MINDSET MATTERS

WHAT TRAITS ARE CHILDREN BORN WITH?

- The Drive to Help (Altruism)
- The Drive to Master
- Problem-Solving
- Social Connection
- Instinctive Optimism
- Intrinsic Motivation
- The Drive to Acquire Knowledge & Develop Intelligence

WE DON’T SEE UNMOTIVATED BABIES.

BABIES ARE ENGAGED LEARNERS.

WHAT HAPPENS?

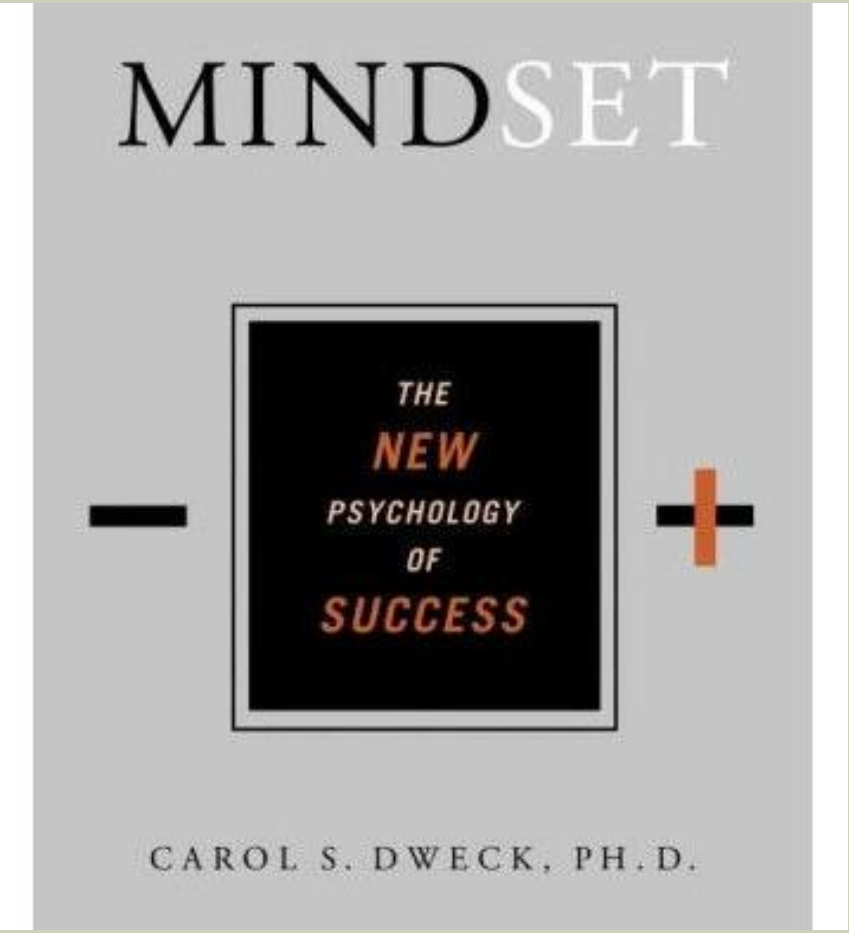
THE ANSWER:

- MANY OF THE THINGS ADULTS DO TO HELP AND TO MOTIVATE OUR CHILDREN CONSPIRE TO HELP THEM BECOME NON-LEARNERS!

