

GREECE (THEME 6)

Turning Challenges into Opportunities (Tough mindedness)

Sub-theme 1:

Developing courage, persistence and optimism in the face of adversity and overcoming difficulties and setbacks (e.g. failure, disability, sickness, injustice, discrimination)

Set of Activities 1: Dealing with difficulties (learning difficulties, failure in school, life challenges) by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

Set of Activities 2: Dealing with disability and sickness by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

Set of Activities 3: Dealing with injustice, discrimination by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

Set 1: Dealing with difficulties (learning difficulties, failure in school, life challenges) by showing courage, persistence and optimism

Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

- Understand that everybody may face difficulties to a lesser or larger degree during life and that is part of life.
- Recognize and verbalize possible emotions caused by adversity or difficulties which make one feel uncomfortable and understand that is expected.
- Utilize positive self-talk and use words of encouragement to encouraging oneself and others.
- Focus on the positive actions a person can take and be able to show courage, persistence and optimism in the face of adversity.

Activity 1: The rabbit and the turtle

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can experience adversity (difficulty) and that is normal.
- To recognize and verbalize unpleasant emotions due to adversity and affirm students that these feelings are normal life experience.
- To introduce to pupils the use of positive self-talk.

- *Age Group*

Early Years

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Book with Aesop's Fable: "The Rabbit and the Turtle, Hand- out 1.

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of adversity and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

2. Read the following story

Once upon a time, a rabbit was boasting about how fast he could run. He was laughing at the turtle for being so slow. Much to the rabbit's surprise, the turtle challenged him to a race. The rabbit thought "You must be joking" and accepted the challenge. The fox was the umpire of the race. As the race began, the rabbit raced way ahead of the turtle, just like everyone thought. The rabbit got to the halfway point and could not see the turtle anywhere. It was hot and he the rabbit was tired and decided to stop and take a quick nap. He thought to himself that even if the turtle passed him, he would be able to race to the finish line ahead of him. The turtle kept walking slowly by step by step. He never quit no matter how tired he got. He just kept going. The rabbit overslept and when he woke up he could not see the turtle anywhere! He went at full-speed to the finish line but found the turtle there waiting for him! The race was won by the turtle!

3. First, our goal is to help children to process the story by asking the following questions:

- What did you think of this story?
- What is the basic difficulty (disability) of the turtle?
- Which is the rabbit's strength?
- How do you think turtle feels about herself?
- What do you think the rabbit feels about himself?
- What made the rabbit to lose the race?
- How do you think the turtle felt before the race?
- What words did the turtle may have said to herself in order to feel strong?
- What characterists of the turtle help her win and determined the outcome of the race?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences: (Suggested questions)
- Is there something about yourself that makes you feel uncomfortable or troubles you?
 - How do you feel about this situation?
 - Have you ever done something to deal with this personal difficulty (handicap)?
 - Did you talk to somebody about this situation?
 - Did you do anything to change this situation (difficulty/personal challenge)?
 - What are some things that may give you courage and help you fight adversity in life?
5. Ask pupils to draw the scene of the story they like most (Use the Hand-out 1: Draw your favourite scene from the story: "The rabbit and the turtle").
- Also ask them to think one positive thought that the turtle may have had before or during the race (e.g. "I will do my best", "I will not give up", "I will reach the end no matter what"). Then we ask each pupil to tell us the sentence they thought and we write it down in a bubble thought above the turtle they have drawn.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look up stories of brave animals in children's books or to think of a story of brave animal they may have watched on T.V. (cartoons, child movie etc.)

Activity 2: The rabbit and the turtle

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can face difficulties and adversity (personal challenges) and that is normal.
- To recognize and verbalize unpleasant feelings that all experience and affirm students that these feelings are normal life's experience.
- To practice utilizing positive self-talk.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Book with Aesop's Fable: "The Rabbit and the Turtle"

Activity Steps

Steps 1-4: Same as Activity 1.

5. Split the children into groups of 6-7 pupils and ask them to think some encouraging and optimistic words (self-talk) that the turtle may say to herself before and during the race.

In case the pupils have difficulty to find ideas, here are some examples: *"I will fight with all my strengths", "I will give my best self", "My goal will be to finalize, no matter how much time will take", "I will not give up even if the rabbit will be close to the end", "I will enjoy the fight, no matter the result", "I will be happy if I manage to be a little bit faster than the previous time I run"*.

6. Then ask each group to present their ideas in front of the class.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look up stories of brave animals in children's books or to think of a story of brave animal they may have watched on T.V. (cartoons, child movie etc.)

Activity 3: The rabbit and the turtle

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can face difficulties and adversity (personal challenges) and that is normal.
- To recognize and verbalize unpleasant feelings that all experience and affirm students that these feelings are normal life's experience
- To practice positive self-talk and using words of encouragement to help oneself and others.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Advance

Materials needed

Book with Aesop's Fable: "The Rabbit and the Turtle"

Activity Steps

Steps 1-4: Same as Activity 1.

5. Role Play. Split the children into groups of 3-4 students and distribute roles (turtle, rabbit, fox) to each child. At this point we can add to the story 3-4 new heroes who are turtle's friends and they attend the race. Then we ask all the children in the class to help the child whose role is the turtle to think and write some encouraging and optimistic words that the turtle may say to herself, before and during the race.

