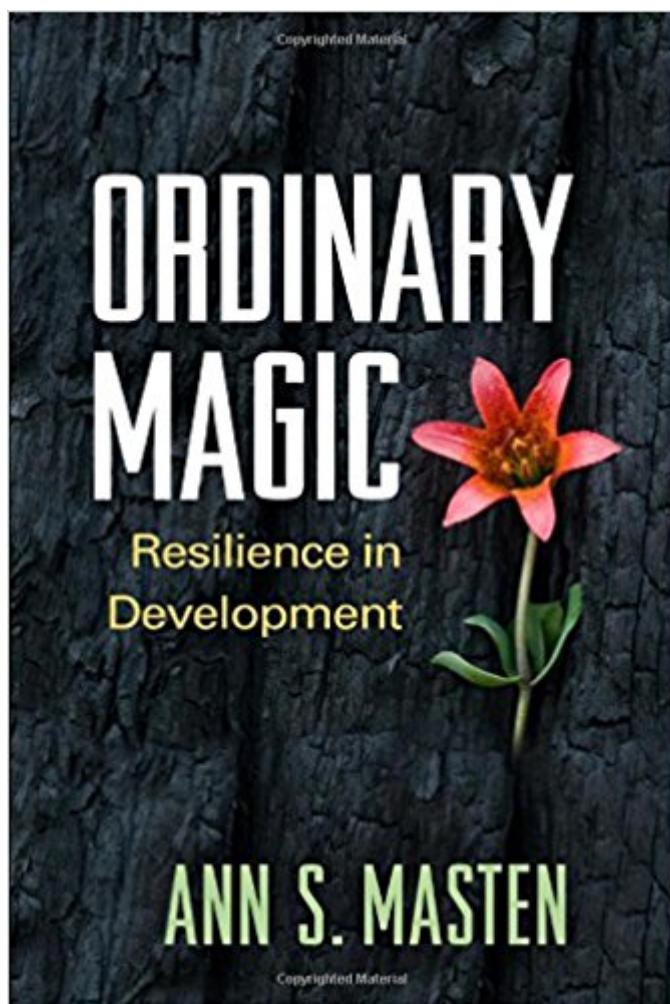


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# Ordinary Magic: Resilience In Development



## **Synopsis**

From a pioneering researcher, this book synthesizes the best current knowledge on resilience in children and adolescents. Ann S. Masten explores what allows certain individuals to thrive and adapt despite adverse circumstances, such as poverty, chronic family problems, or exposure to trauma. Coverage encompasses the neurobiology of resilience as well as the role of major contexts of development: families, schools, and culture. Identifying key protective factors in early childhood and beyond, Masten provides a cogent framework for designing programs to promote resilience. Complex concepts are carefully defined and illustrated with real-world examples.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"A truly magnificent book that is very readable, highly informative, and hugely helpful for both understanding resilience and planning how best to foster it. Given that resilience is not a unitary trait, it presents quite a challenge to distill the key points from a complicated literature into straightforward messages, but that is exactly what this book does. It skillfully summarizes the main findings from both qualitative and quantitative research and combines all of that with telling case examples. Essential reading for any researcher or clinician interested in resilience."--Michael Rutter, MD, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, United Kingdom "Nobody understands resilience as well as Ann Masten, and nobody writes about it as clearly, wisely, and deeply as she does. Dr. Masten is both a creator of new knowledge and a compelling narrator of the science and interventions that address how children manage to thrive in

