

25 Ways to Develop a Growth Mindset

1. Acknowledge and embrace imperfections.

Hiding from your weaknesses means you'll never overcome them.

2. View challenges as opportunities.

Having a growth mindset means relishing opportunities for self-improvement.

3. Try different learning tactics.

There's no one-size-fits-all model for learning. What works for one person may not work for you.

4. Follow the research on brain plasticity.

The brain isn't fixed; the mind shouldn't be either.

5. Replace the word "failing" with the word "learning."

When you make a mistake or fall short of a goal, you haven't failed; you've learned.

6. Stop seeking approval.

When you prioritize approval over learning, you sacrifice your own potential for growth.

7. Value the process over the end result.

Intelligent people enjoy the learning process, and don't mind when it continues beyond an expected time frame.

8. Cultivate a sense of purpose.

Dweck's research shows that students with a growth mindset had a greater sense of purpose. Keep the big picture in mind.

9. Celebrate growth with others.

If you truly appreciate growth, you'll want to share your progress with others.

10. Emphasize growth over speed.

Learning fast isn't the same as learning well, and learning well sometimes requires allowing time for mistakes.

11. Reward actions, not traits.

Tell students when they're doing something smart, not just being smart. Praise actions and effort, not outcomes and results.

12. Redefine "genius."

The myth's been busted: genius requires hard work, not talent alone.

13. Portray criticism as positive.

Believe in the power of "constructive criticism."

14. Disassociate improvement from failure.

Stop assuming that "room for improvement" translates into failure.

15. Provide regular opportunities for reflection.

Let students reflect on their learning at least once a day.

16. Place effort before talent.

Hard work should always be rewarded before inherent skill.

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17. Highlight the relationship between learning and “brain training.”

The brain is like a muscle that needs to be worked out, just like the body.

18. Cultivate grit.

Students with that extra bit of determination will be more likely to seek approval from themselves rather than from others.

19. Abandon the image.

“Naturally smart” sounds just about as believable as “spontaneous generation.” You won’t achieve the image if you’re not ready for the work.

20. Use the word “yet.”

Dweck says “not yet” has become one of her favorite phrases. Whenever you see students struggling with a task, just tell them they haven’t mastered it yet.

21. Learn from other people’s mistakes.

It’s not always wise to compare yourself to others, but it is important to realize that humans share the same weaknesses.

22. Make a new goal for every goal accomplished.

You’ll never be done learning. Just because your mid-term exam is over doesn’t mean you should stop being interested in a subject. Growth-minded people know how to constantly create new goals to keep themselves stimulated.

23. Take risks in the company of others.

Stop trying to save face all the time and just let yourself goof up now and then. Doing so will make it easier to take risks in the future.

24. Think realistically about time and effort.

It takes time to learn. Don’t expect to master every topic under the sun in one sitting.

25. Take ownership over your attitude.

Once you develop a growth mindset, own it. Acknowledge yourself as someone who possesses a growth mentality and be proud to let it guide you throughout your educational career.

(from Saga Briggs, “informED” 2015)

**“You have
only failed if
you have given
up...until then,
it’s just
LEARNING!”**