Here are some examples: *"I will fight with all my strengths", "I will give my best self", "My goal will be to finish, no matter how much time will take", "I will not give up even if the rabbit will be close to the end", "I will enjoy the fight, no matter the result", "I will be happy if I manage to be a little bit faster than the previous time I run"*.

Next, we ask pupils to think of some encouraging ideas that the turtle's friends may have shared with her in order to give her courage.

6. Finally, ask each group to role play (enact) the story in front of the class. Remind our heroes (turtle and rabbit) to think aloud in order everybody hears the positive thoughts of the turtle. Also we ask turtle's friends to call encouraging comment to the turtle before and during the race: *"Don't give up" "We are with you", "Be strong", "You are the winner"* etc.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look up stories of brave animals in children's books or to think of a story of brave animal they may have watched on T.V. (cartoons, child movie etc.)

Activity 4: The rabbit and the turtle

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can face difficulties and adversity (personal challenges) and that is normal.
- To recognize and verbalize unpleasant feelings that all experience and affirm students that these feelings are normal life's experience

- To learn that the key component of dealing with adversity is the triplet: persistence, optimism, courage.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Book with Aesop's Fable: "The Rabbit and the Turtle"

Activity Steps

Same as Activity 3 (Early Years Advanced)

Activity 5: Two frogs and the white danger!

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can be in a difficult situation.
- To understand how the way of thinking affect emotions and actions.
- To promote the value of persistence, courage and optimism.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Picture of half-full or half-empty glass

Activity Steps

2. Read the following story

One day two frogs, Zippy and Zoi, were playing close to their lake and suddenly, they saw a big container full of fresh milk. They were very enthusiastic of drinking some of the fresh milk and they were trying to find a way to do this. But unfortunately, in their attempt to drink some milk, they fell in the container with the milk. They both panicked and scared commenting of their bad luck. They were moving their legs fast and they were trying to find a way out of the predicament they found themselves into. Zippy said: “We will never go out from here there is no point of trying”. But Zoi said: “There must be a way of coming out of here, we need to go on moving our legs”. After some time Zippy was frustrated and he decided to give up. He stopped moving his legs and after a while he relaxed and went at the bottom of the container and drawnd. Zoi was really exhausted by moving his legs all the time but he was telling himself all the time: “I will go out of here”, “There must be a way”, “I am a fighter”, “I will not give up”, “and Persistence always wins”. After many hours of moving his legs in the fresh milk, he started to realized that something soft but solid was underneath his feet. “What was that?” he wondered. He soon came to realize that by hitting his legs hard again and again the mild became butter! It soft but solid enough for Zoi to step on and with a huge jump to come out of the container! Zoi was totally right: “Persistence always wins”.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What did you think of this story?
- What is the adversity for Zippy and Zoi?
- What are the feelings of the frogs being in this difficult situation?
- How Zoi thought of the situation?
- How Zippy thought of the situation?
- What are the differences of their way of thinking?
- How their way of thinking have different consequences?
- What are the words Zoi were saying to himself to keep on going?

4. Next relate the story to the children’s own experiences: (Suggested questions)

- Have you ever been in a difficult situation?
- How did you fell?
- What were your thoughts when you were in that difficult situation.

5. Show a picture of half-full or half-empty glass and ask students “Is this glass half empty or half full?”

6. Then discuss about optimistic and pessimistic way of thinking by asking the following questions:

- Do you think that our way of thinking make any difference in the result/outcome?

- Do you think we have any control of our way of thinking?
- Do you think a positive way of thinking may affect our feelings and our actions?

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to discuss with their parents stories about optimism and pessimism. Parents are encouraged to share with children personal experiences of either pessimism or optimism.

Activity 6: Jim never gets an A

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can face difficulties and adversity (personal challenges) and that is normal.
- To recognize and verbalize unpleasant feelings which all may experience and affirm students that these feelings are normal life's experience
- To practice positive self-talk and using words of encouragement to help oneself and others.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Advanced

Materials needed

Index Cards

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of adversity in life as part of life's path and how we can deal with adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

2. Read the story

Jim is a third grader. He likes school a lot but he has some difficulties in learning. Jim has difficulty in memorizing dictation, grammar rules, multiplication table, history etc. Also he has difficulties in expressing himself in writing. Sometimes he feels very disappointed, because he studies a lot but he cannot show to the teacher and to his classmates that he had studied. Everybody thinks that he never studies at home and he cannot get a "well done" from the teacher.

Every time the teacher says: “Jim you need to study more” Jim feels very sad, but after some time he says to himself: “My teacher is right, I need to study harder”. Everybody knows that Jim is not a good student but they don’t know that Jim is a big fighter that tries a lot and never gives up.

