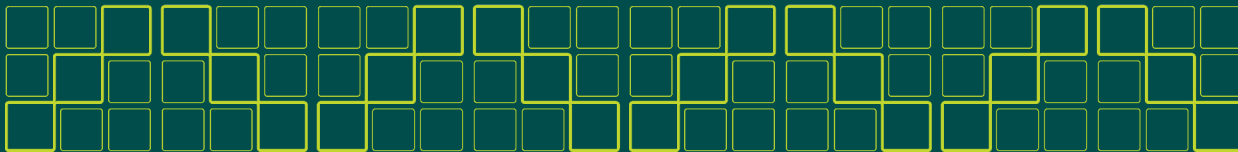


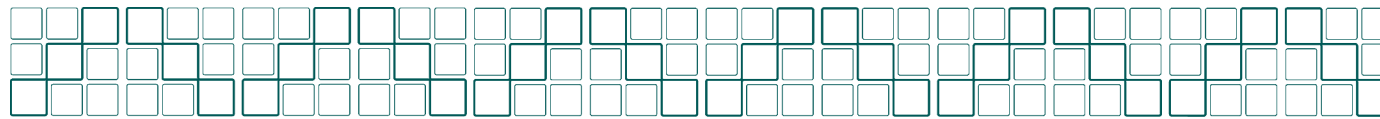
---

# Thoughts On Being Happy

Sharon L. Milgram, PhD

Director, Office of Intramural Training & Education, NIH  
milgrams@od.nih.gov





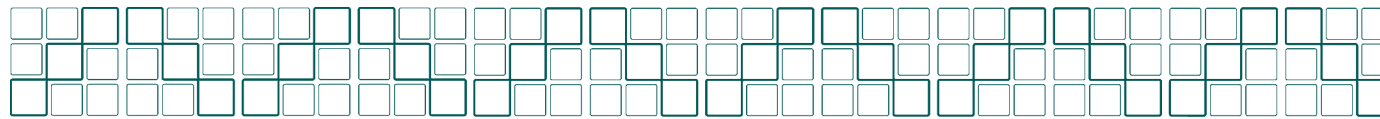
# My Career Path

- Three different jobs
  - Physical Therapist, Welkind Rehabilitation Hospital (1984 – 1986)
  - Professor, UNC-CH (1994 – 2007)
  - Director, NIH OITE (2007 – present)
- Using similar skills - to varying degrees and in different ways
  - Analytical and problem-solving
  - Interpersonal
  - Communication
- Each transition was difficult in the same ways
  - Was I certain I wanted the job?
  - Could I let go of what I already had?
  - Was I “good enough” to get the job, keep the job, and thrive in the job?



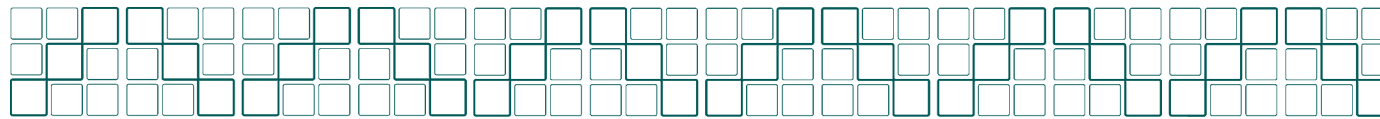
# Things That We All Worry About At Times

- Competitive nature of our work
- Career decision-making
- Concerns regarding work-life balance
- Stress in workplace relationships



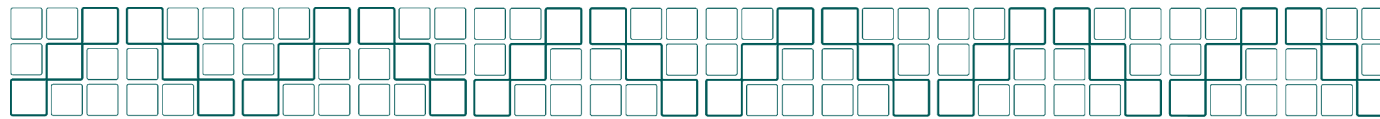
# Things That We All Worry About At Times

- Competitive nature of our work – *Am I good enough?*
- Career decision-making – *Will I get what I want?*
- Concerns regarding work-life balance – *Can I have it all?*
- Stress in workplace relationships – *Do I fit in?*



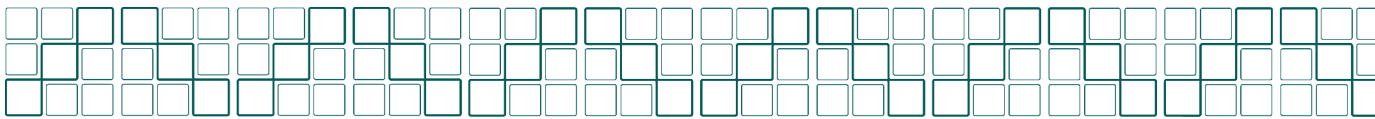
# A Strategy For Success

- Carefully consider who we are, where we are heading and why we are heading there
- Identify the types of experiences likely to get us there
- Cultivate a set of attitudes and behaviors likely to sustain us through the process
- Find resources and mentors to nurture us through the process

