



## Growth Mindset in Sport and in Life

Published November 2016  
Volume 4, Issue 3

### Mindset Check: Which statements do you agree with?

People can learn new things, but they cannot change basic things about themselves.

People are born with a certain amount of talent, so they only have so much capability for success.

OR

People can considerably change even basic things about themselves.

OR

It is impossible to know how much success a person can have with years of passion and training.

### Two Mindsets

There are two different belief systems that guide how we view ourselves, other people, and the world in general.

With a **fixed mindset**, we believe that we are born with a certain amount of innate talent or abilities. Traits like intelligence, athleticism, and creativity are fixed qualities. This can cause people to feel like they have to prove themselves repeatedly. If talents/abilities are fixed qualities, the focus shifts from learning to ranking against others.

With a **growth mindset**, we view talents and abilities as things that can be developed. People with a growth mindset recognize that even champions only achieve greatness through years of dedicated learning and practice (Dweck, 2009; Dweck, 2006). Those with a growth mindset are more resilient when facing setbacks and more confident. Self-worth is not tied to innate ability (Potgieter, 2011).

### Impact of Mindset on Life



## Cultivating a Growth Mindset



### Unknow Your Limits

- Recognize that setting limits on what you believe you can achieve limits what you can accomplish.
- Reflect on times you accomplished more than you thought you were capable of doing.



### Praise Effort or Learning Strategies

- Praising talent (e.g., you are a natural!) leads athletes to focus on innate skill and may yield a fixed mindset.
- Praise hard work, effort, and the improvement process (e.g., Wow, that new strategy you tried in practice was great!).



### Move Toward Challenge

- Embrace challenge, even when it's hard (e.g., criticism, extra reps). Tell yourself, "this is a challenge that will help me develop as an athlete."
- Parents and coaches: coach athletes to develop specific task-focused strategies that help athletes feel a sense of control in difficult situations.



### Reframe Perceived Criticism

- When receiving criticism, consider how to respond in a positive way that supports growth and performance.
- Parents and coaches: provide constructive criticism that benefits the athlete and offers clear support for improvement.

## Where can I learn more about Growth Mindset?

Dweck, C. S. (2009). Mindsets: developing talent through a growth mindset. *Olympic Coach*, 21(1), 4-7.

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Potgieter, R. (2011). *Goal orientation, the growth mindset and coping strategies for success and failure in competitive sport* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).

Ragan, T. (2016). *Growth Mindset Hub*. Retrieved from Train Ugly: <http://trainugly.com/growth-mindset-hub/>

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