

Motivating the Unmotivated

Edmund Dudley

24 May 2018

British Council, Bogota



In this session

- Hard-to-reach students
- Looking beyond language
- Mindsets
- Activities for self-esteem

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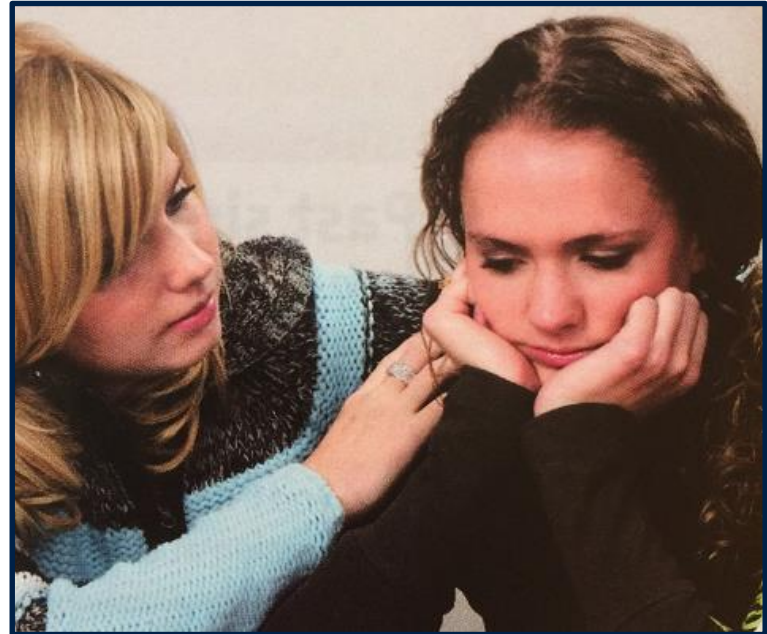
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Hard-to-reach students

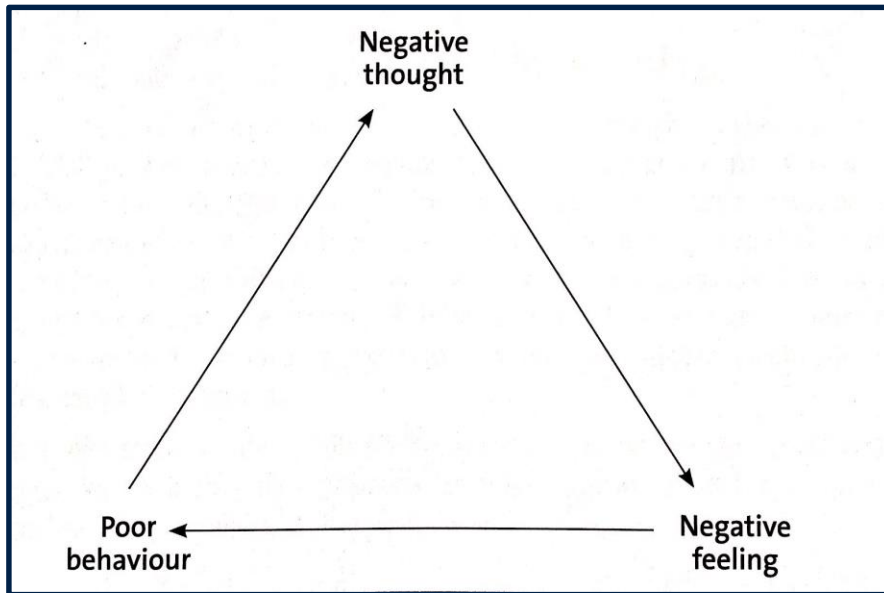
What are the issues?

Think about a student you find it hard to get through to.
What are the issues?

- Language?
- Self-esteem?
- Interpersonal?
- Other?



Encouraging positive expectations



In order for students' behaviour to change, first their underlying thoughts need to be challenged.

→ Try to help them see for themselves that their pre-conceived ideas are without basis.

Dealing with problem students

2 x 10

(Wlodkowski)

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- Choose a student whose behaviour is problematic / influential
 - Ask the student to stay after class
 - Chat for two minutes (in L1, off topic, non-confrontational)
 - Repeat for ten lessons in succession
- Expect to see a significant improvement in that student's attitude and behaviour
- The behaviour of others in the group is also likely to be affected

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Who is he?



IQ

- Average person IQ of 100
- Extremely smart person IQ of 130+
- Albert Einstein IQ of 160
- **Chris Langan IQ of 200**



What does he do?



