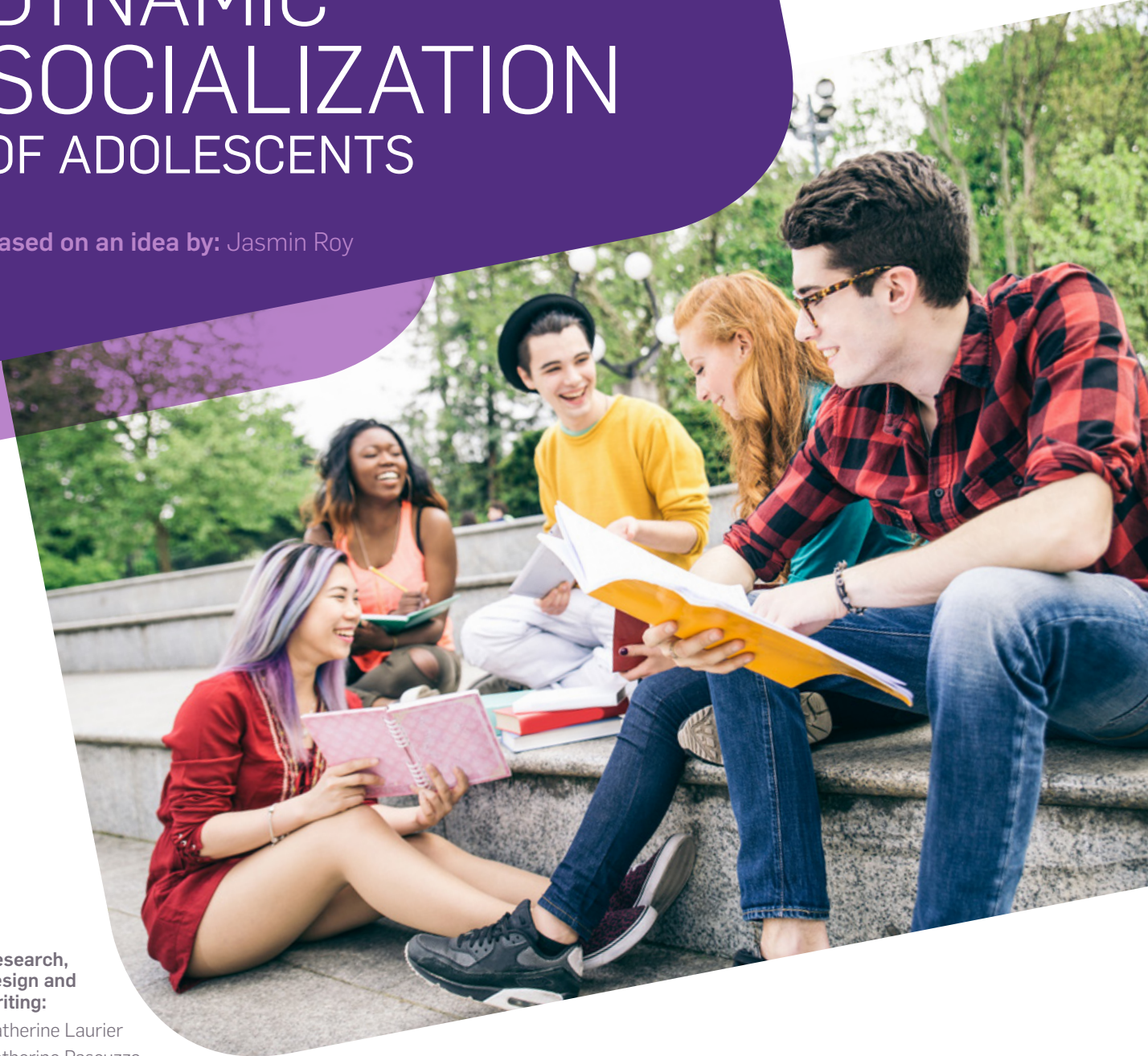


A GUIDE TO PROMOTE THE DYNAMIC SOCIALIZATION OF ADOLESCENTS

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The life path of adolescents consists of many series of events and experiences. Particularly difficult and sometimes unusual incidents may change their path by affecting their ability to adapt. However, these particularly difficult and unusual incidents may also give rise to changes or even significant and positive transformations. If dealt with in the proper way, the pandemic adaptation challenges and demands may become opportunities to develop and grow. For example, these positive changes and transformations may affect personal identity (e.g., optimism about life's possibilities, self-confidence), relationships with others and priorities in life (e.g., meaning of life, spirituality), which are all fundamental issues during adolescence (Blackie et al., 2016; Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004). This ability to develop and mature following difficult incidents is related to positive coping (i.e., the ability to adapt positively to difficult circumstances) and resilience (i.e., the ability to “bounce back” or recover from stress), which have been identified as protective factors from anxiety and depression during the pandemic (Zhang et al., 2020). Through their ability to perceive challenges as opportunities to grow, adolescents may no longer consider themselves to be “victims” but see themselves as “survivors” of the event (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 2004). During the pandemic, youth may then feel that they have benefited from this period of turmoil and have emerged better and stronger or even victorious over this situation.

To transform the unprecedented situation of the COVID-19 pandemic into something good, inner reflection must be undertaken in order to re-examine pre-existing beliefs and thoughts about the new reality that is emerging and make sense of the pre-pandemic situation. Searching for a sense of coherence makes it possible to better understand and give meaning to the stressful events (Arya and Davidson, 2015; Lindström and Eriksson, 2010; Cam and Demirkol, 2019). The goal is not to return to our personal state before the difficult event, but rather to use this event as a lever for growth to enhance who we are and who we have become. For example, instead of classifying the event as entirely and only negative, we can strive to learn various life lessons from the incident or enhance our knowledge about ourselves and our relationships with others. Searching for meaning promotes a sense of coherence, which is associated with less anxiety, depression and hopelessness, while being associated with better mental health (Eriksson and Lindström, 2006; Génèreux et al., 2020; Lindström and Eriksson, 2010; Remes, 2018).

However, cultivating a sense of coherence may be more difficult for teenagers, since their identity is in full development while their identity process has been further strained during the pandemic. It is therefore essential to foster in these emerging adults a desire to “mature during the pandemic.” To achieve this, we should listen to and assist them with their creativity and provide structure and resources to help them in this regard. For example, despite the many repercussions that the pandemic has had on youth, some of them now have greater social awareness, new interests and awareness of talents and greater personal resources (Laurier and Pascuzzo, 2021). Together, we can strive to ensure that the pandemic does not undermine Quebec youth, but instead allows them to emerge with greater knowledge of themselves, their resources and strengths and, in so doing, that they become caring adults in our future society.