ACTIVITY 2

THE RESILIENCE TREE

SKILL/S COVERED: Adaptability
APPROXIMATE TIME NEEDED: 45-50 minutes
AGE GROUP: 8-12 years old

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Adaptability is very important in navigating changes and challenges in life. It involves being flexible, resilient, and able to adjust to new situations or circumstances. Practical activities can help students develop a deeper understanding of adaptability, explore different strategies for coping with change, and strengthen their emotional intelligence skills in navigating life's transitions.

AUTHOR OF THE TOOL/EXERCISE WITH REFERENCING LINK

Original activity created by E-School.

GOAL

To help students see the interconnectedness of different factors that contribute to resilience and adaptability, to develop self-awareness, goal-setting, peer support, and a sense of empowerment in navigating challenges and changes.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

All the class members.

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NECESSARY MATERIALS

- A whiteboard or poster board
- Paper leaf cutouts
- Tape or sticky tack
- Sheets of paper

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The teacher starts by discussing the concepts of resilience and adaptability with the students. He or she explains that resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks and challenges, while adaptability is the ability to adjust and thrive in changing circumstances.
2. A large tree outline is drawn or printed out on a poster board or whiteboard. It is labelled as "The Resilience Tree" and displayed prominently in the classroom. The teacher explains that, as a metaphor, the roots of the tree represent your support (e.g. family, friends, etc), the trunk your personal strengths, and the branches your goals for improvement.
3. A discussion with the students leads to brainstorming different factors that contribute to resilience and adaptability. These could include traits like optimism, perseverance, flexibility, problem-solving skills, social support, and self-awareness.
4. Each student or small group is assigned a specific resilience or adaptability factor to focus on. They are instructed to write or draw their assigned factor on a paper leaf cutout. They are encouraged to include examples or personal experiences that illustrate how this factor contributes to resilience or adaptability.
5. As students complete their leaf cutouts, the teacher invites them to attach them to the tree trunk or branches using tape or sticky tack. As they do so, they are encouraged to share briefly why their assigned factor is important for resilience and adaptability, giving examples of personal or school life situations in which their assigned factor could be helpful.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

6. Once the Resilience Tree is complete, a class discussion about the factors contributing to resilience and adaptability is facilitated. Students are encouraged to reflect on which factors they already possess and which ones they would like to develop further.

7. Each student is encouraged to create a personal "Resilience Plan" outlining specific actions to strengthen their resilience and adaptability. They are encouraged to set realistic goals and identify strategies for overcoming challenges.

DEBRIEFING QUESTIONS

1. What are the potential challenges or opportunities associated with changing situations?
2. How might people react emotionally to change?
3. What are some strategies for adapting to and coping with change effectively?
4. How can emotional intelligence be applied in navigating change?

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

1. The students can be encouraged to share their resilience plans with partners and to provide feedback and support to each other, offering suggestions for additional strategies or resources.
2. Throughout the school year, the Resilience Tree and students' resilience plans should be revisited periodically. The students are encouraged to reflect on their progress, celebrate their successes, and revise their plans as needed.

SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES OR MODIFICATIONS (FOR SHY OR YOUNGER STUDENTS)

- **Simplify the Metaphor:** Use clear language to explain how the tree represents their resilience (e.g., roots = support, trunk = strengths, branches = goals).
- **Use Pre-Made Templates:** Provide a tree outline with labeled sections for students to fill in, reducing complexity.
- **Add Visual Supports:** Use pictures or symbols for students to represent their ideas (e.g., a picture of family for support).
- **Allow Private Reflection:** Give students the option to keep their "resilience tree" private if sharing feels too personal.
- **Resilience Garden:** Replace the tree metaphor with a garden where students identify "seeds" of resilience (coping strategies) and "sunshine" (support).
- **Storytelling Exercise:** Read a story about a resilient character and ask students to identify their "roots" (supports) and "branches" (goals).
- **Emotion Stones:** Have students create "resilience stones" by drawing or writing on rocks to symbolize their strengths or sources of support.
- **Digital Option:** Use online drawing tools or apps for students to create their tree digitally.
- **Role-Playing Resilience:** Act out scenarios that require resilience, followed by a discussion about what "roots" and "trunk" elements were used.

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