

# Strengthening Student Resilience: The Importance of Growth Mindset

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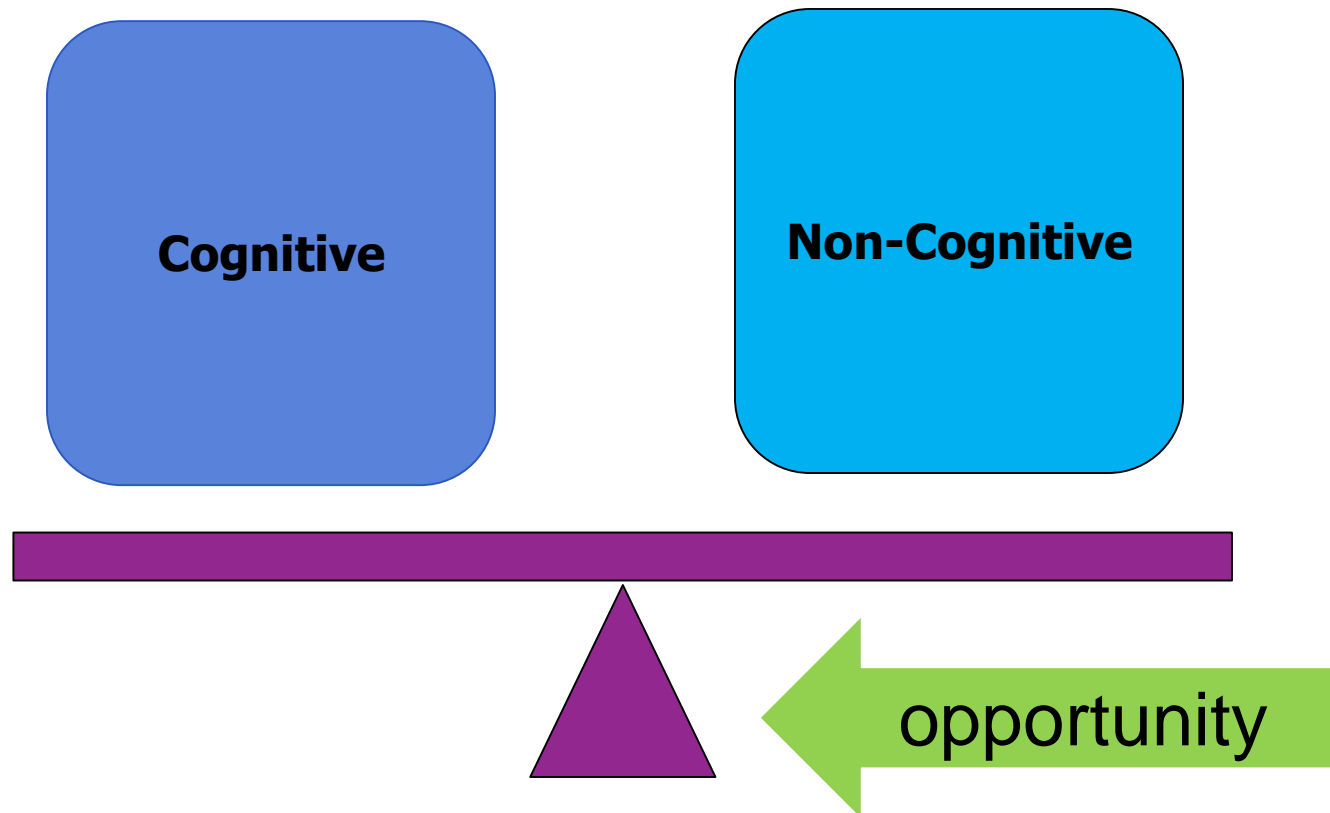
# Questions

- Have you ever learned something difficult without struggle?
- Have you ever failed at something just to go on to be very successful at it?
- Think about the successful people you know.... Would you describe them as
  - Smart
  - Hard working
  - Passionate

# First Generation College Students

- Grit: Angela Duckworth
- Growth Mindset: Carol Dweck
- Outliers: Malcolm Gladwell
- Grit, Growth Mindset, and Social Justice

# What Makes Students Successful?



# Non-Cognitive Skills

- Self-Control
- Grit and resilience
- Optimism
- Gratitude
- Self-advocacy
- Belonging
- Time management
- Goal setting
- Self-regulated learning
- Mindset

Levin and KIPP Character Based Education



<http://www.leadteachers.com/1/category/soft%20skills/1.html>

# GRIT

## Merriam-Webster Dictionary

- Grit~ firmness of mind or spirit; unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger

## Duckworth Lab @ University of Pennsylvania

- “Grit is the tendency to sustain interest in and effort toward very long-term goals.”

