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# Where My Stories Live

## The Unconscious Energy Environment

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## INTRODUCTION

I am suggesting various books to clients, Mindset by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D. and Antifragile by Nassim Nicholas Taleb.

There has been a lot of emphasis on how the stories that we create and inherit are the cause for the situations in our lives. I certainly agree that the stories in the unconscious energy fields will manifest into our lives. Those stories imprint energy causing energy frequencies that eventually become physical. My e-book, **The Law of Manifestation** explains this concept.

However, we live within a deeper energy environment, the context within which our stories live. Both authors speak of this unconscious mental context. Dr. Dweck calls it *Mindset*, Nassim Nicholas Taleb names it *Anti-Fragile or Fragile*. Water is a one way to understand this unconscious environment. We live within two types of “water”, salt water or clear water. We swim and breath within one or the other or both.

Early in her career Dr. Dweck was leading an experiment in which she thought she knew what the outcome would be. It involved introducing puzzles to grade school students of an increasing level of difficulties. She thought that those who were naturally “smart” would keep moving into the difficult ones with ease. The others, the “not smart” would get discouraged and give up on the puzzles. She was surprised when some of the “smart” students were the ones to stop participating when the puzzles were beyond their capacity.

There were some, however, who looked at her when the puzzles were not easily completed and said things like, “Oh good! I love a challenge!” and “I was afraid that there would be nothing to learn.” And then they worked until they figured out the solutions.

That was the beginning of Dr. Dweck’s quest to understand what she was seeing. Not “smart” and “not smart” but students who were excited to be challenged, to admit they did not know and were excited to put in the time and effort to learn.

Nassim uses different language. He speaks of the tendency of society to look for ways to be stable, to create ease and comfort. He proposes that this makes a person “fragile” and will cause greater damage in the face of the disruptive events that are normal. The more we try to control, the more more fragile the system becomes.

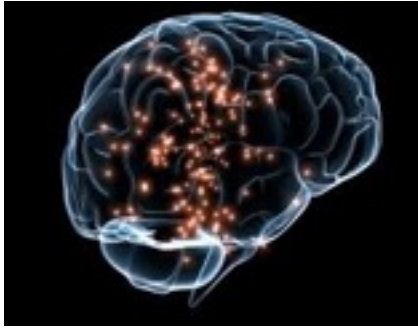
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Embracing life ups and downs means that we learn ways to embrace the "downs", the mistakes, and learn from them. With each indication of problem those who look for solutions, for learning are that much better prepared for any other "down". We benefit from what could be traumatic and destroy. To be in an Antifragile mindset means that you gain from the disorder, disruptions, or mistakes. It is beyond resilience. Learning requires the willingness to make mistakes, to take on learning curves and leaves one saying, "I love a challenge!"

Letting go the fear that we might be seen as "not smart" leaves us with the freedom to "work" at what we love. Following our interests and desires becomes the motivation that makes the learning worthwhile.

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## BRAIN STUDIES



### IQ

Alfred Binet was the French psychologist who invented the first practical intelligence test, the Binet-Simon scale. He created this for the French Ministry of Education. The purpose was not to identify and quantify how “smart” a child was. It was to see how well the current education system was serving each student. Since then, the IQ number has become a “set in stone” bit of information. Students identify with this IQ as a fixed statement of their intelligence rather than for its intended purpose to discover if their education system is inspiring learning.

### Brain

Another new bit of information is in relationship to our brains. It was once thought that your brain was “fixed”. Now, we are learning that our brain is malleable and continually changing in response to your lifestyle, physiology, and environment. It is in learning, working at the new, putting in the effort to grow that causes our brain to remain vital and our lives meaningful. Think about what happens when you’re learning a new skill. The more you focus and practice something, the better you become. Research now shows that as a result of learning, new neural pathways form. At the same time, your brain is undergoing “synaptic pruning”—elimination of the pathways you no longer need.

This concept, neuroplasticity, has proven that your brain is reforming throughout your entire life. The brain has the ability to reorganize pathways, create new pathways and neurons throughout your entire life.

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Our views of the nature of the brain have changed just as our views of DNA which we once thought was unchangeable. Researchers have proven that even that is not true. Human beings can constantly grow, learn, expand.

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## WHAT ABOUT ME?

### FIRST EXERCISE:

Write honestly the answers that comes to mind in response as to these statements.  
Do not try to “look good.”