SOMETIMES WE PUT TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON:

- Labels
- Test scores
- Getting into the right schools

DR. CAROL DWECK
STANFORD UNIVERSITY



WHERE THE RESEARCH BEGAN…

- Carol Dweck has done research over the last 30 years with children and young adults in the USA
- She is particularly interested in how students view themselves as learners
- Their self-theory is likely to have a major effect on their self-belief, their motivation to learn and their resilience
- Carol Dweck's Self-Theories
  - Their Role in Motivation, Personality & Development (Psychology Press, 1999)

4 THINGS YOU PROBABLY BELIEVE ABOUT MINDSET:

1. **Belief**: Children with high ability are more likely to display a growth mindset

   Truth:

   - You might think that students who were highly skilled would be the ones to relish a challenge and persevere in the face of setbacks. Instead, many of these students are the most worried about failure, and the most likely to question their ability and to wilt when they hit obstacles (Leggett)

4 THINGS YOU PROBABLY BELIEVE ABOUT MINDSET:

2. **Belief**: Success in school or in life directly fosters a growth mindset.

Truth: You might also think that when students succeed, they are emboldened and energized to seek out more challenging tasks. The truth is that success in itself does little to boost children's desire for challenge or their ability to cope with setbacks. In fact we can see that it can have quite the opposite effect. (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980)

4 THINGS YOU PROBABLY BELIEVE ABOUT MINDSET:

3. **Belief**: Praise, particularly praising a student's intelligence, encourages mastery-oriented qualities (growth mindset).

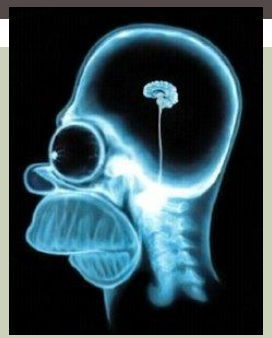
Truth: This is a most cherished belief in our society. One can hardly walk down the street without hearing parents telling their children how smart they are. The hope is that such praise will instill confidence and thereby promote a host of desirable qualities. Instead, this type of praise can lead children to fear failure, avoid risks, doubt themselves when they fail and cope poorly with setbacks. (Mueller & Dweck, 1998)

4 THINGS YOU PROBABLY BELIEVE ABOUT MINDSET:

4. **Belief**: A child's confidence in his/her intelligence is the key to mastery-oriented qualities (growth mindset).

Truth: It seems only logical to assume that children who have confidence in their intelligence—who clearly believe they are smart—would have nothing to fear from challenge and would be resilient. But many of the most confident individuals do not want their intelligence too stringently tested, and their high confidence is all too quickly shaken when they encounter difficulty. (Henderson & Dweck, 1990; Dweck & Lin, 1998)

DWECK'S FINDINGS: TWO MINDSETS



Fixed mindset:

- ✧Intelligence and talent – fixed
- ✧Innate talent creates success
- ✧ Effort will not make a difference
- ✧You either get it or you don't

Growth mindset:

- ❖ Intelligence can be developed
- ❖ Brains and talent are just the starting point
- ❖ Enjoy effort and process of learning
- ❖ You can <u>always</u> grow and learn

For those with a....	Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Intelligence is...	*immutable; given by genetics, chance, or God*	*mutable and can be developed, improved, and expanded.*
Life is...	*a test where we have to PROVE ourselves.*	*a journey where we get to IMPROVE ourselves.*
The primary concern is...	*managing others' impressions.*	*exploring one's own curiosity.*
Failure...	*demonstrates a lack of ability, unworthiness.*	*presents an opportunity for feedback.*
Challenge...	*generates fear.*	*creates excitement, eagerness for learning.*
Effort...	*shouldn't be needed.*	*is THE key to improving ourselves.*
Others' success...	*diminishes, exposes, or shames.*	*lifts up, offers a chance to learn and grow from greatness.*
The end result is...	*an early plateau, never reaching one's potential.*	*ever higher levels of achievement and a greater sense of personal agency.*

Changing Our Mindset

Carol Dweck, world-renowned Stanford University psychologist, talks about the power of our mindset or our beliefs (especially around challenge). We can either have a Fixed Mindset where we let failure (or even success) define who we are, or a Growth Mindset where we see setbacks as opportunities to grow and improve ourselves. Just like how we learned how to walk… there are many stumbles along the way, but to reach our potential and live the life we desire, it takes practice and perseverance. We always have a choice about which view we adopt for ourselves… and it's never too late to change. What's your view?