Every afternoon Jim gets a nap because he knows that naps make him feel fresh and help him to have more energy to study. He studies many hours even if many times he feels tired and frustrated. Every time Jim has a test he starts preparing many days before, in order to have plenty of time to rehearse. He never gets an A. Every time he gets a B- or a C, he feels really frustrated and sad. It helps him very much when his parents say positive, encouraging words to him. Jim has to practice to focus on the things he is really good. All these strategies help him to feel better and gave him power to keep on trying. One day he had a dream. He saw himself holding a test with a big A. Nobody could understand the happiness he felt. From that day on, he decided to try even harder. He asked his mother to hire a tutor at home and the mother promised to ask for a support teacher at school to help him to develop memorizing skills and to practice writing. Jim’s parents always have encouraged him and supported his attempts to deal and fight this difficult situation and adversity in life. Jim has been improving on a daily basis but it was important that his family understood the tough struggle he was giving on a daily basis.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them: (Suggested questions)

- What impress you from the story?
- What are the basic difficulties of Jim?
- How these difficulties make him feel?
- What are some of Jim’s positive characteristics?
- What make Jim feel better after failure?
- Think of some encouraging words Jim’s parents may say to him
- Think some of the things that Jim is doing well in his life
- How hard is for Jim to keep trying even he knows he may fail again?
- What words may Jim say to himself in order to feel better?
- What are some of the actions that Jim may take in order to deal with his difficulties?
- What makes Jim to try even harder?
- What are some of Jim’s characteristics of Jim that it’s worth copying?

4. Next, relate the story to the children’s own experiences:

- Is there any characteristic of yourself that you do not feel well or troubles you you?
- How do you feel about that?
- Have you ever done something to deal with this difficulty?
- Did you talk to somebody about this difficulty?

- Have you done something to change this situation?
- Is there anything that may give you courage and helps you fight with life's difficulties?

5. Next ask each child to make a small personal card. In one side of the card they will write three-four things that are difficult to do (e.g. memorize multiplication table, learn dictation, memorize words in a foreigner language, etc.). In the other side, ask students to write some mottos that may give children courage and help them every time they feel disappointed. We encourage children to write mottos like: *"I am a fighter", "I will never give up", "I will find ways to deal with my difficulties", "It's hard, but I will keep on trying", "I am a strong person who knows how to fight" etc.*

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to ask their parents to share with them adversities they may have faced in the past or they may face at the moment and how they deal with these and what encouraging words may say to themselves.

Activity 7: Jim never gets an A

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can face difficulties and adversity (personal challenges) and that is normal.
- To recognize and verbalize unpleasant feelings that all experience and affirm students that these feelings are normal life's experience
- To teach children that the key component of dealing with adversity is the triplet: persistence, optimism, courage.

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Index Cards, Hand-out 2

Activity Steps

Steps 1-4: same as Activity 5

5. Give pupils the hand out where the word **POC-KET** is written and explain them that this is an acronym for the kids to remember these three important words (P for Persistence, O for Optimism, C for Courage). Then ask them to write down next to each letter each word and decorate the words in a fancy way. Then ask them to cut out the 3 words (Persistence, Optimism, and Courage) and take them home. Finally, ask them to find a safe place at their own room, where they can keep these words, so they remember them.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to ask their parents to share with them adversities they may have faced in the past or they may face at the moment and how they deal with these and what encouraging words may say to themselves.

Activity 8: Crossing the bridge

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face adversity in their daily life.
- To think of some personality characteristics that may help people to deal with adversity.

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Photos provided below, index cards



Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of adversity and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.
2. Next show pupils the first photo and ask them to make comments on it.

Next, tell the full story:

The children in the photograph are from Indonesia and they cross the specific bridge every day in order to go to school. It is really dangerous to cross this bridge and their parents really worry about children's safety.

3. Ask children to think about the personality characteristics of the children in the photo in order to deal with this daily adversity.
4. Ask children to think what are children's sources of courage (e.g. family, teacher and friend support). Then ask children to share their thoughts in front of class.
5. Split the students into small groups and give them index cards. Ask them to write down personality characteristics they consider important for persons to deal with adversities.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to ask their parents to share with them personal experiences where it was necessary for them to show courage and persistence and optimism in order to deal with an adversity.

Activity 9: Crossing the bridge

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face adversity in daily life.
- To think some personality characteristics that may help people to deal with adversity.
- To promote the value of optimism, persistence and courage.

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Advanced

Materials needed

Two photos provided below, Hand out 3.

Activity Steps

Steps 1-4: same as activity 8

5. Ask children to comment on the second photo.
6. Provide to the children the information that the second bridge is the new bridge that local people made in order children to go school with safety. Focus on the fact that the new bridge was built because of the children's persistence and the courage to cross dangerous bridge daily in order to go to school.
7. Ask children to think what made city officials decide to make this new bridge.

8. Split children into groups of 4-5 children. Next, give them the hand out "DICE" and ask them to complete it (Steps are: Cut first, glue next and finally write on each side the words: Pessimism, Optimism, Be Coward, Courage, Persistence, Giving up). Then one child of each group throws the dice and all the members of the group need to write down in the hand outs, a sentence according to the roll of the dice. For example, if the dice says Pessimism, then the children should write a sentence on pessimism about the children crossing the bridge.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to ask their parents to share with them personal experiences where it was necessary for them to show courage and persistence and optimism in order to deal with an adversity.

Set 2: Dealing with disability by showing courage, persistence and optimism

Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

- Understand that everybody may face difficulties to a lesser or larger degree in life and that is normal and to be expected.
- Recognize and verbalize range of unpleasant feelings caused by difficulties and realize that this is normal.

- Be able to use positive self-talk and words of encouragement for helping oneself and others.
- Focus on the positive things a person can do and be able to show courage, persistence and optimism in the face of adversity.

Activity 1: I am a special person

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can have a kind of difficulty and that is normal.
- To focus on strengths.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual, Hand-out 4.

