



# MICROMESSAGING: FIXED VERSUS GROWTH MINDSET

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Director of Special Projects  
February 11-12, 2015



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## Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- explain why people differ in their mindset
- identify the behaviors associated with fixed and growth mindsets
- articulate the benefits of a growth mindset for students
- recognize and apply strategies used to promote a growth mindset



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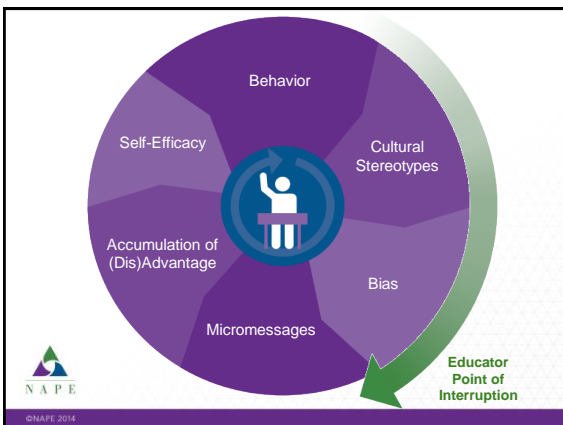
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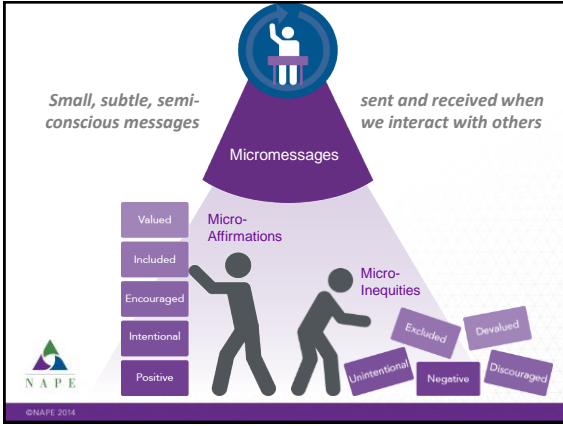
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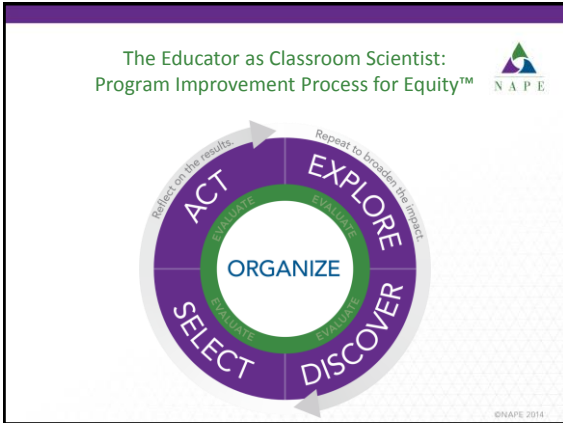
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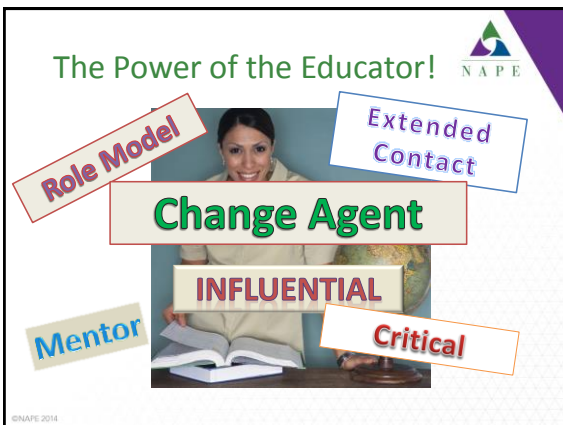
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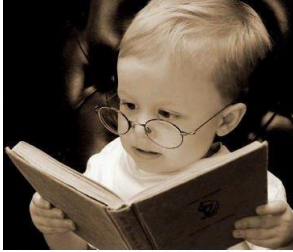
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## How Do You View Intelligence?



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*What happens from  
"happy baby" to  
"bored youth/young adult"  
that changed our engagement?*



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### fixed mindset

- **Belief** that people are born with a certain amount of intelligence that is stagnant and cannot be expanded.



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(Dweck, 2006)

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## growth mindset

- **Belief** that people can change their intelligence through effort and use of learning strategies.

(Dweck, 2006)

*What are the benefits of a growth mindset for students?*



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### Activity

## FIXED

People believe their basic qualities, like intelligence or talent, are **unchangeable**.




## GROWTH

People believe their basic qualities can be **developed** through **dedication** and **hard work**.

**Find a partner and discuss the following questions:**

1. How do you think your fixed or growth mindset affected you?
2. How are mindsets reinforced and communicated to students?
3. What is the disadvantage to being labeled as smart?



