Growth Mindset

Helping All Students Succeed

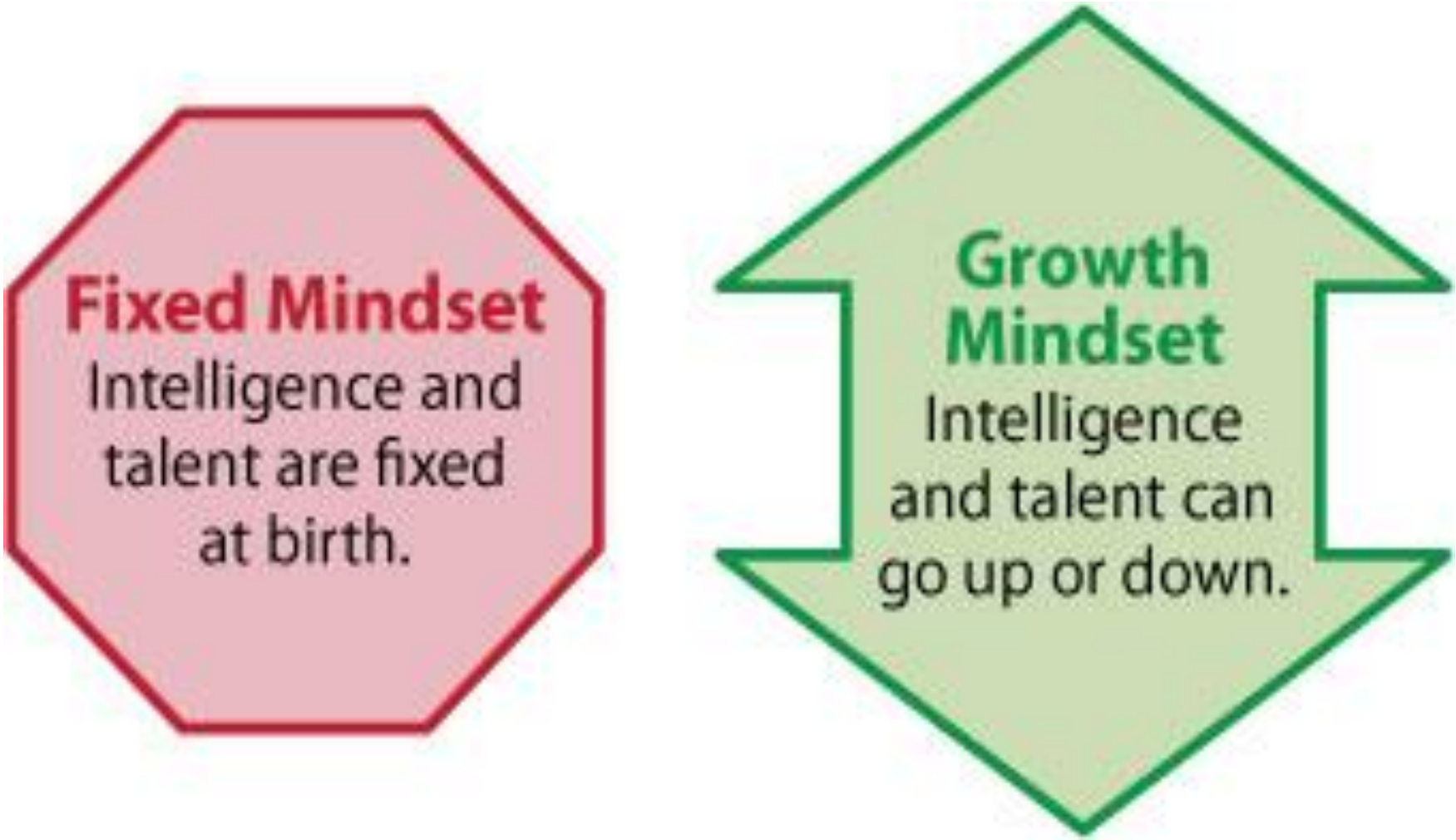
Presented by David Swart, Superintendent
Rescue Union School District
September 15, 2016
Based on the work of Dr. Carol Dweck
Stanford University

