



# Nurturing Resilience

A self-directed inquiry group guide

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This inquiry guide is dedicated to teachers and other educators and made freely available for their use. The resource was developed by the Centre for Addictions Research of BC with funding provided by the British Columbia Ministry of Health. Any views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Ministry of Health or the Centre for Addictions Research of BC.

Using this guide requires you to read several articles, chapters and excerpts. If you do not have access to these required readings, you are invited to contact [carbcyan@uvic.ca](mailto:carbcyan@uvic.ca).



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# Introduction to the Guide

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This guide is meant to support professional leaning among educators but may be useful to parents or other adults who interact with children. It is designed to be used in self-directed inquiry groups but can also be used for personal study. It is about the concept of resilience, and it helps build the capacity to nurture students' (and others') ability to adapt to adversity.

The readings have been carefully selected to provide an accessible introduction to the material and stimulate the application of the ideas into practice. The suggested discussion questions and activities are designed to help you engage with the material. You are encouraged to pursue other questions that might present themselves or experiment with other activities. The important thing is to engage with the ideas through an intentional process of inquiry.

The material is arranged as a 4-session inquiry, but you can adapt it to fit your own availability and needs. Each session includes

- a theory reading and a practice reading,
- a short introduction to the material of the session,
- discussion questions that spring from the readings,
- activities to work on individually, with colleagues or in the classrooms and
- suggestions for reflection and recording thoughts in your journal.

Human resilience is a virtue (like courage or wisdom) that can be nurtured. It is a skill that can be learned in the environment in which the child is situated. Developing the virtue of resilience is fundamental to effective drug education (Brown, Jean-Marie, & Beck, 2010). In contrast to zero-tolerance drug education that seeks to isolate children from drug use, resilience-based drug education (e.g., *iMinds*) aims to develop children's capacity to manage their own well-being while interacting with environments in which drug use is common. This empowerment (rather than protectionist) orientation grows out of the vision captured in the [Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion](#) but has roots going back to Aristotle's discussion of the virtues and his notion of well-being (in contrast to biological health) as the ultimate goal of all human activity. Well-being can be defined in terms of personal thriving and collective flourishing, with individuals having an experience of integrity within themselves and of integration within their communities (Alexander, 2008; Buchanan, 2000).

This guide supports those who work with children to help them develop self-regulation and build the competencies needed to survive and thrive in the constantly changing societies we live in today. Developing self-regulation and cognitive, social and emotional competencies increases well-being and resilience which decreases the risk of developing mental, emotional and behavioural health problems later. Resilience is an inclusive concept related to various competencies and capacities. It fits well with the broader scope of [British Columbia's new K-12 curriculum](#) with its emphasis on [core competencies](#) including critical and creative thinking and "the skills, strategies, and dispositions that help students to stay healthy and active, set goals, monitor progress, regulate emotions, respect their own rights and the rights of others, manage stress, and persevere in difficult situations."

# Session 1:

## Understanding resilience

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*“The strongest oak of the forest is not the one that is protected from the storm and hidden from the sun. It is the one that stands in the open, where it is compelled to struggle for its existence against the winds and rains and the scorching sun.”* ~Napoleon Hill

### Introduction

The study of resilience dates back to the 1970s, though the concept of human resilience is as old as humanity itself. Garmzy and Masten (early pioneers in this field) defined resilience as “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging and threatening circumstances.” For decades, human development research focused on reducing risk to promote health. The notion of resilience created a paradigm shift in research by using a strengths-based model rather than a deficit and problem-oriented approach.

The main question in the field of resilience is, “What is it that allows some children to thrive and develop into successful adults despite facing adversity?” While adversity is nearly constant in today’s complex changing world, the good news is that resilience is a skill, capacity or virtue. We are not simply born with it. Nor is it determined by personality. Rather it is developed in the environment in which the person grows. This highlights the importance of developing cognitive, social and emotional competencies in children and youth early. Such development during the early years of life increases resilience which decreases the risk of developing mental, emotional and behavioural health problems.

When defining resilience, many writers have appealed to the concept of “bouncing back.” The fact is that resilience is more than just bouncing back or recovering from difficulties. It includes the skills and competencies (such as critical thinking, sense of agency, problem-solving, empathy and communication) that enable a child to be better equipped for future challenging and difficult circumstances. This means, the child not only survives but also thrives.