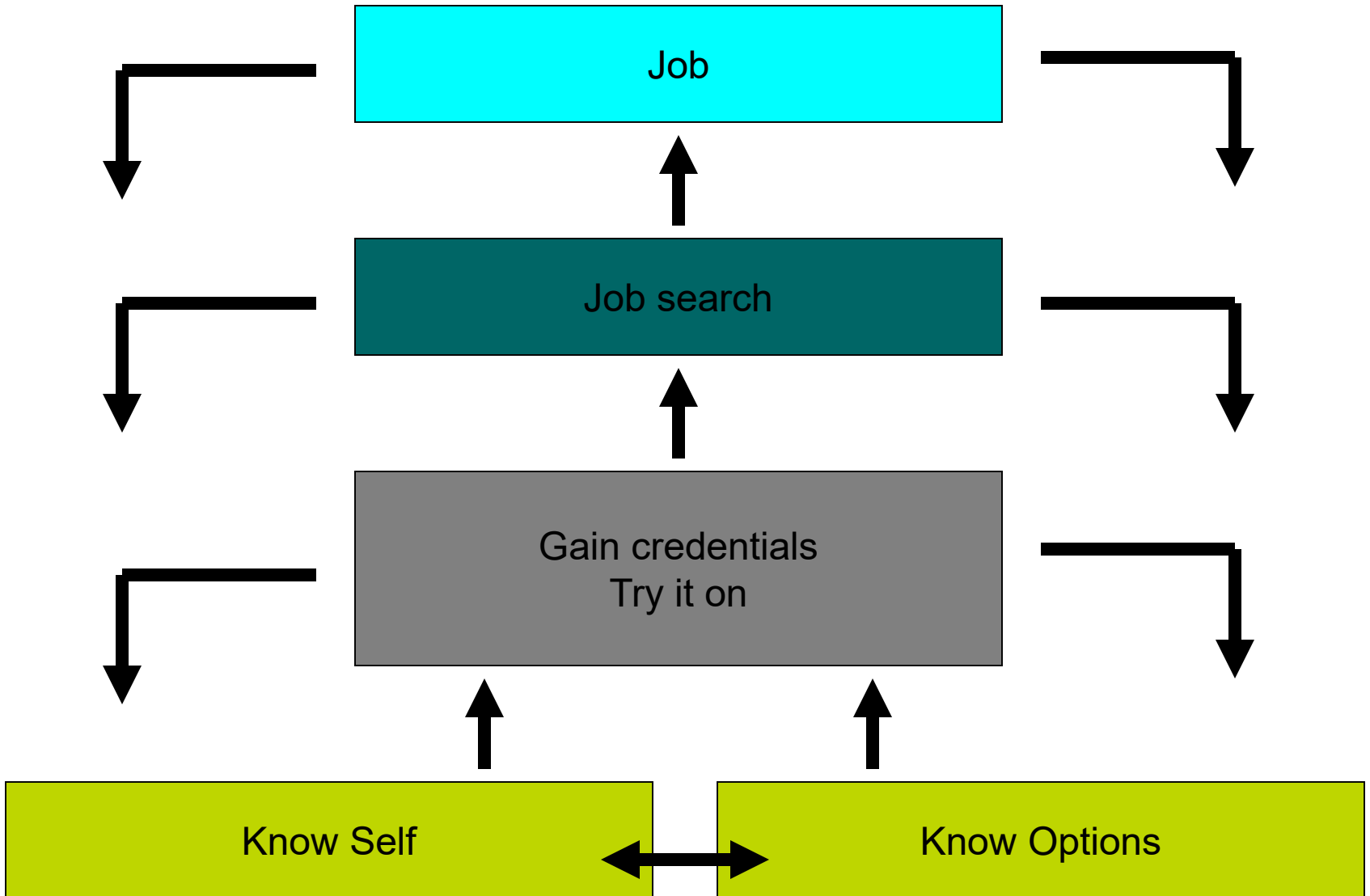


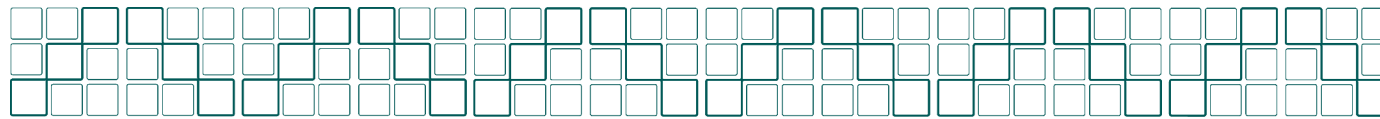
# Career Readiness

- Knowing how to:
  - Explore our career options
  - Get the education we need to pursue careers that interest us
  - Find work and volunteer opportunities that help us “try on” a career and gain credentials to “have” that career
  - Prepare professional communication and job search documents
  - Interview successfully
  - Be self-aware and grow in the job(s) we choose



# What This Looks Like





# Career Readiness

## ■ Knowing how to:

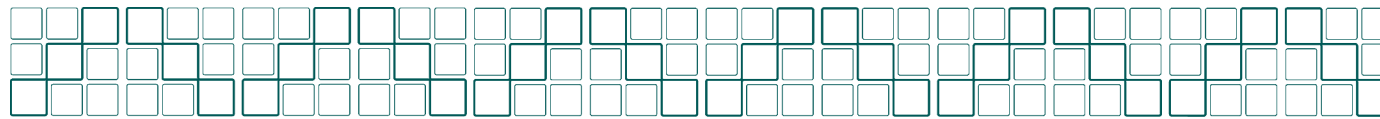
- ❑ Explore our career options
- ❑ Get the education we need to pursue careers that interest us
- ❑ Find work and volunteer opportunities that help us “try on” a career and gain credentials to “have” that career
- ❑ Prepare professional communication and job documents relevant to the career planning and job search process
- ❑ Interview successfully
- ❑ Be self-aware and grow in the job(s) we choose
  
- ❑ Identify family, school and cultural messages that impact our career decision-making (often inappropriately)
- ❑ Develop resilience and a sense of self that allows us to thrive through the process





# Truth #1: To Some Degree We All

- Internalize messages about the value of various STEM careers – not just the careers themselves, but the various specialties and sub-specialties within them
- Internalize messages we receive about ourselves and our potential to learn, succeed, and contribute.
- Struggle to live up to expectations set by:
  - Ourselves
  - Our families
  - Important people at school and in our communities



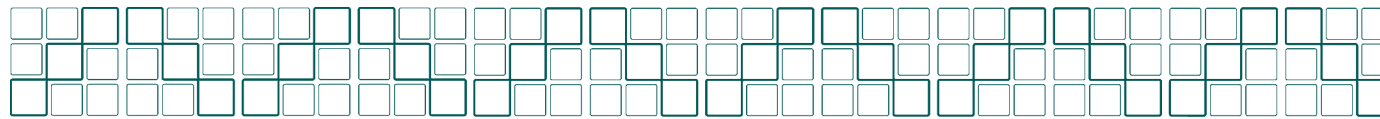
# Really Important Question #1

Why are we still using the word alternative  
after 15 years of discussion?

