

GROWTH MINDSET



Parent Workshop

Growth Mindset Quiz

Please tick the box which identifies the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Your intelligence is something very basic about you that you can't change very much.				
2. No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit.				
3. You can always substantially change how intelligent you are.				
4. You are a certain kind of person, and there is not much that can be done to really change that.				
5. You can always change basic things about the kind of person you are.				
6. Music talent can be learned by anyone.				
7. Only a few people will be truly good at sports – you have to be “born with it.”				
8. Math is much easier to learn if you are male or maybe come from a culture who values math.				
9. The harder you work at something, the better you will be at it.				
10. No matter what kind of person you are, you can always change substantially.				
11. Trying new things is stressful for me and I avoid it.				
12. Some people are good and kind, and some are not – it's not often that people change.				
13. I appreciate when colleagues, coaches, managers give me feedback about my performance.				
14. I often get angry when I get feedback about my performance.				
15. All human beings are capable of the same amount of learning.				
16. You can learn new things, but you can't really change how intelligent you are.				
17. You can do things differently, but the important parts of who you are can't really be changed.				
18. Human beings are basically good, but sometimes make terrible decisions.				
19. An important reason why I study is that I like to learn new things.				
20. Truly smart people do not need to try hard.				

Circle the number in the box that matches each answer.

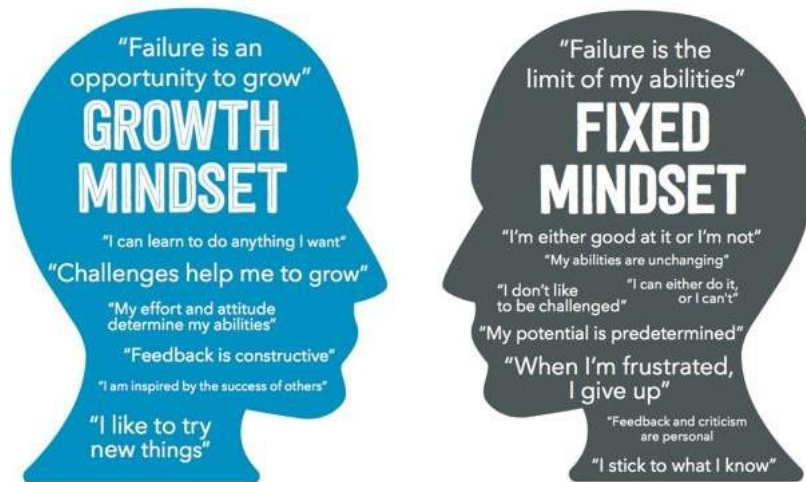
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. ability mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
2. ability mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
3. ability mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
4. personality/character mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
5. personality/character mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
6. ability mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
7. ability mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
8. ability mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
9. ability mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
10. personality/character mindset - growth	3	2	1	0
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12. personality/character mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
13. ability mindset –growth	3	2	1	0
14. ability mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
15. ability mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
16. ability mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
17. personality/character mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
18. personality/character mindset –growth	3	2	1	0
19. ability mindset – growth	3	2	1	0
20. ability mindset – fixed	0	1	2	3
Total				
Grand Total				

What is Growth Mindset?

Research by Developmental Psychologist Dr Carol Dweck of Stanford University points to people having one of two mindsets: Growth and Fixed. A child's belief about intelligence is an important factor in whether they become an effective learner. We all hold beliefs about concepts such as 'intelligence', 'ability' and 'personality', with roughly half of us holding a **'fixed'** mindset and the other half a **'growth'** mindset.

"In a fixed mindset, students believe their basic abilities, their intelligence, their talents, are just fixed traits. They have a certain amount and that's that, and then their goal becomes to look smart all the time and never look dumb. In a growth mindset, students understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence. They don't necessarily think everyone's the same or anyone can be Einstein, but they believe everyone can get smarter if they work at it." Dr Carol Dweck

Although most people will undoubtedly have a mixture of these mindsets in different aspects of their life, Dweck's



research highlights very important evidence that most teaching professionals would instantly recognise in their class. From a practical point of view, staff would recognise students with a fixed mindset who are scared to contribute to class discussion for fear of looking stupid; who take one bad test result as a sign that they cannot do the subject, are going to fail and therefore give up; who will not try anything new for fear of getting it wrong; who will persevere with the same approach to their learning even when it is not working rather than being creative and finding a different solution. Developing a Growth Mindset is designed to remove such barriers to learning as the students realise they can grow their ability rather than being told they can.

