

*Working with Children  
and Young People with  
Complex Needs: Skills to  
Build Resilience*

*University of Brighton*

**Michael Ungar, Ph.D.**

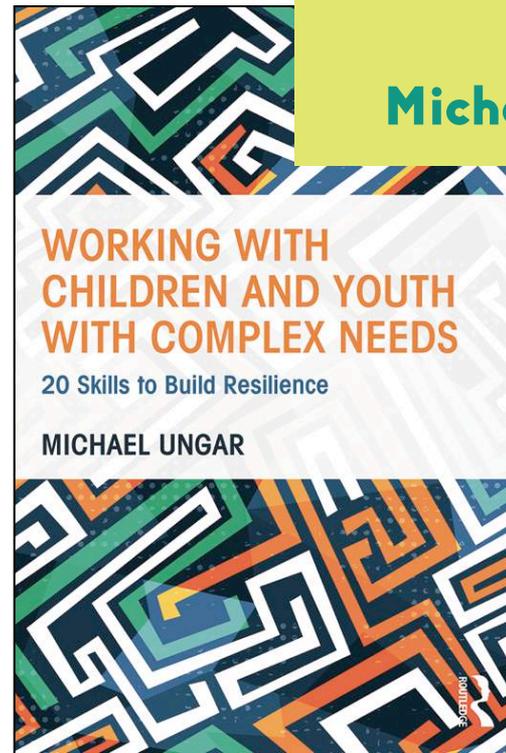
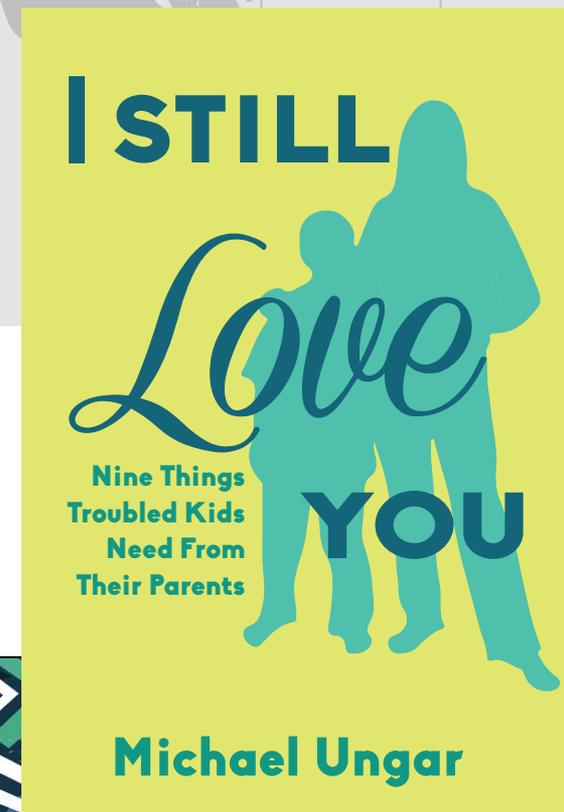
Killam Professor,

