Having a Growth Mindset in Advising

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What? I couldn’t do it the first time and now you want me to try again?
WAIT DO I HAVE A
GROWTH MINDSET

MINDSET CHECK UP

Take a minute or two to answer these questions. There are no right or wrong answers here. Just circle the button that you think works best for you!
Important achievements require a clear focus, all-out effort, and a bottomless trunk full of strategies. Plus allies in learning.

Carol Dweck
Advising as Teaching

Concepts of Academic Advising

- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Outcomes

Lowenstein (2005, 2014) states that advising:

- In integrative, holistic, and helps students make meaning out of their education as a whole
- Enhances learning and at its cores is a locus of learning and not merely a signpost of learning
- Transformative, not transactional
Recursive Process

- Worse performance in school
- "This is hard because I do not belong or am not smart enough"
- Isolation, low help-seeking, avoidance, studying alone, few friends, etc
What is Growth Mindset?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1CHPnZfFmU
8-16
You firmly believe that your talents, skills, and abilities are set traits. These things can’t be changed very much. If you can’t perform really well and look good on a test or project you would rather just not do it. You think that smart and talented people don’t have to work very hard to be good.

17-24
You think that your skills and intelligence probably don’t change much. You like situations where you perform well, are less likely to make mistakes, and don’t have to put in too much effort. You believe that learning and getting better at things should be relatively easy.

25-32
You’re not too sure whether or not you can change your skills and intelligence. Your grades and performances are important to you and so is learning. You’re not the biggest fan of putting in too much effort though.

33-40
You believe that you can develop your skills and intelligence. You really care about learning and don’t mind having to put in some effort to make it happen. Performing well matters to you but you think that learning is actually more important than always scoring well and looking good.

41-48
You totally believe that you can grow and improve your skills and intelligence. You love challenges and know that the best way to learn is by working really hard. You don’t mind making mistakes or looking bad in order to get better.
Growth Mindset and Academic Advising

UW-Whitewater Profile
- More than 12,000 students (10,500 Undergraduates)
- 13% URM
- 40% First Generation
- 78% retention rate for students who remain after 1 year

Campus Wide Initiative
- Brought in David Yeager in August 2017
- Spawned LEAP teams to develop Growth Mindset related projects
  - Examples: In the classroom, tutorial center, peer mentor, orientation
Incorporating Growth Mindset in the Academic Advising & Exploration Center

AAEC
- Shared advising structure (Split Model)
- 16 professional advisors
- All freshmen and Undeclared students
- Funded by differential tuition
- Students are required to meet with their assigned advisor one-on-one twice a semester

- Advisor Training
- Publications
- Presentations
- Letters/Emails
Growth Mindset in the AAEC

1. ACADEMIC ADVISOR TRAINING
   - Conducted early in fall semester
   - An initiative to teach the theory of mindset
   - Promoted ways to use in our office
Growth Mindset in the AAEC

2. WINDOWS TO UW-WHITEWATER

A reference guidebook to the university given to all incoming students

- Handed out during Warhawk SOAR (orientation days)
- Provides a unified resource for new students and their parents/guests
- Serves as a quick reference for campus services, offices, and departments
- Advisors highlight key information during summer orientation
- Utilized during advising sessions throughout the academic year

GROWTH MINDSET CHANGES

- New pages related to growth mindset
What does it take to succeed in college in the 21st century?
Over the past decades, researchers have analyzed the attributes of individuals who overcome significant obstacles. In particular:

- Angela Duckworth, a University of Pennsylvania psychologist, identifies an empowering blend of passion, persistence and optimism that she calls grit.
- Carol Dweck, a professor of psychology at Stanford University, points to a growth mindset in high achievers that embraces challenges rather than fearing failure.
- Lisa Blackwell and David Yeager, authors of “You Can Grow Your Brain,” cite evidence that intelligence can increase with effort, rather than being a fixed trait we are born with.

Angela Duckworth defines grit as “perseverance and passion for long-term goals.” Many studies have shown that this type of attitude is a better indicator of future earnings and happiness than either IQ or talent. It seems that no matter how smart or talented you are, you won’t reach your goals unless you’re also willing to put in the work to get there.

Four tips for developing grit
1. Pursue what interests you
   It’s hard to stick with something over the long haul if you don’t care. The first step to grit is finding something that deeply interests you. Duckworth also recommends picking a mentor or teacher to help you along.

2. Don’t quit at the first sign of trouble
   Many people give up if they make mistakes or face setbacks — and then they give up. But this prevents you from putting in the work necessary to reach your goals. Making mistakes and failing are normal and sometimes they’re necessary. By remaining how you view mistakes, Duckworth believes you can increase your grit.

3. Attempt something that feels difficult
   Grit does not come from doing things that are easy. You’ll develop grit by pushing yourself to achieve in the face of difficulty. Try doing something outside your comfort zone.

4. Re-attempt something you gave up on
   When some people face a setback, they give up because they think it’s a sign that they never had “what it takes” to succeed. Having a growth mindset will give you the perspective you need to face the obstacles that appear in college and beyond.

