



# What is R2?

R2 builds resilience by strengthening two types of factors:

- The **Rugged Qualities** that reside within all of us
- The **Resources** that support us

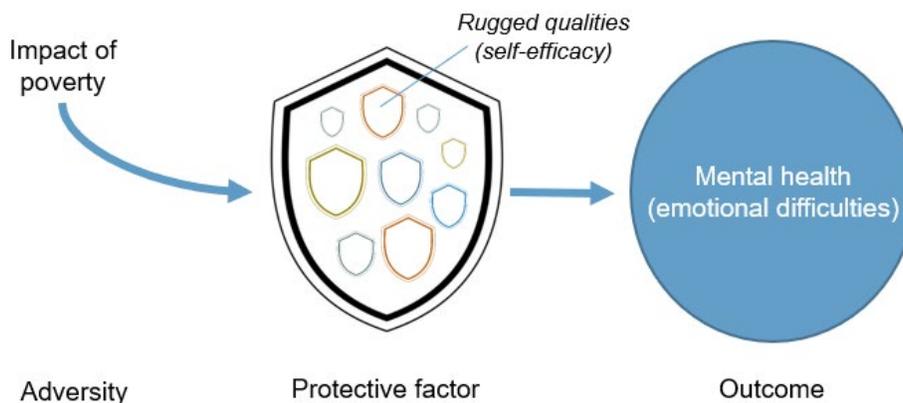
Both aspects of resilience are needed to experience positive outcomes despite stress and adversity.



Rugged protective factors are changeable internal qualities, such as our level of self-esteem, optimism, mindfulness, our ability to set goals and think critically. Resources can include experiences of control, meaningful engagement with others, access to services and supports, structure and routine, or a positive peer group.

## From the evidence:

In a study of 4,000 Danish schoolchildren, Charlotte Meilstrup<sup>1</sup> and her colleagues found that *self-efficacy* (our belief in our own abilities) was a protective factor that mediated the link between poverty and emotional difficulties (e.g., anxiety and depression). Specifically, the researchers found that children with greater self-efficacy had better mental health than their peers with low self-efficacy, despite their lower socio-economic status.

