

This article by Carol Dweck explores why people are successful or not and what is within our control in order to foster that success. She made a series of studies on the subject and found that there were two different types of mindsets that influence everything we do. The fixed mindset wants to prove that they are correct all the time without embracing failure while the growth mindset is the opposite, creating a powerful passion for the process of learning and challenging ourselves. We are able to develop abilities with the latter because it allows us to engage deeply with an error we commit and it eventually leads to correcting and learning about it. When we understand something that was previously unknown to us, our brain activity is stimulated which allows for stronger connections between the neurons as well as brand new links between them. So, by going out of our comfort zone and staying in the courage zone and embracing that fear of not knowing, it allows people to thrive when they are going through challenging times in their lives. This effort to learn and grow that converts life's setback into future successes; perseverance and resilience help us move forward from our mistakes.

I believe I already apply the concepts of this reading, I am eager to take challenges and get out of my comfort zone in order to challenge myself on a daily basis, because I noticed that the more you become accustomed to being on the Courage Zone, the less afraid you are of it.

Based on my experiences in school, I believe I was raised with a growth mindset since my younger brother also thinks in this way. However, I noticed that my elder brother has a very fixed mindset, so I am unsure if the mindset came from the education we were given at home or if it was a personal choice that my younger brother and I took further down the road. All of us have studied in many different schools that employed distinct methods for teaching (traditional, Montessori, Lozanov...) so it could have been that we picked it up from one of them and my elder brother did not since he was older when we switched to the less traditional ones.

I definitely agree with Dweck's theory, I believe that the growth mindset is a pathway to success, since it pushes you to get out of your comfort zone. It allows you to fail, while the fixed mindset does not; failure is inevitable, so I think it is better to learn from it, than to abstain ourselves from doing something just because we are afraid of being defeated. I think that if everyone was taught the growth mindset in school (or at home) many aspects of our lives would benefit from it. People would not be so terrified of failing. Maybe some would not even drop out of school. I think teamwork would also function better because everyone is trying their best and actually engaging with the material they are given.

Mariel De La Luz Perez Ortiz

I definitely agree with you on the Courage Zone aspect. Personally, I like to be in control of most things in my life and I think it is a skill to be comfortable with the uncomfortable (I am working on it).

It is interesting how you and your siblings have different mindsets. My parents never really agreed with the way that my high school put extreme pressure and competition on students and therefore focused on practical skills. They created a safe environment where failing was accepted and that a mistake is something to be learned from. I agree with the statement encouraging learning experience.

My Reply

Both the TED Talk and the article spoke about the notion of two mindsets: fixed vs. growth. Carol Dweck emphasizes the importance and positive results of having a growth mindset, using the support of several studies as evidence. She explains the different consequences of thinking that your intelligence or personality is something that is a "fixed, deep-seated trait", which often manifests itself as people who want to prove themselves right instead of seeking to learn from their own mistakes. Dweck connects this idea to the power of the "yet" instead of the "now". She explains the importance of process rather than immediate reward, which would lead to the understanding of development and growth rather than frustration and close-mindedness.

Moreover, further analyzing the strategies Dweck proposes, I think I was raised on both. At home, my parents always encouraged me to be driven by curiosity on the notion that there is always more to learn. They exposed me to different ideas and concepts throughout my life in order to form a well-rounded mindset. While at the same time, always pushing me to try harder, think differently, and find other ways if I've failed. At school, however, I think a fixed mindset was brought forward most of the time. Aside from a few exceptions, which I can clearly remember, most of my education was based on the outcome - which came in the form of a letter grade - rather than on the process of getting there. I remember teachers who simply taught for positive results on a test, which essentially signaled your worth as a student. Now that I think about it, the best teachers I had were always those that encouraged the qualities of a growth mindset. The teachers that emphasized that they didn't care for grades were the ones that I learned from the most and the ones that put the most effort on really getting students to be challenged and truly expand their minds.

To me, the idea of a growth mindset is extremely important. I actually think it can be very dangerous when people are so set to their core beliefs and fail to see and understand the other side of things. It is that type of mindset that leads to great political divisiveness, for example. If you don't have a growth mindset, then you base yourself on ignorance because such unwillingness to expand your intelligence or adapt your personality hinders your evolution as a person. As humans, we are constantly changing as we become informed from our experiences, challenges, failures, and successes. I think about how much I have changed throughout the years and how differently I think because I have learned from such experiences, which have taught me

so much. Failing to engage in this process of adaptation and advancement leaves you stagnant in your life, unable to move forward.

Once again, the concept of pushing out of our comfort zone comes forward. This concept is definitely something that I can continue to apply in my own life. Bringing myself to learn something new and difficult, as well as maintaining a curiosity in life, can lead me in many different paths. I also think that I need to apply the importance of focusing on process more – instead of simply caring about the result. As, sometimes, this can teach you more than you think.

Valentina Picco

I relate to the experiences you talk about in high school. I think that the process should be celebrated because I have learned more when I was challenged to try different methods and explore further.

I definitely agree with your assessment of a fixed mindset being dangerous because people don't learn the other side of the debate. If people are exposed to more than just their opinion, they will grow and engage better.

My Reply