

Fixed Mind-set vs. Growth Mind-set

Think about the last time you “failed” at something. What did you say to yourself? What are some of the things you said or thought? Record them here.

If some of your answers were similar to “I can’t do this” or “I suck at this,” or “I guess I am not a math person [insert here any subject],” you might be showing signs of a “fixed mind-set.” Fixed mind-set believes that people are inherently born with certain talents and gifts, and the mind-set lends to give excuses for not succeeding.

If some of your answers were similar to “This is just a test, and I need to change how I study” or “I can do this with more practice,” then you might be showing signs of a “growth mind-set.” Growth mind-set believes that people are not fixed in their intelligence and people can learn what they need to know as they progress forward.

Carol Dweck is instrumental in this theory of mind-sets. Mind-set has been shown to have an effect on how a person decides he or she is capable of learning and whether or not he or she will pursue learning.

You can choose which mind-set you will veer toward in how you react to challenges.

http://www.qedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/dweck_mindset.png

The link above takes you to a great illustration of the difference between a Fixed Mind-Set and a Growth Mind-Set based on Dweck’s theories of mind-sets.

For a great exploration of how to use various strategies to learn and master any subject, check out Sandra McGuire and Stephanie McGuire’s book,

Teach Yourself How to Learn: Strategies You Can Use to Ace Any Course at Any Level.

You can check this book out from the library or through interlibrary loan. If you like, you can even buy a copy.

This book can serve as a primer on techniques you can adapt to master a growth mind-set.