spite of adverse conditions. This indispensable book conveys the many facets of resilience, from neurobiology to cultural context to the importance of supportive relationships. Accessibly written, it makes complex concepts and processes easy to understand and impossible to forget. The book can be used as a text for undergraduate and graduate courses on typical development and developmental psychopathology, as well as in seminars for clinical interns and postdoctoral fellows."--Alicia F. Lieberman, PhD, Irving B. Harris Endowed Chair in Infant Mental Health, University of California, San Francisco "I consider Masten to be the preeminent thinker on resilience--and one of psychology's very best writers. Few authors possess the theoretical, empirical, clinical, and translational prevention skills to write such an integrative, well-presented volume. Masten makes a critical contribution to understanding the multiple pathways toward resilient outcomes for individuals who have experienced significant adversity. She does an amazing job of integrating literature from a variety of disciplines and levels of analysis. This is by far the best book I have ever read on resilience, and will set the standard for a long time to come."--Dante Cicchetti, PhD, McKnight Presidential Chair of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota "Resilience is an invaluable concept for our turbulent times. Masten, a highly esteemed developmental psychologist, has been at the forefront of resilience theory and research for decades. In this beautifully crafted volume, she guides readers through the advances in our knowledge of the multilevel processes--the interactions of neurobiological, psychological, family, and sociocultural influences over time--that enable children and adults to survive and grow stronger from serious life challenges. Essential reading for scholars, students, and mental health professionals who strive to understand and promote positive adaptation in traumatic situations and multistress contexts."--Froma Walsh, MSW, PhD, Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor Emerita, School of Social Service Administration and Department of Psychiatry, University of Chicago, and Codirector, Chicago Center for Family Health "Ordinary Magic is an extraordinary achievement. Ann Masten has succeeded in integrating, synthesizing, and extending 40 years of resilience research into a compelling and highly readable volume. The book is audacious in scope, with Masten moving easily from genes to culture writ large. It is a must read for a broad audience, including mental health practitioners, senior scholars, educators, and students."--Deborah Lowe Vandell, PhD, Founding Dean, School of Education, University of California, Irvine "For nearly 40 years, Ann Masten has been at the forefront of the ever-changing science of resilience. Masten's intimate involvement with this research makes her uniquely suited to provide a comprehensive and concise overview of developments in resilience research to date. It is not only Masten's critical role in

resilience research that makes Ordinary Magic a valuable read. Her clear and skillful writing makes the details of this complex field accessible to a broad audience, ranging from resilience scientists to undergraduate psychology majors. Complex matters are explained in simple terms, making them comprehensible to many readers from wide-ranging disciplines. Masten presents an impressive array of the knowledge that she has gained through her years in the field in a clear and concise manner. Ordinary Magic centers on the innovative assertion that resilience is common and dependent on ordinary adaptive systems internal and external to individuals. Masten has succeeded in writing a book that expands on this core idea in a manner that is broadly accessible and applicable for researchers, professionals, and students alike. (Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 2016-10-01) "Sheer joy. The draw for affective engagement with Ann S. Masten's authoritative simplicity is captured exquisitely in her title: Ordinary Magic: Resilience in Development." All scholars wishing to better acquaint themselves with the resilience in development literature would do well to pick up Masten's book and read it solicitously. Ordinary Magic's wealth on what builds resilience is applicable for scientists, practitioners, family members, teachers, early interventionists, policymakers, and countless others who genuinely strive for equity and equanimity among all--especially the vulnerable. (Infant Mental Health Journal 2017-08-01) "I do so wish that this book had been available before I did my doctorate in resilience studies and when I had been teaching this subject." I continue to be very grateful for resilience research and theorizing as a practitioner and, in particular, for this unique summary and stock take of the discipline that Professor Ann Masten provides. Ordinary Magic will be of very great assistance to postgraduate students, and to beginning researchers, because it details the waves of resilience investigations that have brought us to the present day. In my teaching experience, even postgraduate students can have trouble really understanding the resilience perspective, and they will surely benefit from Masten's commitment to expressing complex ideas in straightforward language. (Psychology Aotearoa 2015-05-01) "Masten's book deserves reading because of its extraordinary synthesis of selected theories and research." Masten has pulled together the wide range of approaches to the concept and its empirical grounding to this date. This has been a difficult task but the result is essentially a truly new manual on resilience, which will last as a guide to further research for at least the next decade. (PsycCRITIQUES 2015-03-23) "Ann Masten writes in an accessible narrative style while drawing on her vast personal and professional experience as a professor and international resilience expert." An illuminating and useful text for students, researchers, and

anyone interested in this field. (Therapy Today 2015-02-06)"Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals." (Choice Reviews 2015-01-01)