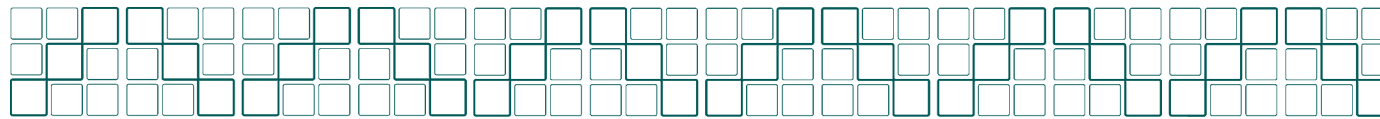


# Truth #2

The only person who needs to be happy with your career decision is you; others get to weigh in, but you get to decide

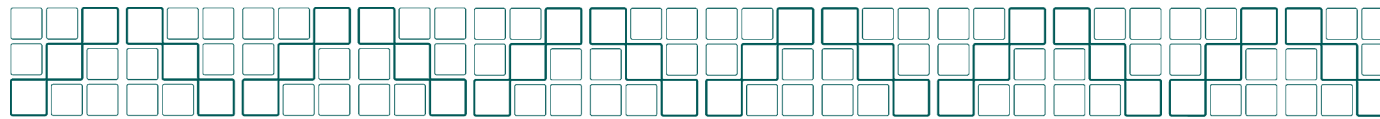


# Truth #3: Building Resilience Takes Time, Effort, and Practice



# What is Resilience?

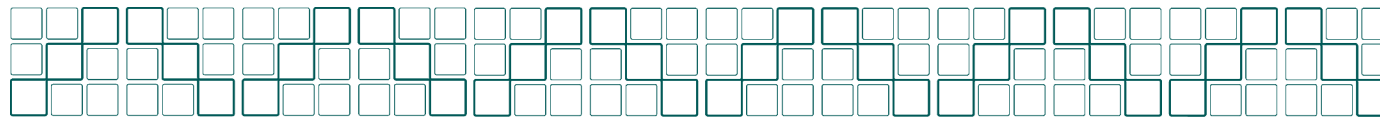
- The ability to:
  - adapt and grow through adversity
  - navigate difficult challenges with awareness, intention, and skill
  - find a constructive way forward during challenging time
- A set of attitudes and behaviors that can be learned and developed through education, self-reflection, and practice



# Two Key Take-Aways

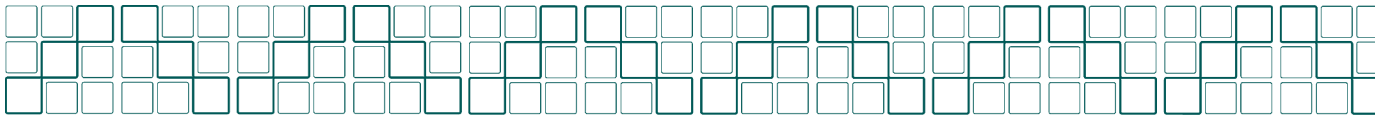
Resilience = People + Process

Those who are resilient prepare to be  
resilient



# To Be Resilient We Have To

- Build strong positive relationships with peers and mentors
- Be proactive and use resources to thrive
- Learn from previous experiences, both good and bad



# The Stages of Learning

|            | Enthusiastic beginner | Disillusioned learner | Cautious performer | High Achiever |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Competence | Low/None              | Some                  | Moderate           | High          |
| Confidence | High                  | Low                   | Variable           | High          |

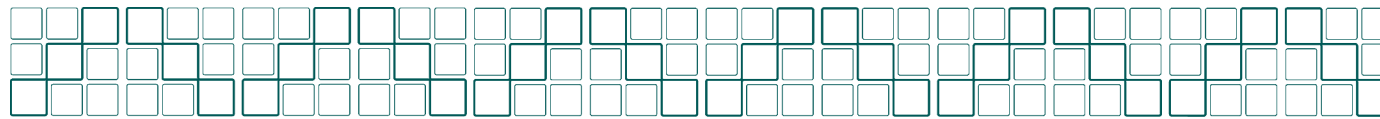




# Self-Reflection and Discussion

- Consider a few times when you hit the disillusioned learned phase, in your research or elsewhere in an educational/research environment. Reflect on the outcomes. In each situation, focus on your thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behaviors - both what you did and what you did not do to deal with your stress and difficulty during the disillusioned learner phase.

|            | Enthusiastic beginner | Disillusioned learner | Cautious performer | High Achiever |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Competence | Low/None              | Some                  | Moderate           | High          |
| Confidence | High                  | Low                   | Variable           | High          |



# To Be Resilient We Have To

- Learn from previous experiences, both good and bad
- Build strong positive relationships with peers and mentors
- Be proactive and use resources to thrive
- Develop our growth mindset



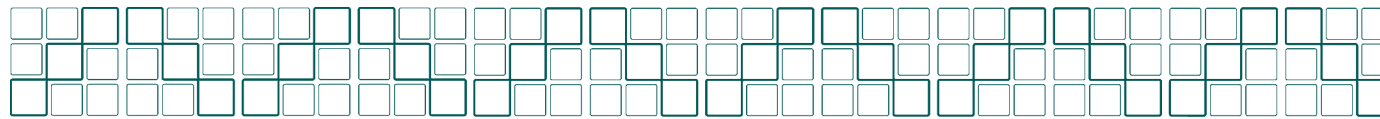
# Mindset Matters (Carol Dweck)

## ■ **Fixed** mindset

- ❑ We believe that our intelligences and talents are essentially fixed
- ❑ We don't believe effort will pay off and avoid taking risks to avoid making mistakes and feeling bad

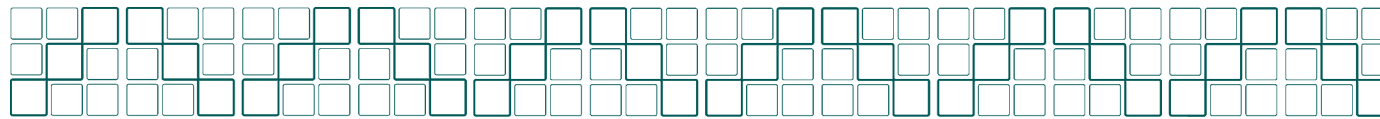
## ■ **Growth** mindset

- ❑ We believe that our intelligences and talents can be developed through effort, the use of resources, persistence, and good teaching.
- ❑ We work to grow in areas that are important to us and that forward our education/career. We understand that mistakes are a part of this growth process and see them as a learning opportunity.



