

# HOOKED ON RESILIENCE

A FUN EDUCATIONAL GUIDE ON RESILIENCE  
PROVIDED BY THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD  
CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES



This guide is intended for ages 6-10, but can easily be adaptable for certain ages or abilities. Some of the activities in this guide may be done independently, while some of the bigger concepts are meant to be worked through as a family.

# SHIVER ME TIMBERS...

## WHAT DOES RESILIENCE EVEN MEAN?

Resilience: re-sil-i-ence (noun)

- The ability to grow and learn when faced with challenges and bounce back from hard things (ex. making a bad grade, not being picked for a sports team, divorce, the passing away of a loved one, any problem big or small)
- The ability to recover quickly from something that is difficult or challenging
- The ability for an object to spring back into shape



What happens when you drop a tennis ball?  
What happens when you pull on a rubber band?  
What do you notice about the springs?

These items bounce, stretch, and are flexible.  
Just like these items, we can learn to bounce back  
during hard times.



# ALL ABOARD LADS...

## FIRST STOP, SELF-AWARENESS

Self-Awareness is the knowledge of one's own character, feelings, motives, and desires (the awareness of the way you think).

### How Are You Feeling Today?



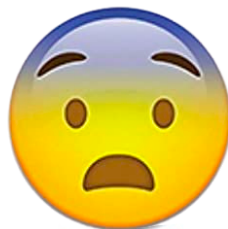
Happy



Sad



Angry



Worried



Shy



Excited



Surprised



Silly



Embarrassed

# CREATE A HAPPY TREASURE CHEST

Sometimes we forget the way back to feeling happy. We might need a reminder that can lead us to a happier emotional place. That's when a happy box (or folder) is really helpful.

A happy box is a collection of reminders of positive experiences we've had. These reminders bring back the feelings connected with the good moments in our lives, our strengths, joys, and accomplishments, the fun we've had, the books or music that have meaning for us, the people who are important to us. It's a happy "treasure chest."

Collect things that remind you of happy memories in your life. For example:

- photos or other souvenirs of great times
- awards that remind you of an accomplishment
- cards or notes from special people in your life
- favorite inspirational quotes or song lyrics
- something you made or drew
- a gift someone gave you
- a photo of someone you look up to

Put everything in a folder, binder, or special box where you can easily find it, or you can make a collage, poster, or mobile of the items. The most important thing is to choose only items that trigger a positive emotion for you. You can add, subtract, and rearrange them any time.

When you feel low or discouraged, take a few minutes to look through your treasure box to boost your happy emotions. Go through it any time to give yourself a daily serving of happy things.

As you work on building your positive emotions, you might notice that you feel happier, more accomplished, and more energetic. A small daily investment of focusing on the positive pays off with big lifetime rewards.

Resource: [Kidshealth.org](http://Kidshealth.org)



# YO, HO, HO LANDLUBBERS...

## IT'S TIME TO KEEP OURSELVES IN CHECK

Self-Regulation is the ability to monitor and manage your energy, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in ways that are acceptable (keeping yourself in check).

### CALM DOWN YOGA FOR KIDS



**I am strong.**

Use your strength to catch tricky waves.



**I am kind.**

Stretch high and spread kindness all around.



**I am brave.**

Be brave and fearless as you fly down the ski run.



**I am friendly.**

Stretch like a dog wagging its tail.



**I am wise.**

Be a wise owl perched on a tree branch.



# WALK THE PLANK...

## TO OPTIMISM

Optimism is hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something (having a positive view on things).

## HUNT THE GOOD STUFF

Hunting the Good Stuff is a skill that helps you to create positive emotion by noticing what is good in your life. Think back to the happy treasure chest activity, when we look for the good things in life, it can help us feel happy and hopeful.

Sometimes we focus on the bad things rather than the good things. Here are three easy steps to start hunting the good stuff:

- First, identify three things that went well during your day.
- Then, write them down, or share with someone close to you.
- Next, ask yourself why each thing happened, what each good thing means to you, what can you do tomorrow to get more of that good thing and in what ways do others contribute to this good thing.
- Fighting our thoughts on bad things helps us build optimism. Optimism can help us have better health, better sleep, and better relationships.





# "HTGS"- HUNT THE GOOD STUFF TREASURE HUNT

What good things will you fill your treasure chest with?

