

Featuring Dr Michaela Litchmore-Dunbar, renowned clinical psychologist, these three short films support students to strengthen their sense of self through acceptance and self-validation. Players from world-champion rugby team, the New Zealand Black Ferns, share personal stories and professional achievements as they show how you can unlock potential, build confidence, and enhance self-esteem.

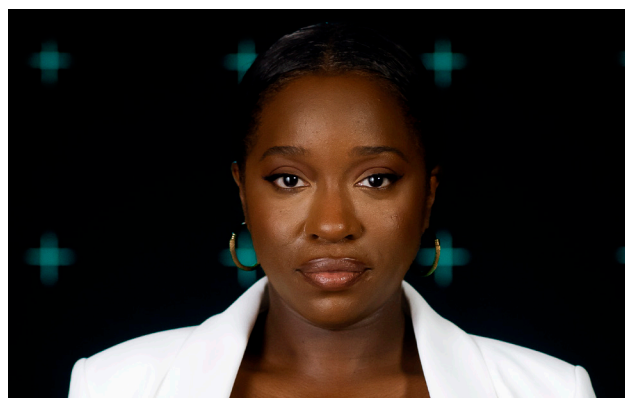
The films may be used as part of the planned curriculum for PSHE or as part of tutor time. Each short film comes with suggested discussion points and activities to use as a springboard into deeper discussion

These four films were created to fit within:

- The Citizenship and PSHE (RSE) curriculum in England
- The Curriculum for Excellence (Health & Wellbeing Education) in Scotland
- Learning for Life and Work in Northern Ireland
- Personal and Social Education (PSE) in Wales

Using in tutor time

If using in tutor time we recommend you start a discussion by talking about what mental health is. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as ‘a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.’



You could then use the following prompts:

Resilience Unleashed	What does self-esteem mean and why is it important? Do you think it links to self-confidence and how we approach problems and deal with setbacks?
Forge Bonds, Ignite Confidence	Dr Michaela shares a saying with us: ‘If you want to go fast, go alone but if you want to go far, go with others.’ Talk about what this saying means.
Fearless Authenticity	Looking at the title of this film, fearless means unafraid and authentic means genuine/being true to yourself. What might happen if we hide who we are or pretend to be something we’re not?

After watching the films, as a group, talk about ways that everyone can support each other with their mental health. Remind students that if they or someone they know has suicidal thoughts then it is important to get help immediately. This is not something they should have to deal with alone.

Using in PSHE lessons

If using in lesson time, fuller teacher notes are provided to support sessions that contain a main discussion, and one pair or small group activity, with a takeaway challenge that encourages students to further work on their own mental health outside the classroom. These will help them strengthen their sense of self.

There is little or no additional need for resources or planning but it's important to become familiar with the films and questions before each session. Consider carefully whether it will be appropriate and of use for your specific cohort as every class is different, even if they are in the same year group. Feel free to adapt the questions to the needs of your own students.

Before watching the films

We recommend that you set up a group agreement before watching the films and this should include how and where to access support if needed. You could include signposting to any support in school or locally.

Remind students that the classroom should be a safe space to discuss and share thoughts and that they should be aware of and respect others' opinions and experiences. Remind them also that you cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality but will talk to individuals if you have any concerns. It's also ok not to share any personal experiences if they don't want to. They can discuss the athletes' personal experiences instead or talk about 'someone who.'

Start a discussion by talking about what mental health is. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as 'a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.' Ask the group if this resonates with them and as a group try and come up with your own definition.

After watching the films

As a group, talk about ways that everyone can support each other with their mental health. Support and allyship is a strong focus in these films.

Each film ends with this message:

Most importantly, remember to seek professional help if you need it. If you're struggling, don't hesitate to reach out to a mental health professional. They can provide immediate support to help you navigate your feelings and develop a stronger sense of self.

Remind students that if they or someone they know has suicidal thoughts then it is important to get help immediately. This is not something they should have to deal with alone.

Want more?

Head to stemcrew.org/gohumansacademy to explore masterclasses covering self care, wellbeing, mental and physical fitness and more.

Resilience Unleashed

Lesson plan

In this film Dr Michaela talks about resilience and self-esteem. Some of the members of world champion rugby team, the New Zealand Black Ferns, look back at their careers and reflect on the moments that that helped shape them. In this film the focus is on:

- What self-esteem is, and what can we learn about self-esteem from the New Zealand Black Ferns
- Exploring how fear of failure can hold us back and how to move through that fear
- Looking at how support and allyship can help with setbacks



Once you have watched the film together, start a discussion based on the questions below. This could be as a whole class, in small groups or pairs. It's important that every student can express themselves in a way that feels comfortable to them.