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of adversity and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

2. Read the story

Champ is a happy squirrel who loves to explore. One day he decided that it's the right time to go around the forest world to explore new places and make new friends. Champ had a tremendous difficulty though. Walking was not easy for him since one of his legs was shorter than the other. This made it kind of awkward to walk and he could not go really fast. For this predicament (difficulty) nobody was a fault. He was born this way. This adversity though did bring his spirits down as he knew he had a strong and sharp mind and he could find solutions to his problem. Suddenly, he had an idea! He made a wooden sole and he glued under his shoe, so he gained more height so he can walk more comfortably. While walking in the forest, Champ met Paco, a mole

(dormouse) who could not see very well, but he had a very strong sense of smell and he can even smell under earth. Also Paco has been using a cane to find his way around.

Champ the squirrel, proposed to Paco to come along his journey around the forest and Paco agreed. Champ kept Paco's hand and helped him to find his way. On their way, they met Freddy the frog who could not hear very well, but he can really jump as high as one tall tree. They asked him to come along. He agreed that all three would walk together. As they all were strolling along they met Berry the hedgehog, who was afraid of many things and he was a bit shy but he could be a fantastic guard if need be with his strong and powerful thorns. All together became a happy group of friends. Suddenly, Paco smelt that a heavy storm is coming and after a while they heard thundering and the sky became gloomy. They had to move fast. Freddy the frog run faster and quickly located a small crack in rock, big enough for all to sit in safe. Champ helped Paco to find his way to the shelter. As they located their shelter, they all worked together to collect leaves and branches to make the shelter dry and safe and to collect lots of food for the rainy days.

They all worked hard but at the end the shelter was done and everybody sat to rest a bit. Tired but happy they all understood something really important: Each of them was different but also special, each of them had a weakness or disadvantage in life but they all could find solutions to move on and enjoy life and help with making the shelter safer. They also understood the power of friendship and relationships. Without this collaboration the shelter could not have been completed. It was a great day for all them!

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What did you think about the story?
- What is the basic difficulty/disability of each animal?
- What is the strong characteristic of each animal?
- How Champ feels about himself?
- What helps Champ see his disability in a positive way?
- What helps the heros of the story to see their disability in a positive way?
- What was the conclusion the heroes came up at the end of the story?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Is there any characteristic of yourself that makes you uncomfortable or trouble you?
- How do you fell about that?
- Have you ever done something to deal with this difficulty?
- Have you talked to anybody about that difficulty?

- Have you done anything to change that difficulty?
Is there anything that gives you courage and helps you fight an adversity you may face?

5. Then ask pupils to think one thing that they are good at and draw themselves in doing this (**Hand out 4**).

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look in children books, T.V. shows or movies for animals or persons who have a disability and how they dealt with it. Then ask children to share their stories in class next time.

Activity 2: I am a special person

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody can have a kind of difficulty and that is normal.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Manual, index cards Hand-out 5.

Activity Steps

Steps 1-4: same as Activity 1.

5. Ask students to think of 2-3 things they are good at and then help each child to make a sentence such as: "I cannot do hiking but I can do biking, swimming and walking fast". Also ask pupils to combine each sentence they say with body language and facial expressions (e.g. I cannot do: feeling sad, I can: feeling happy). Moreover ask them to move their body 180 degrees each time they say "but".

6. Finally give pupils the **Hand out number 5**: “I cannot... but I can” and ask them to draw what they cannot do in one part of the paper and what they can do on the other part of the paper.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look in children books, T.V. shows or movies for animals or persons who have a kind of disability and how they deal with it. Then ask children to share their stories in class next time.

Activity 3: I am a special person

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Advance

Materials needed

Manual, Hand-out 6.

Activity Steps

Steps 1-4: same as Activity 2.

5. Split class into 4 groups and give each group a piece of paper (cut a motto from the **Hand out number 6**) and read to them one of the following mottos: 1. “*I accept myself as it is*”, 2. “*I love myself as it is*”, 3. “*There are things that I cannot change but there are other things that I can change*”, 4. “*I need to focus on the things I can do*”. Then ask each group to memorize its motto and repeat it loud, 2-3 times, in front of the whole class. Finally, ask one group after other to repeat the motto again with passion.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look in children books, T.V. shows or movies for animals or persons who have a kind of disability and how they deal with it. Then ask children to share their stories in class next time

Activity 4: I am a special person

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual, Hand out 6.

Activity Steps

Same as Activity 3.

Activity 5: Bocelli: A resilient tenor

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.
- To learn that with faith, positive energy (love), optimism, persistence and courage all obstacles can be transformed to something positive

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Manual, song by Bocelli (Italian singer) "[Time to Say Goodbye](#)", Hand-out 7.

Activity Steps

1. Play the song "Time to Say Goodbye" by Andrea Bocelli. Ask pupils if they like the song and how they feel when listening to it. Then explain that the album's first single, "Time to Say Goodbye", topped charts across Europe, where it stayed at the top of the charts for fourteen consecutive weeks, breaking the all-time sales record, with over 3 million copies sold in the country. The single went on to sell over 12 million copies worldwide, making it one of the best-selling singles of all time.

