

RESILIENCE AND STRESS IN EDUCATION:  
A Postmodern Phenomenon?

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## INTRODUCTION

This article is an attempt to outline the structure of resilience in an effort to address the issue of stress in education and in society in general. Departments on all levels of education today employ counsellors to assist teachers and students. In discussions recently with a counsellor bereavement was sited as one of the more prominent forms of counselling. Death most often cannot be avoided but how we counsel grief can be mismanaged if counselling is a product of a culture violated by its own ignorance of what it is to be a person.

Teachers today in elementary, junior, and high school levels not only teach but also have to deal quite often with the psychological and sociological issues of their students. In fact, teachers, parents, always did, but classical culture ruled with an iron fist. Conformity was the rule and if one did not conform then you were in some way deviant. In western schools at least, there is an attempt to assist the student with their problem whatever it may be. This places an extra burden on the teacher which some manage reasonably well and others less so. Various support systems, such as in -service days, are in place within the Education departments as well as in the communities to assist teachers in managing these issues. Many of these issues are not learning problems and are brought in from outside the classroom. They affect the teaching and learning outcomes but are not specifically a learning problem. But they affect the ability of the student to learn and eventually the teacher's ability to teach. These are cultural problems. What is cultural cannot be resolved in one zone of that culture. In as much as education, along with parenting and community life, are central zones of maturation, education is one of the more important forums for the possible maturation of a child, but it cannot offset what culture is doing very poorly- creating a person.<sup>1</sup> This experience can and often does create tension, stress, and anxiety in a teacher or counsellor in as much as their efforts are often futile because the source of the problem is systemic. It is cultural. It is to the issue of stress and more so resilience that this article attempts to address at an individual level first and only summarily as cultural. Survival and the art of living can become a focus of teaching, of any career for that matter. I recall at one school where I was involved for 10 years, how teachers were happy to be back in September, by early November they could not wait for Christmas holidays and in May of that same school year

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<sup>1</sup> See my article this site: *Obedience and Self-Creation* for a discussion of the creation of persons.

were not only counting days until year's end but also counting the years to retirement. This is not a problem, and I cannot stress this enough, of education. It is culturally systemic. We are in a time of history that is revealing our ignorance of ourselves and how that ignorance can deepen and widen to proportions beyond our imagination. Do we actually know what we are up to? This article will attempt to outline a structure of resilience that might in some small way assist those in struggling with the problem of stress in what has come to be called "postmodern" society. It might also get one through to retirement and beyond while we work out "what we are up to."

A "structure" of resilience implies that resilience is grounded in a specific dynamic residing in you and I. Research to date offers a similar suggestive premise. Researchers are looking for "something" that enables some people to deal with stress in life better than others. What is this "something" they are searching for? In seeking that "something" a premise is presupposed-that there is a dynamic, a structure, that researchers have named resilience or hardiness.<sup>2</sup> In researching this topic I found that the difficulty was in locating just what the data of resilience would be. The research to date is, I believe, struggling with that same question. What is the data of resilience? What is it that researchers must observe in order to reach some understanding of what has come to be named resilience? It is as if researchers know this dynamic exists and yet have not found the actual data of the dynamic. This problem dominated the early part of my research. Scientific method begins with the data and attempts through experimentation to understand that data. The various texts and articles that I studied on the topic of resilience did not assist me in locating just what the data of resilience is.<sup>3</sup> This posed a methodological problem, which shifted the focus of my research from one of trying to understand what resilience is to one of searching for the data of resilience. This shift in focus, of

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<sup>2</sup>Conversations with Dr. Michael Ungar, researcher into resilience at Dalhousie University in Halifax, NS. He informed me that many researchers were now using the term 'hardiness' to express what had been formally called 'resilience'.

<sup>3</sup>See Segal, Julius; *Winning Life's Toughest Battles: Roots of Human Resilience*, McGraw Hill, USA, 1986. Anthony, James & Cohler, Bertram; *The Invulnerable Child*, Guildford Press, 1987. Higgins, Gina; *Resilient Adults*; Jossey-Bass Pub. USA, 1994

searching for the data of resilience, raised questions about the traditional views on objectivity and subjectivity.<sup>4</sup>

Researchers presume there is a datum to resilience through the observation that some people handle the issues of living more efficiently than others. What do they observe? They observe people's responses to situations. Is the response the data of resilience or is the response an action resulting from a decision? Response follows on a decision. There is a relationship between those 2 activities. In that relationship there are 2 components of what we are calling resilience. It does not seem logical to assume this is the entire structure since decisions are reached after some form of deliberation occurs about experiences that people have in living. In section one we will outline this structure in detail. Resilience would not seem to be observable in a traditional empirical sense. What researchers observe are the actions or responses resulting from people who embody some inner dynamic we are calling resilience. This poses the methodological problem. How can datum that is not observable visually be empirically studied? A second question that emerges is how do we locate this data and, thirdly, how do we know it is the proper data since our term resilience has yet to be related to specific data?<sup>5</sup> In order to respond to these questions it will be necessary to advert to our own experiences of situations that normally would cause stress.

Let us begin with questions.<sup>6</sup> Questions are evoked by a situation to be resolved. But our resolving has a twofold purpose. One is to solve the problem and secondly to notice what we are doing when we solve a problem. An example may help to initiate this awareness. The following is a puzzle to be solved.

