

# Breakthrough Life Coaching Newsletter, October 2008

I'm sorry this newsletter is a little late. I had been thinking about a subject to write on this month and decided to focus on some research showing how our mindset can determine how successful we are. I like the idea.

In this issue:

1. Do you have a growth mindset or a fixed mindset?
2. Stimulus Package - Lowering my fees for three months.
3. Happiness tip for the month.

## 1. What is your Mindset?

Carol Dweck from Stanford University has performed research on how the way in which each of us view our personal qualities will have a direct impact on the success we have in making changes.

When you think about your own qualities do you believe you can improve yourself with practice, education and determination or do you believe your qualities are fixed? How do you talk to others about your talents and qualities? Do you say things like "I've never been good at math, public speaking, singing etc.?" Do you ever think about trying new things but then tell yourself you don't have the skills so why bother trying or do you believe with proper training and education you could actually improve your skills?

## The Fixed Mindset

Dweck's research shows how people who have a "fixed" mindset believe their personal qualities are set in stone. Feeling as though they can never change and that their talents are fixed leads to them spending time and energy worrying and trying to prove to others how successful they are. They put a lot of effort into hiding their weaknesses and mistakes and are afraid to take a chance because they might fail. When they take a test they only want to know how many answers were right and wrong. They are not interested in the questions that were wrong and why they were wrong.

## The Growth Mindset

People with a "growth mindset" aren't afraid to face new challenges and stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone. They believe through their passion, determination and education that they can succeed and develop new skills and talents. When they fail they learn from their mistakes. When they take a test they want to know what they got wrong and why. They want to learn and grow.

Some of Dweck's research with children found that students who had a fixed mindset felt like giving up and not trying when they received a poor grade on a test. They felt they could not change. She encourages parents to praise their children's effort and improvement not their intelligence and talent.

### Changing Your Mindset

According to Dweck mindsets are powerful beliefs and beliefs can be changed. One thing to keep in mind is that research shows the brain changes with learning. So remember, learning can change the brain!

What can you do? Dweck suggests the following:

1. Realize and embrace the fact learning can change the brain.
2. Think of 3 reasons why it is important to recognize that people can develop their abilities.
3. Think about an area in the past where you may have not performed well. How were you able to make the change?
4. Write an email to someone you know who is struggling. Explain to them how abilities can be developed and share some examples from your life where you were challenged and succeeded.
5. Remember a time when you saw someone learn to do something you never thought they could do.

We all have the potential for growth and change. Sometimes it is our fixed mindset and negative self-talk that gets in the way. What is stopping you from making the desired changes? Where are you feeling stuck in your life?

Reference: Interview with Carol Deck, The Growth Mindset, 2006, Coert Visser

### 2. Stimulus Package - Reduced Fees

Many people are challenged right now with the economic situation in our country and yet could benefit tremendously from life coaching. I am offering a discount for people who can come on board now for life coaching. I can offer this fee for 3 months. If you know someone who is feeling stuck and could benefit from life coaching please forward this newsletter.

### Happiness Tip

If you are worrying and ruminating about something so much that it fills your day allow yourself to set aside worry time. So instead of worrying all day make an appointment with yourself to worry for 30 minutes a day or a few days a week. For example you could schedule Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00 p.m. as your worry time. When you begin to ruminate during the day remind yourself you have set aside time to worry. When the clock strikes 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday – start worrying 😊. See what happens!

All the best,  
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