

# BOUNCE BACK

how to be a resilient kid

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# Contents

1	What Is Resilience?	7
2	Getting to Know Yourself Better	11
3	Understanding Emotions	21
4	Using Self-Talk	33
5	Calming Yourself	43
6	Handling Decisions, Disappointments, and New Challenges	53
7	Having the Power of Change	63
8	Dealing With Social Conflicts	73
9	Coping With Unchangeable Situations	87
10	Building a Support Team	101
Conclusion:	Don't Stop! Your Resiliency Journey Continues	109
About the Author		111
About Magination Press		112

## CHAPTER ONE

# What Is Resilience?



Everyone faces challenges at some point during their lives. Some of these experiences may be negative or unpleasant, like dealing with a serious illness, being lonely, getting a low grade on a test, fighting with a sibling, or not getting selected for a team. Some positive experiences can create stress, too. For example, imagine you are offered the chance to swim on the varsity swim team at your school. You might be excited for the opportunity, but also feel stressed at the same time—perhaps you would wonder if you were talented enough, or worry about the hard work that would be required. How would you cope with this stress? Would you withdraw from the team because of self-doubts and anxiety or would you have the coping strategies to deal with your emotions and enjoy the new opportunity?

Take a moment to think about what is creating stress in your own life. Are you struggling with a difficult subject in school, a conflict with a friend, or another uncomfortable or stressful situation? If so, how do you handle it? Do you have strategies for getting through these tough times? Have you ever heard the saying “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade”? It means that even when something doesn’t go the way you would want or you are facing a very stressful experience, there are ways to cope with it and make the best of the situation. A resilient person can often do this. As you become more resilient, you may find that you are better able to do this too!

# What Does It Mean to Be Resilient?

Resilience is like a bouncing ball. When the ball hits the ground, we expect it to bounce back. Resilience means you can bounce back from, or deal with, difficult times, new situations, unexpected changes, or other experiences that cause you stress.

Keep in mind that being resilient does not mean that you don't feel pain or that everything goes your way. Actually, you are more resilient after going through a stressful situation and learning to deal with the challenge or setback. If you find ways to handle difficult situations today, you are likely to feel more confident that you can handle future tough times without feeling totally overwhelmed.

## How This Book Can Help

Some people seem to just bounce back automatically—they understand how to be resilient. However, resilience is not something you are born with or not—it can be learned. If two people face the same obstacles, the person who is resilient will often feel less stress than the person who is not resilient. Resilient people learn ways to work around or overcome stresses.

In this book, you will learn strategies for how to be resilient more often and more easily. There are three major steps toward becoming resilient:

**step one** Know yourself and what makes you happy or stressed.

**step two** Learn strategies to help you get through the stressful times.

**step three** Use these strategies in your life.

The chapters that follow cover these steps and help you gain the important life skill of resilience. You will learn how to figure out whether a stressful situation is within your power to change, and then how to accept, adapt, or change the situation. You will read about when to tackle a problem on your own and when to ask for advice or support. Plus, you will read about how self-talk, calming techniques, and other specific strategies for dealing with conflicts and challenges can build resilience and prepare you for life's roadblocks, obstacles, and challenges that you may face in future years.

You will read a lot about how other kids found ways to bounce back from stressful times. However, in order to protect the privacy of all of the children and teens who have shared their stories, the examples are composites and describe many kids. These examples are not meant to reveal the challenges faced by an individual person.

So, do you want to get “unstuck” from worry, anger, sadness, or general stress? Do you want to gain confidence that you can handle challenges because you have coping strategies for bouncing back? Do you want to learn ways to deal with uncomfortable times so that you aren’t super down about them? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then it sounds like you would benefit from finding a way to become resilient. Being motivated to learn resiliency skills is a great first step toward acquiring them! This book will offer you tons of tips that you can use to help you to reach your resiliency goals!

**Think of a bouncing ball.** When a bouncing ball hits the ground, it bounces back. That's what resilience means—the ability to bounce back from tough times.

Some people seem to just bounce back automatically. But the truth is that resilience is not something you are simply born with—it can be learned. *Bounce Back* will help you find your bounce using cool quizzes, lots of advice, and practical strategies that build up resiliency skills. You'll learn how to:

- ❑ **get to know yourself** better
- ❑ **understand** your emotions
- ❑ **coach yourself** with self-talk
- ❑ **calm yourself** when you are upset
- ❑ **deal with** decisions, disappointments, and new challenges
- ❑ **handle situations** that are under your control
- ❑ **negotiate, compromise, and navigate** social conflicts
- ❑ **cope with or adjust to** serious sources of stress
- ❑ **ask for help** and guidance

And much more! Being motivated to learn resiliency skills is a great first step toward acquiring them! This book will help you to be more resilient and keep on bouncing back!



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