Resilience in the Business Curriculum: A Biblical Perspective and Directions for Future Research

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ABSTRACT: In today's competitive, fast-paced market, employers are seeking more than technical skills in their new hires. They are seeking new hires with strong soft skills. Resilience is among those desired soft skills. As the competitive business environment continues to rapidly change, our graduates will need to be prepared to face those challenges resiliently. As business leaders place more emphasis on the value of resilience, integrating resilience training into the business curriculum becomes a unique way we can prepare our students, differentiating our Christian liberal arts universities from the pack with a unique value proposition. Creating opportunities for safe-failure and successful pivots can be beneficial for developing resilience in our students, and the FLEX Plan is a good way to start. The FLEX Plan is a unique step-by-step approach to help students improve their resilience and focuses around four basic steps: accept failure, lean in to the emotion, elect a positive response, and x-ray (be transparent). This paper will provide support for the FLEX Plan and will connect this approach to supportive literature on resilience and will explore the value of teaching a biblical perspective on resilience. Future areas of research that could be pursued include the overall impact of increasing resilience; the benefit of resilience training with and without a biblical foundation; and the impact of resilience training in online education, adult accelerated-degree completion programs, and MBA programs.

KEYWORDS: resilience, grit, psychological capital, positive psychology, soft skills, FLEX Plan, business curriculum, MBA, biblical foundation, faith

I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me. —Philippians 4:13

INTRODUCTION

Our students experience bundles of information that are woven together in a pattern that combines technical business knowledge, internship experience, service to others, leadership, and experiential learning. Technical business knowledge is built into our curriculum mapping from introducing concepts to mastering skills. Faculty work hard to make sure the curriculum map covers all of the technical content our students need to be successful in their careers. Service to others is also built into our mission-driven, Christian universities, and internship experience is now required for graduation at many liberal arts universities. But where are we ensuring that our students are mastering resilience skills? We must ensure that our students know more than how to analyze a balance sheet and income statement, create a marketing plan, implement a strategy, and understand how to be a successful leader. Our graduates must be able to communicate, empathize, network, listen, express emotional intelligence, and fail resiliently. Many employers

are seeking new hires who are resilient due to the "turbulent nature of the environment facing today's organizations" (King, Newman, & Luthans, 2015, p. 782). The responsibility falls to us to meet this market demand.

For the Christian college professor, resilience training should also integrate faith, as God created us to be resilient. This is nothing new; resilience started with God in the Garden of Eden and is evident throughout Scripture. Being able to integrate a biblical foundation gives us deeper roots in resilience training as we know the end of the story. Good overcomes evil. God loves us, forgives us, leads us, and has a plan for our lives. In this competitive higher-education, online-get-my-degree-anywhere-anyhow-in-any-environment market, we need to set our liberal arts, Christian universities apart. Integrating resilience training is one way we can achieve that. We can focus on our value proposition and communicate a clear and compelling message to the market that we not only educate the whole student, we help prepare our students to be resilient. While many other universities are educating students with vast technical knowledge and skills, which is what Whitehead (1929) called "inert unutilized knowledge" (p. 37), we can dig deeper and educate our students on the "art of life" (p. 39), which includes soft skills such as resilience. Resilience will give our students the ability to face failure with confidence and pivot toward success. This is what God desires for us in every aspect of our lives as Christians. In fact, we believe that there is no one better to teach us about the art of life and resilience than the Creator of life Himself.

This paper will explore the value of integrating resilience training with a biblical perspective at various levels of our business curriculum and will connect this approach with the current literature on resilience. We will distinguish resilience from grit and clarify why increasing resilience is a better fit for the short-term semester timeframe of higher education (typically 16 weeks). We will provide evidence of the value of integrating resilience and propose that this approach could increase student academic success, career success, long-term grit, and even improve university enrollment and retention—something all schools are interested in. Finally, we will present the FLEX Plan, a simple, straightforward way to begin integrating resilience into our business curriculum, and we will connect the FLEX Plan with a biblical foundation.