Instructions: Write down three good things every day. Next to each good event you list, write why it was good, how it made you feel, and what did others do to make you feel good.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Good Thing: \_\_\_\_\_

This was good because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Good Thing: \_\_\_\_\_

This was good because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Good Thing: \_\_\_\_\_

This was good because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



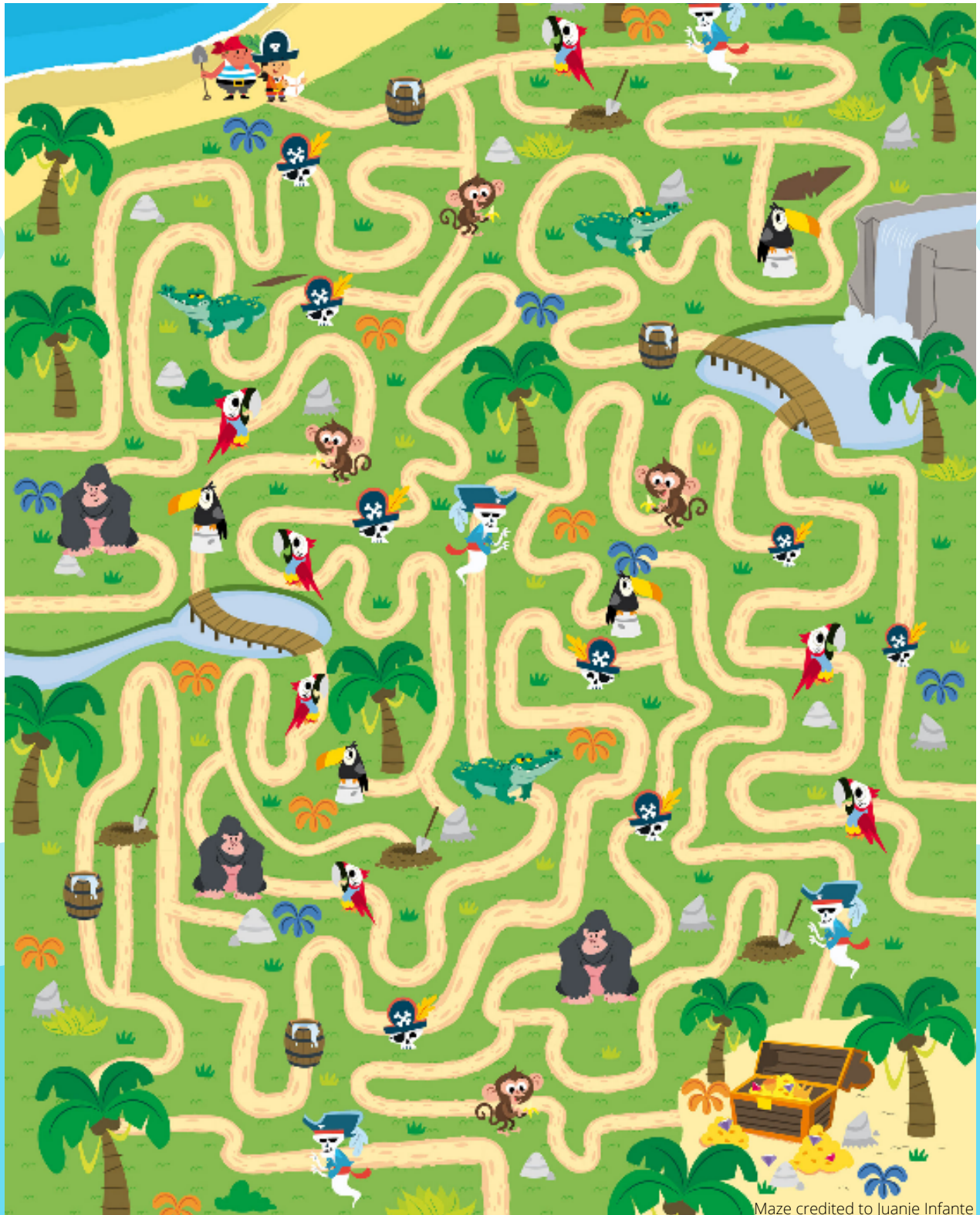
# X MARKS THE SPOT...

## AT MENTAL AGILITY

Mental = How we think

Agility = How we bend and flex (like yoga!)

Mental Agility is the ability to think on your feet and the flexibility to change direction (adapt to change).