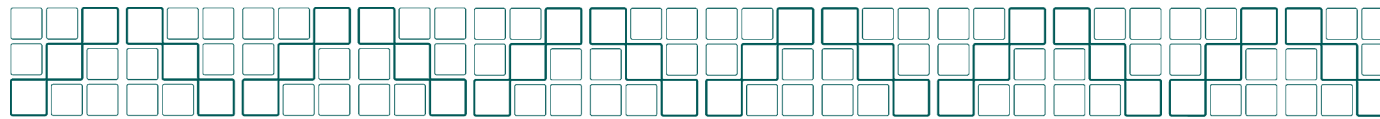
# Hallmarks of a Growth Mindset

- We believe that we can grow and learn whether somethings comes easily to us or not
- We explore new approaches and new ways of tackling problems when we get stuck
- We readily ask for help and use resources to promote learning
- We acknowledge and embrace our weaknesses
- We focus on process and not only outcome
- We learn from mistakes - ours and other's
- We learn skills for giving and receiving feedback



# Key Point

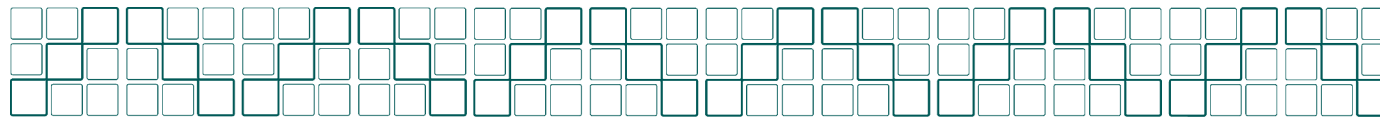
- We are generally a mix of fixed and growth mindsets and can move between the two based on how we feel and what is happening around us.
- Our goal is to develop and maintain (as often as possible) a growth mindset in areas that really matter to us.



# Changing Your Mindset (HATS)

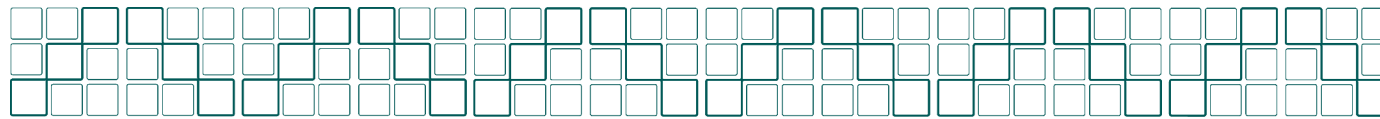
- **H**ear and recognize your fixed mindset “voice”
- **A**ppreciate you have a choice
- **T**alk back to your fixed mindset voice (in a kind voice)
- **S**eek resources and take action

NOTE: This is a go-to strategy you will hear about again and again



# Discussion

- Thinking about the brief introduction to growth and fixed mindset, consider the following questions
  - where do you see a growth mindset and where do tend to get stuck in your fixed mindset?
  - Are there areas where you would benefit from a mindset adjustment?
  - What can you do to promote a growth mindset?



# The 'Power of Yet' (With Some Caveats)

- I am not good in.....
- I am not good in..... **YET.**



Filmed November 2014 at TEDxNorrköping  
Carol Dweck: The power of believing that you can improve



Subtitles

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success

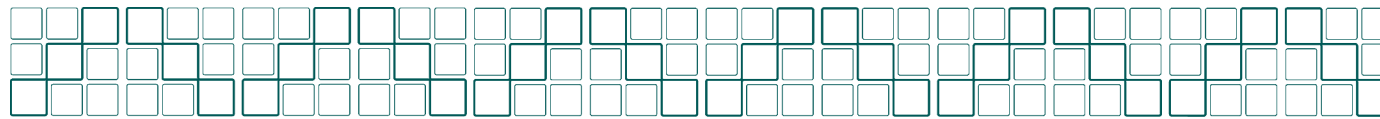
<https://psychology.stanford.edu/cdweck>; <http://mindsetonline.com/>





# To Be Resilient We Have To

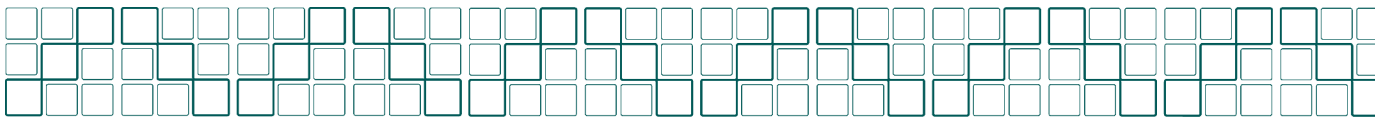
- Learn from previous experiences, both good and bad
- Build strong positive relationships with peers and mentors
- Be proactive and use resources to thrive
- Develop our growth mindset
- Understand our negative self-talk and response to setback



