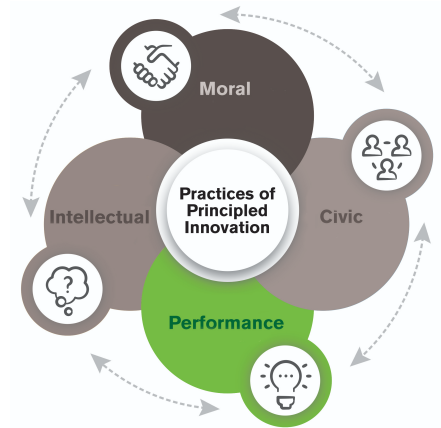


Favorite Failures Activity

Introduction

What is it?

This activity helps us to reconstruct our attitude towards failure. Individually, or within a group; reflect on and share your “favorite failure” from your past experiences using simple, yet powerful questions to draw out candid responses that can result in positive learning.



Why use it?

To prepare and support students and others to navigate the uncertainty and potential setbacks of engaging in creative thinking and expression, try this “Favorite Failures” activity to encourage storytelling around our own experiences with flops and mishaps. This is one important way to reframe failure in schools, classrooms, and other contexts to shift our own thinking and attitude toward failure and setbacks by better understanding what failure looks and feels like in practice.

What you need:



30-60 minutes

- The attached instructions
- This activity can be completed individually as a reflective exercise or within a team or group of students to spark thinking and discussion.
- 1 or more people
- Pen and notepad (optional)

Favorite Failures Activity

Instructions

Step 1: Share or reflect on a failure

Start by having someone share their “favorite failure” story and then go deeper by asking these five questions:

- What happened when you failed?
- How did you feel when it happened?
- What did you learn from that situation?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- Why is this failure your favorite?

Tips

Some tips to keep in mind as you try this activity:

- The above questions provoke thoughts and emotions, so be prepared to listen deeply, provide any support, and focus on the learning opportunities when success doesn't happen.
- Taking risks together and sharing our experiences with failure is one way to encourage a growth mindset and build trust within a team or group. Revisit these questions often to establish an environment where it is safe to take risks and explore failures as learning opportunities. These questions can be a powerful way to nurture an environment that supports people to think, act, and experience mistakes differently.

Favorite failures is adapted from [Taking beautiful risks in education \(Beghetto, 2018, Ed Leadership, 76, 18-24\).](#)