Various promotive and protective factors or “assets” within the *individual, family and context* all contribute to the development of resilience. Some of the most commonly identified individual assets include a social and adaptable temperament, good cognitive ability, a positive view of self and a hopeful outlook on life. Family assets include close and supportive relationships with parents, caregivers and extended family members, and socioeconomic advantages. Among contextual factors, schools play an important role in terms of providing quality education and in nurturing connectedness within the school community. This includes nurturing students’ social and emotional capacities so that they acquire the skills, strategies and dispositions to succeed in their lives.



If you do not have access to the following readings or any required reading in this guide, you are invited to contact [carbcvan@uvic.ca](mailto:carbcvan@uvic.ca).

## Theory reading

Schonert-Reichl, K. (2008). Considering Resilience in Children and Youth: Fostering Positive Adaptation and Competence in Schools, Families, and Communities. Discussion paper for The Learning Partnership. The National Dialogue on Resilience in Youth. Retrieved from [http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/upload/Schonert-Reichl\\_Resiliency\\_2008\\_National%20Dialogue%20Paper\\_TLP.pdf](http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/upload/Schonert-Reichl_Resiliency_2008_National%20Dialogue%20Paper_TLP.pdf)

## Practice reading

Barankin, T. & Khanlou, N. (2007). Understanding Resilience. In *Growing Up Resilient: Ways to Build Resilience in Children and Youth* (pp. 8-15). Toronto: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

## Discussion questions

1. Resilience has been defined as “the process of, capacity for, or the outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging and threatening circumstances.” (Garmezy & Masten). As a teacher, how do you define resilience? How might your definition be different than that of a parent or a child? Discuss.
2. Do you think resilience is developed or innate? Why?
3. Adversity could mean anything that threatens a child’s development. Common adversities include poverty, neglect, maltreatment, violence, isolation, war, exposure to racism, discrimination, teen pregnancy, having parents or caregivers with severe mental illness or serious physical illness, and the like. What are your thoughts on “adversity” or “risk”? Are they the same or different? In what ways do you think your understanding of “adversity” or “risk” might be different than that of a parent or a child?
4. Based on your definition of resilience (Q1 above), how might you strengthen resilience in your students?
5. Many people think of vulnerability as a negative, something to be avoided. Is this realistic? What do you think about vulnerability/invulnerability? Explain.
6. Schools can (and often do) both promote and undermine resilience at the same time. In what ways might your school be promoting/undermining resilience? For whom?
7. Almost every one of us has encountered or known at least one person in life who has shown particular resilience. Who is that person for you? How would you describe that person, his/her adversity and experience in relation to resilience?
8. As a teacher, how can you create a “resilience promoting” classroom?

## Activity: The story of Nadia

*The Story of Nadia* is part of a 1994 documentary called “*I am a promise*” directed by Alan and Susan Raymond. Nadia, a ten-year-old from North Philadelphia born and raised on the playground where she spends most of her days, attends M. Hall Stanton Elementary School. Watch the short video at <http://africanamericanenglish.com/2012/04/03/the-promise-that-is-nadia/> and discuss the following questions with your colleagues.

- In what ways do you think Nadia was resilient?
- What are some possible factors that may have contributed to Nadia’s resilience? Use the classification (individual, family and context) introduced in the readings.
- Have you ever encountered a person who, like Nadia’s “grandfather,” played a supporting, caring role in someone’s life? If so, explain.

## **Reflection journal**

1. What did you find the most interesting, surprising and/or problematic in this session's readings and discussion?
2. What did you learn from this session's readings and the discussion?
3. How can you integrate resilience into your own teaching?
4. Is there a question or a thought that is still lingering in your mind? If so, what is it?

## Session 2: Enhancing resilience

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*“Human beings of all ages are happiest and able to deploy their talents to best advantage when they experience trusted others as standing behind them.” ~John Bowlby*

### Introduction

This session’s theory reading addresses the processes or mechanisms that promote well-being in children with neurological and developmental conditions. However, the discussions and activities could be used by various professionals across a variety of disciplines interested in fostering resilience.

In their paper, Smith and Schonert-Reichl state that there are multiple and interactive characteristics at play such as individual, family and community/environment that can promote resilience. Individual factors encompass characteristics such as positive self-esteem, a sense of self-efficacy or mastery, and a sense of security that promotes autonomy, empathy, and the ability to seek and accept help from others as well as intellectual elements including curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving skills. In general, individual factors relate to one’s ability to solve problems in an autonomous manner based on the individual resources. Family factors are about parental warmth, stable and supportive home environment, close relationship to responsive caregiver, and the like. Family factors also include the support of people one can trust and count on for help when facing adversity. Community or environmental factors associated with safe neighbourhood, access to recreational centres, good public health care, sense of school belonging, and the like. These factors reinforce the feeling of security and stability in relation to other members of the community such as friends, teachers or other significant people.

