

Resilience in Sport

What is Resilience?

- “Resilience refers to a person’s ability to bounce back after adversity, hardship or failure: ‘abandoning the imprint of the past’” (Cyrułnik, 2009)
- “Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems” (Gever Tulley)
- “The capacity to recover quickly from difficulty”
- “The ability to absorb energy & release it to return to its original shape”
- “The ability to ‘bounce-back’”
- “The skill to adapt to pressure”

Components of resilience (Staroverky, 2012; Pennock, 2017)

Optimism	Altruism	Moral Compass
Humour	Role Models	Social Support
Facing Fear	Having Purpose	Training

Measuring Resilience

Several self-assessment scales on resilience are available to use including the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale which has been rated as one of the top three most reliable rating scales by Windle et al. (2011) in their assessment of 19 assessment tools. Others in the top 10 include the Ego Resilience Scale and the Brief Resilience Scale. For the purposes of the intervention carried out at KES, Birmingham, we used a modified version of the CD-RISC as shown below. It is designed to assess five areas of resilience: Personal competence; Acceptance of change and secure relationships; Trust, tolerance and the strengthening effects of stress; Control; and Spiritual Influences.

Teaching for Resilience

- Create opportunities that encourage ‘failure’. Pupils who see learning as a struggle of which errors are part and parcel of learning are less likely to give up when faced with difficult challenges and are more likely to solve them.
- Support pupils through errors and reinforce it as a process of learning. Fear of failure can lead to an over analysis of one’s own performance. For example, test anxiety is thought to lead to considerably lower academic outcomes because pupils spend some of their working memory monitoring their own performance (‘How am I doing?’) leaving less capacity for the task at hand.
- Attempt to promote a growth mindset (Dweck) rather than the thought that we are all born with a fixed capacity. This can be achieved by individualising teaching and providing low stakes assessment. Be it test scores or no result festivals in sport.
- Avoid ‘undesirable difficulty’ where competence is not attained as the difficulty is too high from the start. Consider scaffolding to bridge the gap.

Statement	Level of Agreement			
	1	2	3	4
I am able to adapt to change				
I have close and secure relationships				
I can deal with whatever comes				
Past success gives me confidence for new challenges				
I see the humorous side of things				
I tend to bounce back after illness or hardship				
Things happen for a reason				
I can achieve my goals				
When things look hopeless I don't give up				
I prefer to take the lead in problem-solving				
I am not discouraged by failure				
I think of myself as a strong person				
I can make difficult and unpopular decisions				
I can handle unpleasant feelings				
I have a strong sense of purpose				
I have few regrets in life				
I like challenges				
I have pride in my achievements				
My friends and family are willing to help me make decisions and listen to me				