



# BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN GIRLS

**UTAH** WOMEN &  
**LEADERSHIP**  
Project



Extension  
**UtahState**University



# Building Confidence in Girls



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# Session 1 - What is Confidence?

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## Best Practices

- 1) Focus on hands-on learning through activities.
- 2) Ensure an adult is present in each group when participants are divided into smaller groups.
- 3) Provide ample time for youth to individually reflect and write in their journals.

## PRIOR TO SESSION:

- Obtain curriculum supplies and review introduction and activities.
- All materials may not be needed. Choose activities best suited for your specific group of youth.
- Prepare demonstration materials.
- Use tape or rope to make a line in an open space on the floor.

## INTRODUCTION:

Confidence can be described as a belief that one can achieve what one sets out to do. In today's world we are exposed to media and society norms that undermine our sense of self-esteem and resilience. By learning to develop confidence in our own abilities we can be prepared to meet these challenges and thrive. One of the keys to developing this confidence is learning it is okay, and even helpful, to make mistakes and to fail. Learning to think of past failures as learning and growing experiences will help develop confidence and resilience (Kay & Shipman, 2018).

## WHAT TO DO:

Explain to the youth that having confidence in yourself means that you believe or feel that you can rely on your own skills and attributes. In this session, we will get to know one another during a fun ice breaker activity. We will also learn what confidence is and come up with our own definition for what confidence means. Finally, we will learn the role of failing in building confidence and explore the lessons learned from past mistakes.

## ICE BREAKER: Human Spectrogram (Day, 2019)

### Supplies: Tape or rope to make a line on the floor

In an open space, place a line or rope along the floor. Explain to youth that one end of the line is if they completely agree and the other end is if they completely disagree. Give the youth a series of statements and ask them to go to the part of the rope that fits how they feel. Be sure to include statements that ask how confident youth feel about their abilities, along with general get to know you questions to help youth get to know each other. Some example statements include:

I like sweet snacks

I stay up late at night

I like Math (English, Spelling, etc.) in school

I am good at sports

I am very artistic

I am good at music

# Activity #1

## WHAT IS CONFIDENCE?

### WHAT TO DO

Tell the youth that we are going to do a science experiment to help show what confidence is. Show youth the baking soda. Ask youth to share some activities they think about doing that are difficult. Give some examples such as trying out for a sports team or talking to someone you don't know at school. Share that these thoughts are like this baking soda. Ask the youth, is the baking soda doing anything? Is the baking soda going to change in any way if we just leave it there? This baking soda is like our thoughts. We are thinking about taking action, but we haven't done it yet. Add the food coloring if desired. Next, add the vinegar. Allow the youth to describe what took place. Explain the vinegar in this experiment is like our confidence. When we feel confident we turn our thoughts into action (Kay et al., 2019).

### Supplies

- Mixing bowl, jar or other container
- Baking soda
- Distilled vinegar
- Food coloring (optional)



## WHAT TO DO

Explain to the youth, before we try to identify and define what confidence is, let's look at people who had/have it. Have the Who Am I? pictures posted on the wall or display board. Hand out the Who Am I? cards. Have attendee take turns reading the story on the card and then ask the group to identify who the card is describing and match them with their picture. Some of them you may have heard of others you may not know.

## Supplies

- Printouts of the Who Am I? pictures and name cards. You can make your own with different people. The cards in the lesson plan are only suggestions. (Choose six individuals who you feel will resonate best with your group. Having too many examples will be harder for the youth.)
- Large sticky notes
- Markers
- Confidence Journal and writing instrument for each student.

**Optional Variation:** Make this activity into a competition by dividing the youth into teams to see which team can get the most matches or give each individual youth a point or treat for each match they get.

## After the cards have been matched ask the following questions:

- Do YOU think all of these people were confident?
- Were all of them confident in the same way? How were they different? What characteristics of confidence did you see in these role models?
- Who do you know personally that you consider to be confident? What makes them that way?

Working together brainstorm a bank of words that describe what confidence is. Write these words on the giant sticky note. Then give the youth time to write their own definition of confidence in their Confidence Journal.

Say to the youth, "Now that we have an idea of what confidence is, let's brainstorm ways we can gain more confidence." Allow youth to share their ideas on how to be more confident.

## WHAT TO DO

Ask the participants, "Can you be confident and still make mistakes?" Accept all answers.

Explain that one of the reasons people sometimes don't feel very confident is that they think they have to do everything perfectly the first time. Think about it, would you expect a person who has never been taught to play the piano to play a concert the first time they sit down to a piano? Many people feel like this is what they have to do with everything they try.

If they are not good at something the first time, they will never be good at it. Making mistakes is one of the best ways to learn to be more confident. We are going to practice "flipping" our mistakes or failures into positives. Instead of thinking "I'm really bad at this," try thinking "I learned how not to do this in the future." We are going to practice rewriting how we think about failure.

Invite youth to write a past mistake or failure they have experienced on a piece of paper. Allow the youth to write on as many pieces of paper as they would like. Assure youth that these will not be shared with anyone. Explain to the youth that we are going to flip these mistakes into positives. Invite youth to flip their papers to the other side. Allow the youth to use creative methods when flipping their papers over. When the papers are flipped, invite the youth to write a positive lesson they learned or a positive way of looking at that failure (*6 Self-Esteem Building Activities for Middle School Students - Blog, 2018*). Invite youth to share some of their positive flips. You could also have the youth glue their positives to a poster. Ask the youth what they learned in this activity about making mistakes?

Invite youth to think about their goals related to being more confident and overcoming past failures and give them time to write about their goals and thoughts in their Confidence Journal.

## Supplies

- Several blank sheets of colored paper and pencil for each student
- Blank poster board and glue (optional)



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## Apply

- How does learning to think positively about failure help you to be more confident?
- How can learning to think positively about failure help you try new things?
- What can you learn from others, like the people we talked about today, about what it means to be confident?



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## Who am I? Cards

I was born in New York City. One day when I was a child, I was watching an old episode of Perry Mason and decided I wanted to be a judge. My father passed away when I was young. My mother believed so strongly in higher education that she made a lot of sacrifices to make sure I had the opportunity to go to school. I attended Princeton University. I received low marks on my first paper and took extra writing and English classes. I graduated with the highest honors from Princeton and then attended law school at Yale University. I worked as an assistant district attorney and did some work free of charge for charity. In 2009, I was nominated to, and confirmed by, the U.S. Senate as a Supreme Court judge, making me the first Latina Supreme Court Justice in U.S. History. Who am I?



B. (2020, September 2). Sonia Sotomayor. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/law-figure/sonia-sotomayor>

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I was born in New York. I was considered a shy child. My parents both passed away and I was raised by my grandmother. I was sent to an academy in London which helped draw me out of my shell. After I was married, I worked for the American Red Cross during World War I. My husband took office as President of the United States in 1933. I worked for the League of Women Voters and gave press conferences and speeches on human rights. During World War II, I traveled abroad to visit U.S. troops. I focused on helping the country's poor and stood against racial discrimination. I wrote my own newspaper column called "My Day." I helped to write the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Who am I?



B. (2021, January 29). Eleanor Roosevelt. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/us-first-lady/eleanor-roosevelt>

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I grew up in Los Angeles, California. I attended Stanford University where I earned degrees in English and physics. I later earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in physics. I competed for a spot in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronaut program. I was selected out of over 1,000 applicants. I was the first U.S. woman to travel to space on the space shuttle Challenger. Later, I became the director of the California Space Institute and a professor of physics. In 2001, I started my own company creating educational programs to help inspire girls and young women to pursue their interests in science and math. I passed away in 2012 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Who am I?



B. (2020a, February 28). Sally Ride. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/astronaut/sally-ride>



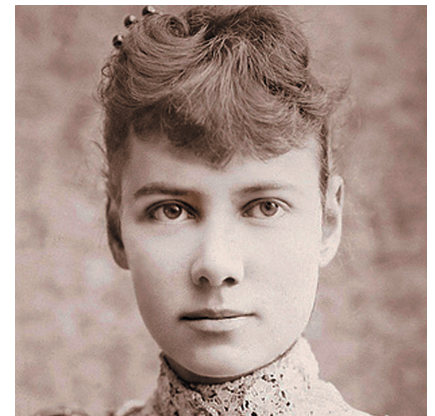
I was born in Massachusetts. I was a shy person, but I found purpose in caring for others after taking care of my brother. I became a teacher at age 15 and later opened a free public school in New Jersey. During the Civil War I wanted to help soldiers any way I could. I started by collecting and distributing supplies for the Union Army. I worked as an independent battlefield nurse and earned the nickname "the angel of the battlefield." After the war, I helped reunite missing soldiers with their families. I also gave many speeches to crowds of people who wanted to hear about my battlefield experiences. I spent time in Europe and worked with an organization called the International Red Cross. I worked to found the American Red Cross Society and I served as its first president. I resigned from the Red Cross in 1904 but continued to give speeches and lectures. I wrote a book that was published in 1907. Who am I?



B. (2020a, March 2). Clara Barton. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/activist/clara-barton>

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I was born in Pennsylvania. My father passed away when I was young and my family often didn't have enough money. I received some schooling, but I had to quit to help my mother. When I was 18, I wrote a letter to the editor that was published in the newspaper. The newspaper's editor liked my letter and gave me a job as a reporter. Later, I was also a reporter for a newspaper in New York. I worked undercover and wrote stories about how women were discriminated against and how badly patients in mental hospitals were treated. In 1889, I traveled around the world in under 80 days. I worked in my husband's factory after he died and then I worked as a reporter again. Who am I?



B. (2020b, November 12). Nellie Bly. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/activist/nellie-bly>

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I was born in West Virginia. As a child I was very good with numbers and finished the 8th grade by the time I was 10. My community did not offer classes for African Americans past eight grade so we moved 120 miles away so I could go to high school. I attended West Virginia State College and earned degrees in math and French. I taught French and math at schools in West Virginia. I started working for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). I was responsible for calculating flight trajectories to get humans into space and back and later calculated how to send a man into orbit around the earth. I performed calculations for the Apollo 11 and Apollo 13 missions. I worked with NASA helping to develop the Space Shuttle program until my retirement in 1986. My story was shared in the 2016 movie *Hidden Figures*. Who am I?