However, it's not all about Dr Dweck. The school will be taking the advice this leading academic gives, mixing it with further academic research and making it suit the current school, authority and national policies and how we think it will best benefit Thomas Harding students.

As you can imagine, a key part of developing such a mindset is in hearing a consistent message from everyone involved. Staff across the school will be using techniques to encourage children to think this way but it is important that the message is heard at home as well. Throughout this booklet therefore, you will find some handy advice on Growth Mindset and how to help your son or daughter consolidate the idea and go on to ever greater success at Thomas Harding School

How can you instill a “Growth Mindset” in your children?

Parenting is hard work and having a growth mindset helps. The way parents talk about ability and learning can have powerful effects on their child's beliefs. Below are three ways parents can instill a growth mindset. In addition, remember, developing a growth mindset in yourself and in your children is a process that takes time. Have a growth mindset about developing a growth mindset!

- Recognise your own mindset: Be mindful of your own thinking and of the messages you send with your words and actions.
- Praise the process: Praising children for being smart suggests that innate talent is the reason for success, while focusing on the process helps them see how their effort leads to success.
- Model learning from failure: When parents talk positively about making mistakes, children start to think of mistakes as a natural part of the learning process.

Research shows that parents can have a powerful impact on their child's mindset. The language you use and the actions you take show your children what you expect. Giving process praise, talking about the brain, accepting mistakes as learning opportunities, and understanding the role of emotions in learning are all practices you can begin today.

Messages about Failure

Nine-year-old Libby was on her way to her first gymnastics competition. She was a little nervous about competing but she was good at gymnastics, really loved it and felt confident about doing well. She had even thought about the perfect place in her room to place the trophy she would win.

In the first event, the floor exercises, Libby went first. Although she did a good job, after the next few girls had performed she slid down the scoring table. Libby also did well in the other events, but not well enough to win. By the end of the evening, she had received no trophies and was devastated.

What would you do if you were Libby's parents?

1. Tell Libby that you thought she was the best.
2. Tell her she was robbed of a trophy that was rightfully hers.
3. Re-assure her that gymnastics is not that important.
4. Tell her that she has the ability and will surely win next time
5. Tell her that she didn't deserve to win.

There is a strong message in our society about how to boost children's self-esteem, and a main part of that message is: Protect them from failure! While this may help with the immediate problem of the child's disappointment, it can be harmful in the long run. Why?

If we consider the five possible reactions from a mindset point of view:

The first (you thought she was the best) is insincere. She was not the best – you know it, and she does too. This offers her no recipe for how to recover, or how to improve.

The second (she was robbed) places blame on others, when in fact the problem was mostly with her performance, not the judges. Do you want her to grow up blaming others for her deficiencies?

The third (reassure her that gymnastics doesn't really matter) teaches her to devalue something if she doesn't do well in it right away.

The fourth (she has the ability) may be the most dangerous message of all. Does ability automatically take you where you want to go? If Libby didn't win this competition, why should she win the next one?

The last opinion (tell her that she didn't deserve to win) seems hardhearted under the circumstances. You wouldn't quite say it that way. However, that's largely what her growth-minded father told her.

Here's what he actually said: "Libby, I know how you feel. It's so disappointing to have your hopes up and to perform your best but not to win. But you know, you haven't really earned it yet. There were many girls there who have been in gymnastics longer than you and who've worked a lot harder than you. If this is something you really want, then it's something you'll really have to work for." He also let Libby know that if she wanted to do gymnastics purely for fun, that was just fine. But if she wanted to excel in the competitions, more was required and that she should ask her coaches for guidance.

Libby took this to heart, spending much more time repeating and perfecting her routines, especially the ones she was weakest in. At the next meeting there were eighty girls from all over the area. Libby won five medals for the individual events and was the overall champion of the competition, for which she received a large trophy.

