



# The Movement Exploration Lab

## A Winning Mindset:

In this lesson we're going to talk about mindset....

Two In particular, actually:

The Fixed Mindset and...

The Growth Mindset.

Much of this work comes from the scientist, Carol Dweck.

"In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort." (Dweck, 2015)

**The fixed mindset** — creates an urgency to prove yourself over and over.

*Every situation is evaluated: Will I succeed or fail? Will I look smart or dumb? Will I be accepted or rejected? Will I feel like a winner or a loser?*

"In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment." (Dweck, 2015)

**The growth mindset** ---- is based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate

Everyone can change and grow through application and experience.

Do people with this mindset believe that anyone can be anything, that anyone with proper motivation or education can become Einstein or Beethoven?

No, but they believe that a person's true potential is unknown (and unknowable)...

They believe it's impossible to predict what a person can accomplish with dedication and training, or deliberate practice.

As writer Maria Popova puts it:

"What makes the growth mindset so winsome, Dweck found, is that it creates a passion for learning rather than a hunger for approval".

The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset.

This is the mindset that allows people to thrive during some of the most challenging times in their lives.

In Feldenkrais language, we grow resilience and dexterity.

Dexterity = motor skill + quick wits... or...

The ability to solve any problem in any situation.

Popova summarizes some of the *most fascinating and telling* bits of Dweck's research:

"..her most remarkable research, which has informed present theories of **why presence is more important than praise in teaching children to cultivate a healthy relationship with achievement**, explores how these mindsets are born — they form, it turns out, very early in life.

In one seminal study, Dweck and her colleagues offered four-year-olds a choice: They could either redo an easy jigsaw puzzle, or try a harder one.

Even these young children conformed to the characteristics of one of the two mindsets... Those with "fixed" mentality stayed on the safe side, choosing the easier puzzles that would affirm their existing ability, articulating to the researchers their belief that smart kids don't make mistakes;

Those with the "growth" mindset thought it an odd choice to begin with, perplexed why anyone would want to do the same puzzle over and over if they aren't learning anything new.

In other words, the fixed-mindset kids wanted to make sure they succeeded in order to seem smart.

Whereas the growth-mindset ones wanted to stretch themselves, **for their definition of success was about becoming smarter.**

In one of her now famous studies, Dweck divided 128 children ages 10 and 11 into two groups.

All were asked to solve mathematical problems...

But one group were praised for their intellect ("You did really well, you're so clever.")

While the other for their **effort** ("You did really well, you must have really stuck with it.")

The kids were then given more complex problems...

Those who were praised for their hard work came to the complex problems with much more resilience and a willingness to try different approaches whenever they reached a dead end.

But those who had been praised for their cleverness were much more anxious about failure, chose to stick with tasks they had already mastered, and had little tenacity when facing new problems.

What she found was that those with a fixed mindset were only interested in hearing feedback that reflected directly on their present ability, but tuned out information that could help them learn and improve.

They even showed no interest in hearing the right answer when they had gotten a question wrong, because they had already filed it away in the failure category.

Those with a growth mindset, on the other hand, were interested in and attentive to information that could help them expand their existing knowledge and skill, regardless of whether they'd gotten the question right or wrong...

**In other words, their priority was learning, not the trap of the either/or success and failure".**

So...

Which type of mindset do you have?

Is it different in different situations?

My invitation to you:

Cultivate and nurture your growth mindset in every aspect of your life.

Instead of thinking in terms of right and wrong, or success and failure...

(Believe me, you'll only breed frustration for yourself doing *this* work if you live in that head space!)

Instead...

Get curious about yourself!

Be interested in how you do what you do.

Notice what's easy and what's not.

Learn about yourself, your habits.

Pat yourself on the back for sticking with the process -- *your process*.

In the next couple of lessons I'll make it clearer than ever what that process looks like when engaging in the Feldenkrais Method® and Awareness Through Movement® lessons.

Know that you can change and grow.

Challenges and difficulty are just an opportunity for you to get better, they are not an indication that you are incompetent.

You can move with more comfort, ease, grace and power.

You can learn to move through the world with a quality you'll love.

Remember, just because you can't do something now, only means you can't do it yet.

Free yourself to learn at your own pace.

[read the the 2 mindset infographic below and read blue first, then green for 2 mins with music in the background]

In summary (*see image below*):

## TWO MINDSETS

BY CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D

