

Paul,

This binder is a token of my great appreciation. I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to learn so much from you this year. I feel very lucky to have learned from someone so knowledgeable, creative, compassionate, and involved. Beyond that, I appreciate you putting your trust in me despite my age and inexperience. With the responsibility you've given me, I've learned a great deal about working with children in schools, but I've also gained a greater insight on my own strengths, weaknesses, and hopes for the future. Perhaps one of my weaknesses was constructing cohesive and functional lesson plans about student motivation and resilience, but I do hope these materials will prove useful for you in the future.

Many many thanks,

Introduction to materials:

Purpose of these materials:

These materials provide tools to help students change patterns of failure and indifference and develop the motivation to reach goals. At the elementary level, these activities and discussions can help students deal with increasing challenges at home, at school, or with peers.

Table of Contents:

1. Lessons and Worksheets on “Jumping Hurdles”
2. Activities that Promote Discussions About Resilience
3. Additional Resources
 - a. Books with themes of resilience and motivation
 - b. Motivational rhymes
 - c. Check-lists for measuring progress

Instructions for use:

Within the Response to intervention (RTI) model, this lesson can be adapted to be implemented at any three of the tiers. For a Tier 1 intervention, these lessons can be implemented in a classroom or school-wide setting, provided to all students by all educators. For a Tier 2 intervention, these lessons can be implemented in a small-group setting or a specialized classroom. For a Tier 3 intervention, these lessons can be implemented on an individual basis by a school social worker, counselor, psychologist, or administrator.

1. Using the worksheets and discussion points provided, the educator should teach students what it means to be resilient, “jump hurdles”, and “jump back up!”. The students will discuss hardships they have overcome as well as those that they are facing now. The worksheets have been adapted for older and younger elementary-age students.
2. The educator may also choose to include hands-on activities for students that will promote discussions about resilience. They may read books with this same theme or discuss the motivational rhymes included in this material.
3. The student and educator will monitor the student’s progress and efforts towards their goals using the charts and measures provided.

Jumping Your Hurdles!

The following lesson was adapted from the “Why Try” Program.

Goal: This lesson provides a problem solving model for people who might be accustomed to giving up when confronted by challenges. There are six critical components to this problem solving model:

1. Identify the problem
2. Create options
3. Get help
4. Take action
5. Believe in change
6. Self-talk

To “Jump Back Up” is to have resilience in the face of failure and setbacks.

Jumping Hurdles: Points to discuss with students

This lesson is adapted from a blog post from *Why Try* trainer Mark Fuller.

Mark discusses how someone can go from the point of feeling like the world is against them to seeing that they can become something. If teachers can guide their unmotivated students through these strategies, they can help their students go from saying “why try” to “I CAN DO THIS”!

1. Find a passion

- a. Mark says it is always good to have a big goal, “but the key is the *daily* goal”
- b. Helps a student get out of bed and get through the day to have something to look forward to

2. Change behavior NOW

- a. It can be paralyzing to see a long-term and far-off goal, so focus on the present and break the bigger goal into small goals
- b. This helps a student to set small goals that they can achieve on a regular basis, experiencing small successes
 - i. Each time they finish a worksheet or problem it is a success!
- c. Rather than getting to graduation, getting a good grade in the class, or making the team, focus on what they can do now to get there!
- d. This approach helps us to say “I can do that” by breaking big, unachievable hurdles into small tasks.
- e. This sort of self-talk is vital for struggling students.

3. Never give up!

- a. Despite how hard they may try, experiencing setbacks or small failures is impossible to avoid, but remember that *everyone* experiences these setbacks every now and then! It’s important to “jump back up!”
- b. “You only lose if you give up!”

Jumping over your hurdles!



Draw a picture of a hard time you faced.

Draw what you did/could have done to overcome this hard time.

Brainstorming Solutions

When faced with a big hurdle, it is easy to feel helpless - we all know the feeling ! Try breaking the problem down. Rather than focusing on the big goal, brainstorm small goals you can focus on to ultimately jump that big hurdle! If you brainstorm solutions to the problem, you'll soon realize this is a problem you can overcome!

Example:

Jenna is upset because got a bad social studies grade on her report card. She feels like she is just bad at social studies and can't do anything to help that. What solutions may help Jenna in this situation?

- She can focus on completing her social studies readings.
- She can ask her teacher for help.
- She can set small goals for herself – each time she finishes a worksheet it is a success!
- She can keep an “I can do it!” attitude!

What is your hurdle?



What are some ways you can solve it?

★ **Remember: the most important thing is to remind yourself “I can do it”!**

“Mind Over Matter”

This activity is part of the *Why Try* program, and is designed to be used along with the “jumping over hurdles” lessons.

Spatial Requirements: Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

Activity Type: Group

Grades: K-12

Group size: 2 or more

Time: 5 minutes

Introduction: A lot of our success in achieving goals depends on our ability to put “mind over matter.” We have more power in our minds than we ever use. There is a term called self-fulfilling prophecy, which means that what we think is what will take place. This is similar to the benefits of “positive self-talk” and “believing in change.” This activity is designed to help students realize the power of the mind in accomplishing goals, and the effect the mind can have on our actions and abilities.

Materials:

- 1 Lifesaver candy per student
- 1 15-inch piece of string per student



Activity:

Give each student a 15-inch piece of string with a Lifesaver tied to one end. Have each student hold their string up in front of their face so that the Lifesaver hangs about six inches from their eyes. Their arms, elbows, and hands must not be touching anything, such as a desk or a chair. Now have them stop the Lifesaver from swinging by using their other hand to stop its motion. Tell them that they are going to make the Lifesaver start to swing by just using their mind power. Have them focus carefully on the Lifesaver and think, “left, right,” while imagining it moving from left to right. While they are doing this, you will be saying slowly, “Left, right, left, right.” Repeat this phrase over and over until the Lifesavers start to swing back and forth. Most of the students will have their Lifesavers moving left and right. This is because the mind sends signals to the hand to move the Lifesaver in the same direction as the command you are giving. The success depends on the fine motor development of the students as well as how hard they are concentrating.

If you really want to amaze them, change the commands from “left to right” to “front, back” or “around and around” and have them focus on the same movement. For advanced students, you can start the Lifesavers moving in a circle and then change the direction and make the Lifesaver move in a circle in the opposite way.

Processing the Experience:

- How many of you were able to make the Lifesaver follow my commands?
- How powerful is our mind (positive self-talk)?
- How do our actions influence what we think and say to ourselves?
- In what kinds of activities do your thoughts or self-talk impact your behavior?
- How can our thoughts and self-talk impact our goals?

Goal I am working towards:

	What I did:	How it worked:
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		