



Exploring Leadership

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP: RESILIENCE

When stress, adversity, or trauma strikes, we may feel anger, grief, and pain. Despite these emotions, we keep moving forward. Resilience isn't just about enduring hardships—it's about reaching out for support. Having a supportive community helps you bounce back from setbacks and stay on track, even when your goals seem out of reach.

CONVERSATION STARTER:

How can staying connected with family and friends help build resilience? In what ways do strong, positive relationships support you during both good times and challenges?

Resilience is the ability to recover from tough situations, and it's a key skill for success in life. It's about getting back up after failure, rejection, or defeat. Resilient people don't just survive—they learn from their challenges and keep moving forward. Whether you're facing personal struggles, school issues, or career setbacks, resilience helps you keep pushing and find new paths toward success.

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

In these two activities, you'll learn about resilience and how a strong support system can help you overcome adversity.

FACILITATOR TIPS:

- This lesson can be completed in 20 minutes or less if you keep the group on track.
- Use Activity 2 as an optional hands-on exercise to further illustrate the concept of resilience by helping participants map out their support system.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Define resilience as a key life skill for overcoming challenges.
- Identify the supportive community that will help develop Resilience.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Blank paper (no lines) & pencils
- Computer and projector to show [conclusion video](#)

Activity 1 – Understanding Resilience:

- Ask participants to stand up and spread out across the room.
- Have them touch something in their environment (but not another person).
- Then ask them to touch something else, but still not another person.
- Ask, "How many of you used your hands?" (Most participants will say they did.)
- Follow up with, "You know you have nerve endings all over your body, so why did you use your hands?" (Encourage responses like habit, comfort, etc.)
- Then say, "Now imagine you have no arms. How would you touch something?" (Prompt responses like using feet, knees, legs, etc.)
- Conclude with: "That's resilience! You didn't give up. You found a way to adapt to the challenge."



EXPLORATION ACTIVITY (CONTINUED):

Activity 2 (Optional) - Building Your Support System:

- Provide each participant with a blank sheet of paper and a pencil.
- Ask them to draw a small circle in the middle and write their name in it.
- Have them draw a larger circle around the first one and write the names of people they live with.
- Continue having them add more circles, labeling each with the names of:
 - Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins (if nearby)
 - Neighbors who could help in a tough spot
 - Close friends
 - Supportive people at school (teachers, coaches, classmates, etc.)
 - Community figures (local business leaders, the mayor, etc.)
 - People who have moved away but still stay in touch
 - People from online communities or through activities (sports, gaming, etc.)
- By mapping out your support system, you can better understand the relationships that help build your resilience and guide you through life's challenges.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Think about the things you do out of habit, like when most of us instinctively used our hands instead of other body parts. Can you think of a time in your life when you approached a challenge with only one way of thinking or solving it?
- Reflect on your support system—the circles of people in your life. How do these circles represent different types of relationships for you?
- How does each circle in your support system play a role in your life? Which circle do you turn to for emotional support? Which for advice or help with tasks?
- When facing setbacks, how can the people in your circles help you stay resilient and bounce back?





APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- Are there certain types of problems or challenges that you would only share with a specific circle of people? Why might that be?
- How do you maintain relationships in each of your circles? Which one do you feel the most connected to, and which one could you improve?
- Everyone’s circles may look different. How do you think other people’s circles of support might differ from yours, and how does that impact their resilience?

CONCLUSION:

Resilience isn’t just about bouncing back—it’s about learning, adapting, and growing stronger through adversity. With the right mindset and a supportive community, setbacks can become powerful learning experiences. Resilience helps you stay focused on your goals, even when the journey gets tough.

Show this video titled “Batman Begins: Why Do We Fall? So We Can Learn to Pick Ourselves Up” (1:31 minutes) and then discuss it as a group.

Like Bruce Wayne in Batman Begins, we all face challenges—but we also have people who help us rise again. By embracing resilience, you open the door to personal growth, lasting success, and the strength to overcome any obstacle.

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REFERENCES

- Resilience: Build skills to endure hardship: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/resilience-training/in-depth/resilience/art-20046311>
- Building Resilience: <https://parentandteen.com/building-resilience-in-teens/>
- How to Develop Resilience And Grit in Teenagers And Kids: <https://www.jonnyshannon.com/blog/resilience-grit>
- Putting the Pieces Together by Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service: <https://agrilifelearn.tamu.edu/s/product/putting-the-pieces-together/01t4x0000040fhcAAC>
- Batman Begins (Conclusion video): <https://youtu.be/HlcGuFnI7ZU> (1:31 minutes)