Ott, T. (2021, January 11). Katherine Johnson. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/scientist/katherine-g-johnson>

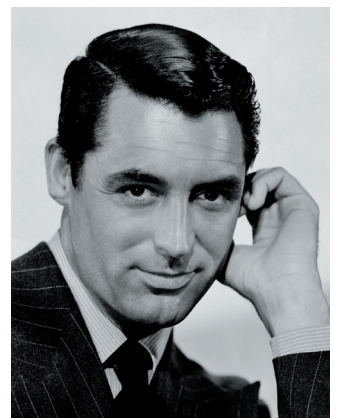
I was born in Missouri. I was the oldest of eight children. We lost most of our money in a financial crisis and I worked on the family farm while my father worked as a traveling salesman. After high school, I taught African American students and saved up to go to college. I was invited to take the U.S. Military Academy at West Point entrance exam and earned the top grade. At West Point I was not the top student, but I was elected class president and was recognized for my leadership abilities. After graduating from West Point, I served in the U.S. military. I was nominated to brigadier general and allowed to skip three ranks. During World War I, in just 18 months, I helped build up the American forces from 130,000 soldiers to over 2 million and led soldiers in numerous battles. After the war, I became the U.S. Army Chief of Staff and continued in that position until I retired. Who am I?



B. (2020c, August 18). John J. Pershing. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/military-figure/john-j-pershing>

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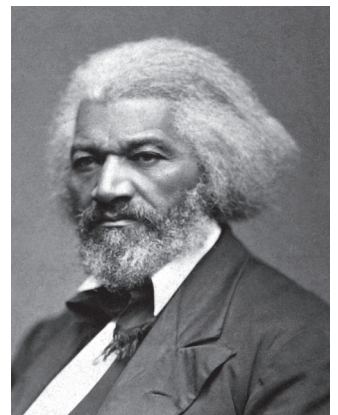
I was born in England. When I was 13, I started hanging around a local theater and did odd jobs. Later I joined a troupe of traveling performers, but my father made me return to school. The next year I was expelled from school and received my father's permission to go back to the performing group. Two years later I struggled to make it as a performer in New York City. I even worked as a stilt-walker for a while. After making several appearances on Broadway, I got the lead part in a musical. I then had a role in a short film and decided I was interested in studio. I moved to Los Angeles, started working with Paramount Studios, and changed my name. I was nominated for two Academy Awards. Later in my career I left Paramount and worked as a free agent. I was a very devoted father and spent as much time as I could with my daughter. I was sometimes referred to as the epitome of elegance on the screen. I was awarded an honorary Oscar in 1970 two years after my death. Who am I?



B. (2020a, January 15). Cary Grant. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/actor/cary-grant>

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I was born around 1818 in Maryland. Because I was born a slave, no one ever knew exactly when my birthday was. Later in my life, I would choose to celebrate my birthday on February 14th. Even though it was against the rules at the time, I learned how to read and write. I taught other slaves to read and write. I tried to escape from slavery twice before I finally succeeded. I was able to escape by dressing as a sailor. I married a woman who helped me escape. We settled in Massachusetts. I produced a newspaper called *The North Star*. I was asked to share my story at anti-slavery meetings. I began to do this often. After my autobiography was published, I had to go to Ireland and Britain for two years to avoid being captured. After returning to the U.S., I published several newspapers and three versions of my autobiography. I became involved with fighting for women's rights. I worked in many political positions after the Civil War. In 1872, without me knowing or giving permission, I was nominated for vice president of the United States. I didn't campaign, but this was the first time an African American appeared on a presidential ballot. In 1877, I visited one of my former owners. This visit meant a lot to me, but many people criticized me for it. Who am I?



B. (2021, January 5). Frederick Douglass. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/activist/frederick-douglass>

I was born in India. I earned a degree in aeronautical engineering in India before I immigrated to the United States and became a citizen. I earned a master's degree and a doctorate degree in aerospace engineering. In 1994, I was selected as an astronaut candidate. After a year of training, I tested software for the space shuttles and worked with robotics. My first opportunity to fly in space was November of 1997 aboard the space shuttle Columbia. The mission lasted just over two weeks and made me the first Indian-born woman in space. In 2003 I made a second flight into space aboard the Columbia. On re-entry, the space shuttle broke up over Texas and Louisiana killing all 7 astronauts on board. Who am I?



Redd, N. T. (2017, December 20). Kalpana Chawla: Biography & Columbia Disaster. Space.Com. <https://www.space.com/17056-kalpana-chawla-biography.html>

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I was born in 1954 in Hong Kong. When I was seven years old my parents moved to Australia for new jobs. I was left behind in boarding school to study martial arts, drama, acrobatics and singing. Once I graduated from boarding school, I found work as an acrobat and stuntman. After several unsuccessful movies, I found my own formula for success by using my martial arts skills and insisting on doing my own stunts. I combined this with my sense of screwball physical comedy. This blend of skills eventually made me the highest-paid actor in Hong Kong. Often, I did more than act in my films. I would produce, direct and perform theme songs. By 1986 I was referred to as a one-man film agency and started my own company, Golden Way. I had several movies that were successful in Hollywood as well as several that were not successful. In 1995 I was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award at the MTV Movie Awards. Who am I?



B. (2021b, March 31). Jackie Chan. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/actor/jackie-chan>

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I was born in England. After graduating college, I moved to Portugal to teach English. I was married and had a daughter, but later got divorced. After getting divorced, I moved to Scotland to be near my sister. I struggled to support myself and my daughter and was on welfare. I wrote a book from an idea I got while riding a train. I was rejected 12 times by publishers before my book was published. I went on to publish many more books and my books were later made into movies. My stories were so popular that I became the first billionaire author. I co-founded a charity to help children grow up in loving families. I have often said, "Anything is possible if you've got enough nerve." Who am I?



B. (2021b, March 29). J.K. Rowling. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/writer/jk-rowling>



I was born in Massachusetts. When I was 18, I went to college and was the editor for my college humor magazine. I was kicked off the magazine staff, but I continued to write stories and used a different name to publish them in the magazine. I attended University of Oxford in England. My plan was to become a professor, but I dropped out. I worked on becoming a cartoonist and during World War II, I published many political cartoons. After the war, I spent a lot of time working on my writing. My first book was rejected 27 times before it was published. I went on to write more than 60 books and several of my books have been made into movies. Who am I?



B. (2021b, March 2). Dr. Seuss. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/writer/dr-seuss>

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I was born in Chicago, but grew up in Missouri. I used to draw and paint pictures and sell them to my neighbors and friends. I had a love for trains, and during the summers, I would work for the railroad selling newspapers and snacks to the passengers. I took photography and art classes and drew cartoons for the school paper. When I was 16, I joined the Red Cross and was sent to France to be an ambulance driver. When I returned to the U.S., I began working as a newspaper artist and started making animated cartoons. I started my own business making cartoons. The business went bankrupt. I moved to California with my brother and a friend and started another cartoon company. Eventually I would produce more than 100 full-length animated films. I even got to be the voice of my main character. I also produced TV shows and opened theme parks. I was diagnosed with lung cancer and passed away at age 65. Who am I?



B. (2020, August 21). Walt Disney. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/business-figure/walt-disney>

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I was born in Mississippi. My grandmother encouraged my love of the arts and I would perform puppet shows for my friends. I was still in high school when I began performing with my puppets on TV. I was able to get more and more time on TV shows and commercials with my puppets and eventually started working on the TV show Sesame Street. Even though people liked my performances on other TV shows, I had a hard time getting my own show. Finally, a producer in London supported my idea. I started with a regular TV show and it led to several movies. I earned many awards for my work, including Emmys, Grammys and a Peabody Award. Who am I?



B. (2021e, April 19). Jim Henson. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/performer/jim-henson>



I was born in Kansas. While I was growing up, I spent a lot of time at my grandmother's house where my sister and I were always looking for adventures. My family struggled to have enough money when I was young and that made me try really hard throughout my life to make sure no one had to take care of me. I volunteered with the Red Cross after World War I as a nurse's aid and took care of wounded pilots. I flew in an airplane for the first time at an airshow and decided I had to learn to fly. I cut my hair short and made sure my clothes looked like what the other women pilots wore. I was the 16th woman to be issued a pilot's license. I tried to go back to college but didn't have enough money. Eventually, I went back to flying. I was asked to be the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, but as a passenger. I completed the flight but was upset that everyone said the flight would have been too dangerous for me to do alone because I was a woman. I worked hard to show that women can be successful in any job they chose to do. I made many successful flights and set records. I set a goal to be the first person to fly around the world following the equator. I disappeared while attempting this flight in 1937. Who am I?



B. (2021e, April 19). Amelia Earhart. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/explorer/amelia-earhart>

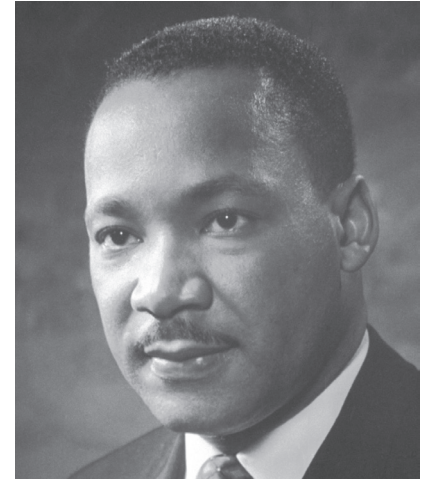
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I grew up in Alabama. I went to segregated schools and often I didn't have the school supplies I needed. Both of my grandparents taught me to stand up for equal rights for all people. I left school to take care of my sick mother and grandmother. Later, after I was married I finished high school. I started working with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was active in civil rights. One night after finishing my shift at a department store I was arrested for refusing to give my seat to a white passenger on a bus. This led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and ultimately the Supreme Court ruling that segregation on public transportation systems was unconstitutional. After my arrest my husband and I both lost our jobs and moved to Michigan and I worked as a secretary. I also worked to teach people about civil rights and organized tours of important Underground Railroad sites around the country. I published my autobiography. I was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal. Who am I?