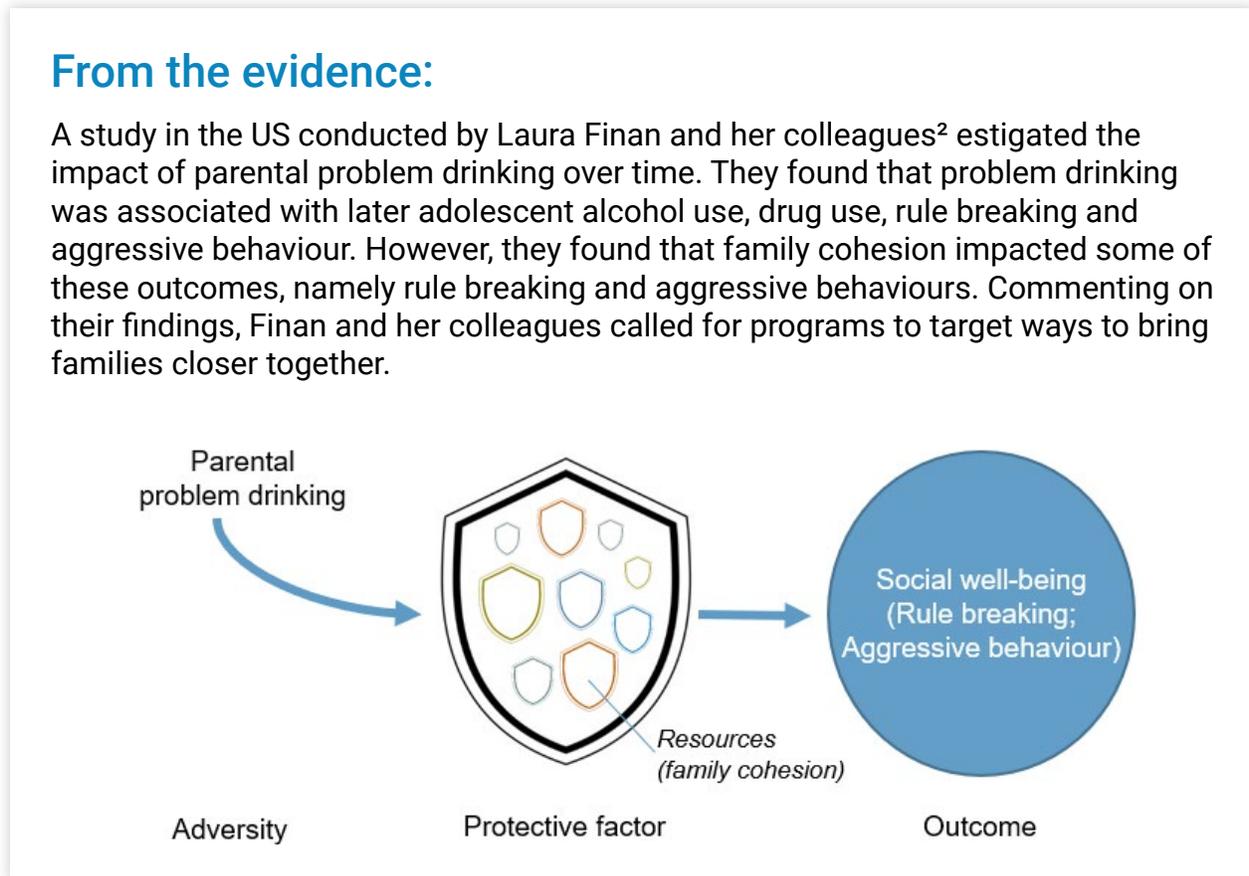


<sup>1</sup> Meilstrup, C., Thygesen, L. C., Nielsen, L., Koushede, V., Cross, D., & Holstein, B. E. (2016). Does self-efficacy mediate the association between socioeconomic background and emotional symptoms among schoolchildren? *International Journal of Public Health*, 61(4), 505–512. doi:10.1007/s00038-016-0790-3

Based on the science of resilience, we know that there are many rugged qualities and many different kinds of resources that help individuals do well despite the challenges they experience. While all of these protective factors are important, some are more relevant than others in particular contexts when facing particular kinds of adversity.

## From the evidence:

A study in the US conducted by Laura Finan and her colleagues<sup>2</sup> estimated the impact of parental problem drinking over time. They found that problem drinking was associated with later adolescent alcohol use, drug use, rule breaking and aggressive behaviour. However, they found that family cohesion impacted some of these outcomes, namely rule breaking and aggressive behaviours. Commenting on their findings, Finan and her colleagues called for programs to target ways to bring families closer together.



A detailed review of the literature has identified at least two dozen rugged qualities of individuals that show greater resilience and another dozen resources which are known to be foundational in the lives of people who recover, adapt or transform their surroundings and themselves after exposure to stress. A short list of the factors and processes associated with resilience is included in Figure 1 (following page). This list is far from exhaustive. These 16 items were selected during the design phase for a program to build resilience to social anxiety among young people aged 16-24. R2 selects the qualities and resources most likely to build resilience in a particular setting, ensuring the program is theoretically sound and matches the risks individuals experience, whether they are young adults, seniors, employees, first responders, children or other unique population.

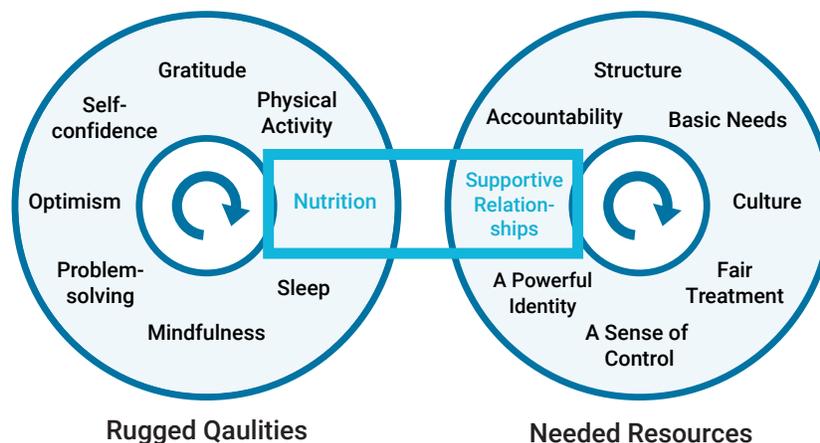
<sup>2</sup> Finan, L. J., Schulz, J., Gordon, M. S., & Ohannessian, C. M. (2015). Parental problem drinking and adolescent externalizing behaviors: The mediating role of family functioning. *Journal of adolescence*, 43, 100-110. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2015.05.001

