

# *The Science of Leveraging a* **Growth Mindset**

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## **What Leads to Success**

- A lot of people think ability works like a DNA lottery.
- The single most powerful factor in being more successful in achieving any goal is the mindset you bring.
- Your mindset is the deeper narrative behind the thing that you're doing.

## **A Fixed Mindset (5:00)**

- When you're operating from a fixed mindset, you think the point of what you're doing is to prove your ability.
- When we think this way, we're focused on comparing ourselves to others.
- The problem with this mindset is that it makes us very vulnerable when things don't go well.
- When things are harder than you thought they would be, you immediately begin to doubt your ability.
- When that happens, we get anxious, which undermines our performance.
- If that happens enough times, we begin to feel helpless and we close off whole areas that we might have been successful in.
- The fixed mindset sets us up to feel a sense of failure when things are challenging.

## **A Growth Mindset (7:22)**

- A growth mindset is not about proving your ability but improving your ability.
- When we think this way, we are trying to develop our skills rather than demonstrate them.
- We focus less on how we're doing compared to other people, and more on how we're doing today compared to how we did in the past.

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- A growth mindset has many benefits:
  - Interest and enjoyment
  - Smart risks
  - Deeper thinking
  - Creativity
  - Persistence and resilience
- Growth mindset is one of the strongest predictors of performance that has ever been studied.

## **Error and the Brain (10:00)**

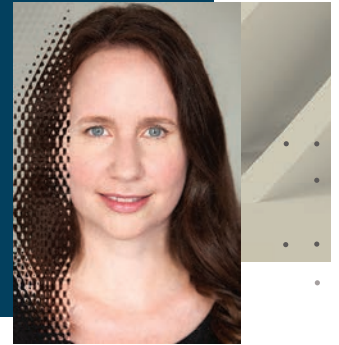
- Growth mindset helps us learn from mistakes.
- When in a fixed mindset, it's functionally impossible to learn from mistakes.
- With a growth mindset, there is less brain activity associated with negative emotion, and more activity associated with long-term learning.

## **Notice, then Shift (11:19)**

- Notice when you're operating with a fixed mindset.
- Signs include feelings of anxiety, frustration, dejection, or helplessness.
- Notice when you say things like:
  - "I'm not good at this."
  - "I don't think I can..."
  - "This isn't easy for me."

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- Shift and reorient yourself to your growth mindset.
  - Add the word “yet” as in “I’m not good at this yet.”
  - Tell yourself it’s not about being good, it’s about getting better.
  - Ask, “What am I going to do next?”
- The way to create a new habit is to repeat something.

## **Change Your Language (17:26)**

- Pay attention to the words you use when you set goals for yourself.
- Find ways to incorporate growth mindset priming words:
  - Grow
  - Progress
  - Improve
  - Become
  - Develop
  - Over time
- Don’t make your goals pass/fail.
  - Not “I want to **have** healthy habits” but “I want to **develop** healthy habit.”
  - Not “I want to **be** a successful leader” but “I want to **become** a successful leader.”
- When people operate with a growth mindset, they set more challenging goals for themselves, not less.
- Describing things as a journey is not only more accurate but reinforces the growth mindset.

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## **Focus on Progress (20:02)**

- People tend to think only about what's happening now.
- Instead, use the rule of three:
  - Where **were** you?
  - Where **are** you now?
  - Where do you **want to be**?
- Use this when giving feedback.

## **Encouraging a Growth Mindset in Others (22:10)**

- A growth mindset is contagious.
- Growth mindsets can be fragile.
- Nobody needs a growth mindset more than a leader.
- Draw attention to your mistakes.
- Share stories of your past challenges.
- Focus on rewarding progress and persistence.