

Perseverance Wellbeing Walks

Notes for Teachers

Introduction

In these walks we encourage children to develop their awareness of what they need in order to persevere when they find things difficult. The focus will be on what conditions are needed to promote perseverance (rather than merely encouraging an attitude of extra effort or 'grit'). The metaphor of a plant growing in adverse conditions illustrates how it can still find a way to grow if its needs are met. The focus of perseverance will be on effort not success as the expectation of success brings with it the potential for failure and failure does not encourage perseverance.

Finding plants growing in dry / challenging places

Children are asked to find plants growing in adverse conditions such as pavement cracks or in walls. It will be supportive to think about how we can value plants that grow in unexpected places with wonder and respect.

Focusing in

What does thinking about the plant make children feel and how can it help them understand themselves? The feelings that children have in response to reflecting on a resilient plant will help them to consider times when they have experienced difficulty persevering and think about the people in their lives who can help them to persevere.

Positive feelings will relate to children recognising that the plant's needs are met and may include feelings such as a sense of being:

- Encouraged, Happy, Safe, Amazed

Difficult feelings will relate to children recognising that the plant could have better conditions to grow in. They may be feeling:

- Sad and sorry for the plant

- That they want to help the plant
- Tired (due to the effort of growing somewhere difficult)
- Angry that the plant doesn't have somewhere easier to grow

Reflection: Supporting children to understand the message

The connection can be made between how children feel about the plant and their own experiences of being provided for and offered help – or not, if there have been times when they have needed more in order to thrive. If the plant looks like it's struggling, it may be supportive to help children recognise that it needs more than it's getting. They can then be guided to reflect on the fact that sometimes they too may need more support and to think about who they can turn to so they receive this help.

Thinking about who can help us persevere
'When things are difficult it helps when...'

The responses from the children may include:

- My friend sits with me
- My teacher says 'well done'
- My nan listens carefully when I tell her how I feel
- My dad says he knows I tried hard

Here you could help the children to think specifically about who can support them and what those people do that makes them feel helped and encouraged. It will be important to have in mind that, for some children, this may not be their parent and it will be supportive to think about who the adults are in school who they feel they can talk to.

Signposts for external support can be found at:
<https://www.place2be.org.uk/page/get-urgent-help/>