A	E F	H I	K L M N
B C D	G	J	O P

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<sup>4</sup>Lonergan, Bernard, Insight: A Study of Human Understanding □-3

<sup>5</sup>See the Conclusion for a response to this question.

<sup>6</sup>Insight, Chapter 1, section 2.4.

The task is to solve this puzzle, to find out why certain letters are on the top of the line and others are on the bottom. There is a law functioning in this distribution. This solving as I have said has a twofold purpose. First to solve the puzzle, and secondly: what are you doing when you are solving the puzzle? This second purpose opens up a new field of empirical enquiry. It manifests data that is not regarded as such or given any interior attention within current social science research. So, what are you doing at this juncture of puzzling? You may answer: To solve the puzzle. Can your questioning be something in itself that is concomitant with solving the puzzle? As you push along try to continue to notice that you are in a particular mode of conscious activity. Are you curious, are you puzzling? Is the experience of puzzling identical with the desire to solve the puzzle? What does it mean to puzzle? Can you direct your attention, your awareness, to puzzling as well as the puzzle? Do you now have two questions: What is the solution to the puzzle? and, What is puzzling? Is there a difference in your attending, in the data to which you are attending? This series of questions is pushing you towards a distinction you may not have noticed before. Are you beginning to make that distinction?

It is this distinction that eventually manifests the data of resilience but until you have empirically made that distinction on your own, the data remains elusive. In order to continue your personal research I leave you with the puzzle and the two questions. The prolongation of the question increases the possibility of your refinement in the distinction and, for our research, provides the data of resilience.

Part One of this paper takes this activity up in more detail and attempts to further outline the complete structure of resilience. What is important to notice is that the structure of resilience, the data of resilience, demands a new form of awareness, a shift in our understanding of empirical. Just as we can advert to sense experience, becoming aware of an image, a sound, a smell, a touch, a taste, we can become aware of acts of consciousness by adverting to them.

This brief introduction to the methodology that I used in this research is paramount if we are to discover the data of resilience or any social or psychological dynamic within the human person. It opens up an entirely new avenue of empirical enquiry that resolves the methodological issues of current research in the social sciences. The view that the real is the observable and by observable, is meant what one can see and measure, quantify if you wish, is a limitation on

empirical enquiry. The data of the social sciences is the interior activity of human consciousness. Observing the external activity of the human person relates more to the study of motor skills.<sup>7</sup> Add to this the data of consciousness and a grounding is provided for a science that studies the whole person. In order to establish the data of resilience it is necessary for researchers to advert to their own inner dynamic structure in responding to situations in their own living. This advertence brings forth slowly the data of resilience.

I have attempted above to provide an explanation for the manner in which this research was carried out and why. Part I will outline the process of resilience as grounded in the dynamic structure of human consciousness. This will be shown to be a common pattern in the human subject. The underdevelopment of this structure or its mistaken development can lead to an inability to deal with situations in one's personal or professional life causing a breakdown in the integrative function of the human subject. Part II will discuss this integrative function and how a breakdown contributes to the experience named stress and in more serious cases, anxiety. The discussion of the structure of consciousness and the integrative function will provide the possibility of defining the term resilience in a concrete manner that further manifests the finality<sup>8</sup> of human consciousness.

Part III will deal with Aquinas' analysis of the will. A discussion of context adds a further dimension to the dynamic of resilience. This part will be an extension of our reflection on the dynamics of consciousness. Part IV will offer a definition of resilience and the problems associated with defining terms. Part V will offer a brief discussion on resilience and education.

Part VI explores the need for a division of labour as a means of reorienting education, institutions, and culture. As there are many different professions in which stress is apparent and that there are different personality typologies (Jung & Myers-Briggs) in the human community, so professionals from different fields, such as sociology, psychology, education, management, will need to address this issue of stress and resilience in order that the structure of resilience be properly applied to the various environments of the workplace and society.

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<sup>7</sup> Lonergan, Bernard; Method in Theology, Herder & Herder, 1972, p. 248 & 180

<sup>8</sup> *Insight*; Ch. 15, sec. 5.

The conclusion will provide pointers towards the development of curriculum that could be taught within the training of educators. At present a method of introspection which directs the person to acknowledge their own inner bias and share their own views on relational dynamics is often used to prepare people for various forms of employment. This article takes the position of directing the person to become aware of their own structure of consciousness, common to us all, in an effort to strengthen that structure, appreciate a common dynamic shared by the human community, and apply that dynamic more efficiently to the provision of solutions to living and working.

It is hoped that this article will make a contribution to not only the structure of resilience but in the long-term assist in the reduction of stress in the teaching professions. The larger issue of providing a solution to stress in human living and the workplace is more related to the design of our cultural and social fabric. This is a larger problem, which I will touch on only briefly in section VI. It relates to the need for a division of labour to meet the ills of the larger cultural scene fostered by economic, political, methodological, and philosophical inadequacies. It will be sufficient for this article to initiate a beginning by outlining the structure of resilience, some of its possibilities for the resolution of stress in education, and a few brief comments on methodology.

#### PART ONE: The Structure of Resilience

Contemporary research on resilience dates back to the last 3 decades. Much of the work focussed on attempting to discover why some people are more vulnerable than others to the difficulties of living<sup>9</sup> Efforts have also been initiated to define just what resilience is. Researchers admit it is still an ongoing search and the various approaches, psychological and sociological, have produced different perspectives on the topic. In this article I hope to go to the concrete data of resilience-the inner workings of human consciousness.

