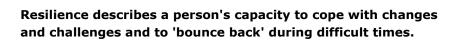
# What Do We Need to Know to Build Resilience in Children?

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Art Therapy & Sensory Play Workshops & Resources FIND MORE at www.CreativePlayLA.com





Children and young people who are resilient are better equipped to resist stress and adversity, to cope with change and uncertainty, and to recover faster and more completely from traumatic events or episodes.

However, research over the last 25 years has shown that today's young people are much less resilient than previous generations. They also have more emotional and behavioral problems. This is the case for males and females, and all social classes and family types. Work is underway to reverse this trend.

Resiliency involves COPING WITH NEGATIVE FEELINGS. To manage life, it is essential to create a balance between negative stressors or feelings and positive experiences. Coping is the process of taking <u>deliberate action</u> to create that balance. Breathing exercises, mindful meditation, and expressive art are deliberate actions that children can easily learn and use when they experience stress or negative feelings.

Are you a POSITIVE ROLE MODEL for resiliency? How do YOU cope with negative feelings?

- a) I soothe my painful feelings in healthy and not self-destructive ways.
- b) I soothe my painful feelings in unhealthy ways.
- c) I don't soothe my painful feelings because I believe I should tough it out.

To help children develop resiliency, adults need to provide OUTSIDE SUPPORT and reinforce INNER STRENGTHS.

### Outside supports include:

- caring relationships
- positive role models in families and communities
- community resources and support programs

### Inner strengths include:

- self-control
- thinking skills
- confidence
- positive outlook
- responsibility and participation

Resilient children learn to develop:

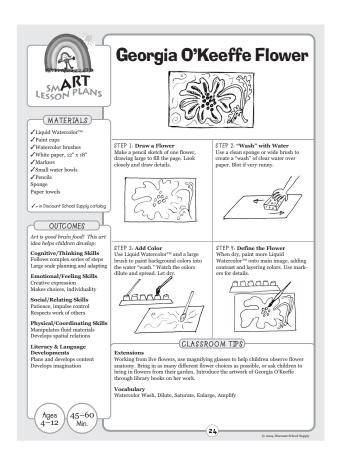


## "Fresh as a Flower" Mindful Meditation & Art

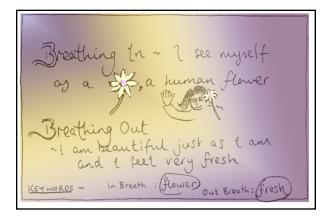
**Objective** - Develop self regulation skills through breathing exercises, mindful meditation, and watercolor art.



Fresh as a Flower combines Anna Reyner's Smart Art Lesson Plan, <u>Georgia Okeeffe Flower</u> with <u>Pebble Meditation for Children</u> by **Thich Nhat Hanh**. Relax and enjoy!







## **Why Resilience Matters**

Life doesn't always go the way we wish or expect. Problems arise in our families, workplaces, and communities. Relationships end, and children leave. We need to develop ways to get through the tough times in our lives. How do we do it?

## **Finding Your Resilience**

Resilience: Resilience is not rare, and everyone is resilient in some ways. Whenever you recover from a setback and get better at coping with life's difficulties, you become even more resilient.

Overcoming Problems: Being resilient doesn't mean you no longer have problems or are not affected by difficulties. It doesn't mean you are not sad when a relationship ends or you are not worried about your family's physical and financial well-being. It doesn't mean having answers to all of life's problems. Being resilient means finding ways to cope.



Failure, Adversity & Resilience: 25 years ago, Scott Peck began his landmark book, The Road Less Traveled, with the sentence: "Life is difficult." From Eastern spiritual practice we learned Buddha's first truth: "Life is pain."

If you are aged enough, you know these truths to be self-evident. The difficulty and pains of life can be seismic (death of a loved one, disease, divorce). They can also be smaller in scale, but still have the ability to rock us off our center and send us into fight, flight or freeze mode. The good news is that current medical research on the neuroscience of emotions teaches us:

Resiliency can be learned at any age – we can become MORE RESILIENT with practice.

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." ~Confucius



Think of resilience as elasticity or flexibility.



### **Resources:**

Finding Your Resilience: Reach In, Reach Out: <a href="http://www.victimsofcrime.org">http://www.victimsofcrime.org</a>

<u>I Can Calm</u> by Dr. Becky Baily http://consciousdiscipline.com

<u>Mindful Meditation for Children by Thich Nhat Hanh http://mindfulkids.wordpress.com</u>

Building resilience in children of mothers who have Co-occurring Disorders and histories of Violence http://link.springer.com/article

Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development.

Masten, Ann S. http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/amp/56/3/227/

Multi-Year Evaluation of the Effectiveness of a Resilience-Based Prevention Program for Young Children http://link.springer.com

Failure, Adversity, Resilience – What's Your Explanatory Style? <a href="http://hollanderleadershipblog.wordpress.com/2011/03/30">http://hollanderleadershipblog.wordpress.com/2011/03/30</a>

**Insight Timer:** Free iphone App with Medication chime

Anna Reyner is a nationally recognized arts advocate who is dedicated to helping people get in touch with their own creativity. She has conducted over 500 national and international hands-on art workshops and is a registered art therapist and licensed marriage and family therapist. She received her MA in Art Therapy from the University of Louisville and her BA in Art and Psychology from Ohio Wesleyan. Anna is the Director of Training for Discount School Supply and maintains an active art studio in Los Angeles. She is the author of two celebrated books, <a href="mailto:Smart Art">Smart Art</a>, which both won the Director's Choice Award for best new early childhood products at NAEYC in 2005 and 2006.

Check out her Art & Creativity Blog at

WWW.CREATIVEPLAYLA.COM