

# Social and Emotional Learning Resources: Resilience

Here are several resources you can use to help practice Resilience. If you are a parent, you can help your child complete these activities at home. If you are a teacher, you can deliver these lessons to students in online classrooms. Remember that you can also take the time to complete these activities yourself.

- Mindfulness Lesson
- In My Zone Lesson
- Gratitude Lesson
- Name It, Aim It, Tame It, Solve It Lesson

We want to hear from you! If you use these lessons, we would like to know if you found them helpful and what else we can do to improve them for future use. To provide feedback, please visit the link below.

Link: [https://act.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1BIYUKa7FnwsMtv](https://act.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1BIYUKa7FnwsMtv)

# Mindfulness

**Objective:** To learn about mindfulness and practice being mindful.

**Background:** Being mindful means being aware of our own thought process and, more generally, being aware of what is going on around us. Often times, we are not very mindful as we go through life. We are too busy thinking about things that happened in the past or things that we think will happen in the future to be fully aware of what is happening right now.

Research has shown that being mindful has many benefits. Some of these include:

- Reduced stress
- Improved memory
- Improved focus
- Improved creativity
- Healthier relationships

Below is one technique for improving mindfulness. It only takes about 10 minutes a day. It is best to try to practice this every day if possible. You can talk students through the steps of this activity and then encourage them to practice it regularly.

**Activity:**

**Before getting started...**

- Find a timer that can be set for 10 minutes.
- Instruct students to find a quiet place in their home.
- Have students tell other people in their homes that they are going to be doing a mindfulness activity for 10 minutes and ask not to be disturbed during this time.
- Have students sit down on the floor or in a chair in the quiet place. Tell students that they should sit upright but also try to be comfortable.
- Guide students through the steps below to have them complete the mindfulness exercise. You should set your timer for 10 minutes and start it once you begin the exercise below.

Step	Description	Approximate Time
<b>1) Breathing</b>	With your eyes open, take about 5 deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. After the fifth breath, slowly close your eyes. Keep your eyes closed for the remainder of the activity.	30 seconds
<b>2) Settling</b>	Focus on the weight of your body as it touches the chair or the floor.	1 minute
<b>3) Listening</b>	Listen to any sounds that might be surrounding you. Don't think too much about them. Just listen.	30 seconds
<b>4) Scanning</b>	Try to build a picture of how you are feeling right now. Start at the top of your head. How does the top of your head feel right now? Slowly scan down and notice how each part of your body is feeling until you get to your feet.	2 minutes
<b>5) Focusing</b>	Try to focus on your breathing. Notice your chest rising and falling as you breathe. Focus on this feeling. If you start thinking about anything else while you are focusing on your breathing, just try again to pay attention only to your breathing.	6 minutes
<b>6) Open your eyes</b>	This is the end. Notice how relaxed you feel!	Total time: 10 minutes

**Important points:**

- Once you have lead students through the activity, you can encourage them to complete it on their own. You can share the steps above with them and encourage them to practice mindfulness regularly.
- You can also modify the duration of the activity based on your students' age. We recommend a shorter time period for younger students.
- Tell students doing the activity independently to not get frustrated if they can't remember all of the steps to the activity right away. If students can't remember a step, just encourage them to focus on their breathing for the duration of the 10 minutes.
- Also explain to students that it is important not to get frustrated if their minds wander during the activity. The most important thing is that they try to relax and consistently do the mindfulness activity every day. They will get better with time and practice.
- After students complete a few mindfulness sessions, have them do a few minutes of reflective writing so that they can track how they're feeling each time. This can happen in a journal or a separate field notebook of self-reflective observations. They could also keep a calendar where they track number of minutes and which days they practice mindfulness. It's best to encourage students to do this a few times each week for a few weeks in a row, and particularly when they are feeling stress or overwhelmed.

# In My Zone

**Objective:** To understand that problems can sometimes be outside of your zone of control and to learn how to stay composed when dealing with these types of problems.

**Materials Needed:** One large piece of paper.

**Background:** In psychology, locus of control is the degree to which we believe that we have control over the outcome of events in our lives, as opposed to external forces beyond our control. Our “locus” (Latin for “place” or “location”) is conceptualized as either internal, meaning we believe we can control our lives, or external, meaning we believe our lives are controlled by environmental factors that we cannot influence. For example, when receiving a bad grade on an exam, students with an internal locus of control tend to blame themselves, thinking they didn’t try hard enough or aren’t smart enough. Students with a strong external locus of control tend to blame external factors, thinking the exam was too difficult or the teacher is unfair.