DEFINING RESILIENCE

Resilience is defined as one's ability to bounce back after facing failure, stagnation, or even success (Avey,

Luthans & Youssef, 2008). It is important to note that resilience is important not only when facing failure but also stagnation and even success because each of these situations cause us to pause and be challenged with what lies ahead. Resilience is needed when facing challenges in life as a part of our psychological well-being. There has been little research on the factors that foster resilience in the workplace and its overall impact on work and organizational outcomes (King, Newman, & Luthans, 2015). As a soft skill, resilience may be considered what Farrington et al. (2012) termed a non-cognitive skill. However, Almeida (2016) redefined non-cognitive skills as meta-cognitive because labeling them as non-cognitive seemed to imply "a false dichotomy," thus labeling cognitive skills as more important than non-cognitive skills and less important for our students to master (Almeida, 2016). This is important to note as we attempt to bring resilience training to the forefront of our business curriculum and seek to place the value of this skill as meta-cognition, not non-cognition, as important an educational factor as GPA.

What Employers Are Seeking

Many employers today do not believe that a strong GPA and a valuable internship is enough for a new hire and that soft-skill capabilities are missing (Wood, 2018). "[With] recent graduates' lack soft skills, nearly eight in 10 American adults agree that if there is not a development of a more talented workforce, the United States will fall behind other countries" (Wood, 2018). According to a recent study, 34% of corporations and 44% of academia believe graduates today are prepared with hard skills but lack the necessary soft skills ("Building Today's Talent," 2018).

> If recent graduates are not well-prepared for their new jobs, it is not because their hard skills are deficient. Some 90 percent of corporate respondents and 88 percent of academics surveyed said new recruits have the hard skills, such as computer literacy and written communication, to do their jobs successfully. But both groups, however, were far less satisfied with new employees' soft skills. Nearly four in 10 corporations and almost half of academic institutions said new hires lack the soft skills they need to perform at a high level. ("Building Today's Talent," 2018, p. 2)

The irony is that employees are learning the needed soft skills, but according to a recent study, "a majority of respondents (59 percent) agreed that they developed most of the skills they've used in their current job outside of school" and only 15% believed they developed these skills in school ("Building Today's Talent," 2018). The case made here is that we are not preparing our students sufficiently for today's

workforce, and changes need to be made. "While technical skills can change rapidly in today's market, strong soft skills never become obsolete (Wood, 2018). "Employers are now more focused on interpersonal skills rather than GPA.… In response, some universities are releasing extracurricular transcripts that demonstrate a student's individual skills in addition to grades" (Wood, 2018). What if we could provide resilience training (along with other soft skill training) throughout our business curriculum, identify and quantify their competency in their official transcript, and set the bar for identifying the soft skills like resilience that our students have learned to prepare them for today's complex workforce?

Research by Jones, Baldi, Phillips, and Waikar (2016) focused on students from diverse universities (as opposed to mainly ivy league universities) and a diverse group of organizations (varying sizes). Results showed that the top four skills employers were seeking included a positive attitude, respect of others, trustworthiness, honesty, ethical behavior, and initiative (Jones, Baldi, Phillips, & Waikar, 2016). Those top four skills are soft skills and resilience is reflected in the "positive attitude" section as it reflects workers who are "attracting help from others, coordinating work, working on teams, and having the mental resilience to overcome obstacles" (Jones, Baldi, Phillips, & Waikar, 2016, p. 424). This study is important as it reflects what our "customers" want. There is a long-standing argument as to who the university customers are. Some say the students are our customers as they make the decision to come to our school, obtain the financing, sit in out classrooms, and pay the bills which comprise our revenue. However, we also believe that students are only partly our customer and partly the "product" we are producing for employers to hire. In this sense, their future employers are also our customers. This dual-customer belief makes it imperative for us to be aware of what employers are seeking in our graduates and to adjust our curriculum approach to meet that demand. After all, our students are not just going to college to earn a degree to frame and hang on their wall. Our students have the end goal of getting a job and growing in their career. That is why helping them increase their resilience is so important.

MILLENNIALS TO GENERATION Z

As our classrooms shift from Millennials to Generation Z students, we need to be prepared to the changes that are occurring, especially related to resilience. Avey, Hughes, Norman and Luthans (2008) found that resilience represents one of four components of psychological capital (PsyCap), which include hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism.