1. I am
2. Parents are
3. Siblings are
4. Partner is
5. Children are
6. Life is



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## ANTI-FRAGILE

A baby is born. The feel of cool air on her wet skin, harsh, bright lights, strange hardness of physical hands and sounds louder than she has experienced, tells her that she is in a strange new place. Not accustomed to this new world in which she is powerless to move about, to find food and feed herself, or to find comfort. How to be safe and live in this world is a big question. She is at the mercy of others.

She is small and has no language that the “others” understand. Many young children learn to read their parents, to become quiet, good, happy in order to be safe and to be acceptable. Parents encourage with praise, “how pretty,” “How smart. “How kind”. “not a bother.”

A child longs for stable, consistent place of safety. She may compensate for harsh situations by dis-associating, by letting go of any wants or need or by trying to be “good” all the time.

Any of this natural ways of compensating lays the foundation for a fixed mind set.

In addition, many parenting concepts are based on “she is perfect, beautiful, smart, exceptional, etc”. All of which assumes pretty or she is not, natural athlete or not, or smart or not. Parents like to think that their child is special because some higher power gave her this gift and without effort she is just “special”. If music, art, math comes easy, you are. If it does not come easy, you are not in the special category.

All such ways of treating children result in fixed mindset.

The fixed mindset says some are special and others are not. It also creates the system that says “You are with us (you agree with us) or are against us”. In religion it is “We are right and so everyone else is wrong”.



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## SECOND EXERCISE:

What would you do? How would you feel?

1. You are an 8 year old. You run onto the playground and reach out to push a classmate in a swing. Instead of laughing and enjoying the push, the classmate shouts and yells, "I don't like you to push me!"
  
2. You are going into your first day of middle school. Everything is new. You go into your math class which has been easy for you in grade school. Now, as you listen to your teacher and look over the problems, math seems like a foreign language.
  
3. You are an adult women. As a child your father worked so many hours away from home that he was not present or a stable presence. The men you date soon become busy with other interests and yet expect you to be available whenever they fell the need for time with you. Now you are married to a very charming man who seemed to love you and wanted to be a supportive partner. Several years into the marriage you find yourself caring for the home and family while he is busy with other matters.

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## DR. DWECK AND TWO MINDSETS: FIXED AND GROWTH.

The fixed mindset is created from a belief that is very common in our culture, you are innately smart, high IQ for example, or you are not. You have special musical ability or not, you are a natural athlete or you are not, you are an innate leader or you are not. Abilities, skills, intelligence, etc. are innate, natural or “fixed”. And if you have a natural ability, you are set apart from others who are not.

What Dr. Dweck has observed is not that there are no individuals with natural abilities in certain areas. What she has observed is that *natural* becomes a “fixed” mindset when it is held within the concept “I have it and others do not”. You see the indications of a fixed mindset when you use words that shift blame or justify life sabotage, discounts others or speaks from elitism. What was surprising is that this fixed set creates limits that prevent growth.

You may have a fixed mindset or a growth mindset. It sounds simple and yet it isn't really that cut and dried. Both fixed and growth exist as possibilities in our inner world. In some areas of your life you may be *fixed* and in other you may allow *growth*. Once you become aware of these two, their qualities and limits, you can consciously choose which serves you. Until then, mindset rules.

We have assumed that the way to build a child's self-esteem is through praise. The praise we most often use is “You are so smart.. gifted, talented, pretty, popular, etc. It is really an easy way to throw something that we think is of value at our child.

In Dr. Dweck's research she concluded that this way of 'building' self esteem is very harmful. It contributes to a fixed mindset.

Praise in a growth mindset environment is focused on effort, on new accomplishments, new ideas on problems to be solved, skills to be learned and questions to be asked.



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### THIRD EXERCISE:

Answer each in your journal.

- When was the last time you remember reacting in this way?
- How often do you do each on a scale of 1-10. 1 being rarely and 10 being often

1. Justified your mistakes or lack of follow through
2. Pretended, put on a good face, rather than speaking your truth
3. Discounted people or situations
4. Gossiped about others
5. Isolated yourself
6. Let fear of mistakes or non-knowing stop you for taking a tasks
7. Resigned yourself to limited or uncomfortable situations
8. Saw bullying and do nothing
9. Dropped out of uncomfortable learning situations
10. Gave thanks that you are not like the “other”

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## FOURTH EXERCISE:

Answer each of these true or false according to your belief

1. A person has the ability to be present and generous in a relationship or does not.
2. A person has the ability to earn a good living or she does not.
3. Difficulties arise, they are valuable as they help you learn.
4. A person has the intelligence to build a business or she does not.
5. A person has the ability to sing, draw, play a musical instrument or she does not.
6. One can create a life of total stability if they try hard enough.
7. A person has the ability to travel the world or she does not.
8. A person has the qualities that elicit love and respect or she does not
9. Skills can be learned and developed.
10. It is important to keep one's life stable and constant.
11. One can choose qualities of character and develop them.
12. It is important to not make mistakes
13. If you have trauma in your life, you are marked and scarred.