B. (2021c, March 26). Rosa Parks. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/activist/rosa-parks>

I grew up in Atlanta, Georgia. My father was a pastor of a Baptist church. He fought against prejudice because he believed racism and segregation were violations of God's will. This left an impression on me. I skipped both the ninth and eleventh grades and started college when I was 15. I was valedictorian of my class and elected student body president. I completed my Ph.D. when I was 25. I became the pastor of a Baptist church in Montgomery, Alabama. I was asked to help lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott. After that I led many marches and protests against racial discrimination. I always used a peaceful approach and encouraged others not to use violence. My work helped lead to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. I won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Toward the end of my life I felt very discouraged at how slowly the civil rights movement was going. I made one last speech in Memphis before being assassinated while standing on the balcony of my hotel room. Who am I?



B. (2021b, January 13). Martin Luther King Jr. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/activist/martin-luther-king-jr>

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I was born in New York. I was homeschooled due to asthma and other illnesses. I loved animals as a child. My father encouraged me to be physically active and I participated in weightlifting and boxing. My father died while I was in college and it made me work even harder. I graduated top of my class from Harvard. I started law school but I didn't finish. I chose instead to be involved with politics and served in many public service positions. My wife and my mother passed away on the same day. I moved to the Dakota territory for two years living as a cowboy and cattle rancher. When I returned to New York I ran for New York City mayor and lost. During the Spanish-American War I led a volunteer cavalry. I was nominated for the medal of honor because of what I did during the war. After the war I became the mayor of New York City. Later I served as vice president of the United States. When President McKinley was assassinated, I became president. I was later elected to a second term. I signed the National Monuments Act and was known as the first environmentalist president. I also worked to make sure everyone had a safe and fair place to work. After I was president I went to Africa for two years. When I came back I ran again for United States president but lost. I published over 25 books during my life. Who am I?



B. (2021g, April 9). Theodore Roosevelt. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/us-president/theodore-roosevelt>

I grew up in South Carolina. I went to college and studied directing. Then I attended the British American Drama Academy in Oxford, England. I performed in many stage plays and also worked as a director and writer. I started making a name for myself doing TV shows and then movies. I worked hard in the roles I played. I was diagnosed with colon cancer, but kept acting in between cancer treatments. I appeared in over 33 movies and TV shows. After I passed away in 2020 I won the Golden Globe, Critics Choice and SAG awards and an Oscar nomination for my last movie *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. Who am I?



B. (2021g, April 5). Chadwick Boseman. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/actor/chadwick-boseman>

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I was born in Paris, France to a musical family. My father was a composer and teacher and my mother was a singer. I began playing the cello when I was just four years old. My family moved to New York when I was seven and I attended Juilliard School in New York City. I wanted to experience life outside of music. I attended Harvard and took classes in many different topics. I graduated with a liberal arts degree. Before I could begin my musical career, I had to have surgery for scoliosis. I was in a body cast for six months and could not play at all. I have worked hard and taken on new challenges to bring classical music to many people. I also worked very hard to play many different types of music. Over my career I have produced more than 75 music albums. I am known for taking chances and trying new things. I have won 18 Grammy Awards, been awarded the National Medal of Arts and named a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Who am I?



B. (2021k, May 19). Yo-Yo Ma. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/musician/yo-yo-ma>

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I was born in Oregon and the youngest of five kids. I was considered a bundle of energy and my parents enrolled me in gymnastics when I was six. My coaches and teachers thought I had potential and invited me to try out for gymnastics competitions. At age 10 I qualified for Junior Olympic Nationals and participated in competitions and camps. I moved up to senior level competitions and continued to participate. I began feeling burned out and after a while I moved to Texas to train with different coaches. I missed a year of competing due to a wrist injury, but I found my love of gymnastics again and made the US Olympic Gymnastics Team. I competed in the Olympics and helped my team win a silver medal. Who am I?



W. (2021l, August 19). The Official Website of Jordan Chiles. The Official Website of Jordan Chiles. <https://www.gym-style.com/jordanchiles/about.html>



I was born in Louisiana and started playing the bass guitar when I was 13. I studied music in college and worked to become a professional musician. I performed with many professional musicians. I did a lot of work behind the scenes as a record producer and an executive with two different record companies. Most people know me as a judge from the TV show *American Idol* where I tried to give helpful feedback to make singers better. I also continued to produce albums and even launched a radio program. I have supported many charities. Because of my battle with type II diabetes, I became the spokesperson for the American Heart Association's "Heart of Diabetes" campaign. Who am I?



B. (2020a, July 16). Randy Jackson. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/personality/randy-jackson>

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I was born in Michigan but grew up in North Carolina. I loved comedy as a kid but my parents wanted me have a stable job. I chose medicine. I went to college and then to medical school. While I was finishing my medical training, I worked as a comedian on the side. A TV studio president encouraged me to pursue performing comedy. I moved to Los Angeles and worked as a doctor and performed at a comedy club. Working in the comedy club gave me experience and eventually I started being on TV and in movies. People called me "the funniest doctor in America." Who am I?



B. (2019a, August 23). Ken Jeong. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/actor/ken-jeong>

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I was born in Russia. My mother was 16 and felt she couldn't take care of me. She put me up for adoption. I was adopted by an American family and grew up in Maryland. I was born without most of the bones in my feet and when I was 18 months old I had to have my legs amputated. My adoptive parents encouraged me to participate in sports such as ice skating, gymnastics and rock climbing. I liked to swim in the pool at my grandparent's house and pretend I was a mermaid. I began swimming in competitions and competed in the Paralympics when I was 12 years old. I got to train with Michael Phelps and Bob Bowman. During my second Paralympics, I felt very stressed and very tired. I took a step back and coached a local girl's swim team. I decided I wanted to be more than an athlete. I used my social media accounts to highlight what people with disabilities can do. I worked with the Make a Wish foundation and gave speeches to kids in schools. I loved that I was different and tried really hard not to hide my disability or feel ashamed of it. Who am I?



Binner, A. (2021, March 30). This is Paralympic swimming star Jessica Long's amazing story. Olympics.Com. <https://olympics.com/en/featured-news/siberia-to-swimming-stardom-paralympic-jessica-long-amazing-story>



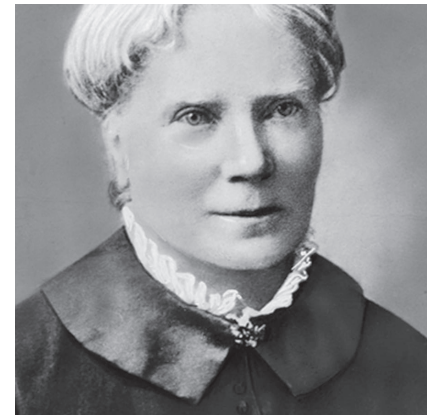
I grew up in Maryland. I started doing swimming competitions when I was six years old. My older brother was also a swimmer. I became the youngest member of the U.S. swim team when I was 15. I won a gold medal in my first Olympics. After that, people said I acted like someone who was confident. I went on to break many more swimming records and win more Olympic medals. Who am I?



B. (2021, July 22). Katie Ledecky. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/athlete/katie-ledecky>

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I was born in England but moved to the United States with my family when I was a child. After my father died, my mother, sisters and I all worked as teachers to make enough money. I became interested in medicine when I had a sick friend who wished she could see a female doctor. I studied with doctors who were willing to teach me before I was finally accepted to medical school. People at the medical school thought I was a joke and many people told me I could not become a doctor. I kept studying and became the first woman to graduate from medical school in the United States. Sometimes I wouldn't get very many patients because I was a woman. My sister, who was also a doctor, and I opened a clinic in New York for poor women and children. I worked with President Abraham Lincoln on a committee making sure health conditions were clean and sanitary. An accident left me blind in one eye and I wasn't able to follow my dream of being a surgeon. I opened a medical school for women. After the school was set up I returned to England and practiced medicine and taught at a medical school. Who am I?



B. (2021a, March 31). Elizabeth Blackwell. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/scientist/elizabeth-blackwell>

I was born in Alabama. My father was in the Air Force and we moved around a lot. My brother encouraged me to get involved in sports. When I was 15 years old I was the youngest player to play for the national soccer team. I went to college in North Carolina and helped my college soccer team win four NCAA women's championships. At age 19, I was the youngest team member in history to win the World Cup, and five years later I won my first Olympic gold medal. I would go on to set records and win more awards. After I retired from soccer, I started a foundation to help those with bone marrow diseases to honor my brother who passed away from a blood disease. Who am I?



B. (2020, June 24). Mia Hamm. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/athlete/mia-hamm>

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I was an only child and grew up in Iowa. I had a lot of energy and my parents put me in gymnastics when I was three years old. I was very good at gymnastics and worked very hard at it. When I was 16 and old enough, I competed in the Olympics and won four medals. I started training for a second Olympic games but because of a knee injury I decided I would not be able to compete. Who am I?



B. (2021b, April 6). Shawn Johnson. Biography. <https://www.biography.com/athlete/shawn-johnson>

# Session 2 - Body Image

Author: Rachel Myrer, Extension Assistant Professor & McKenna Smith, Intern

## Best Practices

- 1) Focus on hands-on learning through activities.
- 2) Ensure an adult is present in each group when participants are divided into smaller groups.
- 3) Provide ample time for youth to individually reflect and write in their journals.

## Supplies

- Rocks
- Construction paper
- Ball of yarn
- Backpacks
- Pencils
- Butcher paper
- Markers



## PRIOR TO SESSION:

- Obtain curriculum supplies and review introduction and activities.
- All materials may not be needed. Choose activities that are best suited for your specific group of youth.
- Tell youth to bring their Confidence Journals.

## INTRODUCTION:

Body image describes how individuals view their bodies, not just in the mirror but also in their mind. It encompasses beliefs about different body shapes and appearances.