We will begin with the child's first expressions in language of an inner world. This first form of expression is the question. Children do not have to be taught to ask questions, this is a

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<sup>9</sup>Why is living difficult? This is a further point, which I touch on in the section on a Division of Labour.

natural dynamic. How can that be? What is innate to human consciousness that evokes this form of expression without the teacher's aid? It is a natural desire to understand experience. How can a researcher locate this datum? This can be done by adverting to one's own experience. As a researcher there is the motivation to solve problems. The motivation might be one of preserving one's position, collecting a pay cheque, achieving some form of prestige. All of these motivations relate to an inner drive of some sort depending on one's disposition. But, in order to do the work properly the researcher will have to engage the pure motivation of his or her curiosity, the desire to understand the problem and provide a solution. This desire is a conscious dynamic that the child manifests by the incessant act of asking What and Why questions. The 2-year-old child has usually not taken on mistaken motivations driving curiosity. It is a dynamic act of consciousness that quickly shifts its focus in the early years of its emergence. As the child grows the desire to understand becomes more focussed and is able to sustain its objective to understand experience for longer periods of time. The question is the first verbal sign that the human subject operates intelligently, the child has an experience and desires to understand the experience. The desire moves consciousness towards something. We might think of this as an inner energy, a motion towards understanding.

The child understands very little at this young age of 2 or 3. This may be the reason for the quick shift of the child's attention span during these years. Explanations for experiences mean very little to the child and so consciousness moves on very quickly to other experiences. As the child learns more in terms of the meaning of language and as small acts of understanding contribute to development, the attention span will usually become more focussed. This does not occur in all children and some children are diagnosed with attention deficit syndromes of various forms. We cannot go into that here but it might be helpful to think of these problems in terms of emotional or psychological inhibitions often caused by chemical imbalances, but other causes maybe due to a slower growth than normal in acts of understanding during those early years. If the natural desire to understand is inhibited by relational problems, emotional or some other form



of abuse, this distraction in consciousness<sup>10</sup> can inhibit the natural dynamic resulting in excessive physical energy as the psyche attempts to off load the built up tension from a lack of release through the natural dynamic of a growth in understanding.

If the child is nurtured in its natural dynamic of questioning and allowed to reach some understanding on its own, tensions are released and the natural dynamic of consciousness resolves the inner tensions of living as well as manifests itself as a means of resolving problems or providing solutions. Children usually have a natural creative bent towards solving problems even though we as adults often find their solutions inadequate. What is important is to note their creative desire to do so. It is interesting to note how children between the approximate ages of 4 and 7 enjoy "Knock Knock" jokes. The pun has some meaning for them. They do not grasp the insight of more complex humour but usually will laugh along contagiously with the group when a joke is told. Some time after the age of 7 or 8 the child begins to get the insights so central to a joke. It is at this time that their questioning finds a new form of resolution. Where as children they simply went on to another experience or enjoyed the sensible experience of something, once insights begin to occur, their curiosity is resolved, not by moving on to another experience, but within the experience of insight itself. It is worth noting this shift in psychic performance in yourself, but even more important to note the release of psychic energy through a new activity, understanding.<sup>11</sup> Again, the researcher might advert to his or her own performance and notice the tension or anxiety that can build at the frustration of not getting the insight to one's problem or question. Different dispositions deal with this experience differently. For where some may become highly agitated, others may be more relaxed and accepting of the lack of insight. It is interesting to note that when an insight to a problem is experienced, not only is the tension in an unresolved question released but also joy is often experienced. "I've got it!"<sup>12</sup> The psychic lift of

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<sup>10</sup>Henman, Robert; "Judgment, Reality, and Dissociative Consciousness", *Method Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Vol. 18, # 2, Fall 2000, p. 183 on the causes of the inward attention to emotional issues weakening the process of intellectual focus.

<sup>11</sup>Our culture focuses on physical activity to off-load the psychic energy of children. There is the challenge to balance this with the release of intellectual development. Excessive reliance on physical activity as a release of anxiety neglects the full development of the child.

<sup>12</sup>*Insight*, p. 3 on Lonergan's example of the experience of insight into phantasm.

the insight is elemental to the integrative function of consciousness and the liberation of chemical tensions that build up in the midst of unresolved issues.

But this insight does not complete the flow of conscious activity. Once we have an insight and the “joy” or liberation is experienced, we recognise the desire to formulate that insight, express it in some form whether it be verbal or written. When we attempt to formulate an insight we realize that this is again a different act of consciousness beyond the insight. Definitions, thesis, and treatises are expressions of formulated insights into the data of both the natural and social sciences. This formulating that we call judgment, the expression of an insight, provides a different level or experience of the cognitional structure.

Beyond this there is another level of cognitive activity expressed when we ask “Is this so?” “Am I correct?” In relation to scientific method-verification. A further activity is the level of asking: “What will we do with this new discovery?”. There is a pattern of questioning that begins with a What question, followed by an Is question, and then a What-to-do question and one can go beyond all of that to ask: “Will we do it?”. So there are four levels of questioning which are all supplemented by insights and formulations all along the way. In Part VI we outline these levels.

