
Mindset

The New Psychology of Success

by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D.

September 2, 2015

Alfred Binet - The IQ Test

“It’s not always the people who start out the smartest who end up the smartest.”

*“A few modern philosophers assert that an individual’s intelligence is a fixed quantity, a quantity that cannot be increased. We must protest and react against this brutal pessimism. With **practice, training**, and above all, **method**, we manage to increase our attention, our memory, our judgement and literally to become more intelligent than we were before.”*

What implications does this quotation have for teachers?

Stretching & Sticking To It!

- True potential is unknown:
 - Passion, Toil, & Training have tremendous impact.
 - Perseverance in the face of Challenges.
 - People are terrible at estimating their abilities.
 - *“All of my life I’ve been playing up.”* - Mia Hamm
-

Exceptional Individuals

- Have a special talent for identifying their own strengths and weaknesses. (*Know Thy Self*)
 - Have a special talent for converting life's setbacks into future successes? (*Resilience*)
 - Can you think of a few students that are exceptional individuals?
-

Don't Seek The Pedestal

- Avoiding CEO Disease (Lee Iacocca)
 - As educators we must all strive to listen and learn what we can from the critics.
 - Don't always do the same thing over and over again because it brought success before.
-

A Test Score Is Forever!?

- Those in the Fixed mindset grant tests the power to define them.
 - What message should we start sending our students regarding formative assessment, summative assessment, standardized assessment?
 - *“You cannot determine the slope of a line given only one point, as there is no line to begin with. A single point (test) in time does not show trends, improvement, lack of effort, or mathematical ability.”* - Michael D. Riordan
-

Transforming Failure

- Student's, especially in the Fixed mindset, “transform failure from an action (I failed) to an identity (I am a failure).
 - How can we as educators help students reframe setbacks?
 - What implications does this have for the rampant cheating we see from all types of students?
 - *“You aren't a failure until you start to blame.”* - John Wooden
-

Curing *Low Effort Syndrome*

- “In school my main goal is to do things as easily as possible so I don’t have to work very hard.”
 - This is how Fixed mindset students protect themselves.
 - How do we begin to do a better job of recognizing and praising effort and growth?
 - Research shows that “ability praise” pushes students right into the Fixed mindset.
 - Are ability praised students more likely to lie and cheat?
-

General Questions to Ponder

1. Do I operate from a Growth or Fixed mindset?
 2. Does my mindset influence or promote the Growth mindset in others?
 3. As an educator do my regular daily words and actions promote/teach the Growth mindset to my students and to my peers?
 4. Does the mindsets of our students parents influence student learning? If so, what do we do about it?
-

Chapter 4 - Sports: The Mindset of a Champion

Sharing w/the Staff:

1. Describe a world class athlete that struggled initially with their sport. How did they meet the challenge.
 2. One or more from the group share about a sport that came easily to you at first, but then you hit a wall. Explain how you adapted and overcame.
 3. Explain how Growth mindset champions from this chapter demonstrate character.
 4. Share 3 “aha” thoughts or ideas from your learning.
-

Chapter 5 - Business: Mindset & Leadership

Sharing w/the Staff:

1. Considering what you learned of the business environment, in what ways could we teach our students to be less defensive about their mistakes?
 2. As educators, how can we focus more of our efforts on our students' well-being and mindset growth?
 3. As in the corporate culture, elitism can exist in the student population. Share examples of this you may have seen. How would/did you address it?
 4. How can debate in the classroom promote higher order thinking and discourage "groupthink"?
 5. Share 3 "aha" thoughts or ideas from your learning.
-

Chapter 6 - Relationships: Mindsets In Love (Or Not)

Sharing w/the Staff:

1. When relationships go south for Fixed mindset people, what is often their number one goal? How do Growth mindset people view the end of a relationship? What is often their number one goal?
 2. When issues arise in a friendship or love relationship, how can interpreting them from a Growth mindset strengthen the relationship?
 3. Explain your stance on this statement: “Relationships are meant to be if they are easy....if there is work involved it is not meant to be.”
 4. What mindset often characterizes “Shy” people? Explain.
 5. Share 3 “aha” thoughts or ideas from your learning.
-

Chapter 7 - Parents, Teachers, & Coaches: Where Do Mindsets Come From?

Sharing w/the Staff:

1. What does the author say about developing mindsets in children when adults use ability praise versus effort/process praise?
 2. Describe the best language to use (and that to avoid) when giving children constructive criticism/feedback.
 3. Explain how lowering standards for student learners does not raise self-esteem.
 4. As parents, teachers, and coaches, our mission is to develop children's potential...explain how the Growth mindset does that.
 5. Share 3 "aha" thoughts or ideas from your learning.
-

Chapter 8 - Changing Mindsets

Sharing w/the Staff:

1. What is the “running account that’s taking place in our/people’s heads” called? What does this internal monologue define?
 2. Explain why if a graduate student is to be successful he/she must be receptive to constructive criticism.
 3. “Fixed mindset people often find out later in life that their ‘cloak of specialness’ was really a suit of armor. What does this statement mean?
 4. Summarize for the staff the “Effort Gone Awry” dilemma on pages 236-238. Please describe the Dilemma, the Fixed Mindset Reactions, and lastly the Growth Mindset Step.
 5. Share 3 “aha” thoughts or ideas from your learning.
-