



Do You Have a “Fixed Mindset” or a “Growth Mindset?”

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For the past two decades, Dr. Carol Dweck of Stanford University has been researching achievement, success and how to foster success. Dr. Dweck has identified two types of mindsets: the “fixed mindset” and the “growth mindset.” Mindset is defined as the beliefs you hold about yourself, your abilities, intelligence, talents, and personality.

The “**fixed mindset**” is the belief that our abilities, intelligence, talents and personality are fixed and therefore cannot change. The downside to this type of mindset is that talents and abilities are not developed but simply documented. There is a pervading idea that “you cannot teach an old dog new tricks.” Individuals with this type of mindset typically shy away from trying something new and may become anxious with new tasks or challenging problems.

Conversely, the “**growth mindset**” is the belief that our most basic abilities, intelligence, talents and personality can change over time. Goals can be accomplished and talents can be developed through dedication and hard work. This view helps to create more of a resiliency to new or challenging tasks. Individuals with this type of mindset are more likely to take on challenges and to stretch their abilities. Reportedly, individuals with the growth mindset are more successful and are able to accomplish more.

For example, a person is given a new problem or confronted with a new challenge: A person with a fixed mindset will tend to view the problem in terms of what he has been able to accomplish in the past. If he has struggled with this type of problem, his reaction is more likely to be one of anxiety and trepidation. Whereas, in the same circumstance a person with a growth mindset will tend to view the problem in terms of what he can learn from the situation and how can he grow to meet the challenge. The person will more likely have the attitude if I try hard, I can solve this problem and meet this challenge. A person with a growth mindset is more likely to succeed.

Do you have a growth mindset or a fixed mindset?

Sources: <http://www.mindsetonline.com/whatisit/themindsets/index.html> accessed 5/03/2011

<http://rescomp.stanford.edu/~cheshire/EinsteinQuotes.html> accessed 5/03/2011



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