**Figure 1:**  
Rugged and Resourced Factors/Processes

Rugged	Resourced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gratitude</li> <li>• Self-confidence</li> <li>• Optimism</li> <li>• Problem-solving</li> <li>• Mindfulness</li> <li>• Sleep</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> <li>• Physical activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Supportive relationships</li> <li>• A powerful identity</li> <li>• Experiences of control</li> <li>• Fair treatment</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Basic needs</li> </ul>

The factors/processes associated with resilience interact such that every rugged feature of an individual depends on many resources to facilitate its growth, just as every resource has the potential to stimulate development of individual qualities needed to cope with atypical stressors. This dynamic model (see Figure 2) is the basis for R2, an innovative approach to building resilience which emphasizes the enhancement of both ruggedness and resourcefulness as its goal. To illustrate, a change in nutrition and eating habits (an individual quality) is partially dependent on the relationships we have with others, our access to healthy food and income, as well as cultural norms which shape what we eat, when and how it is prepared. Likewise, experiences of personal control that we experience in our workplaces or families will influence our self-confidence and sense of optimism for a future that we can decide.

**Figure 2:**  
Interactions between Rugged and Resourced Factors/Process





## R2 Implementation

There are four ways the R2 approach to building resilience can be used by any organization, educational institution, or business. These include: (1) a detailed multi-day series of meeting that tailors R2 to a specific setting; (2) off-the-shelf materials that provide training in how to master resilience to everyday stressors; (3) keynotes, workshops and webinars offered by Dr. Ungar and members of the R2 team; and (4) a multi-day workshop at the Resilience Research Centre to train individuals to become R2 trainers.



1. Customized Programs



2. Standard Programs



3. Workshops & Webinars



4. Become an R2 Expert



### Approach #1: R2 as a Tailored Intervention to Build the Resilience of an Entire Organization or Business

The R2 approach can be contextualized to fit the specific needs of your organization, educational institution or business. To tailor the intervention, an R2 expert meets with members of your senior management team and those responsible for the health and wellbeing of staff/students/clients to ensure the program is adapted to the specific challenges and opportunities people experience daily. Every implementation of the R2 approach will:

- *Explore the general and specific risks* faced by individuals in each work or service setting. Whether those are related psychological trauma or corporate restructuring, the R2 approach ensures that the program responds to the issues that are most pressing locally.
- *Identify the right audience* for the program. We create content aimed at individuals and groups seeking to build their resilience, as well as those holding positions of responsibility for others. The R2 curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of individual staff, customers, and students, or adapted to include case material to support the work of organizational leaders, parents, and teachers.
- *Format the program* to ensure it fits each organizational setting and the time and resources each has to build resilience. The R2 team will turn the core curriculum into workshops and online resources that can range from a series of short interactive seminars delivered face-to-face to day-long events, webinars, websites and apps, depending on what each organization needs. The program can be delivered in different mediums, such as face-to-face coaching, group workshops, or online, and may be facilitated by an R2 expert, an internally trained trainer, or self-directed.



- *Identify the range of resilience factors that are right for your setting.* Different organizations, institutions and businesses need different protective factors to support their staff/students/clients. R2 can provide just the right amount of content, matched to each local setting, to support individual and organizational transformation.
- *Make the training materials easily accessible to ensure the program is sustainable.* Once an R2 program is developed, organizations can continue to access these resources well into the future at a minimum cost. As the program grows, those changes can be reflected in the materials that are shared.
- *Support the design of an evaluation to measure outcomes.* Through R2's affiliation with the evaluation experts at the Resilience Research Centre, the impact of R2 on your organization can be assessed. These evaluations can range from brief and minimally intrusive to far larger, multi-site longitudinal studies of outcomes depending on what your organization and its funders needs.

## Implementation

To tailor the R2 approach to your particular setting, R2 experts typically do the following:

- **Step 1. *The first onsite visit:*** R2 experts meet with members of your senior management team and those responsible for the health and wellbeing of staff/students/clients during a series of meetings over a 1-to-2-day period. The R2 team will provide a brief presentation on resilience and resilience-building, explain the purpose of the R2 approach, work with organization and business leaders to identify the most pressing risk factors affecting people in their setting, and then discuss the intended audience, the format of the program, the range of protective factors, and the scope of evaluation support required. Some of these meetings need the entire senior management team to attend, others are for a smaller group of specialists within each organization to finalize a program implementation plan. During this first onsite visit, R2 staff use a Delphi approach to identify the most relevant risk and protective factors, ranking them based on their perceived importance to program users and seeking consensus on which ones to include in the program.
- **Step 2. *Offsite program development:*** The R2 team uses the information gathered during the onsite visit to develop a tailored version of the R2 program that fits the need of the host organization or business. The time required to develop the program will vary depending on the extent of the adaptation needed but typically can be accomplished within 4-to-6 weeks. An evaluation plan, and evaluation materials, can also be developed at this time.



