EPISODE TWO: TRANSFORMING ADVERSITY TO ADVANTAGE

GOALS:

- To understand the concept of "Adversity to Advantage" as an *actualizer*.
- To understand how this *actualizer* has transformed Israel and made the country so unique.
- To educate the students to turn adversity to advantage in their own lives.
- To understand, on a personal level, how this *actualizer* relates to Israel.

INTRODUCTION – Read aloud:

Adversity is a by-word in Israel. The Israeli ability to turn it to advantage has enabled them to transform a desert, with scarce natural resources into a flourishing, productive and caring society. Adversity is not unique to Israelis. We all experience difficulties that can cause us to want to give up on our dreams. In this episode of *Israel Inside U,* Dr. Tal shares some stories from his own life that teach us how to use our challenges to make us stronger and more resilient.

PLAY Israel Inside U: Adversity to Advantage **(approx. 10 minutes)**

READ ALOUD:

Please listen to this short biography of someone who faced difficult challenges. Pay attention and try to figure out who it is.

"As a child I was a homeless refugee. My family wandered from forest to village just trying to survive. We lived like that until I reached school age.

"During my college years, I worked to pay my way and was regularly attacked and beaten. Soon after graduation, I was thrown into prison. Eventually, I was released but tragedy struck a few years later when both of my parents were brutally murdered by the Nazis. Again, I was arrested, and sent to a forced labor camp where I endured brutal conditions.

"After being released, I enlisted as a soldier. Later, I assumed a leadership role that forced me to live as a fugitive for several years. I was pursued by enemies and labeled a traitor by my own people.

"When I finally came out of hiding I started my political career. I lost eight elections in a row.
The 9th I won.
Who am I?"

(*Answer*: Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel, 1977-1983)

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POSSIBLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What adversities did Menachem Begin face?
- How do you think these challenges transformed him? Be specific.
- Do you think his being bullied affected him?
- How do you think he turned his experience of anti-Semitism into an advantage?
- Have you ever faced a difficult challenge and used it to your advantage?
- What challenges did Israel face in its early days?
- What challenges does Israel face today?
- Do Israelis turn adversity to advantage in a way that benefits the world? Where or how do we see this?

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