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## FIXED MINDSET

Fixed mindset prevents learning that expands an individual. It causes a sense of elitism and lack of equality while at the same time creating subtle fear of making a mistake. A mistake causes one to fall off of the pedestal of “special”. Collaborative creating is difficult if not impossible because “special” requires that s/he holds all knowledge. Collaboration requires the willingness to ask for other’s ideas and being open to making mistakes.

If there are situations when s/he “makes” a mistake, the fixed mindset individual responds by blaming another, making excuses for self and refusing to consider that learning new ways for solution might be needed. You are either smart, talented, pretty, good or you are not. They cannot put themselves in a situation where they are seen as “not”. Fixed mindset limits and shrinks opportunities.

Consider what Dr. Dweck has seen happen when a child or adult who has come to believe that they are “smart” is presented with a class that could move them into a greater grasp, deeper understanding of a subject. The student knows the class will require learning curve. It will certainly cause the student to made mistakes at this new undertaking. They would have to be willing to study and the ease of good grades without study is the mark of “smart”. What was seen over and over is that the response of students with fixed mindset was to not take on the class. Why? Because having to work and study hard would show their parents, themselves and the world that they were not “smart”.

Another limit for a fixed mindset is seen in relationships. Often a young child becomes the “good one” to be safe in a dangerous situation. As an adult, s/he works very hard to be seen as “good”. What happens when someone points out a “lack” or “problem”? The fixed mindset individual would become defensive, demean the person with the suggestion and discount the idea. He would do all of this in order to prove that her/his “goodness”. Accepting to learn destroys the shell of control. In some cases, defensive becomes mean, abusive and even violent, all to be seen as “good” one. This prevents growth and learning and maturing.

Fixed mindset has become a “new normal” in relationships. “I am looking for my soul mate” is code for “perfect”. Problems cannot be tolerated.

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## FIXED MINDSET IN RELATIONSHIPS

Psychologists say one behavior is the 'kiss of death' for a relationship

On the way home from work you have every intention of greeting your partner with a friendly "Hi, how are you? How was your day?" and listening attentively while he or she tells you all about it.

But the minute you open the door and drop your keys on the counter, you find yourself knee-deep in an argument about how he or she bought the wrong type of pepper.

Don't worry: It's perfectly normal to get into arguments like these with your significant other every once in a while, John Gottman, a psychologist at the University of Washington and founder of the Gottman Institute, told Business Insider.

It's what happens next that you need to watch out for, he says.

When you express your frustration over the pepper mix-up, do you listen while he explains that perhaps you didn't ever tell him what type of pepper you wanted? Do you think this over, and, when you realize that maybe he's right, do you apologize? Or do you adopt an attitude and think to yourself, "What kind of an idiot doesn't know that bell peppers are for stir-fry and habaneros are for salsa?"

If you find yourself in the second situation, you're likely displaying contempt for your partner, and it could be putting your relationship in jeopardy.

**Contempt**, a virulent mix of anger and disgust, is far more toxic than simple frustration or negativity. It involves seeing your partner as beneath you, rather than as an equal.

Gottman and University of California at Berkeley psychologist Robert Levenson found this single behavior is so powerful that they can use it — along with the negative behaviors of criticism, defensiveness, and stonewalling — to predict divorce with 93% accuracy.

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**"Contempt," says Gottman, "is the kiss of death."**

The striking 93% figure comes from a 14-year study of 79 couples living across the US Midwest (21 of whom divorced during the study period) published in 2002. Since then, decades of research into marriage and divorce have lent further support to the idea linking divorce with specific negative behaviors.

One recent study of 373 newlywed couples, for example, found that couples who yelled at each other, showed contempt for each other, or simply began to disengage from conflict within the first year of marriage were more likely to divorce, even as far as 16 years down the road.

Why are couples who exhibit this one behavior more likely to split up?

It comes down to a superiority complex.

Feeling smarter than, better than, or more sensitive than other people, especially your significant other, means you're not only less likely see his or her opinions as valid, but, more importantly, you're far less willing to try to put yourself in his or her shoes to try to see a situation from his or her perspective. Elitism is a sign of a fixed mindset.

