



Singleton Church of England Primary School



Growth Mindset Information for Parents



“Passion for learningPassion for life”

Vision

“With God all things are possible” Matthew 19:26

“I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full” John 10:10

To provide the children with a variety of challenging and enriching opportunities, enabling them to live life to the full. Developing a growth mind-set, believing that with God everything is possible. To show, love , trust, wisdom and respect, becoming exemplary role models in our community and the wider world.

FIXED OR GROWTH MINDSET?

What is Fixed and Growth Mind-set?

Research by development 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."

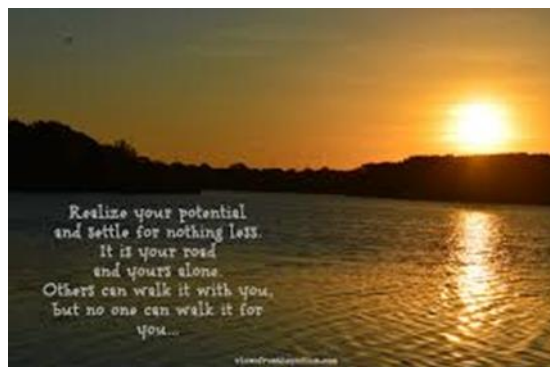
(Dweck)

Although most people will undoubtedly have a mixture of these mind-sets 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 pupils with a fixed mind-set who are scared to contribute to class discussion for fear of looking stupid; who take one bad test result of 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 Mind-set is designed to remove such barriers to learning as the pupils realise they can grow their ability rather than being told they can.

The Following Information explains the concept of Fixed and Growth Mind-set

Mindset and Learning.

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Those with a Fixed Mindset believe that natural ability or talent decides our level of success, even if we have succeeded with very little effort. We avoid challenges that might question our ability and view setbacks as evidence that something is wrong.	Those of us with a Growth Mindset believe that factors such as effort, application and study skills will more accurately determine our level of success. We also enjoy success, but only really if we've had to work for what we perceive to be <i>meaningful</i> success. Setbacks simply give us a new goal to target especially if we get good feedback on how to achieve that goal.





Fixed V Growth Mind- set

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Beliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intelligence and ability are fixed. Nature determines intelligence and ability. I have an innate ability for some things and an innate disability for other things. I will always be good at, for example, maths and always be poor at, for example, art. 	Beliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intelligence and ability can grow. Nurture determines intelligence and ability. If I apply myself more, seek help, take risks, change my strategy, then I've got a good chance of learning anything and thus growing my intelligence and talent.
Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prove myself. To succeed, especially with little effort, as this proves that I am clever and / or able. Avoid failure of any sort, as this proves I have low ability levels. 	Priority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve myself. To learn through challenge, as this will help me to grow my talents. Seek interesting challenges that will stretch and help me to learn.
Attitude to Challenging Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge should be avoided. Difficulties will mean I am not as clever as I thought. Failure means I'm stupid or incapable. 	Attitude to Challenging Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge will help me learn. Difficulties are an inevitable part of the learning process. Failure means I need to adapt my strategies.
I apply myself when there is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An opportunity to show off my strengths. A good chance of getting everything right. Very little risk of failure. 	I apply myself when there is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An opportunity to learn new insights or skills. Enough challenge to stretch me. An opportunity to try something new.
Response to challenge or failure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blame myself or, to protect my ego, someone else. Feel inferior or incapable. Trying guessing the answers or copy others. Seek ego-boosting distractions. 	Response to challenge or failure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no blame – I just want to know how to do it better next time. Feel inspired to have a go. Try various problem-solving strategies. Seek advice, support or new strategies.
Mottos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either you're good at something or you're not. If you're really good at something, you shouldn't need to try. If you have to try you must be stupid. Don't try too hard; that way you've got an excuse if things go wrong. 	Mottos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Success comes with practice. No matter how good you are at something, you can always improve. If you have to try, you must be learning. Always try hard; that way you've more chance of more success. No pain, no gain!

Why Growth Mind-set at Singleton School?

For us it's not all about Dr. Dweck! As a school we constantly evaluate how we do things and the impact of what we do on our children's learning and development. We believe that every child in our school must be provided with opportunities to develop academically, socially, emotionally, and physically to achieve the highest possible standards. All the staff stands united in the belief that the sky is the limit for our pupils. We seek to provide a culture where we inspire each other and learn to value greatness, ambition and achievement of all kinds.

