

The Self-Growth Journey: Transforming Mindset, Consciousness, and Motivation

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Abstract

For 30 years, self-growth has been a conceptual cornerstone of Process Education but its relationship to growth has been unclear. In the last five years, analysis and exploration of new practices have distinguished growth and self-growth as two distinct capabilities, each with multiple components and mindsets. This article starts with the story of self-growth as it has evolved from the understanding and practice of growth within Process Education (PE). Although components and a Methodology for Self-Growth are available, there is a need for an accessible model to lessen the cognitive load when using these PE resources. A Four-Anchor PE model summarizes the components of self-growth with the concepts of insightful reflection, envisioning an ideal self, intentional action planning, and growth capability development. Understanding of the PE self-growth theory is augmented in this article, and analysis of self-growth theory makes clear how mindset, consciousness, and motivation directly and indirectly influence the theory and practice of both growth and self-growth. A set of 12 narratives integrate seven PE resources to expound on how each one of the four anchors influences mindset, consciousness, and motivation. The resources and issues include self-growth components, the Self-Growth Methodology, the Five-Role Model, meta-behaviors, practice issues, impediments, and research examples. By focusing on how mindset, consciousness, and motivation play specific roles for each anchor, the model resolves some of the concerns of practitioners about the complexity of the PE self-growth model while also making more transparent how a self-growth mindset, higher-order consciousness, and motives can be harmonized on an individual level to attain life aspirations possible only through self-growth.

Introduction

As life's challenges become increasingly complex, the ability to intentionally direct personal growth is more critical than ever. By integrating a self-growth mindset, heightened consciousness, and intrinsic motivation, Process Education (PE) provides a comprehensive roadmap for navigating these complexities with purpose and clarity (Apple et al., 2021). Unlike the traditional growth mindset, which focuses primarily on resilience and effort, a self-growth mindset equips individuals with tools for deeper, autonomous transformation.

This research combines decades of insights from PE with contemporary challenges to position self-growth as a vital framework for achieving a meaningful, high-quality life. By operationalizing a self-growth mindset through reflective practices, intrinsic motivation, and structured tools, this exploration aims to make personal transformation accessible, sustainable, and impactful for a diverse audience. Through this approach, self-growth becomes more than a concept—it becomes a practice, empowering individuals to lead lives of insightfulness, intentionality, productivity, and intersubjective fulfillment (Leise et al., 2024).

Imagine a student struggling to navigate the challenges of their academic journey. Equipped with determination and support, they adopt a growth mindset, embracing the belief that their capabilities can improve through effort and persistence (Apple et al., 2015). Over time, they gain confidence, solve problems more effectively, and begin to see improvement in their academic performance. Yet, despite these achievements, they find themselves yearning for something deeper. A sense of direction, a purpose, and alignment with their broader life aspirations. This pivotal moment, where progress meets self-reflection, exemplifies the gap between the traditional growth mindset and the evolving need for self-growth (Leise et al., 2023a).

The study of a self-growth mindset, consciousness, and intrinsic motivation builds upon decades of research and innovation within the PE framework (Apple et al., 2016). Initially, PE prioritized enhancing educational outcomes by focusing on critical capabilities such as *Knowing* and *Learning-to-Learn*, which empowered students to become autonomous learners (Apple & Ellis, 2015). Grounded in systematic interventions and assessment methodologies, these early efforts improved how individuals approached knowledge acquisition and problem-solving (Watts, 2018).

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Over time, the scope of PE expanded as it became evident that learning could not be isolated from broader performance development (Van Slyke et al., 2021) and self-development (Beyerlein et al., 2007). Recognizing this need, PE integrated *Performing* and *Growing* as central functions, emphasizing capabilities that positively impacted quality of life (QoL) (Leise et al., 2023a). These developments culminated in the introduction of *Self-Growth* as the pinnacle function of the framework, a shift that redefined personal transformation as the ability to independently shape one's life journey through reflective practices and intrinsic motivation (Burke, Apple et al., 2024).

Moving Beyond the Growth Mindset

The growth mindset, popularized by Dweck (2007), has long been an important support for the PE contention that effort can strengthen resilience and improve capabilities (Hurd et al., 2021). However, as PE practitioners and researchers have made inquiries into human potential, they have recognized that a growth mindset, while invaluable, could not fully address the complexities of self-directed transformation. A self-growth mindset emerged as a response to this gap, offering a more holistic framework that incorporates disciplined self-reflection, intentional decision-making, and alignment with one's *Ideal Self*, that is a personal vision of the best version of oneself (Apple et al., 2021).

Unlike a growth mindset, which often relies on external feedback and structured challenges, a self-growth mindset emphasizes the internalization of reflective practices and expansion of intrinsic motivation. This shift encourages individuals to take ownership of their own growth and development, that is become a self-grower by aligning their daily actions with long-term goals to achieve personal fulfillment and a higher QoL (King-Berry et al., 2021).

The Role of Consciousness in Self-Growth

Central to a self-growth mindset is heightened consciousness, a metacognitive awareness that extends beyond basic self-awareness. This belief, a mainstay of PE, is a basis for individuals to assess their experiences in real time, to ask critical thinking questions about their choices, using why, what, how, when, where and with whom so as to align their action plans with their long-term aspirations (Leise et al., 2023a). The identification and description of nine psychological perspectives (Leise et al., 2023b) provides a useful array of areas in which action planning can be creatively productive, for example in better managing uses of one's energy. Higher level consciousness has the potential to transform ordinary experiences into intentional growth opportunities, ensuring that each moment contributes meaningfully to one's self-growth journey.

Consciousness acts as the integrative force within the triad of self-growth mindset, consciousness, and intrinsic motivation. It fosters clarity and intentionality by enabling individuals to reflect on their goals, assess progress, and adjust strategies to continue movement towards their ideal self (Burke, Apple et al., 2024). PE researchers argue that this heightened state of consciousness is essential for navigating life's dynamic challenges and achieving sustainable growth (Jain et al., 2020).

Intrinsic Motivation: The Engine of Sustainable Growth

Intrinsic motivation is the driving force behind a self-growth process, providing the internal energy needed to sustain effort and commitment. In contrast to external motivators, intrinsic motivation is deeply tied to personal values and aspirations, ensuring that growth remains authentic and self-directed (Leise et al., 2024).

The PE framework has consistently emphasized the importance of intrinsic motivation, particularly in facilitating ownership over one's self-growth journey (Jain et al., 2015). By fostering this internal drive, individuals become better equipped to overcome obstacles, adapt to challenges, and remain focused on long-term goals (Apple et al., 2018). Moreover, intrinsic motivation amplifies the impact of reflective practices, creating a positive feedback loop that strengthens alignment with one's ideal self and drives further growth (Leise et al., 2010).

Method

Our research approach was designed to provide a comprehensive exploration of a self-growth mindset, with a particular emphasis on heightened consciousness and intrinsic motivation as foundational elements. We began by constructing a narrative that traces the understanding and practice of self-growth over the past three decades. This historical perspective highlights the development of a robust PE framework of theory, research, and practice, culminating in a sophisticated understanding of self-growth as a transformative function within PE philosophy.

A core aspect of our approach is the presentation of the Four-Anchors Model of Self-Growth. We first examine key frameworks from external research that complement and expand upon PE's constructs. These frameworks offered valuable insights into how mindset, consciousness, and motivation influence self-growth, providing a broader theoretical context for the Four Anchors Model. This integration ensures that our model is both aligned with and enriched by contemporary scholarship on human potential.

Next, we present the Four-Anchors Model of Self-Growth. This model addresses the need for a streamlined, accessible

framework that integrates the essential processes of self-growth. It simplifies the self-growth components into actionable concepts by encapsulating the interplay of the reflective practice in a self-growth mindset, heightened consciousness, and intrinsic motivation, demonstrating how these elements work together to enable transformative personal self-development. This model is designed to help individuals align their daily actions with long-term aspirations, making personal transformation both accessible and sustainable.

