

# Resilience

**Character... It starts with me!**

MONTHLY EDUCATOR BULLETIN

## Vs. Hopelessness

### I WILL

- Learn from my mistakes and then let them go.
- Not compare my situation to others.
- Not let a failure in one area affect my attitude in other areas.
- Ask for help when I need it.
- Look for reasons to have hope.

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## Recovering from Adversity

When you think of resilience you automatically associate it to the adversity creating the need for resilience. We tend to think of resilient people as those who are unaffected by the challenges of life, who take a setback with a smile and laugh in the face of their obstacles. But this is not resilience.

Resilience is facing a challenge and not backing down or giving up. It's working to recover and in many cases you can end up learning a lesson or increasing your strength and courage.

Life changes, even when they are positive such as marriage, becoming a parent or a retiree, can use a dose of Resilience to help in adapting.

You've probably heard the story about a man who tried to help a butterfly out of its cocoon by slitting the cocoon open. The butterfly that emerged had small, unformed wings, and died soon after. It needed the struggle out of the cocoon to force the fluid into its wings to stretch and open them so that the butterfly could fly. By trying to shortcut the process, the man had instead doomed the creature.

This month, use adversity to strengthen your wings.



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# No Matter How You Say It

**Resistencia** vs.  
derrotismo

Recuperarse de la  
adversidad



↻↻ Go to the Root ↻↻

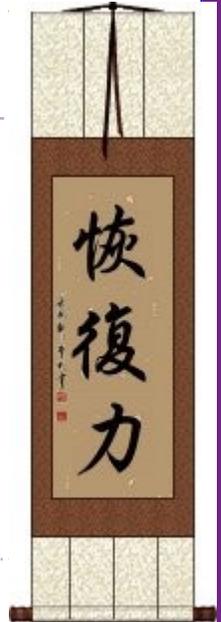
The word **resilience** is derived from Latin *resiliens*, present participle of *resilire* "to rebound, recoil," from re- "back" (see re-) + *salire* "to jump, leap". Can you see how resiliency is jumping back up after a downfall?

This title suggests having the power to recover, restore, rehabilitate. This can refer to yourself, someone else, or even to something, like rehabilitating a burned forest. 恢復力 is the essence of resilience in life.

The first two characters are a word that means to reinstate, to resume, to restore, to recover, to regain, to rehabilitate, restoration, rehabilitation, recovery, return, improvement, recovery (from an illness), recuperation, or convalescence.

The last character means strength or power.

<https://www.orientaloutpost.com/shufa.php?q=resilience>



## Sign Language

Check out the Handspeak website for the American Sign Language interpretation of the word try and Give Up. Can you see how try is coming from the heart?

Try = <https://www.handspeak.com/word/search/index.php?id=2272>  
Give Up = <https://www.handspeak.com/word/search/index.php?id=913>

*“People will accept your idea much more readily if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.” -David H. Comins*

## Character Quotables

“When we face the worst that can happen in any situation, we grow. When circumstances are at their worst, we can find our best.”

~Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

“It may sound strange, but many champions are made champions by setbacks.”

~Bob Richards

“Only those who dare to fail greatly, can ever achieve greatly.”

~Robert F. Kennedy

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”

~Confucius

“The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places.”

~Ernest Hemingway

“Things don't go wrong and break your heart so you can become bitter and give up. They happen to break you down and build you up so you can be all you were intended to be.”

~Charles Jones

“If you're going through hell, keep going.”

~Winston Churchill

“We are not a product of what has happened to us in our past. We have the power of choice.”

~Stephen Covey

“And thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with

pearl.”

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

“It's the bounce that counts! Picking ourselves up after life's hurdle.”

~Tessa Bielecki

“Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.”

Unknown

“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”

~Charles Darwin

“You never know how strong you are, until being strong is your only choice.”

Unknown

“I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying.”

~Michael Jordan

“Turn your wounds into wisdom.”

~Oprah Winfrey

“She stood in the storm, and when the wind did not blow her way she adjusted her sails.”