There are three key features of this natural dynamic to be recognized: 1) that it is a natural dynamic but if not cultivated or if it is misdirected by poor teaching or abuse will go awry, 2) it is natural to all human subjects regardless of gender, race or ethnic origin, and 3) the levels integrate harmoniously chemical and psychic tensions natural and unnatural to the process. Sufficient for now to acknowledge that the data is one’s own and through extrapolation and dialogue we can recognize that all human subjects do this although some better than others for the reasons mentioned above.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Henman, Robert; *The Child as Quest*, University Press of America, 1984, pp. 7-9

## PART II: The Integrative Function of the Person

In Chapter 15 of the work *Insight* by Bernard Lonergan, he outlines three levels of development; organic, psychic, and intellectual. For our work here the key point is to note that development goes on at each level but only to a certain point for each level of developmental activity is limited by the laws pertaining to that level. So chemical changes cannot always be properly resolved on the chemical level. They are resolved on a higher level of performance and activity, the psyche, and those activities that cannot be resolved or integrated on the psychic level can be resolved on the intellectual level. There is an interdependent relationship between these levels of activity that integrate unresolved activity from 'below'.<sup>14</sup> When this relational integrative activity is blocked or frustrated problems will occur on one or more of the levels. So persons who cannot get an insight into a problem may experience some physical anxiety. The chemistry is agitated and this can also manifest an emotional irritation when one converses with others. In such an example the unfinished state of the intellectual component affects the 2 lower levels. So workers who function within a system for prolonged periods in which they find the system 'uncongenial' or poorly organized may eventually begin to experience physical disturbances such as neck pain, back pain, ulcer symptoms, or the inability to focus or even to listen to conversations with others. The inability to express their experience of that work environment and resolve the issues on the intellectual level blocks the natural integrative flow of the 2 lower levels and what is natural becomes 'unnatural' creating disturbances all along the neural pathways. Integration is stifled and the disturbances are warning signs that something is awry, something that demands completion is unable to complete itself. Not all demands are to be met and that is a function of decision. One may 'realize' that the situation cannot be changed and in the acceptance of that decision some resolution is attained and the integrative function can slowly restore itself to harmony, or at least to some degree of harmony. Some individuals may opt for moving on and change their place of work or profession. In either case, the reach is to restore the integrative functioning and the mandate of consciousness seeks to work out that

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<sup>14</sup>The term 'below' is merely convenient to help us form an image of the movement. One could think of this horizontally or vertically. This does not pertain to a hierarchy of something better. It points merely to limitations and functions on each level.

restoration by creative solutions that can be frustrated by external experiences such as unintelligent administrative mandates, inhospitable co-workers, students with problematic emotional issues, or poorly organized work environments.

As much as these three levels of functioning have their own desires or ends, their ability to fulfil those ends are limited. It is this limitation that can induce anxiety on the levels of biology and psyche. So, on the biological level, if you cannot find food when you are hungry, this can first increase the experience of hunger and later induce anxious concern as to the consequences of never finding food. On the level of psyche, emotional desires that cannot be met will induce similar responses. The intellectual level, in its creative capacity, attempts to resolve these needs and if successful releases the tension or anxiety built up by unmet needs or desires. There is then, not only limitations on each level, but a reach for finality<sup>15</sup> on each level. So, sexual desire can be met by the act of having sex, or, over time accepting the decision that one will not have sex and eventually that particular instance of desire will dissipate. But just as hunger reoccurs, so will other biological desires such as sex. Questions about problems can be put off but if they are of interest or concern to the person, they will reoccur. The point is that there is a reach for finality that is natural to the levels and to the integrative functioning of you and I. The frustration of this finality, be it biological, psychological or intellectual, manifests itself through agitation in the nervous system as stress, tension, or anxiety. The resolution of these experiences resides in attaining finality. But finality does not mean that the object of desire is met. Intelligence may discern that the desire can not be met or that it should not be met. In that case resolution, or finality, is reached by acknowledging that fact and deciding for another option, which when accepted and acted upon can over time dissolve the earlier desire and the finality character of our natural dynamism is reached in a manner perhaps different from the original expectation of finality. Appreciating the drive of this reach for finality, its functioning on the 3 individual levels as well as its more overarching command on the intellectual level, helps to highlight a further dynamism in the study of resilience. Finality can be frustrated by external experience, but it can also be weakened by sadness or despair or depression. Depression could be

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<sup>15</sup> See Lonergan on finality in *Insight* and in "Finality, Love & Marriage" *Collection* Herder & Herder, NY, 1967.

viewed as an absence, or weakening, of the reach for finality on one or more of the 3 levels. A weakening on all 3 levels would incur a major form of depression and the inability to work out solutions to the original experience<sup>16</sup> that set this downward spiral into motion. This spiral could be viewed as the opposite of resilience. My attempt to outline the structure of resilience not only manifests a manner of resolving problems and avoiding anxiety, but also holds possibilities in warding off possible depression. It is competent and prudent to acknowledge that chemical imbalances can be genetic or induced in early childhood and that they must in some cases be treated accordingly<sup>17</sup> in conjunction with an understanding of the drive of finality on the 3 levels, with its ultimate finality residing in the intellectual process. That finality is expressed in the question: What will I do? That question can be relating to problems on all 3 levels and its answer and commitment to that answer provides possibilities and an increase in the probabilities of resolution to unsolved issues and tensions related to those issues.

This brief description of the natural integrative functioning of the person and the reach of finality must now be contextualized by a discussion of the will and its dynamics.

