

Mindset Moments for Pre-Service Teachers

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Introduction/need for innovation or idea

The definition of growth mindset can be boiled down to the belief that through dedication and hard work any skill can be cultivated (Dweck, 2015). Through a love for learning and resilience anyone can find accomplishment. While mentoring pre-service teachers through the challenging learning curve entering teaching, there is a clear need to have a love for learning and resiliency to find success. The need for a growth mindset justifies supporting this development through their teacher education preparation program. Being able to acknowledge the challenges they are facing and create growth mindset strategies support the development of emotional intelligence. Goleman et al. (2002) framework for emotional intelligence can help frame these mindset moments through the four domains of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

How it works/methodology/program phases/steps

These mindset moments were facilitated during four seminar sessions held during the Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo pre-service teachers' ($N = 12$) final clinical practice in Spring of 2024. To facilitate these mindset moments, the recommended steps include:

- (1) Determine Gaps: Identify any needs for pre-service teachers' mindset towards clinical practice. These may deal with classroom management, student FFA engagement, program management, or collegiality with co-teachers.
- (2) Identify Strategies: Determine a way to facilitate discussion on challenges they may be facing. These strategies should be differentiated from moment to moment to also illustrate differentiation of instructional methods to pre-service teachers.
- (3) Employ Mindfulness Moments: These moments took approximately 20 minutes and occurred at 4 different points during the pre-service teachers' final clinical practice.
- (4) Reflect: After employing the moments, it is critical faculty look at how the process went. Reflecting is necessary to guide next steps in employing mindfulness moments or other teacher preparation content, as needed.

Complete instructions and sentence frames for the mindset moments will be included in the final poster. The four mindset moments used during the 2024 final clinical practice were:

Mindset Moment #1: James Nottingham's (n.d.) Learning Pit.

Mindset Moment #2: Strategies for growth mindset (Dweck, 2006).

Mindset Moment #3: Choice of language we use during discussion.

Mindset Moment #4: Definition of success.

Results to date/implications

To date, four seminar sessions have been facilitated using a mindset moment. Each moment was approximately 20 minutes long and allowed for the sharing of experiences and challenges that pre-service teachers face during their clinical practice experience. At the conclusion of each seminar, there was an exit survey where 12 pre-service teachers were asked to respond to the prompt "Today I valued..." Out of four seminars, three seminars had at least one response referring to the growth mindset moment (Table 1).

Table 1*Pre-service Teachers' (N = 12) Responses to exit Survey Question "Today I Valued..."*

Seminar	Survey Response
One	<p>"That is okay to not know everything"</p> <p>"I really valued the learning pit segment."</p> <p>"...hearing from the other student teachers and sharing our experiences. Helped with not feeling alone with our struggles."</p> <p>"I valued the mini lesson [teacher] gave us talking about how we are in the pit right now, but we can get out of it. We have done it before, and we can do it now."</p> <p>"Today I value the since of community and not feeling alone in this process."</p>
Three	<p>"Our mindset moment."</p> <p>"Being able to talk with my peers and talk about our accomplishment and struggles."</p> <p>"Hearing from the cohort that most of us seem to be having similar struggles"</p>
Four	<p>"I valued the growth mindset and writing down what success looks like to me right now"</p> <p>"The mindfulness moment"</p> <p>"Learning what is important and setting boundaries."</p> <p>"The land mine game"</p> <p>"Creating a magnet that I can put in my classroom with my idea of success and ideas on what I may have to manage the next year"</p>

Future plans/advice to others

These mindset moments will continue to be included in each seminar agenda to allow pre-service teachers to discuss and apply. Seminar two methods should be reviewed after no responses were connected to the mindset moment. Reflecting on why that moment was not identified as critical will advance mindset moment delivery moving forward. Mindset moments will also be implemented earlier on during the seminar courses held prior to the final clinical practice to scaffold and practice the use of mindfulness in advance.

For others looking to implement this idea, it is recommended these mindset moments be facilitated with pre-service teacher cohorts where they can feel comfortable sharing their thoughts on how they may be struggling. Creating a space where pre-service teachers are willing to share requires attention to group dynamics. Additionally, focusing on the specific needs of each cohort is necessary; the same mindfulness moments may not be necessary for a different cohort and relevancy is key to their success.

Costs/resources needed

There are no costs associated with this tool for pre-service teachers or faculty, unless specific readings, presentations, or practices have associated costs. During the 2024 final clinical practice, all materials were free. The presentations were delivered via a free Canva account, where they can be saved and revised for future use. Links to slides and mindset moments will be included with the final poster for others to adapt and use as needed.

References

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset*. Random House.

Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). *Primal leadership: Realizing the power of emotional intelligence*. Harvard Business School Press.

Nottingham, J. (n.d.). *The Learning Pit*. <https://www.learningpit.org/thelearningpit/>