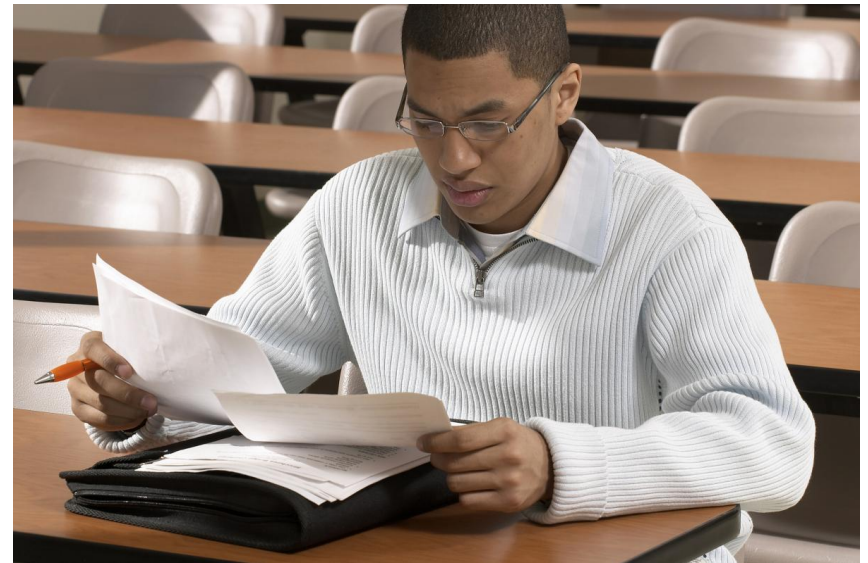# Developing a Growth Mindset and Improving Assertive Communication

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October 25, 2013

Outline

- *A growth mindset*
  - Carol Dweck
  - Historical Context and Roots
  - Research Beginnings
  - Importance of Praise?
  - Stereotypes
- Fostering a Growth Mindset
- Questions and Comments

Spelling Challenge Exercise

- Spelling Bee and self-observations
- Create 4 columns titled:
  - Word
  - Thought
  - Correct
  - Thought
- Spell the word I say
- Then write your inner dialog (brief)

Spelling Bee Words

- **Havoc**
- **Palace**
- **Alignment**
- **Tenor**
- **Loquacious**
- **Acquiesce**
- **Recalcitrant**

Are people born intelligent? Athletic? High achieving? Talented?...
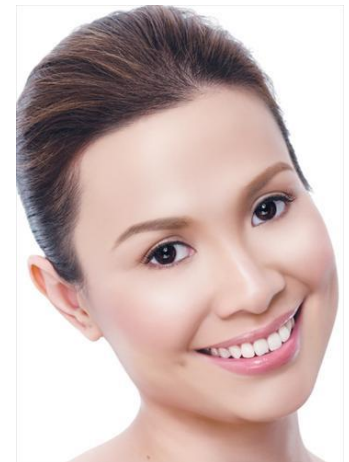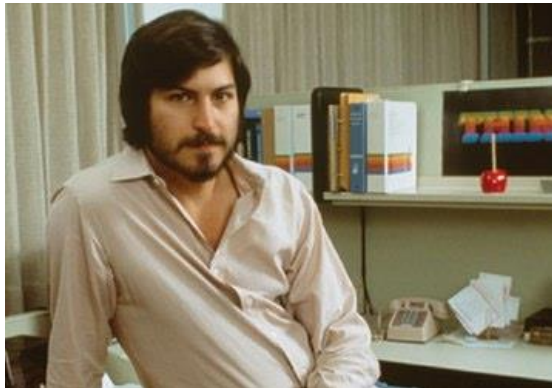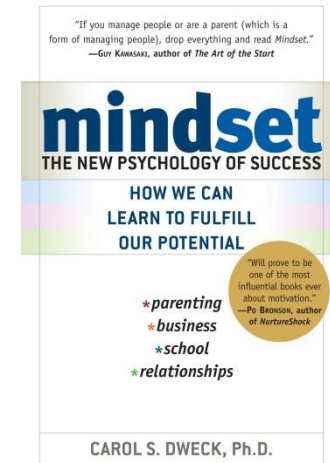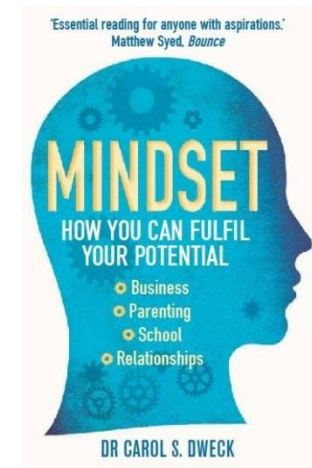
How much control do we have over our potential for growth?

