

7.1: Growth Mindset

In the first set of chapters, when we learned about descriptive statistics, some examples and data sets were based on academics and ways to be better students (remember Dr. Chew's videos?). In this next set of chapters we'll focus on a specific idea that can help you succeed: growth mindset.

Growth Mindset

Dr. Carol Dweck described mindset as the way that we approach learning and finding solutions (Dweck, 2006) in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*.

Growth mindset is when people realize that there are many good ways to find solutions, and that you can always learn more and become better. According to Dweck's research, if you keep trying new solutions, and learn from your "mistakes," you will improve. On the opposite side, *fixed mindset* is when people assume that everyone only has a specific amount of talent or ability, and that there's only one "best way" to accomplish tasks. There is a lot more research showing that growth mindset leads to academic success, and explains some of the reasons why that's true, at the [science section of the growth mindset website](#) called MindsetWorks.com.

This concept of growth and fixed mindset has real-world consequences for learning. For example, Cimpian, Arce, Markman, and Dweck (2007) found that young children who were told that they "did a good job drawing" (growth mindset: focus on effort) were happier and more likely to choose to draw than students who were told that they were "good drawers" (fixed mindset: focus on inherent ability). Similarly, Mueller and Dweck (1998) also found that children whose effort was praised valued learning more than those children who were praised based on their intelligence.

Note

How can knowing about growth mindset help you succeed in this class?

As we move back into understanding new concepts, and move away from the math and numbers for a bit, continue to think about what you are doing that is helping you learn, and what other study strategies you can use to do even better!

References

Cimpian, A., Arce, H-M. C., Markman, E. M., & Dweck, C. S. (2007). Subtle linguistic cues affect children's motivation. *Psychology Science*, 18(4), 314-316.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House.

Mueller, C. M. & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(1), 33-52.

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