

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

Personal Best

Changing Your Mindset About Success



Artwork by Hailey Choi

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

This module was a team effort! **Alanna Price** (Detroit Public Schools) conceptualized its theme, "best effort." **Dr. Rebecca Hasson** (University of Michigan) drafted several versions of the module. **Lisa Jo Gagliardi** (LJ Gagliardi, LLC) provided content for the "Changing your mindset" and "The power of yet" sections. **Heather Lewis** (Williamston Community Schools) provided content for the "Think together: Achieving your personal best through memorization" section. **Evilia Jankowski** (Michigan Department of Education), **Scott Martin** (Michigan Department of Education), **Nick Jaskiw** (Newaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency), and **Nancy Jaskiw** (Reeths-Puffer Schools) provided constructive feedback on different versions of this module.

What are our favorite physical activities to do as a team?

[InPACT at Home videos](#), of course!

[RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

Achieving your personal best

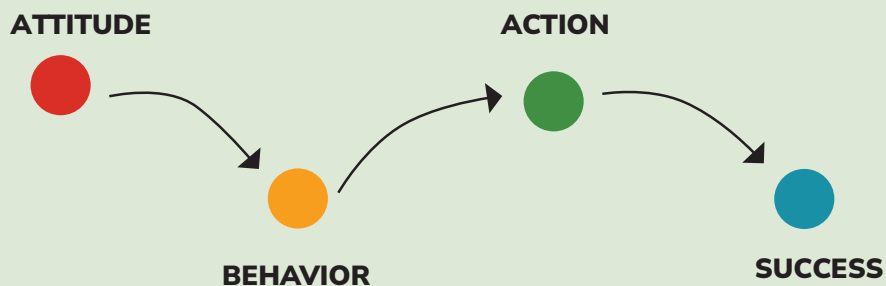
“Give it your best shot!” “Go for it!” “Keep trying!” “Never give up!”

Teachers, coaches, family members, and friends often use these kinds of encouragement to help kids achieve their personal best. But what does “personal best” mean? It means performing at your highest level. To help your child achieve their personal best, you’ll need to set a goal together, make a plan, and remind them to try their hardest. Then, no matter the outcome, your child will need to be satisfied with how much effort they put into accomplishing their goal. That’s right – their personal best won’t be outcome-focused, like getting an A on a test or running their fastest time in a 5K. It’s actually process-focused: what matters most is how they prepare for the test or how well they commit to training before the race. We have opportunities to achieve our personal best in every aspect of life by promising ourselves that we’ll “give it our best shot” as we work towards our goals, both in terms of health and in general.

Changing our mindset

Focusing on the process rather than the outcome may require you to shift your mindset. But what is “mindset” exactly? It’s your outlook on life – your world-view. It basically reflects your beliefs. Changing your mindset calls for embracing a new belief. Many people tend to favor a “winning” mindset; maybe you define success as winning first place and nothing less. Lots of people see “winning” as being better than everyone else. Yet your true personal best comes from having a “growth” mindset, where you’re committed to rising above challenges and learning how to improve at something if you try. A growth mindset also means pivoting from “How did I perform?” to “What did I learn?” To put it another way: a winning mindset centers on being the best, whereas a growth mindset centers on being your best... even if that just means being better tomorrow than you were yesterday. A growth mindset also means that you match your practice with your potential.

MINDSET



A growth mindset alters everything because it changes your attitude and how you look at things. When you update your attitude, you modify your behavior as well. Changing your behavior means changing your actions, which is a success in itself! Focusing on the process rather than the outcome will help everybody in your family achieve their personal best.

The power of “yet”: Why mindset matters!

A growth mindset means that, even in the face of challenges, we can improve if we work hard. “Yet” is a tiny word that packs a punch when it comes to developing a growth mindset. We can use this word when engaging in self-talk about our goals. Many times, we focus on what we think we can’t do. But consider how just adding “yet” to the statements below can change how we feel:

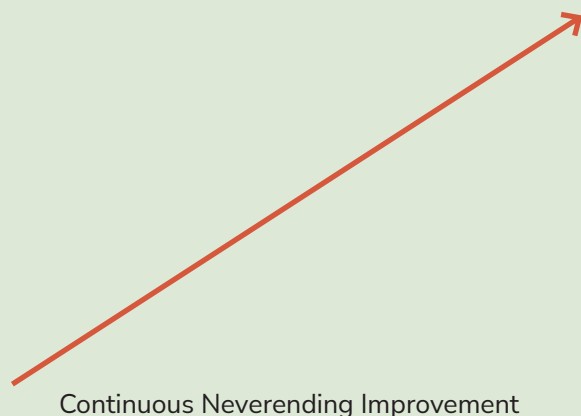
- “I can’t run a 5K... yet.”
- “I don’t understand this math problem... yet.”
- “I’m unable to get my daily servings of fruits and vegetables... yet.”
- “I can’t fit in 60 minutes of physical activity a day... yet.”
- “I can’t convince my kids to clean their room... yet.”