2. Then say the complete story of the resilient tenor Andrea Bocelli:

Andrea Bocelli, is an Italian tenor, and singer-songwriter, who was born with poor eyesight and he became blind at the age of twelve following a football accident. He and his family lived on the family farm, selling farm machinery and making wine in the small village in Tuscany, Italy. As a young boy, Bocelli showed a great passion for music. His mother has said that music was the only thing that would comfort him. At the age of six, he started piano lessons, and later also learned to play the flute, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, guitar and drums and after a while he realized that pursuing the career of a tenor was his destiny. By seven, he was already able to recognize the famous voices of the time as well as tried to emulate the great interpreters. He gave his first concert in a small village not far from where he was born and at the age of 14, he won his first song competition. After finishing secondary school in 1980, he studied law at the University of Pisa. To earn money, Bocelli performed evenings in piano bars. He completed law school and spent one year as a court-appointed lawyer. It was there, in 1987, that he met his future wife, Enrica. Bocelli has recorded fourteen solo studio albums, of both pop and classical music, three greatest hits albums, and nine complete operas, selling over 80 million records worldwide.

With the release of his classical album, *Sacred Arias*, Bocelli captured a listing in the Guinness Book of World Records, as he simultaneously held the top 3 positions on the US Classical Albums charts.

3. Ask pupils what impressed the most from the life story of Bocelli.

4. Split into group of 4-5 and ask them to write down, on hand out 7, the difficulties Bocelli may have faced in his life.

5. Ask pupils to share their ideas in class. Then ask if they have heard other stories of people who have any kind of disability. We may also refer to Helen Keller's story.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to find information for Helen Keller's life and share it in class.

Activity 6: Bocelli: A resilient tenor

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.
- To learn that we faith, positive energy (love), optimism, persistence and courage all obstacles can be transformed to something positive

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Advanced

Materials needed

Manual, song by Bocelli (Italian singer) "[Time to Say Goodbye](#)", Hand-out 8

Activity Steps

Steps 1-5 same as Activity 5

6. Give pupils the **Hand out number 8** labelled: “**Resilience Skills**”, “**Persons to Connect**” “**Resilience Thoughts**” and ask them to cut each Hand out into 4 pieces. Ask them to write down **Resilience Skills** that may help somebody to develop a positive attitude toward disability (one skill on each piece of paper, Total 4), **Person(s) who may help them to be resilient** (one person on each piece of paper, Total 4), and **Resilience Thought(s)** that may help to see disability in a positive way (one thought on each piece of paper Total 4).

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to find information for Helen Keller’s life and share the information with the classmates.

Activity 7: Bocelli: A resilient tenor

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.
- To learn that we faith, positive energy (love), optimism, persistence and courage all obstacles can be transformed to something positive

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual, A4 papers

Activity Steps

Steps 1-3 Same as Activity 6

4. Ask students to reflect that a person with a disability has **2 basic choices (paths)**:
 - a. The path of despair and helplessness (and giving up) or
 - b. The path of acceptance of disability and creative action to move into metamorphosizing (changing something negative into a positive).
5. Present the picture of a backpack as a visual aid. Then ask the children what does a person has to have with him in his 'backpack' in order to take the second path of acceptance?
9. Ask children to draw on A4 paper how they imagine the place where the path of despair leads and how they imagine the place where the path of acceptance leads.

Finally, comment on the children's drawings and display them on a visible place in class.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to find more songs of Bocelli and bring them for listening with classmates.

Activity 8: Konstantinos Fikas: A paraolympic winner

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.
- To learn that with faith, positive energy (love), optimism, persistence and courage all obstacles can be transformed to something positive.
- Success may come in many shapes and sizes.

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Manual, Video from YOUTUBE, Hand out 9 & 10

Activity Steps

1. Play a video from YOUTUBE in which Konstantinos Fikas talks. (internet address to be added)
2. Ask pupils to share anything they want concerning the video.
3. Ask pupils to think and discuss some of the feelings Konstantinos may have experienced from the beginning of his ordeal and until he accepted his adversity (disability) and made it into something positive for him.
4. Ask students to reflect that a person with a disability has two basic choices (paths):
 - a. The path of despair and helplessness (and giving up) or
 - b. The path of acceptance of disability, a path which leads into creative action metamorphosing the disability into something positive.

5. Then ask each student to complete the related **Hand out number 9**: “What Konstantinos needs to have with him in his backpack in order to take the path of acceptance?”

6. Split students into group of 4-5 and give each group a **Hand out number 10**. Ask them to write down on one side of the paper one optimistic sentence and same sentence from a pessimistic point of view (e.g: “I have two legs and one hand” and “I don’t have a leg”).

Discuss in class how an optimistic way of thinking affects our emotions and thus, our actions.

Activity 9: Nick: life without limits

Learning Goal

- To focus on acceptance and love of oneself.
- To focus on strengths as a compensating mechanism for weaknesses.
- To learn that we faith, positive energy (love), optimism, persistence and courage all obstacles can be transformed to something positive.
- Success comes in many shapes and sizes.

