

Exploring Leadership

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP: RESILIENCE

When stress, adversity, or trauma strikes, one may experience anger, grief, and pain, but you're able to keep functioning. However, Resilience isn't about putting up with something difficult, being stoic or figuring it out on your own. Being able to reach out to others for support is a key part of being resilient. Having a supportive community to reach out to is the best way to ensure that young people do not give up on their dreams even in the face of setbacks or adversity.

CONVERSATION STARTER:

- If you want to build your Resilience, get connected! Building strong, positive relationships with loved ones and friends can provide you with support during both the good and bad times.

Resilience is the ability to adapt to difficult situations, and it is one of the most important skills for success in all areas of life. You have to be able to bounce back from defeat, rejection, or failure.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Define Resilience as a valuable life skill.
- Identify the supportive community that will help develop Resilience.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Blank paper (no lines) & pencils
- Computer/Projector to show conclusion video.

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Have participants stand up and spread out.

- Tell them to touch something in their immediate environment (not another person).
- Tell them to touch something else (still not another person).

- Ask: "How many of you used your hands?" [Most/All will say they did.]
- Ask: "You all know you have nerve endings all over your body, so why did you use your hands?" [Habit; it's the way we've always done it; etc.]
- Say: "Now pretend you have no arms. Touch something." (Again, not another person.)
- Ask: "How did you do it?" [Foot, knee, leg, butt, etc.]
- Say: "That is Resilience! No one sat down and said, 'Oh, I can't do it now.' You all faced this 'adversity' and found a way. Good start!"

FACILITATOR TIP:

- All this can be done in 20 minutes or less if you move the group along purposefully.
- See Appendix for another hands-on Activity (optional) that also illustrates Resilience.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Think about the things you do out of habit, like in the first activity when most of us used our hands first instead of another available body part. Is there a time in your life when you approached a challenge with only one type of mindset?
- Think about your circles and the kinds of relationships they represent.
- What roles do the various circles have in your life?
- When you face setbacks or adversity, how can the people in the circles help you cope?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- Are there certain issues you would discuss only with particular circles? Would you ever skip to an outer circle to get help with some issues?
- How well do you maintain relationships within each circle? Which circle is your “strongest”? “Weakest”?
- How might other people’s circles differ from yours?



CONCLUSION:

Show this short clip from the movie Batman Begins, which illustrates the importance of a supportive community in developing Resilience: <https://youtu.be/HlcGuFnI7ZU>. Not all of us can be Batman, but we all have people who can help us pick ourselves back up. (After the clip, Bruce Wayne picks himself up and goes out as Batman to save the city.)

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REFERENCES

- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/resilience-training/in-depth/resilience/art-20046311>
- <https://parentandteen.com/building-resilience-in-teens/>
- <https://www.jonnyshannon.com/blog/resilience-grit>
- Putting the Pieces Together, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M University 4-H
- <https://youtu.be/HlcGuFnI7ZU> -- Conclusion video (from Batman Begins)



APPENDIX:

Activity 2:

- Give all participants a blank sheet of paper and pencil on which to do this:
 - Draw a small circle in the middle. Write your name in the circle.
 - Draw a circle around that one and write the names of the people that live with you.
 - Continue drawing larger circles; within each, write the names of the following:
 - Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins that live nearby
 - Neighbors you could call on for help if needed
 - Close friends
 - Supportive people at school: classmates, teachers, coaches, etc.
 - People/Places in the larger community: business leaders, the mayor, local business workers, volunteer groups, etc.
 - People who have moved away but you still know; family in different places
 - People outside of your state that you have come to know through youth activities, athletics, online communities/gaming, etc.

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