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BUILDING BLOCK I: MENTOR'S PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

UNIT IV - TEACHING FOR GROWTH MINDSET

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UNIT IV - TEACHING FOR GROWTH MINDSET

INTRODUCTION

A growth mindset is a belief that skills, talents, intelligence, abilities, etc. can be developed with learning and through experiences. In education, a growth mindset fosters academic achievement, decreases fear of failure, and encourages students to step out of their comfort zones and develop their skills, abilities and competencies.

Teachers play an important role in students' mindsets when they are providing students with feedback, communicate with them, and have certain expectations from them. In this unit, teachers mentors will get to know ways to empower teachers mentees to teach with a growth mindset. Moreover, teachers will better understand their mindset and its influence on the environment.

Since the topic of a growth mindset is quite broad, this unit provides an introduction to the growth mindset theory, which serves as a motivation for the teachers to explore the topic more in-depth on their own. A lot of useful materials about teaching for a growth mindset for trainers and teachers can be found on the website: <http://www.unigrowthminds.eu>.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the influence of a growth mindset on the person and the environment
- To know the language of a growth mindset
- To understand how to develop a growth mindset in education through simple interventions

CONTENTS

- What is a growth mindset?
- Growth mindset language

DURATION, ACTIVITIES AND DYNAMICS

Estimated working time: 95m

Running time for activity and dynamic:

Activity	Dynamic	Duration	Total Duration
1. Mindset quiz	1. Mindset Quiz	20m	20m
2. Growth mindset theory	1. It is a fixed or growth mindset?	60m	60m
3. Growth mindset language	1. The value of the growth mindset language	15m	15m
			95m



Activity 1: Mindset quiz | 20 Minutes

Each teacher mentor receives a printed version of a mindset quiz, which is included in [Annex 14](#). It is better to print the first two pages separately from the scoring instructions. In this way, teacher mentor can first solve the quiz and later receive the second part, which is the scoring system. They have time to sincerely solve the quiz and find out their score with the help of the third page.

Dynamic 2 – Mindset quiz | 20 Minutes

- a. The trainer gives teacher mentor the first two pages of the mindset quiz (see [Annex 14](#)). Each teacher mentor individually solves the questionnaire.
- b. Once all the teacher mentor have solved the questionnaire, they are given the scoring system. The trainer explains how to score each question, in case it is not clear for the teacher mentor. Each teacher mentor evaluates his or her questionnaire since the final score remains anonymous if they do not want to share it with others.
- c. After solving the questionnaires, the trainer begins a discussion about different types of mindsets. If teacher mentor would like to share their thoughts or scores, they are welcome to do so. It is important to stress out none of the scores is final and they can vary from time to time. Moreover, people can develop their mindsets, so even if their score was a fixed mindset, they should not be worried.

Activity 2: Growth mindset theory | 60 Minutes

General aspects of the growth mindset are explained in this activity. Firstly, the trainer explains the difference between a growth and a fixed mindset. Then, the theory is explained more in-depth with concrete examples from everyday life and some practical exercises. Before conducting this activity, the trainer should know the basics of the growth mindset theory. Teachers mentors are encouraged to ask questions and comment throughout the whole activity.

Dynamic 1 – It is fixed or a growth mindset? | 60 Minutes

- a. Trainer shortly explains what a mindset is (belief regarding the nature of one's characteristics – Carol Dweck) and the difference between fixed (people with a fixed mindset believe their skills, talents, intelligence, abilities etc. cannot be changed, they are limited with a specific capacity) and growth mindset (people with a growth mindset believe that skills, talents, intelligence, abilities etc. can be developed with learning and through experience).
- b. Teachers mentors are invited to decide which of the following statements represents a fixed (F) or a growth mindset (G):
 - I cannot do that, because I am not talented for this. F
 - Math is just not my thing. F
 - I need challenges to grow. G
 - I do only things I am good at. F
 - I can become smarter. G
 - I am as I am. F
 - I can learn how to solve this mathematical problem. G
 - I cannot change how intelligent I am. F



