

I am me, and licuri is small coconut between mindsets, attractions and the little buddha on duty



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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the relevance of mental attitudes, exploring the distinction between the fixed mindset, characterized by the belief in immutable abilities, and the growth mindset, which promotes the belief in the possibility of development through effort and learning. Based on a comprehensive literature review, the article investigates the philosophical, conceptual and practical origins of mindset, addressing the evolution of human thought throughout history. The influence of ancient Greek philosophers such as the Stoics is examined, highlighting the value of

accepting challenges as opportunities for learning and growth. In addition, the Law of Attraction approach is discussed in relation to the growth mindset, emphasizing the importance of maintaining positive thoughts and proactive actions to achieve goals. The influences of religions are also explored, highlighting how Buddhist teachings and the search for self-knowledge can promote personal transformation and continuous development. However, the article also warns about how social comparison and the search for external validation on social media can undermine self-esteem and self-development. Similarly, the superficiality and lack of scientific basis in some self-help books can result in frustration and discourage continuous effort. Based on the concepts revisited, this study concludes on the importance of recognizing both positive and negative sources of influence and adopting a balanced and critical approach to cultivating a mindset that values continuous learning, effort and resilience in the pursuit of goals and personal development.

Keywords: Mindset, Personal development, Philosophy, Law of attraction, Buddhism, Beliefs.

1 INTRODUCTION

"Oh dear... Oh, life... Oh bad luck! That's not going to work." The unforgettable jargon of the hyena Hardy, a character created in the 1960s by the American production company Hanna-Barbera, revealed an exaggerated pessimism in the face of any challenge that was proposed to him. Although she is remembered as a cartoon, humorous, childish, her attitude reflects a mentality that tends to avoid personal and professional growth, restricting itself to the *status quo* and the fear of facing difficulties. In close analogy, Hardy's vision highlights a crucial dimension that shapes our perceptions, behaviors, and achievements: the so-called mindset, and *which, in this case, can be called* the fixed mindset, a powerful inhibitor to progress and significant achievements.

On the other hand, there is *the growth mindset* that encourages the search for challenges and the belief in the capacity for development. Individuals with this *mindset* see obstacles as opportunities



for learning and expansion, embracing the idea that skills and talents can be improved over time. Not only does this lead to continued growth, but also to building resilience, self-confidence, and a proactive approach in the face of adversity, beating their chests, thinking, and screaming: I am me and licuri is small coconut.

This article will address the relevance *of mindset in the personal and professional spheres, highlighting the influence of mental attitudes and the importance of cultivating a growth mindset*, emphasizing that the belief in the possibility of continuous development is key to achieving significant achievements. Adopting a *growth mindset* not only boosts goal achievement but also fosters resilience, self-confidence, and the ability to face challenges with determination and perseverance in achieving goals and individual development

In this study, a comprehensive bibliographic review will be used as a methodological basis, which will encompass a critical and synthetic analysis of relevant research, theories and literary works. The choice of this approach is justified by the desire to compile and synthesize the views and findings of diverse scholars, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how the topic has emerged as a psychological construct of interest, providing a new lens through which to examine how beliefs about abilities and potential affect our life trajectories. The literature review, therefore, will allow us to explore the various aspects that permeate this complex theme, enabling a detailed examination of its social, psychological and cultural implications.

In the following chapters, this article will explore the theoretical foundations of the *fixed and growth mindset*, analyze its influence in educational and professional contexts, and examine its implications for personal development. Practical approaches to fostering a growth mindset will also be discussed , as well as potential challenges and ethical considerations associated with the concept. Through this analysis, it is hoped to contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of the *growth mindset* on the formation of mental attitudes, providing insights for its application in various spheres of life.

2 MATCHDAY 2

2.1 A QUICK TRIP INTO HUMAN BEHAVIOR

The study of human mental behavior and attitudes dates back to ancient times, but the scientific and systematized approach to these fields has evolved over the centuries. It is not possible to specify when the interest in the subject began, however, we can highlight some historical milestones and important figures in the development of the study of behavior and mental attitudes. In Ancient Greece, for example, philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle made significant contributions to the understanding of the human mind and behavior. Plato, in his allegory of the cave, book VII of *The Republic*, illustrates the journey of knowledge and the transformation of the human perspective. His



thoughts in this work present the idea that by leaving the cave and being exposed to sunlight, the prisoners begin to realize that the shadows were only limited representations of true reality, they experience a transformation of perspective and begin to see the world in a more comprehensive way. (Plato, 2014). The philosopher also reflects that the ability to learn already exists in the soul.