It's up to you!	FIXED MINDSET Belief that my intelligence, personality and character are carved in stone; my potential is determined at birth	GROWTH MINDSET Belief that my intelligence, personality and character can be developed! A person's true potential is unknown (and unknowable).
DESIRE	Look smart in every situation and prove myself over and over again. Never fail!!	Stretch myself, take risks and learn. Bring on the challenges!
EVALUATION OF SITUATIONS	Will I succeed or fail? Will I look smart or dumb?	Will this allow me to grow? Will this help me overcome some of my challenges?
DEALING WITH SETBACKS	"I'm a failure" (identity) "I'm an idiot"	"I failed" (action) "I'll try harder next time"
CHALLENGES	Avoid challenges, get defensive or give up easily.	Embrace challenges, persist in the face of setbacks.
EFFORT	Why bother? It's not going to change anything.	Growth and learning require effort.
CRITICISM	Ignore constructive criticism.	Learn from criticism. How can I improve?
SUCCESS OF OTHERS	Feel threatened by the success of others. If you succeed, then I fail.	Finds lessons & inspiration in other people's success.
RESULT…	Plateau early, achieve less than my full potential.	Reach ever-higher levels of achievement.

FIXED MINDSET RESPONSE: HELPLESS

When faced with failure or challenge, people with a FIXED mindset:

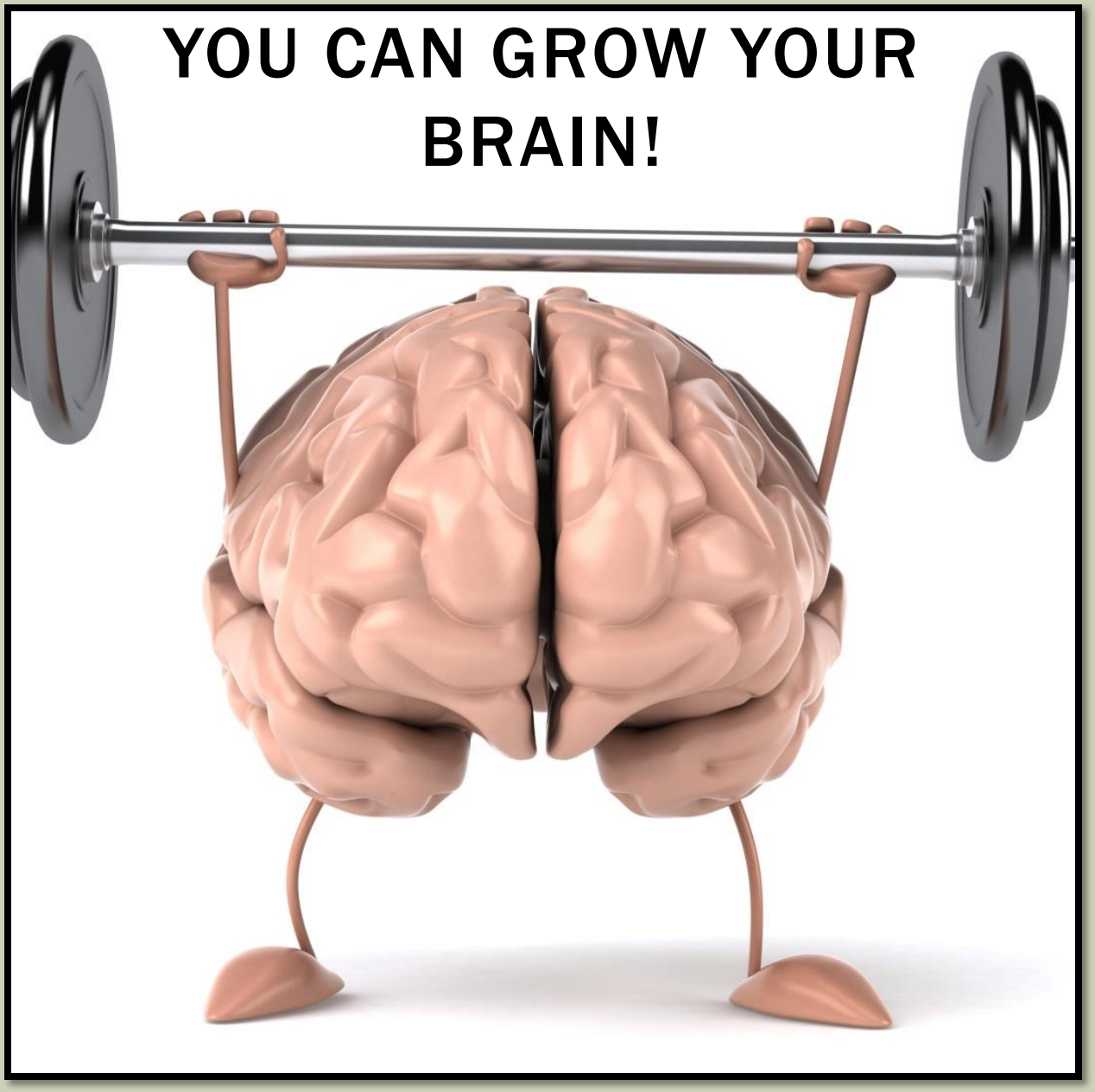
- Do not pay attention to learning information
- Get depressed, lose self-esteem
- Say to themselves 'I am stupid', they'll think…
- Forget past successes and focus on failures (I never do things right
- Explain the cause of events as something permanent about them. (I am ALWAYS this way!)