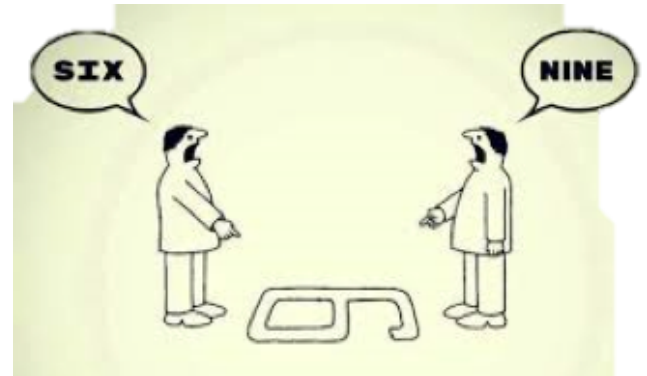
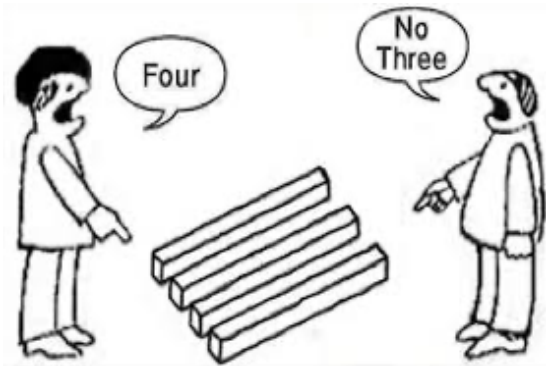
Maze credited to Juanje Infante



# PIIP (PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE)

\*NOTE: THIS SKILL WILL NEED TO BE WORKED THROUGH WITH A PARENT/GUARDIAN

Keeping things in perspective and mental agility work hand in hand with building optimism and overall well-being. It is always good when trying to accurately identify a problem and not jump to conclusions, to try and think outside the box, walk in someone else's shoes and see things from a different point of view. See some simple examples below:



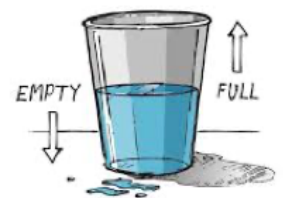
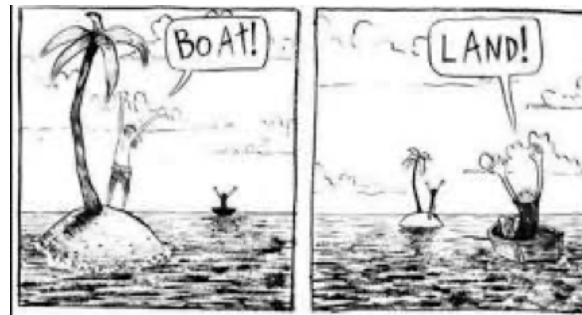
So who's correct in these two pictures above?

You're right, they are both correct.

**Perspective**

The man in the boat is happy to finally see land, but with the same amount of excitement the man on the island is thrilled to see a boat.

**Perspective**



Just as someone thirsty would be glad to have some water instead of none.

**Perspective**



# THE BLACK DOT ACTIVITY

**IN ORDER TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVES IN OUR LIVES, KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE AND CREATE A MORE OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK, TRY THE BELOW ACTIVITY AS A FAMILY:**

**Supplies:** Blank white paper, pen, pencil, marker

## **Steps:**

1. Parent/Guardian, draw a black solid circle in the middle of a white piece of paper.
2. Ask family members to write down what they see on the page.
3. Have everyone share their different descriptions (or perspectives) on what they see.
4. You will find most, if not all, will find ways to describe the black circle (moon, black hole, period, ball, or the position on the page, etc.)
5. Explain that it is always good to share your perspective while remaining flexible in what we see.
6. You can take it a step further by connecting the black circle to represent negativity, problems, or issues in our life. The white area around it can represent the possibilities, growth, connections, blessings and opportunities. Encourage each family member to share those concerns and help each other to see the opportunities.

\*Note: Remember that being optimistic makes us happier, healthier, more productive and successful!



*Parents or guardians, this original activity was given as a pop quiz by a professor. The professor handed out the quiz upside down, and when told to turn it over, all of his students were surprised. There were no questions- just a single black dot in the middle of the page.*

*The professor then asked for the students to describe what they saw.*

*After collecting the quiz, he told them they would not be graded, but proceeded to read what the students had described. All of them, without exception, defined the "Black Dot" trying to explain its position, shape, color, etc. The professor wanted to give them something to think about. He explained that not one person wrote about the white part (positives) of the paper, everyone focused on the dark spot (negativity) in our life, such as health issues, money problems, relationship issues with friends/family, etc.*

*The dark spots are small compared to all the good in our lives but they are the things that pollute our mind and spirit. Let's find ways to focus on the good things and share good things with others. Keep in mind the end result and stay focused on the tasks at hand.*



# AYE AYE CAPTAIN...

## EVERY GOOD PIRATE HAS A SET OF STRENGTHS OR TALENTS

Character Strengths are the unique parts of our personality that help us think, feel, and behave in ways that benefit us and others (natural way you are strong and how you use those strengths).