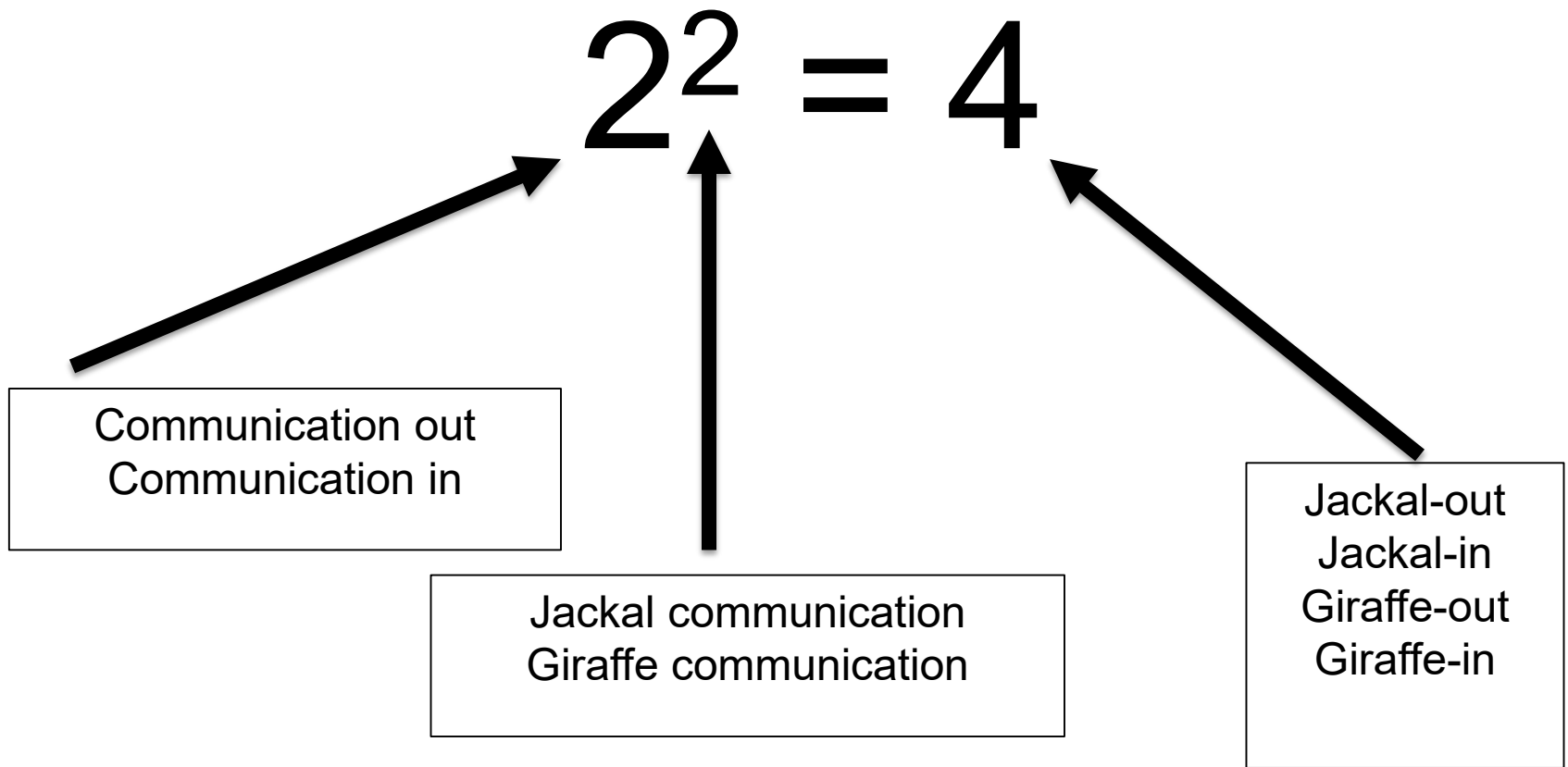
# Some Philosophy At the Outset

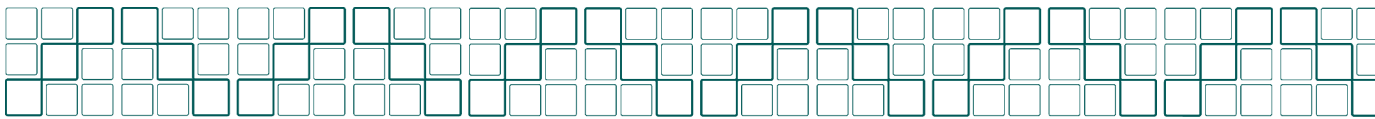
Images removed

From the work Marshall Rosenberg and colleagues,  
Nonviolent Communication; [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)



# The NVC Communication Equation



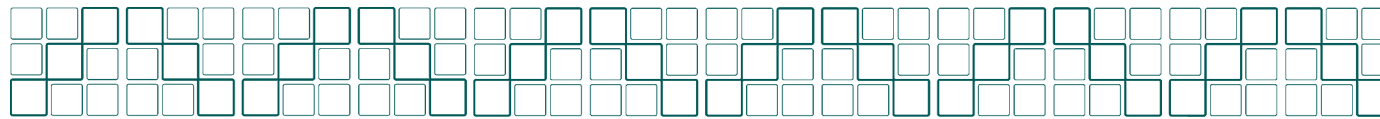


# The ABCs



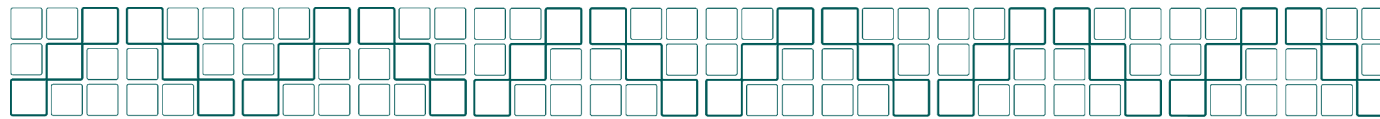
The stories we tell ourselves

- <http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/abc.htm>



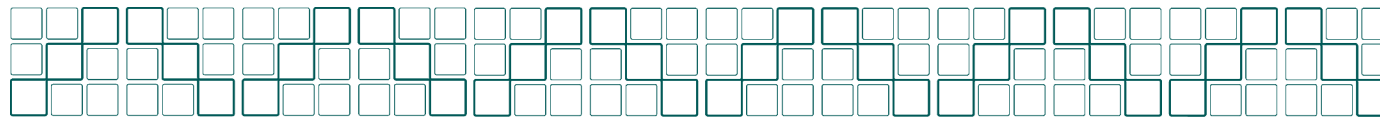
# Some Generalizations About the Stories We Tell

- They are often:
  - more negative than the situation warrants
  - delivered in jackal language
  - often making them demotivating and self-defeating
- We know a lot about the types of generalizations often used and how they impact us



# Two Areas to Consider

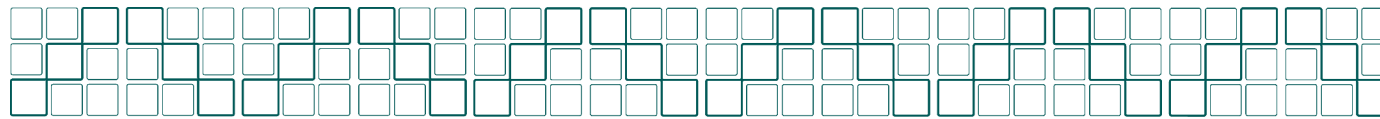
- Cognitive distortions..... leading to pessimistic attitudes and a feeling of hopelessness
- Imposter fears leading..... us to feel like we don't belong



