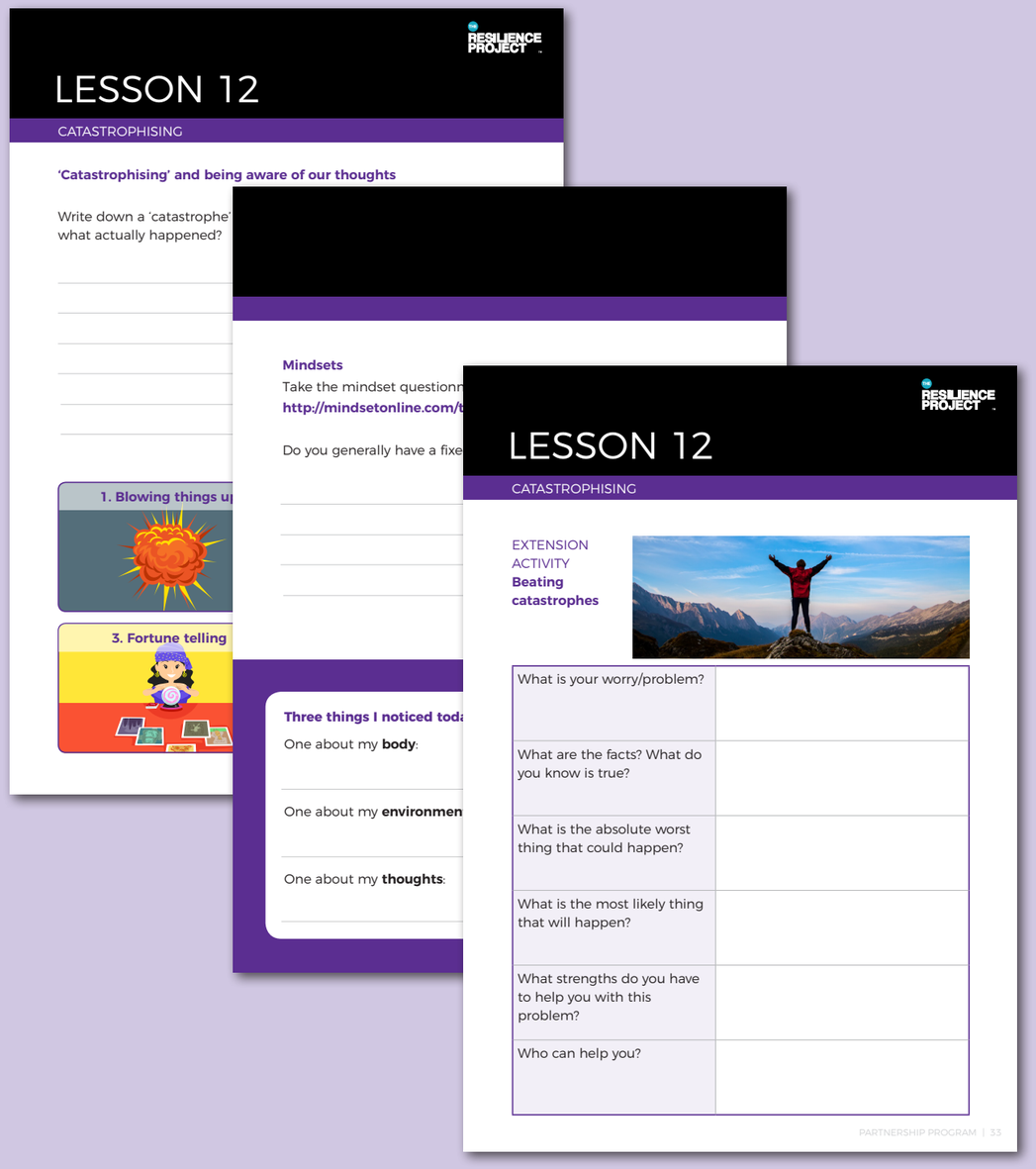

LESSON 12

'CATASTROPHISING'

Learning Intentions:

- Students will become more aware of their internal dialogue.
- Students will examine the concept of 'catastrophising'.
- Students will be able to acknowledge negative thoughts and begin to develop perspective.

Resources:

- Internet access, speakers, projector.
- Student Journals.
- Video Resource List.
- Access to The Resilience Project app or Insight Timer meditation app.

Outline:

Activity 1: Meditation (10 mins)

- Select a meditation from The Resilience Project app or Insight Timer meditation app that the students haven't heard recently.

Activity 2: Disasters (20 mins)

- Watch **Video 1015** from the Video Resource List.
- This is a clip of actual natural disasters. Discuss how we often experience these types of disasters or catastrophes in our heads every day.
- Ask students to put their hands up if they have ever heard anyone say:
  - 'I literally died!'
  - 'My life is over, this is the worst day ever.'
  - 'Everyone hates me.'
  - 'I've got a million things to do.'
- These are examples of 'catastrophising' and it is very common in adolescents but it is not very helpful!
- Write down a 'catastrophe' you have experienced or overheard—what actually happened? These are quite often humorous on reflection but can be traumatic for students too! Share with the class.

Activity 3: Signs of catastrophizing (30 mins)

- Discuss the signs of Catasrophising;
  - Blowing things up.
  - Ignoring the good.
  - Fortune telling.
  - Mind reading.
- Get students to have a go at explaining each one and giving examples.
- Get students into pairs.
- Give each pair one of the signs of Catasrophising.
- Each pair needs to come up with a short skit showing someone demonstrating the behaviour. They can use one of the examples from Activity 2 if they wish.
- Students perform their skit to the rest of the class and the class needs to identify which behaviour they were demonstrating.

Activity 4: Hands Metaphor (5 mins)

- The hands metaphor: Look at your hands open in front of you like the pages of a book. These represent your thoughts. Bring them closer to your face. They begin to get in the way of our view and we can't function at our best.
- When we lower our hands, we can see more, we appreciate what is around us, and we can function better but our thoughts are still there, they are part of us and that is okay.

Activity 5: Journal Reflection (5 mins)

- Three things I noticed today:
  - One about my body:
  - One about my environment:
  - One about my thoughts.

Extension Activity: Beating catastrophes (10 mins)

- Get students to think of a worry or problem they currently have.
- Then fill in the beating catastrophes table in their Student Journals.