“The fixed mindset provides no good recipe for recovering from setbacks…” --Carol Dweck

GROWTH MINDSET RESPONSE: MASTERY

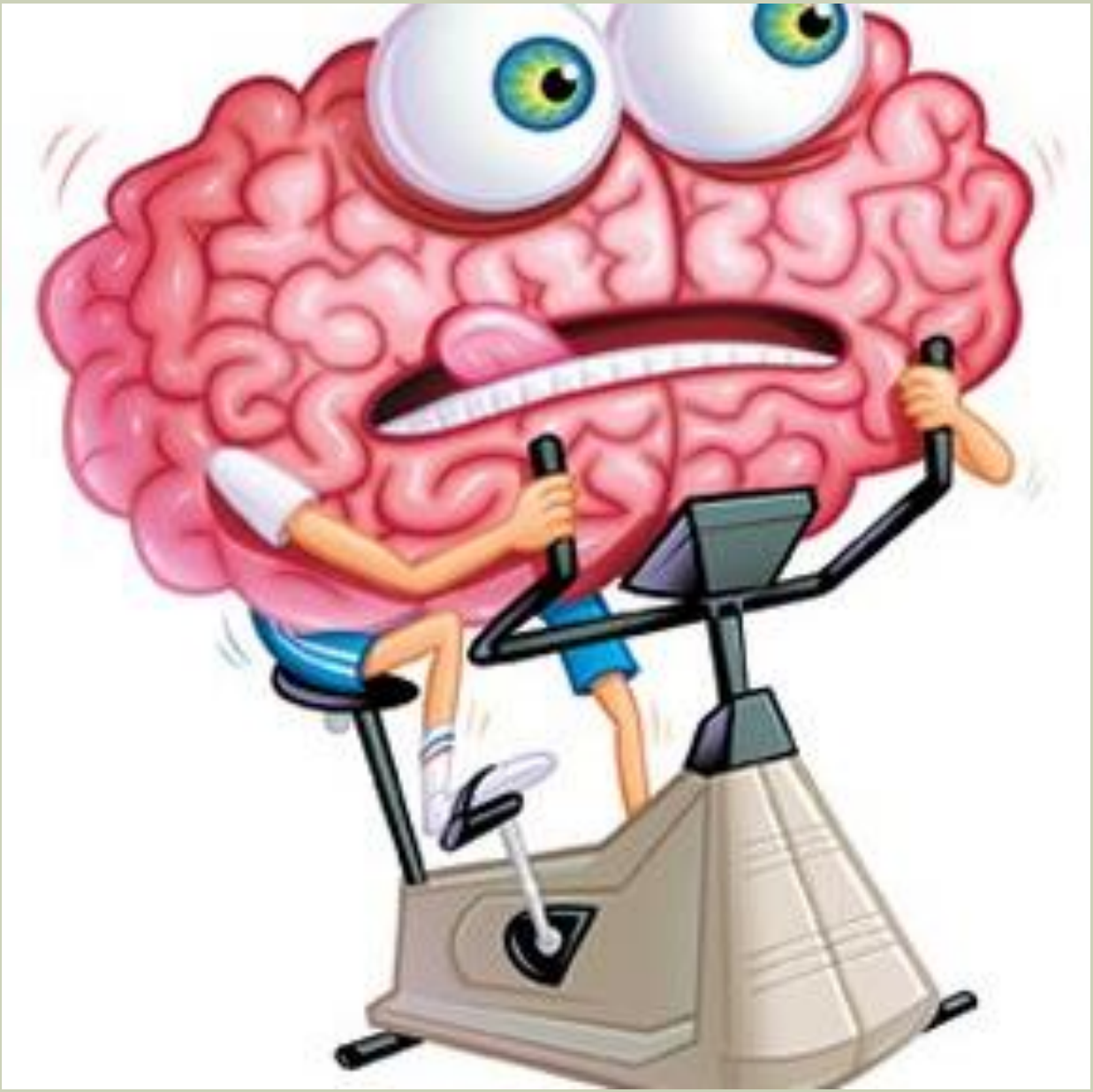
When faced with failure or challenge, people with a GROWTH mindset:

