

## **Developing and Sustaining Emotional Resilience: A programme for those working in education**

**Suitable for NQTs, middle leaders, senior leaders, headteachers and executive headteachers  
Provision is for individual schools, groups of schools or through other training providers**

*Resilience matters and can be influenced. Everyone is bound to face shocks and setbacks at some point in life. But what makes the difference is how well we cope with these shocks, how well we bounce back ... Resilience – and psychological fitness in a broader sense – can also be learned, and enhanced.'*

*Sinking and Swimming, Young Foundation, 2009*

Maintaining and growing resilience means becoming consciously competent: doing more of what sustains resilience, less of what undermines it, and understanding how and why we might work against our own best interests in this area.

Growing resilience often requires changes in habits of thinking and behaviour. Short courses rarely lead to long-term change. This new programme will run as 6 sessions (one per half term) over a school year, starting and ending with a full day. Not only the content, but also the structure of the programme, will help to sustain resilience. In addition to developing trusting relationships with peers, participants will be expected to keep a learning log, to encourage them to capture and learn from challenging experiences.

By the end of the programme, participants will have had the opportunity to increase their own resilience, through

- Increasing their knowledge of what contributes to, and what undermines, their own resilience
- Developing connections with a supportive community who understand the importance of resilience
- Accessing research and writing about resilience and applying it to their own experience
- Understanding the connection between emotional resilience, health and well-being and exploring practical strategies to support work/life balance
- Identifying – and if they wish to – working to change - habits of behaviour or thinking which counter their resilience

## Outline

**Session 1:** Introduction (full day): Introduction to the programme; the current education context; addressing individual needs; a model for understanding the factors impacting on emotional resilience; factors that support and undermine emotional resilience; action learning sets and risk analysis.

**Session 2:** (2-hour twilight) Well-being and work/life balance; setting boundaries; knowing yourself; connecting with your values

**Session 3:** (2-hour twilight) Energy and agency: connecting different types of resilience; when to take control and when to let go; what gets in the way; monitoring stress levels and acting on triggers

**Session 4:** (2-hour twilight) Self-compassion and self-worth; dealing with gremlins; managing our own and others' expectations; mindfulness

**Session 5:** 1:1s and individual review of learning

**Session 6:** (full day) Review and next steps. The design of this final session will depend on the professional responsibilities of those in the group. Those in leadership positions will consider how to foster resilience in others. Those in key positions within their organisation will focus on growing a resilient organisation. Teachers with less experience will consider how to embed new habits and attend to their own resilience appropriately and assertively.

### Facilitators and delivery model

Minimum group size: 8; Maximum group size: 16.

Groups of 8-10: 1 facilitator. Groups of 11-16: 2 facilitators

Julia Steward (Lead facilitator)

Julia has worked with school leaders at all levels for over 15 years, most recently as a leadership development adviser, facilitator and coach. She recently completed a Masters dissertation on developing and sustaining resilience for school leadership, and she has had articles on the subject published in the journal *School Leadership and Management*, the conference proceedings of the *EMCC Third European Research Conference*, and *LDR*, the online journal of the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Gill Fowler

Gill is a qualified Myers-Briggs practitioner who works with schools and local authorities to develop high quality professional development for leaders. She is an experienced coach and facilitator and in addition to providing 1:1 coaching, she develops and delivers coach training and provides coach supervision. Gill and Julia have worked extensively together, notably collaborating on the design and delivery of a programme for aspiring headteachers, *Building Credibility for Headship*.