According to research, body dissatisfaction (BD) is often associated with disordered eating, depression, anxiety, substance use disorder, suicidal ideation, and lowered subjective quality of life. Body dissatisfaction is also linked to insufficient physical activity and inadequate nutrition. Additional research found no association between body mass index (BMI) and body image which suggests that individuals of all sizes are at risk of BD. The majority of children and teens will experience body dissatisfaction at some point in their development. This session can serve as a springboard for addressing body image.

## WHAT TO DO:

No one measures up to the ideal body, not even the stars and models depicted in the media. It is vital that youth understand that the "ideal" body type has changed over time. An exceptional amount of effort and expertise is put into altering photos of models, actors, social media influencers, and even your friends on social media. Developing body gratitude can help reduce negative body image.

### ICE BREAKER:

Get a ball of yarn. If your group is young or you do not have access to yarn you can use a ball instead. Have participants sit in a circle and instruct them to think about a word or phrase to describe current standards of beauty. Said another way, if you were to imagine an Instagram influencer, actor or other celebrity, what would they look like? Give the ball to one youth – they say their word. Then, holding the end of the yarn they toss the ball to someone else in the circle. The receiving person says their word, holds on to the end of the yarn and tosses the ball to someone else. Do this until everyone has had a turn (or if the group is small, you can do it twice). In the end you'll see a "web" in the middle of the circle. Describe to participants that the web is all of the messages we hear about our bodies. It's easy to get tangled up in it if you're not careful!

Examples to get you started: skinny, white teeth, tan skin

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## Activity #1

DEVELOPING BODY GRATITUDE

### DESCRIPTION

Youth should get a large sheet of butcher paper. They will need a partner for this next step. Then, proceed to trace their body outline onto the paper. After tracing is finished, inside of the outline, youth will write down all the things their body does for them. Ex: Jump, run, eat yummy food, laugh, etc. Describe to participants how each body is different, and unique, and can bring so much joy!

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## Activity #2

THE WEIGHT OF NEGATIVE BODY IMAGE

### DESCRIPTION

Leaders should collect multiple medium-sized rocks and write words on them. The words written on the rocks will be beauty ideals and things people don't like about their bodies. Ex: Skinny, small lips, big feet, etc. A youth will place a backpack on their back and shoulders. The leader will explain how the rocks represent the beauty ideals and things people don't like about their bodies. The leader will slowly place a rock one by one into the backpack while the youth is wearing it. The backpack will get heavier and heavier. After placing all the rocks in the backpack, the leader will ask the youth how their back feels from carrying the rocks in the backpack. The leader will explain how it gets heavy and difficult to carry around the negative thoughts and beauty ideals with us constantly. The leader slowly starts taking the rocks out of the backpack and explains that when we are kind to ourselves and others, the rocks come out of the backpack.



## Activity #3

### DEVELOPING A BODY GRATITUDE AFFIRMATION



#### DESCRIPTION

Share examples of mantras, and challenge participants to adopt one or come up with their own. Have participants decorate a piece of construction paper with their own affirmation. When all participants have finished, attach each affirmation to a string and hang them up together.

Examples:

- My body is a vessel for my awesomeness.
- My body enables me to live life.
- I feed my body healthy nourishing food and give it healthy nourishing exercise because it deserves to be taken care of.
- My body is an instrument, not an ornament.
- I love and accept myself.
- My body deserves to be nourished and cared for.

## Activity #4

### GIVING NON-BODY RELATED COMPLIMENTS



#### DESCRIPTION

Each of the youth will get a sheet of paper and a writing utensil. The leader will set a timer for 3 minutes and tell a participant to talk to one person in the group for those 3 minutes. While talking to each other, youth will exchange their piece of paper with the other person. They will write down something they like about their partner that isn't body related. Ex: I like your laugh, I like your fun personality, you are a great listener, etc. Participants will return the paper back to the original owner. When the 3-minute timer is up, participants will move onto meeting a new person. The steps above will be repeated at least three times. This will help give participants practice identifying non-body-related compliments and each will receive a paper full of compliments to put in a place they see regularly.



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## Reflect

- What stood out to you the most today?
- Imagine two people. One has developed gratitude for their body and one has a negative body image. How do you think their lives will be different?

## Apply

- How can you help yourself and your friends be resilient from body dissatisfaction?
- What strategies can you use to focus on your passions and view uniqueness in a positive way?



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# Session 3 - The Friendship Factor

Author: Christina Pay, Extension Assistant Professor



## Best Practices

- 1) Focus on hands-on learning through activities.
- 2) Ensure an adult is present in each group when participants are divided into smaller groups.
- 3) Provide ample time for youth to individually reflect and write in their journals.

## Supplies

- Poster paper/flip chart paper
- Sticky notes
- Timer/watch/clock
- Pen/colored pencils/markers
- Confidence Notebook from session #1
- Role Play scenario cards
- Deck of playing cards
- Tape
- Two or more blindfolds

## PRIOR TO SESSION:

- Obtain curriculum supplies and review introduction and activities.
- All materials may not be needed. Choose activities that are best suited for your specific group of youth.
- Tell youth to bring their Confidence Journal

## INTRODUCTION:

Supply the youth with a pen, colored pencils and /or markers. Tell the youth that they will be using their Confidence Journal for this activity. Invite the youth to draw or write the kind of friend they want to be or, alternatively, the kind of friend they want to look for.

## DISCUSS:

Where would we be without our friends? Friendships are an important part of building confidence. Think about being with a good friend. How does it feel? Do you feel safe and happy being with someone who totally gets you? How does it feel to be with a bad friend? Do you feel unhappy and frustrated? Friendships are important! Science

has proven that good friendships help you to be stronger, healthier, and happier. While it is important to have good friends, it is also important to be a good friend.

### WHAT TO DO:

In this session youth will learn about the qualities needed to be a good friend and will examine where they fall on the Friendship Scale. Youth will also discuss how real communication is vital in a friendship. They will learn healthy communication skills which can help them work out problems instead of letting them fester and destroy friendships. Finally, youth will participate in an activity that allows them to learn the importance of trust in a relationship.

## Activity #1

### THE FRIENDSHIP SCALE



### DESCRIPTION

Let's take a closer look at friendship by using a Friendship Scale. All friendships fall somewhere on a Friendship Scale. Some will fall under True Friend, others under Total Imposter, and still others will fall Somewhere in the Middle. Most people will slide back and forth between the two ends of the scale while they continually learn how to be a good friend. The closer you stay to the True Friend side of the scale the more likely you are to have True Friends. Having healthy friendships is important to being happy, feeling good about ourselves, and having confidence.

On a large piece of poster board or flip chart paper, draw a scale. Label one end "True Friend" and label the other end "Total Imposter." In the middle, write "Somewhere in the Middle."

Evenly divide the group into two groups. Give each group sticky notes and a pen or pencil.

Instruct Group 1 that they need to come up with ideas that show qualities of a True Friend. Instruct Group 2 that they need to come up with ideas that show qualities of a Total Imposter, or a not so good friend. They can use words or phrases. For example, a quality of a True Friend may be, "Kindness" or "They say thank you when you help them." Tell the youth they will have exactly 2 minutes to come up with as many qualities as they can think of. Set the timer for 2 minutes and say "go."

When two minutes is up, tell the groups that each group will be asked to share the qualities they came up with. Team members will take turns sharing their words or phrases and posting them on the Friendship Scale. Encourage all youth to share, but make sure youth understand they do not have to take a turn if they are not comfortable doing so.

### Supplies

- Poster paper/flip chart paper
- Pen/colored pencils/markers
- Sticky notes
- Confidence Notebook from session #1
- Timer/watch/clock

### Friendship Scale



Discuss the results with the youth:

- Which side “tipped” the scale? Were there more phrases or words on the True Friend side or the Imposter side? (The side with the most phrases or words “tipped” the scale.)
- Why do you think it was easier to come up with more qualities for one side than the other?
- Are there any qualities that were shared that could be placed “Somewhere in the Middle?”

Have youth draw a Friendship Scale in their Confidence Journal. Ask them to think about the type of friend they are and mark on the scale where they think they fall. Instruct them to write down traits they can work on to become better at being a True Friend. These can be taken from the sticky notes on the large poster, or they can come up with their own. Explain that by having these in their Confidence Journal they can reflect and measure their progress from time to time.

## Activity #2

THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION

### DESCRIPTION

Communication is the most important part of a good friendship. Real communication means that sometimes we talk about things that make us feel uncomfortable. For example, when we have hurt feelings, or we feel angry or maybe jealous. If we don't talk about them, they won't go away, they may get worse, or you may end up feeling badly. Discuss the following ways to communicate with friends:

1. **Pay attention to how you feel.** We can't share with others if we don't recognize what is going on within ourselves. When you have a problem with a friend, try to think about what you are feeling. Are you angry because your best friend didn't go to the movie with you but went with someone else? Or could it be that you are really feeling hurt? Once you think you know how you feel, accept it. Don't tell yourself that it's bad to feel upset because it is perfectly normal for you to have these feelings and for your friends to feel that way, too.
2. **Don't make assumptions.** We aren't mind readers. Maybe you see two girls whispering and giggling together; don't assume it is about you. Perhaps your friend didn't talk with you at school today, it doesn't mean she is mad at you. Your friend can't read your mind either, if you are excited to spend time with her, tell her!
3. **Use “I” messages.** When you have figured out what it is that you are feeling, talking to your friend is a healthy way to deal with it. Don't ignore it thinking it will go away. It may not and you may end up feeling worse. When we use “I” messages it sounds less like an accusation and helps our friends not get defensive or start a fight. Begin by saying “I got upset when . . .” or “I felt hurt when . . .” then add how the situation has made you feel. You may feel vulnerable, and it is scary, but when you take a risk, your friend will be able to be more sympathetic.
4. **Take responsibility.** Think about your role in the situation. Could you have done something to add to the problem? There is a lot of power in apologizing, so own what you did and say it out loud.
5. **Find a solution to resolve the problem.** Figure out a positive solution. Usually it will be a compromise. Remember, friendships are about giving, too, not just getting.