~Elizabeth Edwards

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

~Thomas Edison

“And suddenly you know - it's time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings.”

~Meister Eckhart

When life puts you in tough situations, don't say ‘Why me?’ say, ‘Try me!’

Unknown

### Curriculum Connection



### Science

Just like in the human spirit, Material Science also deals in **resilience**. It is defined as the ability of a material to absorb energy when it is deformed elastically, and release that energy upon unloading. **Proof resilience** is the maximum amount of energy that can be absorbed without creating a permanent distortion. This deals with the ability of a material to be flexible enough to absorb a shock and then return to its normal shape. Human resiliency is similar in that we can return to normal but hopefully there is a lesson or skill that is learned along the way.

For more information, visit

[https://www.teachengineering.org/lessons/view/uoh\\_matlsci\\_lesson01](https://www.teachengineering.org/lessons/view/uoh_matlsci_lesson01)



## Egypt Ufele, Model of Resilience

Ten year old Egypt Ufele, who goes by “Ify, was bullied in school because of her weight. One time she was even stabbed with a pencil. The weight gain was the result of a health condition that required medicines and steroids that affected her weight.

Rather than letting this situation get her down, she turned the situation around. She wanted to do something so that other kids did not have to endure the bullying she had.

In January 2015, with her mother’s help, she started a charity called BullyChasers. It’s an organization that supports youth who have been bullied and provides them a platform to speak against it.

When she couldn’t find clothing she liked in her size, so she began designing and making clothes for herself. Previously, her grandmother had taught her how to sew and together they had made clothes for her dolls. Now she was doing it for herself.

The first showing of her clothing line was Unique Blend Models Fashion Event. Then, in

### THE FASHION QUEEN



February 2016, she debuted her clothing line for all sizes, *Chubiiline*, at New York Fashion Week. How many 10 year olds can make that claim? Just her.

According to her website, Ufele’s designs, *Chubiiline*, are about “bringing Africa to Americans, one design at a time.”

Ify showed her resilience in not letting the bullying get her down. Instead, she worked to help others who were bullied and eventually turned her plight into a clothing line. That’s recovering from adversity.

For more information on Ify, Bullychasers or Chubiiline, visit

<http://www.chubiiline.com/>

## Team~Building Activity

Building a culture of good character requires building the class into a community. Here is this month’s teambuilding activity:

### The Gauntlet

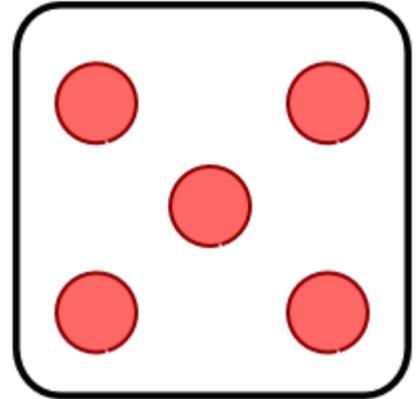
If the class is large, you may want to divide into 2 gauntlets, boys and girls as this will take considerable room. Create a gauntlet of students by forming two lines, facing one another. Space the students in the lines so that there is room for a person to stand between the students. Students raise their arms out straight in front of them. The arms from the two lines should be far enough apart that only their hands overlap with the line opposite. The first person on one side becomes the first one to “walk the gauntlet”. As they pass through the two lines, the students on either side will raise their hands to let them pass without touching them. This will create a wave or a ripple to walk through The person then joins in again at the end of the line. The person who was opposite the first person goes next, etc until everyone has walked the gauntlet. The walkers do not need to wait until the previous walker is done to start but does need to allow enough time for attention to be on the next walker. Depending on time and temperament you can repeat the exercise encouraging people to walk faster and/or having the students in the lines stand closer together making the length of the gauntlet shorter.

When the exercise is done, ask how trusting they were when the exercise was described. Compare that to how they felt as they saw people make it through untouched.



