Bending, Bouncing, and Building Resilience

Moving Beyond Cancer to Wellness at Seattle Children’s
September 30, 2023

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Cancer puts a lot of pressure on us, but it doesn’t need to flatten us! This talk is for anyone in who wants to build their resilience “muscle” — no gym shoes required!
What is “resilience”?

• Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.

• OR Being able to “bounce back”, or to move forward, after all kinds of physical and emotional challenges
Resilience is not something we have or don’t have.

It is something we can learn.

Resilience improves with practice.
Why do we need resilience?

Cancer creates pressure... ...it has to go somewhere!
Resilience is a **tool** we can use

- To decrease stress
- To feel less overwhelmed
- To re-focus
- To get un-stuck
- To feel physically better
- To improve communication
- To improve relationships
3 Take-Home Tools!

• #1: Reminder Spring

• #2: Breath Box

• #3: Circle of Connection

• And 1 challenge...
Reminder Spring

Think of a not-so-great time...

• How did you feel?
  – Overwhelmed?
  – Afraid?
  – Angry?
  – Other feelings...?

• How did you get through it?
  – What strengths did you use?
  – Who or what helped?
  – Did you gain confidence?

Let’s make a spring...
Breath Box

• Let’s make a box...

• Breathing takes practice?
  – Yep!
    • Singing
    • Playing an instrument
    • Swimming
    • Yoga
    • Others?
  – Let’s practice “Box Breathing”

• Mindfulness is a really helpful resilience tool you can use anywhere, anytime!
Circle of Connection

• Think of a time when a family member, friend, teacher, healthcare person, pet, plant, song, book, picture, or movie helped you feel stronger...

• Sometimes it’s hard to blow up your own beach ball

• Let’s make a circle that can connect!
Connections build resilience

Recognizing our common humanity, asking for and/or accepting help, resisting isolation, giving and receiving kindness, and being real help build connections, a sense of security, and our resilience.
3 Tools and a Challenge

• #1: Reminder Spring
• #2: Breath Box
• #3: Circle of Connection

• Gratitude Challenge
• Gratitude
  • Improves physical symptoms and performance
  • Improves psychological coping
  • Improves sleep quality, alertness, and energy
  • Improves self-esteem and empathy
  • Improves relationships and reduces resentments
  • Builds optimism
  • Has LASTING benefits
Gratitude Challenge

• Make a commitment to yourself today
• Say 3 things you are grateful for each morning before you do anything else
• Keep this up, restart if you forget
Thank You for taking the time to be here learning today!

- #1: Reminder Spring
- #2: Breath Box
- #3: Circle of Connection
- Gratitude challenge
- Keep practicing!
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