School of Social Work, Dalhousie University

**Twitter @MichaelUngarPhD**

**[www.michaelungar.com](http://www.michaelungar.com)**

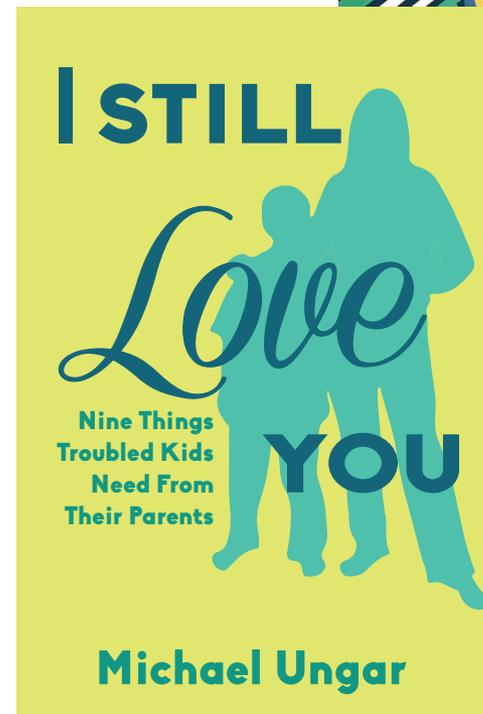
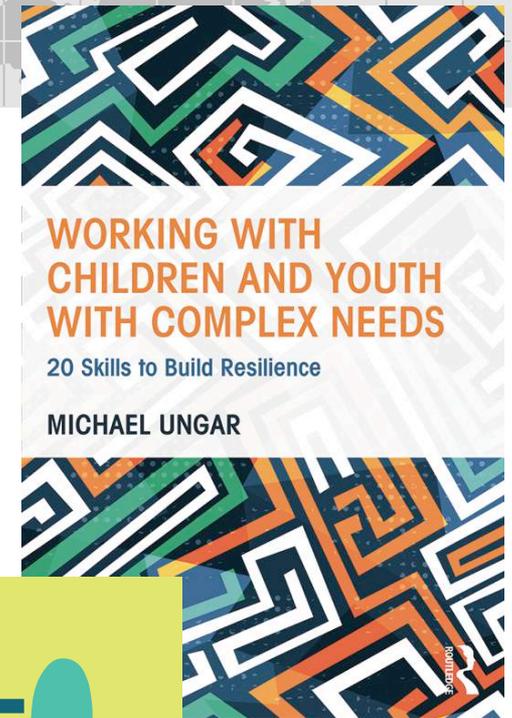
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# *Case example*

✚ Anger, or a reasonable response to racism?





# *Diagnostic Criteria for Resilience*

- ✪ Domain 1: Assess adversity
  - ▣ Severity
  - ▣ Chronicity
  - ▣ Ecological level
  - ▣ Attributions of causality
  - ▣ Cultural and contextual relevance



# *Diagnostic Criteria for Resilience*

## ✿ Domain 2: Assess resilience

- In low and medium risk contexts, assess individual qualities—temperament, personality, cognitions
- In low and high risk contexts, assess
  - Availability of resources
  - Accessibility of resources
  - Strategic use of resources
  - Positive reinforcement of coping strategies
  - Adaptive capacity of the environment



# *Diagnostic Criteria for Resilience*

- ✚ Domain 3: Multidimensional considerations
  - ▣ Temporal
    - Sociohistorical
    - Developmental
  - ▣ Cultural



# *Psychological Resilience*

- ✦ *In the context of exposure to significant adversity:*
- ✦ Resilience is the capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to the resources that sustain their well being, and...
- ✦ their capacity individually and in groups to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided...
- ✦ In meaningful ways.



# *Nine Things All Children Need*

1. Structure
2. Consequences
3. Parent-child connections
4. Lots and lots of strong relationships
5. A powerful identity
6. A sense of control
7. A sense of belonging/  
spirituality/life purpose
8. Rights and responsibilities
9. Safety and support



# *Exercise: Assessing my resources for resilience:*

## ✚ Structure:

✚ “There are people in my life who expect me to \_\_\_\_\_.”

## ✚ Consequences:

✚ “When I don’t meet expectations, I know that \_\_\_\_\_ will happen.”

## ✚ Parent-Child, and Other, Relationships:

✚ “I can reach out to my \_\_\_\_\_ to get help when I need it.”



## ✚ Identity:

- ✚ "I feel respected for what is special about me when I'm with/at/doing \_\_\_\_\_."

## ✚ Power and control:

- ✚ "In my \_\_\_\_\_ I get to participate in making decisions that affect my \_\_\_\_\_."

## ✚ Belonging, spirituality (sense of cohesion):

- ✚ "At my \_\_\_\_\_ people miss me when I'm not there."



## ✿ Sense of culture

- ✿ “There are places such as \_\_\_\_\_ where I can celebrate my culture and beliefs.”

## ✿ Rights and Responsibilities (social justice):

- ✿ “When I’m with others at my \_\_\_\_\_ I feel treated fairly.”
- ✿ “When I’m with \_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for myself/others.”