## Jump In

This exercise sets up “conflict” and a path to resolution. It requires some space to set up and 5 hoola hoops, baseball bases or cones or any item that designates a space. Create a square by setting an item at the 4 corners of the square space. The fifth item goes in the middle. You can also use a foursquare court and designate the 5 areas with chalk. Start with selecting 5 students to stand, one each, at one of the corners and in the center. The rest of the class forms a line ready to Jump In. The student in the middle yells “Jump In”. The students on the corners must choose another corner but not the middle. The student in the middle is also choosing a corner. The next person in line gets the middle. With 5 people choosing from 4 corners, there will be a corner with 2 people. To determine who gets the corner, have the students do “Rock, Paper, Scissors” with the winner getting the corner and the loser going to the end of the line. Continue to play until all have had a chance to Jump In.



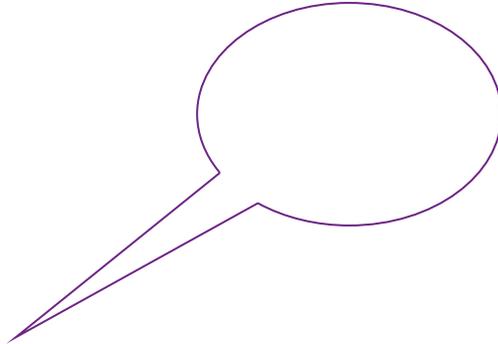
## The “Oh, No” Game

Arrange the students in groups of 5 - 7 sitting in a circle. Pick a place in the circle to start. The first person makes up a bad luck scenario and shares it with the group. The scenario starts with “Oh, no!” For example: “Oh, No! The car won’t start”. Everyone in the group tries to make up a good that could come out of that. This could also be explained as the silver lining. Their responses start with “Oh, well.” for example: “Oh, well, I’ll save money not going to the mall”. The group should try to come up with as many “Oh well’s” for each “Oh no” as they can. When the groups are finished, ask them to share some of the more humorous answers with the class. When finished, ask the students how easy was it to look for the silver lining. Try to use the Oh no/Oh well language in the classroom when bad luck occurs and try to turn around the situation.



## How Would You Treat a Friend?

Many times, when we hit troubled times, we react differently than the advice we would give a friend in a similar circumstance. This exercise will hopefully point that out. Ask the class for examples of encouraging things can you say to a friend or family member to help them feel better when they are troubled. After you have taken several examples, ask them to quietly think about things they say to themselves in their head when they are struggling with something. Repeat the items from the first list and ask them to pick their “go to” phrase they can use to encourage themselves. Have them write this phrase in a thought bubble to use as a reminder of their choice.



## Elements of Resilience

Gather the items below and demonstrate how they help us understand resilience.

**Tea bag:** When you put a tea bag in hot water it produces tea. The longer it is in the water the ‘stronger’ the tea. This symbolizes **strength**—during adversity you may be in stressful situations or as they are sometimes called ‘hot water.’ At those times draw upon your inner strengths and your supports to stay strong.



**Paper clips hooked together:** If you took a bunch of loose paperclips and connected them to make a single chain it would keep those paper clips in order and allows them to have a longer reach than a single paper clip has. These paperclips symbolize the **interconnectedness and relationships** that are a key component of resilience. A single individual alone, does not have the same power or reach as a single individual that is connected to many others. Make friends who can support you and who you are willing to support.



**Stress ball:** Observe that no matter how hard you squeeze a stress ball, that it always bounces back to its original form. This exercise symbolizes the **bounce back** that signifies resilience. Despite how hard they are hit by adversity, they can bounce back.