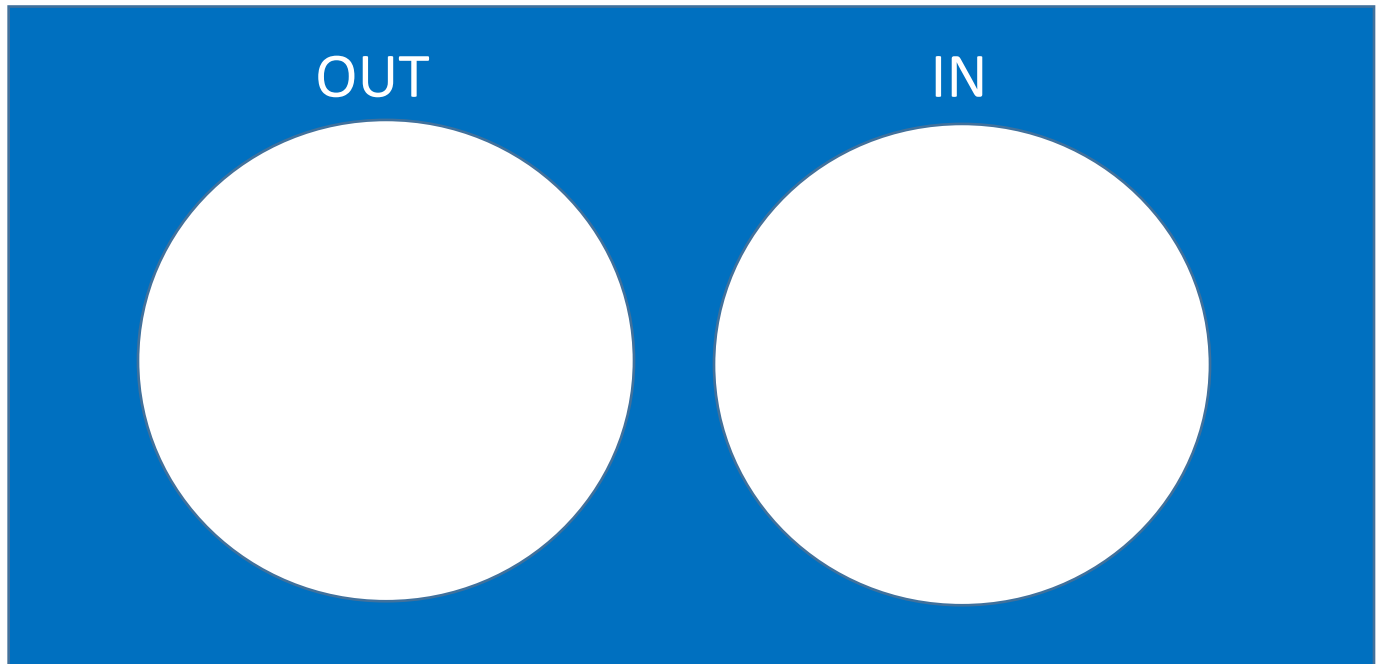
One of the best ways to manage emotions and maintain self-control is to carefully consider whether a challenge or problem that is stressing you is within your control or not, and determine your response accordingly.

**Activity:**

- First, have your student read Niebuhr’s serenity lesson. If you are doing this activity with younger students, do a quick vocabulary check. If students don’t know what the word “serenity” means, have them look it up and work with them to understand what it means.

*Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things I can,  
And wisdom to know the difference*

- Have a conversation with your student(s) about what the concept of locus of control means to them and how it relates to the serenity lesson. Once you are confident students understand the concept of locus of control, take out a piece of paper. Ask them to come up with some examples of things that may not be within a person’s zone of control. Ask students to draw two big circles on the piece of paper, and label them IN and OUT, for in and out of the zone of control.



- Have students first write in the OUT circle things they worry about that are out of their control. Remind them that these are things that we have no control over, the things that the serenity lesson says are “the things I cannot change.” Let them work on this without too much prompting, but provide examples if need be.
- Then have them write in the IN circle things they would like to focus upon that they can change or improve. These might include their own choices going forward, their behaviors every day, and their attitudes.
- Once students complete both circles, ask them to explain their choices to you. Engage in a conversation with them about what they wrote in each circle. If you are leading this activity for a group of multiple students, you can have students share their choices with the group. In these conversations, have students consider how much time they spend each day focused on or worrying about things that are not in their control. You can also focus on situations in the OUT circle and discuss if there are ways to move them to the IN circle to gain control over the situation.
- For example, the spread of the COVID-19 virus is certainly outside of a student’s zone of control, and likely something that students (and adults!) may be worrying about a great deal. IN a student’s control is the ability to stay home to help stop the spread of the virus. IN a student’s control is to wash hands. IN a student’s control is to ask for help understanding what is going on and why everyone needs to stay home. IN a student’s

control is to develop a positive mindset and to think of activities that can be done while at home.

- Have students write a plan for how to spend more time focusing on what is in their zone of control, the things they can change. Encourage students to write down 5 things that they can do to spend more time focusing on the things that are in their zone. For younger students, you can either write things for them, or ask them to draw something that they can do that is in their zone.

# Gratitude

**Objective:** To learn how gratitude can improve your well-being and to practice gratitude regularly.

**Background:** Being grateful, or having gratitude, means being thankful for the people, events, and things in our lives. Gratitude has many benefits to our lives. There are many examples of these positive benefits. People who are grateful...

