



# Self confidence

Age range: 11-16

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills



# Session overview

Time	Key learning outcomes	Resources
30-45 mins	By the end of the activity students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify challenges and describe the feelings experienced when overcoming them</li><li>Analyse challenges posed in the workplace</li><li>Plan how to overcome a fear or challenge</li><li>Explain how thinking about past events can develop self-confidence</li><li>Identify helpful strategies for thinking about past events</li><li>Apply positive thinking to real life situations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Self confidence student worksheet</li><li>Self confidence presentation slides</li></ul>

Remember that you can refer to the guiding principles for establishing a safe learning environment in the Appendix section of the LifeSkills content guide. This includes suggestions for signposting students to further support. The content guide can be downloaded [here](#).

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# Activity one

## Overcoming challenges

### 1. How challenge can be good for us

- Ask students to create a mind-map of the emotions someone might feel when experiencing a problem or challenge
- Show **slide 2**. Ask students how they feel when they have had a problem or a challenge, and they've managed to find a solution or overcome the problem. This could be when they have had to start at a new school, learn a new skill that they found particularly difficult, or do a physical challenge, such as abseiling or diving
- Discuss how successfully solving a problem or meeting a challenge can make us feel rewarded, stretched, proud of ourselves and more confident in what we can do. It can also make us feel that we've learnt something new: it allows us to grow and develop
- Share your own story of a challenge you took on, the fears you had to overcome and the emotions you experienced. Examples might include starting or changing jobs, managing a team of people, becoming a parent, public speaking, visiting a country you hadn't been to before, moving home. Older or more able groups may want to consider some different examples of challenges and these could be seen as an opportunity and/or way to overcome a fear.

**Can they think of examples within different settings, e.g. in the workplace, at school, or in the community?**

**What action plans might they devise to tackle this challenge and turn it into a positive experience that helps their own personal development?**

**Ask students what feelings they can remember having before tackling the challenge: did they feel nervous or scared? Help them to identify that challenges often seem frightening at first**

### 2. Look at some challenges faced by well-known people



- Show **slide 3** and read out each quote. Explain why these three people are famous and the challenges they faced, using the information below

**Malala Yousafzai** was born in 1997 in Pakistan. She has been campaigning for the right for girls to be educated and started writing a blog for the BBC in 2009. On 9 October 2012, Malala was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman: miraculously she survived and, after receiving initial treatment in Pakistan, Malala was airlifted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, where she underwent a series of operations. She regularly speaks out on education issues and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

**Jonnie Peacock** won Gold in the men's T44 100m at the 2012 and 2016 Paralympics. In 1999, aged just six, he had to have part of one leg amputated after a bout of meningitis in which he nearly died.

**Sir Richard Branson** is a highly successful entrepreneur. In the 1970s he founded the Virgin Group, which today controls more than 400 companies in various fields. Richard has dyslexia, which affected his academic performance and has also openly talked about having ADHD.

- Discuss with students what they can learn from each of these people and their quotes
- Explain that they show we can all overcome big challenges and use them to help ourselves or others to grow

# Activity one

## Overcoming challenges (cont'd)

### 3. Explore what it's like to face a challenge



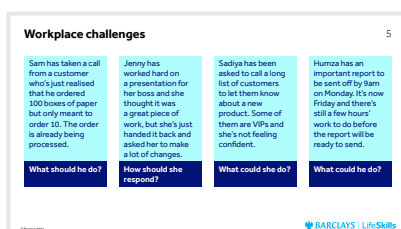
- Show **slide 4**. Help students identify the two sides of any challenge: the benefits from doing it, and also the fear of taking it on
- Explain that it's normal to feel fear when taking on a challenge

**Ask students to reflect on which side they think about most. How do they think the three famous people thought about their challenges?**

- For older or more able groups, before showing **slide 7**, you may want to ask students to work in groups to generate their own idea about how to overcome a fear.

**What action plans might they devise to tackle this challenge and turn it into a positive experience that helps their own personal development?**

### 4. Dealing with a workplace challenge



- Show **slide 5** which features some examples of workplace challenges
- Allocate the challenges to small groups of students and ask them to discuss how the character would respond. Each group should identify the fears and opportunities linked to this challenge
- After a few minutes, display **slide 6** and ask groups to share their ideas with the class so everyone has considered more than one challenge
- Ask students to suggest some of the skills that might be needed to successfully deal with each of the challenges, such as teamwork, empathy, honesty, resilience or confidence

## Extension

If you have access to the internet, students could try [The Workplace Challenge](#) online quiz



# Activity one

## Overcoming challenges (cont'd)

### 5. Encourage students to look at a challenge of their own

- Give out the **Steps to tackling a challenge student worksheet**. Ask students to write about a typical challenge a person of their age might face, e.g. starting at a new school, getting a part-time job, raising money for a trip or for a charity, or passing an exam
- Ask if anyone wants to share their ideas
- Discuss the fears they identified, and ask whether feeling fear is negative. Share examples of when they may have felt fear and then overcome it to tackle a challenge successfully