It is important how children and families approach adversities and new challenges. An attitude such as “we shall overcome it” is described as the sense of coherence by Antonovsky. This sense of coherence has three components: 1) comprehensibility: one’s ability to understand what is happening, 2) manageability: the assessment and confidence that there are resources available and they are good, and 3) meaningfulness: the sense that it is valuable to get engaged in it. A person with a strong sense of coherence is aware of his/her emotions, can easily describe them, and feels less threatened by such emotions. This construct of sense of coherence provides a health-promoting resource which increases resilience.

Smith and Schonert-Reichl also highlight the importance of “hope” in building and understanding resilience. By hope, they do not mean optimistic wishing or positive affect, but a state of focusing on goals and the perceived ability to reach those goals. This involves, both the perception that one’s goals can be achieved (agency) and the ability to plan ways to meet those goals (pathways). Research suggests that agency and pathways operate independently of each other. For instance, someone with a high sense of agency might, nonetheless, be low in pathways thinking such that, when the goals are not met, they are unable to find new ways of achieving the goals. Hope is influenced by both agency and pathways independently. Hope is a complex construct that is associated not only with individual well-being but also with positive family functioning.

Thus, it is important to help children and families frame and explore more helpful cognitions and resources, get clarity about how to achieve goals, and engage in goal-directed processes. These all contribute to building

the resilience that allows children, families and communities to adapt and thrive in the face of challenges and adversity.

## Theory reading

Smith, V. & Schonert-Reichl, K. (2013). Contextualized Facilitators: Resilience, Sense of Coherence, and Hope. In G. Ronen & P. Rosenbaum (Eds.), *Life Quality Outcomes in Children and Young People with Neurological and Developmental Conditions* (pp. 120-135). London: Mac Keith Press.

## Practice reading

Barankin, T. & Khanlou, N. (2007). *Growing Up Resilient: Ways to Build Resilience in Children and Youth* (pp. 18-74). Toronto: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

## Discussion questions

1. Children are exposed to a wide range of challenging, confusing and threatening influences like media, disrupted family structures, bullying, and the like. Their exposure to those negative factors is usually not shielded by any meta-reflexive competencies. What teaching approaches do you think you could use to promote reflection, critical thinking, social-emotional competence and thus resilience in students? Give examples and explain.
2. Research shows that children can change their path of failure and demonstrate resilience if they are provided with counteracting, protective, and nurturing forces. Reflect on this and think about how you can be or provide such protective, nurturing force in your classroom.
3. The literature on resilience shows the importance of promoting strengths and protective factors, rather than focusing on just reducing risks. What do you think about this?
4. Discuss how individual, family, and community protective factors can act as buffers and increase resilience in “at-risk” individuals and populations.
5. We all have our own unique ways to build resilience. What strategies have helped you build and enhance resilience in your life as a person?
6. How can schools and communities contribute in creating resilient contexts and developing resilient children? Explain through examples.
7. Resilient children are more likely to have developed prosocial competencies such as empathy and the ability to seek and accept help from others. In what practical ways do you think families, teachers, and schools can promote empathy and/or other prosocial competencies?
8. According to Smith and Schonert-Reichl, “hope” is a construct that enhances resilience. It includes “both the perception that the goals can be met (agency) and the ability to plan ways of meeting those goals (pathways)” (p. 130). As a teacher, how do you think you can promote both agency and pathways in your classroom?

## Activity 1: Reflection on developing resilient children

Reflect on the following and complete the statements:

- As I think about myself as a teacher/parent/educator/..., I know that my strengths or things I do well, in relation to developing resilient children, are that ...
- My “learning edge” or the area in which I wish to improve is ...
- I think I can do this by ...
- If I need help I can ...

## **Activity 2: Identifying resilience in children**

During this week, look for elements of resilience/resilience factors in all of your students and see what individual factors (such as positive self-esteem, autonomy) and/or pro-social competencies (such as empathy, seeking and accepting help from others), etc. they demonstrate. Write the elements down with the contexts you found them. Pair with a colleague, exchange your notes, and discuss.

