

# Introduction to Determination

Determination

Courage Humour

Resilience

Perseverance

Wisdom



"Success means having the courage, the determination, and the will to become the person you believe you were meant to be."

George A. Sheehan



Determination is trying to do something even when you find it difficult.

## Activity 1

### Aim(s)

- To introduce the concept of determination.

### Resources

- Internet connection to play youtube videos.
- OPTIONAL** *Determination* Power Point. **OPTIONAL**
- Video or written biography of Nick Vujicic.

### Delivery Guide

Watch the below video, or find one similar, of Nick Vujicic. Alternatively, read his short biography.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=-b9YYHi6RL8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-b9YYHi6RL8)

(available 8/16)

Ask the young people to think about what character strengths he shows. Things that may be mentioned include:

- Courage
- Perseverance
- Determination
- Compassion/kindness to others
- Humour
- Gratitude
- Patience (taking one step at a time)
- Resilience (getting back up after you fall down).

Highlight determination and think about these three questions:

- What do you know about determination? What does it mean?

Determination is:

- Simply not giving up.
  - The will to keep on going.
  - Trying to do something even when you find it difficult.
  - Having willpower.
  - 'Stickability'.
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- **Show Slide 2 in the Power Point and look at the four pictures.** Who do they think is showing determination? (All of them are!) Can determination ever be a negative?

*It's useful to be determined when you're trying to achieve a goal – for instance, learning a new skill, competing in a sport, doing something that is particularly hard, or trying to resist temptation.*

*Determination is not always good. It is a character trait that can be used 'for ill' – you can be a very determined murderer, for instance.*

*Can you be too determined? It can be argued that you can try too hard and too long at something that is clearly never going to happen. You have to make sensible decisions depending on when to use determination.*

- **When have you shown determination?**

*Hopefully everyone will be able to come up with examples of when they have shown determination in completing a task or doing something difficult.*



Facilitators can take part and talk about a time they have shown determination.

Show another example of determination, this time in sport:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZIXWp6vFdE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZIXWp6vFdE) (available 8/16)

Ask them what they would have done in that situation. Would they have carried on?

## Points to highlight

- Determination can be used for good or for bad – it needs to be used in the right situation at the right time.
- Determination is one of the essential ingredients to success.
- We show determination in life all the time; sometimes a little, sometimes a lot.

# Activity 2

## Determination in Action

(This activity was taken from the NCSL Student Leadership Course.)

### Aim(s)

- To complete a difficult challenge, showing determination in action.

### Resources

- Each small group needs a sealed envelope containing:
  - 10 straws
  - 10 paperclips
  - A roll of sellotape
- A house brick (or something equally heavy).
- Tables with a gap in between that's the length of an A4 piece of paper.
- Challenge instructions.

### Delivery Guide



This works best in small groups of 3, 4 or 5 people. However, it can be done as an individual.

Split the young people into groups of 3, 4 or 5 people and set up tables or chairs with a gap in between them. Each group needs a 'gap' to work at. Give a sealed envelope containing the resources to each group and put the following challenge up on the wall (either on a flipchart or using the Power Point slide):

**Using only the materials in the envelope (and not the envelope itself) your challenge is to build a bridge between the two tables/chairs strong enough to hold a house brick for at least 10 seconds.**

**You have 10 minutes.**

(You can adjust the time limit if you feel that would work better in your context.)

The group must only use the materials in the envelope (and NOT the envelope itself!) and they cannot test the bridge with the brick. However, if they want to, they can come and hold the brick to get an idea how heavy it is.

When the build is complete, go round each group and place the brick on the bridge. The brick must be supported by the bridge for a count of 10.

- ! When testing the bridges, it's a good idea to ensure that only the facilitator places the brick onto the bridge. It's also a good idea to keep a hand underneath the bridge.

After the challenge, ask the young people to reflect on how they did it (if they did). Did they try a few different ways, or did they go with their first idea? Did they make any mistakes and have to try again? Did they want to give up? (Some young people may have seen the task, decided it is impossible and given up immediately).

Ask them to highlight where they used determination. Possible answers include:

- Determination to get their ideas heard.
- Determination to try again after they made mistakes.
- Determination to go quickly and finish it within the time frame.

## Points to highlight

- Many of the young people will have at first thought this activity is impossible. It's not!
- They showed determination in order to achieve their goal.



## Alternative / Extension Activities

A less resource intensive activity that produces a similar outcome could be a 'newspaper tower'. Split the young people into smaller groups of 3, 4 or 5 and give each group a set number of newspapers and a roll of sellotape. Tell them their challenge is:

Using only the newspapers and the sellotape, your challenge is to make the tallest free standing tower which must stay upright for at least 10 seconds.  
The tallest tower wins.

**You have 10 minutes.**

The rest of the activity proceeds as before, but instead of putting the brick on the bridge, the towers must be measured, either against one another or by using a tape measure.