

Resilience - Activity 2

Extreme resilience



Time Taken: 40 - 50 minutes

Skills Developed:



Resilience



Self-awareness

Resources Required:

- This worksheet

Instructions:

1. Explore a time you have faced a physical challenge
2. Read about Team Hoyt and their resilience
3. Consider the downsides of extreme resilience
4. Explore how you know when to stop

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand what extreme resilience is
2. Understand that extreme examples of character strengths can have a negative side

Responding to challenges

Think of a sporting or physical activity that you found difficult. Perhaps it was a running race, a swim or a long walk. Remind yourself of the experience, then answer the questions below.

Task: Answer the questions below.

1. Why did you find the activity difficult?
2. Was it physically or mentally difficult?
3. How did you respond to it being difficult? Did you carry on or give up?
4. What caused you to either give up or carry on?

An Ironman triathlon is an extreme endurance race. Competitors do a 2.4 mile swim, a 112 mile bicycle ride and a 26.22 mile run. They do all this without stopping! Do you think you would be able to complete an Ironman triathlon?

In the following activity you are going to look at a story of resilience relating to Ironman triathlons.

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Overcoming all odds

Team Hoyt are a team who compete in Ironman triathlons. In the information below, you will learn more about them and what makes them special. **Once you have read about them, you should make a list of all the different challenges that they faced.**

Task: Read the information below to learn about the story of Team Hoyt

Team Hoyt are a father and son duo from Massachusetts in America. Rick, the son, has cerebral palsy, a condition that prevents your brain from being able to properly move your muscles.

When Rick was born, doctors told his parents that he would never be able to attend a mainstream school. However, Rick's mother spent hours teaching him the alphabet. Eventually he was given a computer that allowed him to communicate.

After this, he was able to attend a mainstream school. Rick eventually graduated from Boston University. He then worked in a laboratory developing systems to help people with disabilities.

Rick and his father Dick compete in Ironman triathlons and marathons together. During the triathlons, Dick pulls Rick in a specially designed boat during the swim, carries him on a seat on his bicycle during the cycling, and pushes him in an adapted wheelchair during the run.

When they first started, Dick had no experience of running, and was much older than most people starting to compete in sports. However, he has since improved to successfully complete lots of races.

Together, they have completed 6 Ironman triathlons and 72 marathons. They also biked and ran across the entire distance of the United States of America – 3,735 miles in 45 days.

Task: Use the information above to list the different challenges that the members of Team Hoyt faced.

Task: Answer the questions below.

1. How did Team Hoyt respond to the challenges that they faced?
2. What lessons about resilience could you learn from Team Hoyt?

Is extreme resilience healthy?

David Tait says that resilience is “never giving up”. Is it always a good idea not to give up? Can you think of any situations in which it might actually be better to give up? Think back to the examples of physical challenges from earlier in the activity.

Task: Can you think of a difficult or challenging situation in which it would actually be better to give up?

An example of a time when it would be better to give up is.....

It would be better to give up than continue because.....

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Task: Read the information about the possible downsides of extreme resilience.

Resilience is a positive trait that can help you to carry on when you find things difficult. However, extreme resilience can sometimes persuade a person to carry on when this will have a damaging impact on them.

For example, a runner competing in a race might develop an injury. Extreme resilience would persuade them to try to continue and finish the race, even if carrying on might make the injury so bad that they are not able to run again or hurt themselves for a long time after the race. Is this sensible?

Resilience can also make us spend too much of our time on something. For example, a person might find a maths problem too difficult to complete on their own. Extreme resilience could make them spend hours and hours trying to solve the problem, rather than asking for help in solving it. Whilst it is a good idea not to give up straight away, is it a good idea to spend so much time on something you cannot complete without help?

Another possible danger of extreme resilience is that it can put us in dangerous positions. Imagine that you were trying to reach something that was on a high shelf. Resilience would push you to keep trying to reach it, even if it was higher than you could reach. Extreme resilience might lead you to balancing dangerous on a table or chair to try and reach it and could even lead to you falling or hurting yourself.

A final way that extreme resilience can have a negative impact is by making you too tired. Sometimes we need to stop so that we can rest and let our bodies and minds recover. Extreme resilience, and the desire to 'never give up', might stop us from being able to do this.

Task: List 4 possible downsides of extreme resilience.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Knowing when to stop

We have seen how resilience is a good thing, but extreme resilience can potentially have a damaging effect on you. How will you know when it is a good idea to stop, rather than carrying on?

Can you select 3 ideas from the list below?

Task: Select three answers from the list below.

I will stop when carrying on would mean that I.....

- hurt myself
- successfully achieve my aim
- tire myself out
- can do something I did not think I would be able to do
- put myself in a dangerous position

Optional Task - Sharing Your Learning

The following task is an optional one to help develop your learning further. One of the best ways to consolidate your learning is to share what you have learned with someone else.

Can you explain the concept of extreme resilience to someone else?

Task: Find someone who is at home with you. Explain, in your own words, what extreme resilience is. Try to include the things below in your explanation.

- How Team Hoyt showed resilience
- What the term 'extreme resilience' means
- What the potential downsides of extreme resilience are
- When it is a good idea to stop, rather than carrying on