### PART III: The Will as Context

The *cultivation* of the will is not a naturally occurring event just as the *cultivation* of the question in the child requires cultivating. Occurrence is one thing, cultivation is another just as the child does learn eventually to better focus its questions and hold conscious attention to that one question so the will operates, but its cultivation is a secondary development and it pertains to our topic of resilience. Volume 17 of Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*<sup>18</sup> on the "Psychology of Human Acts", Questions 7 to 17, describes various modes of consciousness that provide a context for the functioning of the intellect. Again, we must advert to our own experience of these inner dynamics to reach some appreciation, empirically, of their role in the development of

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<sup>16</sup>Depression would involve not so much the inability to solve a problem, but the inability to accept other options and the feeling of "no way out" invades psychic performance weakening the psychic and intellectual drive to understand. Hence, the downward spiral begins and the dynamic of the structure of resilience loses its momentum.

<sup>17</sup> Medications for anxiety do in fact shield the chemical agitation from the psychic and intellectual levels providing the patient with the experience of "all's well." In order to reinitiate the finality and integrative function of the person, medications will have to be withdrawn and therapy begun.

<sup>18</sup> Aquinas, Thomas; *Summa Theologiae*, Blackfriars, Cambridge, 1970.

resilience. At this point, it may be more obvious that the experience, or data of resilience, is a structure comprised of various components and that their functioning consists of an interdependency, that at first is complex, and yet does function as a whole with a single objective.

In question 8 of Aquinas' Summa he discusses the objects of volition. In his reply he states that "Willing is a rational appetite." The term denotes a desire that is natural to the dynamic of consciousness. Again, it is important to advert to our own experience of this desire to provide the empirical data for this study. It is important also to note that this desire has an object and the frustration of that outcome can be an inherent cause of tension in consciousness. The will desires, Aquinas tells us, a good. But a desire is not always the 'good'. The will could be responding to a desire that in turn may prove to be unintelligent or unreasonable. It is important to note that the will does operate to resolve a desire and that is a good in itself. Should the desire be directed towards an unintelligent or unreasonable outcome, intelligence and its finality will manifest the character of that desire. The cultivation of the will is the process of exercising it and gradually appreciating its function and relationship to the cognitive process.

A further object of the will is enjoyment and Aquinas has a few points on this that I think are relevant to our discussion of resilience. The will can be cultivated to support different desires on any of the 3 levels of functioning that we described above. We might, at an early age, experience an excessive focus on meeting the needs or desires of the biological level. If this excessiveness is not only cultivated but understood or at least experienced as enjoyment the will becomes attached to that particular objective, one of physical or biological pleasure. So early sexual stimulation may lead to sexual fulfilment later in life as the only real enjoyment in life and the will supports that desire and objective because of earlier cultivation.<sup>19</sup> Or on the psychic level our cultivation may have been towards having all of our emotional needs met by others and the will conforms to that objective. This can escalate into relational dependency. Both extremes on these two levels can first inhibit the objective of intellectual process, limiting it to working out meeting only the needs on the first two levels. This will usually result in a problem of

immaturity later in life and I believe a lack of resilience in meeting the problems of living. If enjoyment is restricted to the first two levels the freedom of choice and change can become restricted psychologically and intellectually.

Enjoyment can be experienced on all 3 levels, the point is that to restrict enjoyment to any one or two levels is to stifle human development. So, at times we desire a good meal, other times, good conversation, laughter and at other times puzzling over say what I offered in the introduction to this article. These various manners of attention develop differentiations of consciousness over time. There is the enjoyment of puzzling and even more so of getting the answer! The will, as context, can become overly attached to a particular desire and as in a form of addiction, strengthen that desire by continuously supporting it. The will is a strengthening, providing perhaps what some researchers are calling hardiness, a compliment to the structure of resilience.

By context I mean the will adds something to the drive of finality of that process. For both the intellect and the will are drives towards finality. A context for any action provides a further motivation to that action. The combination of the drive of intellectual process and of the will as context initiates a power, a strength, towards finality, towards solving a problem. The absence of a context, such as the will, leaves the intellectual process at the mercy of fading, in its own drive, over time. So the seeking of food is motivated by hunger, the context is survival. If one loses the desire to survive-the context-the desire to seek food will fade. So a context is relevant to our discussion of resilience and the context for intellectual process, the structure of resilience, is the will. In question form: Do I have the will to work out the solution to my problem? Notice how that question is different from the specific activity of working out the solution. The solution-question would be of these types: What is the problem? or, What are my options? or, What will I do? The will provides a context of a further power, or strength, to the drive of intellectual process. Together they form what I believe researchers are calling resilience.

Aquinas goes on to discuss Intention, Choice, Deliberation, Consent, Application, and Command in relationship to the will and cognitional process, what I have called the structure of

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<sup>19</sup> Possible causes of sexual dysfunction in adult life can occur due to a focus on fulfilment on the 2 lower levels

resilience. To avoid turning this article into a commentary on Aquinas or a small text, I leave these for further study in the area of resilience.

#### PART IV: What is Resilience?

In exploring the definition of resilience it is appropriate for us to return to our puzzle presented in the Introduction for a further statement on methodology. That puzzle had a twofold purpose, to solve it but also to advert to the process of puzzling. That secondary purpose is central to the awareness of, and discovery of, the data of resilience as well as the reading of this article. The acts of consciousness are data and by our advertence to those acts we can become aware, empirically, of the data of resilience. To continue to avoid that awareness is to remain in the dark about the actual structure that provides some people with the ability to face issues and avoid stress. I am avoiding the issues of subjectivity and objectivity in this article due to the great lengths required to properly discussing them. Sufficient here to say that objectivity is reached in judgment, when you have formulated and verified your insight into the puzzle. Objectivity then is the objectification of our subjectivity, it is not reached by looking. This affirmation is promoted in my secondary challenge of the puzzle. What am I doing when I am puzzling? Am I merely looking<sup>20</sup> or.....? Knowing vs. looking pertains to our discussion of definition.