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## In Math and Science, a Growth Mindset Benefits Girls

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset	
Intelligence is static.	Intelligence can be developed.	•Teach children that intellectual skills can be acquired.
Leads to desire to <i>look smart</i> ; tendency to:	Leads to a desire to <i>learn</i> ; tendency to:	•Praise children for effort.
• avoid challenges	• embrace challenges	•Highlight the struggle.
• give up easily due to obstacles	• persist despite obstacles	•Gifted and talented programs should send the message that they value growth and learning.
• see effort as fruitless	• see effort as path to mastery	
• ignore useful feedback	• learn from criticism	
• be threatened by others' success	• be inspired by others' success	



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### Example of Research on Mindset Praise

1) Feedback (randomly assigned) to students on test of moderately difficult logic problems

- **Neutral:** That is a very high score
- **Effort:** That is a very high score, you must have worked hard at these problems
- **Intelligence:** That is a very high score, you must be very smart at these problems



Mueller & Dweck 1998

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### Example of Research on Mindset Praise

2) Students then took a very difficult test of logic problems

3) Followed by a moderately difficult test like the first test

- **Neutral:** That is a very high score
- **Effort:** That is a very high score, you must have worked hard at these problems
- **Intelligence:** That is a very high score, you must be very smart at these problems



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### Exercise

- Work in small groups or individually and rewrite fixed mindset phrases to reflect a growth mindset.
- Be prepared to share out to the larger group.



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## How to Grow the Brain

- **Effort**
  - Time over target – hard work
- **Strategy**
  - If what you have been doing isn't working, try a new approach
- **Help**
  - Seek assistance



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The power of...

# YET!



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## Critical Feedback

Build **trust** that allows students to accept your critical feedback and understand it is not based on biases.

*I'm giving you these comments because I have high standards and I know that you can meet them.*



Yeager et al 2013

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## WISE Feedback

- Says that the teacher has high standards
- Gives the student assurance that the teacher feels they can meet those standards
- Provides resources/actionable feedback

*In studies WISE feedback has the most impact with students who tend to have the least trust for teachers*



Yeager et al 2013

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## Wise Feedback

Wise feedback is a way of giving feedback that ensures students that they will not be viewed or treated in light of a negative stereotype and that their abilities and belonging are assumed rather than doubted.

Wise feedback conveys faith in the potential of the student while the gap between the current level of the student and the level they could achieve with effort is clearly communicated.



Cohen and Steele

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## Components of Wise Feedback

1. An explicit **invocation of high standards**.
2. A **personal assurance** that they will be able to improve with effort.

*I'm giving you these comments because I have **high standards** based on your **potential**. I know that **you can do better**, and can **achieve more**.*



Yeager 2013

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### Super Strategies

- ✓ Teach students that intelligence and ability can be **developed** through **dedication** and **hard work**
- ✓ Praise students for **effort** and **struggle**
- ✓ Use the power of **YET!**
- ✓ Look for ways to incorporate the **four sources of self-efficacy**
- ✓ Use **Role Models** like them
- ✓ Persuade with Micro-Affirmations
- ✓ Set realistic "bite size" Goals
  - Measure performance & Celebrate progress
- ✓ Reflect on the power of **micromessages** in your life.

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### Self Efficacy for Student Outcomes

**HIGH**  
engagement  
persistence  
performance  
achievement  
motivation & interest

*Self-efficacy is the belief one holds in their ability to perform a specific task.*

**Sources of Self Efficacy**

- Mastery Experiences
- Vicarious Experiences
- Social Persuasion
- Physiological States

**LOW**  
doubt, fear, avoidance

*Higher self-efficacy is related to the adoption of more challenging goals and greater commitment to those goals.*

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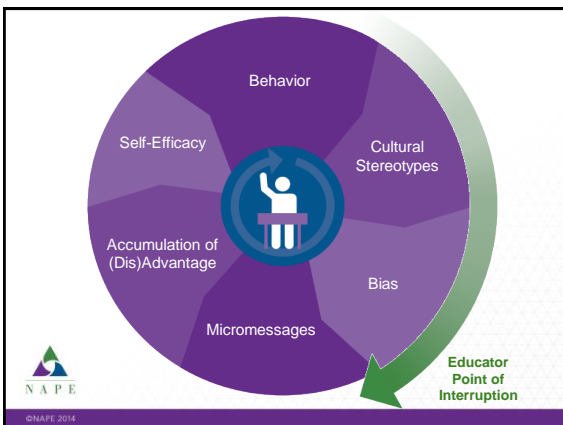
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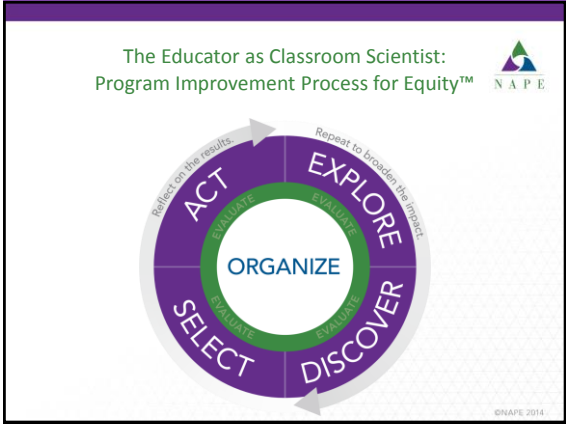
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Questions? Comments?

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