Bill Wolfson
Self-Theories … by Carol Dweck
Their Role in Motivation, Personality, Self-esteem, and Development

Goal of the book	To ask: what is the most useful way of thinking about intelligence and what are the consequences of adopting one view or another?
Meaning Systems	How people create different meaning systems about themselves (their self-theories) that create different psychological worlds, leading them to think, feel, and act differently in identical situations.
Hall Mark of Success	1. Love learning 2. Seek challenges 3. Value effort 4. Persist in the face of obstacles
Two self-theories	1. **The theory of fixed intelligence …** Some people believe that their intelligence is a fixed trait. They have a certain amount of it and that's it. She calls it the **entity theory**. This view has many repercussions for students. It can make students worry about how much of this fixed intelligence they have, and it can make them interested first and foremost in looking and felling like they have enough. The entity theory, then, is a system that requires a diet of easy successes. Challenges are a threat to self-esteem. 2. **The theory of malleable intelligence…** Some people their intelligence is not a fixed trait that they simple possess, but something they can cultivate through learning. She calls this **incremental theory** People who hold this theory do not deny that there are differences among people in how much they know or in how quickly they master certain things at present. They focus on the idea that everyone, with effort and guidance can increase their intellectual abilities. **Self-esteem** is completely different in the incremental system. It is not something we are going to give people by telling them about their high intelligence. It is something we equip them to get for themselves- by teaching them to value learning over the appearance of smartness, to relish challenges and effort, and to

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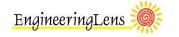|	use errors as routes to mastery.
Her research challenges several beliefs	She calls these "master-oriented" Her research **challenges several beliefs** that are common in society: 1. Students with high ability are more likely to display master-oriented qualities. 2. Success in school directly fosters master-oriented qualities. 3. Praise, particularly praising a student' intelligence encourages master-oriented qualities. 4. Students' confidence in their intelligence is the key to master-oriented qualities.
When failure undermines and when failure motivates	Many of the most accomplished students shied away for challenges and fell apart in the face of setbacks. Many less skilled students seize challenges with relish and were energized by setbacks. .. **How can this be?** Two distinct reactions to failure, **which we call helpless and master-oriented patterns** When monitoring students' problem-solving strategies and their statements as they went from success to failure, two patterns emerge. **The helpless group** quickly began to denigrate their abilities and blame their intelligence for the failure, saying things like " I guess I'm not very smart", " I never did have a very good memory", and "I'm no good at things like this". Not only do the children loss faith in their ability to succeed at this task in the future, but they also lost perspective on the successes they had achieved in the past. The **master-oriented group** did not blame anything. They began issuing instructions to themselves on how they could improve their performance. **They were not seeing failure as an indictment of themselves.**
Coming relatively easy	Bight students in the early grades can achieve success easily and when faced with challenges in mid-grades can begin to fail if they are part of the "helpless group" It is important to understand that the "helpless response, if it is a habitual response to challenge, will not just limit students achievement, but also achievements of their own goals.

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Goals Both goals are normal & fuel achievement.	There are two goals: • **Performance goals** … is about winning positive judgments of your competence and avoiding negative ones. • **Learning goals** is about increasing your competence … a desire to get smarter.
Goals create helpless versus master-oriented responses	When children are focused on measuring themselves for their performance, failure is more likely to provoke a helpless response. When children are instead focused on learning, failure is likely to provoke continued effort.
Is intelligence fixed or changeable?	Research found that the more students held an entity theories of intelligence the more likely they were to choose a performance goal, where the more they held an incremental theory, the more likely they were to choose the learning goal.
Effort	Students who embrace the **entity theory** believe that if you have to work hard at something, it means you're not good at it. If your good at something, you shouldn't need effort. What doe this mean for students confronting a difficult task? This exactly when high effort is needed. Yet what a conflict this poses for students with an entity theory pursuing a performance goal and eager to show high ability. High effort may be necessary for success on the task, but high effort will automatically spell low ability.
When do I feel Smart?	**Entity Theory**: • When I don't do mistakes. • When I turn in my paper first. • When I get easy work. **Incremental theory:** • When I don't know how to do it and its pretty hard and I figure it out without anybody telling me. • When I'm doing schoolwork because I want to learn how to get smart. • When I'm reading a hard book. It is becoming common practice in much of our society to praise students for their performance on easy tasks, to tell them they are smart when they do something quickly and perfectly.

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	When we do this we are not teaching them to welcome challenge and learn from errors. We are teaching them that easy success means they are intelligent and, by implication, that errors and effort mean they are not. **What should we do if students have had an easy success and come to us expecting praise?** We can apologize for wasting their time and direct them to something more challenging. In this way, we may begin to teach them that a meaningful success requires effort.
When Confidence and Success are not enough. *… when they are not facing difficulties.*	Within an entity theory framework, no matter what your confidence is, failure and difficulty still imply low intelligence. The whole framework with its emphasis on measurement and judgment gives meaning to negative outcomes (and to effort) that in undermining to students --- even if they enter the situation feeling fine about their intelligence. What appears to be important here is not the confidence you bring to a situation, as the ability to maintain a confident and nondefensive stance in the face of obstacles. This is much more difficult to do in an entity-theory framework. Training that gave students just success experiences did not help them to cope with failure, even though they showed confidence and enthusiasm while that success lasted. They still interpreted failure as an indictment of their ability and showed a clear helpless response. In contact, training that gave students a new meaning for failure succeeded in helping them cope with failure far more effectively that they had before. Many of them, in fact, began to look quite mastery-oriented.

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