

more than saying, “Hey, Siri. Call Mom.” As with a lot of studies, the participants might not have been representative. Perhaps the hard workers didn’t participate because they were out working hard. Still, the nature of work has changed, which is the point.

Enough about grip strength though. A *Wall Street Journal* article got at another point. Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt suggests that Millennials may be weak because of antifragility, a concept developed by Nassim Nicholas Taleb in his book *Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder*. Taleb proposes that “people/systems/organizations/things/ideas can be described in one of three ways: fragile, resilient, or antifragile” (McKay and McKay).

Introduces a concept: antifragility.

Things that are fragile “break or suffer from chaos and randomness,” from “adversity or volatility.” Things that are resilient “remain steady in times of both adversity and tranquility.” In “Beyond ‘Sissy’ Resilience: On Becoming Antifragile,” Brett and Kate McKay explain, “Buddhism and Stoicism promote psychological resilience, as both philosophies teach indifference to change. When you’re mentally resilient, you don’t care if you’re rich or if you lose your wealth in a single day.” According to Taleb, resilience is settling for the status quo. The McKays say, “To be truly effective in a world swirling with complexity, randomness, and risk, you can’t stop at sissy resilience. Whenever you can, you should always find opportunities to actually *grow* from disorder, volatility, and adversity. The goal should be to move beyond resilience to becoming antifragile.” They say, “Things that are antifragile grow and strengthen from volatility and stress. . . .”

Information from sources (Taleb and the McKays) explain the concept.

Haidt says children need unsupervised time “to get in over their heads and get themselves out,” that they’re not getting enough of that, and “that it greatly decreased in the 1980’s,” which by the way coincides with the hand grip thing. According to Haidt, “millennials come to college with much thinner skins.” (He’s being figurative, I’m sure, but I wonder if their skin, like their handshakes, might be studied and found to be literally thinner than their parents’ skin.) What caused this, according to Haidt, is child-rearing: “With the rise in crime, amplified by the rise of cable TV, we saw much more protective, fearful parenting. Children since the 1980s have been raised very differently—protected as fragile.”

The writer puts forth a claim of cause: What caused this is child-rearing.

We’re all familiar with helicopter parents. Melanie Thernstrom, in “The Anti-Helicopter Parent’s Plea: Let Kids Play!” says:

Research suggests that students with controlling “helicopter” parents are less flexible and more vulnerable, anxious and