

A growth mindset fosters resilience, perseverance, and a belief in the ability to improve through effort, ultimately promoting a positive attitude toward learning and personal development.

Using Growth Mindset to Improve Classroom Management

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Growth mindset is a powerful concept that has the potential to transform the way we approach learning and student behavior. Coined by psychologist Carol Dweck, the growth mindset refers to the belief that our abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication, effort, and a willingness to learn from failures and challenges.¹ This mindset stands in contrast to a fixed mindset, which considers individuals' talents and capabilities as static traits.



At the heart of the growth mindset is the understanding that learning is a lifelong journey and that our potential for growth is virtually limitless. People with a growth mindset embrace challenges as opportunities to expand their skills and knowledge. They understand that setbacks and failures are not indicators of their inherent inadequacy, but rather steppingstones toward improvement. This outlook encourages resilience, as individuals view obstacles to be chances to learn, adapt, and ultimately succeed.

Persistence, Curiosity, and Improvement

One of the key aspects of the growth mindset is the emphasis on effort over outcome. Those with a growth mindset understand that mastery comes through persistent practice. They don't shy away from difficulties, recognizing that the struggle itself is an essential part of the learning process. This mindset shift empowers individuals to persevere through difficulties, knowing that their hard work will lead to progress and eventual success.

Furthermore, the growth mindset fosters a love for learning itself. People with this mindset are willing to step outside their comfort zones, actively seeking out new challenges and opportunities to expand their horizons. They view acquiring new skills and knowledge as exciting rather than intimidating. This curiosity-driven approach keeps them engaged and motivated, enhancing their ability to grasp complex concepts and acquire expertise in various fields.

A growth mindset also promotes a healthy attitude toward feedback

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and criticism. Instead of taking criticism personally, individuals with this mindset consider it a valuable tool for improvement. Constructive feedback becomes a roadmap for refining their skills and making meaningful progress.² This openness to criticism not only accelerates learning but also cultivates strong interpersonal relationships, as others appreciate their receptiveness and willingness to evolve.

Growth Mindset and the Learning Environment

In the classroom, fostering a growth mindset can have profound implications. Teachers who promote this mindset in their classrooms create an environment where students feel safe to take risks and explore their potential. Students are more likely to engage actively in their learning, tackle challenging subjects with enthusiasm, and develop a deep-seated belief in their capacity to improve.

The growth mindset is a game-changing perspective that has the potential to revolutionize how we approach learning and personal development. By believing in the power of effort, embracing challenges, and seeing failures as opportunities for growth, individuals can unlock their true potential and achieve remarkable success. This mindset not only propels individuals to achieve their goals but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in education and beyond.

What Does Research Tell Us?

Research into the concept of growth mindset has yielded a wealth of insights into human behavior, learning, and achievement. The pioneering work of psychologist Carol Dweck, who introduced

the concept, has laid the foundation for numerous studies that have explored the impact of mindset on various aspects of life, education, and beyond.

Studies have demonstrated that individuals with a growth mindset are more likely to embrace challenges and put in sustained effort to improve their skills.³ They view failures as opportunities for learning and are more resilient in the face of setbacks. This mindset fosters a passion for learning and a willingness to explore new areas, ultimately leading to greater academic success.

Furthermore, research has shown that a growth mindset can significantly influence motivation and goal setting. Individuals with this mindset are more likely to set ambitious goals and pursue them with vigor.⁴ They are less discouraged by initial failures and setbacks, seeing them as steppingstones rather than roadblocks. This resilience and determination can lead to higher levels of achievement and a greater sense of self-efficacy.