### **Reflection journal**

1. What did you find the most interesting, surprising and/or problematic in this session's readings and discussion?
2. What did you learn from this session's readings and the discussion?
3. What implications do this session's readings have for your teaching?
4. Is there a question or a thought that is still lingering in your mind? If so, what is it?

## Session 3:

### Nurturing resilience as a virtue

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*"It may sound strange, but many champions are made champions by setbacks."* ~Bob Richards

*"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but rather the one most responsive to change."*  
~Charles Darwin

#### Introduction

Russell argues that resilience may be the central virtue in human life. Yet it has been overlooked or poorly understood. He argues that many of the definitions of “resilience” in the literature are either too narrow or too broad. For example, according to one common understanding, resilience means one bounces back and returns to the previous state after facing adversities. But Russell draws our attention to the fact that resilience is not necessarily about bouncing back or full return to a pre-adversity position. Some people go beyond their pre-adversity state, and some adapt in other, new ways to respond to the adversity (like a hockey player rendered paraplegic by an accident who demonstrates resilience by taking up another sport). On the other hand, seeing resilience as “the ability to achieve successful outcomes in the face of challenging circumstances” (p. 163) is too broad. Simply working through a complicated problem on an exam does not, in itself, count as resilience.

Russell suggests “resilience is a virtue that is expressed in the ability to adapt positively to significant adversity” (p. 164). Thus, resilience requires some sort of adversity—where situations or circumstances work against a person. Adversity involves a setback, failure, misfortune, trauma, or disappointment that makes one’s desired goal more difficult to attain than expected. But the key issue is the ability to *adapt*.

Central to this ability to adapt is how one conceptualizes the adversity—whether one sees it as a traumatic event or as a chance to learn and grow. In her article, Konnikova explains perception or attitude as a key element to resilience. According to Bonanno (cited by Konnikova), every “traumatic” event has the potential to be traumatic, or not, to the person who is experiencing it. “The experience isn’t inherent in the event, it resides in the psychological construal.” Having a positive construal towards adversities can foster resilience.

Russell takes up this notion of positive construal in his discussion of “capacity” for resilience. That capacity enables us to see beyond who and what we are and the limitations of the context in which we find ourselves. The capacity for resilience involves the use of our imagination such that we see the possibilities, are able to hope and remake ourselves when facing adversities.

In Russell’s definition, resilience is a *virtue*. Aristotle acknowledged that virtues are not just some traits of individuals. They are complex states that are expressed in repeated (habitual) actions over time and in the right contexts. They are nurtured through experience, encouragement, social supports, opportunities, and contextual factors. The virtues lead to right choices, thus the virtue of resilience involves being able to choose, plan and act wisely in adapting to adversity.

Like all character virtues, resilience is interconnected with other virtues such as courage, temperance, patience, imagination, willingness to be self-critical, and wisdom. Together, these virtues support a mean

between two states of deficiency and excess, each representing a vice. For example, a courageous person who does not have patience may be led to foolhardy exploits. An individual who shows little or no resilience may lack the courage to try in the face of adversity. On the other hand, courage without a willingness to be self-critical may blind the person to a needed area of adaptation. The resilient person needs experience and learning to hit the mean which involves nurturing the other virtues.

## Theory reading

Russell, J. S. (2015). Resilience. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*. 42(2), 159-183.

## Practice reading

Konnikova, M. (2016). How People learn to Become Resilient. The New Yorker. Retrieved from [http://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/the-secret-formula-for-resilience?mbid=social\\_facebook\\_aud\\_dev\\_kwmarsubsecretformularesilience\\_int&kwp\\_0=118943](http://www.newyorker.com/science/maria-konnikova/the-secret-formula-for-resilience?mbid=social_facebook_aud_dev_kwmarsubsecretformularesilience_int&kwp_0=118943)

## Discussion questions

1. Russell argues that definitions of resilience which emphasize people “bouncing back” or returning to their normal or pre-adversity functioning are too narrow. He suggests that resilience is “the ability to adapt positively to significant adversity.” What do you think about this definition? What implications might it have for education? Explain.
2. Russell gives several examples of resilience in sports and in life more broadly. Can you think of any examples of people you know who have shown adaptability in facing adversity or challenges and thus demonstrated resilience?
3. Russell cites Kretchmar (2012) as arguing, it is the capacity for resilience that leads us to have hope to come back or to try again. By capacity, he means to be able “to look beyond who and what we are and the boundaries imposed by our environment and past actions. It opens up our imagination and sense of possibility for realizing hopes and re-making ourselves in the face of the adversities that inevitably lie in our way” (p. 172). As a teacher, how do you think you can help foster children’s imagination and sense of possibility in order to re-make themselves when facing difficulties?
4. The ability to make wise decisions and to plan properly to cope with/overcome adversities is a virtue that includes other virtues such as courage, persistence, optimism, and wisdom. How do you think you can nurture the development of these virtues which all contribute to the virtue of resilience?
5. While the social and economic realities (such as level of poverty, health, educational attainment) play a role in children’s well-being, children’s own assessment of how their lives are going and their own perception of who they are and whether they conceptualize an event as traumatic or as an opportunity to learn and grow highly contribute to their well-being. What do we need to do to promote such subjective assessment/perception in children?