- Construction
- Farm-hand
- Ranch-hand
- Cowboy
- Firefighter
- Forest ranger
- **Bouncer**
- Teacher
- Lawyer
- Astronomer
- Army General
- Economist
- Professor
- Physicist

The limitations of talent and ability

In addition to *IQ*, we also need **soft skills**:

- Emotional intelligence (*EQ*)
- Social skills
- Life skills
- Non-cognitive skills
(curiosity, determination, courage...)



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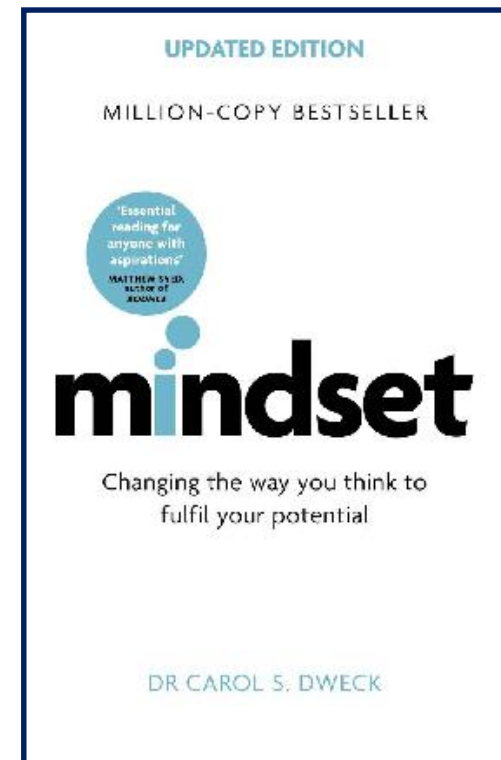
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Mindsets

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- Fixed mindset
- Growth mindset

Dr Carol S. Dweck *Mindset*



Fixed mindset

- Success is a result of talent

Growth mindset

- Success is a result of hard work

Fixed mindset

- Success is a result of talent
- Success and failure are *identities*

Growth mindset

- Success is a result of hard work
- Success and failure are *provisional outcomes*

Fixed mindset

- Success is a result of talent
- Success and failure are *identities*
- “You either have it or you don’t”

Growth mindset

- Success is a result of hard work
- Success and failure are *provisional outcomes*
- “Everyone can improve over time”

Fixed mindset

- Success is a result of talent
- Success and failure are *identities*
- “You either have it or you don’t”
- Tendency to avoid challenges

Growth mindset

- Success is a result of hard work
- Success and failure are *provisional outcomes*
- “Everyone can improve over time”
- See challenges as learning opportunities

The wrong kind of praise

“After seven experiments with hundreds of children, we had some of the clearest findings I’ve ever seen:

Praising children’s **intelligence** harms their motivation and it harms their performance.” Dweck

The wrong kind of praise

The value of difficult learning



speed



perfection

“Speed and perfection are the enemy of difficult learning.”

Dweck

The right kind of praise

Process feedback

- praise effort, not intelligence

“I can see that you have *worked* really *hard* at this – great *job!*”

- accept setbacks as strategic opportunities

“Everyone *works* in a different way. Let’s *keep trying* to find a way that *works for you.*”

→ be positive; be truthful

Promoting a growth mindset

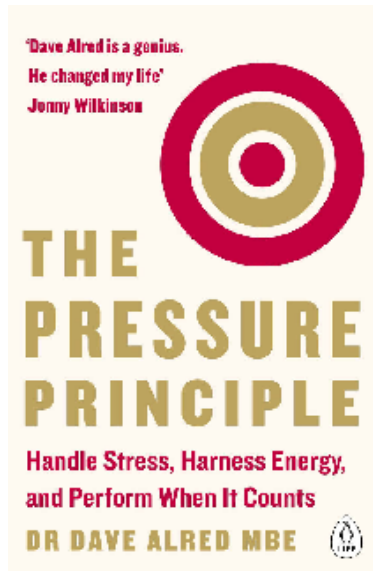
The role of honest feedback

“When people believe their basic qualities can be developed, failures may still hurt, but failures don’t define them.” Dweck

- set appropriate challenges
- praise students for effort and attitude
- be specific
- use the language of *work*, not talent
- make use of the *power of yet*

Communicate positively

The problem with motivational team talks...




Communicate positively

In the classroom

Instead of telling students what they mustn't do...