- **Step 3.** *The second onsite visit (recommended but optional):* The R2 team returns to the host setting, this time presenting a general introduction to R2 to as many staff and other stakeholders as possible. The R2 experts then either:
  - Work with a small group of individuals to conduct a trial of the program. Refinement of the materials is then done offsite and a revised version of the program returned to the organization or business for implementation.
  - Train a group of individuals within the organization or business who will be the R2 trainers, supporting them through teleconferences after the training is completed and implementation of the R2 curriculum begins.
  - R2 experts can be available to both conduct a trial and train trainers if necessary.
- **Step 4.** *Evaluation:* Whenever possible, an evaluation of outcomes is conducted by either R2 experts or by those with this expertise already employed by the organization or business. Typically evaluations occur at regular intervals (e.g., on first day of training, and 3 and 6 months after the training ends). Evaluation staff at the Resilience Research Centre are available to help compile and analyse the data, produce a report on the findings and make recommendations for further tailored implementation of the R2 program.

## Cost

Each organization/institution/business is a little different depending on the number of people who will participate in an R2 program and how much support is required to develop and implement the program. An initial conversation can review your needs and a detailed quote provided that will ensure services match your resources. There are, however, a few things worth noting:

- Once we know your needs, we can quote a price for the entire program development and delivery, evaluation and follow-up training, or implementation with less support and specialized adaptation.
- In general, we charge for the development of curriculum tailored to your organization/institution/business and an annual licensing fee based on the number of people who will be accessing the program.
- While the materials we develop can be individualized with corporate logos and other identifiers (including case examples that speak to your clients/customers), the copyright for the content remains with RRC-ETI. We use this content to create standardized versions of the program. These programs, however, will not include content which is specific to your work setting.



## **Approach #2: Off-the-shelf Pre-packaged Programming to Build Resilience**

The R2 approach is available as an 'off-the-shelf' resilience-building program that any individual, organization or business can access for a reasonable charge. An organization or business may also license the program for use by all their employees, offering a cost-effective approach to improving employee resilience.

This version of R2 shows people how to build important protective factors for resilience that prepare them for everyday stressors experienced at home, work, and in their communities. The R2 program provides an engaging general curriculum with plenty of activities. R2 experts are also creating different pre-packaged programs for diverse audiences. For example, there are versions dealing with on-the-job burnout, young people entering the workforce or searching for their first job, adolescents experiencing social anxiety, and seniors post-retirement. Most of these versions of R2 will be presented as ten 30-to-60 minute workshops or online seminars that require participants to practice the skills they learn between sessions and complete a number of homework assignments.

## **Approach #3: Workshop, Keynote or Webinar Presented by an R2 Expert**

Join Dr. Ungar and members of his team for a masterclass in resilience where you will discover the R2 approach and how to build resilience in your organization, institution or business. The events can be tailored to all kinds of meetings, from a 1-hour keynote or webinar to a multi-day onsite workshop.

## **Approach #4: Become an R2 Expert Yourself**

Join Dr. Ungar and members of his team for a masterclass in resilience where you will discover the R2 approach and how to build resilience in your organization, institution or business. The events can be tailored to all kinds of meetings, from a 1-hour keynote or webinar to a multi-day onsite workshop.



## Contact Information

For more information about R2 or to discover how you can bring the program to your organization, business or educational setting, please contact us.

### Contacts

Lead Developer:

Michael Ungar, Ph.D.

Canada Research Chair in Child, Family and Community Resilience

[michael.ungar@dal.ca](mailto:michael.ungar@dal.ca)

Ph: (902) 229-0434 (Cell)

<https://resilienceresearch.org/r2/> | [www.michaelungar.com](http://www.michaelungar.com)

@MichaelUngarPhD

Contracts and logistical support:

Paula Mullen

Planner, RRC-Evaluation and Training Institute

[pmullenevents@gmail.com](mailto:pmullenevents@gmail.com)

Alexis Wheeler

R2 Client Relations and Business Development Manager

[alexis.wheeler@dal.ca](mailto:alexis.wheeler@dal.ca)

