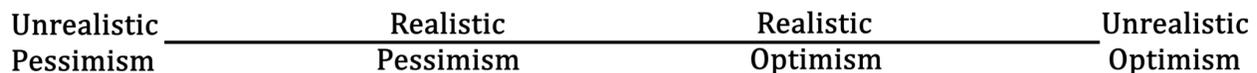


Wellness Works @ UGDSB
Brought to you by the Wellness Works Team!

This month at UGDSB our Wellness Work's theme is Realistic Optimism. *What is Realistic Optimism?*

Realistic optimism is:

- Believing that you will succeed with the right inputs like hard work and careful planning
- The tendency to look at the favourable side of events
- Expecting a positive outcome while preparing for obstacles and seeing ways to work around them
- A relatively stable expectation that good things will happen instead of bad
- A belief in the ability to learn and grow



(image from article ["Realistic Optimism"](#) by Chris Loper)

Realistic optimism is not about always seeing the positive. It is about recognizing that obstacles exist, focusing on what we can control, and looking for opportunities to problem solve even during times of struggle. Realistic optimism requires the cognitive flexibility skills explored in October. Here are some ways you can explore realistic optimism this month:

Self Talk: What we say to ourselves can shift our perspective. Ask kids to listen to that little voice in their heads and notice what it is saying. Identifying what they are saying to themselves is the first step. Next, prompt them to create new statements that are framed in a more positive tone. "I'm going to fail that test tomorrow" could shift to "I am going to do the best I can on that test tomorrow".

Look for the Lesson: When something doesn't go as planned, it can be easy to resort to blame. Often, that blame is turned on ourselves. Instead, look for the lesson. Intentional reflection can help highlight the possibility for personal growth inside of a challenging situation. What has this situation taught you? What have you learned? This is a great skill that adults can also model for their children.

SMART Goal Setting: Sometimes we set goals that are unrealistic or too vague, which leads to feeling failure when we don't accomplish them. Setting goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, and **T**imely can help us celebrate small wins along the way, especially when connected to action tasks. Imagining what is possible and connecting it to the hard work needed to make it happen is realistic optimism in action!