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Advanced

Materials needed

Manual, Hand out 11 & 12

Activity Steps

1. Play a video from YOUTUBE in which Nick Vojegic talks about his life. (internet address to be added)
2. Ask pupils to share anything they want concerning the video.
3. Ask pupils to think and discuss some of the feelings Nick may have experienced from the beginning of his ordeal and until he accepted his adversity (disability) and made it into something positive for him and the people around him.
4. Ask students to reflect that a person with a disability has two basic choices (paths):

- a. The path of despair and helplessness (and giving up) or
 - b. The path of acceptance of disability, a path which leads into creative action metamorphosing the disability into something positive after all.
5. Then ask students to complete **Hand out number 11**: “What Nick needs to have with him in his backpack in order to take the path of acceptance?”
6. Then split pupils into groups and distribute them one card to each group from a hand out 12. Each card will have one saying by Nick: 1. *“There are some things you cannot change and other things you can change”*, 2. *“You need to see where the obstacle is”*, 3. *“Visualize yourself overcome obstacles”*, 4. *“Focus on the positive things you do”*, 5. *“Using everything you can do”*, 6. *“Use the best of your ability”*, 7. *“Never give up”*.
7. Ask each group to reflect on each saying and share their thoughts in class.

Set 3: Dealing with injustice and discrimination by showing courage persistence and optimism

Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

- Understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice, to a lesser or larger degree, during his/her life and that is part of life.
- Recognize and verbalize unpleasant emotions caused by discrimination.
- Understand that it is normal to experience feelings such as anger, frustration, sadness or sense of helplessness when somebody faces discrimination and injustice.
- Be able to make an action plan in order to deal with discrimination and injustice.

- Be able to show courage, persistence and optimism in the face of discrimination and injustice.

Activity 1: A white squirrel

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To recognize the negative feelings that discrimination and injustice can cause somebody to experience emotions such as anger, frustration, sadness, disappointment, sense of helplessness and it is normal to have these emotions.
- To understand that there is always something that we can do when we are faced with discrimination and injustice.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual, pieces of brown cloths and white cloths.

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of discrimination and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.

2. Read the story

It was Monday morning and all squirrels arrived happy at school. The squirrel school was located in the middle of the forest and all squirrels were of brown color. This Monday was not like others because a surprise waits all the squirrels. The teacher introduced them a new classmate, Wilson. Wilson was a white squirrel coming from a place very far away from the forest. All the squirrels were very much surprised by seeing Wilson, since they have never seen a white squirrel before.

When the bell for break rang, all the squirrels went out to play. Wilson asked kids to play with him but they avoid him by telling him that he didn't know the games they play. Next day Wilson asked kids to play with them "hide and seek", but kids answered that it's not fun to play with him because everybody can easily find him since he is white color. The next day, the teacher asked Wilson to go and play with other kids but Wilson answered that he doesn't want to. Wilson felt very sad and he thinks that it was not fair that his family decided to move on and take him in a school with brown squirrels.

After a week Wilson discussed with his parents and they tried to find a solution to the problem. Finally, they thought that Wilson will bring to school some photos from his old school showing the school of white squirrels. Also, Wilson was prepared to play with his new classmates his favorite game he used to play with his old friends.

The next day was one of the happiest days of Wilson's life. Brown squirrels were really impressed from the photos and the stories Wilson told them. When Wilson proposed the new game, the other students liked the idea and were willing to play. By the end of the day Wilson had many new friends. From the next day nobody thought Wilson as a white squirrel, but as an interesting squirrel with many nice stories and new games.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Why do you think squirrels didn't want to play with Wilson?
- How Wilson felt about that?
- What was the action plan of Wilson?
- Was his plan successful?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Have you ever been in a new environment (new class, party) that nobody wants to play with you?
- How did you feel?
- Have you ever try any action plan in order to make other kids, to play with you?

5. Role Play. Give all kids, except one, brown pieces of cloths and give to one child a white cloth. Ask children to role play the situation of brown squirrels at school when a new white squirrel comes to class as a new student. Then, ask kids to play the scene when Wilson showed photos, said stories and finally played new games all together. Ask are encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look for stories of animals in childrens' books, they may have at home or to think a story of animals they may have watched on T.V. (cartoons, child movie etc.) where some animals are different from the others and focus on other animals behavior (Did others discriminate the animal who was different or not?).

Activity 2: A white squirrel

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To understand that there is always something that we can do when we are faced with discrimination and injustice.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Manual, pieces of brown cloths and white cloths.

Activity Steps

1-4 Activity Steps: Same as Activity 1.

5. Role Play. Ask two children to wear white cloths (fur) and role play Wilson's parents and then ask them to play the scene of the story when Wilson is discussing with his parents in order to make an action plan. Finally, ask kids to play the scene when Wilson showed photos, said stories and play with them new games. Encourage the children to share thoughts and feelings.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look for stories of animals in childrens book, they may have at home or to think a story of animals they may have watched on T.V. (cartoons, child

movie etc.) where some animals are different from the others and focus on others animals behavior (Did others discriminate the animal who was different or not?).

Activity 3: A white squirrel

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To understand that there is always something that we can do when we are faced with discrimination and injustice and talk to parents is one of the basic approach.

Age Group

Early Years

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual, sheets of paper

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of discrimination and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.
2. Read the story

It was Monday morning and all squirrels arrived happy at school. The squirrel school was located in the middle of the forest and all squirrels were of brown color. This Monday was not like others because a surprise waits all the squirrels. The teacher introduced them a new classmate, Wilson. Wilson was a white squirrel coming from a place very far away from the forest. All the squirrels were very much surprised by seeing Wilson, since they have never seen a white squirrel before.

