

# ***PROMOTING GROWTH MINDSET - PROMISING PRACTICES***

## **Everyday Phrases that Promote a Growth Mindset (Developed by the Carnegie Math Pathways)**

**What is it:** Guidelines for creating well-crafted everyday growth mindset phrases that promote a growth mindset.

**Rationale:** The one-time growth mindset activity may not be enough to sustain momentum throughout the term. Everyday Phrases can be carriers for powerful messages that encourage and support momentum.

**Student Outcomes:** Students believe they are capable of learning math by putting forth effort, using good strategies and seeking help when they need it.

**When to use:** We recommend using these Everyday Phrases from Day 1 and throughout the class.

### **Core Ideas**

The goal of these growth mindset phrases is to emphasize the **process of learning**:

- We want students to develop a mindset in which the process, the thing they can most readily control, is the most relevant part of being a good student.

The “learning process” is made up of three main components:

- Learning takes sustained **effort**
- Using **effective learning strategies** and switching strategies when needed.
- **Seeking help when needed**

Many students equate success with innate ability. When they struggle they may believe it is a signal that they don’t have what it takes to be successful. One common mistake is to think that the cure for students worrying about being “dumb” is to help them feel “smart.”

### **When to use mindset phrases**

Use growth mindset phrases to:

- **Praise** a student after success
- Offer **encouragement** when faced with difficulty
- Provide **critical feedback**

### **Tips from experienced faculty members:**

- Use “we” in phrases, not just “you” when possible. (“We can reach the standard...”)
- Emphasize that the process can take time.

### **Growth Mindset Phrase Examples**

On the next page, there are examples of growth mindset phrases and common phrases that may unintentionally promote a fixed mindset. Please remember the growth mindset phrases given below are only suggestions. You are encouraged to craft your own based on the core ideas so they feel natural to you.

**Praising a student after success:**

- "You're improving ... your efforts are really paying off."
- "Great, you've learned so much!"

*Instead of*

- "Oh, you got that right away; you're good at that."
- "See, I told you you're smart!"

**Offering encouragement when faced with difficulty:**

- "Struggling on this assignment doesn't mean you can't get it, it means you're learning it. Your brain is making connections that are not yet strong."
- "This is just a measure of what you can do right now. It is not a measure of what you can ever do."

*Instead of*

- "Not everybody is good at math. Just get through it."
- "Keep trying and you'll get it."

**Providing critical feedback:**

- "This class has a high standard...to really understand the math. AND I wouldn't hold you to it if I didn't believe that together we could get there."

*Instead of*

- "Well, you may not be good at math, but you have real strengths in \_\_\_\_\_."

## Faculty Email Routine: Using Growth Mindset Phrases (Developed by the Carnegie Math Pathways)

**What is it:** A set of sample email routines incorporating growth mindset phrases. These emails can be sent to individual students or to the entire class.

**Rationale:** Reaching out to students via emails with embedded growth mindset phrases can promote and reinforce a growth mindset culture..

**Student Outcomes:** Students believe they are capable of learning math by putting forth effort, using good strategies and seeking help when they need it..

**When to use:** Begin incorporating growth mindset phrases into your emails from Day 1 and throughout the course.

### Core Ideas

The goal of this activity is to emphasize the **process of learning**:

- We want students to develop a mindset in which the process, the thing they can most readily control, is the most relevant part of being a good student.
- Many students equate success with innate ability. When they struggle they may believe it is a signal that they don't have what it takes to be successful.

The "learning process" is made up of three main components:

1. Learning takes sustained **effort**
2. Using **effective learning strategies** and switching strategies when needed.
3. **Seeking help when needed**

### Activity Guidelines

- Sample e-mails are on the following page.
- Send emails with embedded growth mindset phrases to individual students or the entire class to:
  - **Praise** a student after success (e.g. on a homework assignment)
  - Offer **encouragement** when faced with difficulty (e.g. before a test or a difficult module)
  - Provide **critical feedback**

### Tips from Experienced Faculty Members:

- Use "we" in phrases, not just "you" whenever possible. (e.g. "We can reach the standard...")
- Emphasize that this process can take time.

**Sample Emails:**

Below are sample emails incorporating growth mindset phrases. The bolded phrases address the core ideas described above.

**To the whole classroom:**

*Hello everyone,*

*I just wanted to remind everyone that Quiz 21 will be on Wednesday. Please see the Quiz Tracker (link on WAMAP) to see what topics it might include.*

*ALSO, Quiz 20 Quiz corrections are due Tuesday. We don't have many quizzes left so please take advantage of the opportunity to increase your quiz score by doing corrections if you did not get a 10/10.*

*EVERYONE who did not get a perfect score has an opportunity to review your mistakes, carefully explain what you did wrong, and fix your errors. **Remember, this process of reflecting on your errors is a NATURAL PART OF LEARNING. Your brain needs the opportunity to make connections so that you understand the material and the ideas. I encourage you all to engage in this very important part of the learning process, and in the process, to GROW YOUR BRAIN. Let's all commit to having "bigger" brains by the end of the quarter.***

*Lawrence*

**To a specific student:**

*Hi Alex,*

*I am very pleased to see **how much you are improving and growing** in Math 0990 this semester. You have been using **good strategies** on your OCEs. I was especially impressed by your response to #10 in the 2.7 OCE. It was **very thorough** and showed good quantitative reasoning!*

*At this point, your overall grade in the course is 68%. **I know that you can strengthen your skills and improve that score with some extra effort.** I have office hours tomorrow from 9:00 until 2:00. Please stop in so that **we can work together on growing your understanding of the concepts** in Module 2. Remember that the Module 2 Assessment will take place this Thursday.*

*I hope to see you tomorrow!*

*Kristin*