Our drive to implement the 'Growth Mind-set' concept in our school comes from what we truly believe is vital within education. As a staff we have key values that underpin and drive the provision we offer.

We Value

Happiness

Those who are happy are great learners

Confidence

Those who are confident always 'have a go'

Creativity

Those who are creative can think and learn in imaginative ways

Perseverance

Those who persevere have positive outlooks and have self-belief

Respect

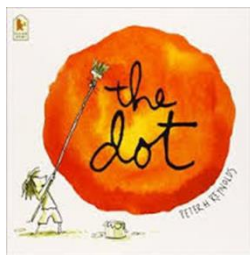
Those who are respectful see things through the eyes of others



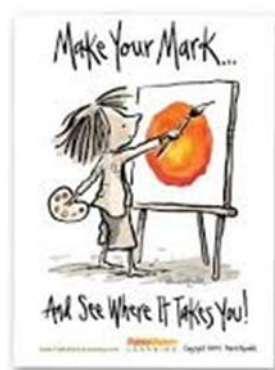
Before launching Growth Mind-set in our school we researched the concept thoroughly and as a staff evaluated its principles. We felt that it supports our vision and our values.

But you know us we don't take a concept and try and make it fit our school..... we take a concept and make it our own changing it and adapting it to meet the needs of our children.

At Singleton we decided that we would launch the Growth – Mind-set concept by using a story called



The story is all about a little girl with a fixed mind-set that believes she can't draw. The teacher encourages her to just make a mark



The story tells of the journey that Vashti goes through from no self-belief and confidence, to the realisation that perseverance, learning from mistakes, taking risks, rising to a challenge and trying your best eventually leads to success.



As you wander around our school you will see that the whole learning environment reflects the principles and values of the story. All the children were involved in developing the displaysall our children make their own unique mark!

From this we worked with the children to see where the concept of 'making your mark' would take us. We have made many subtle changes to how we do things in school. The children as usual had many brilliant ideasand we encouraged this, as if this is to be a success the children need ownership.

Changing a culture takes time and Growth Mind- set has evolved since we launched in September 2016 and we believe it will continue to evolve.

With the children we have looked at our approaches to:-

- **Learning –**

- Children are encouraged to embrace making mistakes and see them as a learning opportunity.
- Children are encouraged and expected to have ago and not give up.
- All Staff focus on developing resilience within learning.
- Children are encouraged and expected to rise to a challenge.
- Children are encouraged and expected to be ambitious and to take learning on independently
- Children are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and be responsible for their behaviour
- Children are encouraged to reflect and analyse how they treat others.
- Children are encouraged to support one another through the e growth mind-set concepts.

- Teachers and Support staff support this process through the use of the BRAIN – BOOK - BUDDY – BOSS – system. This was introduced as a way of supporting the development of independence and resilience within learning
- **Rewards and Praise** – we completely changed our systems:-
 - Appointed Growth Mind- set Prefects
 - Introduced a weekly celebratory 'Growth Mind-Set' worship
 - The Christian Values at our school are at the forefront of all that we do. It is important that the Christian Values be incorporated within the growth mind-set philosophy
 - Children who have shown growth mind-set through our Christian Values are recognised.
 - We incorporated this by using the poem "Footprints
 - Footprints are visible throughout the school and highlight our Christian values.
 - Children make their mark, in the same way that Jesus made his mark thorough his values – we use the footprint in the sand as a symbol of 'Making your Mark' like Jesus.
 - Rewards and praise now given for;-
 - Making your Mark like Jesus (Caring, Friendship, Wisdom, Perseverance, Trust and Love)
 - Resilience – Don't give up until you are proud.
 - Best effort – Always see effort as a path to mastery.
 - Give it a go – Nothing will work ...unless you do!
 - Building from mistakes – Every mistake you make is progress!



Using praise to encourage a Growth Mind-set and move learning on.