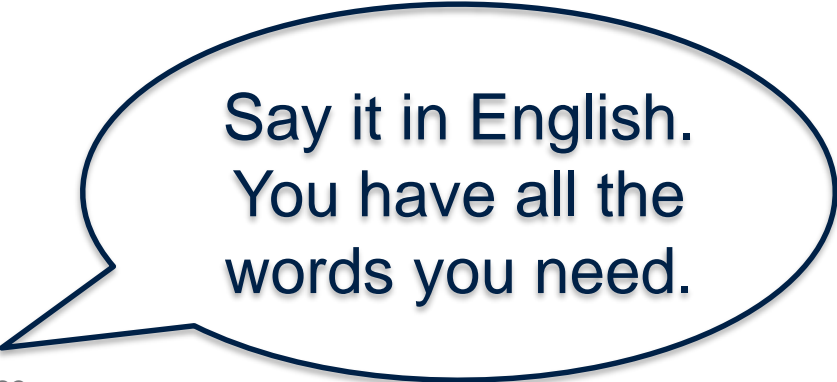


No speaking
L1!




No stupid
mistakes on
the test!

...tell them what you would like them to do, and why/how they can accomplish it.



Say it in English.
You have all the
words you need.



Take your time.
Check your work
carefully when
you're done.

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- **Activities for self-esteem**

Speak, pass, or nominate

Giving students options

6 ACTIVATE Complete the sentences about sports for you.
Then talk about your answers with a partner.

- 1 I'm / I'm not good at ____.
- 2 I don't take part in ____ competitions because ____.
- 3 I like / don't like watching ____ on TV.
- 4 I can / can't beat my friend at ____.
- 5 I like / don't like playing team games because ____.
- 6 I enjoy / don't enjoy running a race.

I'm good at tennis and football. What about you?

SPEAK

= I'm happy to answer

PASS

= No thanks. Please ask someone else

NOMINATE

= My friend here has a great answer... ;)

Speak, pass, nominate

Some observations

- The majority of students choose to speak
- Students who pass have a sense of relief...
- ...which often leads to renewed confidence
- Nominated students can pass!
- Students appreciate being given options

Open-ended prompts

Scale of 1-5

- Where do you think this is?
- How sure are you (1-5)?

- 1: We have no idea. Let's say...
- 2: Our guess is that it's...
- 3: It looks a bit like... / It might be...
- 4: We're pretty sure it's...
- 5: That's definitely...



Montreal



Predict the answers:

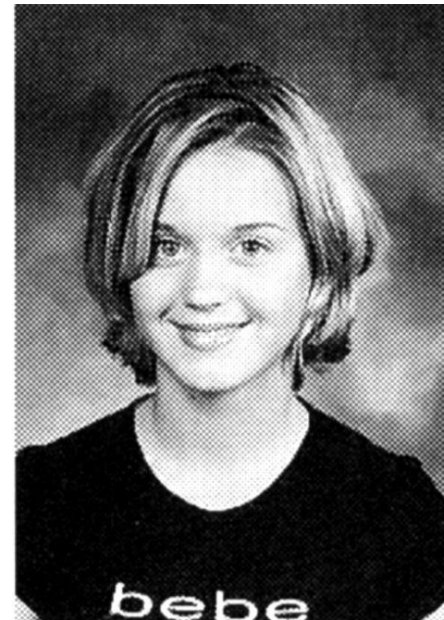
1. There is a lot of _____ in Montreal in the winter.
2. There are _____ between important buildings in the city.
3. _____ people use the system every day.



Use a scale of 1-5

Can you identify the famous person?

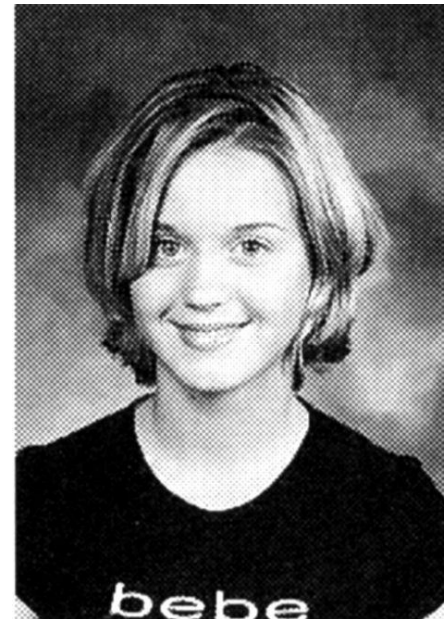
1. I have no idea, but I'll say...
2. I don't know, but it could be...
3. I think it might be...
4. I'm pretty certain it's...
5. I'm 100% sure it's...



Use a scale of 1-5

Can you identify the famous person?

