Of late, more and more schools are asking me to work with their students as well as their staff. My most popular workshop at the moment is Learning to Bounce where we explore resilience.

Resilience is generally accepted to mean the ability to bounce back after adversity. However, inspired by the words of Dr Sue Roffey a couple of years back, I’ve been fascinated by the notion that resilience is also the ability to bounce forward. Specifically, Dr Roffey talks of Post Traumatic Growth as opposed to the more commonly thought of Post Traumatic Stress. When I’m working with staff and students, we explore how being resilient also gives us the confidence to push ourselves out of our comfort zone. To take opportunities we might otherwise pass up if we feared failure. This is another example of how resilient people bounce forward.

One of the things we can all do to enhance our resilience (like any ability, we can develop it) is to look out for ANTs, or Automatic Negative Thoughts.

Everyone experiences these thoughts from time-to-time, and how we deal with them can have a huge impact on our lives. See which of these four ANTs you can recognize in yourself.

- **Catastrophising** – It’s a disaster! It’s completely ruined.
- **Overgeneralising** – Everyone else is going, No-one likes me
- **Filtering** – When someone asks you how your day was, you forget the three positive things that happened and focus on the one negative.
- **Mind-reading** – They said they liked it, but they were just being polite.

There are many more, and sometimes it’s easier to spot ANTs in others before you see them in yourself.

If you do see an ANT… try to get rid of it!

Challenge your thinking

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These are excerpts from “GENERATION NEXT” It is an exciting new initiate featuring a national seminar series and supporting resources aimed at protecting and enhancing the wellbeing of our children and teenagers.

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