Divide youth into groups of no more than four. Each group will receive a situation role play card. The groups will get no less than five, but not more than 10 minutes to come up with two responses to the situation on the card; a healthy communication response and an unhealthy communication response. Leaders may help youth plan their skits. When the specified time is up, each group will act out all the responses.

*Role Play Scenarios\**



**Scenario Cards** - select the appropriate scenarios for the ages of your group or create some of your own.

<p><b>Scenario 1</b>          You are giving an oral book report in school. Your best friend, Maddie, helped you practice it before school because she knew how nervous you were. There are several other students in class that are whispering and giggling, including Maddie. You thought she'd have your back! You feel embarrassed and hurt. What do you do?</p>	<p><b>Scenario 2</b>          For weeks you have been working on a science project with your friend, Megan. The project is due tomorrow and you were supposed to go to her house after school to help finish painting and adding the final touches to your volcano model. You feel like you have done most of the work on the project, so you ditch Megan and go to the park with another friend, instead. Megan finishes the project but barely talks to you the next day. She is upset and you feel badly for your choice. What will you do?</p>
<p><b>Scenario 3</b>          You see your friend, Kristie, handing out birthday party invitations but she doesn't give you one. Your feelings are hurt. Your birthday is coming up in 2 weeks. How will you respond?</p>	<p><b>Scenario 4</b>          You and your best friend, Max, disagree about who the greatest baseball player of all time is. Things get heated and you end up arguing loudly and calling each other names. Later, when you have calmed down, you feel angry, hurt and sorry, all at the same time. What can you do to save your friendship?</p>
<p><b>Situation 5</b>          For weeks you and your best friend have been talking about going to the new Fun Center that recently opened. It's all you've talked about since you first heard about it opening. But your best friend ends up going with someone else without telling you. You find out Monday morning when you hear them talking about how fun the new arcade games and activities were. You are super upset. How will you respond?</p>	<p><b>Situation 6</b>          You and your friend do everything together, but recently your friend has joined the coding club, which has started to win a bunch of competitions. Coding club is ALL your friend talks about. Your friend doesn't have time to hang out anymore because the club is always working on new projects or busy in design sessions with the "new crew." The bragging is grating on your very last nerve. How can you deal with the nonstop boasting?</p>
<p><b>Situation 7</b>          Your friend, Sophie, is boatloads of fun, except that she is obsessed with being "best friends." She buys you matching t-shirts and wants to do EVERYTHING together; even plan a schedule of things to do together when you're not in school. She gets upset if you hang out with other friends or if you post pictures with other friends. You feel like you can't even get a haircut without consulting her. You don't want to dump her, but how can you tell her that you can't be locked down into one single friendship?</p>	<p><b>Situation 8</b>          Your friend, Caleb, confesses his enormous crush on Abby to you. All three of you walk home together every day, usually stopping to go buy chips and then sharing them along the way. Now that you know about his crush, you feel an awkwardness around the two of them. One day, when Caleb is sick at home you make a joke to Abby about the secret crush. It seemed funny at the time, except now, Abby is all weird around Caleb, and Caleb knows you spilled the beans. He is upset and hurt. What do you do?</p>

\*Role play scenarios adapted from Kay, K., & Shipman, C. (2018). *The Confidence Code for Girls*. New York, NY: Harper-Collins.

Discuss the following questions:

- In the role play activity, was it easy to communicate in a healthy way? Why or why not?
- Did practicing healthy communication skills make you feel more confident that you can communicate better with your friends?

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## Activity #3

TRUST AND THE DRAGON'S TOWER

### DESCRIPTION

Trust allows us to feel safe knowing that our friends support us, will listen to what we say, and will not judge how we might be feeling. Sometimes it is our turn to talk and sometimes it is our turn to listen. Being a good friend means we know the difference. Friendship means teamwork and cooperating with each other. In the end, good friends are always there for each other.

Prepare the room or outdoor area by creating an obstacle course with a specific path and age-appropriate obstacles that players will have to navigate around. For older youth, a night version of this can be played to increase the difficulty.

The leader should give specific instructions for this activity and why the participants are doing the activity (to learn the importance of trust in a friendship). It might be necessary to have a leader who knows the rules be with each group and lead the way or demonstrate the roles of each participant.

Divide participants into at least two groups of three members each. Have team members stand on one side of the room/field. Using the Queens from a deck of cards as Princesses, let each team choose their Princess. Make sure each team knows what their princess looks like. Tell the teams that their goal is to rescue their princess and bring her back to their team.

Each team will consist of:

- The Silent One (who is allowed to look, but isn't allowed to talk)
- The Talker (who is only allowed to look at the Silent One's pantomime and is allowed to talk)
- The Tracker (who is blindfolded and navigated by The Talker in their quest to find the princess).

1. Blindfold The Tracker in each group and have him or her turn away from the center of the room and face The Silent One who has an overview of the whole room.
2. For the indoor course, attach Princess cards to the opposite wall beforehand.
3. For the outdoor course, hide Princess cards beforehand.
4. Show The Silent One from each team where their princess is located. Only The Silent One from each team is allowed to see where the leader has placed their group's princess. The Talker and The Tracker must not see this.
5. Once the game begins, The Silent One will use pantomime to explain to The Talker, who is facing him or her, where their princess is located.
6. The Talker only sees The Silent One and his pantomime and tries to verbally navigate. The Tracker uses the information he receives from The Silent One.
7. The (blindfolded) Tracker then moves. His goal, with the help of his teammates, is to find their princess and get her back to his teammates successfully.
8. Begin the game with the word, "SEEK!"

*\*Music playing in the background can be a nice addition to help players practice focusing on teammates to help build trust.*

The team with **The Tracker** who successfully finds the princess and gets her back to his team first is declared the winning team. It is crucial that teammates play their roles well and cooperate in order to successfully finish the task. For older youth, a night version of this can be played to increase the difficulty.

Discuss with the youth:

- What can this activity teach you about trust in friendships?
- What role did each participant, The Silent One, The Talker and The Tracker, represent in friendship? With which one do you most identify?



## Reflect

- How can knowing the difference between a true friend and a total imposter help you become a better friend and have better friendships?
- What did you learn about the importance of healthy communication in friendship?
- Why is it important to have trust in a friendship?

## Apply

- What steps can you take to become a true friend?
- What can you do to make sure you are communicating in a healthy way?
- How can you be more trustworthy in your friendships?



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# Session 4 - Resilience

Author: Andrea Schmutz, Extension Assistant Professor



## Supplies

- Scissors
- Glue
- Pens, markers or pencils
- Thank you note cards or cardstock and markers to create cards
- Handouts: Gratitude Tracker, Try Saying Something Else
- Reference material - Characteristics of Resilient Youth
- A glass filled with water to the halfway point
- Hula hoop
- Stopwatch or timing device
- Tarp, blanket or towel just large enough for the entire group to stand on (if the group is large, you can split into smaller groups and use two tarps or blankets)

## Best Practices

- 1) Focus on hands-on learning through activities.
- 2) Ensure an adult is present in each group when participants are divided into smaller groups.
- 3) Provide ample time for youth to individually reflect and write in their journals.

### PRIOR TO SESSION:

- Obtain curriculum supplies and review introduction and activities.
- All materials may not be needed. Choose activities that are best suited for your specific group of youth.
- Tell youth to bring their Confidence Journal

### PREPARATION:

Study the characteristics of resilient youth found at the end of this section. Become familiar with the characteristics so that you can guide the discussions and help the youth recognize existing resilient traits they may already possess.

### INTRODUCTION:

**Share with the youth a brief explanation about what resilience is and why resilience is a valuable trait to develop.**

The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "The only thing that is constant is change." Life is constantly



changing and evolving and we don't always know what trials and challenges life may throw at us. We can learn skills that will prepare us to face these challenges and overcome them or adapt to them. The ability to recover from setbacks and bounce back after trauma, tragedy, adversity, or stress is known as **resilience**.

Some people may already have a bit of resilience, but fortunately resilience is a trait that we can work to develop. Cultivating gratitude, learning problem solving skills, practicing optimism, and exercising mindfulness are all valuable skills that help increase our resilience. During today's session, we will explore each of these skills and talk about how they help build resilience.

### DISCUSSION: Cultivate Gratitude

Discuss with the attendees the benefits of cultivating gratitude. When we practice gratitude, the circuits in our brains release dopamine, a chemical that makes us feel good. Not only does dopamine make us feel good, it fosters positive emotions that help us feel optimistic. There are simple ways to practice gratitude that you can incorporate into your daily life. You can express gratitude to others by simply saying thank you each time someone does something for you, you can write notes to people who have helped you, and you can even keep a gratitude journal. Learning to express gratitude regularly will help improve your mental and emotional well-being, leading to increased resilience.

## Activity #1

THANK YOU



### WHAT TO DO (10 MIN)

Hand out cards and pens or markers to each attendee. Have a brief discussion about basic elements of a thank you card:

1. Start with a greeting, such as Dear Aunt Mary, or simply start by writing the person's name.
2. Write a message that expresses your gratitude for a gift, act of service, or a way the person has influenced you. (Ex. Thank you for your friendship, patience, good example, etc.; Thank you for the fun toy, awesome shirt, interesting book, etc.; Thank you for taking me to my game, helping me with my homework, etc.)
3. Add some detail or explain why you are thankful. (If they gave you a gift, explain how you will use it. If they threw you a party, tell them about your favorite part. If they did a service for you, explain how it helped you.)
4. Add a forward-looking statement. Some ideas are to mention when you might see them again: I can't wait to see you at the family reunion. Or, I look forward to talking to you soon. You could also inquire about something in their life by asking a question.
5. Restate your gratitude and then sign your note. Examples are: I can't believe you remembered my birthday, or I really appreciate you taking time to help me.

Help them brainstorm people in their lives who have made an impact or done something for them recently and encourage them to write a thank you note. They can decorate the card with the markers, or write a second card if they finish early.

