Measuring Resilience: Use of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale
for People with Spinal Cord Injuries

Resilience, in its simplest terms, results in people “bouncing back” from adversity and getting on with their lives. To infer resilience, two major steps must occur: (a) exposure to significant adversity (e.g., car accident), and (b) a positive developmental outcome afterwards (e.g., substantial psychosocial adjustment). The construct of resilience has recently been explored among individuals with spinal cord injuries (SCIs). Resilience has also been found to be inversely associated with depression and positively correlated with life satisfaction. In this study, the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) was assessed for psychometric validity among individuals with SCIs to provide rehabilitation counseling practitioners with a valid measure of resilience among people with chronic illness and disability.

Results
This study provides evidence to support the use of the CD-RISC for individuals with SCIs. The result indicated that the construct of resilience in the CD-RISC has five contributing sub-factors:

- Personal competence, high standards, and tenacity
- Trust in one’s instincts, tolerance of negative affect, and strengthening effects of stress
- Positive acceptance of change and secure relationships
- Control
- Spiritual influence

These five factors correlated positively with disability acceptance and happiness, and inversely related to depression.

Bottom Line
This tool can be used:

- As part of an admission screening battery in state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency settings in conjunction with other psychosocial and vocational assessments.
- To assess client strengths and positive traits for VR counselors to formulate a well-balanced perspective of persons with disabilities in employment planning and intervention.
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