

Growth Mindset in Action

Video: The Power of a Growth Mindset

(BEV CASWELL:) Growth mindset motivates students to know that learning is this process of, you know, coming to deeper understanding about a topic area. It's about -- what it actually is, it's about believing in yourself that you can do this. That there are pathways to move you forward to be able to become better at something. And that it's actually a natural process. You know? We don't -- when we are introduced to a new area, you know, you're introduced to the piano; you are not going to be at this level. So the same thing. When we're introduced to Grade 4 math, I'm not expecting you to be at this level. I'm going to put, you know, tools -- I'm going to build a toolkit for you. I'm going to put things in place for you so that you are going to keep getting better. And, you know, I'm going to expect that you're going to be practicing it. So my expectations are high because I believe in you. And so I'm going to set these high expectations, but I'm going to also create this learning environment that makes you welcome. I'm -- like I was saying before, I'm going to create a compassionate space where everyone in this classroom is welcome. And I'm going to value all of your contributions. I'm going to create multiple entry points for my students. I'm going to value what you bring. I'm going to see you and see your strengths.

Think about all of the things we face in our life and how easy it is to go, "Oh, I'm not good at that. So I can't do that." And then there goes -- there the door is shut to that opportunity. But think about if you were in a school where you had this growth mindset, you've had some kind of philosophy where you actually believe in yourself. You believe that if you can't do it at the first attempt, you're going to try. You're going to keep at it. And that, you know, following interests actually leads to bigger things. And so if you are raised in this kind of environment that allows you to believe in yourself, then you're going to meet a lot of life's opportunities and life's challenges with resilience, with a belief that there are ways of reaching the goals that you would like to have to succeed. There are -- you know, there are ways of working together with people to get a bigger picture of things that are going on.

There -- you know, the process -- a lot of children in the classrooms that I've been in, they're actually part of this process of innovation. And so I just -- understanding that going from the creativity of coming up with an idea to actually making that idea come to life is a process that requires some teamwork, often. And it requires effort. And so I think that these are qualities that are instilled in children. And, well, in all of us.

I think a growth mindset is about seeing the strengths that children bring to the classroom. And also helping them find strengths that they didn't even know existed. That they didn't even know they had.