Our analysis is then extended by examining the implications of how mindset, consciousness, and motivation influence self-growth through each of the four anchors. By exploring the intersections between heightened consciousness, intrinsic motivation, and self-growth processes, we identified how these factors shape and enhance individual development. This approach underscores the dynamic relationship between internal drivers of growth and the external frameworks that support them.

Finally, we synthesized these findings into a set of 12 narratives that capture the transformative potential of combining a self-growth mindset with heightened consciousness and intrinsic motivation with each of the four anchor constructs. These provide a robust pathway for individuals to navigate challenges, achieve alignment with their ideal self, and elevate their QoL. By focusing on these interconnected elements, our research contributes to the advancement of understanding of the construct of self-growth and its practical applications.

Models of Mindset, Consciousness, and Motivation

Mindset, consciousness, and motivation require special consideration because of their centrality in self-growth development. For each of these focus areas, specific theoretical models have been identified for fuller understanding of the range and dynamics of potential strategies promoting self-growth development.

Mindset Theory

De Ruiter and Thomaes (2023) propose a general model for understanding the mechanisms that underly mindset beliefs and their development. Their *Process Model of Mindsets* (PMM) matches the PE emphasis on self-growth as psychologically dynamic and situative, such that authentic experiences and insights emerge from iterations of intentional action plans within socially complex situations. De Ruiter and Thomaes caution that intersubjectivity factors in social negotiations between individuals often are asymmetrical in status. For example, a student interacting with a teacher. This asymmetry can

lead to different meanings and attributions about control and knowledge on a moment-to-moment basis within the situation.

From the iterations of resolutions experienced in ongoing situations, the PMM predicts a pattern of *emergence* and *constraint* over time that creates a tendency to center on *attractor states* that can become mindsets, much like habits or personality traits that are relatively stable but do change over time (Dweck, 2017). Some life events, like emergencies, occur on an almost random basis, while others are self-determined and are governed by self-regulated intentions. Control through self-regulation leads to increased potential for the emergence of perceptual, affective, and metacognitive responses consistent with a desired attractor state that may be autonomously defined as important for developmental movement toward an ideal self.

Consciousness Theory

Edelman's (1989) biological theory of consciousness represents a holistic person perspective of PE growth and self-growth. The theory keeps attention on the integration of body, emotion, mind, behavior, and context as these occur in each moment of experience.

Consciousness is the mysterious, irrepressible phenomenon that holds internal and external experiences together. It includes self-awareness along with awareness of others, situations, and things. Primary consciousness is the mental and perceptual awareness that keeps us in direct touch with our present context. Higher-order consciousness, though it incorporates inputs from primary consciousness, adds a whole new level, awareness of being aware. Consciousness makes it possible to remember, and even infer, what may have happened and to imagine what might happen next. Despite all these features, the experience of consciousness is isolated within each person and the evidence of what is "on the mind" of someone else can only be inferred from observations, speech, and commonsense suppositions.

Edelman's (1989) theory is naturalistic as it rules out "causes" of consciousness other than the biological evolution of nervous systems. It is also comprehensive since it identifies how each of the known forms of consciousness are likely to have arisen based on the neuroscience evidence about the evolution of the nervous systems of complex animals, especially humans. Edelman emphasizes that consciousness arises from many repetitive loops within the brain itself that creates a richness of phenomena well beyond simple sensory and motor interactions with environments.

Edelman (1989) identifies the beginnings of the biological evolution of self-awareness and identity as the perception

of self versus non-self. This perception emerges from drives or states from internal bodily processes that become associated with external conditions represented as perceptual categories related to behaviors used to meet internal needs. Child development in humans includes self-concept, self-esteem, personality, and agentic beliefs such as self-efficacy (Bandura, 2001) that derive from self versus non-self experiences.

The main features of Edelman's (1989) biological theory of consciousness are identified as:

- *Perceptual categorization*: selection of stimuli, focus of attention, and memory of features of reality
- *Awareness of self/non-self*: perceptions of external "categories" that combine with bodily sensations and drive states to produce a basic sense of separate identity
- *Primary consciousness*: being mentally aware of something—the most general form of consciousness
- *Preverbal concepts*: generalizations of perceptual categories and self-/non-self-discrimination
- *Varied Memory Types*: Multiple kinds of memory systems preserve timing, locations, actions, and effects of experiences, e.g., episodic memory automatically captures personal experiences but short-term memory lasts only a few seconds unless rehearsed to keep concepts available in longer-term memory; conceptual knowledge is retrieved mainly through language; psychomotor learning becomes automatic with practice
- *Language*: varied means and abilities to share meaning, thoughts, feelings, memories, and future plans
- *Higher-order consciousness*: awareness of being aware; the capability to monitor self and experiences in varying ways depending on situations and memories

These features are important for self-growth in that many of them create special challenges since they often are not directly controllable by intentions and conscious effort. Yet, despite how prominent and complex the many nonconscious, seemingly effortless, features of our neural capacities are, it is possible to aim for and attain transformative change in ourselves and our world by developing stronger observation skills and deeper insights into their operation.

Motivation Theory

Two motivation theories help explain the significant transition of expanding a growth mindset into a self-growth mindset. The first, Self-Determination Theory (Ryan et al., 2021), provides a structured taxonomy that assists in identification of what kinds of motive states an individual may be experiencing. Second is Fishbach's (2021)

Self-Motivation Theory. This theory is based on empirical research validating four main factors that individuals can use to motivate themselves: goal setting, goal striving, goal juggling, and leveraging social support. These two models will be used to examine the motive changes needed to expand growth into self-growth.

Self-Determination Theory of Motivation

Within their Self-Determination Theory, Ryan et al. (2021) propose a taxonomy of six levels or types of motivation that have been found to characterize the *locus of causality* in response to varying conditions. The first, *Amotivation*, is a passive, largely unconscious state of motivation such as occurs with learned helplessness (Seligman, 2018). *Extrinsic motivation* is the general label for the second through fifth types in Ryan et al.'s model. The extrinsic forms include:

External: Pavlovian and operant conditioning occur in response to environmental contingencies, for example, a physical or emotional reward. Habits often form from daily experiences of reinforcement and punishment.

Introjected: This form of motivation involves internalized guilt or shame, often from early social development, that reduces self-esteem and motivates preservation of self-worth rather than external achievement.

Identity: These motives are quite powerful for life goals such as school or career achievement, which are personally valued and for which there is internal locus of causality, even when the activities themselves are not intrinsically motivated. Identity growth often occurs within specific life roles, especially as part of education, early career development, and parenting.

Integrated: When multiple identity motives occur in synchrony, the individual's concern is consistency across roles with the aim of increasing overall achievement. This type of motivation is strongly relevant to self-growth even though some elements of extrinsic influence remain.

Although prominent in motivation of learning, learning to learn, performing, and growth, these four kinds of extrinsic motivation lack some features of the fully autonomous intrinsic motivation that is a characteristic of self-growth. Intrinsic motivation, the sixth form, is often experienced when an individual has an intense interest, fascination, and enjoyment of the preparation, practicing, and performance capabilities needed to be expert in singular roles or activities such as sports or chess (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Self-growers seek to experience increases in intrinsic motivation related to their ideal self aspirations.

Self-Motivation Theory

Fishbach (2021) addresses the feasibility of self-motivation by asking how scientific knowledge about the psychology of motivation can be consciously applied to one's own life choices. As indicated previously, he identifies four "elements" supported by careful scientific studies: goal setting, goal striving, goal juggling, and leveraging social support. Fishbach emphasizes that prior to using self-motivation principles one must have awareness of a need to change a situation, or its meaning, before selecting responses. Goals that are specific to a positive change are much more likely to be pursued than a desire to avoid a negative outcome. Goals that are intermediate in difficulty are more likely to be attained than goals that are too easy, of little value, or too hard where failure is too big a risk. Fishbach identifies research-derived principles that usefully guide and sustain motivation within each of the four elements.

