



The Sunny Side



Volume One: Issue Six

A YEAR IN THE STATE OF PIVOT

As I write this issue of *The Sunny Side*, I am convinced that March 2020 was both yesterday and also six years ago. And I can't help but to think: *Is this what the cast of The Rocky Horror Picture Show was singing about in the "Time Warp?"* In "just a jump to the left and a step to the right," our lives turned upside down. Those of us who went into the office every day, were suddenly setting up workspaces at home. Preparing for a simple trip to the grocery store became a superhero costume sequence. And our Optimist meetings moved from restaurants, schools, and community centers to our individual homes. We put "our hands on our hips" and brought "our knees in tight" and were thrust into a state of pivot.

And a year later, we're still here. Let's reflect. Did we embrace the challenges of the last year or did we retreat from learning new skills? Did we look at others with jealousy and internalize shame or were we inspired and motivated by their examples? Did we think "I could never do that" or did we think "I can't do that yet." Carol Dweck, PhD, Lewis and Virginia Eaton Professor of Psychology, Stanford University, would argue that our approach to change comes down to the difference between a Fixed Mindset and a Growth Mindset.

YOU'RE INVITED

Combo-Zone Meeting

Date: Sat, April 24th
Time: 9:00 – 10:30 AM
Location: Virtual, Zoom

Regional Oratorical Competition:

Date: Sat, May 1st
Time: 9:00 – 10:30 AM
Location: Virtual, Zoom

3rd Quarter Conference

Date: May 8th
Location: Platteville & Virtual
[Conferences](#)

District Oratorical Competition:

Date: Sat, May 8th
Location: Platteville & Virtual

FIXED MINDSET: Intelligence is a fixed trait.

- **Goal:** The goal is to look smart at all costs. Avoid tasks that will show deficiency.
- **Effort:** Skills and intelligence should come naturally. The need for effort means a lack of talent and/or intelligence.
- **Setbacks:** Hide mistakes and deficiencies. Run from mistakes.

GROWTH MINDSET: Intelligence can be developed.

- **Goal:** The goal is to learn at all costs.
- **Effort:** Work hard. Effort is key.
- **Setbacks:** Capitalize on setbacks and confront deficiencies. Detect, process and correct mistakes.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we may have set goals for ourselves and our clubs. For those of us who logged into the Optimist International Learning Management System (LMS), we encountered a module on setting **S.M.A.R.T** goals:

- **Specific:** Identify who is involved, what will be accomplished, why it is important, and which resources will be used.
- **Measurable:** Identify how progression/accomplishment will be tracked.
- **Attainable/Achievable:** Identify how the goal will be accomplished.
- **Relevant:** Identify how this goal matters.
- **Time-based:** Identify a deadline.

How are your goals progressing? If they are anything like my goals, they aren't. But with a growth mindset, we know that now is not the time to give up. Dr. Dweck's summary of growth mindset is "Embrace learning and growth. Understand the role of effort in creating intelligence. Effort creates talent. Maintain resilience in the face of setbacks rather than running from errors."

No one is saying that the last year has been easy. But as Dr. Dweck points out, shame is not productive; it either causes us to lash out or retreat. So instead of living in shame, let's learn from the setbacks and the mistakes. It's not too late to be inspired to step outside of our comfort zones. We still have time to be successful by trying something new, putting in the effort, and continuing to work at it. We are Optimists. We don't accomplish being Optimists; we live it. We make mistakes and try again. We live each day bringing out the best in ourselves and each other.

REFERENCES:

[Carol Dweck—Google](#)
[Carol Dweck—Keynote](#)
[Carol Dweck—Potential](#)
[Grow your Brain](#)

To submit a question for the SWIS District Leadership team or to request an article topic for *The Sunny Side*, please contact Amanda.szymkowski@gmail.com