In essence, her father had not only told her the truth, but also taught her how to learn from her failures, to do what it takes to succeed in the future and where to seek help to improve. He sympathised deeply with her disappointment, but he did not give her a phoney boost that would only lead to further disappointment.



Accepting Mistakes as Learning Opportunities

Children learn how to behave by imitating others. That means one of the most powerful ways you can help your child develop a growth mindset is to model it with your own actions. New research shows that one powerful way that parents model mindset in front of their children is through their reaction to failure.

Modeling a growth mindset means being willing to try hard even when failure is likely *because that is how growth happens*. For example, parents should try to get excited when their children make mistakes because these mistakes can reveal important conceptual gaps that should be filled. When adults get excited about the learning that mistakes can facilitate, children start to think of mistakes as a natural part of the learning process. This leads to a few important changes in learning behaviour:

- Children respond well to challenging work when they are not afraid of mistakes.
- Children become less likely to try to "sweep mistakes under the rug" because they stop thinking of them as something to be ashamed of.

Action Ideas

- Make mistakes in front of your children, have a positive reaction to those mistakes, and openly reflect on what could be learned from the mistake. Try to show that *it is all about learning, not about being right*.
- Talk to your child about the times that you struggled with something, how hard it was and how you overcame it. Then ask your children if there is anything they struggle with, how they overcame it, and what they learned from the experience.
- Get excited when your child makes a mistake and help them to think through what could be learned from it. Even mistakes that seem careless can be good learning opportunities. For example, if your child forgot to study enough for an important test, it might be an opportunity to learn about prioritisation and to-do- lists.

Recognising a Growth Mindset

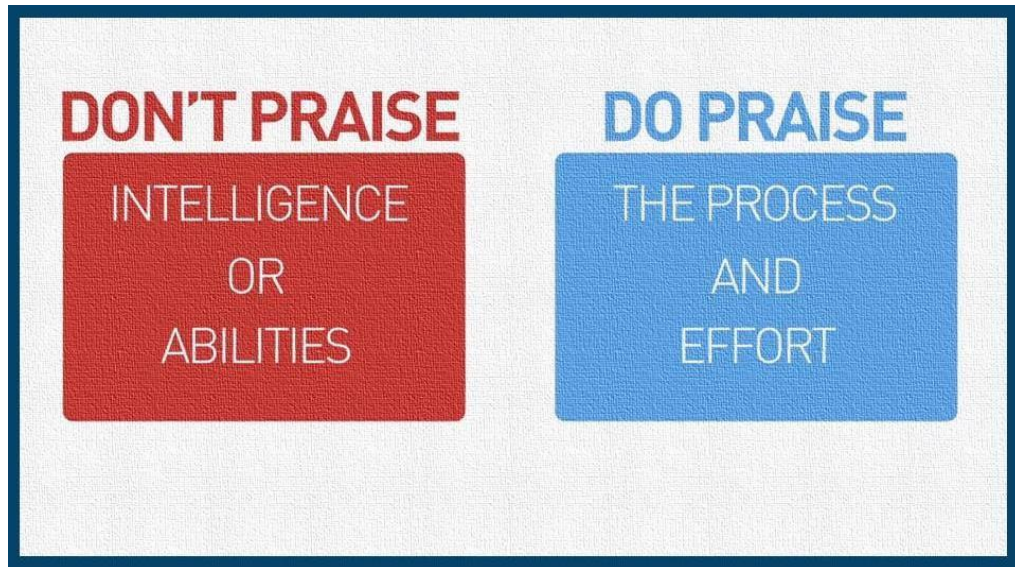
Everyone falls into fixed mindset thinking sometimes. The first step toward fostering a growth mindset in our children is to become aware of language that signals one mindset or the other.

Here are some questions to think about:

- How often do you notice and praise effort, strategies, and progress?
- What thoughts did you have this week when your child struggled? How could you frame their struggle in a growth mindset way by helping them understand that this is when their brain is growing most?
- What thoughts did you have when your child excelled? How could you frame their success in a growth mindset way, e.g., by talking about the process that went into their success?
- What kinds of fixed and growth-mindset statements did your child make?