When you feel unhappy, you can **BOUNCE** back again and feel better



**B** Bad feelings always go away again.

**O** Other people can make you feel better if you talk to them.

**U** Unhelpful thinking makes you feel more upset.

**N** Nobody is perfect. Mistakes help you learn.

**C** Concentrate on the good things and have a laugh.

**E** Everybody feels sad and worried sometimes, not just you.



For more information on the Bounce Back Program visit

<https://learningprogram.rmhc.org.au/docs/8-Bounce-back-Teaching-resilience-to-young-people-HelenGrath.pdf>

Back to School Sales! Trial school bus runs- Got to get to school on time! "Gearing up letter" from my great principal! I get the feeling that Summer may be waning and that school is nearly upon us. By the time you read this (Thanks! By the way!), you will likely be full speed ahead til Thanksgiving. I hope it's another great year.

# Croskey's Corner

Me? I always get a little nervous in August, even after 45 years of starting school on the staff member side. But this year, I am sort of glad to be done with summer. Plenty of sick or injured people in my family. Hip replacement for me. Couple months of rehab PT. Kitchen and bathroom water damage followed by a four month delay on restoring the rooms. (Don't ask. Nothing to compare with the devastation in Texas, though!) Lost or stolen paycheck. Helping get my Dad's house ready to sell. Knowing my daughter had to move and not being there to help. Our dog with sudden partial paralysis. (He's improving tremendously!) Whine! Whine! Whine. I am sure many of you could "See my list" and double it from your life. And there are billions of people who have it way worse than me. Still, the string of difficulties has gotten me down. So the Character Quality of Resilience, meaning recovering from adversity, is a quality I should know from experience how to embrace. But not so much!

Hans Selye (1907-1982) was an MD who built a career studying the impact which stress had on our lives, including, but not limited to, physical damage. He is reported to have said, "It's not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it." People have ways of thinking about their stressors. These ways of thinking lead to emotional reactions. We cannot easily stop feeling emotions which cause us trouble. In fact, we resent and reject attempts by others at this: "Stop feeling that way!" or "You SHOULDN'T feel that way!" are commands we are unlikely to be able to or want to obey. But we CAN change the ways we think about stressful events. Sometimes we need a friend, a loved one, or a counselor to help us become aware of other optional ways of thinking about our lives.

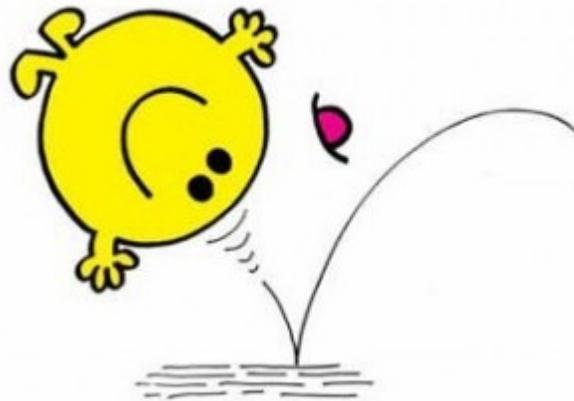
For example, my left hip needed to be replaced. My dog's recovery in his ability to walk has been slowest in his left hind leg. My son recently injured his left leg. My Dad, who is almost 101, also has the most mobility difficulty in his left leg! It is ironic that the "Croskey boys" are having left leg issues all at the same time! One way to think about these is, "We sure got a lot of bad luck in the left leg department." A different thought could be: "Each of us - yeah, even the dog - has had a chance to empathize with the others about how much we depend on our left leg!" I have been doing plenty of self pity this summer. Maybe I need to re-frame my thinking about left legs and appreciate that our left leg "miseries" have PLENTY of family company.

That's the thing about Resilience. As a culture, we admire it so much when someone bounces back from a difficult blow. We love the "comeback kid" stories. We relish the communities who have rebuilt after a hurricane. We put great store in the times when our loved ones "beat" cancer. (Matter of fact, I worry sometimes that we send the message that if a person passed away from cancer, it was because he or she did not try hard enough.) I don't think Resilience is only about trying hard. Maybe it is just as much about looking at a problem in a new light and drawing energy from that fresh perspective to follow the serenity prayer. That means having the serenity to accept that we do not always have power over difficult situations. But with those situations which we can change, we need courage to keep fighting. And we show wisdom when we know which situation we are facing.