When the bell for break rung, all the squirrels went out to play. Wilson asked kids to play with him, but they avoided him by telling him that he didn't know the games they

play. Next day Wilson asked kids to play with them “hide and seek”, but kids answered that it’s not fun to play with him because everybody can easily find him since he is white color. Next day teacher asked Wilson to go and play with other kids but Wilson answered that he doesn’t want to. Wilson felt very sad and he thinks that it was not fair that his family decided to move on and take him in a school with brown squirrels. After a week Wilson discussed with his parents and they tried to find a solution to the problem.... From the next day nobody see Wilson as a white squirrel, but as an interesting squirrel with many nice stories and new games.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Why do you think squirrels didn’t want to play with Wilson?
- How did Wilson feel about that?

4. Then relate the story to the children’s own experiences:

- Have you ever been in a new environment (new class, party) that nobody wants to play with you?
- How did you feel?
- Have you ever try any action plan in order to make other children to play with you?

5. Split children into four groups and ask them to think of a solution that Wilson may made up with his parents.

6. Ask children to share their ideas in the class.

Take Home Activity

Children are encouraged to look for stories of animals in childrens book, they may have at home or to think a story of animals they may have watched on T.V. (cartoons, child movie etc.) where some animals are different from the others and focus on others animals behavior (Did others discriminate the animal who was different or not?).

Activity 4: A white squirrel

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.

- To understand that there is always something that we can do when we are faced with discrimination and injustice and talk to parents is one of the basic approach.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual

Activity Steps

Same activity as Activity 3

Activity 5: Sonya: a girl with a dream

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To find ways of making feel better when discrimination takes place.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Manual, sheets of paper

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of discrimination and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.
2. Read the story: **“Sonya: A Resilient Roma girl with a dream!”**

Sonya is a 9 old girl born in a Roma family. Even though none of her siblings did go to school, Sonya asked her mother to go to school. The family attempted to discourage her, but she had her mind made up. Sonya really wanted to go to school and learn to read and write!

At the end, the family gave in and registered Sonya in the public school. Nevertheless, things were not easy for Sonya. She had to walk every day to school and when school was over, she had to come home to help her parents with different chores and also go with them in their truck selling different goods (e.g. potatoes, watermelons etc) in the different neighbourhoods of the city. Sonya at the end of the day, was exhausted and she had her homework to do for the school. Sonya kept going though because she had a dream which gave her strength to continue.

When Sonya started school she was very happy because somebody from the family could finally learn how to read and write. Her dream was to be teacher and to convince all Roma parents in their establishment to send the children to school. The situation at school was not easy for Sonya either. From the first day, Sonya was mocked by most of the children because she had darker skin and spoke with an accent, the gypsy accent. Also the school children made fun of Sonya's clothes because they were not like the other children's clothes. Some children call her "dumb" because she a 9 year old girl and she were still in first grade.

Sonya was very sad with the whole situation in school and many times was crying and felt that this whole situation was not fair. Nevertheless, Sonya though kept going to school every day and drew strength from her teacher who really liked Sonya and everyday try to teach her something new.

The teacher helped her so other children stopped saying nasty words to her and accepted her in the school gradually. When Sonya was returning back home in the Roma establishment, she was describing her daily difficulties in the school to her family. The family was impressed by Sonya determination to go to school and learn to read and write. Then the whole family kept telling her: "Do not forget how special you are and how many great things you can accomplish in your life". These words made Sonya strong in order to deal with daily hassles and problems in school. As time went by, the jokes and nasty words of her classmates were reduced. The teacher helped Sonya learn to read and now Sonya was at the end of first grade and she was a good reader. One day, she started reading stories and fairy tales to other children in the establishment. They loved it. Sonya was happy!!! Her dream came true!!!

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- Do know if all Roma children go to school?
- Why do you think this is the case and Roma children do not go to school?
- Why Sonya wanted to go to school?
- What are the difficulties and adversities Sonya had to face in her days in school?
- How these difficulties made her feel?
- Why do you think Sonya's parents discourage her to go to school?
- What was Sonya's dream?
- What made Sonya to keep trying? Who helped Sonya?
- How Sonya's family helped her?
- Was her dream realized? What help her realize her dream?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Have you ever meet a Roma child and where?
- What are the differences and what are the similarities with Roma children?
- Why do you think some children make fun of other children?
- How children feel when they are made fun of?

5. Split class into four groups and ask them to think some ideas how they can make a new classmate to feel comfortable in the new class. We encourage children to think activities and games that help children to know better each other and to accept each person with as it is.

6. Then ask each group to share their ideas and ask them to choose one activity to make it real.

Activity 6: Sonya: a girl with a dream

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To find ways of making feel better when discrimination takes place.

Age Group

Early Primary

Level

Advanced

Materials needed

Manual, Hand-out 13.

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of discrimination and how we can face adversity by showing courage, persistence and optimism.
2. Read the story: **“Sonya: A Resilient Roma girl with a dream!”**

Sonya is a 9 old girl born in a Roma family. Even though none of her siblings did go to school, Sonya asked her mother to go to school. The family attempted to discourage her, but she had her mind made up. Sonya really wanted to go to school and learn to read and write!

At the end, the family gave in and registered Sonya in the public school. Nevertheless, things were not easy for Sonya. She had to walk every day to school and when school was over she had to come home to help her parents with different chores and also go with them in their truck selling different goods (e.g. potatoes, watermelons etc) in the different neighbourhoods of the city. Sonya at the end of the day was exhausted and she had her homework to do for the school. Sonya kept going though because she had a dream which gave her strength to continue.