- Pay attention to learning information, thus do better on future tests.
- Focus on what they are learning, rather than focusing on how they feel.
- Try out new ways of doing things.
- Use self-motivating statements such as ‘ the harder it gets the harder I try’.
- When faced with tests which are impossible to pass they will factor in other reasons and not blame their intellect i.e. this test was beyond my ability for now.



The growth mindset confirms the new research which reveals *that* *<u>intelligence can be developed</u>*, and expertise can be built by means of deliberate practice."

EFFORT IS ESSENTIAL



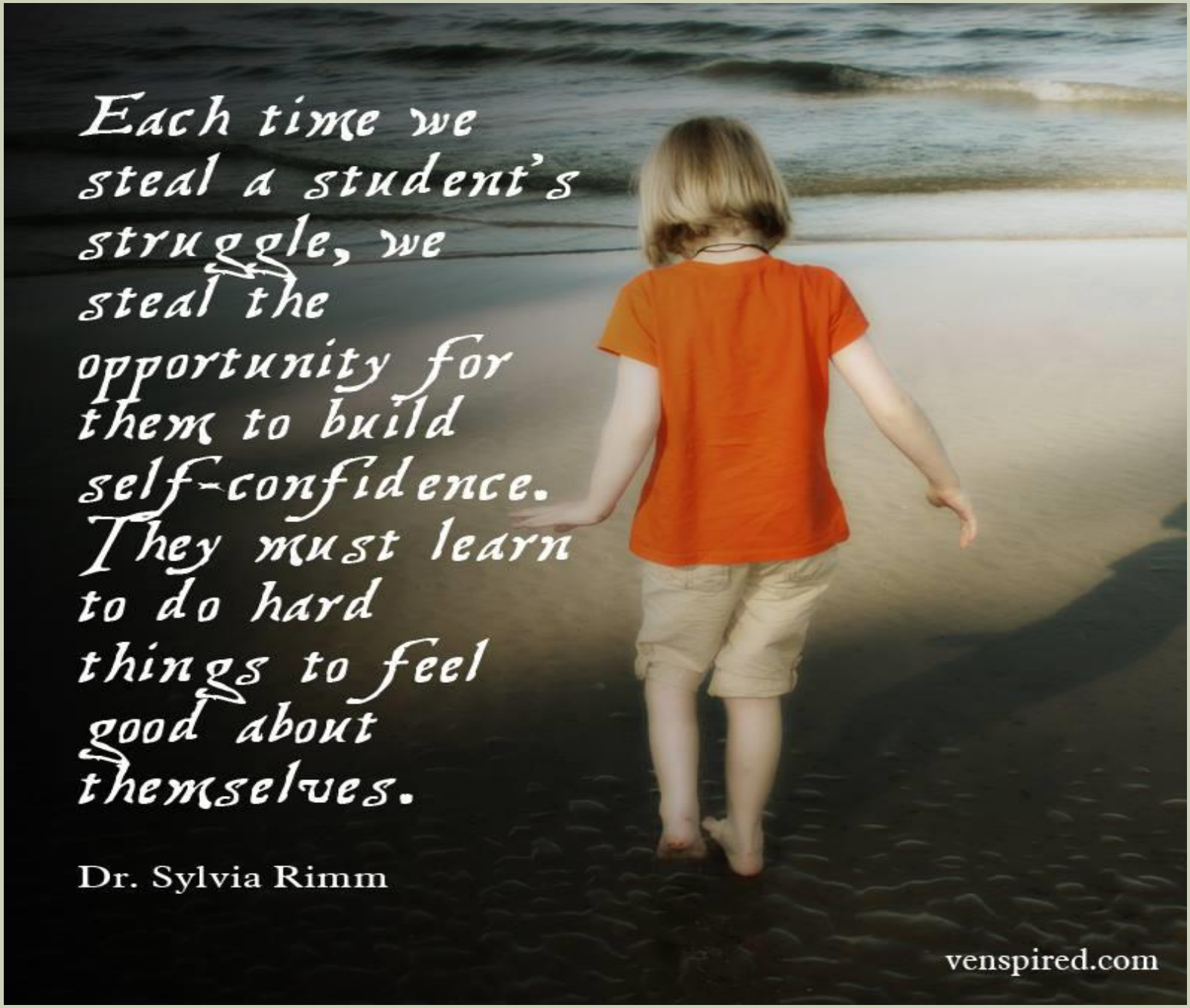
Brains Don't Grow Neural Connections Magically; They Grow Them By Hard Work and Not Giving Up!

THE BRAIN AND LEARNING:

- In the classroom, the more ways the content is introduced to the brain and reviewed, the more dendritic pathways of access will be created. There will be more cell-to-cell bridges and these pathways will be used more often, become stronger and remain safe from pruning.

--Dr. Judy Willis, Neurologist, 2006.

FROM NEUROSCIENCE WE KNOW THAT:


Each time we steal a student's struggle, we steal the opportunity for them to build self-confidence. They must learn to do hard things to feel good about themselves.
Dr. Sylvia Rimm
venspired.com

LET THEM STRUGGLE

"Do not handicap your children by making their lives easy."

–Robert A. Heinlein

EXAMPLES OF PROCESS PRAISE TO FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Studying:

- You really studied for your English test and your improvement shows it.
- You read the material over several times, you picked out the main points, and you tested yourself on them. It really worked!

Persistence:

- It was a long and hard assignment, but you stuck to it until you got it done.
- That was really hard, but you never gave up! That's impressive!

EXAMPLES OF PROCESS PRAISE TO FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Trying Many Strategies

- I like the way you tried all kinds of strategies on that math problem until you finally got it.
- You thought of a lot of different ways to do this problem and found the one that worked!
- That didn't work. Can you think of another way to do it? Great!

