



## SELF-CONFIDENCE & COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### Work Sheet 3

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In this work sheet you will focus on ways to develop a growth mindset. There are many similarities between a growth mindset and a task orientation, but a growth mindset focuses specifically on how we understand learning and improvement. Read the following 5 principles and consider how you can incorporate them into your life. Try and take on the challenges suggested with each principle, if you feel ready to do so. You can just start with one, and build up to the others.

#### 1. Stop thinking “I can’t”

If you find yourself avoiding certain activities because you don’t think you can do them, question why this is. What is the evidence for this? Have you ever done this before? Have you done it before and it didn’t go well? What can you learn from that? What might a little more effort, concentration, or self-belief do to change the outcome?

**Challenge:** revisit an activity you find difficult and that you often tell yourself you “can’t” do (this could be anything – from a particular dance genre to a funding application). Approach it with a curious, open mindset so that you don’t place unnecessary expectations on yourself or the activity.

#### 2. Add “yet”

When you find yourself thinking, “I can’t do it”, simply add “yet” to the end of the sentence. Remind yourself that you are still learning and developing in this area. Saying “I can’t do it yet” tells your brain that you fully expect to master the skill soon, and you are then more likely to fulfil your expectations!

**Challenge:** as you revisit the above activity, keep the word “yet” in mind to counter any automatic negative thoughts. You may need to say it to yourself over and over again!

### 3. It feels hard because it is hard!

Sometimes, we convince ourselves that we are finding something hard because we aren't any good and we don't have the skills or talent required. But in reality, things are usually hard because they're new to us and we haven't done them before. Developing new skills can be challenging, but it stretches us and enables us to develop. Life would be pretty boring if everything was easy.

**Challenge:** revisit those ideas about success from Work Sheet 2. Do they reflect any other unhelpful beliefs around success, failure, and self-worth? For example, is your sense of self-worth strongly linked to your accomplishments? If so, you may find it hard when you struggle with things, and may find yourself trying to avoid them because they compromise your self-worth. Spend some time reflecting on these beliefs. Where do you think they have come from? What are the advantages and disadvantages of living by each of these beliefs? Can you come up with some alternative beliefs?

### 4. How can you fail better?

While I don't like the word 'fail', I do like the idea of failing better. Ultimately it means learning from our mistakes instead of walking away and never trying again. Next time you make a mistake, consider how you can use that experience to improve. What can you learn from the mistake? Can you ask for feedback? Can you try a different solution? Can you work on something with a colleague, friend or mentor?

**Challenge:** think back to a recent 'failure'. How did you react to it? What did you tell yourself? How did that make you feel? Now that you have gained some time and space from the situation, can you look at it differently? Can you see it from a different perspective?

### 5. Keep trying new things

Getting out of our comfort zone more often can be so good for us. Trying new things reminds us that we are capable and curious, helps us to get out of habitual patterns and behaviours, and expands our sense of self and who we could be.

**Challenge:** try something new that you have always wanted to do, even if it scares you a little. It doesn't have to be related to dance, but it needs to be in the stretch zone that was introduced in Video 3. Push yourself a little, expand your horizons, and enjoy the confidence boost it brings. Can you apply that same brave and curious approach to your work, or other areas of your life? Do you feel more confident if you are exploring rather than trying to be perfect?