The Four-Anchors Model of Self-Growth

Self-growth emerges from the holistic development of the insightful reflection, envisioning an ideal self, intentional action planning and growth capability development as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Four-Anchors Model of the PE Theory of Self-Growth



These four anchors of self-growth development integrate and activate the 13 components important to self-growth (Apple et al., 2021). These components are reflection, life plan, shared journey, annual growth plan, self-growth methodology, mentoring skills, Classification of Learning Skills (CLS), Self-Growth Coach, designed assessment system, self-growth mindset, quality mindset, self-mentoring, and an active growth plan. The four anchors help to conceptualize, manage, and reduce the complexity of the interactions of these 13 components. Three main outcomes that define the purpose of self-growth are to increase QoL, to expand compassionate impact of one's actions on others and the world, and to increase

capabilities to deepen the meaningfulness of life through insights gained from autonomously *becoming* an engaged and authentic person (Zhang et al., 2024). Consciousness overarches these anchors and plays a central role in every component of self-growth, especially metamotivational (Miele et al., 2024) awareness of what motives are active in one's intentions and plans. This awareness is an important aspect of future self-determined decisions involved in moving towards one's ideal self.

Insightful Reflection

Developing a self-growth mindset is especially important for the development of the other 12 components of self-growth capability because it serves as a gatekeeper for the development of self-growth capability. A self-growth mindset includes motivation to be ever more insightful about intentionality. An increase in reflective capabilities (Desjarlais & Smith, 2011) allows one to become wiser about life decisions by sharpening perception of the dynamics of situations and relationships (referred to as *intersubjectivity*) for which thoughtful preparation is important for success. Reflection is not just a review of past actions, but a special practice designed to uncover richer dimensions of areas of experience previously selected for growth potential. It drives a continuous growth cycle of reflecting, learning, and applying new insights for personal development through intentional growth (Apple et al., 2021). The availability of an *Insight Methodology* (Leise, Dombi, & Apple, 2023) helps with capturing the full value of observations collected during efforts to implement growth action plans. Transitioning from a growth mindset to a self-growth mindset involves recognizing deeper elements such as accurate insights into the validity of how action plans reflect intentional plans. An Insight Generator AI application has been created by Pacific Crest (2024) as an assistive coach for learning to use the Insight Methodology to increase value from observations, especially when intersubjectivity is a prominent characteristic of a situation.

Envisioning an Ideal Self

Awareness and continuous evolution of one's ideal self are fundamental to the journey of self-growth, yet this way-of-being (Quarless, 2007) is often overlooked. An ideal self cannot be fully realized but nevertheless helps individuals gain clarity and a deeper understanding of personal potential. In the context of counseling success, Rogers (1961) emphasized the significance of a balanced integration of how one presently understands self with an ideal self that includes characteristics and capabilities that are judged to be important for understanding who one aspires to become. The focus of reflection on an ideal self includes personal characteristics and life situations that cannot be fully defined in the present but would be

highly valued if even partially attained. A useful way to represent the characteristics of one's ideal self is as *meta-behaviors* (Leise et al., 2024). These meta-behaviors can be used to create profiles (Davis & Beyerlein, 2007) that are more general than observable behavior but carry meaning and intent across time, relationships, and contexts. Wise practices are frequently organized around meta-behaviors that promote consistent positive life actions. The PE theory of self-growth includes vicarious roles such as the *Guide* to provide centering insights and the *Performer* to actuate plans that help individuals to meet the outcomes and meta-behaviors desired in their ideal self (Burke, Apple et al., 2024).

Intentional Action Planning

An effective action plan must clearly represent and define one's growth intentions, leveraging each selected opportunity to its fullest potential. Opportunities and challenges arise across a wide range of timelines, from instantaneous moments to minutes, hours, weeks, months, or even years. Action plans often require self-growers to develop background capabilities, such as enhancing proficiency in relevant learning skills (Leise et al., 2019; Burke, Apple et al., 2024) and adopting mindful practices. Each opportunity presents itself as a unique and complex situation, containing multiple features that could serve as valuable focal points for growth. While experiences are perceived holistically in consciousness, attention is typically directed toward a specific intention, such as improving a specific performance. To maximize the value of life activities as intentional growth opportunities, self-growers must cultivate an open mindset, embracing each moment as a chance to strengthen their capabilities and broaden their perspectives (Leise et al., 2023a).

Growth Capability Development

When enthusiasm and expectations are high, it can be tempting to start with growth objectives for which capability development can most readily be achieved. Success often depends upon acquisition and strengthening of foundational skills from the CLS to address impediments (Watson Spiva et al., 2024) or risk factors (Apple et al. 2018) that may come to light from the initial attempts to manage the dynamics of contexts and relationships that are embedded in growth opportunities. A future-oriented mindset is a facet of growth that keeps attention on how to strengthen learning skills and best-practices needed to meet or exceed aspirational challenges one has set during action planning. Growth capability challenges include not only overcoming impediments but continuously meeting seemingly mundane physical and mental wellness needs to ensure that the stamina and resilience needed to meet their growth objectives is always available.

Resources Related to the Four Anchors Model

The four anchors provide an overview that reduces the cognitive load (Feldon et al., 2024) involved in the intentional work needed to produce additional self-growth capabilities. PE scholarship provides many insights about how self-growth can emerge as a self-organizing system for increasing QoL (King Berry et al., 2021). Desjarlais and Morgan (2013), Beyerlein et al., (2007), and Apple, Duncan and Ellis (2016) examine the key PE resources available to be used in positive feedback loops that increase the potential for self-emergence centering around a self-growth mindset. Burke, Apple et al. (2024) explore the iterative and situative focus of the PE theory for increasing the dynamic potential of opportunities by making it more likely that cognition is used to integrate—not separate—action planning with affective and social needs through five roles: *Guide*, *Director*, *Coach*, *Scriptwriter*, and *Performer*. These five roles support a systematic pursuit of self-growth as the practice of continually planning, enacting, assessing, and reflecting on iterations of experiences with the goal of expanding and deepening self-growth as a mindset and as a capability for moving toward one's ideal self.

Twelve Narratives to Strengthen the Four Anchors by Expanding Self-Growth Mindset, Enhancing Consciousness, and Increasing Intrinsic Motivation

Within each cell of Table 1 is a synopsis statement summarizing how each focus area, Expanding Self-Growth Mindset, Enhancing Consciousness, and Increasing Intrinsic Motivation, interacts with each of the anchors of the Four-Anchor Model. The resulting array of information provides a way to quickly identify how greater awareness and self-regulation of these three focus areas (mindset, consciousness, and motivation) can positively contribute to strengthening progress with meeting the potential represented by each of the four anchors.

In what follows, these 12 interactions are more fully described within a narrative. Each narrative is structured around seven key aspects that together provide a holistic exploration of self-growth for each combination of an anchor and a focus area.

Together, these seven aspects provide a comprehensive lens for understanding the dynamics of self-growth development and practices for each cell of the table. The narratives provide guideposts for recognizing areas of self-growth strength and areas for improvement. By deciding on and taking specific, self-determined and self-regulated actions based on the narrative information, an individual's self-growth journey will become an intrinsically motivating source of insight and meaning.

Table 1 Synopses of the interaction between the three Focus Areas and the Four Self-Growth Anchors

		FOCUS AREA		
		a. Self-Growth Mindset	b. Consciousness	c. Intrinsic Motivation
SELF-GROWTH ANCHOR	1. Insightful Reflection	1a Belief in unlimited growth causes the valuing of insights to develop new intentions.	1b Awareness of one's thinking, emotions, relationships, and spiritual meaning in all life situations increases life meaning.	1c The more one understands themselves, the more they want to become their ideal self.
	2. Envisioning Ideal Self	2a Believing in an ideal self strengthens one's resolve to overcome impediments and clarify life's purpose.	2b Understanding how past experiences influence aspirations sharpens clarity about an ideal self and how to expand it.	2c Seeing personal values reflected in the vision of an ideal self fuels intrinsic motivation to pursue it.
	3. Intentional Action Planning	3a A belief in one's ability to design active growth plans transforms goals into reality.	3b Conscious decision-making aligns action plans with long-term goals, ensuring intentional and impactful growth.	3c Knowing that actions align with intrinsic values energizes sustained commitment to follow through with plans.
	4. Growth Capability Development	4a The experience of growth, despite perceived limits, expands the willingness to develop and refine new capabilities.	4b Conscious tracking of progress helps identify specific areas for improvement and sustains alignment with growth goals.	4c Growth achieved amplifies the drive to build and enhance new self-growth capabilities.

