

# LESSON 5

## RESILIENT THINKING

This lesson plan is designed to instruct teachers on guiding students to resilient thinking. Resilience is about being able to bounce back positively when bad things happen. This lesson plan aims to help students understand that in order to be resilient in challenging situations, they need to focus their thinking on things within their power, rather than worrying about things they cannot influence or control.

### LESSON PLAN DETAILS:

Length: 35 minutes

#### INCLUDED MATERIALS

- Teacher's presentation PowerPoint slides
- Teacher's lesson notes
- Student worksheet

### TEACHER'S LESSON NOTES

#### PART ONE:

##### RESPONDING TO PROBLEMS

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#### MATERIALS

##### Teacher presentation slide one:

How do you cope with setbacks?

##### Students' worksheet question one:

How do you cope with setbacks?

**Minutes:** 0 - 10

■ Explain that this lesson is about getting students to think differently about how they respond to setbacks and challenges within their lives. Examples include receiving grades they aren't happy with, missing out on a part-time job they applied for, or having problems with their friends.

The ability to bounce back from disappointment and deal with constructive criticism is crucial to future career success. It's known as resilience: the difference between someone who is able to carry on in the face of adversity or setbacks, or someone who finds themselves overwhelmed in

difficult times. A resilient mindset is a key skill for any individual.

Ask your students to imagine the last time they experienced a disappointment or challenge. Perhaps they were unsuccessful trying out for a sporting team, received negative feedback or did not do well in an assessment task.

Now ask students to write on their worksheet how this made them feel, and what they thought about the setback. Perhaps they thought "this is so unfair, I'm not good at this" or "that teacher doesn't like me".

Give them five minutes to complete the task.

#### PART TWO:

##### RESILIENT WAYS OF THINKING

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#### MATERIALS

##### Teacher presentation slide 2:

The Circle of Worry and Control

**Minutes:** 10 - 22

■ Explain that what typically happens when we react to a challenge is that our mind becomes focused on things we are worried about in this particular situation. These worries or reactive thoughts might sound like "it's just so unfair because..." or "if only this was different..." or "if only I'd done something different..."

These thoughts do nothing to improve the situation; they only drain our energy, and can prevent us from being resilient.

On the other hand, we find thoughts about things we can change or control. They might sound like “next time, I’ll practice harder”; “I will start my next assessment earlier”; “just because I got one thing wrong, doesn’t mean I’ll get the next thing wrong”. These types of thoughts help us ask ourselves: “what can I do in this bad situation, what is within my control, what choices do I have?”

Experts suggest that people who are resilient spend more time thinking about things they can control, and less time wasting their energy on things they cannot change.

### **PART THREE:**

#### APPLYING THE CIRCLE OF WORRY AND CONTROL

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#### **MATERIALS**

##### **Teacher presentation slide three:**

Resilient Thinking Scenarios

##### **Students’ worksheet part two:**

Resilient Thinking Scenarios

**Minutes:** 22 - 35

■ Using slide three, encourage students to use the “Circle of Worry and Control” they’ve just learned about to think about how they would respond to each of the suggested scenarios by using a resilient mindset.

The scenarios are:

**Scenario One:** You were hoping to get an A for an assignment you submitted - but you got a B. Initially you were really upset and disappointed... How can you change your response to this situation with thoughts and actions that you can control?

**Scenario Two:** You recently found out that your best friend of the last few years has said some pretty awful stuff about you online. You felt hurt, upset and betrayed when you found out about it.

How can you bounce back from this situation in a positive way, using thoughts and actions you can control?

**Scenario Three:** You applied for a job and got your first job interview. You thought things went pretty well, and walked away feeling confident. Yesterday, you received an email: you didn’t get the job. How can you bounce back from this by using thoughts and actions that you can control?

After they’ve completed these activities, ask members of each group to share their thoughts and actions with the rest of the class.

You might want to ask your class what they think might be challenges when trying to use the resilient thinking method in the heat of a challenging moment. Also, ask them to share what benefits they think they might gain from using this type of thinking?

#### **Final Exercise:**

Ask your students to think back to the situation they identified in question one. Now that they know more about thinking in resilient ways, how might they respond differently if faced with a similar situation in future? Let them discuss this with their peers.

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