Can you feel the difference? Adding and believing the word “yet” tells us that we can do those things as long as we put in the effort. Think about something you’d like to do but are struggling with because you feel you can’t achieve it. Now add the word “yet.” Look at that – you’re on your way to a growth mindset and meeting your goal!

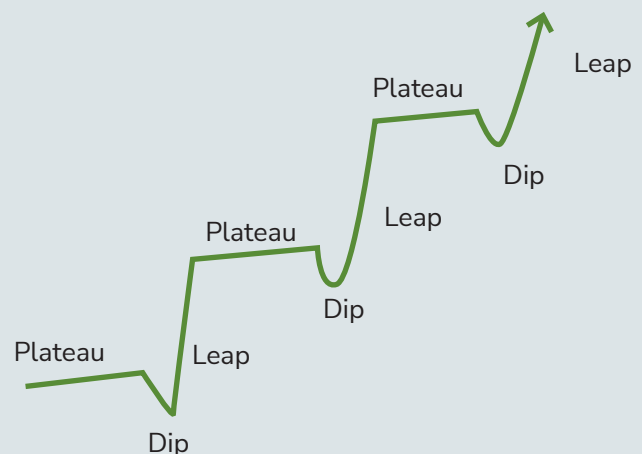
The path to success is not linear!

Having a growth mindset is crucial for achieving your personal best. It’s also important to remember that success isn’t a straight shot upward (see the graphs below). Believing that the path to success is straight can leave you frustrated or disappointed by some of the obstacles you may encounter along your journey.

How People THINK Success Looks



How Success ACTUALLY Looks



Instead, success usually comes with leaps, a few dips, and several plateaus. You'll probably have seasons of difficulty when you feel like you are doing everything right but not seeing results. The trick is to not give up! On the other side of that dip, there is a giant leap in progress waiting for you. Sure, sometimes you'll need to ease up, slow down, or take a brief rest. But just like Dory from Finding Nemo says, "just keep swimming!" If you keep moving forward, your persistence will pay off.



Just keep swimming!

The next three sections of this module give you and your family examples of how you can achieve your personal best by moving together, thinking together, and being together!

MOVE

Achieving your personal best through activity

Imagine your family has completed the InPACT at Home Healthy Choices module, you've started exercising, and you've already run a couple of 1-mile races. Now, as a family, you set a goal to complete the Girls on the Run 5k. No one in your family has run a 5K race... yet. Because you know that nothing is achieved in a day, but rather with consistency over time, you download the [Girls on the Run 10-week training plan](#) or join a [Let Me Run](#) team. Instead of setting a race time goal (e.g., finishing the race in under one hour), you map out a process that will help your family finish the race. For example, you might ask yourself the following questions when creating a plan:

- What time of day will help us be consistent in our training?
- Are we going to train by ourselves or as a family?
- What steps should we take to prevent injuries?
- Where in our house/apartment will we post our training schedule?
- How will we keep each other accountable to complete our training plan?
- How will we reward ourselves for the progress we are making?
- Are there any changes we need to make to the 10-week training plan?

After answering these questions, you can write down your training schedule, post it on your refrigerator, and start training!

...Today is race day. Over the past 12 weeks, you completed 94% of the runs on your training schedule. Congratulations! Because you put in the hard work of training, this race is no longer a race but is in fact your victory lap! You and your family can run with confidence knowing that two things will be true:

1. You can trust your training and be satisfied with the level of effort you've put into achieving your goal of finishing the race.
2. No matter how long it takes you to finish the race, it will be your personal best – because it's your first time running the race!

This running example shows us that "personal best" means setting a goal, making a plan, and doing your best. And no matter the outcome, you can be satisfied with the level of effort you devoted to accomplishing your goal.



THINK

Achieving your personal best through memorization

Imagine your child has secured a part in the school play. They're excited but not sure how to memorize all those lines. Just as runners work through a training schedule to prepare for race day, you and your child can create a "training schedule" to get ready for opening night.

