Using Growth Mindsets to Foster Positive Classroom Cultures

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I don’t divide the world into the weak and the strong, or the successes and the failures... I divide the world into the learners and nonlearners.

- Benjamin Barber
Talent North West

The Search Is On!
Agenda

- Fixed and Growth Mindsets:
  - What they are
  - What they *aren’t*
- How Mindsets Shape Student Behavior
- Our Mindset Personas (Activity)
- Where do Mindsets Come From?
- Changing Mindsets
Mindsets

Mindsets are people’s personal beliefs about the malleability of human characteristics.

- Intelligence/Intellectual ability
- Personality
- Athletic ability
- Musical ability...
2 Types of Mindsets

Fixed Mindset:

- Intelligence, athletic ability, and personality are fixed traits
- They can’t be changed; either you have it or you don’t
- E.g., “I’m just not a math person.”
2 Types of Mindsets

Growth Mindset:

- Intelligence, athletic ability, and personality are malleable qualities
- A potential that can be developed; they can grow and improve by effort, applying the right strategies, and seeking help
- E.g., “I just haven’t mastered math yet”
OLD ways of thinking about Mindset

People either “have” a fixed mindset or they “have” a growth mindset.

**What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?**

**Growth Mindset**

I can learn anything I want to.
When I’m frustrated, I persevere.
I want to challenge myself.
When I fail, I learn.
Tell me I try hard.
If you succeed, I’m inspired.
My effort and attitude determine everything.

**Fixed Mindset**

I’m either good at it, or I’m not.
When I’m frustrated, I give up.
I don’t like to be challenged.
When I fail, I’m no good.
Tell me I’m smart.
If you succeed, I feel threatened.
My abilities determine everything.
False Growth Mindset: Common Misperceptions about the Growth Mindset

Many educators think growth mindset is:

- Being open-minded (“open mindset”)
- Telling students they can do anything
- Effort: Encouraging students to work hard

VS.

Believing that talents and abilities can be developed
False Growth Mindset: Common Misperceptions about the Growth Mindset
True Growth Mindset

students mindset growth

students process fixed

mindset approach

students growth way

parents help

learning effort

making mistakes

think

learning
NEW way of thinking about Mindset

- People “have” both mindsets.
- We move between the mindsets based on “triggers”
Mindset Trigger #1

Fixed Mindset:

LOOK SMART AT ALL COSTS

Growth Mindset:

LEARN AT ALL COSTS

(If you’re not challenged, you’re not getting smarter.)
Mindsets Shape Students’ Goals

**LOOKING SMART**

“The main thing I want when I do my school work is to show how good I am at it.”

**LEARNING**

“It’s much more important for me to learn things in my classes than it is to get the best grades.”
Tiger Woods

- Youngest Masters winner
- Lowest score ever
- Took apart his game and restructured it.
Mindset Trigger #2

**Fixed Mindset:**

IT SHOULD COME NATURALLY*

**Growth Mindset:**

HARD WORK, GOOD STRATEGIES, AND HELP FROM OTHERS IS KEY

*Why many promising students stop working ...
Mindsets Shape Students’ Effort

DON’T WORK TOO HARD

“Where the truth is hard, when I work hard at my school work it makes me feel like I’m not very smart.”

WORK HARD; EFFORT IS KEY

“The harder you work at something, the better you’ll be at it.”
Do Geniuses Work
Or Does it Just Come Naturally?
Mindset Trigger #3

Fixed Mindset: It’s about me

HIDE MISTAKES & DEFICIENCIES

Growth Mindset: It’s about learning

CONFRONT MISTAKES & DEFICIENCIES
Mindsets Shape Students’ Responses to Obstacles

GIVE UP EASILY

“What’s the point? I’ll never be good at math.”

PERSIST IN THE FACE OF SETBACKS; ADOPT A NEW STRATEGY

“Looks like I just haven’t figured it out yet. I’ll try a new way next.”
Mindsets Shape Students’ Response to Challenges

AVOID CHALLENGES; CONCEAL MISTAKES AND DEFICIENCIES

“I only want to do the easy problems.”

EMBRACE CHALLENGES AND MISTAKES; CONFRONT DEFICIENCIES

“I was hoping you’d give me something tough today.”
After a failure...

Fixed Mindset:
“I’d spend less time on this subject from now on.”
“I would try not to take this subject ever again.”
“I would try to cheat on the next test.”

Growth Mindset:
“I would work harder in this class from now on.”
“I would spend more time studying for the tests.”
Mindsets Shape Students’ Response to Criticism

IGNORE USEFUL NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

“She doesn’t know what she’s talking about.”

LEARN FROM CRITICISM

“That was really helpful. I’ll try that now.”
# The Battle Within Us All

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<tr>
<th>Fixed Mindset</th>
<th>Growth Mindset</th>
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<td>1) Never look dumb</td>
<td>1) Learn</td>
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<td>2) Don’t work hard or seek help</td>
<td>2) Work hard, use strategies, seek help to learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Run from difficulty</td>
<td>3) Learn from mistakes</td>
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Grades, test scores, and motivation are a natural by-product.
Let’s get to know them!

