# The 3 P's: how do you deal with setbacks?

A quick exercise for teachers and education staff

## Introduction

The way you talk to yourself shapes how you show up at work and in life.

Learned optimism is about spotting negative self-talk and pessimistic thinking then flipping the script. Next time you feel pulled down by a setback or miss the joy in a win, grab this exercise to help you pause, reflect and change your perspective.







### **Exercise:**

When something goes wrong our brain may interpret it in 3 unhelpful way - sometimes called the 3 P's. You can use the 3 P's to reframe your experience. For example:

#### **Pessimistic Optimistic** thinking thinking **Personal** "There were a few things that didn't go "I'm just not good at Do you criticise well today, but I can teaching. It's my fault and blame yourself, learn and adapt. it went badly." or consider outside factors and show "This doesn't self-compassion? define me." **Pervasive** "If I can't manage "This was one difficult How much does a this one class, I must moment in one class setback affect the rest be a bad teacher I'm still doing well of your life? altogether." in many other areas of my teaching." **Permanent** "Today was difficult, but it doesn't mean "It's always like this Do you see setbacks future lessons will with this class. I'll as temporary or be." never improve." permanent? "I've had good lessons before, and I will again."





Promoting optimistic thinking:

try it yourself

#### **Directions:**

- 1 Pick a recent challenging experience from work.
- Write out how you think about the situation in the Personal. Pervasive and Permanent boxes.
- Change your point of view and write out how the experience could be viewed in a more optimistic way on the following page.

Personal

**Permanent** 

**Pervasive** 



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# Promoting optimistic thinking: try it yourself

Would it help to make space for more optimistic thinking in the future?						

#### Further help and support

Remember, teachers and education staff can call our free, emotional support helpline, open 24/7 on 08000 562 561.

#### Source:

Seligman, M. (2006). Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life Vintage Books A Division of Random House, Inc. New York

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