## Activity 1: Developing virtues

Virtues such as courage, persistence, optimism, and wisdom all contribute to the development of resilience. Choose one of these virtues. Then, find a stimulus (e.g., a storybook, video clip, song, or picture) related to that virtue and

- Develop some open-ended questions and/or activities around the topic of your choice and the stimulus,
- Pair with a colleague and exchange your discussion questions and/or activities (give each other feedback), and

- Facilitate a classroom discussion or have students work in groups to discuss those questions or engage in the activities.

## **Activity 2: Portraiture**

This session’s readings highlighted the importance of exercising various virtues together in developing resilience (e.g., courage, imagination, patience, etc.).

- Think about your virtues that enable you to move through hardship and succeed. Make a list.
- Create a portraiture (see [https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies/critical\\_thinking/illustration/3879](https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies/critical_thinking/illustration/3879)) – an image that represents you “inside” using edges, colour, line, symbols, words, and composition to represent your virtues related to resilience.
- Create a second portraiture that represents reflections about how to improve your capacity to choose, plan and act wisely in adapting to adversity.

## **Reflection journal**

1. What did you find the most interesting, surprising and/or problematic in this session’s readings and discussion?
2. What did you learn from this session’s readings and the discussion?
3. What implications do this session’s readings have for your teaching?
4. Is there a question or a thought that is still lingering in your mind? If so, what is it?

## Session 4:

# Resilience and the role of schools and teachers

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*“Every child requires someone in his or her life who is absolutely crazy about them.” ~Urie Bronfenbrenner*

### Introduction

This session’s theory reading looks at the concept of resilience from Skinner’s behavioural approach and from Vygotsky’s approach. B. F. Skinner (1904 – 1990) was one of the most influential American psychologists. He explains human beings’ relationship with the environment as a dialectic—we act upon the world and change it, and in return, we are changed by the consequences of our actions. As a behaviourist, he developed the theory of conditioning and argued that behaviour is determined by its consequences such as reward or punishment. If the consequences are good, it is more likely that the behaviour will occur again. Skinner called this the principle of reinforcement. In contrast, those behaviours that produce unpleasant consequences are *less likely* to be repeated.

Looking at the concept of resilience through the lens of reinforcement theory requires a further element of the theory. If a particular behaviour is reinforced intermittently, the person will be led to develop a variety of ways to achieve the goal. Whereas, if the behaviour is always reinforced, the person may develop an over-dependence on one way to achieve a goal.

Resilient people have the ability to seek reinforcements within their reach through behavioural variability in order to solve problems. This leads to learning the fact that change can be good and results in the individual’s flexibility and openness to change. Thus, people with greater behavioural variability are more likely to adapt to new situations. From a behavioural perspective, teaching resilience (helping people be more equipped with the skills to survive in a continually changing society) involves a regimen of intermittent reinforcement.

Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (1896 – 1934) was a Soviet developmental psychologist and a historical-cultural theoretician. He argued that human beings develop through the mediation that occurs between the environment and the individual, first between people in the form of interpsychological processes and later inside the individual as self-regulated intrapsychological ones. Internalization happens when external regulation is turned into self-regulation and so the individual creates their own way of understanding and responding to things.

“Based on Vygotsky, resilience can be understood as a higher psychological function resulting from an individual’s self-regulating processes. In turn, these processes arise from external regulation occurring within the historical and cultural context” (Pasqualotto et al., p. 1845). Through internalization, one creates their own ways of dealing with adversities and difficult situations in terms of where/how to seek forms of overcoming the adversity with the help of different mediators. Over time, the person is able to achieve higher levels of self-regulation and to solve new problems. The capacity to develop these higher levels of self-regulation requires exposure to quality social interactions that enable the person to experience and adopt various cultural tools.