1. It begins with the **Key Components of Self-Growth Capability** (Apple et al., 2021). These capabilities identify foundational components essential to developing self-growth practices that use the focus area to strengthen the anchor.
2. The most critical **Self-Growth Role** (Burke, Apple et al., 2024) highlights the specific self-growth role from the Five Roles Model that is most influential in empowering growth for the given anchor and focus area.
3. The **Key Step of the Self-Growth Methodology** (Jain et al., 2020) connects structured processes to practical applications, demonstrating how individuals can integrate self-growth practices into their self-growth journey.
4. The **Top Two Meta-Behaviors** (Leise et al., 2024) illustrate actionable performance plans and mindsets that bridge the gap between intention and practice.
5. The **Two Greatest Impediments** (Watson Spiva et al., 2024) reveal common limitations to growth and provide insights into addressing them effectively.
6. The **Top Two Common Issues** expand on these challenges, offering targeted solutions that encourage reflection and intentional action. These issues come from three years of self-growth coaching 1,000 hours of direct coaching (Apple, 2022) and coaching of coaches who have themselves collectively accumulated 1,000 hours of coaching practice (Apple, 2024).
7. Finally, **Research and New Growth Paths** contextualizes the anchor and focus area within broader self-growth processes, emphasizing resilience, exploration, and alignment with an ideal self and provides an example of research, often external to PE, that supports how the focus area influences performance related to an anchor.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Reflection and Self-Growth Coaching**

These self-growth capability components aid individuals to critically analyze their experiences and transform future activities into actionable self-growth opportunities. Reflection serves as a cornerstone for generating insights, while self-growth coaching provides structured guidance to navigate challenges. Together, these components foster resilience and the ability to transform growable moments into meaningful progress toward one's ideal self.

Self-Growth Role**The Guide**

Acting as a Guide involves helping individuals connect life moments with insights that inform their self-growth journey. This role supports the alignment of values and aspirations, ensuring that reflective practices are targeted and meaningful. The Guide also models reflective thinking, reinforcing the belief that every experience holds possibilities for new discoveries leading to new intentions.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 5 - Step d (Life Vision)**

Reflecting on weekly performance is a vital step for insightful reflection. This practice helps individuals identify strengths, areas for improvement, and key insights, creating a reflective foundation for addressing weekly challenges and enhancing QoL. By integrating this step, individuals can link reflective practices directly to intentions and active growth plans.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Ideal-Self Focused and Self-Mentoring**

Focusing on an ideal self ensures that reflective practices align with aspirational goals, reinforcing intrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, self-mentoring encourages individuals to integrate their reflection-in-action by refining growth plans and associated actions to ensure that these real-time insights lead to additional growth in the moment.

Self-Growth Impediments**Minimal Reflection Capability and Fixed Mindset**

Minimal reflection capability impedes the ability to derive meaningful insights, while a fixed mindset limits an individual's willingness to explore growth opportunities. These challenges can be mitigated by introducing structured reflection prompts within weekly and daily reflections and adopting a mentoring system that models reflective thinking. This approach fosters greater insightfulness in reflection and shifts perspectives toward a growth-oriented mindset.

Common Issues**Sustaining consistent reflective practices and Doubts about their value**

These issues can be addressed by scheduling regular reflection sessions using the Weekly Reflection Methodology and fostering nonjudgmental analysis of experiences. The Insight Methodology (Leise, Dombi, & Apple, 2023) helps extract actionable insights, connecting new intentions to growth opportunities.

Research and New Growth Paths

Efforts to develop a self-growth mindset through insightful reflection often leads individuals to explore side paths that may initially appear promising but fail to yield sustainable self-growth. These experiences, while challenging, are integral to discovering a self-growth mindset attractor state. Establishing a sustainable self-growth path demands resilience and readiness to embrace exploratory journeys that refine an ideal self. The Insight Methodology (Leise, Apple, & Dombi, 2023) includes steps for transforming significant observations into insights that can be generalized. Insights can be of the "aha" type that arises unexpectedly and are experienced as intuitions that seem true without further validation. However, Kahneman (2011) cautions that "fast" (intuitive) thinking must be tempered by patiently analyzing with "slow" thinking methods. The initial steps of interpreting an unusual observation are typically fast but the later steps of the IM require slow analysis to improve validity in the details as well as in the big-picture intuition. A self-growth mindset is the integration of openness to intuited possibilities with disciplined analysis to get true value from what is observed.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Systematic Reflection** and **Structured Planning**

Systematic reflection and structured planning help individuals elevate their awareness by synthesizing past experiences and aligning actions with their ideal self. These components ensure that reflection becomes a deliberate practice, promoting clarity and focusing on recognizing opportunities for meaningful growth.

Self-Growth Role**The Director**

The Director plays a critical role in cultivating consciousness through systematic reflection and structured planning. Acting as a Director involves translating the Guide's reflective insights into actionable intentions, aligning them with long-term goals and aspirations. The Director fosters clarity and intentionality by identifying patterns and connections within experiences, ensuring that heightened consciousness leads to new intentions aligned with becoming one's ideal self.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 1 - Step a (Values and Needs Analysis)**

Conducting a values and needs analysis will uncover core values and motivational drivers that are pivotal for building consciousness. This step helps individuals gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing their decision-making and growth processes. By creating a foundation of awareness, individuals can engage in systematic reflection and structured planning that aligns with personal aspirations.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Systematic Growth** and **Opportunity Focus**

Systematic growth ensures that reflection connects to measurable growth goals, providing a clear framework for assessing progress. Opportunity focus helps individuals identify and evaluate each weekly activity for moments of intentional growth, enabling them to maintain a proactive approach to self-growth.

Self-Growth Impediments**Lack of Self-Growth Consciousness** and **Cognitive Blind Spots**

The lack of self-growth consciousness limits an individual's ability to recognize growth opportunities, while cognitive blind spots prevent them from identifying areas that need improvement. These impediments can be mitigated by implementing structured awareness exercises (e.g., 3-minute after-action reflections) and guided mentoring systems that help individuals document and analyze key growth moments, thereby fostering greater self-awareness.

Common Issues**Lack of Awareness of Values** and **Difficulty Identifying Patterns**

A lack of awareness of how values and past experiences influence decision-making, combined with difficulty identifying patterns, are common barriers to strengthening consciousness. These issues can be addressed through values and needs analysis and reflective exercises. By adopting the Guide role, individuals can connect their life history with current growth objectives, ensuring that decisions align with long-term goals.

Research and New Growth Paths

Developing consciousness often involves exploring hidden patterns and addressing blind spots that initially resist awareness. These challenges, while difficult, are critical for achieving more effective self-growth. Conscious engagement with systematic reflection and structured planning allows individuals to refine their intentions and growth objectives so they align with a clearer vision of their ideal self. Peterson and Seligman (2004) provide a taxonomy of character strengths and virtues that is a resource for specifying characteristics of one's ideal self and criteria that bring a realistic focus to what could be intended. Because it is future-oriented, some elements in the description of an ideal self cannot be fully identified presently. Its further clarification is part of the journey that emerges only from insightful reflection about possibilities for transformational change.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Reflection and Self-Mentoring**

Reflection serves as a catalyst for uncovering intrinsic motivators by connecting personal experiences to QoL, the impact made, and the vision of an ideal self. Self-mentoring ensures one's actions consistently reflect their ideal self aspirations. Together, these components foster a belief in one's capabilities for intentional decision-making and continuous growth.

