

## 1

WHY **RESILIENCE** IS THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

Resilience is about more than just coping or surviving; it's about thriving in the face of adversity. In fact, for youth "living in poverty, students who have barriers to learning, or students experiencing stress and trauma, it may be the skill that makes all the difference."<sup>1</sup> And, best of all, it is a skill that anyone can learn – particularly if they have someone in their corner! As research shows: "one caring person—often a youth worker, social worker, neighbor, grandparent, older friend, clergy member—has the power to change the life trajectory of a child from 'at risk' to 'at promise.'"<sup>2</sup>

## 2

HOW TO **NURTURE RESILIENCE** IN YOUNG PEOPLE

**Try these ways to help youth bounce back from setbacks and challenges they may face:**

**Turning failure into success**

Share examples from YOUR own life when you turned a negative situation into something positive. Then ask your mentee to tell you about a time when they handled a challenge or hardship – and what they learnt from the situation. This will help them see they already have an innate resilience! Get them to visit the library or print out articles from the Internet about people who have overcome great odds to attain success, such as Nelson Mandela, Oprah Winfrey, or Caster Semenye. Better yet, ask them who THEY admire – a celebrity, a relative or community member – and get them to find out how they dealt with difficult times.

**Grow a passion**

Ask the young person what they like doing or are good at. "Having one or more things one can do well, can take pride in, and can share with others, seems to be another factor that promotes resilience among adolescents."<sup>3</sup> Whether it's reading, singing, running or acting, encourage them to dedicate time to growing a talent or passion. This can help them feel good about themselves – and contribute to their sense of wellbeing, motivation and self-respect.

**Keep busy, keep learning**

When things go wrong, people often retreat or feel 'stuck'. Staying busy is not only the best way to keep calm; it also gets you closer to your goals!<sup>4</sup> From part-time work to volunteering, taking online courses to reading, encourage the young person to make good use of their spare time. This could also open doors for future opportunities.

**Find something to be grateful for**

Did you know that even if it feels like there is nothing to be grateful for, simply looking for something can make one feel happier!<sup>5</sup> Encourage the young person to think about things that they appreciate in their lives – even if they seem really insignificant.

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:**

"Books saved me from drug addiction": Share this inspiring talk by 25-year-old Philani Dladla about how he went from being homeless to helping others – and himself: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40qu0D9M3BY>

"Reflections on resilience": take a look at this overview of resilience – and the part you can play: [http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed\\_lead/el201309\\_truebridge.pdf](http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el201309_truebridge.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> "Unleashing the Power of Resiliency: The Teacher's Super Power". ASCD in Service. Available at <http://inservice.ascd.org/unleashing-the-power-of-resiliency-the-teachers-super-power/>

<sup>2</sup> "Resilience & Youth Development". California Healthy Kids Survey. Fall 2007/Spring 2008. Available at [http://surveydata.wested.org/resources/rydm\\_surveycontent.pdf](http://surveydata.wested.org/resources/rydm_surveycontent.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> "Positive Mental Health: Resilience". Child Trends: Adolescent Health Highlight, Publication #2013-3. January 2013. Available at [http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Child\\_Trends-2013\\_11\\_01\\_AHH\\_Resilience.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Child_Trends-2013_11_01_AHH_Resilience.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Barker, E. "How To Be Resilient: 8 Steps to Success When Life gets Hard". Barking up the wrong tree. tAvailable at: <http://www.bakadesuyo.com/2014/07/how-to-be-resilient/>

<sup>5</sup> Barker, E. "Be More Successful: New Harvard Research Reveals a Fun Way To Do It.". Barking Up The Wrong Tree. Available at: <http://www.bakadesuyo.com/2014/09/be-more-successful/>