In ancient China, thinkers such as Confucius and Lao-Zi (or Lao-Tzu, or Lao-Tze) also discussed issues related to the mind, behavior, and morality. His teachings have influenced the understanding of human development and ethical attitudes. Confucius emphasizes the importance of continuous learning and reflection as a means of developing the mind and attitudes. According to the philosopher, the mere acquisition of knowledge is not enough; It is also essential to apply critical reflection to fully understand the teachings and internalize them in our attitudes and actions. The one who learns but does not think is lost, the one who thinks but does not learn is in danger (Confucius, 1979).

In the Renaissance, the study of psychology began to gain prominence, with thinkers such as René Descartes exploring the interaction between the mind and body. During the Enlightenment, philosophers such as John Locke and David Hume also discussed the nature of the human mind. The nineteenth century witnessed the beginnings of psychology as a scientific discipline. Wilhelm Wundt, often considered the father of experimental psychology, founded the first psychology laboratory in Leipzig, Germany, in 1879. He focused on studying mental processes and perception (Araújo, 2009). Other areas of knowledge have made contributions on the development of personal behavior and transformations of mental attitudes. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, in his work, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, emphasizes the importance of self-transformation and self-overcoming limitations. Zarathustra, a character in the book, challenges conventional beliefs and values, encouraging critical reflection and the search for deeper understanding. The work also explores the idea that suffering and challenges are an integral part of personal growth and fulfillment (Nietzsche, 2017)

The twentieth century brought a number of advances in psychology. Sigmund Freud, in his work *The Interpretation of Dreams*, developed psychoanalysis, exploring the influence of the unconscious on behavior, motivation and mental processes (Gomes, 2003). Between the 1950s and 1960s, cognitive psychology emerged, focusing on mental processes such as memory, thought, and perception, with a direct influence, in this approach, of researchers such as Jean Piaget and Albert Bandura (Castañon, 2005). Also noteworthy is positive psychology, promoted by Martin Seligman, which seeks to understand people's healthy functioning and development, including positive attitudes and well-being (Paludo & Koller, 2007). Beyond psychology, as in the centuries that preceded, philosophy remained on its trajectory over behavior. Michel Foucault, a French philosopher, known for his critical analyses of power, knowledge, social institutions and subjectivity, explores in his work, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, his methodology for analyzing discourses and knowledge throughout



history. According to the author, truths and knowledge are not fixed or universal, but are social constructions that vary over time and context (Foucault, 2008), demonstrating that supposedly fixed beliefs about abilities and potential can be questioned and deconstructed, opening space for a more flexible and dynamic understanding.

While studies of human mental behavior and attitudes have evolved considerably over the centuries, they continue to develop and diversify, addressing topics ranging from neuroscience to positive psychology to mental health. It was not the object of this work to go through all the elements and periods in which behavioral development has been studied, but to demonstrate that the theme has always been present in the most diverse thoughts, productions, places and disciplinary fields, forming a kind of theoretical-scientific framework for new research and discoveries.

2.2 MANY MINDS IN ONE BODY

The purpose of life is a deep and complex topic that has been addressed by philosophers, thinkers, and scholars of human behavior throughout history. Views on life, one's goals, and/or conceptions of happiness and success can vary widely, depending on cultural, philosophical, and individual perspectives. There is no clear regulation, map or instruction manual. Life is a sequence of acts and facts, composed of variables, mostly uncontrollable, that reveal themselves without any warning or planning. It is the human factor, or rather, individual behavior, that will shape the way in which the various challenges will be faced and how meanings will be attributed to this existence.

In this sense, the study of *mindset*, or mental attitude, has gained prominence in the areas of psychology, education, and human development, having its roots in the pioneering research of Carol Dweck, an American psychologist who has dedicated decades to investigating beliefs about abilities and potential and how these beliefs affect behaviors, achievements, and individual growth. The concept of mindset *encompasses two distinct mindsets*: the fixed mindset and the *growth* mindset.