Self-Growth Role**The Coach**

The Coach plays a pivotal role in fostering intrinsic motivation through insightful reflection. Acting as a Coach, individuals reinforce the belief in limitless growth capability by addressing self-doubt and emphasizing incremental progress. The Coach creates a supportive environment in which the Guide's insights are transformed into active growth plans, ensuring that intrinsic motivation is sustained through a sense of purpose, success, and growth.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 1 - Step b (Raising Expectations)**

The step, Raising Expectations, is critical for cultivating intrinsic motivation. Raising expectations challenges self-limiting beliefs by encouraging individuals to set ambitious yet attainable goals. It instills confidence in one's ability to grow and fosters a mindset that sees reflection as a pathway to realizing greater possibilities.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Weekly Transition and Autonomy**

Weekly transitions provide a structured framework for individuals to review and refine their reflections, ensuring that new intentions align with annual plans and their ideal self. Autonomy empowers individuals to take ownership of their self-growth journey, ensuring that their motivation is driven by internal values rather than external validation.

Self-Growth Impediments**Self-Growth Impediments: Self-Doubt and Fear of Failure**

Self-doubt undermines intrinsic motivation by eroding confidence in one's ability to grow, while a fear of failure discourages individuals from engaging deeply with reflective practices. These impediments can be mitigated by adopting a coaching approach that validates incremental successes and reinforces an individual's belief in their potential. Visualization techniques and positive affirmations can help shift focus from fear to possibilities and opportunities.

Common Issues**Maintaining Motivation During Reflection and Doubts About Value**

Challenges in maintaining motivation during reflective practices and doubts about the value of reflection often deter individuals from fully engaging in self-growth. These issues can be addressed by adopting the Coach role to reinforce belief in one's potential and using visualization techniques to celebrate incremental successes. These strategies ensure reflection becomes a source of inspiration and sustained motivation.

Research and New Growth Paths

Sustaining intrinsic motivation in reflective practices often involves exploring pathways that may initially seem daunting or unclear. These exploratory efforts are essential for building reflective capabilities and aligning reflective practices with personal values. The external types of motivation identified in Ryan et al. (2021) support many behaviors related to learning, performance, and growth that are necessary for daily life endeavors such as career, family and community contributions. Self-growers must develop reflective metamotivational awareness of the differences between these motives and the desired movement to intrinsic motivation for their ideal self aspirations. Guided by intrinsic motivators, individuals can refine their strategies and strengthen their ability to transform daily and weekly reflections into meaningful weekly active growth plans.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Life Plan and Self-Growth Plan**

These self-growth capabilities enable individuals to clarify their life's meaning, values, and aspirations while creating actionable pathways to achieve their vision by developing new capabilities. By fostering a mindset centered on growth and possibilities, these tools empower individuals to align their daily actions with their long-term goals.

Self-Growth Role**The Director**

The Director is most influential in fostering a self-growth mindset for envisioning an ideal self. Acting as a Director, individuals create a clear self-growth journey by defining meaningful goals and crafting broad strategies that help to connect present intentions and efforts to future aspirations. The Director role emphasizes the importance of setting a vision that inspires intentional and continuous growth.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 2 - Step b (Creating a Vision of the Future Self)**

The step, creating a vision of the future self, helps individuals articulate who they aspire to become by aligning their capabilities, values, and goals with their ideal self. It serves as a compass for translating their vision into intentional decisions and purposeful actions.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Ideal Self Focused and Accepting the Role of Director**

Being focused on one's ideal self ensures that every life activity aligns with the aspirational vision of the future self. Accepting the role of Director reinforces the intentionality required for the Coach to create, regulate, and refine weekly growth action plans and for the Scriptwriter to create the script for the week.

Self-Growth Impediments**Low Expectations with Inferior Criteria****and Unaware of an Ideal Zone of Development**

Low expectations trap individuals in a limited mindset, preventing them from envisioning an aspirational ideal self. Additionally, being unaware of the optimal growth zone (Leasure et al., 2020) restricts their ability to see the motivational potential of intentional planning and execution. These challenges can be mitigated through emphasizing goal reframing techniques and structured growth planning to encourage individuals to elevate their aspirations and desired level of quality.

Common Issues**Difficulty Articulating a Compelling Vision****and Aligning Current Actions with Future Aspirations**

These challenges can be addressed through prompted life visioning reflective writing exercises and adopting the Director role to set meaningful goals and develop strategies that bridge the gap between present efforts and future aspirations.

Research and New Growth Paths

Envisioning an ideal self often requires individuals to navigate uncertainties and reassess their long-term goals and QoL framework (King Berry et al., 2021). While this process may involve initial setbacks, it fosters resilience and clarity by reflecting on implemented intentions weekly. Guided by a self-growth mindset, individuals can upgrade their vision and create an inspiring roadmap that align with their values and aspirations (Burke, Apple et al., 2024).

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Life Planning** and **CLS Self-Growth**

Conscious engagement with life planning and the Classification of Learning Skills (CLS) upgrades (Leise et al., 2019) the ability to increase awareness of how their growth efforts align and impact their broader aspirations. These components allow individuals to consciously align their actions with the vision of their ideal self by developing transferable learning skills that strengthen self-awareness and growth capability.

Self-Growth Role**The Guide**

The Guide role is essential in fostering consciousness for envisioning an ideal self. Acting as a Guide, individuals analyze their life history to clarify values and understand how past experiences shape their aspirations. This reflective process ensures that growth goals are informed by a conscious understanding of personal identity and long-term aspirations.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 2, Step a - Developing One's Life History**

The step, developing one's life history, involves analyzing past experiences to identify patterns, strengths, and areas of growth. By understanding how past influences inform the present, individuals can consciously align their future goals with a well-grounded sense of self.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Shared Journey** and **Self-Growth Journey**

A shared journey helps individuals to align personal aspirations with significant others by identifying collective growth opportunities and by fostering synergy between personal and interpersonal goals. A self-growth journey involves using systematic methodologies to consciously navigate the steps required to achieve an ideal self.

Self-Growth Impediments**Limited Awareness of Growth**and **Mentoring Skills and Fixation on Expectations of Significant Other**

Limited awareness of growth and mentoring skills (Burke, Beyerlein, & Apple, 2024) prevents individuals from developing capabilities that support intentions that align with long-term goals. Additionally, over-prioritizing other's expectations diverts focus from intrinsic aspirations to less valued external demands. Mentors can address these challenges by developing and using mentoring skills to strengthen growth skills and by collaborating with significant others to update shared expectations.

Common Issues**Inability to Link Past Experiences to Future Aspirations**and **Difficulty Identifying Personal Growth Opportunities**

The inability to link past experiences to future aspirations and difficulty identifying personal growth opportunities can be addressed through reflective exercises like a life history analysis that helps to reveal where major growth occurred in the past and what the opportunities were to create this growth.

Research and New Growth Paths

Developing consciousness to envision an ideal self often involves uncovering hidden patterns in life experiences and realigning growth strategies. While this process may initially be unclear, it enables individuals to refine their vision and consciously connect their values and aspirations to a meaningful life plan. This reflective clarity lays the foundation for sustained self-growth. For example, Turcotte et al. (2023) found that the capacity to regulate attention in pursuit of a goal is shared by meditative and sociocognitive approaches to understanding mindfulness. Becoming more consciously attentive helps one to see and make connections between experiences and aspirations. This reflective clarity lays the foundation for enhancing the consciousness necessary for the Director to plan out a self-growth journey (Burke, Apple, et al., 2024).

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Well-Defined Life Vision and Active Growth Plan**

A well-defined life vision provides a clear understanding of one's values and aspirations, while an active growth plan bridges the gap between daily actions and long-term goals. Together, these components inspire individuals to perceive their efforts as aligned with their core values and a meaningful future, driving sustained intrinsic motivation.