Carol Dweck, PhD

- Developmental, Social, and Personality

- Stanford University

- Mindsets
  - ◦ Lay beliefs (or implicit theories) about the nature of human attributes
  - ◦ She studies their impact on achievement and interpersonal processes

Dweck on the "extent of the problem"

- "I have had surprises. The biggest surprise has been learning the *extent of the problem*—how fragile and frightened children and young adults are today (while often acting knowing and entitled)… Coaches have complained to me that many of their athletes can't take constructive feedback without experiencing it as a blow to their self-esteem. I have read in the news, story after story, how young workers can hardly get through the day without constant praise and perhaps an award. I see in my own students the fear of participating in class and making a mistake or looking foolish. Parents and educators tried to give these kids self-esteem on a silver platter, but instead seem to have created a generation of very vulnerable people. My hope is that my work can help to reverse this trend"

From an interview with "Highlights Magazine" (n.d.):
http://www.highlightsparents.com/parenting_perspectives/interview_with_dr_carol_dweck_developing_a_growth_mindset

Trophy	Ribbon

Echoing Dweck's Concern

Millennials are truly "trophy kids," the pride and joy of their parents. The millennials were lavishly praised and often received trophies when they excelled, and sometimes when they didn't, to avoid damaging their self-esteem… "Their attitude is always 'What are you going to give me,' " says Natalie Griffith, manager of human-resource programs at Eaton Corp. "It's not necessarily arrogance; it's simply their <u>mindset</u>."
(Alsop, WSJ, 2008, paras. 9-10)

The Historical Context & Roots of a Growth Mindset

- Theories of motivation
  - Instincts, drive-reduction, arousal, incentive
- Social learning theory & the social cognitive movement
  - Ex: Bandura—modeling and self-efficacy
- <u>Nurture</u> over nature
  - Ex: Brain plasticity, personality change, environmental influences on IQ

Growth Mindset: The Beginnings
(Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980)

- Middle school age children in laboratory setting
- Method
  - Categorized as mastery-oriented or helpless

Growth Mindset: The Beginnings
(Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980) continued

- Categorization
  - ◦ Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale (Crandall et al., 1965)
  - ◦ Similar to the following questions:

1. You have a certain amount of intelligence, and you can't really do much to change it.
2. Your intelligence is something about you that you can't change very much.
3. No matter who you are, you can significantly change your intelligence level.

- Scale: 1-*strongly agree* to 6-*strongly disagree*

Questions from Dweck (2006) http://mindsetonline.com/testyourmindset/step1.php

Growth Mindset: The Beginnings
(Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980) continued

- Middle school age children in laboratory setting
- Method
  - Categorized as mastery-oriented or helpless
  - Learning task that became increasing difficult
  - At failure, children verbalized thoughts, feelings, & strategies

Growth Mindset: The Beginnings
(Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980) continued

- Results
  - Helpless children
    - Negative self-cognitions
    - Negative affect
    - Task-irrelevant verbalizations (self-aggrandizing)
      - "There is a talent show this weekend, I am going to be Shirley Temple"
    - Decreased performance
  - Mastery-oriented children
    - Perceived challenges to be solvable
    - Greater sustained effort and concentration
      - "The harder it gets, the harder I need to try"
    - Optimism and positive affect
      - "I did it before, I can do it again"

Identifying Mindsets: Growth & Fixed
(Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988)

Fixed

Growth

Table 1
Achievement Goals and Achievement Behavior

Theory of intelligence	Goal orientation	Confidence in present ability	Behavior pattern
Entity theory (Intelligence is fixed)	⟶ **Performance goal** (Goal is to gain positive judgments/avoid negative judgments of competence)	If high ⟶ but	**Mastery-oriented** Seek challenge High persistence
		If low ⟶	**Helpless** Avoid challenge Low persistence
Incremental theory (Intelligence is malleable)	⟶ **Learning goal** (Goal is to increase competence)	If high or low	**Mastery-oriented** Seek challenge (that fosters learning) High persistence

Defining Mindsets

- Growth
  - Embrace challenges
  - Negative feedback (isn't permanent ability) → maintaining self-esteem
  - Intrinsic
  - Brian : muscle
 - "Beautiful Oops" by Barney Saltzberg

- Fixed
  - Dread failure
  - Negative feedback (may confirm inability or incompetence) → low self-esteem
  - Extrinsic
  - Brain ≠ muscle

Exercise: Your Mindsets

- When do you practice a growth mindset? a fixed mindset?

- How do these experiences differ for you?

- Record your thoughts and feelings in each case.

