

GROWTH MINDSET

Exploring your Mindset

Understanding Growth Mindset

“Mindset” is “the established set of attitudes held by someone”.

The phrase “growth mindset” is the belief that your abilities, intelligence and talents can be developed through dedication, hard work and learning from feedback.

Having a growth mindset is someone who is:

- Able to achieve more, because they don't quit when things get hard
- Bounces back faster from failure, seeing it as information rather than identity
- Takes on bigger challenges, because failure isn't a verdict on who they are
- Builds stronger relationships, because they seek feedback rather than avoiding it
- Experiences less anxiety, because their self-worth isn't tied to performance

How to change your Mindset

1. Change self talk. Add the word “yet” to fixed mindset statements. “I cant do this” becomes “ I can’t do this YET”.
2. Reframe failure. Ask “what can I learn from this” instead of “why did I fail?”
3. Value the process, not just the outcomes. Celebrate effort, Strategy, and persistence, not just results.
4. Seek challenges deliberately. Comfort zones feel safe but don’t produce growth.
5. Pay attention to your triggers. When you slip into fixed thinking, gently redirect.
6. Be inspired rather than threatened by others. When someone outperforms you, ask what you can learn from them.

How to have a Growth Mindset

| Fixed mindset | Growth mindset |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| “I’m not good at this” | “I’m not good at this yet” |
| Avoids challenges | Embraces challenges |
| Gives up easily | Persists through obstacles |
| Sees effort as pointless | Effort is a path to success |
| Ignores criticism | Learns from feedback |
| Threatened by others success | Inspired by others success |

Growth mindset and the ADHD brain

- Believing you can grow and doing it a way that fits your brain.
- ADHD is a different operating system, not a broken one. Separate your symptoms from yourself, forgetting things or losing focus isn't failing.
- Compare yourself only to your past self, not neurotypical standards. Your effort costs more.
- Work with your brain: use interest, novelty, body doubling, and external structures instead of fighting your wiring.
- Learn in short bursts, use multiple formats, and capture ideas immediately since working memory is unreliable.
- Rejection hits harder with ADHD (RSD), take moments to relax before reacting to criticism or failure.
- Celebrate small wins deliberately, because the ADHD brain skips over them.
- Build tiny habits, reduce friction by making it easy to do the new habit.
- Use tools suiting your brain: visual trackers, gamification, voice memos, alarms.

Changing your mindset and the ADHD brain

- Mindset change is may be harder with ADHD because your brain lives in "now versus not now", so standard advice rarely sticks without adaptation.
- Catch negative thoughts by writing them down, say them aloud, name your inner critic. Be curious and investigate: is this thought true? Would I say this to someone that I love? Develop and an inner mentor to help you reframe or learn and move on. Write the mentor response down alongside the critical thought.
- Rewire self-talk with specific evidence, not empty motivation. Use second/third person self-talk, record voice memos on good days to play back on hard ones, and keep a physical "wins folder."
- Replace shame with curiosity. "Isn't that interesting" is always more positive than "why am I like this". Learning about your ADHD actively dissolves shame faster than willpower. Be curious and be specific about how a growth mindset can change your life.
- Regulate first, reflect second. You can't shift your mindset from a dysregulated state. Have a "reset menu" of 3-5 things that reliably calm you down before attempting any mindset work.
- Make change stick by linking your successes to dopamine e.g. ticking things off lists, reflecting on what you have completed and achieved, giving yourself immediate rewards, sharing your successes.
- Expect your mindset to fluctuate, the goal isn't a permanent positive state, it's returning to growth thinking faster each time.
- *The one core shift: "I am not broken. I am wired differently, and I deserve systems and compassion that fit how my brain actually works." Everything else builds from there.*