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# A gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon.

Duckworth, Peterson, Mathews, Kelly, 2007.





# Grit Survey

Where did you learn to be gritty?

Home



School



Sports



Work



Other

# Angela Duckworth's



# Angela Duckworth's Research:

- Experience as a middle school math teacher in New York
- Research at West Point
- Grit is the tendency to sustain interest in and effort toward very long-term goals.
- The correlation between self-discipline and achievement was twice as large as the correlation between IQ and achievement
- Grit scale

# Grit Survey

- I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge.
- New ideas and projects distract me from previous ones.
- My interests change from year to year.
- Setbacks don't discourage me.
- I am a hard worker.
- I finish what I begin.
- I have achieved a goal that took years of work.

# Mindset

## Merriam-Webster Dictionary

- Mindset~ the established set of attitudes held by someone

## Carol Dweck @ Stanford University

- “Mindset~In a growth mindset, people believe their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work.”

# Mindset

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**“Just because some people can do something with little or no training, it doesn’t mean that others can’t do it (and sometimes do it even better) with training.”**

## Carol Dweck @ Stanford University

- “Mindset~In a growth mindset, people believe their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work.”

~Dweck (2006)

# Carol Dweck's Research:

- Mindset: The established set of attitudes held by someone
- In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits.
- In a growth mindset, people believe their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work.
- The growth mindset has been receiving scientific confirmation from cognitive psychology and from neuroscience.

# Why Grit and Mindset?

“Pure IQ is stubbornly resistant to improvement after about the age eight. But executive function and ability to handle stress and manage strong emotions can be improved, sometimes dramatically, well into adolescence and even adulthood.”

~Paul Tough, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*, 2012, p. 48



# Let's talk about struggle

- Internalize the struggle
  - “This is dumb.”
  - “I can't do it.”
  - “I quit.”
  - Unproductive struggle
- Externalize the struggle
  - “This is hard, but I can learn something.”
  - “Good failure”
  - “I can do this.”
  - Productive struggle

Inner  
Speech



## Malcolm Gladwell

- Outlier is a truly exceptional individual who, in his or her field of expertise, is so superior that he defines his own category of success
  - Opportunity and socialization
  - 10,000 hour rule
  - High IQ does not guarantee success
  - A “hard knock” can spur excellence

# Social Justice

- There are many factors that create barriers for students from low income and under-represented racial minority groups. Many social structural and institutional barriers impinge on students' persistence in college. While grit may be one social psychological variable, structural factors and inequalities cannot be overlooked.
- There are pitfalls to emphasizing concepts such as grit if presented as a person is "lacking" or has a deficit of character (Osgood, 2012; Strauss, 2012).
- Teaching grit does not necessarily have to live at odds with a social justice pedagogy as some have claimed.
- Focus should be on re-channeling of student's natural grit into academic areas.
- Teaching grit doesn't mean that your students should never give up or that they should avoid becoming well-rounded.


# Struggle, Grit, Mindset, and the Brain

- Physiological inhibitors to learning and performance
- If you internalize failure you give up
- If you externalize it you develop resilience



“There are **NO** secrets to **SUCCESS**. It is the **RESULT** of **PREPERATION, HARD WORK & LEARNING FROM FAILURE.**”

~Colin Powell, US Secretary of State (2001-2005)



“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.”

~Thomas Edison

Variant of a remark made by Edison. As quoted in Edison: His Life and Inventions, Vol. 2 by Frank Lewis Dyer, Thomas Commerford Martin, Harper & Brothers, 1910, p. 636.

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