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## GROWTH MINDSET

When faced with problems that stump her/him or when mistakes occur, the growth mindset individual laughs, and says, “looks like there is some work to do.” They are very comfortable asking for extra help in studying, mentoring, skill evaluation or what might help them grow.

These individuals understand that growth can occur in any field. When there is a mistake, an unknown, a challenge, it is within their understanding of how life works. They may not know that the brain is constantly expanding and growing, they just know that if there is a desire to learn, anything can be achieved.

When a problem arises in a relationship a growth mindset person feels comfortable asking for time to talk with the other about the problem. Mistakes are part of life and so a growth mindset person does not make it personal, does not blame, discredit, or label the other, but shines light on a problem. In addition, the growth mindset accepts that new skills must be explored and will look for additional insight. They know that a relationship will become stronger through learning.

Moving into a growth mindset is a choice. It allows you to embrace the inner, hidden fears, lacks, limits, coverups, pasts and to let them go. Then you are free to pursue what you love, what excites you. A growth mindset knows that anyone can change, improve, become proficient with work. Love and curiosity becomes the motivation that pushes the learning curve, attracts the teachers, opens new doors, and expands capacity.

People in the full flower of their potential get there by building from what they innately know, have an interest in, an ability for or would love to explore.

Free of the fixed mind set, individuals are also free to really go for what they love. They know that all it takes is effort and the love for the project is the motivation to put forth the effort.



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## FIFTH EXERCISE:

How would you feel, think and react in these situations?

1. I have a friend who I have spent a fair amount of time helping. When I reached out because I was feeling the need for some help, she didn't have time to talk.
2. At the office, I am always willing to take on extra tasks or listen to the complaints of my office mates. I really needed to take an afternoon off and when I asked for help, everyone was too busy.
3. At home, I am the glue that keeps everything together. I juggle work, home, kids, activities and my husband's travel. Last week the overwhelm was too much and I just wanted some time alone. No-one stepped up to help make that happen.

[Evaluation of this exercise on Page 24](#)



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## CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

### THE NATURE OF CHANGE

Here are some concepts to consider in relationship to changing your mindset:

The key factor in making any changes in your life is YOU. You cannot make changes when you are unaware of new possibilities. So, one place to begin is with the 5 exercise in this booklet. This will begin your awareness of Mindsets. Evaluate yourself very honestly.

Then, choose which mindset will serve you the best, fixed or growth.

Then use the Law of Personal Authority. You speak your Word for you choose. I suggest writing Reality Statements to use with the TAG Reality Shift process.

Here are some possibles:

- *Growth happens when I recognize where I can expand.*
- *I embrace the effort and mistakes required to grow beyond my current capacity.*
- *I encourage myself and other to expand our skills and abilities by embracing problems and creating solutions.*
- *I give up the label of "special" and move into the joy of every expanding "more".*
- *Doing my best involves learning through mistakes.*
- *I keep my commitment on my action steps.*



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## CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

### CREATING A GROWTH MINDSET ENVIRONMENT

The brain is becoming less and less of a mystery. We are discovering that the brain is like a muscles that gets stronger when you use it. It grows, it make new connections throughout your life. All that is required to learn a new skill, expand your skill set, develop mastery in a subject, create new projects, etc. causes a stronger, smarter brain.



How can you develop a growth mindset environment for your self, family, business and community? Pay attention to how you think and speak. Make conscious choices to enroll in classes, read more books, have discussions, listen to new ideas. Consciously take your challenges into growth mindset solutions; what is the problem, what is there to learn, what is the goal, what steps are necessary to take. Choose a hobby to learn, remember what you love and become better at it. Set

concrete plans and then visualize the steps in as much detail as possible. Use all of your senses.

Anything that is a challenge is perfect for practicing a growth mindset. Also learn more about brain balancing skills and add them to your program.

Watch your words. Do you make statements of judgement, labeling or blame of others. That type of reactions makes other leery of making “mistakes” in your presence. Instead, create a culture of lightness around new, unusual, out-side-the-box ideas and see the humor in the “goofs” that come.

Change your words of appreciation and encouragement. Stay away from those statements that have been shown to strengthen a fixed mind set such as, “You are so smart.” “You are just beautiful.” “You are a natural artist.” “You are perfect.”

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This puts the emphasis on things beyond the person's control. The quality just is... fixed therefore they just "are" with no say in the matter.

