Leading Resilience: Using Creative Destruction to Uncover Organizational Fragilities (and figure out the first steps to make us stronger).  
By Elle Allison-Napolitano, PhD.

Introduction: Every journey toward system-wide resilience begins with an honest effort to uncover fragilities: the practices, processes, structures and cultural norms that ultimately make learning organizations less effective. To lead ahead of adversity, resilient leaders proactively use the art of conversation to scrutinize the organization for vulnerabilities.

**The Conversation Protocol**

1. With your leadership team or work group, Identify 5-7 “Characters,” from both internal and external stakeholders (e.g. parent, teacher, principal, counselor, student, board member).

2. In groups of 5-7 people, each person from the perspective of their “character,” responds to a Thought Leadership Question that draws down mindfulness about something that matters such as: **What can we do to reliably be the least resilient organization imaginable?**

3. Each person writes 3 strategies and behaviors on 3 different sticky notes. The strategies and behaviors should be written as a “We should…” For example, the person in the student character might say, “We should only guide students with high test scores into STEM courses.”  
   - The brainstorm needs to be bold and fearless. Therefore, do not censure what comes to mind.

4. Round Robin style, each person reads aloud, the statement on each sticky note (one per round), with no additional explanation or discussion at this time. Put each sticky note in the middle of the table.

5. After all statements have been read, engage in dialogue around this tough question: **How does your list compare to what your organization does now, even in small ways?** Be brutally honest; these are the vulnerabilities or cracks that if ignored, will spread and expand and become the next organizational adversity.

6. Pick one statement to focus on and work on.

7. Now engage in dialogue around this question: **How does this vulnerability make us fragile and less resilient; what does it weaken?**

8. What first steps could we take to remedy this fragility; to stop the crack from growing?
Additional Thought leadership Questions (TLQ’s) to introduce *creative destruction* to help uncover potential cracks in educational organizations:

How could we most reliably guarantee that leaders in the organization have stopped leaning?

How could we most reliably guarantee that we are the type of organization that blames poor performance on the budget?

How could we most reliably guarantee that we consistently ignore results on critical short and long-term indicators?

How could we most reliably guarantee that too many unfocused initiatives overwhelm people and cause them to say they have “too much on their plates”?

How could we most reliably guarantee that success in our organization goes uncelebrated?

How could we most reliably guarantee that we will neglect our responsibility to develop leaders within our organization?

How could we most reliably guarantee that our district culture stifles innovation?

How could we most reliably guarantee that our culture undermines the well being of stakeholders?

Elle is author of the books, *Bounce Forward: The Extraordinary Resilience of Leadership* and *Bounce Forward: Transformational Leadership Coaching for Sustainable Change*. If you would like Elle to facilitate this process or other processes within your organization, please contact her at elle@wisdomout.com or 925.786.0987

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**wisdom /ˈwɪzdəm/ noun**

1. The ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting; insight.

2. Common sense; good judgment: a. The sum of learning through the ages; knowledge: b. Wise teachings of the ancient sages.

3. A wise outlook, plan, or course of action.

**out /ˈaʊt/ adv.**

1. In a direction away from the inside.

2. Away from the center or middle.

3. To the fullest extent or degree.

4. Into being or evident existence.