**Reflect:** How does practicing gratitude help you develop resilience, or the ability to bounce back after challenges or trials? (Encourage the youth to answer and if necessary, remind them that learning to express gratitude regularly will help improve mental and emotional well-being, leading to increased resilience.)

### WHAT TO DO

Distribute the Gratitude Tracker. Challenge the youth to take five minutes each evening to fill in three things they are grateful for that day. Encourage them to be thoughtful and specific. Have a short discussion of the types of things they might be grateful for at the end of the day. Ask them to be prepared to report back at the next session.

**Reflect:** Follow up at the next session and ask them about their trackers. Review by asking how practicing gratitude can help build resilience.

### DISCUSSION: Develop Problem-Solving Skills

Remind the youth that resilience is often described as the ability to recover quickly from hardships. We will all face hardships and challenges and sometimes they can feel overwhelming. Having strong problem-solving skills can help us look at these challenges and break them down so they are not so overwhelming, giving us confidence in our abilities to conquer them. By developing and practicing problem-solving skills on a regular basis, we are better prepared to face more serious challenges when they arise.

Talk about basic problem-solving skills such as:

1. Identify the problem.
2. Define the problem and what needs to be done.
3. Organize information and determine possible resources.
4. Form a strategy.

### WHAT TO DO:

Have the youth form a circle and hold hands with each other. Explain that the goal of the activity is to pass a hula hoop all the way around the circle without breaking the handholds. Place the hula hoop on two of the joined hands (so the hands are passing through the hula hoop). Tell them you will time them to see how long it takes and then say "go." Once the hula hoop gets all the way around the circle, stop for a minute and have them reflect on how they did. Talk about what made it difficult and what they did to solve the problem/challenge.

To make this more challenging for older youth, introduce a few variations such as beating their original time, blindfolding everyone or just a few people or adding a second hula hoop.

**Reflect:** What problem-solving techniques did you use? Why is it necessary to learn problem-solving skills? (Encourage the youth to talk about their problem-solving techniques. Remind them that by developing and practicing problem-solving skills on a regular basis, they will be better prepared to face challenges when they arise, which is part of being resilient.)

**WHAT TO DO** (This activity is a little more challenging than the previous activity.)

Lay the tarp, blanket or towel on the ground and have everyone stand on it. The activity works best if the group barely fits on the tarp. Tell the group that they must flip the tarp over without anyone stepping off of it or touching the ground. If someone does step off or touch the ground, they will have to start over. You can make this activity more challenging by telling the group they cannot touch the tarp with their hands, you can blindfold one or two of the youth and/or tell them they cannot speak.

**Reflect:** What problem-solving techniques did you use? Why is it necessary to learn problem-solving skills? (Encourage the youth to talk about their problem-solving techniques. Remind them that by developing and practicing problem-solving skills on a regular basis, they will be better prepared to face challenges when they arise, which is part of being resilient.)

### DISCUSSION: Practice Optimism

Did you know that optimism and resilience are closely linked? Research shows that optimism is one of the most important factors that helps us handle life's stressors. Optimism has numerous benefits. For example, when compared to pessimistic people, optimists:

- Are more successful in school, work and athletics.
- Tend to be healthier and live longer.
- Are more satisfied with their relationships.
- Are less likely to suffer from depression and are less anxious. The good news is that optimism can be learned; it is a teachable skill.

### WHAT TO DO:

Fill a glass with water to the halfway mark. Ask the youth the following questions:

- Is the glass half empty?
- Or is the glass half full?
- How would you choose to describe it?

Talk about how optimistic people usually see the glass as half full, focusing more on what is there and what can be done with half a glass of water. Pessimists usually see the glass as half empty and focus more on what is missing.

Explain that while some people are naturally more optimistic than others, each day we can all choose whether we are going to be a “glass half full person” or a “glass half empty person.” Ask the youth to think of experiences they have had where they looked at the situation as the glass being half full or half empty. Talk about scenarios they may face where it would be easy to look at the experience as the glass half empty and talk about ways to change their thoughts to a glass half full attitude.

**Reflect:** How might practicing optimism help build resilience? (Help the youth understand that being optimistic can reduce the feelings of helplessness when faced with challenges and motivate people to take constructive action.)

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## Activity #6

DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET

### WHAT TO DO

One way to become more optimistic is to learn how to reframe problems into experiences that bring growth, or how to look at challenges as opportunities to learn something new. This is often called a “growth mindset.” Give each person a copy of the handout “Try Saying Something Else,” some scissors and a glue stick. Have them cut the phrases from the bottom of the page and paste them in the correct column. You could do this as a group and have a brief discussion about each phrase as they paste them onto the page. Challenge the youth to consider what they are thinking when faced with challenges and to reframe their thoughts to reflect a growth mindset.

**Reflect:** How might practicing optimism help build resilience? (Help the youth understand that being optimistic can reduce the feelings of helplessness when faced with challenges and motivate people to take constructive action.)

### DISCUSSION: Exercising Mindfulness

Mindfulness is described as being intensely aware of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations and surroundings at the present moment, without judging or interpreting them as right or wrong. Being mindful helps us cope better with difficult thoughts and emotions and helps alleviate feelings of being overwhelmed.

Mindfulness techniques help reduce stress and allow the body to enter a state of calmness by inducing the body’s “relaxation response”. One simple mindfulness technique is to focus on breathing. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends practicing slow diaphragmatic breathing, also known as belly breathing, to help slow down the breath and communicate “safety” to the brain when we are facing a tough situation. Once learned, this breathing technique becomes a useful tool that you can always have with you to use when something upsetting happens, when you have internal tension or stress, or even if you are having trouble falling asleep.

## WHAT TO DO: Belly Breathing

Follow these steps to practice belly breathing:

1. Sit comfortably in a chair or lie down on the floor. Make sure your spine is straight. Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the floor about eight inches apart.
2. Place one hand on your belly and one hand on your chest.
3. Breathe in slowly and calmly through the nose, filling up the belly with a normal breath. The hand on your belly should move out with your belly as you breathe in as though you are filling up a balloon. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible. Avoid lifting the shoulders or expanding the chest as you inhale.
4. Breathe out slowly while counting to 5. The hand on your stomach should move in with your belly while the hand on your chest should move as little as possible.
5. Pause for 2-3 seconds before inhaling again and repeating the sequence.

Belly breathing may feel awkward or unnatural at first so practice for a few minutes each day. Once you learn this technique, you can use it to help calm your body and brain when you notice yourself becoming tense.

**Reflect:** How does being mindful help us develop resilience? (After the youth have answered, remind them that being mindful helps people cope better with difficult thoughts and emotions and helps alleviate feelings of being overwhelmed.)





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## Reflect

- What skills did you learn about that help build resilience?
- Which skill was your favorite and what did you like about it?

## Apply

- Describe a situation in your life where you could apply one of the skills you learned today.
  - a. Gratitude
  - b. Problem solving
  - c. Optimism
  - d. Mindful breathing
- How can developing resilience help you in school, sports, family life, when learning new skills, etc.?



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# GRATITUDE TRACKER

Week of \_\_\_\_\_

**Monday**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Tuesday**

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**Wednesday**

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**Thursday**

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**Friday**

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**Saturday**

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**Sunday**

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# Try Saying Something Else

Youth with a fixed mindset believe they can't improve. Youth with a growth mindset believe they can improve by using successful strategies and working hard. Help your child decide which phrases belong in each column.

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset

Cut out these phrases and decide which column to glue or tape them into:

I can't do this.	This is too hard.	I need help understanding this.	It's not going to work anyway.
I'll never get any better at this.	I can learn from this mistake.	What can I learn from my friend?	It'll take me some time to get this.
I give up.	I tried and it didn't work.	I'm just not good at this.	I'll try it a different way.

# Characteristics of Resilient Youth

- Have close supportive connections with trusted family, friends, teachers, and other adults in the community.
- Generally view themselves in a positive light and can recognize that they possess strengths and abilities.
- Are aware of their emotional responses to situations and can modulate their arousal and manage impulses.
- Possess strong communication skills; they know how to express themselves and listen to others.
- Have confidence in their ability to solve problems they encounter.
- Understand they do not have all the answers and feel confident in their ability to locate resources and ask for help and assistance.
- See themselves as resilient and not as a victim.
- Practice good self-care habits and have a number of healthy coping skills to use in a variety of situations.
- Experience themselves as a resource for others and can contribute to their family, friends, school, or community.
- Can separate themselves from their adversity and have a positive outlook for their future, despite difficult or traumatic experiences.

*\*Keep in mind that racialized expectations of perseverance, strength, religiosity, gender, and cultural norms, as well as the stigma around mental health within communities of color, may contribute to youth of color being less expressive in surfacing their struggles to recover.*

Adapted from “This Emotional Life;’ co-production of the NOVA/WGBH Science Unit and Vulcan Productions, Inc. 2009.



# Session 5 - Can't Hold Me Back

Author: Eva Timothy, Extension Assistant Professor

## Supplies

- Canvas or paper cover
- Paint brushes, markers, glue, stickers, various materials for decorating the canvas, or watercolor paper
- Magazines with pictures of youth
- Large cardboard boxes
- Velcro
- Markers
- Painter's tape
- Drawstring cloth bag
- 5-10 objects a person might use in their day-to-day living
- Handheld mirror or technology for youth to record themselves
- Timer or stopwatch
- Paper and pencils
- Regular-sized marshmallows
- Aprons or smocks

## Best Practices

- 1) Focus on hands-on learning through activities.
- 2) Ensure an adult is present in each group when participants are divided into smaller groups.
- 3) Provide ample time for youth to individually reflect and write in their journals.



### PRIOR TO SESSION:

- Obtain curriculum supplies and review introduction and activities.
- All materials may not be needed. Choose activities that are best suited for your specific group of youth.
- Tell youth to bring their confidence journals.

## Activity #1

MY MANTRA 

### PRIOR TO SESSION:

Instruct youth to think about the things they tell themselves that discourage them from trying something new or challenging. Now have them think of a positive word or phrase they could tell themselves when they have that negative thought. Instruct them to write down their phrase or word on a sheet of paper.