The *fixed mindset*, as described by Dweck (2006), is characterized by the belief that personal skills and characteristics are immutable, leading individuals to avoid challenges and seek only activities in which they can guarantee immediate success. On the other hand, the *growth mindset* involves the belief that development is possible through effort, learning, and persistence. The ability to face challenges, learn from mistakes, and seek opportunities for growth are essential components of this type of attitude (Dweck, 2006). The *mindset* perspective has profound implications for individuals' personal and professional lives. In educational settings, a *growth mindset* is associated with a higher intrinsic motivation to learn and a more resilient approach to obstacles (Seligman, 2018). This same principle extends to the professional context, where individuals with a *growth mindset* are more likely to persist in their goals and seek development opportunities, even in the face of challenges (Dweck, 2006).



2.3 TURNING THE KEY

The modern literature reaffirms the possibility of the evolution of mental attitudes, although, recognizing that it is not exactly a process that occurs very quickly, effort and persistence are required. Dweck (2006) points out that, although people are different from each other, in many aspects, each one is capable, through effort and experience, of improving and developing. The starting point is in what the Greek philosophers called *pistis* (faith, belief) and played an important role in understanding reality and knowledge. Beliefs play a key role in personal and professional development, influencing attitudes, behaviors, and achievements. Believing in oneself, one's talents, and abilities is a central characteristic for success in various spheres of life. However, negative beliefs, such as limiting beliefs, can act as hindrances, restricting potential and perpetuating harmful thought patterns.

Positive beliefs refer to conviction in abilities, capabilities, and possibilities for growth. These beliefs drive motivation, resilience, and the pursuit of self-development. In the professional context, individuals with positive beliefs are more likely to face challenges, learn from mistakes, and persist in their goals (Dweck, 2006). Limiting beliefs, on the other hand, are those that restrict potential by creating self-imposed barriers based on negative self-perceptions (Louden, 2018). They are imposing thoughts that are usually created in childhood and developed throughout life. They end up becoming our own truths and, over time, design our personality (Duarte, 2022). These beliefs can undermine self-confidence and hinder the pursuit of new opportunities.

Positive beliefs can manifest as the conviction that effort leads to success, the ability to learn from challenges, and confidence in abilities to overcome obstacles. For example, believing that continuous learning is valuable and that mistakes are opportunities for growth demonstrates a positive belief in personal and professional development (Dweck, 2006).

Limiting beliefs, on the other hand, can manifest as fear of failure, doubt about one's own abilities, and the belief that success is unattainable. For example, the belief that "I'll never be good enough for this promotion" or "I'm not talented enough for this" or "Oh dear... Oh, life... Oh bad luck! That's not going to work," exemplifies limiting beliefs that can hinder professional progress.

The transformation from a *fixed mindset* to a *growth mindset* involves identifying and challenging limiting beliefs. Awareness of beliefs that restrict potential is the first step towards change (Louden, 2018). Critical self-analysis, questioning, and replacing limiting beliefs with positive affirmations are effective strategies to promote *mindset change* (Dweck, 2006).

2.4 A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING

History, and its developments in various areas of knowledge, reveals itself as a valuable source capable of providing us with deep insights into modern problems and helping us understand the development of the human being. By examining events, social changes, political decisions, cultural



transformations, and individual trajectories over time, we can gain a more comprehensive perspective on contemporary issues and understand how we arrived at the current situation. In the study of mental attitudes, it is no different. From the classical Greek philosophers, to the Hanna-Barbera drawings, there are valuable lessons. A closer look can draw important lessons. As previously stated, this work does not intend to address all aspects, facts, thinkers, etc., but to capture some excerpts in order to support the line of thought outlined in this study. Due to its natural limitations, space and time, we will address in this text some impressions about the development of positive attitudes, from the perspective of philosophy, the law of attraction and religions.

