

Reconsideration of Resilience from Kamagasaki

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The purpose of this study is to examine and reconsider the concept of “resilience” as seen “in the field,” by analyzing the process of how resilience appears.

Recently, it has been pointed out that the study of resilience needs to shift its focus from a problem-oriented approach to nurturing the strength of people through challenging circumstances. However, there are only a few studies that attempt to clarify the process of how resilience actually appears. The word “resilience” thus tends to stay in literature, not “in the field.”

This study analyzed the conversations of those at a group meeting that the author attended five times as the facilitator. The group takes place in Kamagasaki, a town where many single men with remote relations with relatives live. By using the method of ethnography, the transformation of the relationship between the author and the members became apparent. The author, who was first ignored by the members, was allowed to become part of the group, in the end. The transformation took place when the author stopped forcing the concept of resilience as mentioned in literature; thus making effort to adapt to the group. It became clear that a relaxed relationship is sometimes crucial for resilience. It also elucidated several viewpoints that we need to consider when using the word “resilience” in the field of clinical psychology.