



Keeping hope alive

Your mindset is your way of thinking about or seeing things. There's more than one way to think about challenging situations, but let's talk about the mindset that helps you bounce back: Optimism. That's when you see the positive side of things and expect the best out of situations.

Optimistic people might see a room full of poop and say to themselves, "I know there must be a pony in here somewhere."

When you're optimistic, you're more likely to think of failures and mistakes as learning opportunities. And you're also more likely to think that accomplishments and wins are because of your strengths.

Optimism helps you expect situations to turn out well in the end, no matter how rocky things get. When things turn out blah, an optimist won't blame themselves for long. They see failings as temporary situations, lessons to be learned, and recognize that nothing terrible is permanent. Sounds like magic, but it's not always easy.

Take this example: Two best friends try out for the basketball team and they both don't make it. One friend says to himself, "There was a lot of great talent at tryouts and only a few spots. I'm bummed that I didn't get it, but I got some great advice from the coach, so I'll be back and better than ever next year."

The other friend says to himself, "No wonder I didn't make it. I suck and everyone was better than me. I never get a break. They were laughing at me. I might as well face it. I'm just not a great athlete." Which one do you think will feel more encouraged to try again next time? Let's practice recognizing optimism.

☆ Activity

STEP 1

Think about (or even watch) a movie about a person you admire. This movie can be about a person that exists in real life or a fictional character. Just try to find one that's about one main character who has to overcome adversity and is able to stay optimistic most of the time.

STEP 2

Were there any moments in the movie in which you related to the main character? Were there any moments the main character faced that would've caused you to give up? What kept them going?

STEP 3

Let's pretend you're making a movie about your own life. What would your journey be like? What genre would it be? Who would you cast to play yourself? What would you call it?

STEP 4

How would your movie character overcome their challenges? What kept you bouncing back and moving forward through hard times?