

MINDSET: THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF SUCCESS

By Carol Dweck
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- The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it is not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset.
- In a poll of 143 creativity researchers, there was wide agreement about the number one ingredient in creative achievement, and it was exactly the kind of perseverance and resilience produced by the growth mindset.
- The fixed mindset makes you concerned with how you will be judged; the growth mindset makes you concerned with improving.
- People with a fixed mindset grant one test the power to measure their most basic intelligence now and forever. They give this test the power to define them. That is why every success is so important.
- People who believe in fixed traits feel an urgency to succeed, and when they do, they may feel more than pride. They may feel a sense of superiority, since success means that their fixed traits are better than other people's.
- Failure is transformed from an action (I failed) to an identity (I am a failure).
- Even in the growth mindset, failure can be a painful experience, but it does not define you. It is a problem to be faced, dealt with, and learned from.
- You are not a failure until you start to blame. You can still be in the process of learning from your mistakes until you deny them.
- The more depressed people with the growth mindset felt, the more they took action to confront their problems, the more they made sure to keep up with their schoolwork, and the more they keep up with their lives. The worse they felt, the more determined they became.
- Part of the fixed mindset is that effort is for those who do not have ability. People with the fixed mindset tell us, "If you have to work at something you must not be good at it." Things come easily to people who are true geniuses.
- The idea of trying and still failing – of leaving yourself without excuses - is the worst fear within the fixed mindset.
- People can change their mindset.
- People can have different mindsets in different areas. I might think that my artistic skills are fixed but that my intelligence can be developed.
- Most often, when kids are behind, they are given dumbed-down material on the assumption that they cannot handle more. That idea comes from the fixed mindset: These students are dim-witted, so they need the same things drummed into them over and over.
- Some teachers preach and practice a growth mindset. They focus on the idea that all children can develop their skills; and, in their classrooms, it did not matter whether students started the year in the high or low ability group. The group differences disappeared under the guidance of teachers who taught for improvement.
- Praising students' ability pushes them into the fixed mindset. Praising students' effort raised student achievement.

- Almost 40% of ability-praised students lied about their scores. In the fixed mindset, imperfections are shameful – especially if you are talented – so they lied them away. What is so alarming is that we took ordinary children and made them into liars, simply by telling them that they were smart.
- Research by Steele and Aronson shows that even checking a box to indicate your race or sex can trigger the stereotype in your mind and lower your test score. Almost anything that reminds you that you are black or female before taking a test in the subject you are supposed to be bad at will lower your test score - a lot.
- When stereotypes are evoked, they fill people’s minds with distracting thoughts – with secret worries about confirming the stereotype. This does not happen to everybody, however. It mainly happens to people who are in a fixed mindset.
- Speed and perfection are the enemy of difficult learning: If you think I am smart when I am fast and perfect, I had better not take on anything challenging. When children complete a task quickly and perfectly, say “Whoops. I guess that was too easy. I apologize for wasting your time. Let’s do something you can really learn from!”
- Many educators think that lowering their standards will give students success experiences, boost their self-esteem, and raise their achievement. It comes from the same philosophy as the over-praising of students’ intelligence. Well, it does not work. Lowering standards just leads to poorly educated students who feel entitled to easy work and lavish praise.
- Dorothy DeLay’s husband always teased her about her “Midwestern” belief that anything is possible.
- Beware of success. It can knock you into a fixed mindset.
- Mindsets frame the running account that is taking place in people’s heads. They guide the whole interpretation process. The fixed mindset creates an internal monologue that is focused on judging: This means I am a loser. This means I am a better person than they are.
- What works is making a vivid, concrete plan: Tomorrow during my break, I will get a cup of tea, close the door to my office, and call the graduate school. These concrete plans – plans you can visualize - about when, where and how you are going to do something lead to really high levels of follow-through, which of course, ups the chances of success.
- For a long time, your son remains attracted to the fixed mindset. He loves the idea that he is inherently special. He does not love the idea that he has to work every day for some little gain in skill or knowledge. Stardom should not be so taxing.
- If someone stays inside a fixed mindset and uses the growth strategies, it can backfire. Mindset change is not about picking up a few pointers here and there. It is about seeing things in a new way. When people change to a growth mindset, they change from a judge- -and-be-judged framework to a learn-and-help-learn framework. Their commitment is to growth, and growth takes plenty of time, effort and mutual support.
- Fixed mindset: Intelligence is static. A fixed mindset leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to avoid challenges, get defensive or give up easily, see effort as fruitless or worse, ignore useful negative feedback, and feel threatened by the success of others. As a result, people with a fixed mindset plateau early and achieve less than their full potential.
- Growth mindset: Intelligence can be developed. A growth mindset leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to embrace challenges, persist in the face of setbacks, see effort as the path to mastery, learn from criticism, and find lessons and inspiration in the success of others. As a result, people with a growth mindset reach ever-higher levels of achievement.