In a 2015 study on psychological capital, Millennials were shown to have lower resilience than previous generations (Silents, Baby Boomers, and Generation X) (Berg, 2015). But Millennials are no longer in our traditional college classrooms. Generally speaking, Millennials were born between 1980 and 2000, though some studies have Millennials born between 1980 to 1995 with Generation Z (or iGENS) born from 1995 through 2012 (Eckleberry-Hunt, Lick, & Hunt, 2018). Each generational cohort brings unique traits and characteristics to our classrooms, and we need to be prepared to help them find success in their own unique way. Seven shifts attributed to Generation Z include confidence morphing to caution, idealism changing to pragmatism, education acquisition becoming education hacking, consumerism to thriftiness, media consumption changing into media creation, viral messages morphing into vanishing messages, and text messaging morphing into iconic messaging (Elmore, 2015). In order to better understand Generation Z, we want to break these traits down in detail:

1. **Confidence is morphing into caution**. Millennials grew up with an expanding economy, the dot.com era, clean-cut boy bands, and soccer moms. Generation Z members are growing up in the economic recession, rising debt, gender confusion, and a lack of absolutes with a flexible reality.

2. **Idealism is morphing into pragmatism**. Millennials grew up getting what they wanted, from iPhones to tattoos. Generation Z have parents with a tighter budget and a 400% increase in multi-generational households, forcing them to think pragmatically about their future.

3. **Attaining an education is morphing into hacking one.** Millennials graduated from high school and applied to various liberal arts universities in search of a degree. Generation Z have discovered ways to "hack" a college degree through free Ivy League online classes, online certificates, and real-world experience.

4. **Spending money is morphing into saving money.** Millennials were spenders on everything and anything, whereas Generation Z, having only an average of $16.90 a week to spend, tend to plan and save their money. Generation Z tends to think ahead, which may be a good thing.

5. **Consuming media is morphing into creating media.** While Millennials consumed a tremendous amount of media, watching YouTube videos, Netflix and the like, Generation Z is finding ways to "create" new media, interactive experiences, YouTube channels, and their own content.

6. **Viral messages are morphing into vanishing messages.** Millennials grew up with Facebook, Twitter, and

Instagram likes, views, and shares. Generation Z have seen the downside of public social media issues and prefer messaging that evaporates, like Snapchat, Whisper, and Secret, with an attempt to protect their personal digital footprint.

7. **Text messaging is morphing into iconic messaging.** Millennials were known for complex communication skills, and Generation Z is striving to simplify communication using images, symbols, emojis and icons instead of words in their messaging (Elmore, 2015).

Generation Z is the first generation to always have the Internet and social networking. They spend significant time online, especially on social media, and have become the generation with the highest rate of depression and suicide (Eckleberry-Hunt, Lick, & Hunt, 2018). Those factors appear to be connected as social media represents our "highlight reel" of life, and spending significant time viewing how great everyone else is doing tends to make people feel depressed about their own very boring lives. Generation Z tends to be "less emotionally resilient and more insecure than previous generations, and they lack insights into reasons for this" (Eckleberry-Hunt, Lick, & Hunt, 2018, p. 379). This cohort also tends to be less prepared for adulthood during their early twenties, which should be a concern for university professors. We had just adapted our teaching to reach Millennials, and now our classrooms are filled with Generation Z students. It is time to readjust and meet their needs, helping them to face life resiliently.

RESILIENCE AS A COMPONENT OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

As we approach resilience training, it is important to understand the big picture of positive psychology as a whole and where resilience fits in. Resilience is a component of psychological capital (PsyCap) that falls under the larger umbrella of psychological positivity, a managerial motivational and leadership concept. Positive psychology encompasses positive organizational scholarship (POS), positive organizational behavior (POB), positive psychology (PP), psychological well-being (PWB), and psychological capital (PsyCap) (as shown in Figure 1 in Appendix A). PsyCap is an individual's positive psychological state of development and includes hope (persevering toward goals), efficacy (confidence), resiliency (ability to bounce back), and optimism (thinking positively) (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). PsyCap is correlated with positive work-related outcomes (Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa, & Li, 2005). It is inversely related to absenteeism (Avey, Wernsing, & Luthans, 2008),

inversely related to organizational cynicism (Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2008), inversely related to counterproductive workplace behaviors (Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2008), and inversely related to intentions to quit (Avey, Luthans, & Youssef, 2008), all traits and characteristics employers are concerned with today, especially as Generation Z enters the workforce (as shown in Figure 1 in Appendix A).