# Croskey's Corner

I got the most help and the best advice on Resilience from my vet, William Rueger. We were discussing how my dog Jazzy suddenly lost the use of his hind legs. He quickly learned to drag himself around the yard on his two front legs to catch bugs. Dr. Rueger reflected a moment and said that one of the great things about pets is this: when they run into a physical obstacle, they don't sit around and whine because they don't have the use of their legs. They don't look for someone to blame. They might pause and glance at family members questioningly. But then, they jump in to figure out how to accomplish what they want to do in a different manner. They bounce back from Adversity in an efficient way without stopping to whine. (Oh, my dog whines, but it's usually about a treat or because he wants to go out.) My dog was climbing some steep steps last week. He lost his footing and slipped. He could not go back down but he did not quit. He turned sideways and pushed himself up a few steps, got some momentum, and finished the climb the way he started. Our pets can be inspirational in their Resilience. They help us become what Henri Nouwen calls a "wounded healer." That's someone who has gone through a damaging life event, but who heals, and uses the scars and experience to help others heal.

So maybe we can observe those who have healed, including our pets, as a model presented to us and say, "Well, if Jazzy can figure out another way around his problems, maybe I can bounce back, too."



Bill Croskey is a retired  
school psychologist  
from the Loveland City  
Schools

## For the Family

We are studying the character quality of **Resilience**: Recovering from adversity.

To practice Resilience I will:

- Learn from my mistakes and then let them go.
- Not compare my situation to others.
- Not let a failure in one area affect my attitude in other areas.
- Ask for help when I need it.
- Look for reasons to have hope.



### Family Activity:

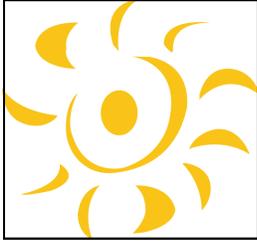
#### The Egg, the Carrot and the Coffee

For this activity you will need a whole, peeled, hard-boiled egg, cooked carrots and a cup of coffee. Gather the family and talk about resilience. You may need to define adversity and give examples of tough times as a family or as individuals. Discuss what it means to recover or bounce back from tough times. Compare tough times to boiling water. The three items in front of you were all hit with the adversity of boiling water but they each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard, and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The carrots are like people who give up too easily. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The egg is like people who get bitter and carry a grudge. The ground coffee was unique, however. After it was in the boiling water, it had changed the water. The coffee is like people who learn from their mistakes. Ask them which one they want to be, the egg, the carrot or the coffee?



Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- Review the “I wills” and see if there are specific actions you can add to this list.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.
- For more ideas visit [www.charactercincinnati.org/education.php](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/education.php)



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**Character...It Starts With Me!**

## Character in the Classroom *Continuously*

There are many ways that you can teach the Character Quality of Month. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Ask students to make posters to hang in the classroom or around the school.
- Challenge students to find quotes, news stories, current (or classic) songs or movies that portray the character quality of the month. Be sure to share these with the class and “archive” these to use in future years.
- Add the character trait of the month to the spelling word list. (Even if it is posted in the classroom to copy!)
- Offer for students to make a video or write a rap that demonstrates the Character Quality of the Month.
- If you teach younger students, see if you can “borrow” some older students to lead your students in an activity or switch the roles and have the younger students “teach” a rhyme to the older students.
- If you teach older students, you can be the initiator in the previous activities.
- Invite local business leaders or small business owners to talk about the importance of a character trait. If you teach older students, aim to get a representative from a business that typically hires teens so that they can relate the importance of good character when applying for and *keeping* a job.
- Men and women in uniform usually make impressive guest speakers. Police departments, fire departments and military recruiting offices are usually willing to come into a classroom. Do not be afraid to give them specific requests or guidelines for speaking so that it is pertinent to the lessons of the month.
- Always have a generic character activity planned and ready to go that you can use as filler when you have time to kill or that a substitute teacher can use in your absence.