# Cognitive Distortions (Automatic Negative Thoughts)

Characteristic ways that our mind convinces us of something that is really not true to reinforce negative thinking or emotions. Generally serve to keep us feeling bad about ourselves and can lead us to feel very anxious and pessimistic

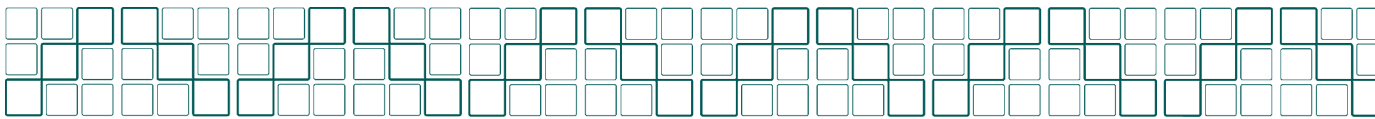
**NOTE:** Our brain has a built-in 'negativity bias'



# Some ANT Examples (and a vote)

- **All-or-nothing thinking:** Your performance is either perfect or it is a complete failure
- **Catastrophizing:** You exaggerate the implications of a setback or mistake
- **Mind reading:** You make assumptions about what someone else is thinking
- **Minimizing:** You downplay the importance of your accomplishments or positive qualities
- **Over-generalization:** You take one negative event and see other similar events through that failure

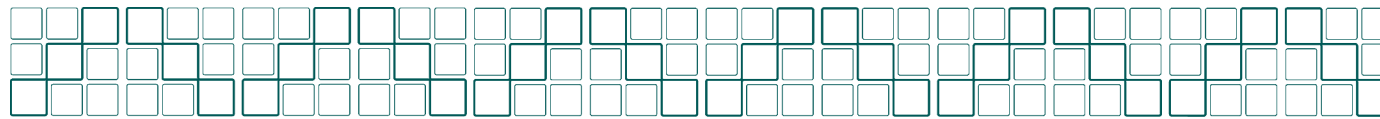




# Imposter Fears

The feeling of phoniness in people who believe that they are not intelligent, capable or creative despite evidence of high achievement





# More on Imposter Fears

- Four flavors:
  - Feeling like a fake
  - Attributing success to luck
  - Discounting your successes
  - Assuming you had to work hard and that the equivalent accomplishment was easy for everyone else
  
- Often a result of:
  - Fear of failure
  - Perfectionist tendencies
  - The tendency to compare ourselves to others

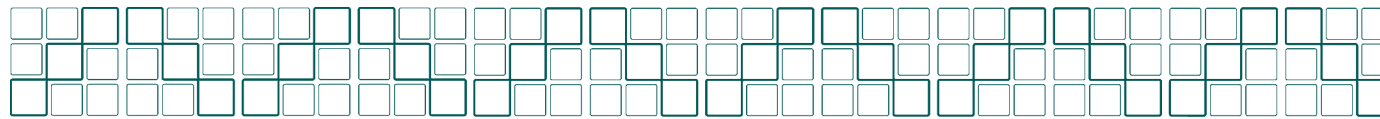
<http://paulineroseclance.com/>



# Causes of Imposter Fears

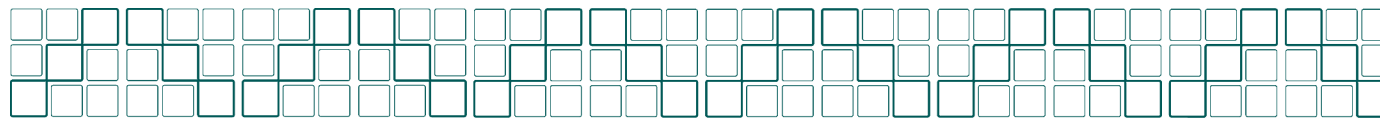
- Being a student
- Being in an environment that feels foreign to you
- Organizational culture and messaging
- Messages from family and childhood
- Stereotype threat
- Working in a creative field

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** 70% of individuals (or more?)  
experience imposter fears at some point.



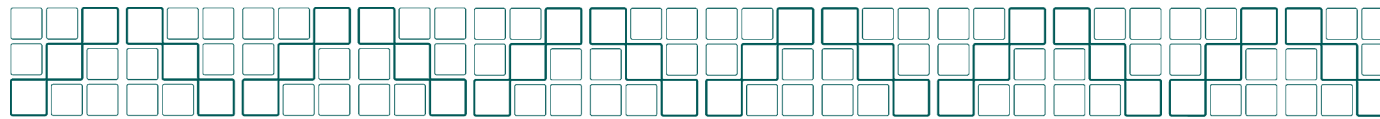
## So What?

What are some potential impacts of imposter fears?  
Are there both positive and negative impacts?



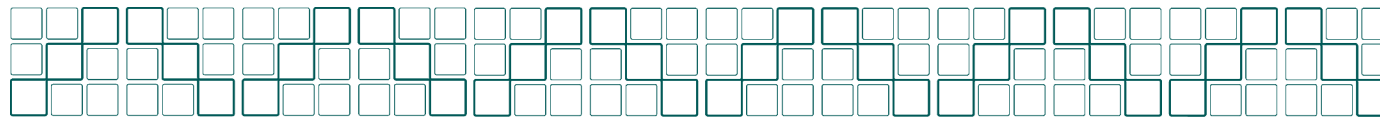
# Impacts of Imposter Fears

- In small doses and put into perspective?
  - They can make us use resources and work hard
- Unchecked and unquestioned?
  - Increased stress, potentially leading to poor performance
  - Second guessing (in class, on exams, in our research group, etc)
  - Hesitating to ask for help
  - Not volunteering for assignments or applying for competitive positions
  - Maintaining a low profile in the group
  - Engaging in self-sabotaging behavior



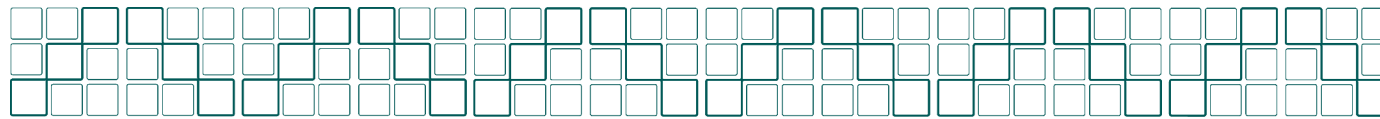
# Let's Strategize

- Share some experiences with imposter fears (or times you saw mentees/friends/classmates/colleagues struggle with them). Strategize ways to deal with imposter fears when they creep up on you or your friends and colleagues