RESILIENCE AS A COMPONENT OF GRIT

Resilience is also related to grit. Resilience is bouncing back in the short-term and grit is defined as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals" (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007, p. 1087). In the academic classroom, students who become grittier see life's challenges as a marathon, not a sprint, and have what is called a growth mindset. Having a growth mindset is believing you can improve your knowledge and capabilities, being a lifelong learner, and living optimistically about overcoming any challenges you may face (Stoffel, Pharm, & Cain, 2018). Grit has been shown to be positively related to conscientiousness and GPA but inversely related to SAT scores (Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007). The prevailing thought is that smarter and more talented students are slightly less gritty than their less intelligent peers who must work harder and overcome more obstacles to reach success. Though technical skill are important, research on grit shows that effort is even more impactful on success. Duckworth, Eichstaedt and Ungar (2015) found that "effort improves skill at a rate proportional to talent and achievement at a rate proportional to skill" (p. 365). The formula they established to reflect this impact that effort is:

$$\text{achievement} = \tfrac{1}{2} \times \text{time} \times \text{effort}^2$$

Their premise here is that cumulative achievement or success in the long-run is greatly impacted by effort. So how is grit related to resilience? Almeida (2016) identifies resilience as a part of "overcoming obstacles," which is seen as one of three components of overall grit (as shown in Figure 2 in Appendix B). Almeida (2016) conceptualized grit as the convergence of three components: "(a) having interest or passion in a given area; (b) preferring long-term, rather than short-term, goals; (c) overcoming obstacles or setbacks" (p. 561). Resilience is represented by the "overcoming obstacles or setbacks" component. Increasing your grit also requires having what is termed a growth mindset. Though more research is needed in this area, especially in the areas of increasing resilience in our students, if university professors are able to successfully integrate resilience training in the business curriculum, the initial findings show that

long-term grit may be impacted as well (Almeida, 2016). The influence we can have in consecutive 16-week semesters over a four-year period can have a lifelong positive impact on helping our students to become grittier.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATING RESILIENCE IN THE BUSINESS CURRICULUM

Over one-third of students who enter higher education do not finish the degree they started, which is an insufficient degree completion rate to meet the global workforce needs effectively (Almeida, 2016). In addition, 60% of all jobs in the U.S. require some postsecondary education, which is an increase from 30% just forty years ago (Hyslop & Tucker, 2012). Therefore, overcoming challenges in the academic classroom through being more resilient can help students to complete their college degree which may be a critical factor to being prepared for success in the 21st century job market. In the *Recruiting Trends Report* (Gardner, 2018), research showed that employers, especially small companies with 500 or fewer employees, were challenged to find new hires with appropriate soft skills, especially small companies. Knowing this is what employers want in new hires and being able to provide graduates who have built strong soft skills are very different realities. One challenge for university professors is that as a soft skill, resilience is not directly related to academic content and may not be actively addressed in the business curriculum. The responsibility of student success or failure has moved away from the institution and toward the individual faculty member who must now create a learning environment where students are able to take responsibility for their own success and failure, helping them to pivot toward success (Almeida, 2016).

Resilience Can Be Increased

Research has shown that resilience can be developed (Masten & Reed, 2002) and can be increased (Luthans, Youssef-Morgan, & Avolio, 2015). However, increasing resilience must be a consistent, ongoing intervention, not a one-time activity. Reinforcement is necessary to increase resilience, similarly to increasing grit, like "booster shots," building long-term changes in reactions to overcoming challenges (Robinson, 2007). Therefore, it is recommended that resilience-building activities are integrated throughout the business curriculum at various academic stages for reinforcement. We would recommend that resilience become a part of our curriculum mapping from introducing the concept to mastering the skill and should be a part of our assessment process as well. Teaching our students to become more resil-

ient is important because it increases the likelihood of academic success in the midst of regular adversities, helps them to overcome academic obstacles, increases retention potential, and ultimately can improve career and lifelong success.