Most people don’t know that when they practice and learn new things, parts of their brain change and get larger, a lot like the muscles do. This is true even for adults. So it’s not true that some people are stuck being “not smart” or “not math people.” You can improve your abilities a lot, as long as you practice and use good strategies.

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Four steps to developing a growth mindset
1. Think of your mindset as a voice
   It’s the voice inside your head that promotes doubt. The Fixed Mindset voice tries to make you doubt and second-guess yourself. It will try to scare you from even trying.

2. Choose growth
   You can either listen to the Fixed Mindset voice, or you can respond with a Growth Mindset voice. When you encounter a setback, you can either interpret your grade as a sign of failure or as an opportunity to grow and improve.

3. Talk back
   Whichever voice you hear, use the Growth Mindset voice and respond with a Growth Mindset voice. For example:
   Growth Mindset Voice Response: “I’m not yet at my best.”

4. Act
   Put actions behind your Growth Mindset voice. Take on challenges with 100% effort. Don’t be stymied by setbacks. Interpret them as learning opportunities and continue to persevere.

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Growth Mindset in the AAEC

3. ADVISING JUMPSTART

One-hour session held during the first week of each semester to help students get started with the semester

- Discuss important dates and deadlines, what to expect from academic advising and tips for a successful semester

GROWTH MINDSET CHANGES

- Process of Learning
- Resources

Effort + Strategies + Help from Others = Growth Mindset
Growth Mindset in the AAEC

4. ADVISING SYLLABUS

A tool which allows advisor to outline the advising relationship and experience for their advisees

- Communicate our expectations
- Pertinent advising information

GROWTH MINDSET CHANGES

- Changed the organization and structure to create opportunities to integrate growth mindset language in the advising meeting
- Launching pad to start conversation
5. LETTER/EMAIL

ACADEMIC PROBATION

It is common for students to struggle at points in time during their academic career and UW-Whitewater is committed to assisting you by offering support services and resources to identify areas in which you may be experiencing problems and determining how to address them.

Placement on ‘probation’ is part of the University’s commitment to offer students support for - and guidance through - whatever difficulties they may have experienced. We are committed to assisting you in overcoming this hurdle in your academic journey, and accomplishing your personal, academic, and career goals.

LOW GPA

Dear Student,

I looked at your grades from the past spring term and I’m sorry to see that the semester was tough for you. The transition and adjustment of being a college student is a challenging process, but you found a way to make it through your first semester and I believe that you are well on your way to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

-Advisor

GROWTH MINDSET CHANGES

- Changed the wording and tone to promote sense of belonging and resiliency
Pathway for Success

- Student population
- Growth mindset interventions
- Implications of initial program assessment
Here’s what you can do

Advisor Mindset
What are we giving out/actions/words...internal belief on students abilities

Student Mindset
Impact on student’s mindset
First, we must have a growth mindset.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of...</th>
<th>Try thinking...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m not good at this</td>
<td>What am I missing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m awesome at this</td>
<td>I’m on the right track!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give up</td>
<td>I’ll use some of the strategies we’ve learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is too hard</td>
<td>This may take some time and effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t make this any better</td>
<td>I can always improve, so I’ll keep trying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I just can’t do math</td>
<td>I’m going to train my brain in math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I made a mistake</td>
<td>Mistakes help me to learn better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’s so smart. I will never be that smart</td>
<td>I’m going to figure out how she does it so I can try it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s good enough</td>
<td>It is really my best work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan A didn’t work</td>
<td>Good thing the alphabet has 25 more letters!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Stereotype threat:** “being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one’s group” (Steele & Aronson, 1995, p. 797)

**Sense of belonging:** “refers to students’ perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the group (e.g., campus community) or others on campus (e.g., faculty, peers)” (Strayhorn, 2012, p.3)
How Can We Foster A Growth Mindset

Key Points

- Talk about the process of learning
- Promote high standards with a nurturing environment
- It’s OK to ask for help
- Don’t give up on students when they are giving up on themselves
- Helpful for successful students too!
Dear Student,

I hope that you are enjoying your winter break, and finding a way to brave the cold and spend time with family and friends. I have recently reviewed your academic record and noticed that you have successfully registered for the spring semester! Congratulations on completing your first semester as a college student (and for earning over a 3.0) - the transition and adjustment of being a college student is a collegeing process, but you found a way to make it through your first semester and are well on your way to continuing to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

I will be around throughout the winter break-- please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

-Advisor
The Power of YET

I can’t do this...yet.
This doesn’t work...yet.
I don’t know...yet.
It doesn’t make sense...yet.
I don’t get it...yet.
I’m not good at this...yet.

Mindset Shift

Instead of saying this...

Say this

You are so athletic!
You really work hard and pay attention when you are on the field.

You are really smart!
You work hard in school and it shows.

You are such a good artist
I can see you have been practicing your drawing. What a great improvement!

You’re a great athlete. You could be the next Pele.
Keep practicing and you will see great results.

You always get good grades, that makes me happy.
When you put forth effort, your grades show it. You should be so proud of yourself! I am proud of you!
Practice

Pair and Share

What would you like to implement at your institution to develop a growth mindset and what initial steps can you take when you get back?
THANK YOU!

The presentation and handouts will be found on the NACADA website later.