

## Learning to be Resilient

To be resilient you need a “toolbox” of skills. You use these skills when you deal with setbacks, much as you would use carpentry tools to build a deck. However:

- If you only had a hammer, you could build a deck, but it would be very difficult and the deck would probably not look very good.
- If your toolbox had hammers, drills, saws, and other tools, you could use a combination of tools to build a great-looking deck with less difficulty.

Resilient people have a full toolbox of skills, and they use them. Rather than moping about miserably when a setback happens, resilient people will search for tools to overcome the challenge. They might shed a few tears at first, but then they’ll look into themselves and pull out the “positive thinking” tool. They might say, “That’s sad. But I think I can do something about it.”

Mark’s friend, Eric, has dropped him and is now spending time with someone else. But Mark is a resilient person, and because resilient people believe in themselves, he thinks, “I want Eric as my friend, so I’m going to find out what the problem is.” Mark can then use his communication skills to approach Eric and find out what happened. If Eric is critical of him, Mark can be flexible enough to deal with it. Most importantly, he can let Eric know that he still wants to be friends.



Your resiliency tools can be sharpened only when you use them. This is true whether you are new at using your own resiliency tools or an old hand at being resilient.

## Resiliency Toolbox

In your notebook, list the following resiliency skills and rate yourself using these categories: "Well developed," "Okay, but needs work," or "Awful, needs lots of work."

		Well developed	Okay, but needs work	Awful, needs lots of work
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	I communicate well and care about people. I find humour in many situations.			
<b>Planning Skills</b>	I can organize what needs to be done. I can make decisions and take action.			
<b>Problem-solving</b>	I think creatively and find solutions to problems. I also ask for help when I need it.			
<b>Awareness</b>	I know what is going on around me and can spot potential problems before they happen.			
<b>Self-concept</b>	I think independently. I know who I am, and I have confidence that I can change things.			
<b>Motivation</b>	I am motivated, I am a hard worker, and I am determined.			
<b>Positive Thinking</b>	I have goals and a positive view of my life. I know I can succeed.			
<b>Flexibility</b>	I know my strengths and will use them. But I'm also willing to learn and to change.			
<b>Continuous Learning</b>	I seek advice from people who are wiser than me. I also learn from my mistakes.			



## Bouncing Back and Moving On

These teens are facing different problems. Read their stories and suggest some resiliency tools that might help them bounce back and move on with their lives.

### Jacob

Jacob's mother died ten days ago. Now his dad wants him to go back to school. Jacob remembers his mom saying, "Be strong!" He doesn't feel strong at all. He is struggling just to make it through the day, and he doesn't know how he'll be able to go back to school.

### Sean

Sean has failed three subjects again. "There's no point in trying anymore," he mutters. "Three months of expensive tutoring wasted!" He knows his parents will be furious. "Wait until they hear I got suspended from school too!" he thinks. He crumples up the report and throws it away.

### Kayla

Kayla's dad is moving out. She's been told to stay in her bedroom while he packs. "What did I do wrong?" she sobs. "Dad is the only person I can talk to." She opens her door but her dad yells at her to stay in her room. Kayla slumps to the floor in tears.



### Over to You

1. Describe the problem each teen is facing, and explain what each one is feeling.
2. Explain what you think each teen should do next. Using the Resiliency Toolbox, list some of the resiliency tools each one could use to deal with these serious difficulties.
3. Which resiliency tools did Mark use in dealing with his friend Eric?
4. How can you develop the resiliency tools you don't have now but would like to have?

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1. Describe the problem each teen is facing, and explain what each one is feeling:

Jacob's problem:
Jacob is feeling....
What should Jacob do next? (Make sure you refer to at least one resiliency tool)
Sean's problem:
Sean is feeling....
What should Sean do next? (Make sure you refer to at least one resiliency tool)
Kayla's problem:
Kayla is feeling....
What should Kayla do next? (Make sure you refer to at least one resiliency tool)

2. What resiliency tool would you like to have? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How can you develop that resiliency tool? \_\_\_\_\_

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