The better way is to look at the effort that has gone into the great soccer game, the higher school grade or the amazing party. Then praise the effort and tenacity. Notice the hours of creative thought that went into a video that your teenager created and comment on the skills, the commitment, etc. Praise the ability to see the problem and then the greater courage that it takes to discover the solution.



Do the same with others and with yourself.

Another value in the growth mindset is that growth allows you to embrace what you may have considered "dark". "Dark" just becomes a mistake, a non-knowing, a lack of skill and embracing it as a "problem" with a solution opens growth and makes more of "you" possible

You are in charge of your mind and how your brain develops. You may find it helpful to keep a journal just for your adventures with Mindset.

Notice how you learn, where you want to learn more, and when you are reluctant to try something new because it is new.

Moving away from any fixed mindset "fears" frees you to build a life based on what you love. After the mindset has shifted, then you can begin to address the stories, habits, genetic tendencies, and tribal mind beliefs that have kept you from a life that is meaningful and fulfilling.

Re-discovering that authentic part of yourself will be the next step in your journey.

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## REVIEW OF EXERCISE ANSWERS

### FIRST EXERCISE:

As you wrote your honest answers, do they reflect a fixed mindset response or a growth mindset.

1. I am
2. Parents are
3. Siblings are
4. Partner is
5. Children are
6. Life is



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## SECOND EXERCISE:

Compare our answers:

### Story 1

FMS: Can't be "wrong" and so makes fun of the swinging classmate, discounts, laughs and points others to escalate the put down. May even pretend to know what the problem is. The Swinger new becomes the target. FMS puts down others to make themselves "look" good/right/popular and even lie to be right.

GMS Hears the shouts, understands that pushing was a mistake, does not personalize, "I am wrong" but, "what can I learn?" May apologize and ask how to right ehe mistake, stop the swing, ask first next time. And goes away with new awareness and skills.

### Story 2

FMS I am smart because math comes easily. So, I cannot ask for help, the is for those who are not smart. I cannot study because smart people do not study. The student studies less and falls behind. My excuses are, the teacher is stupid and does not know how to explain well. I am bored because I am too smart for this class, I failed the test because I was up so late with more important homework.

FMS Wow, this is difficult. Go to the teacher and admit that I have not yet grasped the concepts and ask for additional help. Ask by new methods to study, ask parents for ways to understand they information. Fail the test, I realize that I need to study harder and ask for more help.

### Story 3

FMS I have to be seen as smart and good. Deny that there is a problem. Stuff your loneliness so as to not rock the boat. Blame this work for taking up his time.

GMS Recognize that a pattern exists that causes a problem for you. Realize that a conversation is needed to present your concern to your partner. Ask for his view of the situation. How does this lack of time together impact him. Come up with a plan to find solutions, commit to lean ring skills with the goal that growth will improve life for both and the relationship.

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### THIRD EXERCISE:

Evaluate your answers. Identify where you see “fixed” or “growth” mindset.

1. Justified your mistakes or lack of follow through
2. Pretended, put on a good face, rather than speaking your truth
3. Discounted people or situations
4. Gossiped about others
5. Isolated yourself
6. Let fear of mistakes or non-knowing stop you for taking a tasks
7. Resigned yourself to limited or uncomfortable situations
8. Saw bullying and do nothing
9. Dropped out of uncomfortable learning situations
10. Gave thanks that you are not like the “other”

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## FOURTH EXERCISE:

Circle your “growth” mindset answers. This is to make you more aware of your “water”.

1. A person has the ability to be present and generous in a relationship or does not.
2. A person has the ability to earn a good living or she does not.
3. Difficulties arise, they are valuable as they make one stronger.
4. A person has the intelligence to build a business or she does not.
5. A person has the ability to sing, draw, play a musical instrument or she does not.
6. A person has the ability to travel in the world or she does not.
7. A person has the qualities that elicit love and respect or she does not
8. Skills can be learned and developed.
9. It is important to keep ones life as stable and constant as possible.
10. One can choose qualities of character and develop them.

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## FIFTH EXERCISE:

How would you feel, think and react in these situations? Now that you understand about fixed and growth mindset, where did your reactions come from?

1. I have a friend who I have spent a fair amount of time helping. When I reached out because I was feeling the need for some help, she didn't have time to talk.
2. At the office, I am always willing to take on extra tasks or listen to the complaints of my office mates. I really needed to take an afternoon off and when I asked for help, everyone was too busy.
3. At home, I am the glue that keeps everything together. I juggle work, home, kids, activities and my husband's travel. Last week the overwhelm was too much and I just wanted some time alone. No-one stepped up to help make that happen.

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