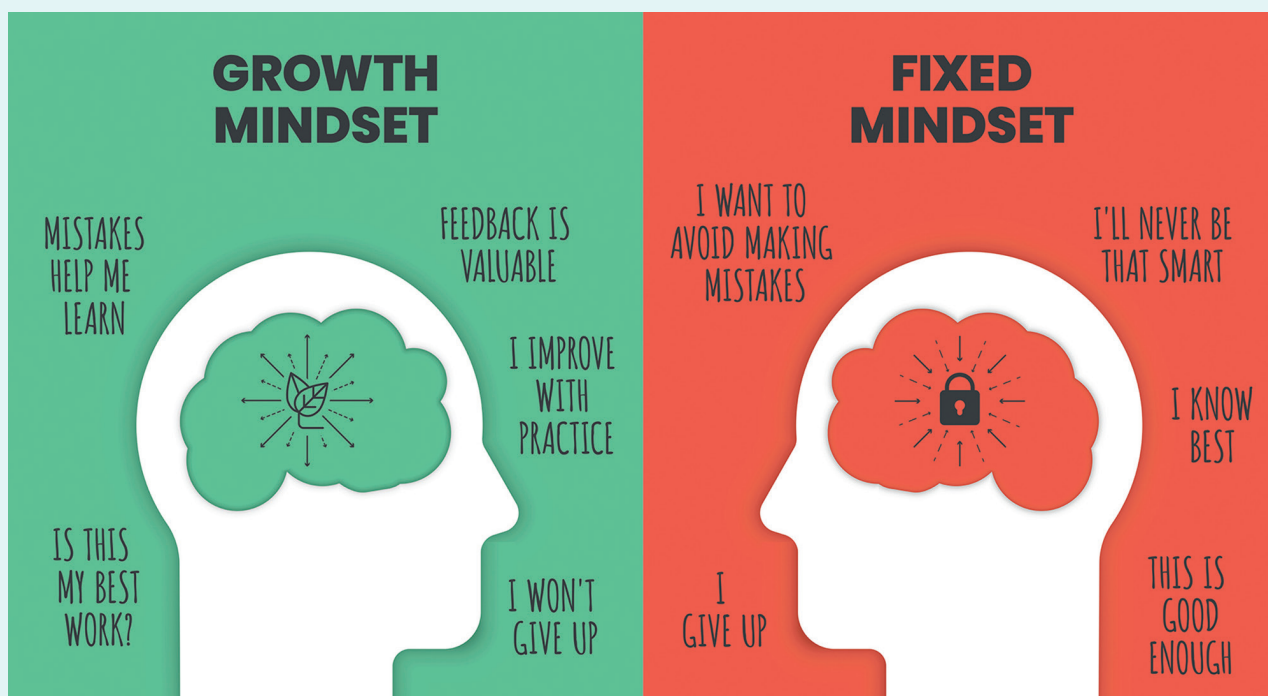
In education, the research on growth mindset has sparked a transformation in teaching practices. Educators are incorporating growth mindset principles into their classrooms to create an environment where students feel safe to take risks and make mistakes.⁵ Studies have indicated that teaching students about the malleability of intelligence and praising their efforts rather than innate talents can lead to improved academic performance and a positive attitude toward learning.⁶

Classroom Management

Classroom management is a critical aspect of effective teaching, and incorporating a growth mindset into this realm can lead to more positive learning environments and better outcomes for students. Applying a growth mindset in classroom management involves fostering a culture where students are encouraged to develop their abilities, take responsibility for their actions, and view discipline and behavior as opportunities for growth rather than punishment.

Potential Benefits of a Growth Mindset for Classroom Management

- **Promoting Responsibility:** In a classroom where a growth mindset prevails, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. They understand that their behaviors, both positive and negative, are opportunities for learning and improvement. This mindset reduces instances of blame and excuses and helps students develop a sense of accountability.
- **Reducing Disruptive Behavior:** When students view discipline through a growth mindset lens, they are more likely to perceive correction as guidance and not as punishment. This shift in perspective can lead to a decrease in disruptive behaviors, as students recognize that they have the power to change and grow from their mistakes.
- **Building Resilience:** A growth mindset in classroom management teaches students resilience.



★ *Create an open and nonjudgmental space for students to discuss their behaviors and the consequences of those behaviors.*



They learn to bounce back from failures and setbacks, understanding that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. This resilience is a valuable life skill that extends beyond the classroom.

- **Enhancing Student-Teacher Relationships:** Implementing a growth mindset in classroom management can strengthen student-teacher relationships. When teachers approach discipline with empathy and understanding, students feel valued and supported, which can lead to better communication and cooperation.

Strategies for Promoting a Growth Mindset in Classroom Management

- **Reframing Behavior as a Learning Opportunity:** Instead of viewing challenging

behaviors as inherent traits or fixed, help students see them as opportunities for growth and learning. Encourage them to understand that their actions can change with effort and practice.

- **Open Dialogue:** Create an open and nonjudgmental space for students to discuss their behaviors and the consequences of those behaviors. Encourage them to reflect on their actions, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for themselves. This approach shifts the focus from punishment to growth.
- **Promote Effort and Persistence:** Emphasize the idea that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort and perseverance. Encourage students to see challenges and mistakes as opportunities for growth rather than failures. Praise students for their hard work and strategies rather

Educators can create a positive and growth-oriented atmosphere that encourages students to view challenges as opportunities for learning and improvements in behavior.



than solely focusing on outcomes. For example, instead of saying, “You’re so smart,” say, “I can see you worked really hard on this.”

- **Provide Constructive Feedback:** Give feedback that is specific, actionable, and focused on improvement. Encourage students to view feedback to enhance their skills. Avoid overly critical or judgmental language and instead offer suggestions for improvement. When providing feedback, focus on the effort and strategies students used rather than just the result. Ask questions like: “What did you do to solve this problem?” or “What strategies did you use?”
- **Set Behavior Goals:** Help students set behavior-related goals that are attainable. These goals should focus on incremental improvements rather than expecting a complete change overnight. Celebrate their successes and guide them through setbacks. Incorporate lessons on

resilience and coping strategies, helping students deal with setbacks, stress, and challenges. Teach them techniques for managing stress, such as mindfulness or problem-solving skills. Keep track of students’ progress in meeting their behavior goals. Adjust these goals as needed to ensure they remain challenging but attainable.

