



## POSITIVITY AND MINDSETS

This summer, I attended a distance swimming camp at Kenyon College in Ohio. This experience taught me so much not only about long distance swimming and training but also about the sport of swimming itself. I really wanted to share what I learned with everyone and I hope you can use this article to help you in your swimming career.

A very important part of swimming is being **POSITIVE**. After you have had a bad swim it is normal to feel a little bad about what happened, but sometimes we get down on ourselves a little too hard. When you realize you are doing this, **STOP!** Sometimes, the more you get down on yourself, the more you tend to dwell on the past and this will hinder your improvement. To change this, for all the bad swims you ever have, remember to find one thing to be proud of and one thing to improve on. Even when you have a "bad swim", there is always something to be proud of. Keeping positive thoughts even through tough times in swimming is the key to a continuously motivated attitude.



I also learned the importance of having a **GROWTH MINDSET** in swimming (as it really is the psychological key to improvement). Do you have a Growth Mindset or a Fixed Mindset?

Some characteristics of someone with a Fixed Mindset are:

- They believe their skills and intelligence is “set” as in they have what they have.
- Main concern is their performance.
- Effort is something you give when you’re not good at something.
- They tend to give up or check out when faced with challenges.
- They take feedback personally and get defensive.
- They hate making mistakes.

A person with a Growth Mindset would believe that:

- Skills can be developed and grown.
- Their main concern is getting better or focusing on the process of improving.
- Effort is an important part of learning.
- They persevere through challenges and have grit.
- They like feedback and use it to learn.
- They use mistakes as learning experiences.



If some of the Fixed Mindset characteristics describe you, **DON’T BE ALARMED**

because YOU ARE NOT ALONE and YOU CAN CHANGE THIS! I can honestly say that when we went over this during the camp, this lesson really hit home because I struggled with changing a lot of these characteristics for so long, and I still struggle now! If you feel that you fall into the Fixed Mindset category, the biggest and most important thing you can do to change this is to admit to yourself right now of the areas where you can improve. This may be hard, but acknowledging your weaknesses is the first step to developing that Growth Mindset. Every day, when you come across any of the circumstances that the characteristics of a Fixed Mindset covered, try your best to address the situation and to attack it with a Growth Mindset and soon enough, you will find that your Growth Mindset is really “growing.”

If you looked at the characteristics above and found that for the majority of them, it placed you into the Growth Mindset category, then good for you! But as they say, nobody is perfect, and there is always something you can improve upon. Find that one characteristic of a Growth mindset that you may lack a little of or be weak in and work every day to improve on that.

I hope this article helped you to really look a little deeper into your thoughts and mindset not only for swimming, but in life altogether, and I hope you can use this to improve!