### 6. Share ideas for overcoming fears

- Show **slide 7** and share the tips for overcoming fear
- Ask students to add to the **Steps to tackling a challenge student worksheet** and note how they could use these ideas to overcome the fears connected to their own challenge. This is an individual reflection task to allow students time to apply the learning to their own experiences
- For older or more able groups, before showing **slide 7**, you may want to ask students work in groups to generate their own idea about how to overcome a fear



# Activity one

## Overcoming challenges (cont'd)

### 7. Reflect on the need to overcome challenges and fears

- Remind students that to grow, we must take on and overcome new challenges
- Emphasise that it's normal to feel fear – this shows you've taken on something worth doing. But these fears aren't always as big as we make them out to be. When students take on their challenge and overcome their fears, they'll build their confidence to take on even bigger challenges in the future
- Give out the **Overcoming challenges student worksheet** as a summary of what you have covered in this activity. Students should complete the blank sections under 'Do my fears really matter?' and 'How can I overcome fear' with their own examples and tips. This should be done as an individual activity to encourage reflection and ensure progress is gauged and recorded at the end of the session. Examples could include:

#### Do my fears really matter?

##### Fear

<b>Failure</b>	You might not do it, and this will be really bad	You might not do it, but you'll do your best and learn from it
<b>Embarrassment</b>	You'll look stupid if you fail	You'll look good because you had a go – and even better if you succeed
<b>Rejection</b>	People won't want to know you if you fail	People will still like you, and they might admire you for having a go

#### How can I overcome fear?

- Have a goal and a plan
- Imagine success
- Believe in yourself
- Realise why your fears might not matter
- Ask yourself 'What's the worst that can happen?'
- Learn from mistakes – then try again

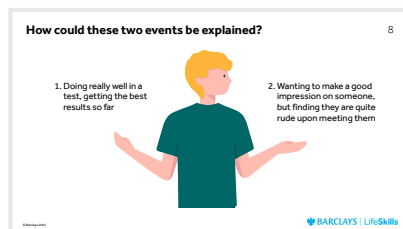
# Activity two

## Thinking confidently

### 1. Discuss the ingredients for success

- Ask students to name someone they think is happy and successful – a 'hero' – and give your own example. This could be anyone who has overcome adversity, or been determined to achieve their dream – a sports person, author, campaigner, family member or friend. Remember, success doesn't just equate to financial reward
- Share ideas about what might help these people be happy and successful

### 2. Examine how students reflect on situations



- Show **slide 8** which demonstrates two experiences George has had. Ask students to look at the scenarios and think about how George might explain the outcome of each situation after the event. Would he think about it in a positive way (e.g. He worked hard to prepare for that test so deserved to do well/that person was having a bad day and didn't mean to be rude) or a negative way (e.g. It was a fluke that the test went well/he must have done something to upset that person)?
- Ask students to share their thoughts

### 3. Introduce the idea of 'explanatory style'



**Ask students to consider how George might go through life depending on the two different outlooks, one positive and the other more negative.**

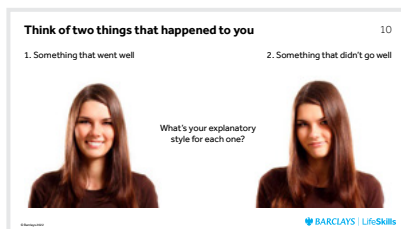
**How might going through the same experience differ dramatically as a result of the attitude he takes?**

- Show **slide 9**. Explain that when people think about past events, they can answer these three questions. This is referred to as their 'explanatory style', and it can be positive or negative depending on how they tend to answer the questions
- Split the class into small groups. Using the examples above, ask half the groups to think about doing well in the test and the other half to think about the person being rude
- Within their groups, they should try answering the three questions shown on the slide in a positive way, and the other in a negative way
- Ask the groups to share their ideas with the rest of the class

# Activity two

## Thinking confidently (cont'd)

### 4. Consider how to explain life events

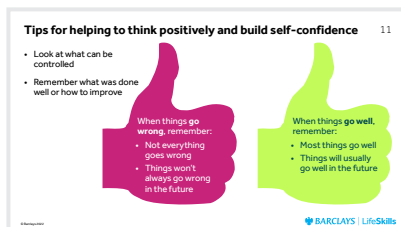


- Show **slide 10** and give out the **Thinking confidently student worksheet**. Ask students to think of two events of their own (these should not be examples from their personal lives, but something from school or employment e.g. represented the school at a sporting event, organised fundraising, became an open day ambassador for the school, secured a paid or voluntary job)

**Ask students to write down their events and how they think about each one. Do they think about each event in a different way?**

