

Positive Mindset

Maintaining positive expectations

A positive mindset is a key factor in determining one's level of success or even satisfaction within an experience or situation. This one-hour stimulating workshop provides students with thinking skills for recalibrating their expectations, allowing them to develop a pragmatic, yet optimistic outlook. This outlook gives them strength in times of stress, upheaval and change.

RATIONALE

By making positive thinking a habit, students can increase the likelihood that they will develop a positive mindset in the long term. Not only does positive thinking lead to higher positive expectations with regard to academic performance, but students with a more optimistic mindset tend to have higher self-esteem and stronger social relationships than those with negative outlooks. Positive expectations are also associated with better physical and mental health (Lench 2011). Here's how it works: Positivity releases serotonin and dopamine also known as the happiness and feel-good hormones, into a student's brain. At the same time, it reduces the amount of cortisol, the stress hormone, into their brain, which in turn leads to improved memory, learning, creativity and problem solving. It can also lower stress levels and improve moods. While more effective learning naturally leads to an increase in achievement, a positive attitude about the subject they're studying puts a student's brain in a mode that's optimal for grasping and retaining content.

Positive thinking improves a students' ability to answer maths problems, improves memory and enhances problem-solving.

Stanford University School of Medicine(2018)

OBJECTIVES

- To build confidence in their own potential.
- To recognise that all people experience nervousness.
- To understand that feelings and thoughts can be changed.
- To enable students to affect their thinking and in turn, create a more positive mindset.

SKILLS taught and their BENEFITS

Embracing Change is key to adopting positive expectations for the future. This exercise will encourage students to reflect on how they have made successful changes and acquired new skills in the past, enabling them to look into the future with confidence, knowing that they will further develop and grow.

The Circle of Concern concept, developed by Stephen Covey, can help students to recognise which things they can influence and control, and which they can't. Understanding that much of what a student might focus on may well be outside of their influence enables them to focus their efforts, build resilience, develop responsibility and the ability to reflect.

Cognitive reframing is a psychological technique that consists of identifying and then changing the way situations, experiences, events, ideas, and/or emotions are viewed. Cognitive reframing allows students to challenge negative thought patterns and literally 'reframe' them in a more positive and useful manner.

Reflecting on positive, past experiences in which we made progress and felt good about ourselves encourages us to develop the belief that we can achieve the goal in front of us. If we did that, then we can do this!

"The workshop has shown how I can change my attitude and be more resilient. It's given me reassurance and motivation to strive."

Year 10 Student - George Spencer Academy (2023)

OUTCOMES

By the end of the workshop, your students will have:

- Gained confidence in their own abilities and potential.
- Developed an understanding that all people experience nervousness and other negative feelings.
- Gained confidence in their ability to positively impact their own thoughts and feelings.
- An increased understanding of strategies which will encourage development of personal resilience.
- Developed a positive attitude towards change and an understanding of how to embrace it.

GATSBY Benchmarks: 3,5,8
NERUPI Framework: Choose, Become, Understand
PSHE Core: Living in the wider world

Statutory Guidance, Curriculum and Frameworks