

Harsh winter brings some psychological benefits, says researcher

February 25 2015, by Bert Gambini

University at Buffalo researcher Mark Seery, who studies stress and coping, says the severe winter weather seems at first glance to have few redeeming qualities. Frigid temperatures and daily battles with mounds of snow and ice are testing the resolve of the heartiest among us.

But, according to Seery, research shows that those who endure negative events such as these may reap an unexpected benefit: resilience.

"Specifically, having experienced difficulties in life can leave people better able to cope when facing subsequent stress," says Seery, UB associate professor of psychology. "This benefit is not limited to simply dealing with the next winter storm, but instead generalizes to other sources of stress, as well."

Seery's groundbreaking research in 2010 on the effects of adverse life events on [mental health](#) found that adverse experiences do, in fact, appear to foster subsequent adaptability and resilience, with resulting advantages for mental health and well-being.

"Our findings revealed that a history of some lifetime adversity predicted lower global distress, lower functional impairment, lower post-traumatic [stress symptoms](#) and higher life satisfaction," says Seery.

Provided by University at Buffalo

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