- Are more resilient
- Are more optimistic and healthy
- Sleep better
- Have higher self-esteem
- Are more helpful to others

It is very easy to practice gratitude. You can have students complete the following activities to practice expressing gratitude.

## Activity 1: The Gratitude Journal

To have students make a gratitude journal, simply have them write down five people, events, or things that they are grateful for. You can have students do this as often as every day, but make sure they do least do it once or twice per week at minimum. You can encourage students to keep a single journal at home and write all of their gratitude entries in it each time they complete the exercise. You can give the prompt below to students to get them started.

*Five people, events, or things I am grateful for.....*

1)

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2)

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3)

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4)

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5)

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# Name It, Aim It, Tame It, Solve It

**Objective:** To learn how to identify and manage emotions.

**Background:** There are many emotions we can experience on a daily basis. To effectively manage our emotions, it is critical for us to be able to complete several steps. These four steps are being able to name, aim, tame, and solve each emotion we feel.

You can first guide students through an example of the four-step process using emotions they have experienced in the past. Then, you can repeat this activity weekly, daily, or as situations call for it. Once students understand the process, you can work with them to name, aim, tame, and solve emotions they are feeling in real time.

**Activity:**

- Have students think of a situation in which they experienced an extreme emotion. The situations could have occurred in a variety of settings, such as within the family or in a friendship. You can have students write down these situations and can allow some students to share aloud if you are working with a group.

**Step 1: Name It**

- Have students identify and write down discrete emotions that they felt in the situation they described. Some common emotions students may have felt might be:
  - Anger
  - Nervousness
  - Shame
  - Hopelessness
  - Boredom
  - Frustration
  - Disappointment
  - Happiness
  - Sadness
  - Excitement
- Identifying several emotions that students felt can be helpful. It is also important for students to understand that many negative emotions, such as anger, are complex emotions. When a student feels angry, for example, he or she is probably feeling many other underlying emotions as well (e.g., fearful, hurt, lonely, rejected, powerless, not

good enough). Encourage students to identify other emotions that may accompany the emotion they have named.

### Step 2: Aim It

- Once students have identified the emotions they felt, they can work to identify the situation/person/object at which the emotion is aimed. Is the feeling:
  - Toward the self?
  - Toward a peer, teacher, or parent?
  - Toward a situation that may be beyond the student's control?
  - Toward an assignment or task?
- By asking students "at what or whom" the emotion is aimed, you can help them identify the source of their emotion. For each emotion students identify, have students write down the source or sources of each emotion.

### Step 3: Tame It

- By this point, students have identified a discrete emotion, as well as the situation at which it is aimed. Some examples:
  - A student feels angry because her friend went through her cell phone without permission.
    - Name It: Anger
    - Aim It: My friend through my phone
  - A student feels hopeless because he thinks that his science test was way too hard. He feels like he will fail no matter how much he studies.
    - Name It: Hopelessness
    - Aim It: Science test being too difficult
  - A student feels bored in math class. He attributes this to the fact that he doesn't like the subject, as well as the material being so difficult that he isn't really understanding much of what the teacher is saying.
    - Name It: Boredom; frustration
    - Aim It: Math class; self for not understanding material
  - A student feels ashamed because she did not get into the college she wanted to go to. She feels like she has let down everyone in her life.
    - Name It: Shame; disappointment
    - Aim It: Didn't get into college; self for letting others down
- In the "Tame It" stage, students can use coping strategies to come up with ways to deal with their emotions. Coping strategies exist on two overlapping dimensions: approach/avoidance, and cognitive/behavioral. Various combinations of strategies are presented in the table below. Discuss each of these strategies with your students and the accompanying example.

Strategy	Description	Example
<b>Cognitive approach</b>	Reappraising an emotion by changing the way you think about it	A student feels bored in math class. He can focus on the content in his math class and how important it will be for him in the future, as opposed to how bored he is currently feeling.
<b>Cognitive avoidance</b>	Avoiding an emotion that you are feeling by thinking about something else	A student feels ashamed because she did not get into the college she wanted to go to, but tries to think about something else instead. She thinks about an upcoming event or what she will do after school instead.
<b>Behavioral approach</b>	Engaging in a behavior that helps reduce the emotion you are currently feeling	A student feels hopeless because he thinks that his science test was way too hard, so he asks his teacher for extra help so that he can feel more confident about the material.
<b>Behavioral avoidance</b>	Engaging in a behavior that removes you from the situation that is causing you to feel the emotion	A student feels angry because her friend went through her cell phone without permission, so she walks away from her friend so she doesn't have to speak to her anymore.

- Once students understand each coping strategy, allow them to brainstorm different approaches to dealing with the emotions they listed earlier. Encourage students to come up with at least one possible approach in each category: cognitive approach, cognitive avoidance, behavioral approach, and behavioral avoidance.

#### Step 4: Solve It

- In this last step, students select one of the possible approaches for each strong emotion they felt. Before choosing one, students should consider each of the following questions:
  - Is this the best possible solution?
  - Will the solution I choose help me to decrease negative emotions I am feeling?
  - How will the solution I choose affect others?