

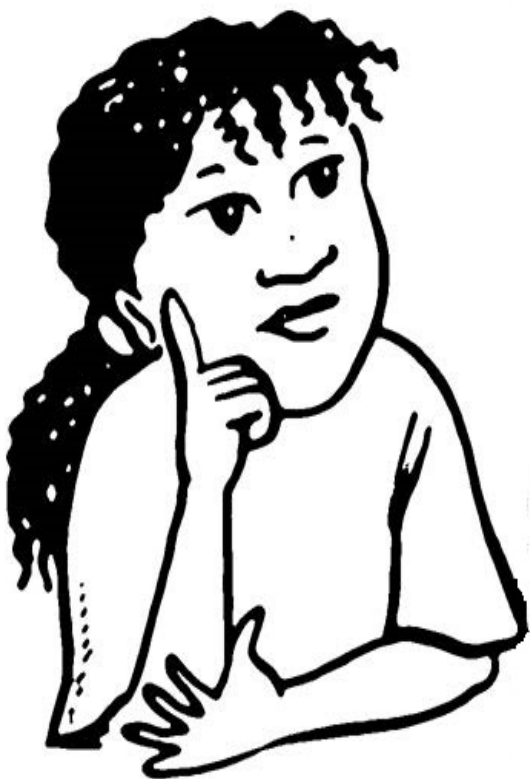


# WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

*Resilience is the ability to adapt and to 'bounce back' when unexpected things happen.*

## **What do we do when something doesn't work out as we expect?**

Perhaps we get upset, start yelling, hit out at someone... or simply give up. However, none of these reactions will help us to overcome the challenges that we face. Resilience means being able to adjust to changing circumstances, and to respond in a positive way. Resilient people can handle change and think of ways to solve problems that happen in their lives.



Sometimes these problems may be small ones:  
*Lucy really wanted to wear her red t-shirt today, but it's in the wash. She could get angry and feel that her whole day is ruined - or she could be disappointed, but then refocus on finding an alternative shirt to wear.*

Some challenges might be bigger, and out of our control:  
*Sam's family is moving away to a different city. Sam and Josh have been friends all through school - they don't want to be separated! Although they are sad and upset about it, they can make a strategy to make the best of their situation - perhaps it might be to email and phone each other, so they can still be in touch regularly.*

## **We face challenges every day, in every area of our lives.**

Not getting picked for a team at lunchtime; having rain cancel a Saturday morning sports game; being sick on the day of a friend's birthday party; or not getting words right in a spelling test when we have studied - we face unexpected events all the time. And, while it is important to be mature and responsible in our reactions, it is also important to remember that it is OK to feel angry, or sad, or disappointed when things go wrong. If we can acknowledge our feelings while staying in control of our actions, we are acting in a resilient manner.



## How can I be more resilient?

- Accept that change happens - and will continue to happen - throughout life. Although we will make lots of decisions ourselves that change our lives, many other changes will be out of our control.
- Be positive about ourselves. Remember that you are special and unique, nobody else is just like you! Being positive and remembering our strengths can help us to deal with challenges.
- Keep things in perspective, and look at situations from more than one viewpoint. Remember that all things change over time, and even things that feel very difficult now will get better.
- Build positive relationships. Having people around us who are supportive and encouraging - whether they are parents, friends, uncles or aunts, teachers, or youth leaders - means that we have trustworthy people to go to when we need help and advice.
- Help others. Do some fund-raising for a charity, or help elderly people in the community.
- Set goals. Working towards - and achieving - a realistic goal helps us to build confidence and self-esteem.



### References

American Psychological Association 'Resilience Guide for teachers and parents' 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/resilience.aspx> 30 June 2015

PsychCentral.com 'Ten Tips for Raising Resilient Kids' 25 July 2013. Retrieved from: <http://psychcentral.com/lib/10-tips-for-raising-resilient-kids/> 30 June 2015

American Psychological Association 'The Road to Resilience' 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx> 30 June 2015

With support from  *JSB Education*

LET NZ 5 August 2015

