



# Perseverance

Grades 9-12

## Segment Summary:

**Krystal Williams' perseverance has helped her to overcome adversities, such as homelessness, a drug-addicted father and domestic abuse, in order to achieve success and to inspire others.**

Today Krystal Williams is an “A” student, camp counselor and president of the student council; however, just a few years ago, Krystal and her mother faced many hardships. Her father was using drugs and was mentally and physically abusing her mother. Unfortunately, Krystal witnessed this domestic abuse until she and her mother left the situation and became homeless. With time, Krystal and her mother have slowly put together the pieces of their lives, and now Krystal is a leader, a role model and an inspiration for others who are experiencing difficulties. She maintains a positive attitude and constantly tells others, “You can be anything that you want to be.” She lives this mantra by persevering and by overcoming the enormous hindrances that were once in her path.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What kind of perseverance does Krystal demonstrate, and how does this make her a stronger person?
2. What challenges did Krystal face at school, at home, in her community, etc.?
3. How could Krystal have handled these challenges other than the ways that she did?
4. Krystal could turn to her mother for support. Who could you turn to for support? What would you do if you didn't have anyone to turn to for support? Would you continue to fight or would you give up?
5. What kind of effect did Krystal's father's drug use and abusiveness have on her? How did his actions affect Krystal's decisions regarding drug use and violence?
6. How do you think Krystal's father's actions affected her and the relationships she now forms with adults, men, friends, etc.?
7. What are some obstacles that you have encountered at school, at home and in your community?
8. How did you persevere to overcome these obstacles?
9. Why is it necessary to have perseverance throughout life?
10. Predict situations in the future when you might need to persevere.

## Vocabulary Words and Definitions:

### **Adversity (n.)**

**Definition:** a condition of suffering or affliction

**Context:** Though blind, Jacklyn overcame her adversity and learned to maneuver through the school without assistance.

### **Ambitious (adj.)**

**Definition:** having determination or a strong desire to perform and accomplish

**Context:** Carl Lewis' ambitious attitude led him to victory at the Olympic Games.

### **Challenge (n.)**

**Definition:** a test of someone's abilities or resources in a demanding but stimulating undertaking

**Context:** Mr. Hernandez faces the challenge of teaching English to his Spanish-speaking students.

### **Consistent (adj.)**

**Definition:** in agreement; following the same principles

**Context:** Parents need to have consistent expectations if they want their children to improve in academic performance.

### **Determination (n.)**

**Definition:** firmness of purpose; a fixed intention or resolution

**Context:** His determination to learn the lesson material was an inspiration to his peers.

### **Goal (n.)**

**Definition:** the final purpose or aim; the purpose toward which an endeavor is directed

**Context:** The group's goal was to raise \$15,000 to pay for the homeless shelter's food and supplies.

### **Hindrance (n.)**

**Definition:** something immaterial that interferes with or delays action or progress

**Context:** Rashmi's learning disability was a hindrance on her path to become a writer.

### **Perseverance (n.)**

**Definition:** sticking to a task, purpose or goal

**Context:** Angel's perseverance was the key to her success at learning how to drive.

### **Resilience (n.)**

**Definition:** the ability to recover quickly from illness, change or misfortune

**Context:** Doctors praised Wendy's resilience to bounce back from her life-threatening illness.

### **Tenacity (n.)**

**Definition:** persistency, of purpose; the quality or state of being tenacious

**Context:** His tenacity paid off when he was finally elected to serve on the student council.

**Source:** *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. 2000.

## Feel Good about “Just Doing It”

### Objectives:

Students will be able to

- Determine an appropriate goal
- Predict possible conflicts
- Record objective data
- Express subjective responses
- Recognize the elements of perseverance
- Evaluate data

### Materials:

- Pencil, pen
- Notebook

### Procedure:

1. Discuss the various aspects of holistic good health and well-being.
2. Instruct students to take time to do some personal evaluation. Have them consider some changes that they could make to improve their general physical and/or mental fitness.
3. Ask each student to determine ONE challenging goal that he or she would like to accomplish.
4. After setting and recording a realistic goal, each student needs to create a timeline in which to accomplish the goal (or a realistic goal that could be met in the teacher’s timeline).
5. Students should predict any challenges or hindrances they foresee and record their predictions.
6. Have them plan and record ways to overcome their predicted obstacles.
7. Instruct students to log their “journey.” They need to include actual obstacles, changes they make to their timeline and end results.
8. Ask students to comment *objectively* on their data as they record it. They must also comment *subjectively* about their feelings, questions, frustrations, etc.
9. At the end of the set time, have students evaluate and comment on their results, attitudes and efforts throughout their journey. Possible questions for students to consider follow:
  - Was your goal indeed realistic?
  - Were the obstacles harder or easier, more or less than you predicted?
  - Were you consistent in following your plan?
  - How do you feel about the way you handled the challenge?
  - Did the challenge prove beneficial to you? How so?