Discussion prompts

Dr Michaela starts by talking about self-esteem

- Self-esteem is how we value and perceive ourselves. It could also be described as self-confidence and can shape how we approach problems and deal with setbacks. What might happen if our self-esteem is low?

The New Zealand Black Ferns talk about the early days of their careers and the setbacks they faced

- How did the members of the New Zealand Black Ferns deal with their setbacks both emotional and physical?

The New Zealand Black Ferns talk about the importance of support from their team-mates. One mentions supporting from the sidelines

- How could your friends, family and allies support you and what do you do to support your own friends?

Dr Michaela talks about not being afraid of failure and using it as a steppingstone to success

- Failure can be hurtful and knock our self-esteem, but Dr Michaela talks about how important it is to our experience. Talk about what you could do when faced with failure and what helps. Perhaps it's talking to a friend, listening to music or doing exercise
- Can you think of anyone in the public eye who has experienced failure and what they did to overcome it? Perhaps it's an actor who failed to get the part they wanted but ended up with a better role or a celebrity who experienced a public break up. What if they had just given up at the point of failure? Would we even be talking about them?

Resilience Unleashed

Lesson plan

Failure-proof your future

- Dr Michaela and the New Zealand Black Ferns talk about how failure is an important part of our lives just as much as success is. Failure can even make us stronger and more resilient, but it can also hurt us and lower our self-esteem
- As a group, make two lists, perhaps on a large sheet of paper
 - On one side ask students to write down all the things they could say to themselves or someone else when they are afraid of trying and failing or advice for someone about to try something new. Phrases like, 'you can do it' or 'you've got this' are helpful but try to be specific. For example, take it one step at a time, make a list of things that might go wrong and then go through them in your head so you're prepared, how might you feel if you didn't even try?
 - On the other side of the paper or on the second list, ask students to write down all the things they could say or do if a friend was dealing with a failure or a setback. For example, do you want to talk about it? I know it didn't work out this time but I'm here for you when you try again, you're so brave for having a go
- Talk together about the advice they've created and perhaps display the ideas around the classroom
- Encourage students to become unafraid of supporting each other in trying new things and to be there for each other when they experience setbacks. Normalise failure as part of the learning process

Takeaways

Dr Michaela offers some final thoughts around self-esteem and failure:

Failure is a steppingstone

Failure is not a sign of defeat but a sign of your courage to try. Recognise these moments as opportunities for growth, paving the path to your eventual success.

Consistency fuels confidence

Having positive self-esteem isn't built in one fell swoop. It's a skill that's honed through action and perseverance. Embrace the process and let it guide you.

Team dynamics

In group settings, harness the power of different perspectives. The collective support and camaraderie can bolster your resilience, nurturing self-esteem in the process.

Signposting

After the session, remind students to seek professional help if they need it. Mental health professionals can provide immediate support to help them navigate their feelings and develop a stronger sense of self.

Forge Bonds, Ignite Confidence

Lesson plan

In this film Dr Michaela and the New Zealand Black Ferns talk about how working together in a team can create bonds and boost our own self-esteem. The focus is on:

- How the power of collaboration with a team can contribute to our sense of self-worth
- How having a shared central goal can create positive reinforcement for a healthy mindset
- When people feel encouraged and valuable, their confidence naturally builds
- How to receive feedback even if it feels negative
- How to be conscious of negative self-talk



Below are some questions to get a discussion started. This could be as a whole class or in small groups or pairs. It's important that every student is able to express themselves in a way that feels comfortable to them.

Discussion prompts

Dr Michaela shares a saying with us: 'If you want to go fast, go alone but if you want to go far, go with others...'

- Talk about what this saying means. Are there times when you need to go fast and alone? When might you go further with a team or someone to support you?

The New Zealand Black Ferns talk about how valuable their teammates are in supporting them

- Talk about the teams and groups we belong to. These could be sports teams but could also be family, friendship groups, hobby groups or faith groups. How do your family/group/teammates lift you up if you're feeling down, and how do you lift others up?

Dr Michaela talks about the impact of negative self-talk

- Discuss what she means by this, and if it feels comfortable, share with the group a time when the little voice inside you talked you out of something. What might you do differently next time?

Better together?