Ann S. Masten, PhD, is a Regents Professor and the Irving B. Harris Professor of Child Development in the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota. She is former president of the Society for Research in Child Development, a Fellow and former Division President (Division 7: Developmental Psychology) of the American Psychological Association (APA), and a Fellow of the Association for Psychological Science. She co-chairs the Forum on Investing in Young Children Globally for the U.S. National Academies. Dr. Masten is an internationally known expert on resilience in human development, with over 170 publications in scientific journals and books. She is a recipient of the 2014 Urie Bronfenbrenner Award for Lifetime Contribution to Developmental Psychology in the Service of Science and Society from the APA. Â

The author is a justifiably highly regarded leader in the field, and the book is smoothly written, and remarkably jargon free. The book is based on cutting-edge research and cites the latest work. I thought these attributes would make the book perfect for a freshman course that I teach on the resilient child. Unfortunately, it's written from a bird's eye view, so my students were saying things like "It didn't tell me anything I didn't already know, " as if one tosses off a 20 year longitudinal study on homeless families every day of the week and then comes up with a sunny happy ending! They entirely missed the point of how much dedication it takes to do the work, in spite of my exhortations to the contrary. The voices of the resilient themselves are also largely missing, except in the 2nd chapter..I will try using this book again, enriching it with more detailed discussions of the research on which it is based (fortunately, we have access to the PsychInfo database). I am happy to know that children can survive all sorts of bad beginnings, literally given half a chance, but it ain't magic, and it certainly ain't ordinary, and neither is the developmental research that brought us this conclusion.

This is a great book -- sums up the literature from the past three decades in this field. It is written to be readable and understandable to a wide audience, which is great, but as a result I am using only a few chapters to supplement academic articles in my graduate class rather than the main text for the class.

Great book with a great foundation of resiliency research. We used this for a state-wide school

psychologist book club night and it spurred some great conversation.

Awesome read

Very readable great content.

There is nothing ordinary about *Ordinary Magic*. Instead, it offers an extraordinary synthesis of the vast and complex domain of resilience research, spanning its historical, conceptual, and theoretical foundations, current multi-level pathways, and, as yet, incompletely explored facets. In doing so, it facilitates a deep understanding of the multiple, interacting systems that enable and constrain how individuals adjust constructively to challenging circumstances/events, facilitates an understanding of how best to harness such knowledge to champion resilience, and directs future research. Importantly, this book makes mention of the resilience processes of children in majority-world contexts. In doing so, it conveys a more nuanced understanding of how resilience processes are contextually sensitive and cautions against simplistic or stereotypical explanations of resilience. This enhances its value to those of us researching and championing resilience in Global South contexts. Allied to this, if, like I do, you work with students, clinicians, and practitioners whose mother tongue is not English, then please know that part of the magic of this book is that it is beautifully written in ways that support epistemological access. In short, this book forms the bedrock of the teaching I do, and is indispensable to my resilience-focused university-community collaborations. I recommend it unconditionally.

Linda Theron, Optentia Research Focus Area ([www.Optentia.co.za](http://www.Optentia.co.za)), North-West University, South Africa

I am using *Ordinary Magic* as the primary text for a 400-level undergraduate course and it is just fantastic. Masten summarizes decades of research in a way that is interesting, relevant and current. Somehow she strikes a balance that it is a compelling and informative read for those deeply knowledgeable about the field, but also quite accessible to those who are new to the field. Thank you, thank you, thank you for this wonderful addition to the field!

A brilliant, comprehensive book by the preeminent child development expert Ann Masten

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