Action Ideas

- When you hear or provide praise, ask yourself "What is being praised?" Is it effort, strategy, persistence, focus, and improvement, or does it sound more like a fixed trait or ability?
- When you or your child makes a mistake, ask yourself "How does my reaction influence my child's future behaviour?" Does it encourage learning and growth, or does it encourage them to avoid challenges in the future?
- When something you or your child says or does signals a fixed or a growth mindset, write it down! You may be surprised how often mindset statements come up. Keep a chart on your fridge for a week then see if it changes at some later time.



Talk about the Brain

The brain is far more malleable than we once thought. Teaching our children that they actually have control over growing their brains through the actions they take is empowering! Tell your children that when they work hard, that's the feeling of their neurons connecting. The dendrites are reaching out to other dendrites, trying to connect to make a stronger brain. What strengthens those connections is practice, asking questions, and actively participating in learning. When children learn that their brains physically change with effort, it leads to increased motivation and achievement.

Action Ideas

- When you're with your child, explain that you learned that the brain can rewire itself and become smarter when people learn new things and challenge themselves!
- Tell them a little bit about what you have read, or watch a growth mindset video.
- Ask your child where in their life they use, or could use, a growth mindset.

What approaches do Thomas Harding take to develop a Growth Mindset in children ?

- Using feedback/praise designed to promote and highlight Growth Mindset.
- Showing students that their brain and body can physically achieve more through training and effort.
- Giving clear and inspirational examples of others who have used their Growth Mindset to great effect.
- The opportunity for students to think about and write about their mindset.
- All of this will be supported by our ASPIRE VALUE



“What if my son/daughter already has a natural talent, high attainment, considerable success at school yet is fixed mindset? “

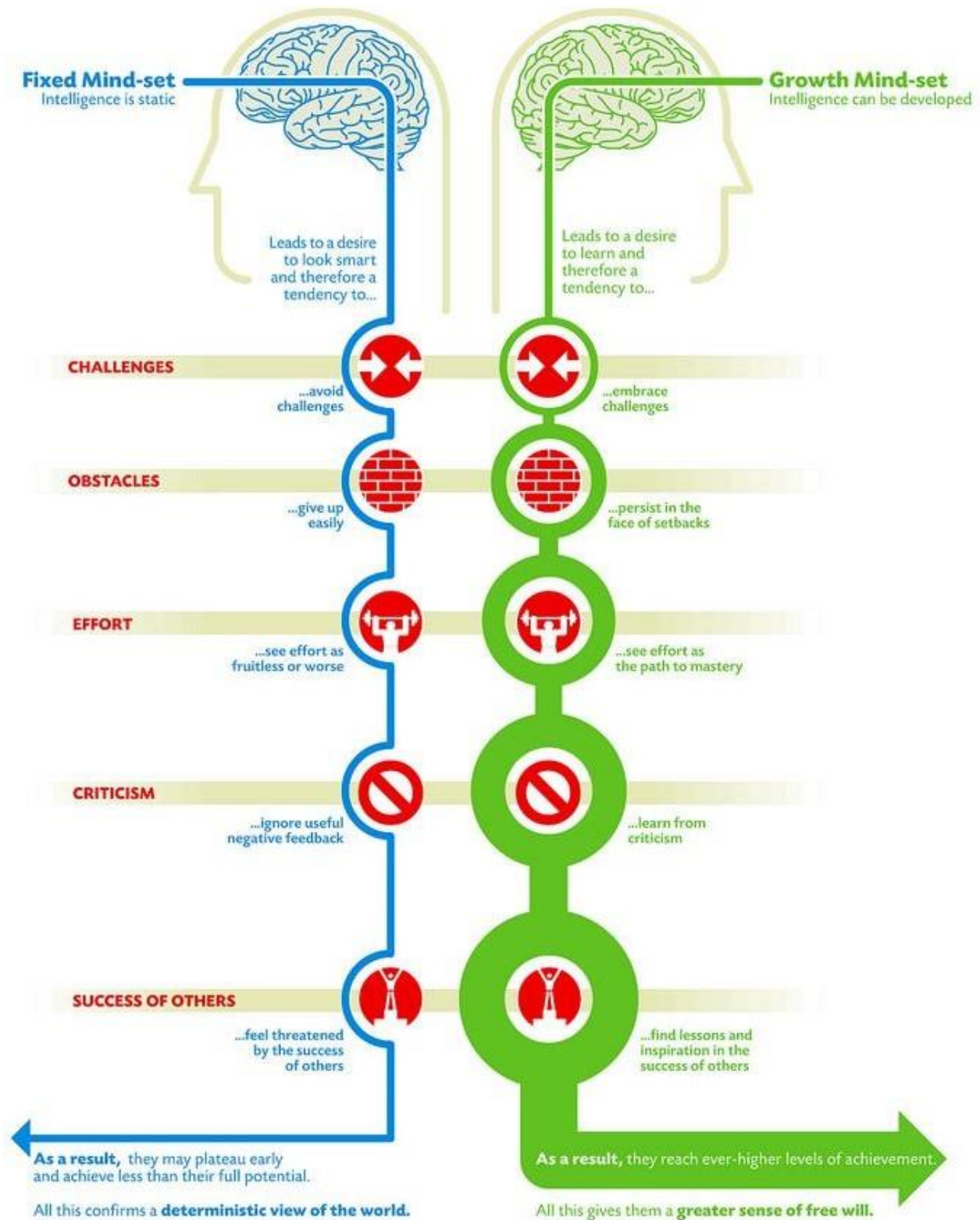
About half of society have a Growth mindset while the other half are Fixed and in reality many of us probably have different mindsets in different aspects of our lives. Having a Fixed mindset is not a bad thing and developing a growth mindset is not meant to quash natural talent. Natural talent should always be allowed to flourish. Growth mindset allows students to maintain and increase academic achievement while developing a more rounded and resilient individual who is willing to try new approaches. During Dr Dweck's research she asked children when they felt smart. Fixed mindset students said things like, “It's when I don't make any mistakes”, “When I finish fast and it's perfect” and “When something is easy for me, but other people can't do it”. Growth mindset students replied along the lines of, “When it's really hard, and I try really hard, and I can do something I couldn't do before”, “When I work on something a long time and I start to figure it out”, “I find challenge and interest go hand in hand”

