

# CAFE Resources Spring 2019



In last month's CAFE Resources e-blast, we examined the impact of a learner's mindset, specifically a growth mindset compared to a fixed mindset, on motivation and achievement. This month we will take a look at grit, and its effect on learner success.

According to Angela Lee Duckworth, psychologist and researcher, **grit** is the passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. In studies looking at success in many different contexts, grit has been identified as a significant predictor of success. Although different from mindset, grit is a related concept "in that if one believes that failures are due to their fixed traits, there is no reason to try again. Conversely, individuals with growth mindsets are more likely to be resilient and have more grit" (Nebel, 2018). In other words, individuals with grit realize that failure is not permanent and accept that it is part of the learning process.

Grit, like a growth mindset, is a concept that can and should be taught. It is important to help students understand that their success and achievement is something over which they have control. As Dr. Duckworth asserts, "one of the things that makes you gritty is having a growth mindset. The attitude 'I can get better if I try harder' should help make you a tenacious, determined, hard-working person" (Perkins-Gough, 2013). Helping students understand that it is more than natural talent or innate ability that enables them to be successful can increase their likelihood of success. Specific ways to build an understanding of these concepts are listed below.

- Introduce students to the idea that intelligence is not fixed.

- Share the benefits of maintaining a growth mindset.

- Provide multiple low-impact assignments so students can identify where more effort is needed without harming their final grade.

- Include activities and information to help students understand how they learn.

- Encourage students to reflect on their chosen learning strategies and try alternative ones, especially when they are struggling to learn.

- Provide prompt, detailed feedback which includes specific suggestions for improvement.

For additional information about the research related to grit, including links to the grit measurement scales, see:

<https://angela duckworth.com/research/>

### References

Nebel, Cindy. "Growth Mindset and Grit Interventions." The Learning Scientists, 19 Apr. 2018,

[www.learningscientists.org/blog/2018/4/19-1](http://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2018/4/19-1).

Perkins-Gough, Deborah. "The Significance of Grit: A Conversation with Angela Lee Duckworth." Educational Leadership, Feb. 2013, [www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept13/vol71/num01/The-Significance-of-Grit@-A-Conversation-with-Angela-Lee-Duckworth.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept13/vol71/num01/The-Significance-of-Grit@-A-Conversation-with-Angela-Lee-Duckworth.aspx)

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