

# BUILDING RESILIENCE



1 hour

Create a safe and positive learning environment by agreeing ground rules for the lesson.

In this lesson we will learn:

- ➔ that there are a range of coping strategies that can be helpful
- ➔ to understand that everyone experiences difficult times and feelings
- ➔ that resilience is about working through challenging times.

## Key message

Sometimes we use the coping strategies we know and have used before. At other times we need to ask for help. If you feel lonely or isolated or are going through a difficult time, reach out to someone for support.

## Resources

- Coping cards plus blank cards
- Situation cards
- “My five” handout
- Room labels – helpful, harmful and useless
- “Resilience” film
- Building resilience – film discussion point handout
- Character profile cards.

## Activity

1. Watch the film “Resilience”. Allow time for students to talk about the film. Asking the student to work in small groups, hand out the discussion points, one character per group. Ask each group to complete a character profile (handout) for their character from the film. Thinking in particular about what the character can do to build resilience and what you would recommend as a friend. Share these as a class.
2. Ask students to write down difficult situations or problems on pieces of paper or sticky notes (or use situation cards). Gather these up.
3. Hand out two cards to each student: either two coping cards or one coping card and one blank card where they can add their own idea. Each student chooses one to hold up where everyone can see it.
4. Label areas in the room **helpful**, **harmful** and **useless**. Read out one of the situations which the students wrote down and ask them to move according to which category their coping strategies would fit into for that situation.
5. Discuss each response and compare ideas and thoughts. Would you need more than one coping strategy? What makes something harmful or useless? What do we need to consider when thinking about how we are coping? How will we know if what we are doing has helped?

Does anything ever get in the way of us doing what we know will be helpful? Is the helpful thing the same as the easy thing? Can it be difficult to do what we know will be helpful? Can you think of an example (for instance, knowing who to go to for support is not the same as actually ringing them up or going to their office)? How could we overcome this (for instance, go with a friend)?





6. Plenary: To build resilience we need to have a toolkit of strategies that keep our lives in balance and might help us feel better able to cope when a challenge comes our way. Remind the class of the video clip. It's also useful to have a specific plan to help us cope with things that may come our way and cause us stress, to make sure that we have 'the right tools for the job' when we have to cope with a difficult situation.
7. Hand out the "My Five" sheets and **ask students to think about a plan of 5 things they can do to help themselves cope with stressful situations.** They do not need to share it if they do not wish to do so.

## Reflection

Which coping strategies will I try to use when I need them?

What ideas will I take from this lesson?

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**Links to:** Finding a way forward | Barriers to seeking help | Exam stress |  
My support network | Supporting my friends

Make sure young people know what support is available  
and how to access this support.