Self-Growth Role**The Coach**

The Coach plays a vital role in fostering intrinsic motivation by illustrating how growth goals and growth objectives help an individual proceed on their self-growth journey towards their ideal self. Acting as a Coach, individuals reinforce belief in their potential to achieve growth goals, motivating themselves by focusing on the transformative impact of realizing progress towards their life vision. The Coach encourages the celebration of incremental successes, which sustains momentum and commitment to long-term aspirations.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 2 - Step d (Creating Milestone Goals)**

By setting measurable progress markers, individuals can track their achievements and maintain motivation. Milestones provide tangible evidence of impact and growth and act as motivational checkpoints, reinforcing commitment to an ideal self.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Empowering Others and Quality of Life (QoL) Decision-Making**

Empowering others enables individuals to create shared growth opportunities, enhancing personal motivation through collaboration and collective success. QoL decision-making ensures that an individual's choices are intrinsically guided by their QoL criteria, reducing uncertainty and fostering alignment with their annual measures of success and annual growth goals, and their vision of their ideal self.

Self-Growth Impediments**Lack of Autonomy and Philosophical Skepticism**

Lack of autonomy diminishes an individual's sense of control over their self-growth journey, thereby undermining intrinsic motivation. Similarly, philosophical skepticism about the significance of growth goals fosters resistance to envisioning an ideal self due to a limited belief in one's ability to change. These barriers can be mitigated through weekly transitions that incorporate focused decision-making and reflective practices. By using weekly reflection to analyze the impact of the previous week's growth objectives, individuals can build confidence in their ability to grow and reinforce the meaningfulness of their growth efforts.

Common Issues**Challenges in Maintaining Motivation
and Difficulty Connecting Immediate Actions to Long-Term Goals**

These challenges can be addressed by adopting the Coach role to reinforce belief in unlimited intentional growth and using milestone goals to celebrate progress and sustain motivation especially by self-assessing using performance measures that show the increased capabilities during the growth opportunities.

Research and New Growth Paths

Sustaining intrinsic motivation for envisioning an ideal self requires individuals to navigate uncertainties and setbacks while remaining committed to their efforts. Guided by intrinsic values and aspirations, individuals refine their goals and align their self-growth journey with a clear and inspiring vision of their ideal self. This alignment provides the foundation for sustained self-growth and long-term fulfillment. The external types of motivation identified in Ryan et al. (2021) support many behaviors related to learning, performance, and growth that are necessary for daily life endeavors such as career, family and community contributions. Self-growers must develop reflective metamotivational awareness of the differences between these motives and the desired movement to intrinsic motivation of their ideal self aspirations. For example, Riddell et al., (2023) found that parents who used metacognitive techniques, following the model of mental contrasting with implementation intentions (MCII), helped parents to become more autonomous in their goal regulation practices. Intrinsic motives are more likely to evolve when a self-growth journey is shared, and supported, as in family relationships.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Active Growth Plans** and **Mentoring Skills**

Active growth plans and mentoring skills help operationalize growth objectives into specific, actionable steps. These capabilities empower individuals to translate their new intentions into measurable performance improvements, fostering a mindset that transforms intentional growth into tangible impactful outcomes.

Self-Growth Role**The Scriptwriter**

The Scriptwriter is critical for fostering a can-do mindset through intentional action planning. Acting as a Scriptwriter, individuals design detailed performance plans and weekly scripts, linking long-term goals to daily actions. This role emphasizes intentionality and autonomy, helping individuals create actionable pathways to achieve their weekly outcomes.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 5 - Step b (Developing a Weekly Action Plan)**

The step, developing a weekly action plan, ensures individuals identify specific actions to address growth opportunities, aligning their weekly growth efforts with self-growth goals. Developing a weekly action plan connects daily activities with broader intentions, reinforcing the importance of deliberate, goal-driven planning.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Growth Development** and **Self-Growth Coaching**

Growth development focuses on systematically expanding targeted capabilities to enhance the effectiveness of performance plans. Self-growth coaching equips individuals to identify and overcome impediments, ensuring that plans are realistic, actionable, and aligned with growth objectives that mitigate impediments but also help to increase weekly outcomes.

Self-Growth Impediments**Inability to Create Action Plans** and **Low Growth Productivity**

The inability to create action plans leaves intentions unstructured, while low growth productivity limits the time and energy available for self-growth efforts. These challenges can be mitigated by using the weekly scripting methodology and engaging in collaborative mentoring strategies to build confidence in designing and executing effective growth plans.

Common Issues**Overwhelmed** and **Difficulty Maintaining Focus on Long-Term Objectives**

Competing priorities and difficulty maintaining focus on long-term objectives often disrupt intentional action planning and its execution. These challenges can be addressed by adopting the Scriptwriter role to create operational weekly plans that align with annual measures of success and annual growth goals. Additionally, making better QoL decisions by prioritizing quality over quantity—embracing the "less is more" principle—can help individuals maintain clarity and reduce feelings of being overwhelmed.

Research and New Growth Paths

Intentional action planning often involves iterative refinement as individuals test and adapt their strategies. While initial efforts may not always succeed, they provide critical learning opportunities. Guided by a self-growth mindset, individuals develop actionable plans that link aspirations to outcomes, reinforcing their ability to transform intentionality into sustainable growth. For example, Huang et al. (2024) found that a transformative mindset intervention led to higher feelings of authenticity and lower feelings of fragility after success with a goal. Individuals in this intervention experience persisted with more positive learning and social behaviors as well as greater interest in sustaining their goal-maintenance behaviors.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Self-Growth Methodology and Active Growth Plan**

An active growth plan ensures individuals intentionally connect their daily actions with long-term aspirations, fostering deliberate and focused decision-making. Practices such as prioritizing tasks that align with annual growth goals and regularly assessing progress ensure that actions remain purposeful and impactful. The Self-Growth Methodology enhances consciousness by offering a structured framework to select growth opportunities, refine strategies, and consciously assess the outcomes of decisions. Together, these components enable individuals to approach intentional action planning with clarity, ensuring alignment between their immediate efforts and broader aspirations.

Self-Growth Role**The Director**

The Director plays a pivotal role in fostering increased consciousness through intentional action planning. Acting as a Director, individuals analyze decisions, prioritize intentions and growth opportunities, and consciously align their efforts with life goals. This role emphasizes clarity in decision-making and ensures that actions are purposeful and contribute meaningfully to self-growth. By adopting this role, individuals strengthen their awareness of how their choices impact their self-growth journey.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 3 - Step b (Conducting a Performance Analysis)**

This step helps individuals identify patterns and areas for improvement, fostering conscious awareness of their growth processes in improving performance development. Conducting a performance analysis ensures that decisions are informed, deliberate, and aligned with both weekly outcomes and annual measures of success. It builds the clarity required to create intentional action plans that align with self-growth goals.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Quality of Life (QoL) Decision-Making and Intersubjectivity**

QoL decision-making prioritizes actions based on their alignment with life vision, helping individuals focus on decisions that enhance their self-growth journey. Intersubjectivity (interactions with people and situations) integrates personal and interpersonal objectives into intentional action plans, fostering alignment between individual growth efforts and collective goals. Together, these meta-behaviors deepen awareness and foster intentionality in action planning.

Self-Growth Impediments**Poor Quality of Life Decisions and Distractibility**

Poor QoL decisions lead to misaligned actions that fail to support an individual's QoL criteria that move them towards becoming their ideal self. Distractibility disrupts focus and reduces the effectiveness of action plan implementation. These impediments can be mitigated by improving weekly reflections regarding the quality of an individual's decisions which will improve QoL decision making and weekly scripting will introduce new criteria for making better choices.

Common Issues**Lack of Clarity in Identifying Growth-Focused Actions and Inconsistent Focus**

These challenges can be addressed by adopting the Director role to strategically define priorities and using reflective tools to ensure actions align with both weekly outcomes and annual measures of success. Regularly scheduled reflection sessions, such as daily reflection, can help individuals maintain focus and clarity, enabling them to identify growth opportunities and sustain alignment with their weekly growth objectives and annual growth goals.