## INTRODUCTION

Explain the following concepts to youth before reading the story below. The human race has two kinds of mindsets: fixed and growth. When someone has a fixed mindset, they tend to believe that no matter how much they try at something, they will never improve. A growth mindset means someone believes that with repeated effort and practice, they can increase their abilities, character, intelligence, and even improve how they think about themselves (Popova, 2016).

The best way to develop a growth mindset is to begin saying positive statements when negative thoughts enter your mind. One of the best ways to fight off those discouraging thoughts is to come up with a word or phrase that reminds you of your own abilities to succeed. It could also be a quote that reminds you to push through failures. What you tell yourself then becomes your mantra. You tell yourself this thing so much that you begin to believe it.

In this session, youth will learn about developing a growth mindset and will create their own positive saying or mantra. Youth will reflect upon positive experiences they have had in the past that will give them the confidence to try new things. To help conquer the fear of trying new things, youth will practice calming techniques. Additionally, youth will develop a plan for creating change in their world.

## WHAT TO DO

Share the following story with the youth. After discussing the questions at the end of the story, have the youth create their own mantra to hang in a place where it will be seen often.

Amberlee's family often takes weekend trips to the San Francisco Bay estuary. After 5 years of regular family trips to the estuary, she started to notice a lot of trash in the water or near the shore. She felt a strong need to do something about the trash in the bay.

After one particular trip to the Bay Area, she talked to her dad about what she saw and how she felt as they drove home. He recommended they reach out to some schools to see if the students in that area would want to join her in cleaning up. They got the numbers of local schools and the agency in charge of taking care of the San Francisco Bay estuary.

Several weeks went by and Amberlee hadn't called anyone. Her past experiences in talking with new people told her she couldn't do this without sounding stupid. She went as far as to avoid conversations with her dad about how the planning was coming along. Amberlee's dad finally asked if there was something she was worried about. She opened up to him about her inability to speak to people. Her dad shared a quote with her that he kept on his desk at work. He found the quote when he was in high school and decided to participate in a speech and debate team. He told Amberlee that the quote reminded him not to allow fear to stop him from doing something he wanted. Amberlee made a drawing with the quote and hung it on her closet door so she would see it every day before and after school.

Amberlee and her dad spend the next month calling businesses to see if they would donate trash bags, gloves, snacks, and water to the volunteers. They worked with the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission to have them haul the trash off and provide waders for the volunteers. Amberlee still got nervous

when talking with people, but she would repeat the quote her dad shared and then push forward. Speaking to people over the phone got easier because Amberlee was excited about making a real difference in a place she and her family loved to visit.

On the day of the cleanup activity, Amberlee was in charge of telling everyone where to go and what to do. She was still nervous when she got up in front of everyone to start the bay cleanup, but she thought about how she had been talking to new people for the last month, and not once did someone laugh at her or her idea. This reassured her that she could do this. She successfully started the event without her voice shaking or tripping over her words.

The San Francisco Bay estuary cleanup later became an annual event hosted by the city where hundreds of people showed up every year to keep their area beautiful.

### REFLECT

1. What was Amberlee's fear?
2. What was her passion?
3. What became her mantra?
4. What happened as a result of her facing her fear and putting together a San Francisco Bay estuary cleanup?
5. How did challenging her fear of failure help her in the long run?

### APPLY

1. Why did you pick the word, saying, or quote you did?
2. How will you use your mantra to help you?

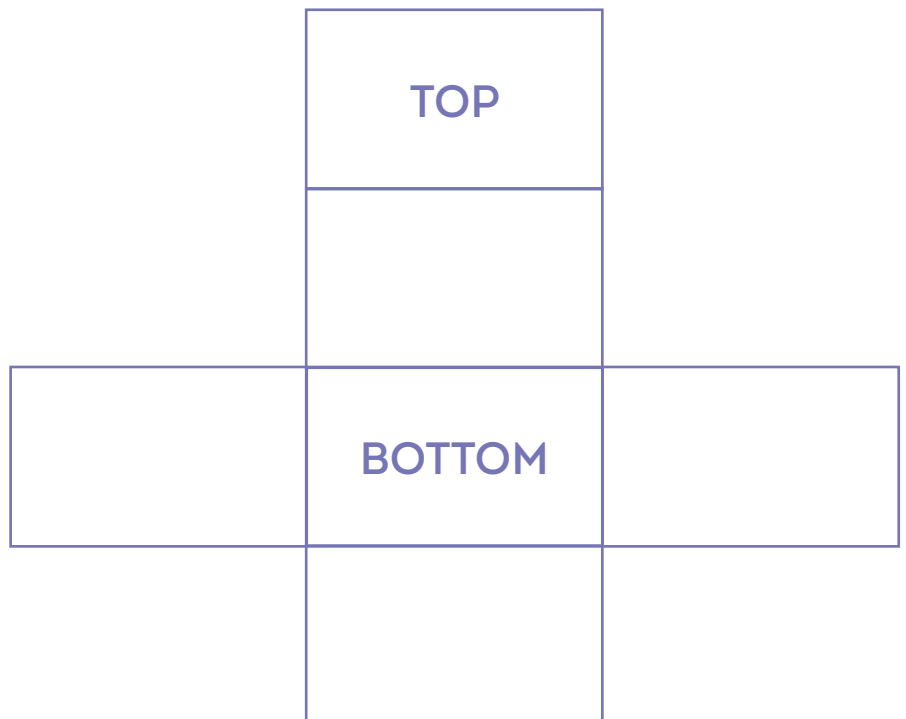
## Activity #2

BUILD ME UP



### PRIOR TO SESSION:

Draw the following diagram on the boxes, cut, fold, and glue together to make as many blocks as possible. With painter's tape, create a designated area for tower placement. Groups will gather in another area and move their finished tower to the area you outlined with painter's tape. \*You may place obstacles on the floor or in the room to make this activity more challenging.



## INTRODUCTION

Explain that each of us battles with automatic negative thoughts and if we aren't careful, they can take over. This happens when we listen to the little voice in our head that tells us we can't do something or that we might look stupid doing it. Think of it this way, thoughts lead to feelings, which then lead to action or inaction. Our experiences, good or bad, either confirm our instant negative thoughts or dispel them. Therefore, when negative thoughts go unchallenged, we may begin to believe them to be a true reflection of our abilities, character, intelligence, or value. Furthermore, these discouraging thoughts generally start with "I should...", "I can't because...", "I always...", or "I never..." phrase. These statements are absolutes. They tell a person that things will never change. These are fixed mindset statements.

To get past these negative thoughts, so you can embrace challenges, ask yourself what experiences you have had in the past that make these thoughts false? Think about successes you have had. How do those positive experiences confirm that you are capable of much more? Reflecting on positive experiences allows us to gain greater confidence in our own ability to take on and become successful at new tasks. The more we face and successfully complete a task, the easier it is to know how to handle it the next time. Doing hard things can give you the tools needed for later success.

## WHAT TO DO

Split youth into multiple groups with at least five people in each group. Have volunteer leaders join groups as well. Give one color of markers to each group. This will make it harder for youth to identify who wrote what in the group. Youth will get 12 blocks for their team. Youth will then write positive and negative things about themselves on the blocks. They may only write about themselves. They are not permitted to write about another team member. However, if a teammate is having difficulty coming up with enough traits to put on their blocks, team members may share positive attributes about the person.

Once all the sides of each block have been written on, all blocks should be placed in a pile so no one knows who they belong to. Next, have each team build their tower by attaching the positive statement sides to one another with pieces of Velcro. Only positive statements may touch one another when building a tower. Once the group has built a tower they must work as a team to lift and move it to another designated spot in the room. If their tower falls before getting to the designated area, the team must stop and rebuild it. The first team to build and move their tower to the designated area wins.

## REFLECT:

1. How did building with positives enable you to succeed in making a tower?
2. How did having Velcro on the blocks enable you to move your tower without it falling?
3. Were there any mistakes made in building and moving your tower? If so, what did you learn from the mistake(s)?

## APPLY:

1. How can you use this activity to remind yourself to dismiss negative thoughts and only focus on the positives?
2. How can challenging negative thoughts give you the courage to take on personally challenging tasks?
3. What positive things have you learned about yourself from experiences where you felt like you failed?



## PRIOR TO SESSION

Find a drawstring bag and objects that you use on a regular basis. The items need to be things the youth could tell their peers how to use. Place enough objects in the bags for each participating youth to have a turn. Bring extra items in case you want to do this activity multiple times. Keep them hidden so no one has an unfair advantage if they see the objects.

## INTRODUCTION

Public speaking is something that almost everyone is afraid to do. According to the University of Iowa, 75% of all people experience great anxiety when it comes to public speaking. Completely eliminating the fear related to speaking in front of a group is not possible. However, there are several ways to quiet your fears so that no one else knows you are nervous. Youth will now practice speaking to a group on the fly, then they'll learn and practice ways to help them speak confidently in front of groups.

## WHAT TO DO

Split youth into groups with at least five participants in each group. If there are not enough youth to split into multiple smaller groups, do this activity as a larger group. Give a bag of objects to each group. Number the members of your group starting with the number 1. The first person will take the bag and without looking in it, will pull out an item. They will then have 15 seconds to explain how to use the object. After each person has had a turn to explain how to use the object they picked, place all items back in the bag. \* Alternative: use slips of paper with the name of objects on them. Fold the slips and have youth draw out one slip of paper.

Write the following items on slips of paper and pass them out to the youth. Have the youth take turns reading the different techniques below.

## CALMING TECHNIQUES

1. Get physical. Run around an area or find a place to do stretches.
2. Write yourself some encouraging notes that you can read as you prepare for your moment in the spotlight. If you do not feel like you have anything nice to write to yourself, ask a friend or family member to write something positive for you to read.
3. Use grounding techniques to help your mind focus on the fact that you are safe. Grounding techniques consist of using your five senses to reassure the mind that everything is okay when you feel extremely anxious. For example, you can touch a podium and think about how it feels, what it looks like, or you could think about how your feet feel in your shoes on solid ground.
4. Release tension. Squeeze your fingers together, then release. If you feel the tension in your neck and shoulders, squeeze your shoulders up toward your head and hold for 5 seconds, and release, letting your shoulders and arms drop swiftly. Now try this with your arms, moving to your legs, and then try tensing and releasing your whole body.
5. Use comedy. Share some funny stories or find a joke that fits your topic.
6. Challenge negative thoughts that come to mind about your ability to do well. (Techniques from Staley, n.d.)