Another interesting quote from Dweck is an observation about Fixed mindset high achievers when she observes that, “Lurking behind the self esteem of the fixed mindset is a simple question: if you're somebody when you're successful, what are you when you are not successful?”

In England, we have a considerable dropout rate from Further Education and in 2012 the figure reached a staggering 24%. A wide variety of social and economic factors may be responsible for this. However, a recurring theme is for children who leave school having only known success in exams, suddenly find University a challenge and begin to fail for the first time in their academic career. Many fixed mindset students give up and believe they are incapable of turning things around. For many Growth mindset children there will still be challenges and some will also drop out but the mindset to grow and learn from the hard times statistically helps them pull through.

Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard.

Dr Carol Dweck's. "Midset: how you can fulfil your potential" is available in most book shops and online. Chapters 1, 2, 7 and 8 are most suited to children.



Further Reading

The following books help support our idea of developing professional excellence and creating a culture of Growth Mindset with our staff, parents and students.

Title	Author	Synopsis
Mindset	Dr Carol S Dweck	World-renowned Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck, in decades of research on achievement and success, has discovered a truly groundbreaking idea-the power of our mindset. Dweck explains why it's not just our abilities and talent that bring us success-but whether we approach them with a fixed or growth mindset.
The Talent Code	Daniel Coyle	'Talent. You've either got it or you haven't.' Not true, actually. In The Talent Code, award-winning journalist Daniel Coyle draws on cutting-edge research to reveal that, far from being some abstract mystical power fixed at birth, ability really can be created and nurtured.
Bounce	Matthew Syed	Two-time Olympian and sports writer and broadcaster Matthew Syed draws on the latest in neuroscience and psychology to uncover the secrets of our top athletes and introduces us to an extraordinary cast of characters, including the East German athlete who became a man, and her husband – and the three Hungarian sisters who are all chess grandmasters.
The Power of Habit	Charles Duhigg	Why We Do What We Do, and How to Change In The Power of Habit, award-winning New York Times business reporter Charles Duhigg takes us to the thrilling edge of scientific discoveries that explain why habits exist and how they can be changed.