The answer to this section's question, or at least my answer to this question, should be somewhat obvious at this point. Resilience, in definition form, is the structure of intellectual consciousness in act. But the definition falls short of providing the data. The definition can be repeated by anyone who can speak. That recitation does not provide a student, or you or I, with the data of resilience, nor does it provide any understanding of the data of resilience. The data of resilience is established by an advertence to the data of consciousness, our own acts of consciousness. We cannot experience the acts of anyone else's consciousness. We can only

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during early childhood.

<sup>20</sup> See *Insight*, p. 253. on knowing and looking. Also see Charles Osgood, *Method and Theory in Experimental Psychology*, NY, 1953, p. 1. and Rita Carter's *Exploring Consciousness*; University of California Press, LA., 2002, p. 16. for the problem of understanding what is seen.



attempt to understand their expression and correlate our understanding of their expression with our own experience and understanding of our own acts of consciousness.<sup>21</sup> This does not differ from any current form of communication or objectivity in any of the natural or human sciences. But it does point to a process that is unacknowledged in contemporary methodology. An understanding of that data provides us with some insight into what we have been calling resilience. Notice that the name of this experience is not initially relevant. The term eventually given to the experience only becomes relevant once some understanding of the data is achieved. Prior to that achievement the name or term holds little meaning or exudes a vagueness about its usage.<sup>22</sup>

So, my usage of the term resilience throughout this article refers to the experience of a dynamic structure of consciousness that goes on in you and I. This structure is not something vague. I suggest that it functions in each and everyone of us, some rather well, some not so well. Recall our comments on cultivation of both this process and that of the will. This process is accessible to research through the method of introspective analysis, becomes known in the judgment of one's own experience, and universally known through the collaboration of communication and meaning. Its challenge to a gap in contemporary social science methods and to naive realism is confronted in your own affirmation of your own experience. Once that affirmation<sup>23</sup> is appropriated it is very difficult to 'backstep' to some notion of naive realism. But the initial step of affirmation is no less challenging and accepted views on realism and objectivity continue to block the evolution of science in general, but more specifically the human sciences since the data that manifests the human component of living is relegated to obscurity.

This brief section highlighted the problem of definition. A definition presupposes some data that has been understood. I believe sufficient pointers towards the data of resilience have been outlined for a discussion of resilience and its functioning within education.

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<sup>21</sup> See *Insight*, p. 582

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*; pp 10-11.

<sup>23</sup> *Insight*, Ch. XI on affirmation of the knower.

## PART V: Resilience and Education

This topic of resilience and stress in education came to me in an unexpected manner. My field of research and teaching lies for the most in the philosophy of education and in ethics. I was invited to teach a course in ethics in a department of Family Studies and Gerontology during the year 2002. It was expressed to me by students and professors in that department that stress and burnout were quite prevalent in the care giving professions<sup>24</sup> Most people in this profession cope or deal with the associated stress on the job. In other words, they are not provided with training as a student to deal with this later in their profession. Discussions with various professors and professionals in health care led me to reflect on the problem and subsequently to work out what might be a solution to this problem. Rather than focus on health care, the topic for me opened out into a cultural one and on education in general. This article is the result of my research to date. I am hoping to work out a course curriculum that would assist students in any profession in cultivating their own 'resilience'. I will say more on curriculum in the Conclusion of this article.

If stress is so acute to education one could surmise that some organizational restructuring is required. But I do not think we can focus just on education as an environment inducing stress. It is in the university, the government, private industry, the family-part of modern culture might we say? My focus on education pertains to my teaching experience, both with adults for various professions and children of all ages. The idealism of changing the system is unrealistic. What is possible is training students to deal with the stressful issues in their profession. This offers two positive possibilities: 1) that their mental health is retained and they perform well in their profession, 2) that their mental health contributes gradually to a restructuring of their own work environment. When under stress we react and the solution is seldom helpful. Our stability provides the patience and focus required to properly work out new and better solutions to problems. The awareness of the data of resilience manifests the data of a specific component of being human and that awareness in turn has the possibility of humanizing<sup>25</sup> an organization or

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<sup>24</sup> Nor does our education system or culture provide such training.

<sup>25</sup> To humanize an institution is to create out of the basic human component, the structure of consciousness.

institution. That is a long-term outcome and I will discuss this in the next section. We express in our institutions what we are. If people are experiencing stress the organization becomes a stress filled environment<sup>26</sup> In the same way if people are healthy the environment has the potential of a deeper humanization.

The issue of stress in education is a wider issue, a cultural issue, and its solution cannot be resolved in isolation from the larger cultural scene. But I do believe that people can be trained to learn to resolve issues through a self-knowledge, a knowledge of the structure of resilience that can contribute to a slow evolution of systems and organizations and institutions as we now know them. Am I being unrealistic? I would prefer to think of my optimism as a belief in a proper methodical science and the contribution it can make to making life more livable. If science merely discovers and makes life no more livable, then the method is truncated<sup>27</sup> and I suggest that it is the unknownness of the data of consciousness that is the cause of this truncation.