### REFLECT:

1. How did you feel as your turn got closer?
2. What were your thoughts as your turn got closer?
3. In what part of your body did you notice tension or anxiety?
4. In what ways do you feel you did well when it was your turn?

### APPLY:

1. How can you apply this activity to your everyday life?
2. Which of the calming techniques will you use the next time you feel nervous?

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## Activity #4

GARBLED 'MALLOW MOUTH

### WHAT TO DO

You may have heard that practice makes perfect. So, let's get to it. Grab another bag of objects and have each person take two to three marshmallows. \*Alternative: write the name of objects on small pieces of folded paper and draw a slip of paper out. Have youth review the techniques they can use to help them feel calmer while presenting or as they wait their turn. Allow them to share the calming technique they think will help them. Give youth 5 minutes to use that technique before moving on.

Now each person will take an item or slip of paper from their bag. Have each person come to the front of the group, place their marshmallows in their mouth, and explain how to use the object they drew from the bag. The group must then guess what the object is based on the description of how to use it. The youth describing how to use the object may not say the name of the object or use hand motions. Tell the youth that it is okay to laugh as they speak with the marshmallows in their mouth. This game is meant to help us remember that we do not have to be perfect.

### REFLECT:

1. What calming technique did you like most?
2. How did practicing beforehand help you?
3. Did you laugh when people tried to speak with marshmallows in their mouths?
4. What effect did laughing have on you during this activity?

### APPLY:

1. How can calming techniques be used in your life when you feel anxious about a task?
2. How can you use what you've learned to help other people feel more comfortable and confident when speaking to you or in a group setting?
3. How does this activity prepare you for clubs, activities, and competitions?



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# Session 6 - Being True to You

Author: Cindy Jenkins, Extension Assistant Professor

## Supplies

- Two or three inflatable beach balls (enough to split into groups of five or six people)
- Journals (they should already have these if you are at camp)
- Shield template (see Activity 3: My Mantra)
- Cardboard - enough for each student to make a shield
- Markers (no markers for younger kids)
- Stickers and other decorating supplies (for shield if desired)
- Pencils or pens
- Dice - enough for one large group
- Small and fun prize for winning group from activity 2 (candy would be fine)
- Props for skits
- Two to three sheets of big paper (the kind that sticks to the wall) to write on or you can use a whiteboard

## Best Practices

- 1) Focus on hands-on learning through activities.
- 2) Ensure an adult is present in each group when participants are divided into smaller groups.
- 3) Provide ample time for youth to individually reflect and write in their journals.



## PRIOR TO SESSION

- Obtain curriculum supplies and review introduction and activities.
- All materials may not be needed. Choose activities that are best suited for your specific group of youth.

# Activity #1

## ICE BREAKER BALL TOSS



### PRIOR TO SESSION

Come up with some positive things that people tend to value about each other. The kids will have practiced these enough that they will not need prompts on the ball, so leave them blank. This can be any attribute or skill.

Some examples include:

- Work hard
- Nice person
- Make great food
- My buddy hangs out with me
- Good at art
- Help people
- Good leader
- Grit and determination
- Good stories
- I love working with animals
- I love exploring in nature
- I love \_\_\_\_\_.
- My friend is funny
- Honest
- Respectful
- Peaceful
- My parents are great

### WHAT TO DO

Take the ball and have the kids get in a circle. Tell them to toss the ball to each other (making sure each person gets a turn) and say something they value about themselves or another person. Advise them that there are prompts on the ball if they have a hard time coming up with something. However, the next ball will not have prompts. There is a list of potential prompts above.

Do the activity again with the ball that has no prompts. It's okay to go around several times to help get them talking. You can also tell them some of the things you value in yourself and others.

Ask the group the following questions: 1) What is it you most value about yourself and others? and 2) Are there things you value about other people that you'd like to work on in yourself?

# Activity #2

## FIGURING OUT CONFIDENCE



### PRIOR TO SESSION

Prepare props for skits and a list of attributes of confident people in case you need to prompt the group.

### WHAT TO DO

Moderate a discussion with youth to discuss the skills they believe belong to confident people. Write down the skills they bring up on a numbered list. After a brief period of sharing and writing attributes, have two or three members of each group roll the dice.

The numbers rolled are the skills youth will work on. Make sure each group knows all the skills selected by their group. As a group, have the youth come up with a skit that demonstrates these skills. Explain that they will want to choose a situation for their skit that is as true to life as possible so they can practice and demonstrate their confidence skills. Choose a leader for each group who will assist with moving the process along and make final decisions. Give them 5-10 minutes to come up with their skit and play music to help keep them focused and energized.



When each group does their skit, have an impartial judge decide which skit best demonstrates the skills that were selected. Give the group that wins a small prize.

Ask the group the following questions:

1. How did you put your confidence skills into practice?
2. How can you apply these skills to real life situations?

## Activity #3

RACE TO FINDING YOU

### PRIOR TO SESSION

Before the activity, write down three to four things about yourself that you view as strengths (i.e., creative, sympathetic, funny, friendly, etc.). Next, think about a hobby or skill you always wanted to work on and then finally learned. What did you do to make it happen? How did you find the time? How did you help yourself overcome obstacles? Prepare your story to share with the group as an example.

Example:

My Strengths	What I want to achieve

Achievement That I Chose	Skills that Helped Me

### WHAT TO DO

Share your example of what you did to accomplish a goal or work on a skill. Write down your prepared example on the big paper or white board. Then, have the youth divide into groups of two or three. Have them brainstorm a hobby or skill they've always wanted to try but never had the time or opportunity to work on it. Brainstorm a master plan of how you can start working on your hobby or goal as soon as you get home. Discuss the following skills:

- Is there a way to learn it or practice it for free on the internet?
- Is there a way you could practice your hobby, but in smaller or easier ways? Could you ask to help a friend who is already into this hobby?
  - Photography - practice basic skills with your smartphone camera until you can get a nicer phone or camera.
  - Painting - buy less expensive paints until you get better at painting. Save money for nicer paints and supplies in the meantime.
  - Woodworking - start with the most basic tools and activities. Then, build from there.
- Make a plan to practice your skill and name someone you will follow up with on your goal.

## PRIOR TO SESSION

Print out a life-sized shield (or the size you prefer) for the kids to use as a template. Keep this one blank. Then, prepare your own shield and mantra and a story about how this helps you have courage and confidence in your everyday life. Prepare examples of famous people or other people you know and give examples of their mantras. (Option: turn this into a jeopardy game).

## WHAT TO DO

### Read the following paragraphs:

There is an old Cherokee legend of the good wolf vs. the bad wolf. In the story, an older Cherokee man tells a young man that he is fighting a battle inside of him: the good wolf vs the bad wolf. When the young man asks him which wolf will win, the older man says, "The one you feed." The bad wolf generally tells us bad things about ourselves, like that we aren't good enough or that we can't do something, while the good wolf tells us that we are capable and can do hard things.

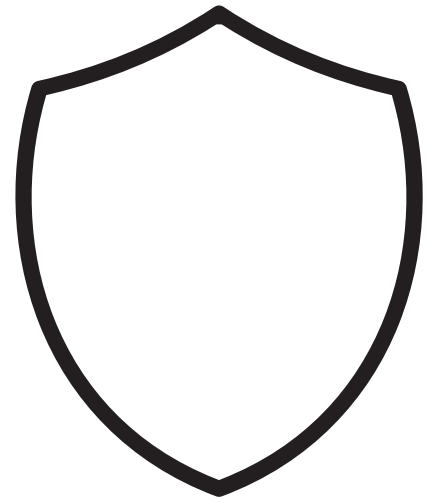
We all have good thoughts and bad thoughts inside of us. To face challenges and feed the good wolf, we need a few things to help ourselves. One of the things that can help is to have your own mantra to use when things get hard. Remind the class that self-esteem must come from within and using a mantra is one of the ways that helps invoke your self-esteem when you need to slay a tough life challenge.

Give examples of famous people or other people you know who have mantras. (Option: turn this into a jeopardy game)

### Activity:

Ask the kids to imagine that their good friend is struggling with thinking positive thoughts about him or herself. They've been having a hard time for a few weeks. Have them write down what they would tell their friend to help encourage them.

Once they have this written down, ask them to consider if they would tell this same thing to themselves. Show them the example of your shield and why that works for you. Then, have them tweak what they want to say so it fits on a shield and can become their mantra - whatever it is they would tell themselves or a friend when life gets hard. Next have them cut out and decorate their shields with their mantra highly visible on the front of the shield.



## PRIOR TO SESSION

Prepare a list of things/people you are grateful for along with a few of the reasons why listed next to the most important items/people.

This session will help youth learn to value their own uniqueness and individuality. Youth will discover and discuss how uniqueness and individuality contribute to feeling confident. Youth will also reflect on their successes in accomplishing hard things and how expressing gratitude contributes to their confidence and feelings of well-being.

## WHAT TO DO

Read to the group some of the items on your list and the reasons why some of them are so important to you. Advise them that a big part of developing self-esteem and self-worth, which translates into confidence, is gratitude. This can even counteract symptoms of depression.

Have the group write or draw pictures in their journals about what they are grateful for. When they are finished writing, ask some of them to share what they wrote down. Give them a challenge to continue writing in a gratitude journal.



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## Reflect

- What are your current strengths that help you have and/or help you build confidence in yourself?
- How will being grateful help you gain confidence?
- What are some specific steps that will help you build confidence and resilience? Make a plan.

## Apply

- Write a plan down in your journal for how you are going to build your confidence and resiliency skills.
- How does practicing skills prepare you to face challenges at school or in social settings?



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## REFERENCES

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