YOUR GROWTH AND FIXED MINDSET PERSONAS
Your Mindset Personas

Let’s get to know your triggers:

• What are your triggers? When do they show up?
• How do they make you feel?
• How do they affect your behavior?
• How do they affect your relationships?
Your Fixed and Growth Mindset Personas

Main objective: To learn to work with mindsets to enhance the culture of our classroom.

To help ourselves and our students.
Shifting the Culture

WHERE DO MINDSETS COME FROM
Messages About What Is Valued

Intelligence Praise: “Wow, that’s a really good score. You must be smart at this.”

Effort (Process) Praise: “Wow, that’s a really good score. You must have tried really hard.”

Control Group: “Wow, that’s a really good score.”
Number of problems solved on Trial 1 (before failure) and Trial 3 (after failure)
Lying
Students who misrepresented their scores

<table>
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<th>Type of Praise Given</th>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Effort</th>
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CHANGING MINDSETS
Who Are the Breakout Performers?
Liedtka & Colleagues

- Chose 50 managers who had achieved breakout results.
- They shared one thing: A Growth Mindset
  - Faith in their ability to change selves and environment
  - Conviction that learning is the route
  - Belief in teamwork
Mindset Workshop for Managers

- Scientific article and video on how the brain grows with learning throughout life
- Exercises to instill a growth mindset
Before Workshop

- Fixed mindset managers couldn’t take criticism.
- Fixed mindset managers didn’t mentor their employees as much—people can’t change.
- Fixed mindset managers didn’t notice improvement—first impressions last.
Workshop Results

After the growth mindset workshop, managers showed greater:

- Openness to critical feedback
- Willingness to mentor and higher quality of mentoring
- Openness to employee change
CHANGING STUDENTS MINDSETS
You Can Grow Your Intelligence

New Research Shows the Brain Can Be Developed Like a Muscle

Many people think of the brain as a mystery. They don't know much about intelligence and how it works. When they do think about what intelligence is, many people believe that a person is born either smart, average, or dumb—and stays that way for life.

But new research shows that the brain is more like a muscle—it changes and gets stronger when you use it. And scientists have been able to show just how the brain grows and gets stronger when you learn.

Everyone knows that when you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and you get stronger. A person who can't lift 20 pounds when they start exercising can get strong enough to lift 100 pounds after working out for a long time. That's because the muscles become larger and stronger with exercise. And when you stop exercising, the muscles shrink and you get weaker. That's why people say "Use it or lose it!"

But most people don't know that when they practice and learn new things, parts of their brain change and get larger a lot like muscles do when they exercise.

Inside the cortex of the brain are billions of tiny nerve cells, called neurons. The nerve cells have branches connecting them to other cells in a complicated network. Communication between these brain cells is what allows us to think and solve problems.
Growth Mindset Motto

Learn, learn, learn!
Work hard, effort is the key!
Embrace mistakes, confront deficiencies!
Percent Identified as Increasing in Motivation

- Control: 9
- Growth: 27
Identity Threats

- Stereotypes about intelligence treat intelligence as a fixed trait.
- Stereotypes about intelligence lead to low expectations for stereotyped individuals.
- Low expectations convey to individuals that they do not have the “ability” to be successful.
- Ultimately, stereotypes undermine performance.
Effects of Brainology on Math Standardized Test Scores (Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003)
CHANGING CLASSROOM CULTURES
Culture Change: School-based Intervention (2011-2014)

- Located on the Tulalip Indian Reservation
- Both schools in bottom 5% of the state
- Approximately 550 K-5 students each year
- 81% Native Students; 10% other minority
- 76% Free/Reduced lunch
- In the past, district scores reflect same pattern as state of “no change” for Native American students.
Culture-Relevant Growth Mindset
School

Research-based

Growth Mindset

Culture Matching

Data Teaming
Tulalip & Quil Ceda Practices

- Creating immersion environment (e.g., morning welcome assembly/message; growth mindset; purposefully placing posters/images on walls)
Growing our Mindset!
Grow your brain at least 6 hours a day.

Respect yourself, all people, and things.

Own your actions and attitudes.

Welcome all who come to our community.
Cultural Models: Practices

- Creating immersion environment (e.g., morning welcome assembly/message; growth mindset; purposefully placing posters/images on walls)
- Weekly professional development on culture relevance (e.g., developing lessons plans that integrate relationship, relevance, rigor, & results)
- “Honoring” families in the classroom/school

- Sending teams of teachers/staff community/family celebrations and ceremonies, including funerals
Results:
Culture Cycle School Intervention

- Kindergarten and 1st graders lead the district in oral reading fluency.
- 95% of Kindergarten and 80% of 1st graders are proficient or above benchmark in reading.
- On state literacy test, 38% of 3rd grade students met standard and another 30% were within 10 points of making standard. In the fall, the majority of students were significantly below standard (i.e., >100 points on 600 point test).
- Using Measure of Academic Progress in literacy and math for grades 3-5, during the spring, 60% made more than one years growth and at least half of these students made 1.5 to 2 years growth.
- School met state Annual Measurable Objectives in every category. Native students meeting state standards improved by 18%.
Toolkits

- Encourage Growth Mindsets
- Demonstrate Growth Mindsets
- Encourage effort, not intelligence!
- Teach children to love learning; do not over reward.
- When children fail or misbehave…focus on trying and growth (e.g., my favorite mistake).
- Remember the power of your words and the examples you set.
Thank you!