# ANTs and Imposter Fears

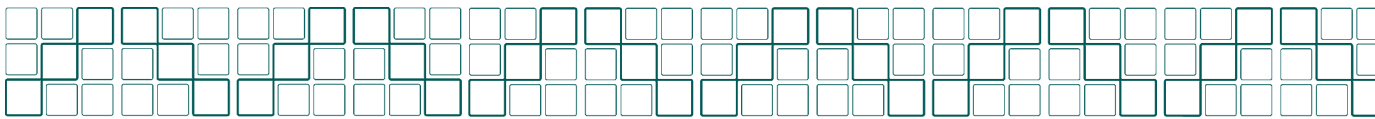
- Be mindful and recognize them when they happen (HAT)
  - Take a deep breath
  - Acknowledge and talk back to them (giraffe language)
  - Find inspiration..... from a positive affirmation, a phrase, an image that makes you feel strong
- Find a supportive community and talk about them
- Remind yourself of your successes
- And in the long-term
  - Build confidence in developing new skills in low stress situations
  - Learn to accept praise rather than rebutting it
  - Use journaling and other resources to explore where they might come from and what their impact is
  - Really getting in the way? Talk about it with a counselor



# Important to Remember

The foundation of our resilience is SELF-CARE

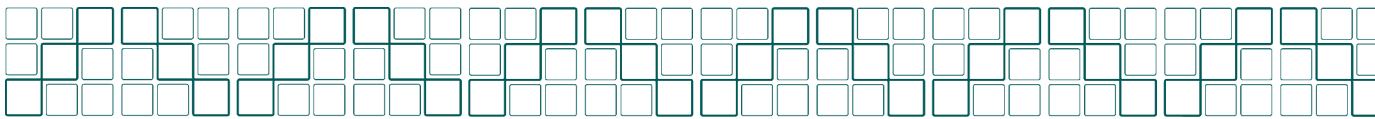




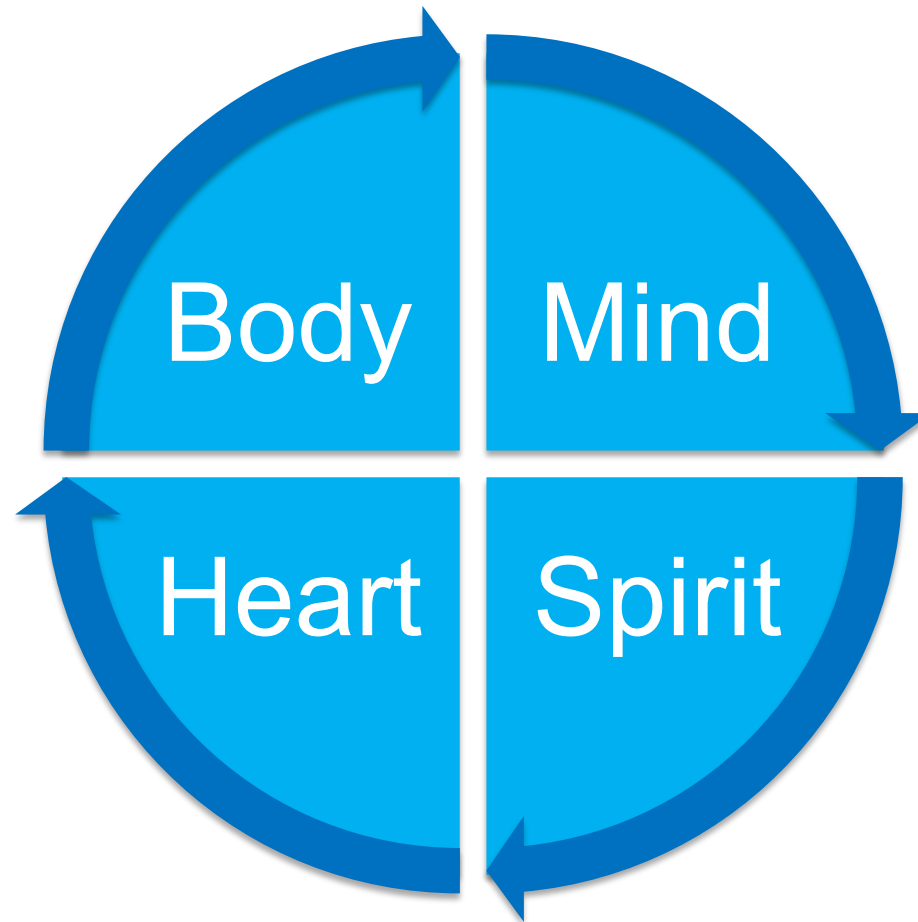
# What is Self-Care?

- All the things we do (and don't do) to maintain our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health
- There are common themes, but we all have unique ways of “tuning-in and taking care”

Why is it a badge of honor to work so hard?



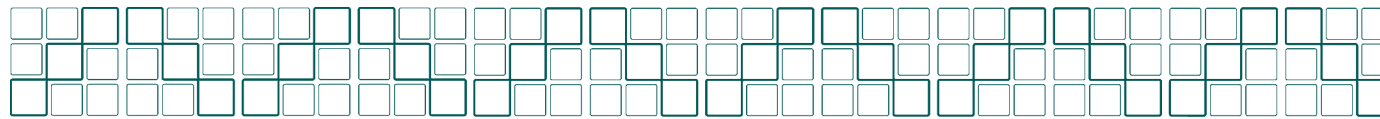
# Holistic Self-Care



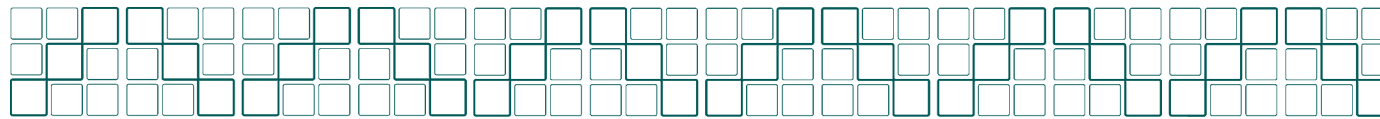


# Self-Care Assessment

- Complete the “*So How Am I Doing?*” Assessment
- Get into small groups (3-4 people); everyone will share:
  - one thing you are pleased about (i.e. you do well)
  - one thing you would like to work on

