

Past Experiences as a Guide

Objective: To use past experiences as a guide for problem solving in the present.

Main Ideas:

- When we face new challenges, we can become overwhelmed, but the truth is we have had lots of past experiences that can guide our way.
- Use guiding questions to help your child evaluate past situations, what they tried, what worked/didn't work and why.
- This process helps to increase confidence in our problem solving abilities and allows us to apply knowledge from our experiences.

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Situations to practice

- **You have a big test coming up and you're feeling stressed.** What was helpful last time this happened? What wasn't helpful?
- **You and a friend say some unkind things to each other.** Has that ever happened before? What was useful last time you had an argument with a friend? What did they need and what did they do that helped you?
- **Tomorrow is your first day on a new team and you're feeling nervous.** What other new things have you done in the past? How did those go? What helped them to go well and what didn't?

Past experiences may have taught me:

- I can handle all sorts of hard things.
- The first time for everything is the hardest.
- Disagreeing doesn't prevent us from being friends.
- Mistakes are a part of learning new things.
- I feel best when I line my choices with my values.
- When I communicate, I tend to feel better.

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More guiding questions:

- How does the problem make you feel?
- What is something you want to accomplish?
- How will you know if you've met your goal?
- When a similar situation happened in the past, do you think it was managed well? What went well and what could have been better?