## ✿ Safety and Support:

- ✿ “I am well-cared for by \_\_\_\_\_.”
- ✿ “I feel safe when I’m with/at \_\_\_\_\_.”



# *Exercise*

- ✪ The Child and Youth Resilience Measure
  - ✪ For a copy of the CYRM (at no charge), please write to the Resilience Research Centre and make your request:
  - ✪ [rrc@dal.ca](mailto:rrc@dal.ca)

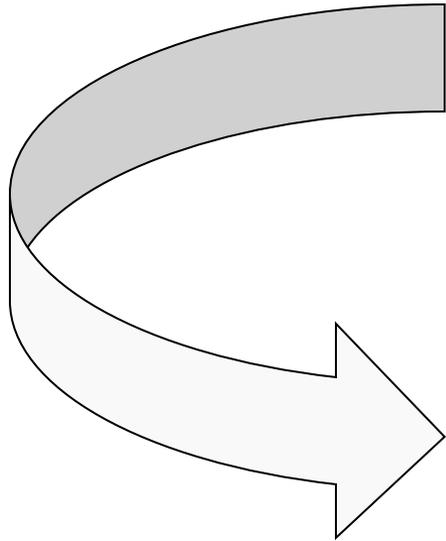


# *Theory of Change*

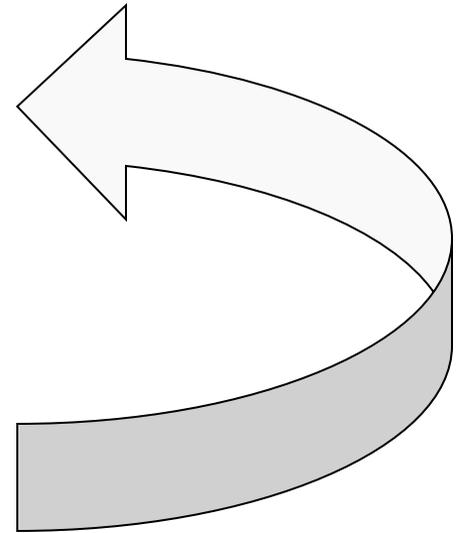
- ❖ People living in challenging contexts change when their natural supports, programs and interventions, and social policies help them:
  - ❖ Navigate effectively
  - ❖ Negotiate effectively
  - ❖ Find resources that are culturally and contextually meaningful



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*Help children  
Navigate*





# *Navigation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **1. Available**

Help children identify the internal and external resources that are available.



# *Navigation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **2. Accessible**

Help children access the resources that are available.



# *Navigation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **3. Barriers**

Discuss barriers to change that children experience, and which resources are most likely to address which barriers.



# *Navigation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **4. Complex**

Explore solutions that are as complex as the problems they address.