- I am not good at that yet. G
 - I can change some traits and behaviours, that I do not like about myself. G
 - I am not good at sports/ school/ music/. F
 - I learned something from my mistakes. G
 - I can learn whatever I want. G
 - If I don't achieve something right away, I am not for that. F
- c. Afterwards, they are invited to form more statements that reflect a fixed and growth mindset. The trainer encourages the discussion.
- d. The trainer explains that people usually have both, fixed and growth mindsets. They can develop it based on their experiences and feedback from the social environment.
- e. Teachers mentors later reflect and discuss the following questions: Do you recall your own experience as a student with a teacher/coach who you believe supported the growth mindset? What about a fixed mindset?

Activity 3: Growth mindset language | 15 Minutes

Based on some insights from previous activities, the trainer explains more in-depth what is a growth mindset language with the help of slides, available in the [Annex 15](#). Moreover, teacher mentor can practice growth mindset language.

Dynamic 1 – The value of the growth mindset language | 15 Minutes

- a. The trainer explains various aspects of a growth mindset language, such as from labelling to process, real examples, high expectations, positive self-talk and brain growth conversation with the help of the slides in [Annex 15](#).
- b. After a short introduction, teachers mentors are invited to think about a person they know, with a growth mindset. They should think about his/her characteristics and concrete behaviours that show a growth mindset. Afterwards, the trainer encourages teachers mentors to share their insights. In the same way, the teacher can encourage students in the class to think about a real person with a growth mindset and the benefits of it.
- c. The trainer explains the importance of having high expectations for all students. For inspiration, the trainer or the teachers mentors can watch the video about the Pygmalion effect to better understand the meaning of expectations:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1YI9nvXIE0>

ANNEXES



Annex 14 – Mindset quiz

Mindset Quiz

What kind of mindset do you have?

Directions: For each question, mark the box next to how you feel about the statement.

1. You can't change your intelligence very much.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
2. You can always change basic things about the kind of person you are.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
3. Any one can become a musician or get into the music business.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
4. Only a few people will be truly good at sports-- you have to be "born with it."
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
5. Math is much easier to learn if you are male or maybe come from a culture that values math.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
6. No matter what kind of person you are, you can always change yourself.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
7. Trying new things is stressful for me and I avoid it.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
8. Some people are good and kind, and some are not-- people don't usually change.
 Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree



Annex 15 – Growth mindset language



Bring on!



1

From labelling to process

Praise effort not talent. Focus the attention on the learning process.

2

Real examples

Provide examples of the growth mindset from various contexts.

3

High expectations

Communicate your high expectations to all students.

4

Positive self-talk

Teach students how positive self-talk support their learning process.

5

Brain growth conversation

Demonstrate the connection between learning and result.



#1 From labelling to process

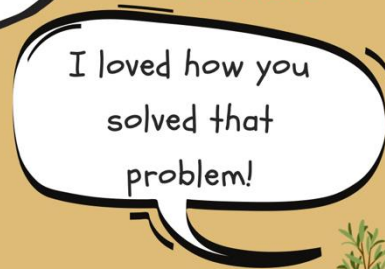


Label



You are so
smart!

Process



I loved how you
solved that
problem!



One day

One day you get a rejection from a journal that is really important to you and that you like a lot. You're very disappointed. That afternoon on the way back to your home, you find that you've gotten a parking ticket. Being really frustrated, you call your partner to share your experience but you get a rain check.

What would you think? What would you feel?
What would you do?

Instead of ...



I am not good at this.

Exercise these ...



What am I missing?



Instead of ...

I'm not good at this.

I'm awesome at this.

I give up.

This is too hard.

I can't make this any better.

I just can't do X.

I made a mistake.

She's so smart. I will never be that smart.

It's good enough.

Plan A didn't work.



Exercise these ...

What am I missing?

I'm on the right track.

I'll use some of the strategies we've learned.

This may take some time and effort.

I can always improve so I'll keep trying.

I'm going to train my brain in X.

Mistakes help me to learn better.

I'm going to figure out how she does it.

Is it really my best work?

Good thing the alphabet has 25 more letters.

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