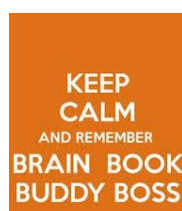
Whilst we were researching Growth Mind-set we discovered that we had to retrain ourselves on how we praised and encouraged the children. What we had thought were helpful comments, examples and motivating techniques – under the 'Growth Mind- set' system actually sent the wrong message to their children. We realised that, every word and action sends a message. It tells children how to think about themselves. It can be a fixed mind-set message which says: "You have permanent characteristics and I'm judging them". Or it can be a Growth Mind-set message that says: "You are a developing person and I'm interested in your development".

Praising effort alone is useless when the child is getting everything wrong and not making progress. As the children will feel misled when they are eventually confronted with the reality of their low achievement, or the hollow praise will convey adults' low expectations for them. In our school we focus on praising a child's process and strategies within learning, and tie those to the outcome.

Instead of telling the children to keep trying, we sit down with them and say, "Let's look at what you've done," "Let's look at what your understanding is," or "Let's look at what strategies you've used, and let's figure out together what we should try next."

We introduced a system we call '**BRAIN – BOOK - BUDDY – BOSS**' – this is a process that the children go through when facing challenge.

- **1st – BRAIN**
 - Have a think about what you have been taught – look in your book for prompts and reminders – use the learning prompts on your table
- **2nd – BOOK**
 - Research – can you find any further information that may help. Use books or the internet.
- **3rd –BUDDY**
 - Discuss the problem / challenge with your learning partner – do they have any strategies? Can you work out a strategy together / share ideas?
- **4th - BOSS**
 - When you have tried all of the above – ask an adult to support.



Resilience within learning

I'm not
telling you
it's going
to be
easy,
I'm
telling you
it's going
to be
WORTH IT.

We keep moving
forward,
opening new doors
&
doing new things,
because we're
curious
&
curiosity
keeps leading us
down new paths.

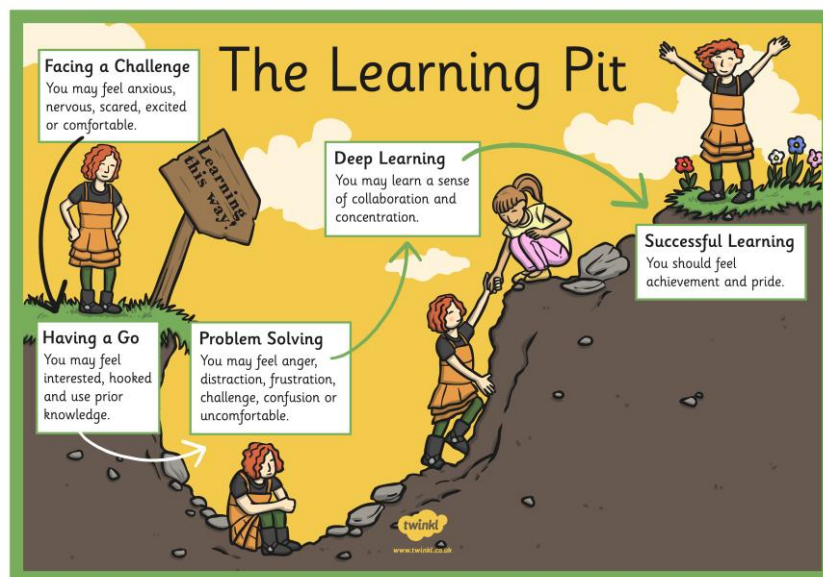
Walt Disney

miStAkEs
are proof
that you are
TRYING

Developing resilience is a key part of the Growth Mind-set concept, the idea that when things get tough you don't give up or get upset.

- We want to ensure that our children embrace a Challenge and don't view it as something that should be avoided in case of failure.
- We want our children to know and understand that there is no blame if mistakes are made, that making mistake does not mean you are not clever and that the important thing is that the child wants to know how to do it better next time.
- We want our children to feel inspired to have a go.
- We want our children to try various problem-solving strategies.
- We want our children to seek advice, support or new strategies.
- We want our children to reflect on themselves and their behaviour and understand that it is possible to be responsible for change.

In school we explain the learning process with the as follows:-

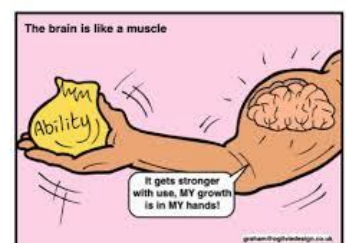


We use the following to develop resilience and support learning:-

Constructive Criticism

'Constructive' means helping the child to fix something build a better product or do a better job.