- Invite students to share their answers, reasons and feelings if they are happy to do so. If working with students who would find this type of activity more emotionally challenging, you may wish to run this purely as an individual reflection task. This will still allow students the opportunity to apply the learning to their own experiences

### 5. Using a positive explanatory style



- Show **slide 11**. Ask students to identify how they could think about events using a positive explanatory style. They could do this on their own or, if they feel comfortable, ask a partner to help them come up with ideas

## Extension

Help students explore in more detail the idea that some things that happen are out of their control, while others are within their control. Think about being late for a job interview: if this was because a student overslept and missed the bus, then that was in their control. But if they were late because the bus broke down, that was out of their control

**Remember that you can refer to the services and advice signposted in the Appendix section of the LifeSkills content guide to find further support for students who may lacking in self-confidence or feeling anxious about taking on new challenges. The content guide can be downloaded [here](#)**



# Summary

Thinking positively
12

When things go wrong, remember:

- Not everything goes wrong for me
- Things won't always go wrong in the future

When things go well, remember:

- Most things go well for me
- Things will usually go well in the future

Tips for helping to think positively and build self-confidence:

- Accept that things can go wrong
- Remember that most things go well
- Replace any negative thoughts using a positive explanatory style
- Remember examples of when things go well and use them to challenge pessimistic thoughts
- Use these examples to think 'I can help this go well because...'
- Always be honest and take responsibility for actions

- Show **slide 12**. Explain that to feel positive and confident about the future, we need to feel positive and confident about the past. Developing an optimistic attitude can help you look for what you could do better next time instead of worrying about what went wrong
- Sometimes we might face challenges that are out of our control. Explain that by accepting what we can't change and thinking positively about what things that we can control, we can learn to deal with challenges effectively and confidently. Examples of things that are in our control might include being punctual, working hard or bring friendly when meeting new people. Things outside of our control might be moving schools if a parent gets a new job, the bus breaking down or a train being cancelled
- You can ask students to take notes from **slide 12**, which they can refer to as a takeaway after the session. You could also ask students to choose their favourite tip, and either write down or explain to the class:
  - Why it's important to them
  - How they're going to use it in their own life



# Self confidence

## Steps to tackling a challenge

New challenges help us grow. Sometimes, fears can get in the way.

Think about a challenge you'd like to overcome. What's stopping you? How could you overcome your fears and grow?

**The challenge I'd like to overcome is:**

**My fears about doing it are:**

**My good reasons to do it are:**

**Ways I could overcome these fears:**

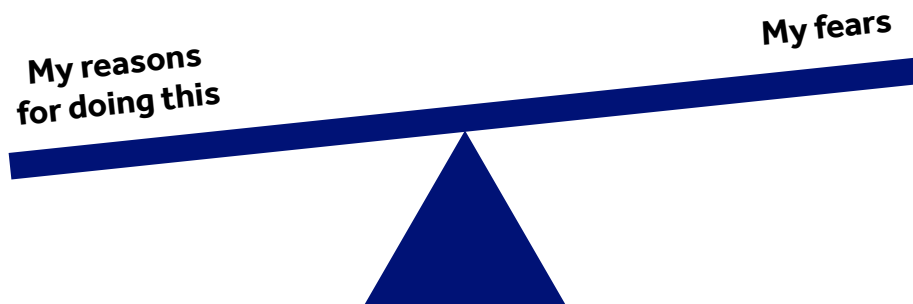
# Self confidence

## Summary: Overcoming challenges

### Why overcome challenges?

New challenges help us grow. Sometimes, fears can get in the way. It's normal to feel fear – this shows you've taken on something worth doing.

Think of the good reasons to take on a challenge. Decide that these are more important than fears.



### Do my fears really matter?

Usually fears don't matter as much as it sometimes feels. Here are four common types of fear and why each one might not matter so much.

Fear	Why might it be scary	Why it might not matter
Having a go	Your challenge might be difficult or not enjoyable	It might not be too hard, and you might enjoy doing it
Failure		
Embarrassment		
Rejection		

### How can I overcome fear?

Here are some good ways to overcome your fears. Anyone can use them – how could you?

- Treat each challenge as an opportunity
- Find reasons to have a go
- Reach out of your 'comfort zone'

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# Self confidence

## Thinking confidently

### What's my explanatory style?

Think of two things that happened to you in the past. How do you explain each event to yourself?

#### 1. Event that went well

#### 2. Event that didn't go well

What happened?

Did I do my best at things I could control?

Does everything work out this way?

Will things always work out this way?

### My positive explanatory style

When you look back and explain events to yourself using your 'inner voice', try to make it a positive voice. It will help you become more optimistic!

- How could you think about the event that didn't go well in a different way?
- Write down positive ways to think about what happened
- Write down examples of where things went well instead

How I did well at the things I could control, or how I could learn to do better

Reasons why not everything works out this way

Reasons why things won't always happen like this