2.4.1 From the Time of the Cave

Greek philosophy offers several approaches that we can relate to the formation of a growth *mindset*. One of the most relevant philosophies in this context is Stoicism. Stoicism is a school of thought that emphasizes, as its main goal, to face ordinary challenges in a positive way and to deal with the great frustrations of life (Lebell, 2006) using self-mastery as a great virtue, and the search for personal development. Other teachings are linked to the importance of controlling our emotional reactions to situations and learning to control our reaction to challenges and obstacles, rather than being overwhelmed by negative emotions. This approach allows for a more rational and constructive response, encouraging learning and growth. The Stoics also argued that we should focus only on what is in our control, such as our actions and attitudes (Natta, 2021), as it reminds us of the importance of not wasting energy on things we cannot change, but rather investing our effort in developing our skills and capabilities.

According to Natta (2021), the Stoic philosophy of "amor fati", an expression created by Nietzsche, but in total consonance with Stoicism, involves accepting and embracing fate, regardless of the circumstances, encourages the acceptance of difficulties as opportunities for learning and growth. Instead of resisting challenges, we can embrace them as part of our development journey. Also according to the author, the Stoics emphasized the importance of self-discipline and self-improvement, valuing continuous effort to improve and develop our skills. The Stoics viewed adversity as an opportunity to strengthen character and practice resilience, as they encouraged seeing challenges as opportunities for personal growth, encouraging learning and overcoming.

2.4.2 The Law of Attraction

The Law of Attraction is a popular belief and concept that suggests that our thoughts and emotions can directly influence the outcomes we experience in life (Mendes, 2023). According to this theory, if you hold positive thoughts and focus on your goals and desires, you will attract positive results and achieve what you want. The Law of Attraction encourages the maintenance of positive



thoughts and the cultivation of an optimistic mindset, where believing in one's abilities and having confidence in progress is essential to face challenges and achieve goals (Dweck, 2006). It also emphasizes the importance of visualization and clear goal setting, promoting a greater commitment to personal development (Canfield & Switzer, 2011).

The Law of Attraction often highlights that you need to maintain a constant focus on your goals and work consistently to achieve them. This is in line with the *growth mindset*, which values self-discipline, persistence, and continuous effort to improve (Dweck, 2006). It also suggests that believing in positive outcomes can help overcome obstacles and adversities. This resilience in the face of difficulties is an essential characteristic, which sees challenges as learning opportunities (Dweck, 2006). Another *insight* is related to the fact that emphasizing the power of thoughts usually defends the importance of action, valuing the active search for opportunities for learning and improvement (Canfield & Switzer, 2011). Belief in the Law of Attraction can directly influence a person's attitudes and beliefs. Those who believe in this concept may be more likely to take a more proactive approach to developing their skills and pursuing goals (Dweck, 2006).

It is important to note that the Law of Attraction is a controversial approach and lacks robust scientific backing (Mendes, 2023). Still, according to the author, while many people report benefits from practicing the Law of Attraction, others consider its results to be inconsistent. Therefore, it is essential to take a critical approach and evaluate what works best in terms of personal development and *growth mindset*.

2.4.3 Plain and Simple

Religions have several connections and influences on the *growth mindset*, emphasizing values such as resilience in the face of challenges, the search for knowledge, personal transformation, and the building of supportive communities. The approach of facing adversity with perseverance and learning from it resembles the concept of continuous growth. The quest for knowledge and wisdom, intrinsic to many religions, mirrors the emphasis on constant learning. The stimulation of self-discovery and personal transformation in religions can be compared to the search for personal evolution. The relationship of community and cooperation fostered by religions also converges with the idea of sharing experiences and knowledge, characteristic of the *growth mindset*. The acceptance of human imperfections and changes, taught by some religions, resonates with the acceptance of failures as learning opportunities.

In addition, the cultivation of gratitude and generosity present in religious practices aligns with a positive focus and desire to share. These intersections between religion *and growth mindset* vary by religious tradition and individual interpretations. However, religious influences in promoting positive



mental attitudes are evident and can play a significant role in cultivating a mindset of personal growth and continuous development.

Buddhism, for example, as a spiritual tradition, offers a number of teachings that can positively influence the growth mindset by sharing similarities with the principles underlying that mindset. Many of the Buddhist concepts, such as the acceptance of impermanence and the practice of mindfulness, align with the pursuit of personal growth and ongoing development. The idea of impermanence, present in Buddhism, emphasizes the transitory nature of difficulties, valuing learning (Paldron, 2003). The practice of mindfulness, considered the heart of Buddhist meditation, is a simple concept, and its benefits are felt through practice. According to Kabat-Zinn (2020), it is about directing thoughts and attention in a specific way: with purpose, in the now, and without any kind of judgment. The author also points out that this type of attention provides greater awareness, clarity and acceptance of the reality of the present moment. It serves as a warning that life develops only in moments (present, now). If we are not fully present for many of these moments, we may not only miss out on what is most valuable in life, but also fail to realize the richness and depth of our possibilities for growth and transformation (Kabat-Zinn, 2020).