There are also two key articles, which help explain the understanding and value of having a Growth Mindset that we have attached:

[Carol Dweck: The power of believing that you can improve](#)

[Angela Lee Duckworth: Grit: The power of passion and perseverance](#)

[Carol Dweck: The power of believing that you can improve](#)

A transcript of the talk from:

https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve/transcript?language=en

I heard about a high school in Chicago where students had to pass a certain number of courses to graduate, and if they didn't pass a course, they got the grade "Not Yet." And I thought that was fantastic, because if you get a failing grade, you think, I'm nothing, I'm nowhere. But if you get the grade "Not Yet", you understand that you're on a learning curve. It gives you a path into the future.

"Not Yet" also gave me insight into a critical event early in my career, a real turning point. I wanted to see how children coped with challenge and difficulty, so I gave 10-year-olds problems that were slightly too hard for them. Some of them reacted in a shockingly positive way. They said things like, "I love a challenge," or, "You know, I was hoping this would be informative." They understood that their abilities could be developed. They had what I call a growth mindset. But other students felt it was tragic, catastrophic. From their more fixed mindset perspective, their intelligence had been up for judgment, and they failed. Instead of luxuriating in the power of yet, they were gripped in the tyranny of now.

So what do they do next? I'll tell you what they do next. In one study, they told us they would probably cheat the next time instead of studying more if they failed a test. In another study, after a failure, they looked for someone who did worse than they did so they could feel really good about themselves. And in study after study, they have run from difficulty. Scientists measured the electrical activity from the brain as students confronted an error. On the left, you see the fixed-mindset students. There's hardly any activity. They run from the error. They don't engage with it. But on the right, you have the students with the growth mindset, the idea that abilities can be developed. They engage deeply. Their brain is on fire with yet. They engage deeply. They process the error. They learn from it and they correct it.

How are we raising our children? Are we raising them for now instead of yet? Are we raising kids who are obsessed with getting As? Are we raising kids who don't know how to dream big dreams? Their biggest goal is getting the next A, or the next test score? And are they carrying this need for constant validation with them into their future lives? Maybe, because employers are coming to me and saying, "We have already raised a generation of young workers who can't get through the day without an award."

So what can we do? How can we build that bridge to yet? Here are some things we can do. First of all, we can praise wisely, not praising intelligence or talent. That has failed. Don't do that anymore. But praising the process that kids engage in, their effort, their strategies, their focus, their perseverance, their improvement. This process praise creates kids who are hardy and resilient.

There are other ways to reward yet. We recently teamed up with game scientists from the University of Washington to create a new online math game that rewarded yet. In this game, students were rewarded for effort, strategy and progress. The usual math game rewards you for getting answers right, right now, but this game rewarded process. And we got more effort, more strategies, more engagement over longer periods of time, and more perseverance when they hit really, really hard problems.

Just the words "yet" or "not yet," we're finding, give kids greater confidence, give them a path into the future that creates greater persistence. And we can actually change students' mindsets. In one study, we taught them that every time they push out of their comfort zone to learn something new and difficult, the neurons in their brain can form new, stronger connections, and over time, they can get smarter.

Look what happened: In this study, students who were not taught this growth mindset continued to show declining grades over this difficult school transition, but those who were taught this lesson showed a sharp rebound in their grades. We have shown this now, this kind of improvement, with thousands and thousands of kids, especially struggling students.

So let's talk about equality. In our country, there are groups of students who chronically underperform, for example, children in inner cities, or children on Native American reservations. And they've done so poorly for so long that many people think it's inevitable. But when educators create growth mindset classrooms steeped in yet, equality happens. And here are just a few examples. In one year, a kindergarten class in Harlem, New York scored in the 95th percentile on the national achievement test. Many of those kids could not hold a pencil when they arrived at school. In one year, fourth-grade students in the South Bronx, way behind, became the number one fourth-grade class in the state of New York on the state math test. In a year, to a year and a half, Native American students in a school on a reservation went from the bottom of their district to the top, and that district included affluent sections of Seattle. So the Native kids outdid the Microsoft kids.