This brief discussion provides a wider context for the topic of stress in education. I could do a survey and ask teachers what causes stress in their workplace. The list would be extensive and patterns would be evident. Would these patterns be the data of resilience or people's attempts to express the functioning of their structure of consciousness in an effort to resolve their problems? I know from my own work experience that similar issues pervade much of our working society. I work as a university lecturer, counsellor, chaplain and pastoral associate. I have worked in government and private industry and spend much of my time in dialogue with people from these facets of North American life. There are recurring patterns of responses to our cultural scene. I do not believe any institution or profession is exempt from being dehumanized and the contemporary view of our humanity suffers from a proper analysis of the specific component that more fully expresses our humanity-the data of consciousness. Just as that specific component of our humanity is absent from our self- understanding, so is that same

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<sup>26</sup>*Insight*, Ch. VII, sec. 4 on tension in community & sec. 8 on cultural reversal.

<sup>27</sup>Lonergan, Bernard; *A Second Collection*, Westminster Press, PA, 1974, p.73. "The neglected subject does not know himself. The truncated subject not only does not know himself but also is unaware of his ignorance and so, in one way or another, concludes that what he does not know does not exist." This pertains to the data of resilience.

component absent in the structuring of our organizations, our institutions, our culture. For how can we build into our culture that of which we have no knowledge? These points are a major criticism of the social sciences, of our education system, and of our culture. I see no other manner in which to properly contextualize the issue of stress in education. To do less would be to betray the place of science in human development as well as insult my reader in offering some simplistic solution to a very complex problem. That said, a survey would verify what many professionals are already experiencing in their profession. But their observed reactions or their comments on stress or the cause of stress to situations would not manifest the data of resilience. In the next section I take up briefly a possible long-term solution to stress in education.

#### PART VI: A Larger Perspective on Stress: A Division of Labour

The last section set the stage for a larger perspective on the problem of stress in education. In this section I will describe a methodology that emerges out of the data of human consciousness providing the long-term possibility of an emerging humanization of culture. I will begin with a list of the elements of the data of consciousness. There are 13 elements of consciousness.

1.) Experience 2) What questions: What is the(law)problem? 3) Direct Insight 4) Answer 5) Is questions: Is the answer correct? 6) Indirect Insight 7) Conclusion 8) What-is-to-be-done? 9) Insight

10) Options 11) Which one? 12) Insight 13) Decision. All this followed by an action. Let us diagram these 13 elements out in order to assist us in becoming more familiar with the order.

Experience(Data) ----->What Questions? --> Insight ! -----> Formulation -->

Is the formulation correct? --> Indirect Insight ! --> Yes/No answer -->

What-is-to-be-done questions? --> Insight !--> Options -->

Which one is to be done? --> Insight ! --> Decision-->Action<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>McShane, Philip; *Wealth of Self & Wealth of Nations*; Exposition Press, pp. 15 & 48 for diagrams of the 13 elements.

Now you may read through this list and respond that you do not do all of this every time you make a decision. Try it out. Many of our decisions do not require such refinement such as “Where will I eat lunch?” MacDonaldis or Wendys? But even resolving this routine aspect of daily living will put you through most of these elements if not all. It depends on your temperament, or priority of food as a worthwhile activity. Notice that this process is identical with your puzzling over the puzzle provided in the Introduction even to the point of asking yourself what will you do now that you have solved the puzzle? You might pass it on, entertain friends or attempt to introduce others to the structure of puzzling and resilience.

These 13 elements reveal different levels of consciousness. So in experiencing we are being attentive to something. In asking questions and getting insights we are exercising intelligence. In formulating our insights we are being reasonable and in making decisions we are being responsible. Four levels of human consciousness: Attention, intelligence, reasonableness and responsibility are manifested as we move through these 13 elements. Just as these 13 elements provide for the possibility of living an intelligent life and reaching finality, so do they provide a foundation for a methodology that promotes progress and revision in human culture. Let us list and line-up this method with the 4 levels of consciousness.

- 4. Responsibility --->(5)Deciding -----> 4.Dialectic ----->5) Foundations
- 3. Reasonableness:->(6)Judging ----->3.History ----->6) Policies
- 2. Intelligence:----->(7)Understanding ---->2.Interpretation -----> 7) Planning
- 1. Attention -----> (8)Experiencing ----->1.Research -----> 8) Executive Reflection<sup>29</sup>

Each level of consciousness corresponds not only with an act of consciousness but also with 2 of the components of the method. So attention is the act of experiencing and it corresponds to research and to communication or executive reflection. These eight stages of the method are called functional specialities, since each is first a particular speciality but also functions interdependently with each of the other specialities. They are two phases to this method. The first phase is that of bringing forward what has been worthwhile in a field. The second phase is directed towards developing on what has been brought forward and

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<sup>29</sup>Anderson, Bruce; *“Discovery” in Legal Decision-Making*, Kluwer Academic Pub., Netherlands, 1996, p. 166 & *Method in Theology*, Ch. 5, pp 127-133.

communicating those results to a particular audience. Because these 8 specialities emerge out of the 4 levels of consciousness they draw on the data of consciousness as the humanizing effect in society mediating that humanness to the creation or revision or restoration of a culture or an institution such as education. The dynamic unity is further effective in that what is communicated after step 8 becomes data for research. Each speciality continues to draw on the expertise of the different 8 field subjects in an effort to initiate a development in society, a move or direction towards progress.<sup>30</sup>It is implicit that the basis of progress is the functioning of the acts of human consciousness and the mediation of the results of those acts is through a method of functional specialization.