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE OF RESILIENCE

Historically, resilience dates back as far as the 1800's when the interest in psychological resilience grew out of existing knowledge on physiological resilience (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). Masten (2000) stated, "[D]espite the deeply embedded desire of humans to be resilient and thrive in the face of difficulty, and despite the historic nature of this concept resilience, this virtue has only been discussed scientifically since 1975." With the literature interest in positive psychology originating in 1998 (Seligman, 2018), resilience and grit have seen a resurgence in our academic settings. The value of resilience for Christians dates back further than the 1800s to the creation of the world and mankind, to God the Creator himself. Resilient stories, characters, and commands can be seen throughout the New and Old Testaments, from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:4-3:24) to Revelation with the Lord's "descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Resilience is seen in the stories of Noah and the flood (Genesis 6:9-9:17) and Job's triumph over evil (Job 20:5). God's message of resilience is even seen in lesser-known biblical characters like Gideon (Judges 6:11-18). God called Gideon to be a mighty warrior and save Israel from the Midianites. Gideon questioned God's trust in his ability to defeat the enemy, and yet God's response was "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" (Judges 6:14b). Gideon again questioned God's belief in him and God again replied, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive" (Judges 6:16). God called Gideon. Gideon felt like a failure and questioned God's trust in his ability. God reassured Gideon that he would be with him. It was through God's strength that Gideon found his ability to be resilient, which is where we should find our strength to be resilient today.

We are consistently reminded that God is with us, and that it is not of our own doing, not of our own abilities, but through God's presence and grace that we can face any challenge. In Philippians 4:13, we are reminded, "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me." As followers of Christ, we are called to put on the armor of God to be a warrior and fight the good fight (Ephesians 6:10-14).

As we trust in God, we then can trust in tomorrow. We can bounce back after failures because we know that God has a plan for our lives, He can work in us through every failure, and he will continue to grow our faith and grace throughout our lives until we are called home to be with him (Jeremiah 29:11). We are not only called to be resilient but also to approach each day with positivity. No matter what has happened in your life today, no matter what failures you face, God reminds us, "This is the day the Lord has made, we shall rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). We are not called to rejoice when things go our way; we are called to rejoice each and every day, no matter what we face, no matter what pain we are in, and realize that each day is a gift from God. This is a perfect example of a growth mindset.

In the Bible, we learn about hope, perseverance and resilience. "There is evidence for biblical roots of this concept in teachings of hope, perseverance, and ultimately overcoming adversity and achieving well-being through faith" (Agaibi, 2018, p. 33). God even tells us that we should expect adversity, that it will rain on the righteous and unrighteous (Matthew 5:45), that we should expect longsuffering. Longsuffering, which is also known as patience or perseverance, is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23 KJV), and it is through this longsuffering that we grow in our faith. Though both secular and biblical resilience have benefits for our students, biblical resilience has deeper roots in our faith and may be more sustainable.

Biblical resilience differs from the worldly, bootstrap variety of resilience. The bootstrap-secular form of resilience is powered by self-belief, confidence in your capabilities, and a search for power from within. It is inner-focused, self-reliant, and dependent on you. Conversely, biblical resilience is powered by one's faith in Jesus, his plan for your life, his capabilities and knowledge, and a search for power from him. While secular resilience is internally focused, biblical resilience is externally focused. Biblical resilience is God-reliant and dependent on his knowledge and capabilities, his love for us, and his plan for our lives. God has indeed numbered every hair on our head, and we are certainly more valuable to his than the sparrows (Luke 12:7). Biblical resilience (at its core) is intertwined with our faith, which rests on the promises of God and therefore is full of hope (Romans 15:13). Biblical resilience is empowered by God's grace, which is why Paul could say things like, "I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10) and why we can hold fast to those promises as we pray our way through each challenge, failure, and success in our lives. Biblical resilience is powered by God and is therefore much more powerful than secular, bootstrap resilience.

As university professors, we can begin by simply starting the conversation about resilience, defining what it is and discussing how important it is. We can then make a biblical connection to resilience that roots deep in our faith. Many students have never given much thought to their resilience, and some students have not given much thought to their faith and how it impacts their lives. Combining these two concepts may be a perfect opportunity to address both important facets of life after college.