Knowing your character strengths not only helps you, but it also helps others. It is also good to know what others' character strengths are. This resilience skill helps to build connection and communication by allowing everyone in a group, team, class project, or family to use their talents.

In preparation for this activity (not mandatory; just for your own knowledge), we would like you to take the following survey: <https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/> This online survey should be completed with parent/guardian supervision.

When you get to the website follow these steps:

- Click the tab labeled questionnaires
- A drop down menu will appear - click "VIA Strength Survey for Children"
- You will be asked to set-up a user name and password (write it down)
- Set-up will be complete after inputting all required fields
- Take the survey and print your top 24 strengths

\*Note: It may be helpful for each family member to complete the online survey, to promote family discussion.



# CHARACTER STRENGTHS ACTIVITY

## "WANTED POSTERS"

from the Operation Military Kids; Boots Off Activity Guide

Identify personal strengths you've gained through your experience as a military child, especially during times of challenge or change.

1. Draw a picture representing yourself on the next page
2. List your character strengths that make you an important member of your family, team or group
3. Share with your family some of your strengths (talents) that you can contribute to the successfulness of any task





# WANTED

My Character Strengths make me an important part of my family...

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

# BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES...

## LAST UP BEFORE LANDFALL IS CONNECTION

Connection is the relationship in which a person, thing, or idea is linked or associated with something else; strong relationships help develop an understanding that other people matter.

Connect as a family by making this special treat from [www.lilluna.com](http://www.lilluna.com)

## TREASURE PUDDING CAKE

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 packages Golden Oreos
- 8 oz PHILADELPHIA Cream Cheese softened
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 16 oz cool whip
- 2 boxes instant vanilla pudding or white chocolate
- 3 cups milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- Treasure Candy (chocolate coins, Ring Pops, etc.)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Crush 1 package of Oreos and place in the bottom of a 9x13 pan. Set aside.
2. Mix cream cheese and butter until smooth.
3. Mix in powdered sugar and fold in whipped topping. Set aside.
4. In a separate bowl mix pudding, milk and vanilla. Fold this mixture in with the cream cheese mixture.
5. Pour over crumb mixture.
6. Crush the last package of Oreos and sprinkle all over the top to look like sand. Let set for a few hours.
7. Before serving, top with treasure candy and jewels.



# SHARE YOUR TREASURE

## Make a Family Kindness Jar

Parents/Guardians, a Family Kindness Jar is one of the many ways to teach children about the benefits of being kind. Through activities like this, we can teach children that being kind is not only beneficial to others, but to ourselves as well!

Simple kindness activities for kids are all that is needed when trying to instill these values in your children. You don't necessarily have to teach kids to be kind, you just need to show them. It is our job as parents/guardians to show kids that being kind to others is a huge part of life.

### Activity Supplies:

- Container (any type of jar, canister or box will work)
- Pens, markers, crayons
- Slips of paper
- Stickers, ribbon, etc. for decorating

### Directions:

1. Gather supplies needed and your family members
2. Decorate your container
3. Take turns coming up with random acts of kindness that you would like to complete as a family and write them down on your slips of paper.
4. Put all your papers in the jar and decide on how often you are going to complete these acts of kindness. (weekly, Bi-weekly, or monthly)
5. Take turns drawing an act of kindness out of the jar and completing them as a family!



### Family Kindness Jar Ideas:

You can either come up with the ideas as a family, or have each individual family member write down what act of kindness they would like to have the family participate in.

If your children are having a hard time coming up with what they would like to do, here are some conversation starters to get their minds going.

- Who do you want to show kindness to? Animals? Your Teacher? A Friend? A Neighbor?
- Do you want to make a gift? Bake some treats? Commit an act of service?

Here are some ideas for your kindness jar:

- Wash a neighbors car (or your parents)
- Pick up litter in your neighborhood
- Bake cookies for the police or fire department in your area
- Write a nice note for someone like your teacher
- Make a blessings bag for someone in a shelter or the Red Cross
- Walk your neighbor's dog



This activity was found on [kidsactivitiesblog.com](http://kidsactivitiesblog.com) and the Random Acts of Kindness Jar activity came from a book called "Make & Share Random Acts of Kindness: Simple Craft and Recipes to Give and Spread Joy."

# LANDFALL ON RESILIENCE

We hope you enjoyed the voyage to learning about resilience. By applying the skills of self-awareness, self-regulation, optimism, mental agility, strengths of character, and connection to everyday life events, we can keep our ship sailing in a positive direction.

For more information on resilience, or how you can be a part of the National Guard Child & Youth Services, please contact your program coordinator!

[www.arngcys.com](http://www.arngcys.com)