1. I have no idea, but I'll say...
2. I don't know, but it could be...
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Katy Perry

Signals from the future

- *Everything turned out OK*

David still remembers acutely what it was like to be his nine-year-old self. “I feel like I’m in touch with that person today,” he says. “Whenever I’m doing something that I think is cool, like if I’m in New York City in a room full of people, interviewing Alicia Keys or something, I send a message back to that person and let him know that everything turned out OK. I feel like when I was nine, I was receiving that signal from the future, which is one of the things that gave me the strength to hang in there. I was able to create this loop between who I am now and who I was then.”

Awareness-raising through visualisation

Activity 1 : a letter to my nine-year-old self

Think back to when you were nine years old.

Were you worried or anxious about your future learning?

Were you afraid of anything in particular?

Think about the ways you have succeeded since then.

Write a letter to your nine-year-old self.

Explain how you were able to succeed.

Give advice!

Awareness-raising through visualisation

Activity 2: a letter from my future self

Think about your future learning.

What are you worried or anxious about?

Are you afraid of anything in particular?

Now imagine it's the future. You have managed to succeed.

Write a letter from the future to yourself as you are today.

Explain how you were able to succeed.

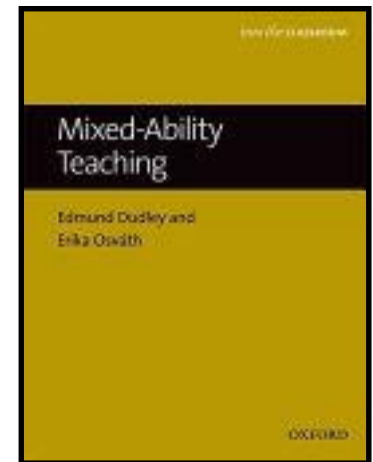
Give advice!

Awareness-raising through visualisation

Activity 3: Backtracking from future success to now

- Think about a tough challenge ahead, e.g. a test
- Imagine yourself having succeeded

Close your eyes ... Imagine you're doing the test ... You feel calm and relaxed ... You're ready to begin ... You read through the questions on the test ... It isn't easy, but you know what you have to do ... You understand ... You can concentrate ... You complete the answers ... You don't understand everything, but you can do the task ... You read through your work again ... You've finished ... You're happy with it ... You feel good about yourself!



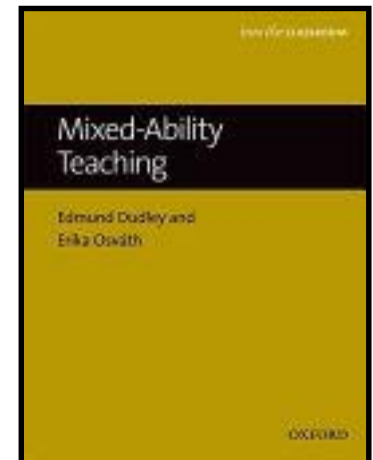
From visualisation to action

- How were you able to do it?
- What steps did you take before the test?
 - 3 constructive steps, e.g.

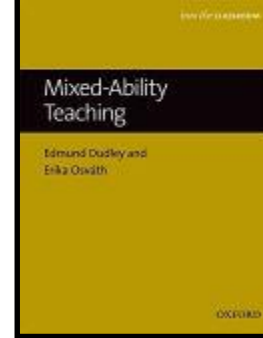
I read through my notes

I did practice exercises

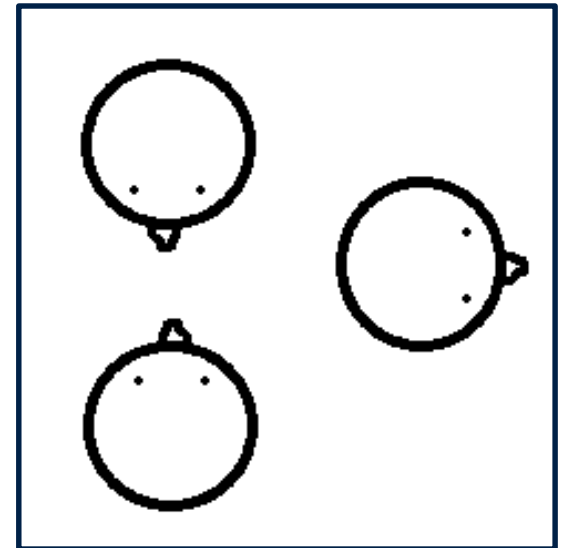
I got someone to help me prepare



Positive gossip



- Get students into threes
- 1 St turns their back
- The other two gossip about her/him
- Positive comments only



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