

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?

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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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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