- We focus on always trying your best



Feedback and Questioning:

As a staff, we will be aiming to praise your children for their effort, process and commitment rather than talent or intelligence. Phrases and approaches that staff at Singleton Primary School will be aiming to use are:

- “You really worked well to prepare for that assessment and your improvement shows it”.
- “I like the way you tried different strategies until you finally got it. You thought of different ways until you got it to work”.
- “I like the way you took on that project. It took a lot of work doing research, thinking about layout before carrying it out. Boy, you’re going to learn a lot of things from this which you can use again in the future”.
- “I know you used to find school work easy and worry that bits are difficult now; but, the truth is you weren’t using your brain to its full power. I’m really excited that you’re stretching yourself now and working to learn hard things”.
- “That homework was really difficult and long. I admire the way you went about finishing it”.
- “That work is really good. Tell me about it and how you did it”.
- “How did you feel when you completed that difficult piece of work?”
- “I like the effort you put into that piece of work, but let’s work together some more and see if we can figure out what you didn’t understand”.
- “We all have different learning curves. It may take more time for you to catch up this and be comfortable with this material but if you keep working hard at it, you will”.
- “Everyone learns in different ways. Let’s keep trying to find the way that works for you”.
- I am really proud of the fact that you were able to recognise that your behaviour was inappropriate and you have changed it!
- I know you used to struggle with how you played with your friends. However, I am proud of the changes you have made. How does it make you feel?
- I am really proud of how you have reflected on our Christian Value of caring this term, you have changed your approach to how you share your toys with your friends.

Staff try to avoid praise like:-

- “Wow you did that so quickly”
- “Look, you didn’t make any mistakes!”

This can send the message that speed and perfection are what is prized most. However, speed and perfection can be the enemy of difficult learning. Children can think, “If you believe I’m smart when I’m fast and perfect, I’d better not take on anything challenging” when in fact some of the best learning comes from learning from mistakes and the process of how to develop from there.

Pupils often worry about failure in school and feel doing poorly in one piece of work means they simply cannot and never will be able to do something. The message to them is that they may not be able to do it YET.

Home and school example can display how children label themselves:

	<u>HOME</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>
Children	Ach, I don’t want to read I’m rubbish at it	I can’t do this, I’m not clever.
Parent /Teacher	That’s not what we say	That’s not what we say
Children	What do we say then?	What do we say then?
Parent /Teacher	You say, I find reading hard but if, Read every day I will improve.	You say, I find this this hard; How can I get better at it?
Children	Just like that?	Just like that?
Parent /Teacher	Exactly like that.	Exactly like that.

Assessment Tests

Before major assessments like the KS1 and KS2 SATs, children will inevitably begin to worry. For many, this can manifest itself through worry that they will **let themselves down**, their parents and their teachers if things don’t go well. They put so much pressure on themselves that it hinders their chance of success.

One final example from Dr Dweck:

The night before an assessment, parents see how distraught their child is and try to raise their confidence. "Look you know how smart you are and we know how smart you are. You've got this nailed. Now, stop worrying".

This seems very supportive but actually increases pressure. An alternative could be, "It must be a terrible thing to feel worried that everyone has high expectations of how well you will do on these tests. We want you to understand that we know you have worked very hard and that we know you will try your very best. That is all that matters"

Other useful information

Children love praise. They especially love praise about their intelligence and talent. It really gives them a boost and a special feeling..... but often only for a short time. The minute they hit a snag, their confidence can be destroyed and motivation hits rock bottom. If success means they are smart, then failure can mean they are dumb.

So does mean staff will not praise their pupils. Not at all! It just means that we need to try and stay away from certain kinds of praise that only focuses only intelligence and talent rather than effort.

What approaches will school be taking to develop a Growth Mind-set with children?

- Being very open and frank about the approach. i.e. making everyone aware of what they can achieve by adopting the mind-set.
- Using feedback/praise designed to promote and highlight Growth Mind-set.
- Showing pupils that their brain and body can physically achieve more through training and effort.
- Giving clear and inspirational examples of others who used their Growth Mind-set to great effect.
- The opportunity for pupils to think about and write about their mind-set.