When Sonya started school she was very happy because somebody from the family could finally learn how to read and write. Her dream was to be teacher and to convince all Roma parents in their establishment to send the children to school. The situation at school was not easy for Sonya either. From the first day....

NOTE:

The story is incomplete on purpose.

The teacher needs to direct the discussion so the children can express their emotions Jenny may experience.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:
 - What do you think are the difficulties Sonya faced in school life?

- Why do you think this happened?
 - Do know if all Roma children go to school?
 - Why do you think this is the case and Roma children do not go to school?
 - Why Sonya wanted to go to school?
 - What are the difficulties and adversities Sonya had to face in school?
 - How these difficulties made her feel?
 - Why do you think Sonya's parents discourage her to go to school?
 - What was Sonya's dream?
 - What made Sonya to keep trying? Who helped Sonya?
 - How Sonya's family helped her?
 - Was her dream realized? What help her realize her dream?
4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:
- Have you ever meet a Roma child and where?
 - What are the differences and what are the similarities with Roma children?
 - Why do you think some children mock other children?
 - How children feel when they are mocked?
5. Split class into four groups and ask them to finish Sonya's story (**Hand out 13**).
6. Then ask each group to read the story in class and discuss which end they like most. Also ask children to think what action should be do in order this "happy end" to make true.

Activity 7: Sonya: a girl with a dream

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To find ways of making feel better when discrimination takes place.

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Basic

Materials needed

Manual, Hand out-13

Activity Steps

Same as Activity 6.

Activity 8: Mandela: The black diamond of resilience

Learning Goal

- Understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To understand the power of having a dream and goal and how in trying to achieve the goal we show courage, persistence and optimism (Resilience ingredients)

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Intermediate

Materials needed

Manual, Hand-out 14.

Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of injustice and discrimination and how we can face them by showing courage, persistence and optimism.
2. Read the story

MANDELA: The Black diamond of RESILIENCE

Mandela was South African lawyer who was jailed by the Africans people (white people), because he was fighting apartheid and fighting for black people's rights. He was an activist for human rights. He was jailed and stayed in Roben Island for 27 years. All this time, Mandela was showing courage on a daily basis. He had started a small garden and he believe that seeing the small flowers flourish gave him hope for the future and something that was alive and himself was responsible to take care.

Mandela was a person with courage and true love for all people. He did not hate his harsh prison guards but he showed kindness to them. In fact, all these years in jail instead of hating the white people who imprison him, he made his mission to study their history, learn their language. His goal was to become strong in spirit and to fight discrimination in South Africa and eliminate apartheid. He fought with kindness and

courage and instead of revenge, he spoke of understanding. In fact, one touching story who one of his biographers shared is following. One of the prison guards liked Mandela very much and they became very good friends. Often Mandela would say that the one thing he missed the most in jail, is not having children around. One Sunday, this prison guard surprised him by bringing his grand child to visit with Mandela, even though was against the rules of the prison. This gave so much happiness to Mandela and was a special day in prison for the legendary Mandela.

Mandela without having materials things and living in a small cell for almost 30 years, he kept hope and was optimistic that things will change. One thing which gave him strength in prison was the following poem Invictus:

*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.*

*Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.*

William Ernest Henley

He eventually won his battle against his enemies, he was freed and was elected as the first black president of South Africa. Also he won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1993. Mandela is an authentic story of persistence, courage and example of the power of having a big goal and a dream.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- What do you think of the story of Mandela?

- What were the basic adversities Mandela had to face in his life?
- What was the injustice Mandela faced in his life?
- How do you think Mandela felt when he went in prison?
- How did he deal with his daily life in prison?
- From what facts from Mandela's life can we conclude that Mandela showed courage in his life?
- What were the things Mandela missed in the prison and did he miss the most?
- What children may symbolize for Mandela?
- Why the guard broke the prison rule for Mandela's sake?
- What was the goal of Mandela and how this goal helped him to deal with adversity?
- What are some of Mandela's achievements?

4. Read the following sayings of Mandela:

- ✓ *"I learn that courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph of over it. The brave man is the not the one that does not feel afraid but the one who conquers that fear".*
- ✓ *"The greatest glory in living lies in never falling but in rising everytime we fall".*

5. Split students into three groups and give each group one **Hand out 14** with Mandela's quotes and Poem of Invictus. Ask each group to discuss its quote and write down some thoughts related to the quotes or the poem.

6. Ask one person from the group to read its quote or the poem and say the thoughts of its group as they relate to resilience and growth.

Activity 9: Mandela: The black diamond of resilience

Learning Goal

- To understand that everybody may face discrimination and injustice.
- To understand the power of goal and how in trying to achieve the goal we show courage, persistence and optimism (Resilience ingredients)

Age Group

Late Primary

Level

Materials needed

Manual, Hand-out 15

Activity Steps

Steps 1-3: Same as Activity 8.

4. Read the following sayings of Mandela:

- ✓ *“I learn that courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph of over it. The brave man is the not the one that does not feel afraid but the one who conquers that fear”.*
- ✓ *“The greatest glory in living lies in never falling but in rising everytime we fall”.*

5. Split into groups of 4-5 and give them hand-out 15. Ask each group to think of an adversity and create their own “Invictus” like poem as a group. Read out loud to the rest of class.