This collaborative effort grounds the creation of culture and holds the possibility of humanizing culture in a way that would over a prolonged period create a form of living that rather than create stress, attempts to eliminate it or creates a living that does not induce stress. This is not a utopian view of culture, it is a method of creating culture that increases the possibilities of a more humane existence and decreases the possibilities of inhumane environment. An example might be helpful here. If you were planning a family trip you might first gather and speak of other trips pointing out what worked and what did not. This is a drawing on past experience. Out of these reflections you would plan the future trip with the earlier reflections in mind. So you provide a better trip for the future through this process. The 8 functional specialities function in this same manner towards the development of a science or a culture.

In as much as individuals may learn to reduce their own stress by appropriating the structure of resilience, the culture will still impose its inadequacy. What is needed is a division of labour, which the 8 functional specialities provide. This division of labour is a collaborative effort on the part of many specialists as the task is too large to delegate to one person or to either the educational, social, or political, or economic, or management aspects of human living. It would require the collaboration of all these aspects of culture and education to function within

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<sup>30</sup>Progress is to be understood as the product of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. Functional Specialization recycles the 4 levels of consciousness increasing the possibility and probability of progressiveness in a science or a culture.

this eight-fold method to reorient society towards a more humane existence so that the educator not only discovers how to handle his or her personal situations, but also that the culture does not mitigate against those efforts by continuing to impose inhumane policies. This eight-fold structure is also applicable to the various departments and services of any educational institution. In that manner both the individual institutions and the cultural scene are operating out of the same dynamic in collaboration to create a more humane society.

This is a very brief description of this method. The footnotes point to sources of enlargement on its more exact nature and functioning. I have included it in this section and article so as not to provide some false hope about resolving stress in education or society as a whole. It is a larger problem than discovering the structure of resilience. But that discovery is a beginning as the method of functional specialization is an outgrowth of that initial discovery and until that initial discovery is made, functional specialization is stifled in its emergence.

This larger perspective is helpful in also realizing the immensity of the problem<sup>31</sup> and the challenge of the future for universities and the training of teachers. Such a perspective may ease the personal tension some experience in either their research or their work performance.

#### CONCLUSION: Pointers Towards Curriculum Development

I mentioned earlier in this article that I would offer some thoughts on the development of curriculum towards the teaching of resilience. A curriculum would consist of helping the student become familiar with his or her own structure of consciousness and developing a perspective on progress and cultural evolution. First and foremost the teacher would have to do his or her own work. Through the experience provided in the Introduction of puzzling, the teacher can become acquainted with, and arrive at some insight about, his or her own dynamic. Only once this work is done to some degree could someone challenge students to enter into the same experience. Classes would oscillate around puzzles and problems cajoling the student into noticing their own dynamics. It will be a new experience<sup>32</sup> for teachers and students and many do not catch on and

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<sup>31</sup>See *Insight*, p. 226 ff. On the Longer Cycle of Decline.

<sup>32</sup>There is the need to appreciate history as the story of the evolution of consciousness. There is the move from mythic to classical to historical consciousness over the past 10,000 years. At present consciousness would

some only partially. It is a science of which one's views on empiricism and realism are challenged. The fruits of that effort can only be appreciated by someone who has done the work, not unlike the physicist who alone appreciates his or her insight expressed in a theory of quantum particles. The physicist finds it very difficult to communicate his or her enthusiasm or insight to someone unfamiliar with his or her field. The science of consciousness is no less easy.

I raised 3 questions(p. 4) in the Introduction concerning the data of resilience. The first two have been answered within the article. The third question: 'How do we know this data is the data of resilience?' has been answered implicitly throughout. A few further comments are in order. The vague meaning associated with the term resilience is that it is a strength or activity that some people possess in order to meet life's problems and/or reduce or ward off stress. I have outlined the structure of consciousness as that activity. In doing so I believe I have offered a pointer towards discovering the data of resilience that researchers have been searching for over the past 3 decades. Verifying this pertains to the directives in Part I of this article. How do you solve puzzles? Or How do you resolve stressful issues in your life? What is the process? The awareness of this process manifests the data of resilience. The researcher can advert to his or her own drive to research resilience. What process are you using to do research? Do you have questions? It is hoped that a beginning has been initiated for those who are concerned about the issue of livability in education and in culture.<sup>33</sup>

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appear to be in a transitional stage, which might be called fragmentation, a slow evolution towards empirical consciousness, and the acknowledgment of consciousness. This stage makes the experience of communicating to the student a difficult task. It is not part of the fabric of contemporary culture to develop one's interiority.

<sup>33</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, CWL 10, University of Toronto Press, 1993, p. 232. "What I want to communicate in this talk on art is the notion that art is relevant to concrete living, that it is an exploration of the potentialities of concrete living, that it is extremely important in our age when philosophers, for at least two centuries, through doctrines on economics, politics, and education, have been trying to remake man and have done not a little to make human life unlivable. The great task that is demanded if we are to make it livable again is the recreation of the liberty of the subject, the recognition of the freedom of consciousness." This comment sums up much of what I have been expressing in this article in regards to the tension of living and 'Why living is often difficult.'