

The Resilient Mindset

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Resilient Youth's unmatched dataset of 125,000 young people has revealed a cluster of factors that together create a 'Resilient Mindset'. Our findings show that we can group students into three mindsets:

- Anxious
- Avoidant
- Resilient

The Resilient Mindset enables students to approach challenges with greater confidence. It assists both the anxious and avoidant learner to become a Resilient Learner.

The Resilient Mindset is specifically attuned to learning and behaviours in classrooms. Resilient Mindsets are differentiated from 'anxious mindsets' and 'avoidant mindsets'.

The Anxious Mindset

The anxious mindset is where students habitually freeze in the face of new challenges. Their levels of arousal overwhelm and panic them and they shy away from new experiences and opportunities for learning. Experiencing anxiety at these levels interferes with memory functioning and thinking.

The Avoidant Mindset

Students in this mindset are escapees from the demands of school. Habitually they respond to challenges with fight or flight. They may distract, question the validity of the work, get angry, distant or incommunicative. These students may

become disengaged and distracting to others. Their anxiety can influence other students and lower their motivation.

The Resilient Mindset

Shifting the appraisal of challenges that invoke anxious or avoidant responses into a Resilient Mindset requires a positive, trusting relationship between teacher and student. This is the art of great teaching: to reframe tasks, create support that overrides fear, develop a sense of success, and mastery is the basis of establishing a Resilient Mindset.

The establishment of a Resilient Mindset increases engagement in learning, motivation and academic success. It also relates to the factor that most predicts success in life and in relationships: the ability to regulate emotions. To create Resilient Learners, we have to deal with the ability to form relationships.

The Resilient Mindset relates to how we see ourselves and how others view us as we attempt new tasks, make mistakes and learn new skills. This is why it directly relates to the cultures of schools and classrooms. A Resilient Mindset is developed at school, inside and outside the classroom, in the corridors, on the sporting fields and at play.

Resilient Youth has found that there are key actions to be taken by teachers, parents and students to develop a Resilient Mindset. Talk to us to find out more – phone Katrina on 0476 282 927.

The Resilient Mindset - Indicators

Anxious	Resilient	Avoidant
Reluctant to attempt challenging tasks.	Has a go and persists.	Gives up easily, shuts down.
Freezes in the face of challenges. Doesn't know where to start. Feels incapacitated.	Gets stressed but resolves it through support (while there may be times of freeze or flight, the eventual strategy is tend, mend and befriend).	Flight. When confronted with a challenge, avoids, procrastinates or distracts.
Sees mistakes as personal failings.	Sees mistakes as necessary to learning.	Sees mistakes as not worth replicating.
May blame self for difficulties. Feels ashamed and worries.	Doesn't use blame / shame.	May blame others for difficulties. Feels ashamed and avoids it.
Energy is focused on pleasing people.	Energy can shift appropriately.	Energy is overly focused on escaping.
Concentration is often focused on other people and their judgements.	Concentration can flexibly shift between focused and diffuse; externally focused and internally reflective.	Wary; vigilant.
Sleep is often lessened through worry.	Sleeps well.	May sleep too long or be up playing computer games.
Resilience fragile and dependent on social support.	Resilience is robust enough to overcome challenges and upsets. Resilience is present in the absence of social approval.	Resilience may appear good but be fragile in crises due to inability to rely on others.
Decision making - seeks input from others, worries about what others might do.	Decision making - can make independent decisions and can seek the input of others when useful.	Overly self-reliant on making decisions alone. Reluctant to seek help from others.
Feedback - seeks reassurance and may feel helpless.	Feedback - seeks feedback in order to improve.	Avoids feedback and may feel judged and threatened.

To book a workshop on the strategies your staff can use to create a Resilient Mindset, please contact Resilient Youth at resilience@resiliencyouth.org.au.