Some of us tend to be more naturally resilient than others, and everyone's starting point is unique. However, research has shown that no matter where we start, we can increase our resilience (Riley & Masten, 2005). One key to building resilience in our students is to practice facing adversity or failure with positive adaptation (Riley & Masten, 2005). This is where we can create opportunities to fail in a safe environment, pivot, and find success. This can be done in many different forms and can be customized to various majors and courses within the business curriculum. It can begin as simply as offering formative feedback and allowing students to rewrite and improve a paper, a homework assignment, or a project while framing this opportunity in the precepts of resilience. It is not about the task or grade but rather about the process we utilize to help our students pivot away from failure and towards success. There are numerous methods, too many to list, and research must continue to test these methods and explore what works best to increase student resilience. One simple place to start is by utilizing the FLEX Plan.

THE FLEX PLAN STEPS

The FLEX Plan is a unique step-by-step approach we created to help students improve their resilience. It focuses around four basic steps (biblical connections in parentheses).
1. Accept that failure happens to everyone (Proverbs 24:16)
2. Lean in to the emotions (Luke 19:41)
3. Elect a positive response (Jeremiah 29:11)
4. X-Ray or be transparent (Proverbs 12:17)

Accept That Failure Happens
Step one is realizing that failure happens to everyone and is a part of life. It is important to start the conversation about failure and assure students that failure can be positive because it teaches us how to pivot towards success. Edmondson (2011) stated that failure can be good as it provides invaluable information and knowledge that can help us attain success in the future. Failing is inevitable in

today's complex world, and those of us who fail, correct, and learn from our failures will find success (Edmondson, 2011). In Proverbs 24:16 (NIV), we learn that "for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes." We all fail, and we all suffer calamity, and it is those who get up who find success. Take Simon Peter for example. Peter had many times failure and triumph, and it was the Lord who picked him up. When Peter asked Jesus to help him walk on water, he did. Then he doubted his strength when he felt the wind and began to sink (Matthew 14:30). He cried out to the Lord to save him, and Jesus reached out to save him. Later, Peter boasted that he would never deny Jesus. Then as Jesus proclaimed, before the rooster crowed, Peter denied Jesus three times (Matthew 26:69). If Peter, the disciple whom Jesus loved (John 21:7), failed when faced with challenges, we can certainly expect to fail, doubt, and need Jesus to pick us up.

Lean In

Allow yourself to experience your emotions in a safe environment. Leaning in to your emotions involves sharing your experiences, both positive and negative, with someone who loves you, someone who can empathize with your story. This is referred to as the social sharing of emotion (SSE) (Rime, 2009). SSE occurs when someone shares an emotional experience with someone else. SSE has been shown to have many positive benefits for the sharer and receiver both (Rime, 2009). Sharing of emotions is a human need especially when those emotions are strongly felt. As people feel emotion, they make psychological adjustments to a "disruption to the pursuit of their goals" either positive or negative (Hidalgo, Tana, & Verlegh, 2015, p. 365). When someone's emotional balance is disrupted, he/she needs to share that experience in order to rebalance his/her emotional life. According to Derks, Fischer, and Bos (2007), sharing emotions is seen as a human need, especially when there are strong emotions involved, and this "leaning in" facet of the FLEX Plan is important before moving forward to our response. We are created to be emotional beings, and even the human part of Jesus caused him to feel these human emotions. Jesus felt many emotions throughout his ministry, and this should bring us much comfort as we experience the many emotions failure brings. Jesus was overwhelmed and exhausted and needed to withdraw to quiet places (Matthew 14:13; Mark 6:31; Luke 5:16; John 6:15). Jesus felt anger at the hypocrisy of religion (Matthew 23:33; Matthew 7:15). Jesus felt frustration at the lack of faith people had (Matthew 17:14-20). And one of the most poignant verses and the shortest verse in the Bible is, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35) at the death of his friend, Lazarus. Why

do we believe God wanted us to know about Jesus experiencing emotions? Because he knew we would, and he knew we needed to experience these emotions before moving on. We need to lean in with those who love and support us before we can move forward.