Research and New Growth Paths

Consciousness in intentional action planning often involves revisiting and refining strategies as new insights emerge. While this iterative process may initially seem challenging, it builds critical awareness and enhances decision-making skills. For example, Patella et al. (2022) demonstrated that an intervention to increase the agentic (self-determining) behaviors of college science students increased their personal interest and intentions to persist in their field of study. Guided by a reflective, agentic approach, individuals can create actionable plans that are both intentional and adaptable, ensuring alignment with their broader growth goals.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Mentoring Skills** and **Quality Mindset**

Mentoring skills empower individuals to guide themselves and others in designing and executing action plans, fostering accountability and mutual growth. A quality mindset emphasizes striving for excellence in every step of the process while maintaining adaptability. Together, these components sustain intrinsic motivation by reinforcing the alignment between personal values, growth efforts, and the pursuit of meaningful outcomes. Practices such as identifying areas for improvement during weekly reflections and celebrating incremental successes help individuals internalize the value of their growth journey.

Self-Growth Role**The Performer**

The Performer is critical to fostering intrinsic motivation for intentional action execution. Acting as a Performer, individuals actively engage in their growth efforts, employing self-assessment to adjust their actions and ensure alignment with their plans, values, and aspirations. This role emphasizes persistence, adaptability, and intentionality in achieving increasing productivity, helping individuals overcome challenges and maintain momentum.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 5 - Step e (Memorializing Weekly Progress)**

Reflecting on weekly successes and lessons learned strengthens intrinsic motivation by helping individuals internalize their growth experiences. This step involves analyzing the impact of previous actions, identifying patterns of success, and preparing for future challenges. By reinforcing the connection between daily efforts, their successes, and annual measures of success, this practice builds confidence and sustains engagement with intentional action.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Weekly Transition** and **Autonomy**

Weekly transitions provide a structured framework for assessing progress, refining action plans, and maintaining alignment with intrinsic goals. Autonomy empowers individuals to take full responsibility for their self-growth journey by making deliberate choices that reflect their values. These meta-behaviors help individuals to sustain motivation by fostering a sense of ownership and purpose in their self-growth efforts.

Self-Growth Impediments**Feeling Time Pressure** and **Perfectionism**

Time pressure can diminish motivation by overwhelming individuals with competing demands, while perfectionism creates anxiety and limits adaptability by setting unrealistic expectations. These barriers can be mitigated by leveraging mentoring skills to prioritize tasks effectively and by cultivating a growth-oriented perspective that values incremental progress over flawless execution. Tools such as weekly scripting and reflection-after-action can help individuals manage their time and create a more positive can-do mindset.

Common Issues**Maintaining Motivation When Plans Face Setbacks**
and **Balancing Competing Priorities**

Setbacks and competing priorities often disrupt sustained motivation. These challenges can be addressed by adopting the Performer role to reframe setbacks as opportunities for learning and growth. Reflective practices, such as daily reflection and visualizing new images of an ideal self, can help individuals stay connected to their intrinsic drive. Additionally, emphasizing quality over quantity in task selection fosters focus and reduces the likelihood of burnout.

Research and New Growth Paths

Intrinsic motivation in intentional action planning often develops through iterative refinement, as individuals navigate challenges and adjust their strategies to better align with their values. While setbacks may initially undermine confidence, they provide valuable opportunities for resilience and adaptability. By focusing on meaningful outcomes and maintaining alignment with personal aspirations, individuals can create intentional action plans that sustain intrinsic motivation and support long-term self-growth. For example, Weissman and Elliot (2023) found that experimental participants focused on the shared tasks related to achievement goals demonstrated stronger academic performance and increased intrinsic motivation—as predicted by the well-researched social relations model. Sharing a self-growth journey increases the likelihood that selected or created experiences and opportunities will be enjoyed more.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Self-Growth Mindset and Shared Journey**

A self-growth mindset cultivates the belief that growth is limitless, encouraging individuals to challenge perceived limitations and embrace opportunities for continuous development. The shared journey fosters collaboration, mutual support, and the exchange of insights, amplifying both individual and collective growth. Practices such as shared reflection sessions and collaborative goal setting can help individuals internalize the value of learning and growing from others, enhancing their ability to develop targeted capabilities, especially to address impediments.

Self-Growth Role**The Coach**

The Coach plays a pivotal role in fostering a self-growth mindset for capability development. Acting as a Coach, individuals identify growth opportunities, provide guidance, and co-design active growth plans that incorporate measurable performance criteria. This role encourages belief in one's potential while modeling resilience and strategic thinking. By offering constructive feedback and celebrating small wins, the Coach reinforces the mindset that every challenge is an opportunity for becoming more like one's ideal self.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 3 - Step c (Developing Detailed Performance Descriptions)**

Crafting detailed descriptions of high-quality performance helps individuals create a clear and actionable vision of what they want to assimilate. This step enables individuals to articulate precise expectations of excellence in targeted growth areas, ensuring alignment between efforts and desired outcomes. Detailed performance descriptions provide a structured approach to intentional capability development, fostering continuous refinement, focus, and improvement.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Self-Growth Coaching and Growth Development**

Self-Growth coaching enables individuals to address impediments and effectively navigate their growth processes. By providing structured support and fostering accountability, this meta-behavior ensures individuals stay on track toward their goals. Growth development systematically expands targeted capabilities, helping individuals translate intentions into sustainable progress by prioritizing actionable steps and measurable outcomes.

Self-Growth Impediments**Satisfaction with the Status Quo and Being Overwhelmed by Growth**

Satisfaction with the status quo discourages individuals from pushing beyond their current comfort zones. Being overwhelmed by growth fosters resistance to initiating or sustaining development efforts. These barriers can be mitigated by fostering a disruption mindset that challenges complacency and encourages experimentation. Practices such as breaking growth goals into smaller, manageable tasks (Fishbach, 2021) and using visualization techniques to reduce fear of failure can help individuals stay motivated and focused, reducing their sense of being overwhelmed.

Common Issues**Resistance to Prioritizing Growth Opportunities and Avoiding Challenging Tasks**

Resistance to prioritizing growth opportunities and the tendency to avoid challenging tasks often stem from uncertainty or fear of failure. These issues can be addressed by adopting the Coach role to model the value of stretching one's growth objectives. Developing active growth plans with clear, achievable objectives can provide individuals with a sense of direction and confidence, making it easier to embrace challenging tasks.

Research and New Growth Paths

Capability development often involves exploring new challenges and taking calculated risks to stretch current abilities. While this process may evoke discomfort initially, it fosters resilience and adaptability. Guided by a self-growth mindset, individuals can embrace these challenges as opportunities to refine their skills and expand their capabilities. Over time, this iterative process creates sustainable growth and alignment with long-term self-growth goals. Dweck (2024) reviews her research history, starting with learning and achievement motivation and her well-known theory of fixed versus growth mindsets. From there she and her collaborators explored other aspects of human potential and developed an integrative theory that identifies motivation as a key factor in personality development and intelligent decision-making. These discoveries provide evidence of the importance of the capabilities that are realized with a self-growth mindset and the motivational focus that goes with it.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Self-Growth Methodology and Assessment Systems**

The Self-Growth Methodology provides a structured framework for identifying and refining life plans and supporting growth opportunities, encouraging individuals to reflect deeply on their progress and align their actions with broader aspirations. Assessment systems enhance this process by allowing individuals to track their progress, assess outcomes, and adjust improvement strategies. Together, these components elevate awareness of how daily actions contribute to continuous self-growth and ensure intentional alignment with annual measures of success.

Self-Growth Role**The Guide**

The Guide plays a pivotal role in fostering consciousness during growth capability development. Acting as a Guide, individuals reflect on their actions and progress to identify areas for refinement and alignment with their goals. This role emphasizes the importance of maintaining a clear understanding of the broader context of one's self-growth journey and using that awareness to stay focused on current growth objectives and weekly outcomes.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 4 - Step a (Identifying Key Risk Factors)**

Recognizing and addressing barriers that hinder progress is critical for fostering consciousness. This step enables individuals to identify key risk factors that may impede their growth and implement proactive strategies to mitigate these risks. By integrating this step, individuals can ensure their growth efforts remain productive and aligned with their intentions.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Systematic Growth and Life Assessment and Shared Journey**

Systematic growth and life assessment involve regularly assessing progress, growth strategies, and alignment with annual measures of success. This meta-behavior ensures individuals critically analyze their efforts and refine their approaches to enhance productivity. The shared journey fosters collaborative growth by encouraging individuals to seek interpersonal insights and integrate them into their self-growth practices, deepening their awareness and enhancing their capability development.

