

## Introduction

- Mindset orientation refers to the beliefs that underlie the causes of one's abilities.
- Dweck (2006) suggests that some individuals exhibit a **fixed mindset**, believing their abilities are unchangeable. Others tend to exhibit a **growth mindset**, believing their abilities can be developed through practice.
- **Growth mindset is associated with positive outcomes** including motivation, resilience, and goal achievement (Dweck, 2006).
- Additionally, possessing a **growth mindset may alleviate anxiety and depression** among high-risk adolescents (Schleider & Weisz, 2016).
- Recent research has found that a **growth mindset is associated with using positive coping strategies** and fewer negative coping strategies (Janssen & van Atteveldt, 2023; Henshaw et al., 2023).

*We hypothesize that growth mindset will be positively correlated with positive coping behaviors and inversely correlated with negative coping behaviors.*

## Methods

- **Participants:**  $N = 115$  (75 females); Age  $M = 28.02$ ,  $SD = 10.30$
- **Procedure & Materials:** A survey was administered using snowball sampling methods. Qualtrics XM survey platform to collect the following data:
  - **Mindset Survey (20 items, Dweck, 2006);** Higher scores indicate a growth mindset and lower scores indicated a fixed mindset.
    - Growth Mindset: "No matter how much intelligence you have, you can always change it quite a bit."
    - Fixed Mindset: "Your intelligence is something very basic about you that you can't change very much."
  - **Brief COPE Inventory (14 items; Carver, 1997)**
    - See all COPE categories listed in Table 1.

## Results

Table 1. Correlations between Mindset Orientation and Coping Behaviors

	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>Mindset Orientation</i> ( $M = 2.01$ , $SD = .38$ )
<b>Positive coping behaviors</b>		
Active Coping	2.92 (.82)	$r = .16^\dagger$ , $p = .089$
Emotional Support	2.67 (.87)	$r = .02$ , $p = .870$
Instrumental Support	2.67 (.95)	$r = .05$ , $p = .608$
Positive reframing	2.93 (.79)	$r = .17^\dagger$ , $p = .065$
Planning	3.00 (.86)	$r = .13$ , $p = .154$
Humor	2.32 (.99)	$r = -.04$ , $p = .691$
Religion	2.28 (1.14)	$r = -.01$ , $p = .953$
Acceptance	2.86 (.80)	$r = -.07$ , $p = .468$
<b>Negative Coping Behaviors</b>		
Distraction	2.70 (.84)	$r = -.14$ , $p = .137$
Denial	1.53 (.85)	$r = -.32^{***}$ , $p < .001$
Substance Use	1.49 (.84)	$r = -.16^\dagger$ , $p = .085$
Cognitive Disengagement	1.57 (.81)	$r = -.26^{**}$ , $p = .005$
Self-Blame	2.41 (.96)	$r = -.12$ , $p = .199$
Venting	2.26 (.92)	$r = -.27^{**}$ , $p = .003$

Note. Higher scores on mindset orientation indicate higher growth mindset.  
 $^\dagger p < .10$ ,  $*p < .05$ ,  $**p < .01$ ,  $***p < .001$ .

## Discussion

- **Participants with a growth mindset tend to avoid using denial, cognitive disengagement, and venting to cope with stress.**
- They see stress as a challenge and might be less likely to avoid or complain about it, but that doesn't mean they are more likely to implement a positive coping strategy.
- Growth mindset is only **trending with active coping and positive reframing**, which are both beneficial coping strategies.
- Ultimately, **growth mindset is associated with fewer negative coping behaviors**, rather than more positive ones, reinforcing findings from Yeager & Dweck, (2020) and Henshaw et al. (2023) who suggest that poor coping skills might result when someone has a fixed mindset.

## Future Directions for Research

1. **Coping behaviors are not always "positive" or "negative".** Strategies could be studied in different contexts. Tran et al. (2023) suggests that venting, for instance, can be a positive coping strategy for those who feel that they have low emotional support.
2. **Mindset orientation should be examined in the context of different situations and stressors.** It is clear that growth mindset has positive effects in education (Yeager & Dweck, 2020) and emotional understanding (Henshaw, et al., 2023), but can it have a benefit in the workforce, relationships, or parenting?
3. **Interactive effects of mindset orientation and personality should be examined.** Future studies might explore mindset orientation or coping behaviors under different conditions, such as within individuals demonstrating narcissistic traits.

## Take Home Messages

**Mindset orientation shapes individuals' perception of their ability to develop their skills and learn.**

**Possessing a growth mindset is associated with fewer negative coping behaviors, such as denial, disengagement, and venting.**

**Further investigation on the association between mindset and coping can help facilitate initiatives designed to target stress management and resilience in adults.**