In the context of education, schools should be places where self-regulation is encouraged through the dialectic exchange between students and teachers, where new contents or skills are introduced with great

support—the kind of support that gradually is withdrawn. It is important that teachers also look for different forms of learning that match the students' needs and encourage them to improve.

Skinner and Vygotsky both emphasize the social and cultural environment in shaping who one is as a subject. Based on both Skinner and Vygotsky's approaches, resilience is developed socially and culturally and it encompasses constant interaction with the environment. In the constantly changing society we live in, building resilience (developing the capacity that enables us to adapt in the face of adversities) is critical. Schools can act as safe, nurturing learning environments where students are offered situations with increasing levels of difficulty and are supported through the challenges in order to develop their resilience.

## Theory reading

Pasqualotto, R. A., Lohr, S. S. & Stoltz, T. (2015). Skinner and Vygotsky's Understanding of Resilience in the School Environment. *Journal of Creative Education*, 6(17), 1841-1851.

## Practice reading

Hurlington, K. (2010). Bolstering Resilience in Students: Teachers as Protective Factors. *What Works? Research into Practice*. Research Monograph #25. The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. Retrieved from [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/ww\\_bolstering\\_students.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/ww_bolstering_students.pdf)

## Discussion questions

1. Pasqualotto, Lohr & Stoltz emphasize the role of schools as an environment for human development. They say, "One of the characteristics of a good teacher is stimulating students to find different forms of learning in accordance with their needs and encouraging them to continually want to improve." (p. 1847). What does this mean to you and how do you think you can practice it?
2. According to Vygotsky, children learn from other peers and, through mirroring, internalize different thinking modes (such as problem solving). How can you provide positive thinking skills through mirroring in your classroom? What are the challenges? Give examples.
3. Children's early experiences of life are often formed in the private sphere of home or in the public sphere of school. It is important that in both places of private and public, children are offered recognition for who they are, and their ideas, thoughts and feelings are acknowledged. How can schools, as public places, offer such recognition to children and acknowledge their sense of self? Give examples and explain.
4. According to Skinner, continuous reinforcement can create problems when a student is faced with a difficulty. This is because the student has not been encouraged to learn how to adapt to different situations. Some children may come from a family where they were shielded from experiencing disappointments or going through frustrating situations and thus, their adaptation skills are weak. As a teacher, how do you think you can help such students (who expect continuous reinforcement) develop resilience?
5. According to Vygotsky, resilience results from an individual's self-regulation. Self-regulation helps the person be prepared for other difficult situations in the future. How do you think teachers and/or schools can create teacher-student or other types of relationships in schools that foster self-regulation?
6. In his paper, Hurlington explains the importance of high expectation and opportunity for meaningful contribution as key protective factors that foster the development of resilience (in addition to caring relationships). How do you think you can create an environment for your students where they can focus on their independent abilities and become citizens in their classrooms? How do you think you can communicate high expectations and help students hold those high expectations for themselves?

- Having read and thought about resilience, what are the major findings and limitations of the research so far? In what areas do you think future research needs to focus?

### **Activity 1: Resilient students**

Watch the video about a boy who struggles to make it over the vaulting horse in a gymnastics class (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43phHwRJg7Q&t=3s>) and then discuss it with your colleagues. Some or all of the following questions may be useful.

- What are your thoughts on this video?
- What factors do you think contributed to the boy's ultimate success? Discuss.
- In what ways did the teammates help the boy succeed? How about his coach? What role did the boy play in his own success?
- Imagine if the coach had withdrawn her support after the boy's third unsuccessful attempt. How do you think that might have impacted the boy and his future? Explain.
- As a teacher, how can you create the kind of social context that promotes the resilience of your students, especially for the ones who struggle to succeed?

### **Activity 2: Resilient teachers**

Resilient teachers can contribute to students developing more resilience. Think about your own childhood experience in school. What were some of the approaches *your* teachers used to increase resilience? Reflect on the following individually and then pair with another teacher and discuss your responses.

- Reflect on “what makes *you* resilient” as a person and write down all the contributing factors you can think of.
- Think about how those factors have contributed to you being a “resilient teacher.” Give examples.

### **Reflection journal**

- What did you find the most interesting, surprising and/or problematic in this session’s readings and discussion?
- What did you learn from this session’s readings and the discussion?
- How can you integrate resilience into your own teaching?
- Is there a question or a thought that is still lingering in your mind? If so, what is it?

## Readings and references

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