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

About half of society has a Growth Mind-set while the other half are Fixed and in reality many of us probably have a mixture of both mind-sets in different aspects of our lives. Having a Fixed mind-set is not a bad thing and developing a Growth mind-set is not meant to quash natural talent. Natural talent should always be allowed to flourish. Growth mind-set allows pupils to maintain and increase academic achievement while developing a more rounded and *resilient* individual who is willing to try new approaches.

At Singleton School – we constantly evaluated the curriculum that we offer the children. We look at the children we have in school and think about the experiences that we provide for them. Our aim is to give as many opportunities as possible despite being a small school – so that all our children can flourish!

During Dr Dweck's research she asked children when they felt smart.

Fixed Mind-set 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 Mind-set 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".

Creativity, resilience and flexibility

Scott Forstall, senior vice president of Apple in charge of iPhone software, talks about his experiences of putting together the iPhone development team. He identified a number of the highest flying superstars within various departments at Apple and asked them for a chat. At the start of each interview he warned the recruit that he couldn't reveal details of the project but promised the opportunity, "To make mistakes and struggle, but eventually we may do something that we'll remember the rest of our lives".

Only people who immediately jumped at the challenge ended up on the team. He wanted people who valued stretching themselves over being king of their particular hill. People with Growth Mind-set tend to demonstrate the kind of perseverance and resilience required to convert life's setbacks into future successes. Forstall's team certainly did that.

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 mind-set students give up and believe they are incapable of turning things around. For many Growth mind-set children there will still be challenges and some will also drop out but the mind-set to grow and learn from the hard times statistically helps them pull through.

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



<http://www.centreforconfidence.co.uk/>

<http://mindsetonline.com/>

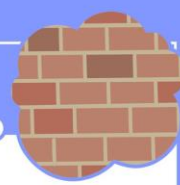
<http://www.mindsetworks.com>

What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?

Growth Mindset



Fixed Mindset



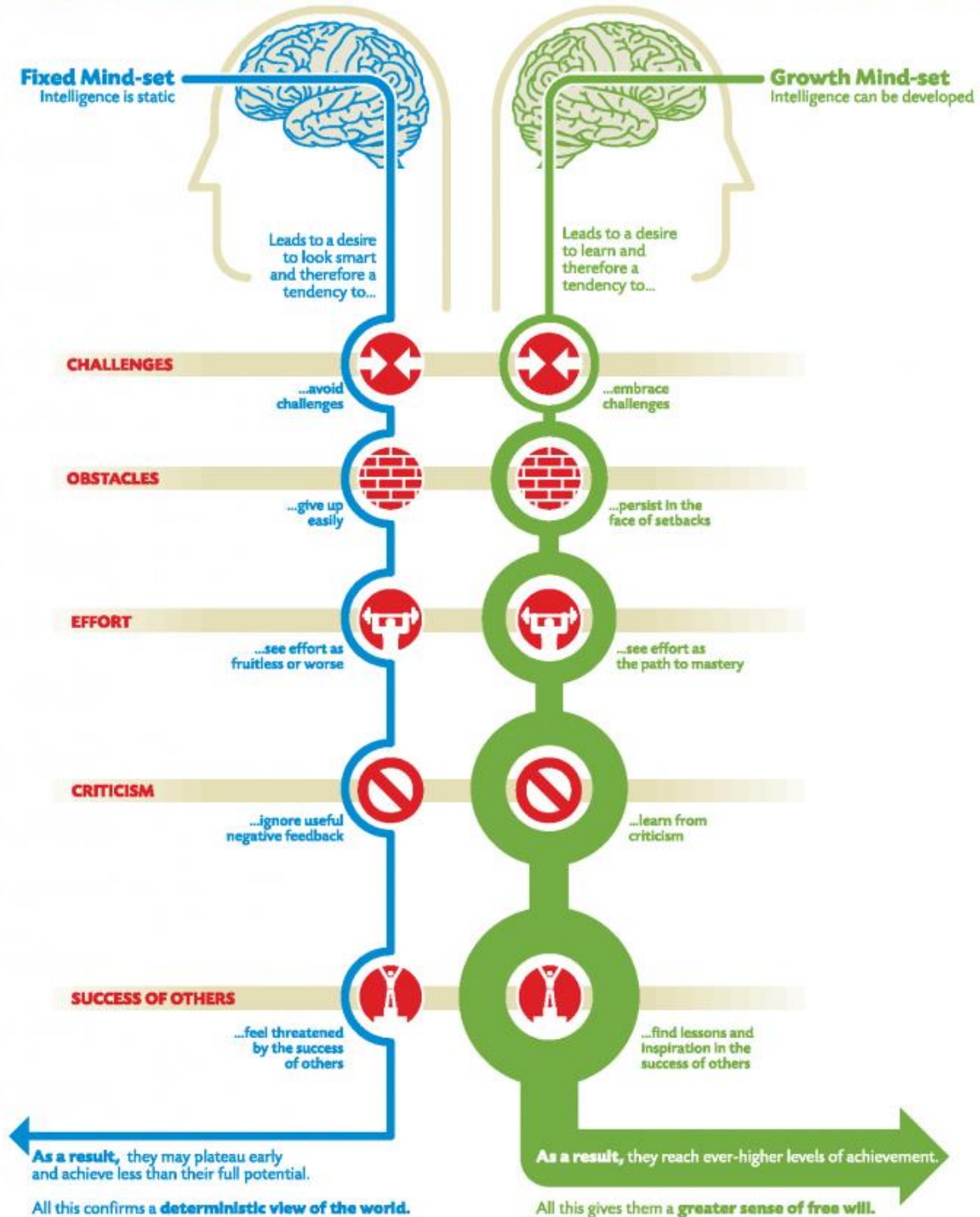
- I can learn anything I want to..... I'm either good at it or I'm not.
- When I'm frustrated, I persevere..... When I'm frustrated, I give up.
- I want to challenge myself..... I don't like to be challenged.
- When I fail, I learn..... When I fail, I'm no good.
- I learn from criticism and follow advice..... I ignore criticism or advice.
- I like to be told that I'm trying hard..... I like to be told that I am clever.
- If you succeed, I'm inspired..... If you succeed, I'm threatened.
- My effort and attitude determine everything..... My abilities determine everything.



