Antifragility and Anxiety: How to Navigate Challenges to Become Stronger
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How has societal change contributed to the increase in mental illness over the years? In what way does the current culture impact children, teenagers, and adults' ability to develop resilience? How do we strike a balance between being supportive in therapeutic settings and fostering resilience and antifragility, in the face of challenges? In this seminar, we will explore the idea that adversity can benefit us. We will investigate how reframing challenges as chances to evolve can transform us and be a catalyst for strength and self-improvement. In doing so, we will examine implications of exposure therapy in relation to promotion of resiliency, antifragility, and ultimately effective management of negative emotions, with an emphasis on anxiety
Readings and TedTalk
What Really Makes Us Resilient? Harvard Business Review
TedTalk: The Three Secrets of Resilient People
The Relationship between Resilience and Levels of Anxiety, Depression, and Obsessive-Compulsive Symptoms in Adolescents (Hjemdal, Vogel, Solem, Hagen, & Stiles, 2011)

Essay Prompt:
Knowing what you now know about resiliency, antifragility, anxiety, and treatment of anxiety disorders, write a letter to a person who is hesitant to enter treatment for anxiety that addresses (1) whether negative experiences and uncomfortable emotions should be deemed as dangerous and avoided and (2) how resilience and antifragility are related to anxiety treatment. In this letter, explore how the lack of opportunities for facing adversity and challenges may be linked to rise in mental health challenges. Furthermore, discuss the long-term consequences of shielding individuals from failure and adversity. Highlight the complex interplay between societal changes and the rising prevalence of mental illness by investigating how contemporary culture influences the development of resilience in individuals across different age groups, from children to teenagers and adults.

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