

Self-Discipline + Self Confidence

It's hard to become self-disciplined when you constantly have to justify yourself to those around you. The problem is, even your friends don't know what to make of your new behavior, and being human, they can't help but wonder just what you're up to and why.

The problem comes in when you start feeling like you have to either justify yourself or you give up because you get tired from catching too much flack. Here's when you need to stop, take a step back, and ask yourself whose opinion is more valuable, theirs or your own?

Loving yourself means doing what's best for you. That includes being self-disciplined, especially when making positive change. Tell the naysayers to get lost! They never were your friends, to begin with, if they can't understand that.

How Does Your Mindset Influence Self-Discipline?

According to Stanford University psychologist and researcher, Carol S. Dweck, there are two kinds of people in this world – [those with a fixed mindset](#), and [those with a growth mindset](#). Keep reading to explore how your mindset influences self-discipline.

What's The Difference Between Fixed & Growth Mindsets?

People with fixed mindsets believe their characteristics, traits, and skillsets are permanent and, therefore, cannot be changed. They are more likely to attribute

success to natural talent and feel attached to – and proud of – their current level of brilliance, skill, or brainpower, rather than seeking to improve through hard work and focus.

People with growth mindsets, conversely, assume that talent, skill, and intelligence are changeable and can grow with practice, learning, and hard work. They acknowledge that wherever they stand, they can always improve. As such, they view success as attainable regardless of the starting point. No goal is too big.

A Fixed Mindset Is The Enemy Of Self-Discipline

If you follow Dweck's model, it's easy to see how a fixed mindset is the enemy of self-discipline. Let's say, for example, that you want to lose weight. Maybe you compare yourself to a very slim or physically fit friend. What if you hear this friend say things such as "I've always been small," "I have a fast metabolism," and "No matter what I do, I just can't seem to gain weight!" This person seems to eat and drink whatever they want, never exercise (as far as you know) and look fantastic. While you, on the other hand, can't seem to lose weight no matter what. You conclude that you "just have a slow metabolism," "accept that you're probably not meant to be any smaller," and believe it's outside your power to make the change you desire. The truth is that your fixed beliefs are holding you back from reaching your goals, nothing more. Your fixed mindset steals your power. It puts distance between you and the big idea that although it may take a bit more effort than you're accustomed to, you can change.

It's all about perspective. More often than not, people who've achieved results you only dream of have generally put in much more work and effort behind the scenes than is evident on the outside. They just don't talk about it.

Think about “overnight celebrity.” Tales of people who seemingly come out of nowhere to instant stardom. You’ve never heard of them before, then suddenly you see them everywhere and they make it look so easy. Yet, when you look into their past, you find that they’ve been working extremely hard for *years*, finally had a big break, and now are reaping the benefits of the seeds they’d sewn years before.

A fixed mindset is closed to ideas of hard work, patience, determination, persistence, trial and error, and learning as you go. Yet, these are the very traits that self-discipline is all about.

A Growth Mindset Makes Self-Discipline Inevitable

Just as a fixed mindset is the enemy of self-discipline, a growth mindset supercharges self-discipline and positions it as the top tool in your goal-setting toolbox.

Let’s return to our example of weight loss, assuming a growth mindset this time. What changes?

Well, first of all, you acknowledge that you may have struggled with your weight in the past, but you decide that it has no bearing on your future. You know you can change. If you do think you “have a slow metabolism,” rather than assume it’s preventing you from losing weight, you’ll go to the doctor, have some tests run, and gain concrete evidence of such along with recommendations for how to improve.

Furthermore, you educate yourself on healthy, sustainable weight loss methods, taking your lifestyle, preferences and limitations into consideration. You understand that the process may take some time, and it won’t always be fun, yet you’re aware of why you want to lose weight in the first place, commit to the goal and believe that with time, focus and determination, you can make it happen.

Which Mindset Do You Have?

In Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, Dweck explains that it’s common to have a fixed mindset in some areas and a growth mindset in others.

If you’re naturally introverted and more on the shy side, you may have low confidence in social situations. Yet a growth mindset may push you to step outside your comfort zone and go to events where you’ll meet new people and try new things. On the other hand, since you’ve always been shy, perhaps you spent lots of time reading books and studying as a younger person, thus effortlessly achieving academic success. You may consider yourself “naturally smart” and have a fixed mindset in this area.

You Can Change Your Mindset

One of the first steps to improve your self-discipline is to become self-aware. If you analyze your personality and find that you have a fixed mindset, know that you can change. Dweck explains, “Mindsets are just beliefs. They’re powerful beliefs, but they’re just something in your mind, and you can change your mind.”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tiffany Halverson'. Below the signature, the words 'TYH COACHING' are printed in a small, blue, sans-serif font.