Dr. Carol Dweck, Ph.D
Stanford University

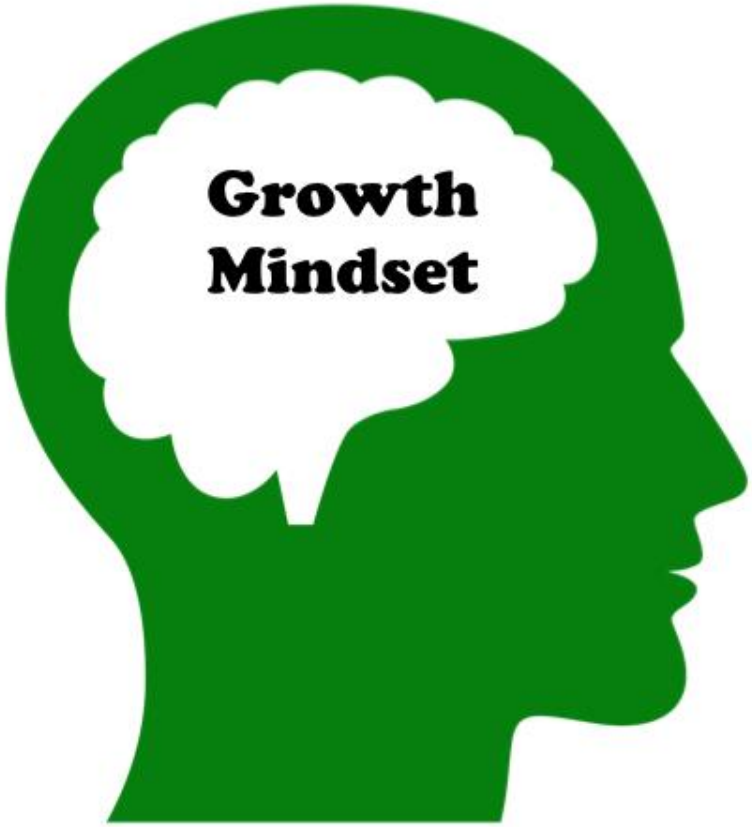
- Original work in 2006
- Book entitled, “Mindset - the New Psychology of Success” (Ballantine Books, Amazon)
- Work bridges Developmental, Social and Personality Psychology
- Based on research on brain “plasticity”
- Huge Implications for Teaching and Learning,

  Parenting, Business, Sports, Music, even Personal Relationships!

Growth Mindset



What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?



I can learn anything I want to.
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.
I want to challenge myself.
When I fail, I learn.
Tell me I try hard.
If you succeed, I'm inspired.
My effort and attitude determine everything.

I'm either good at it, or I'm not.
When I'm frustrated, I give up.
I don't like to be challenged.
When I fail, I'm no good.
Tell me I'm smart.
If you succeed, I feel threatened.
My abilities determine everything.

Two Mindsets
Ramifications for Learning

- Challenges
- Obstacles
- Effort
- Criticism
- Success of Others

How Can a Growth Mindset Increase Rigor?

Effects of Growth Mindset in the Classroom

- Beliefs effect learning outcomes (learning is viewed as the path to mastery)
- Effort (not yet)
- Questioning
- Feedback
- Mistakes
- Feedback
- Thinking (metacognition)
- Persistence
- Less fear of negative consequences

Video #1

Carol Dweck:

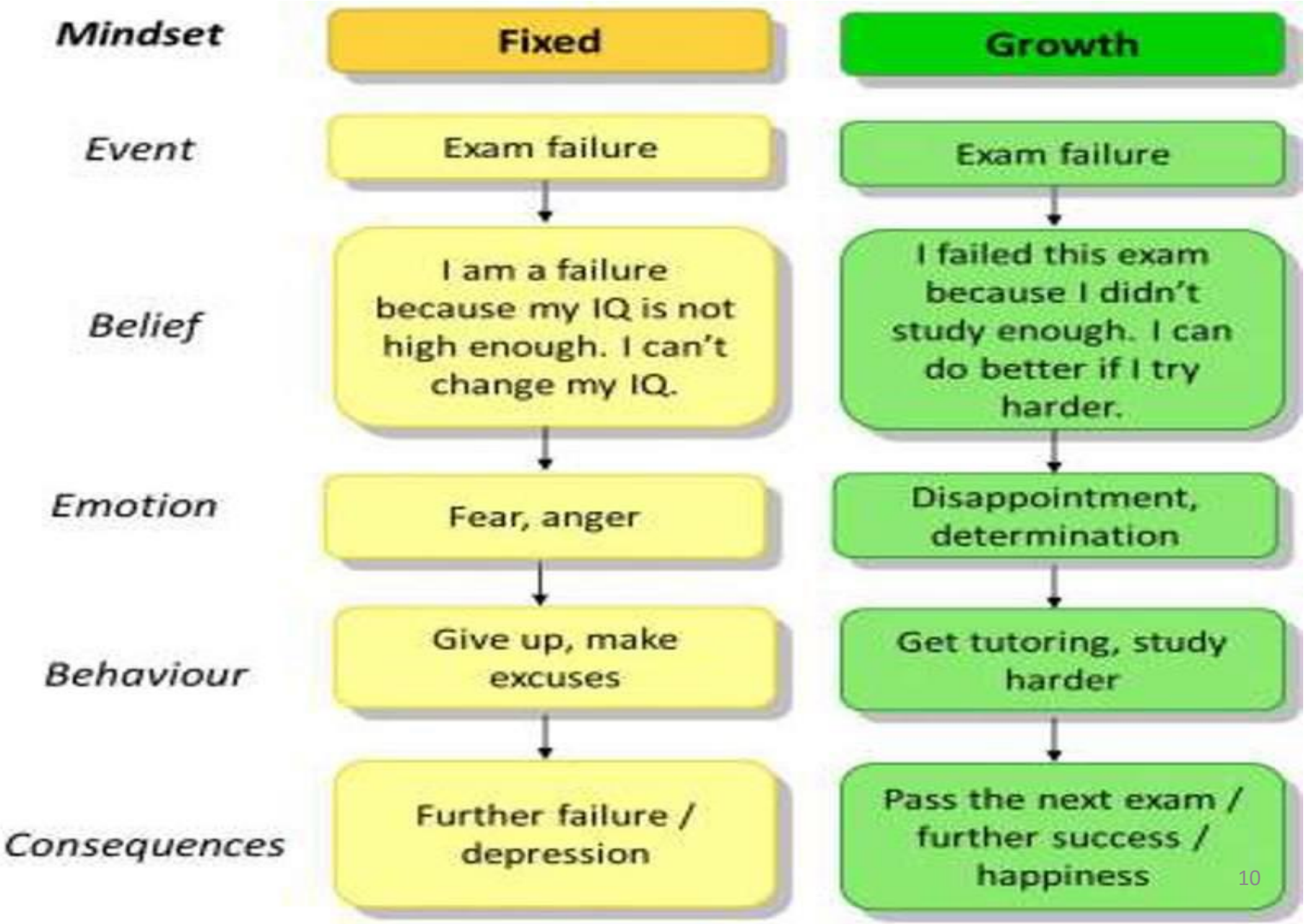
“A Study on Praise and Mindset”

