

This is the second in a series of key stage 4 lessons exploring mental health and emotional wellbeing. This lesson focuses on resilience and reframing setbacks. Neither this, nor any of the other lessons, is designed to be taught in isolation, but should always form part of a planned, developmental PSHE education programme.



Learning objective

Students will learn:

- about how negative thinking patterns can impact on our response to disappointments
- strategies to build resilience by reframing negative thinking



Learning outcomes

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- describe different negative thinking patterns and consider their potential impact on wellbeing
- reframe negative thinking and identify ways to learn from setbacks



Climate for learning

Before teaching these lessons, ensure that you read the accompanying PSHE Association document [Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing](#) for guidance on establishing ground rules, the limits of confidentiality, handling questions, and additional advice relating to teaching about mental health effectively and safely.



Resources required

Box for anonymous questions



Resource 1: Attitude continuum



Resource 2: Negative thinking patterns match



Resource 2a: Negative thinking patterns match teacher sheet



Key words

Emotional wellbeing, resilience, perseverance, self-confidence, managing disappointments

Activity	Description	Timing
1. Introduction	Revisit ground rules and introduce lesson objectives and outcomes.	5min
2. Baseline assessment	Complete continuum line on mindset and attitudes to setbacks	10min
3. Thinking patterns match	Share thinking patterns terms and ask class to match definitions and examples on cards	10min
4. Script/storyboard	Class create scripts/storyboards to show the difference that thinking patterns can make to outcomes	15min
5. Present work	Showcase scripts/storyboards. Class identify negative thinking patterns and comment on whether the alternative way to manage the setback was appropriate and likely to succeed	10min
6. Endpoint assessment	Revisit the attitudes continuum and reframe statements	5min
7. Signposting	Signpost students to sources of support for mental health issues	5min

Baseline assessment



Introduction

Establish or reinforce existing ground rules – add or emphasise any ground rules that are especially relevant to this lesson. Ensure students know they have a right to pass and that there should be no personal stories. Remind students that they can ask anonymous questions using the question box/ask it basket throughout the lesson.

Explain that today's lesson focuses on resilience and strategies to reframe how we see setbacks in order to bounce back quicker and build resilience.



Baseline assessment activity



Students complete **Resource 1: Attitude continuum**. Circulate during the activity to gain an understanding of their starting points. Students should keep this with them to revisit at the end of the lesson to chart progress.

Take feedback, focusing on the idea that mindset has an impact on our actions. Check students' understanding of the meaning of resilience, negative thinking patterns or loops and reframing.

Simple suggested definitions might be:

- Resilience is a skill that helps people to recover quickly from difficulties, change or misfortune; to adapt to and overcome risk and adversity through adopting effective coping strategies; to persevere and 'bounce back'.
- Negative thinking patterns/loops are habitual thought processes which can affect our perceptions.
- Reframing is a process of thinking about something differently, often in a more positive way.

Core activities



Identifying negative thinking patterns



Give students the card sort **Resource 2: Negative thinking patterns match** and ask them to match the label to the definition and to an example. The resource original provides the correct answers.

Discuss the definitions and examples and ask students to reflect on whether they have encountered these in their daily lives. Be sure that students do not share personal stories.

Ask students to reflect on what the impact of such thinking patterns is.

Make students aware that someone who is experiencing ongoing negative thinking patterns that stop them engaging with normal activities should seek the support of a trusted adult. There are lots of support options available (such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) that can help a person manage these thought processes.

Support:



Use different colour paper/card for each column of the card sort and reduce the number of examples given to support students.

Challenge



Ask students to suggest an additional example for each term.



Alternatives to negative thinking patterns

Students work in pairs to create a script or storyboard which provides two alternative endings. One version involves the likely outcomes of a person repeatedly thinking in negative ways (using the previous activity for ideas); another version shows how a person might recognise their negative thinking and challenge themselves to think differently, which leads to a different outcome. You may wish to allocate different thinking patterns to different students to work on.

The following example may be helpful:

Will is upset as he thinks his best friend Jay is avoiding him, as he's dating Jay's ex TJ.

Negative thinking version – Will continues to believe that his friend is avoiding him so the friendship is doomed.

As a result, Will doesn't wait for Jay at the bike sheds after school like he used to so they see less and less of each other, eventually hanging out with a different crowd altogether.

Alternative version – Will recognises he's making assumptions about what Jay's thinking (he's 'mind reading', so he resolves to talk to Jay about it. It turns out Jay had been upset about a family issue so hadn't felt like hanging out much. Jay had no idea Will had started dating anyone but he and TJ had only been a casual thing so there are no hard feelings. They continue to be good friends and laugh about their misunderstanding.

Support:



Provide students with **Resource 3: storyboard** which provides a template with starting statements.

Challenge



Show the complexities of each person in the story having their own negative thinking patterns e.g. Jay might be ignoring the fun they used to have together in favour of focusing on Will's recent let-downs.

Plenary/ Assessment of learning



Share progress



Students share their storyboards/scripts by giving each pair a minute to summarise their work or role play it. The class then feedback on:

- the negative thinking patterns they have identified*
- whether the alternative way of managing the situation would likely be successful.*

Alternatively, students could go around their table/ the class and annotate work in pencil/using post-it notes.

**This is an important opportunity to assess learning. It also helps students to model positive thinking strategies to avoid negative thinking patterns.*



Revisit attitude continuum

Students revisit their baseline responses and identify which contain examples of negative thinking. Reinforce that spotting and managing negative thinking is a skill itself, and that people can improve at it with practice and persistence. Students should then reframe 'negative' statements more positively e.g. 5. *If someone knows a project will be a challenge as it doesn't suit their style of working, it's good to persevere and try out new ways of working, as this will give them new skills.*

The 'success' of the lesson is not based on the change of attitudes itself, but whether young people have recognised thought patterns which could be impacting on their happiness.



Signposting support



Remind students that they can access support at home, and both in school (e.g. through their form tutor, head of year, or school nurse) and out of school, through local and national organisations. Explain to students that there are lots of different ways that young people can seek help from reputable organisations, including text-based support, digital chat support and online counselling, as well as face to face or via phone. Share the following websites and phone numbers with the students:

Young Minds - www.youngminds.org.uk

Childline - www.childline.org.uk Phone: 0800 1111

Samaritans - www.samaritans.org Phone: 116 123

Extension activity

Create a leaflet



Educate others about the different negative thinking patterns which can stop a person from thinking, and therefore acting, more positively. The designed leaflet should help the reader understand what the different negative thinking patterns are, how they can be translated into more positive thoughts, and the impact these types of thoughts can have on people's actions.