- **Teach Self-Regulation Skills:** Provide explicit instruction on self-regulation skills, such as anger management, impulse control, and problem-solving. Help students recognize triggers and develop strategies to respond more effectively to challenging situations. Provide resources, tools, and strategies that can help the students manage their behavior effectively. This might include anger management techniques, relaxation exercises, or conflict resolution strategies.
- **Embrace Mistakes:** Teach students that making mistakes is a natural part of learning. Create a safe

environment where they feel comfortable admitting their mistakes and are encouraged to learn from them. Discuss how to make better choices next time. Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their behavior and growth. Encourage journaling, self-assessment, and self-awareness. Discuss with them how their mindset impacts their learning and development.

- **Model Growth Mindset:** Teachers should model a growth mindset themselves by demonstrating resilience, embracing challenges, and showing a willingness to learn and adapt. When students see their educators embodying a growth mindset, they are more likely to internalize these values. Demonstrate a growth mindset by openly acknowledging your own mistakes and learning from them. Share stories of your own struggles and successes. Show enthusiasm for learning and problem-solving and exhibit a positive attitude toward challenges.
- **Provide Support:** Remember that developing a growth mindset is a process. Be patient and consistent in promoting these principles throughout the school year. Offer guidance and support to students who struggle with behavior issues. Understand that change may take time and be patient in helping students develop better habits. Encourage them to seek assistance when needed. Acknowledge and celebrate students' efforts, growth, and progress over time, not just their final grades or achievements. Consider recognition or rewards for their dedication and perseverance.
- **Involve Parents and Guardians:** Share the concept of a growth mindset with parents and guardians, so they can support their children's development at home. Encourage open communication between parents and teachers regarding students' growth and progress.

Talking to students using a growth mindset approach:

- **Effort and Persistence:**

"I appreciate the effort you put into getting closer to your goal. Hard work pays off!"
"You're facing a challenge, but remember, the more effort you invest, the stronger you become."
- **Learning from Mistakes:**

"Mistakes are opportunities to learn. What did you discover from this experience?"
"Everyone makes mistakes. Let's figure out what we can learn from this and move forward."

- **Embracing Challenges:**

"Challenges help us grow. I believe you have the ability to overcome this."
"This may be tough, but I know you can handle it. Challenges make us stronger."
- **Positive Self-Talk:**

"You might not have mastered it yet, but you're making progress. Keep going!"
"Tell yourself that you can do it. Positive thoughts lead to positive actions."
- **Encouraging Questions:**

"Great question! Asking questions is a sign of curiosity and a desire to learn."
"Don't hesitate to ask for help. It's a strength to seek understanding."
- **Recognizing Improvement:**

"I've noticed how much you've improved in [specific behavior]. Your effort is paying off."
"You've come a long way. Celebrate your progress!"
- **Promoting Collaboration:**

"Working together can lead to even better results. Let's collaborate on this."
"When we support each other, we all grow. Let's tackle this challenge as a team."
- **Setting Goals:**

"What's a goal you can set for yourself? Remember, small steps lead to big achievements."
"Having a goal gives you something to work toward. What's your next challenge?"
- **Encouraging Reflection:**

"Take a moment to reflect on your efforts. What strategies are working for you?"
"Think about the progress you've made. Reflecting helps us learn and improve."
- **Building Confidence:**

"Believe in yourself. You have the potential to achieve great things."
"You might not have all the answers now, but you're growing every day. Trust in your abilities."

Educators can create a positive and growth-oriented atmosphere that encourages students to view challenges as opportunities for learning and improvements in behavior. This mindset shift promotes resilience, a willingness to embrace difficulties, and a belief in the capacity for improvement. By incorporating a growth mindset into your classroom management approach, you can inspire students to embrace challenges, develop a love for learning, and become more resilient in the face of obstacles, ultimately

creating a more positive and productive learning environment.



Notes:

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² Ng, B. (2018). The neuroscience of growth mindset and intrinsic motivation. *Brain Sciences, 8*(2), 20.

³ Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2020). What can be learned from growth mindset controversies? *American Psychologist, 75*(9), 1269-1284.

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⁴ Blackwell, L. S., Trzesniewski, K. H., & Dweck, C. S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an

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⁵ Mueller, C. M., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75*(1), 33-52.

⁶ Erdley, C., Cain, K., Loomis, C., Dumas-Hines, F., & Dweck, C. S. (1997). The relations among children's social goals, implicit personality theories and response to social failure. *Developmental Psychology, 33*(2), 263-272.

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Disclosure Statement:

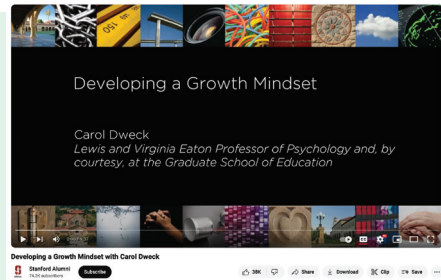
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Learn More About the Growth Mindset

Developing a Growth Mindset with Carol Dweck

Professor Carol Dweck talks about her groundbreaking work on developing mindsets. She emphasizes the power of "yet" in helping students succeed in and out of the classroom.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiiEeMN7vbQ



A Schoolwide Approach to Fostering a Growth Mindset

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www.edutopia.org/article/cultivating-growth-mindset-schoolwide



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