Dr Carol Dweck's, "Mindset: 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.

FIXED GROWTH



A Few Tips for Cultivating a Growth Mindset at Home.

- 1) Help children reconnect with a time when they learned something new that was a stretch or a challenge.**
 - Point out the development nature of “getting good at something” – we all go through the process of making a lot of mistakes, practicing and then getting better.
- 2) Help children get curious about mistakes.**
 - Help them reframe a mistake as new information or as a step in the process of learning. In addition, help them incorporate self-correction in their own language process.
- 3) Help children learn to hear their own fixed mind-set “voice”.**
 - Capture and, in a gentle and appropriate way, share their own statements with them. Most children are unaware of this self-talk because it has gone on so long and is subliminal.
 - That guy is brilliant; he never tries and he gets it.
 - I got it wrong again, I’ll never get this.
- 4) Help children talk back to negative self-talk with a growth mindset voice (i.e. give them a language).**
 - I am willing to learn new skills to improve and I know it will be hard at times.
 - I get better and better with practice; this is hard but will get easier.
 - Practice makes permanent.
- 5) Model growth mind-set at the table.**
 - *At dinner: Tell your child about a time when you didn’t know the answer to a recent question. Who did you ask for help? How did you learn the answer?*
 - *At breakfast: Ask questions about their opportunities for learning and growth in the coming day or week. What questions do they need answers to? What do they want to learn, practice and/or get better at today/this week?*
- 6) Avoid labels and give growth mind-set praise.**
 - Don’t label yourself in ways that model a “fixed mind-set” (e.g. I’m a terrible cook.... I was never good at maths”.)
 - Shift your child’s attention to a process that leads to outcome. (i.e. cause-effect).
 - Praise and value effort, practice, self-correction and persistence.
 - Don’t shelter your child from a **failed** task. Ask “What can you learn from this experience? What could you try differently the next time?”
- 7) Get curious about your child’s work through questioning.**
 - How did you figure that out? What’s another way you could have done that? How many times did you try before it turned out that way? What here was challenging and how did you figure it out? What do you plan to do next time?