# *Navigation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **5. Advocacy**

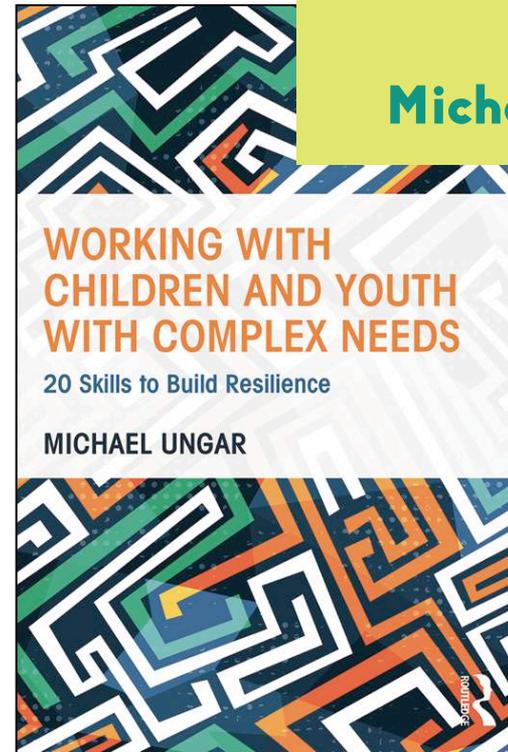
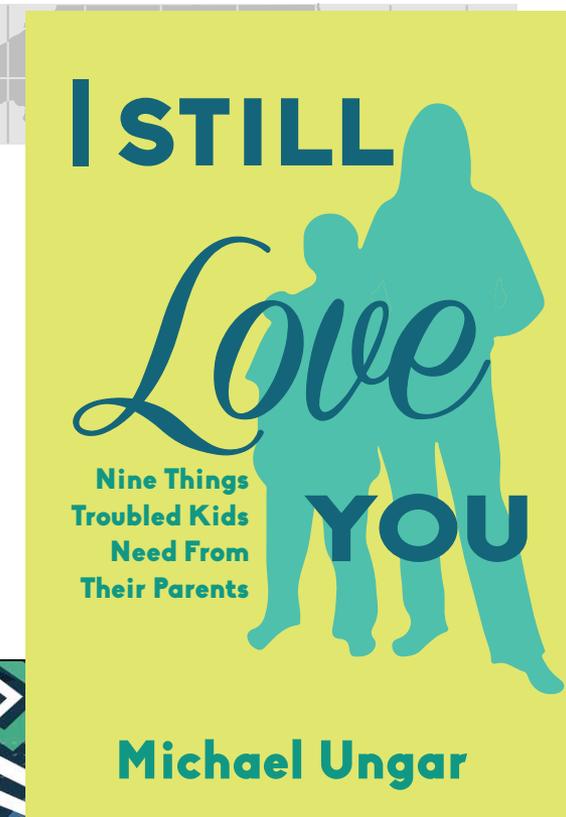
Advocate with, or on behalf of, members of your community, or show children and their caregivers how to advocate independently to make resources more available and accessible.

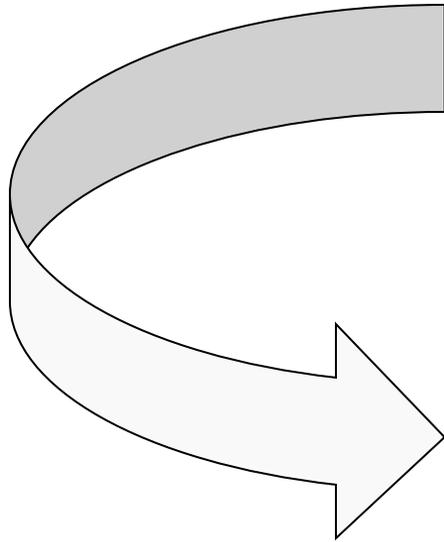


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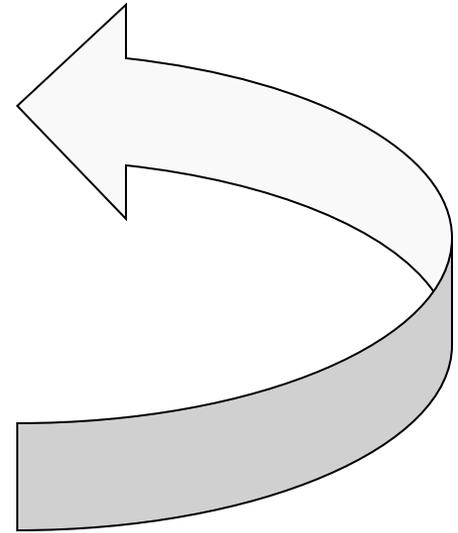


# *Weaving a life*





*Help children  
Negotiate*





# *Negotiation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **1. Context**

Explore the context in which problems occur, and the conditions that sustain them.



# *Negotiation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **2. Responsibility**

Discuss who has responsibility to change patterns of coping that are causing problems.



# *Negotiation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **3. Voice**

Help children be heard when they name the children and resources they need to make their lives better.



# *Negotiation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **4. New Names**

When appropriate, offer different names for problems and explore what these new descriptions mean for efforts to solve these problems.



# *Negotiation-How to help children be more resilient*

## **5. Possibilities**

As new solutions get put into practice, ask children to evaluate whether they are experiencing possibilities for change that are more numerous than before.



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*Thank you!*