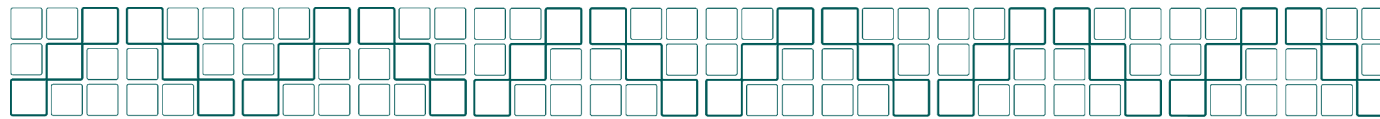


If we do this well, we have the opportunity to find happiness and meaning in our life and work – and for this we have a a lot to be grateful for



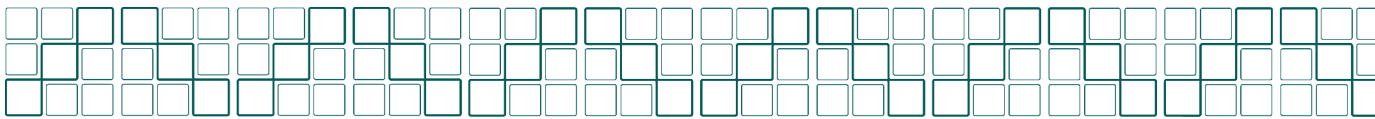
# Debrief and a Final Fun Exercise

- Questions, comments, thoughts?
- And now – train your brain to see the positive
  - Embrace and enjoy the community you are with today (and tomorrow)
  - Practicing gratitude
  - Three good things
  - Get a nice journal and get started



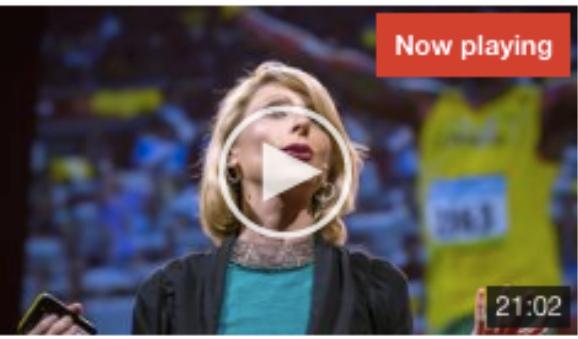
# Some Books and TED Talks I Like

- Mindset: The New Psychology of Success; Carol Dweck
- Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ; Dan Goleman
- Networking for People Who Hate Networking: A Guide for Introverts, the Overwhelmed and Underconnected; Devorah Zack
- Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life ; Martin Seligman
- Authentic Happiness; Martin E.P. Seligman
- Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself; Kristin Neff
- Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead; Brene Brown
- Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears; Pema Chodron
- The Empress Has No Clothes: Conquering Self-Doubt to Embrace Success; Joyce Roché
- Thirteen Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do; Amy Morin



Brené Brown  
**The power of vulnerability**

Brené Brown studies human connection — our ability to empathize, belong, love. In a poignant, funny talk, she shares a deep insight from her research, one that sent her on a personal quest to know herself as well as to understand humanity. A talk to share.



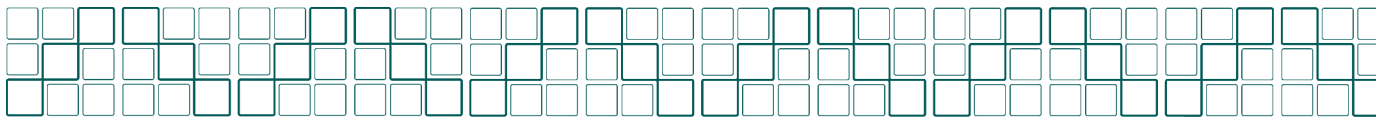
Amy Cuddy  
**Your body language shapes who you are**

Body language affects how others see us, but it may also change how we see ourselves. Social psychologist Amy Cuddy shows how “power posing” — standing in a posture of confidence, even when we don’t feel confident — can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain, and might even have an impact on our chances for success.



Susan Cain  
**The power of introverts**

In a culture where being social and outgoing are prized above all else, it can be difficult, even shameful, to be an introvert. But, as Susan Cain argues in this passionate talk, introverts bring extraordinary talents and abilities to the world, and should be encouraged and celebrated.



Shawn Achor

### **The happy secret to better work**

We believe we should work hard in order to be happy, but could we be thinking about things backwards? In this fast-moving and very funny talk, psychologist Shawn Achor argues that, actually, happiness inspires us to be more productive.

 [Watch later](#) · [723 comments](#) >



Guy Winch

### **Why we all need to practice emotional first aid**

We'll go to the doctor when we feel flu-ish or a nagging pain. So why don't we see a health professional when we feel emotional pain: guilt, loss, loneliness? Too many of us deal with common psychological-health issues on our own, says Guy Winch. But we don't have to. He makes a compelling case to practice emotional hygiene — taking care of our emotions, our minds, with the same diligence we take care of our bodies.

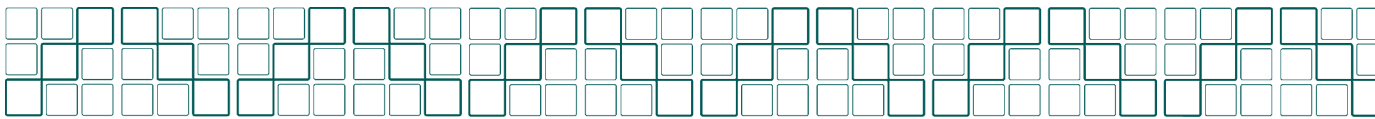


Dan Pink

### **The puzzle of motivation**

Career analyst Dan Pink examines the puzzle of motivation, starting with a fact that social scientists know but most managers don't: Traditional rewards aren't always as effective as we think. Listen for illuminating stories — and maybe, a way forward.





The Secret of Becoming Mentally Strong | Amy Morin | TEDxOcala



The Space Between Self-Esteem and Self Compassion: Kristen Neff at TEDxCentennialParkWomen