For Challenge Seeking

- I like that you took on that challenging project for your science class.
- Great choice. That project will take a lot of work—but you're really going to learn a lot of wonderful things.

COMPARE:

- “You did that project beautifully. You see, you *are* smart. I’m proud of you”
- “You did that project beautifully. Your practice and hard work really paid off. Are you pleased?”

LOW EFFORT SUCCESS RESPONSE:

- You got an A without working. You must not be learning much.
- You did that so quickly and easily. I’m sorry I wasted your time. Let’s do something you can learn from.

COMMUNICATING A GROWTH MINDSET

For Communicating High Expectations

- I ***know*** that you (all) have the ability to do this, so I have set the bar high.
- This will be a challenging concept to learn, but all of us can reach the goal.
- Be sure to communicate with me about your progress so I can provide support to you.
- I am going to push you all because I know if I do you will all do amazing work!
- Our classroom is a place for everyone to learn challenging material. I am here to help you meet that goal.
- This is challenging, but rewarding!
- This may be difficult right now, but you will remember it for the rest of your life.
- When you master this learning, you can be proud because this isn't easy.
- Here is my challenge for you. I know you can meet it. I want you to challenge yourself.
- As you learn this, mistakes are expected. Your mistakes help me support you. Let's make mistakes together!
- I have seen you stretch and succeed in the past. Let's do it again.

For Communicating a Learning Goal

- New material is an opportunity to stretch!
- Today's learning objective will give everyone an opportunity to stretch.
- Today, your brain will get stronger.
- I am hoping that you all do not know this already; I wouldn't want to waste your time!
- I really want us to stretch beyond our comfort zone on this!
- After you do this, I'm going to ask everyone to share one mistake so we can learn from it.
- I'd like everyone to share one thing that is really confusing with their partner.
- The point of the lesson is learning; I want to know what parts are unclear so we can all meet our learning target.
- Today's target for learning is ___. By tomorrow our goal is ___.
- I do not expect you to know this already. I am here to help you learn challenging material.
- Today, I want you to challenge yourself. Stretch to learn this challenging material.
- This is very dense reading/challenging material. I am not going to hold you accountable for understanding all of it right away, but I want you to give it a first try.
- This is just the first draft—you'll have lots of chance to improve it.
- I want you to push yourselves to tackle this concept.
- You won't be graded on this—it's a risk-free zone!
- We're in the learning zone today. Mistakes are our friends!

RESILIENCY 101

- Simply put, the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines resilience as "an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change."
- Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone."

SOME REASONS GIFTED KIDS AVOID TAKING RISKS:

1. Perfectionism (Healthy, Paralytic, Neurotic)
2. Heightened sensitivities
3. Defining self by ability
4. Previous failures in social situations

THE EXPERIENCE OF FAILURE ITSELF IS NOT HELPFUL. WHAT MATTERS IS WHAT THE CHILD LEARNS FROM IT.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOUR GIFTED CHILD DEVELOP RESILIENCY?

- Encourage your child to take academic risks (Don't let your child settle for shortcuts, or lavish praise over accomplishments that come too easily)
- Distinguish between process and outcome (Your child's job is to take on challenges he or she has not already mastered. Let your child know that you care as much about how he or she approaches learning as what is produced)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOUR GIFTED CHILD DEVELOP RESILIENCY?

- Teach coping strategies (Help your child learn how to accept disappointment and loss without either blaming others or engaging in harsh self-criticism.)

- Emphasize values (Let your child know that actions and behaviors speak more about character than accomplishments, and that how one behaves is more important than always being the best)

REMEMBER TO:

- Focus on effort, struggle, persistence despite setbacks
- Choose difficult tasks
- Focus on Strategies
- Reflect on different strategies that work and don’t work
- Focus on Learning and improving
- Seek challenges
- Work hard

REFERENCES:

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