The effects of praise on growth mindset/effort vs. intelligence and ability

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.


Mindset
Fixed
Growth
Event
Exam failure
Exam failure
Belief
I am a failure because my IQ is not high enough. I can't change my IQ.
I failed this exam because I didn't study enough. I can do better if I try harder.
Emotion
Fear, anger
Disappointment, determination
Behaviour
Give up, make excuses
Get tutoring, study harder
Consequences
Further failure / depression
Pass the next exam / further success / happiness

Video #1

Carol Dweck:

"How to Help Every Child Fulfill Their Potential"

Implications for the Classroom

- Performance Goals vs. Learning Goals

Performance Goals = About measuring ability (students may condemn themselves)

Learning Goals = About mastering new things

Performance goals contribute to “Entity Theory”

Growth goals – Students see both themselves and learning in a different way!

(This changes how we plan, teach and assess.)

Basic Components – "Developing Growth Mindsets in the Classroom" by Mike Gershon (2016)

- Getting the Language right
- Changing how students perceive mistakes
- Targeting student effort
- Giving great feedback
- Thinking about thinking (metacognition)
- Creating a challenging culture
- Focusing on process
- Engaging parents with growth mindset

Impacts on Teaching and Learning

- Shifts in thinking in how to meet the needs of all students (differentiation) in the classroom
- Shifts in programs such as GATE (from a small subgroup to how we better serve all students)
- Differentiation is critical but there are many myths around differentiation such as:

#1 "Differentiation means I have to plan something different for every student"

#2 "I differentiate by grouping students by reading ability and giving them leveled readings."

#3 "I can differentiate effectively using one data point."

#4 "Differentiation is easy, just give the high students more and the low students less."

#5 "I don't need to change anything about my instructional practices to effectively differentiate."

Conclusion: Growth Mindset

- 20 years of research indicates that *the view that you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life*
- *Believing that your basic qualities (and those of others) are carved in stone (the fixed mindset) creates an urgency to prove yourself over and over*
- Growth Mindset moves us from the belief in fixed attributes and in recognizing and praising "intelligence" toward a growth mindset that recognizes the importance of:

  *Strategies *Effort

  *Focus *Persistence ("not yet")
- Growth Mindset changes how we perceive "failure"
- Cultivated by deliberate practice and specific vocabulary

Even Greater Implications

- Growth Mindset creates an enjoyment around learning
- Fixed Mindset – Can foster dishonesty (40% of “smart kids” were dishonest about their scores because we told them they were smart)
- Implications for relationships – myths about “true love”, “living happily ever after”, (the ideal vs. growth mindset – improving communication and avoiding assigning blame)
- Growth mindset can create a voracious appetite for learning!!!

Plans for Implementation of the Growth Mindset in our Classrooms

- Initial Professional Staff Development for all teachers on Growth Mindset (Research and practices) / District Leadership – Book Study
- Continuing Professional Staff Development for all staff – on the concept of Growth Mindset
- Continuing staff development for teachers on best practices in differentiation
- GATE – identification of small subgroup will be discontinued, no state funding for this category, philosophically need to change this practice based on the research (labeling detrimental to all)
- With inherent challenges of Common Core / Next Generation Science Standards – a lot of room for open-ended, challenging instruction (not more work – but enriched work)
- Incorporating "higher order thinking" / Socratic Dialogue in all subjects and classes
- Increased opportunities within the school day for more hands-on STEAM activities with programs like Project Lead the Way; more Career Tech orientation (partnerships with businesses, etc.)
- LCAP – smaller class sizes, more differentiation for all students
- Consideration of more consistent curriculum-based Study Trips / Virtual learning / After school site school activities and clubs / Advanced academic pathways such as middle school in math