- Print out the suggestion cards on the next page/write them on a whiteboard and ask students to discuss each one, talking about the pros and cons of doing the activity alone or with others

Forge Bonds, Ignite Confidence

Lesson plan

100 metres race	400 meters relay race	Completing a piece of homework	Taking an exam
Driving a car	Writing a novel	Lifting weights at the gym	Playing the piano
Developing a medical cure	Shopping for clothes	Acting in a play	Singing in a choir
Taking a photo for social media	Making a music video	Climbing a mountain	Setting up a business

- Encourage them to think carefully about each answer and think broadly. For example, you could write a novel on your own but what if you had people to help read it and give feedback and if it was published, you'd need a whole team of people to support - agents, publishers, editors, readers
- There are no absolute right or wrong answers, but groups should work together to come to an agreement
- Ask them to categorise the activities into two groups - alone or together. Compare the answers with another group and listen to each other's reasons

Takeaways

Dr Michaela suggests some things to think about. These could form the basis of further discussion in class or be used as something to think about at home. These are:

Team power

Collaboration in a team can significantly boost your self-esteem. It's about shared goals and mutual growth. Encourage trust, be transparent and embrace feedback.

Be your own cheerleader

Self-talk has a profound effect on your self-esteem. Practice positive self-talk and remember, it's not indulgent to lift yourself up.

Unhelpful comparisons

Social media presents us with highlight reels, not reality. Avoid comparing your journey to others and focus on personal growth and fulfillment.

Signposting

After the session, remind students to seek professional help if they need it. Mental health professionals can provide immediate support to help them navigate their feelings and develop a stronger sense of self.

Fearless Authenticity

Lesson plan

In this film Dr Michaela and the New Zealand Black Ferns talk about being authentic and resilient with a focus on:

- How to regroup after a setback and come back stronger
- How the past has no bearing on the here and now
- How to be vulnerable
- Everyone experiences imposter syndrome sometimes and that's ok
- How to stop comparing ourselves to others



Below are some questions to get a discussion started. This could be as a whole class or in small groups or pairs. It's important that every student is able to express themselves in a way that feels comfortable to them.

Discussion prompts

The title of this film is fearless authenticity. What does it mean and why should this matter?

- Talk about each part of the phrase. Fearless means unafraid and authentic means true to yourself, so taken together this means being unafraid to be who you are, to be your own unique self.
- Why is this important? What might happen if we hide who we are or pretend to be something we're not?

Dr Michaela talks about how our past experiences shouldn't impact on the here and now

- Talk about the sort of experiences and situations that might affect us. For example, if we've failed at something in the past it might make us nervous to try again. If we compare ourselves to others, we might not try something new

The New Zealand Black Ferns talk about the importance of role models, especially to children and people you may represent. One talks about 'people who look like me...'

- How could you act as a role model to a younger you? What would help you feel positive as a youngster, and can you be that role model now?

My Haka

- The New Zealand Black Ferns talk about how performing the haka together helps them feel strong and powerful. The Haka is a ceremonial dance performed in Māori culture and is now often performed to challenge opponents before matches
- The haka uses movements, words and facial expressions to create a team bond and help the team feel confident and strong before a match. The physical side of the dance (haka) is a demonstration of respect (mana) for the people the haka is being performed to

Fearless Authenticity

Lesson plan

- It can be a sign of love, happiness, strength and unity and demonstrates the ability to accept and welcome individuals of all cultures and races. This is often referred to as 'Manaakitanga' (hospitality)
- Watch the New Zealand Black Ferns performing the haka (there are plenty of videos on YouTube). This haka includes encouraging the team to get ready, to gather their energy and to challenge their opponents
- Towards the end of the Haka the New Zealand Black Ferns say:
*'You stand tall and proud.
Women of strength.
Who will bear the future.
The Black Ferns of New Zealand.
Rise and press on.
When the challenge arrives.
We will gather and unite together.
Strength together. It will be done.'*
- As a group create a short verse that encourages you to work together, to be strong and to collaborate. What might you say? What powerful words could you use? Share these with the rest of the class

Takeaways

Dr Michaela offers some final thoughts around being our authentic selves:

The negativity from past experiences

Critical voices in our lives or instances of bullying – have no bearing on your worth today. We often underestimate our ability to cope with whatever comes from being vulnerable.

Being vulnerable isn't a formula

It looks different to different people. Without vulnerability, we are not being authentic, we are not being genuine.

Focus on the things that make you feel good

Be aware of the voice in your head and try to keep it kind and motivating.

Nobody has it all together 100% of the time

And everybody is experiencing some kind of challenge.

Signposting

After the session, remind students to seek professional help if they need it. Mental health professionals can provide immediate support to help them navigate their feelings and develop a stronger sense of self.