

# WELL-BEING SNAPSHOTS K-7

## LEARNING TO WORK WITH MISTAKES



**Mindsets**  
How they impact motivation & achievement

Our mind's approach to tasks & goal-reaching matters. Research shows that when we focus on process and effort, we are more likely to stay in the game and reach our potential than if we focus solely on the end point, setting us up for success or failure as the only outcomes. In other words, when we have a **GROWTH MINDSET**, we achieve more.

**FIXED MINDSET**

- Focus on **END GOAL**
- Praise reserved for **FULL RESULT** or **DESIRED OUTCOME**
- Rests on belief that you either have the intelligence or you don't.

**GROWTH MINDSET**

- Focus on **PROCESS & PROGRESS**
- Praise the **TIME & EFFORT**
- Ever-changing, **IMPROVEMENT** oriented

**PROMOTE IMPROVEMENT**

- Provide encouragement throughout the process of learning
- Express belief in your child's ability to learn, grow & adapt
- Remember: we are more motivated to strive for our goal if we focus on what is in our control - the **EFFORT** we put in!

Information source:  
**MINDSETWORKS**  
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Giving up when we make mistakes, or not being kind to ourselves when they happen, can directly stem from an underlying belief that we aren't capable of growing, changing, or learning. Then we see our worth is dependent on getting things "just right." It's a recipe for perfectionism and makes it difficult for us to keep trying when at first, we don't succeed. The "try, try again" part happens when we have what Dr. Carol Dweck calls a "Growth Mindset."

A mindset is a way of looking at things. If we have a "fixed mindset," we believe we are primarily stuck with what we have in abilities and intelligence. The first sign of "failure" or not reaching our ultimate end goal must mean we "can't" accomplish it. If that's how you think about it, why would you keep trying? That would be a waste of your time. It's better to learn to accept that you aren't capable of the task at hand. Admit defeat.

If, on the other hand, we adopt a "growth mindset," we believe that our brains and abilities change and develop through experience, practice, and determination. Instead of the obstacle to achieving our goal being a dead end or brick wall, we view it as a chal-

lenge to rethink or overcome. We keep our heads in the game, try new approaches and believe that if we continue our efforts, we'll get further towards our desired outcome than if we had given up – which the research shows is exactly what happens. When we believe we can learn, grow, and adapt, we feel more capable of accepting the hurdles or mistakes along the way. We stay motivated to press on. In the end, it's the growth mindset that brings us closer to achievement and leaves us feeling much better about ourselves because the emphasis was on the effort and progress, not on getting the gold medal.

Think about ways you can apply a growth mindset to parenting. How can you begin reframing mistakes as part of an amazing process towards effectively reaching goals? What would it sound like at soccer practice, when they are doing math homework or learning rules to a new board game? This approach can play a powerful role in developing a strong self-esteem, lowering anxiety, and feeling capable of both setting personal goals and achieving them. ●

### RESOURCE LINKS:

[Mindset Works](#)