- Work in pairs and share your different experiences

- Brief group discussion

The Importance of Praise

- The self-esteem movement
  - Influenced the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of teachers and parents.
    - More than 80% of American parents think it's important to praise their children's ability in order to foster confidence and achievement.
  - The implications…
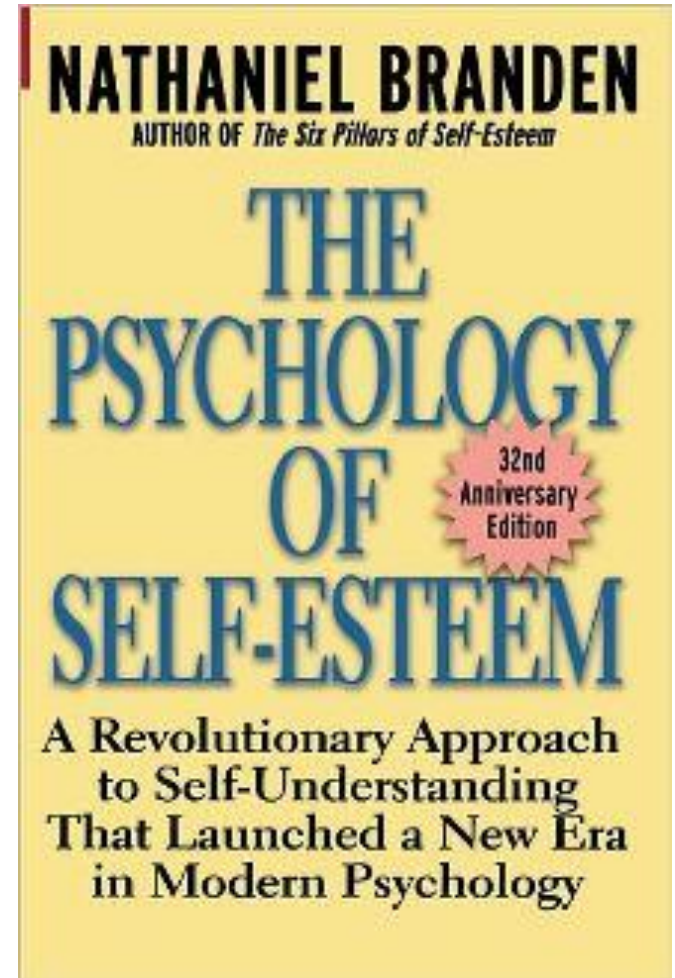
First published in 1969

The Problem with Praise
(Mueller & Dweck, 1998)

- Praise for intelligence →
  - performance goals →
    - <u>fixed mindset</u>

- Praise for effort →
  - learning goals →
    - <u>growth mindset</u>

Dweck on Praise

- "When you give children easy tasks and praise them to the skies for their success, they come to think that your love and respect depend on their doing things quickly and easily"

Mindsets in Intercultural Relations

- Background: Foundational research on stereotypes
  - Contact theory (Allport, 1954)
    - Reduction of prejudice and stereotyping through intergroup contact
    - Requires:
      - Equal status, support from authorities, common goals, coopera~
    - Current support
      - See meta-analysis by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006)

  - However…
    - "merely exposing someone to stereotype-inconsistent information may not necessarily lead to a decrease in stereotyping" (Plaks et al., 2001, p. 876)

Mindsets in Intercultural Relations

(Plaks et al, 2001)

- Fixed mindsets →
  - Rapid trait-based judgments about others
  - Stereotypes persist
- Growth mindsets →
  - Considers the situation and psych processes of others
  - Less labeling
  - More open to new information

Mindsets in Intercultural Relations
(Dweck, 2012)

- ◦ White adult sample
- ◦ In mixed-race interactions, teaching a growth mindset led to
  - • Decreased anxiety (self-report)
  - • Decreased physiological arousal (HR)
  - • Increased friendliness (chair spacing)
- • Conclusion:
  - ◦ A person's theory about prejudice matters, not just prejudice itself

  - ◦ Confronting prejudice (Rattan & Dweck, 2012)
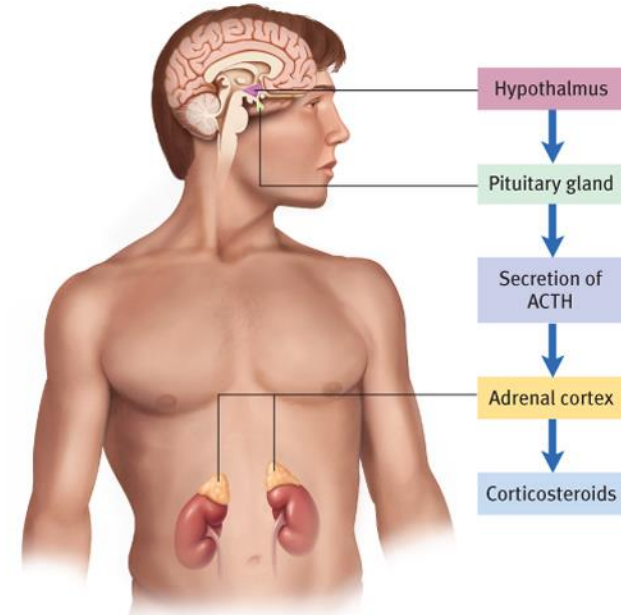
FOSTERING A GROWTH MINDSET AT CAL MARITIME

Personal TQM Exercise

- Read the Reflection box on p. 204
- Identify 1 or 2 areas for growth.
- Share this with your partner and help your partner identify concrete steps to take toward making these changes

Growth Mindset: Summary

- A <u>transformative</u> psychological construct...

- with <u>implications</u> for academic achievement and positive intercultural relations…

- that <u>support the missions</u> of Cal Maritime and your Personal TQM

Questions and Comments

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THANK YOU

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