The Buddhist emphasis on compassion, self-knowledge, and non-judgment reflects the importance of positive mental attitudes. The practice of compassion can promote personal growth by encouraging collaboration and mutual empathy. The search for self-knowledge through meditation, which reflects the work of internal self-repair, contributes to identifying and overcoming personal limitations. By cultivating non-judgment, Buddhist principles favor exploration and self-development. The cultivation of the mind reflects the pursuit of personal expansion, while the pursuit of the middle path fosters a balance in the approach to learning and growth (Dalai Lama, 1998). In summary, the affinities between Buddhist teachings and the growth *mindset* highlight the relevance of religions in promoting positive mental attitudes, encouraging personal transformation, and the constant pursuit of personal and spiritual development.

2.5 A NECESSARY ALERT

The rise of social media has significantly impacted people's mental attitudes, often resulting in negative influences on the development of a growth *mindset*. Social networks, while having the potential to connect individuals and provide access to information, often promote social comparison and self-promotion, and can lead to the formation of limiting beliefs, where individuals believe that only extraordinary results are valued, inhibiting the appreciation of incremental progress. In addition, the search for external validation on social networks can undermine self-esteem and the development of a positive view of oneself, in a current contrary to self-development and acceptance.



At the same time, the proliferation of self-help books with superficial theories and no scientific basis can have a negative influence on people's mental attitudes. Many of these books offer simplistic solutions to complex problems, not addressing the inherent difficulties of growth. These shallow approaches can result in frustration when solutions don't yield the expected results, discouraging continued effort and perseverance. In addition, the absence of scientific foundation can lead to disbelief in the proposed strategies and undermine confidence in one's own abilities, which is counterproductive to the development of a *growth mindset*.

For Brinkmann (2022), both self-help books and autobiographies have as their main point the "self" as the most important aspect of life, ignoring any balance between integrity and moral values. The author, still in criticism, states that the self-help industry is a reflection of an extremely consumerist society, in which products (in this case books) promise to help readers find themselves, but promote the culture of "constant and infinite improvement" endowed with mobility, but not stability.

The negative influence of social media and self-help books reflects the importance of informed and critical approaches in developing growth mindsets. Constant comparison on social media can inhibit the acceptance of failures and the pursuit of learning, while excessive focus on superficial self-help solutions can undermine the resilience and determination needed to face challenges and achieve goals, so it is crucial to adopt a balanced approach based on promoting positive mental attitudes and cultivating a *healthy growth mindset*.

3 FINAL THOUGHTS

The study of mental attitudes of growth has been shown to be crucial in several spheres of life, directly influencing the personal, professional and social development of individuals. The analysis of the philosophical roots, the connection with contemporary theories and the religious influences show the consistency and scope of this construct throughout history. The understanding that the fixed mindset can inhibit progress and the achievement of meaningful achievements, while the growth mindset encourages resilience, self-discipline, and the pursuit of self-development, demonstrates the relevance of this approach.

Awareness of limiting beliefs and the willingness to challenge them are key steps in the process of transforming from a fixed mindset *to a growth mindset*. An emphasis on self-discipline, resilience, and the pursuit of learning, aligned with philosophical principles, religious practices, and a focus on the Law of Attraction, can provide a solid foundation for fostering constructive mental attitudes.

By understanding the historical, philosophical, and contemporary influences, as well as the challenges posed by social media and self-help books, we are empowered to take a critical and informed approach to fostering a mindset that values effort, learning, and self-development. In this



sense, we have gone from a mere stereotype complaining at the top of our lungs "Oh dear... Oh, life... Oh, bad luck! This is not going to work" for a state of more significant individual achievements, contributing to a more resilient, collaborative, and progress-oriented society, because at the end of the journey, one can hear in unison "I am me, and licuri is a small coconut."



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