This happened because the meaning of effort and difficulty were transformed. Before, effort and difficulty made them feel dumb, made them feel like giving up, but now, effort and difficulty, that's when their neurons are making new connections, stronger connections. That's when they're getting smarter.

I received a letter recently from a 13-year-old boy. He said, "Dear Professor Dweck, I appreciate that your writing is based on solid scientific research, and that's why I decided to put it into practice. I put more effort into my schoolwork, into my relationship with my family, and into my relationship with kids at school, and I experienced great improvement in all of those areas. I now realize I've wasted most of my life."

Let's not waste any more lives, because once we know that abilities are capable of such growth, it becomes a basic human right for children, all children, to live in places that create that growth, to live in places filled with "yet".

[Angela Lee Duckworth: Grit: The power of passion and perseverance](https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance/transcript?language=en)

A transcript of the talk from:

https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance/transcript?language=en

When I was 27 years old, I left a very demanding job in management consulting for a job that was even more demanding: teaching. I went to teach seventh graders math in the New York City public schools. And like any teacher, I made quizzes and tests. I gave out homework assignments. When the work came back, I calculated grades.

What struck me was that IQ was not the only difference between my best and my worst students. Some of my strongest performers did not have stratospheric IQ scores. Some of my smartest kids weren't doing so well. And that got me thinking. The kinds of things you need to learn in seventh grade math, sure, they're hard: ratios, decimals, the area of a parallelogram. But these concepts are not impossible, and I was firmly convinced that every one of my students could learn the material if they worked hard and long enough.

After several more years of teaching, I came to the conclusion that what we need in education is a much better understanding of students and learning from a motivational perspective, from a psychological perspective. In education, the one thing we know how to measure best is IQ. But what if doing well in school and in life depends on much more than your ability to learn quickly and easily?

So I left the classroom, and I went to graduate school to become a psychologist. I started studying kids and adults in all kinds of super challenging settings, and in every study my question was, who is successful here and why? My research team and I went to West Point Military Academy. We tried to predict which cadets would stay in military training and which would drop out. We went to the National Spelling Bee and tried to predict which children would advance farthest in competition. We studied rookie teachers working in really tough neighborhoods, asking which teachers are still going to be here in teaching by the end of the school year, and of those, who will be the most effective at improving learning outcomes for their students? We partnered with private companies, asking, which of these salespeople is going to keep their jobs? And who's going to earn the most money? In all those very different contexts, one characteristic emerged as a significant predictor of success. And it wasn't social intelligence. It wasn't good looks, physical health, and it wasn't IQ. It was grit.

Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day in, day out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint.

A few years ago, I started studying grit in the Chicago public schools. I asked thousands of high school juniors to take grit questionnaires, and then waited around more than a year to see who would graduate. Turns out that grittier kids were significantly more likely to graduate, even when I matched them on every characteristic I could measure, things like family income, standardized achievement test scores, even how safe kids felt when they were at school. So it's not just at West Point or the National Spelling Bee that grit matters. It's also in school, especially for kids at risk for dropping out.

To me, the most shocking thing about grit is how little we know, how little science knows, about building it. Every day, parents and teachers ask me, "How do I build grit in kids? What do I do to teach kids a solid work ethic? How do I keep them motivated for the long run?" The honest answer is, I don't know.

What I do know is that talent doesn't make you gritty. Our data show very clearly that there are many talented individuals who simply do not follow through on their commitments. In fact, in our data, grit is usually unrelated or even inversely related to measures of talent.

So far, the best idea I've heard about building grit in kids is something called "growth mindset." This is an idea developed at Stanford University by Carol Dweck, and it is the belief that the ability to learn is not fixed, that it can change with your effort. Dr. Dweck has shown that when kids read and learn about the brain and how it changes and grows in response to challenge, they're much more likely to persevere when they fail, because they don't believe that failure is a permanent condition.

So growth mindset is a great idea for building grit. But we need more. And that's where I'm going to end my remarks, because that's where we are. That's the work that stands before us. We need to take our best ideas, our strongest intuitions, and we need to test them. We need to measure whether we've been successful, and we have to be willing to fail, to be wrong, to start over again with lessons learned.

In other words, we need to be gritty about getting our kids grittier.