Self-Growth Impediments**Minimal Self-Assessment and Cognitive Blind Spots**

Minimal self-assessment limits individuals' ability to evaluate their progress effectively, while cognitive blind spots prevent awareness of areas needing improvement. These impediments can be mitigated by implementing structured self-assessment tools, such as weekly reflection, and fostering reflective practices that enhance self-awareness, such as reflection-in-action. Mentoring systems can further support this process by providing feedback and modeling strategies for recognizing overlooked growth opportunities.

Common Issues**Difficulty Reflecting on Progress and Linking Actions to Broader Goals**

Challenges in reflecting effectively on progress and connecting daily actions to broader objectives can hinder capability development. These issues can be addressed by adopting the Guide role to facilitate reflective practices, such as documenting successes and lessons learned. Additionally, systematic assessments can help individuals establish clear connections between their efforts and their progress towards their ideal self, ensuring their self-growth journey remains intentional and aligned.

Research and New Growth Paths

Enhancing consciousness in capability development often involves uncovering hidden growth opportunities and reassessing long-term goals. While this process can initially feel overwhelming, it provides opportunities for deeper self-awareness and strategic refinement. Guided by structured assessments and reflective practices, individuals can align their daily actions with sustained self-growth, enabling intentional and meaningful development over time. Fredrickson (2001) emphasizes the importance of keeping a focus, i.e., a positive mindset, on a "broaden and build" perspective rather than letting oneself be captured by negative experiences and failures to attain what is intended. Long-term self-growth capability development requires attention to gaining skills, especially mentoring skills, at all function levels (Leise et al., 2023a) to assure readiness even for unexpected self-growth opportunities.

Key Components of Self-Growth Capability**Quality Mindset and Self-Monitoring**

A quality mindset encourages individuals to pursue excellence in every aspect of their self-growth journey, fostering a commitment to intentionality. Self-monitoring enhances awareness by ensuring that actions remain aligned with growth objectives and weekly outcomes. Together, these components sustain intrinsic motivation by reinforcing the connection between each moment's efforts with the growth that is produced and meaningful outcomes achieved. Practices such as monthly review of annual measures of success, QoL Index, and progress with annual growth goals help individuals maintain focus and motivation.

Self-Growth Role**The Performer**

The Performer plays a central role in fostering intrinsic motivation for growth capability development. Acting as a Performer, individuals actively engage in their growth efforts by practicing self-assessment, internalizing feedback, and adjusting their actions to stay aligned with their growth objectives and intentions. This role emphasizes persistence, intentionality, and a proactive approach to overcoming challenges, ensuring sustained progress toward an ideal self.

Self-Growth Methodology**Stage 4 - Step b (Determining Key Learning Skills)**

Identifying key learning skills to address growth challenges helps individuals focus their efforts on impactful self-growth activities. This step bridges the gap between immediate actions and long-term development goals by targeting skills that directly contribute to overcoming obstacles and achieving excellence. By concentrating on these skills, individuals can channel their motivation effectively toward meaningful growth.

Top Two Meta-Behaviors**Autonomy and Empowering Others**

Autonomy fosters self-directed motivation by encouraging individuals to take full ownership of their self-growth journey. This meta-behavior allows individuals to set and pursue goals independently, reinforcing intrinsic motivation. Empowering Others creates a ripple effect of shared growth, as individuals inspire and support collective aspirations while aligning their efforts with personal values. Together, these meta-behaviors deepen engagement and amplify the motivational impact of growth efforts.

Self-Growth Impediments**Limited Energy for Self-Growth and Avoidance of Discomfort**

Limited energy for self-growth can deplete an individual's motivation, making it difficult to sustain progress. Avoidance of discomfort prevents individuals from embracing challenging yet exciting and rewarding growth opportunities. These impediments can be mitigated through applying the psychological perspectives of managing energy and focusing on QoL (Leise et al., 2023b).

Common Issues**Difficulty Maintaining Effort and Avoiding Challenging Tasks**

Maintaining consistent effort and tackling difficult tasks can be hindered by competing priorities or fear of failure. These challenges can be addressed by adopting the Performer role to internalize successes that will help to increase the willingness to adapt strategies in the moment to sustain motivation. Practices such as real-time assessment (reflection-in-action) and visualizing the implications of challenging efforts can help individuals overcome personal resistance and stay focused.

Research and New Growth Paths

Intrinsic motivation in capability development often requires individuals to navigate discomfort and embrace challenging opportunities that stretch their abilities. While this process may initially feel daunting, it fosters resilience, adaptability, and deeper commitment to long-term goals. Guided by a quality mindset and supported by the empowering influence of collaborative growth, individuals can sustain their motivation, refine their skills, and achieve meaningful, enduring self-growth. Layous et al. (2023), for example, found that consciously focusing on gratitude resulted in increased positive affect and healthier thought patterns, e.g., in depressed individuals and those who ruminate about negative aspects of their lives. A mindset open to positive affect development can overcome impediments related to negative thinking about external issues if focus can be placed on ideal self outcomes such as personal changes in attention to gratitude in daily interactions.

Conclusion

Although self-growth has been described in PE scholarship over the past 30 years (Leise, 2007; Apple et al., 2018), deeper explorations during the past six years has distinguished between growth and self-growth. The components of both growth and self-growth have been identified (Hurd et al., 2021; Apple et al., 2019; Apple et al., 2021) and methodologies for each have been produced (Van Slyke et al., 2021; Jain et al., 2020;). Many of the challenges, including significant impediments (Watson Spiva et al., 2024), have been identified and closely analyzed during the PE Expert Project (Apple, 2022; Apple, 2024). Growth and self-growth capabilities for closing the gap between intentions and behavior (Haggar, 2010) need to be grappled with through new personal change strategies such as the five-role model (Burke, Apple, et al., 2024) which maps a path for continual improvement. An ideal self is a goal state that can be represented by meta-behaviors (Leise et al., 2024) that both describe the direction of a part of one's life journey and bridge the differences between what is presently true and what one intends to attain for oneself.

The present article presents a four-anchor model that summarizes the 13 components of self-growth in the four summative concepts of insightful reflection, envisioning ideal self, intentional action planning, and growth capability development. By reducing short-term memory load from 13 items to four, this new model can more readily be used to improve self-growth insights, ideal self aspirations, action plans, and in the moment self-monitoring of both internal and external performance factors important for self-growth capability development.

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The implementation of the processes designated by the four self-growth anchors is strongly affected by three dynamic factors: mindset, consciousness, and motivation. The literature review focuses on one or two major external research models for each of these three influences on the self-growth anchors. The interactions among the four anchors and the three factors have overlaps but have been delineated in a series of 12 narratives that highlight the most probable and significant self-growth components, the important steps in the Self-Growth Methodology, the most influential role from the Five-Role Model, the key implementation issues for self-growth development, representative meta-behaviors, the most likely impediments, and a brief discussion of supporting ideas and research.

With these new conceptual and application resources, the PE theory of self-growth is further strengthened as the highest function level within the PE framework. Greater attention to the theoretical and empirical features of mindsets, consciousness, and motivation provides practitioners with an expanded range of relevant considerations for moving from growth to self-growth. These also provide considerably more knowledge about how to bridge the gaps between intentions and action plans in self-determining self-growth aspirations that yield the greatest personal and social value for each individual.

AI Disclosure Statement

An Open AI application (ChatGPT) was used to gather and edit background material from PE files and articles for the Introduction and the Twelve Narratives sections.

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