

5.2 Life Stories Resilience

What	Resilience
Purpose	enhanced understanding of factors that promote resilience in LGBT+ older people
Target group	teachers and trainers in vocational education and their students
Level	Level 2-3-4 in vocational education.
Execution	Extra support from the teacher might be necessary depending on the ability of the students to work independently
Sources	Visible Lives: Identifying experiences and needs of older GBT in Ireland Resilience in the Aging and Health Report Disparities and Resilience among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults. Handlovsky I, Bungay V, Oliffe J, Johnson J (2018) Developing Resilience: Gay Men's Response to Systemic Discrimination. <i>American Journal of Mens Health.</i> ;12(5):1473–1485.

Introduction

Resilient ageing is a recognition that older people bring many positive attributes to the ageing process. Personal resilience may be defined as the ability to 'flourishing despite adversity' and the 'ability to bounce back' (Higgins et al 2016). It is a positive stance that moves away from the assumption that adversity, loss and grief automatically lead to psychological distress and a disruption in psychosocial functioning. In the context of LGBT+ older people, some writers talk about 'crisis competence. By this they mean that LGBT+ older people have become adept at dealing with prejudice, stigma and loss throughout their lifetime, and as a result have developed a range of strengths and competencies that assist them adjust to ageing. In other words the stressed and challenges that they have encountered during their life may buffer them against later crises. Recognising the strengths that LGBT+ older people bring to later life is core to providing care that is strengths based. A strength-based approach is important given that LGBT individuals, especially LGBT+ older people, are often portrayed as wounded individuals whose victimisation has led to high levels of mental health problems. In addition to personal resilience

Activity 1

What do you think are the strengths that older LGBT people bring to ageing process?

Activity 2

Read the chapter titled: Strength of spirit and resilience: pathways to coping and support in the report [Visible Lives: Identifying experiences and needs of older GBT in Ireland](#) and read the chapter titled Society and Health – [Resilience in the Aging and Health Report Disparities and Resilience among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults.](#)

Also watch [the video](#)

Activity 3

Having read the two chapters and watched the short video consider the following questions:

1. List all the factors that LGBT+ older people have identified as helping build their resilience.
2. These reports and video are from the United States and Ireland, are there any differences within the reports/video? are there any differences where you live? Why do think these differences exist?
3. How might you use the strategies identified to adopt a strengths based approach when caring for LGBT+ older people?

Activity 4

1. Look at this short youtube video on [Stress and Resilience in the LGBTQ community](#) from the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law and note how Meyer differentiates between personal resilience and structural resilience
2. In small groups discuss i) what policy changes in your county has or could help build structural resilience from LGBT+ older people



Keep on Learning

- [Higgins A, Sharek D, Glacken M \(2016\)](#) Building resilience in the face of adversity: Navigation processes used by older LGBT adults living in Ireland. *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 25 (23-24) 3652–3664
- Kwon P (2013) Resilience in lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 17(4), 271-383.
- [Handlovsky I, Bungay V, Oliffe J, Johnson J](#) (2018) Developing Resilience: Gay Men's Response to Systemic Discrimination. *Am J Mens Health.*;12(5):1473–1485.