

# GROWTH AND FIXED MINDSETS

## ACTIVITY

### Time Needed

60 minutes

### Materials

Signs to mark areas of the room  
Sticky notes

### Activity Description

When you THINK YOU CAN'T, you limit your potential. When you THINK YOU CAN, you open up your possibilities and can find success through practice, dedication, and persistence. A fixed mindset assumes a limitation, while a growth mindset assumes you can learn and achieve with enough hard work and time. Understanding your mindset will help to frame your thought process and embracing a growth mindset can have a positive impact on your decision making.

### Suggested Steps

1. Mark three areas of the room:
  - One corner/wall with “Fixed Mindset”
  - One corner/wall with “Growth Mindset”
  - The center with “Goals and Natural Highs”
2. Look over the diagram and the following examples of Growth and Fixed Mindsets:

| Growth Mindset    | Fixed Mindset                |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| I will...         | I will try....               |
| I am going to.... | I want to....                |
| I know I will.... | I wish I could....           |
| I can learn...    | I'm not a _____ or I am only |

3. Think about yourself and how you would describe yourself. What are you good at? What goals do you have (big, small, short and long-term)? How would you describe yourself?



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4. Write out statements about yourself. Decide if they belong on the Fixed Mindset or Growth Mindset part of the room. See below for examples:

| Growth Mindset                  | Fixed Mindset                 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I will be a scientist           | I will try to be a scientist. |
| I am going to travel the world. | I want to travel the world.   |
| I know I will be successful.    | I wish I could be successful. |
| I can learn math.               | I'm not a math person.        |

5. Read the sticky notes in the fixed mindset part of the room. See if you can change them to be written with a growth mindset.

6. When someone criticizes you, you can respond with a growth mindset or a fixed mindset. For example, if someone says you can't do something you could say, "Not yet but I can if I try hard" or you could say, "You're right."

7. Identify one area where you tend to have a fixed mindset. Make one goal toward changing to a growth mindset with that area. For example:

I often have a fixed mindset when it comes to studying. I assume I will not do well if I haven't done well in the past in that class.

Now I will try to identify ways to improve and assume I will do well if I work hard. And if I don't do well, I will talk to the teacher about ways I can.



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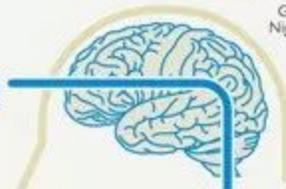
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# TWO MINDSETS

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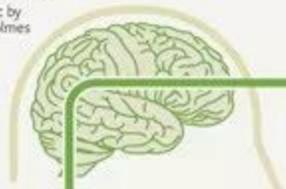
Graphic by Nigel Holmes

**Fixed Mindset**  
Intelligence is static



Leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to...

**Growth Mindset**  
Intelligence can be developed



Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to...

## CHALLENGES

...avoid challenges



...embrace challenges



## OBSTACLES

...give up easily



...persist in the face of setbacks



## EFFORT

...see effort as fruitless or worse



...see effort as the path to mastery



## CRITICISM

...ignore useful negative feedback



...learn from criticism



## SUCCESS OF OTHERS

...feel threatened by the success of others



...find lessons and inspiration in the success of others



As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential.

All this confirms a **deterministic view of the world.**

As a result, they reach ever-higher levels of achievement.

All this gives them a **greater sense of free will.**



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