Elect A Positive Response

We must respond positively when facing a setback or failure. Though we may not be able to control the circumstances of our lives, we can always control our response. Thinking positively about responses has been shown to benefit human well-being, which is reflected in the research on positive psychology (Seligman, 2018). McNulty and Fincham (2012) reflected that optimism and the expectation of positive outcomes have been positively associated with individual well-being. An example of electing a positive response could be discussed with the class in terms they would understand. We sometimes ask our students, "Let's say you fail a test you believe was unfair, for many reasons. How do you respond in the moment? How do you respond to the professor? What is your desired outcome?" We then talk through our initial emotional responses and how that may not be appropriate in that setting or time and how to take time to calm down, work through the emotions, and conscientiously choose a positive response to a desired outcome. This is also a great opportunity to share your own stories of failure and choosing a positive response in your life. As we personalize our resilience training, it takes deeper roots with our students. Scripturally, we are told to choose positive responses throughout many verses, from what we think about (Philippians 4:8, Colossians 3:1-2) to how we are transformed by our positive thoughts (Romans 12:2) to how we must rejoice always (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19, Jeremiah 29:11). We are even told that positivity is "good medicine" for a crushed spirit (Proverbs 17:22). We cannot control our circumstances, but we can always choose our response. This is a very important lesson for our students as they learn to become more resilient.

X-Ray

When we need to identify a broken bone, we use an X-ray to see transparently inside, and only then, can we cast the bone and heal. As we face and overcome failure, it is that same transparency that can help others heal from their own failures and overcome them. Our honesty is healing. We learn from those around us, our mentors and our peers, and they learn from us. Mentoring others and learning from mentors is a relationship created by God. The Holy Spirit is our helper and is constantly teaching us (John 14:26). We are told that iron sharpens iron as one man sharpens another

(Proverbs 27:17). Women should mentor each other to be women of God (Titus 2:3-4). Most poignantly, we learn about the importance of mentoring and peer relationships through Barnabas, Paul, and Timothy. After Paul became a new convert, it was Barnabas who first reached out to him and served to bridge the gap between Paul and the people he was reaching (Acts 9). Paul, having seen the benefit of having Barnabas as his mentor, began to mentor Timothy as he became part of his ministry team and they traveled, sharing the Gospel (Acts 16). We can learn a lot from these relationships. As we learn how to be more resilient, our stories will become even more valuable to those around us, and we must mentor them. As our students become more resilient, they can, like Paul, begin to mentor those around them, sharing resilience through relationships for generations to come.

CONCLUSION

The bundles of skills we teach our students are woven together in a pattern of technical knowledge, work experience, servant leadership, and soft skills. More and more, business leaders are emphasizing the value of soft skills for new hires. These soft skills are not typically integrated into our business curriculum. This must change. The ability to communicate, network, listen, show empathy, express emotional intelligence, and fail resiliently are fast becoming our value proposition differentiating our Christian liberal arts universities from the vast competitive market. Though there are many ways to integrate resilience training into the business curriculum, the FLEX Plan is a good place to start and can easily be customized to fit diverse courses and curriculum maps for various majors.

Future areas of research include the impact of resilience training on online education, degree completion programs, graduate-level courses, and twelve-month online MBA programs. In this overly-hyped competitive, higher education, online-get-my-degree-anywhere-anyhow-in-any-environment market, integrating resilience training with a biblical foundation into our business curriculum at various stages could become the value proposition that sets us apart and shows that we educate our students about the art of life (Whitehead, 1929, p. 39), the life we are called to live resiliently, created and given to us by the Artist of life himself.

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APPENDIX A

Figure 1: The Umbrella of Positivity in Literature
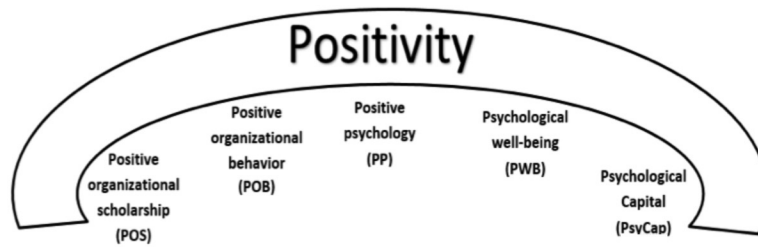
APPENDIX B

Figure 2: Resilience as a Component of Grit (Almeida, 2016)