First, here are a few **tips and tricks** to keep in mind when memorizing anything (e.g., vocabulary words, spelling lists, speeches):

- Writing the lines out longhand will help your child remember them.
- Working on the lines before bed will help them "stick." We process what we've learned while we sleep; that's when information is converted from short- to long-term memory.
- Repetition is key! Your child should rehearse their lines repeatedly.
- Have your child exercise or move around while they work on their lines. Research has shown that the increased blood flow to the brain from movement, as well as the connections the brain creates while moving, makes for a powerful combination for memorizing!
- Keep memorization sessions short; 20–30 minutes per day is plenty. Remind your child to take a 5-minute break every 10–20 minutes to get up and walk around.
- Once your child has memorized a scene, have them give the script to a partner who will read the other character's lines as your child runs through theirs.
- After the first four days, have your child say their lines out loud while practicing. Speaking them and hearing the lines will help make them stick.

With these tips in mind, you and your child can now create a training schedule to help memorize your lines. Here's a sample schedule:






- **Day 1:** Read the entire script (as long as it takes).
- **Day 2:** Highlight all your lines and read through as many as you can in 20 minutes. If you finish early, go back to the beginning and read the lines again until the 20 minutes are up.
- **Day 3:** Start at the beginning of your script and handwrite as many lines as you can in 20 minutes. This will be Section 1. Then read through these lines again before bed.
- **Day 4:** Walk around your house (or outside if you'd like) as you read through Section 1. Read through it over and over until 20 minutes are up, and then read it quietly again before bed.
- **Day 5:** At the end of Section 1, handwrite the next lines (as many as you can) in 20 minutes. This will be Section 2. Read through it again before bed.
- **Day 6:** As on Day 4, walk around your house (or outside if you'd like) as you read through Section 2. Read through it over and over until 20 minutes are up, and then read it quietly again before bed.
- **Day 7:** Walk around and read through Sections 1 and 2. Say the lines out loud. Repeat for 20 minutes, then read both sections again quietly before bed.
- **Day 8:** If you still have more pages to work through, repeat Days 3–7 until you've made your way through the whole script.
- **Day 9 (opening night):** Read all sections out loud as you walk around, then read through all sections quickly and quietly before bed.

Again, the important things to remember are for your child to set a goal, make a plan, do their best, and be satisfied with the level of effort they've put into achieving their goal no matter the outcome.

Now let's apply this same process to setting reading goals! As you put together a family plan for reading, keep in mind that the goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

Here are some sample SMART goals for reading:

- Simple goal: I will read every day.
- Better goal: I will read at least 10 pages per day.
- Best goal: During the summer, I will read at least 10 pages per day before going to bed.

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------|--|---|
| S | SPECIFIC | Does the goal make sense? Is it clear? |  |
| M | MEASURABLE | Is the goal measurable? Can I track my progress? |  |
| A | ATTAINABLE | Is the goal challenging but not impossible? |  |
| R | RELEVANT | Is the goal worth my effort? Will it benefit me and meet my needs? |  |
| T | TIMELY | Is there a timeframe for achieving the goal? |  |



BE

Helping each other achieve their personal best

Achieving your personal best can be challenging on your own. Everyone needs support from a team to accomplish their personal best! As we learned in the Healthy Choices module, people are usually motivated to pursue goals when they have a sense of belonging and attachment to others. Consider how you can help your child achieve their personal best. We've got some suggestions to get you started!

- **Carve out time to be together:** Our fast-paced lives, including work and school responsibilities, have made it more and more difficult to spend quality time with family. So we need to put more effort into scheduling family discussions and family fun! What's a SMART goal you can set for being together?
- **Be present and mindful when together:** To truly connect as a family, everyone should unplug from their electronic devices. Being present for your family and staying mindful in those moments will show your family that they're important to you.
- **Help each other set SMART goals:** Setting goals can be hard for anyone, especially if you haven't had a lot of practice. Ask your child if they need help setting SMART goals for homework assignments, athletics, or extra-curricular activities. Remember not to impose your own goals on your child. Instead, ask SMART questions to help them choose goals and ways to achieve them. Another strategy is to model developing SMART goals to set an example. Let your child see your process as you set and accomplish goals for work, fun, and relationships.



- **Support each other's process and goals:** Think about how you can be an accountability partner for your child as they work towards their goals. Say they're going through a dip or have hit a plateau along their journey towards success. How can you come alongside them and encourage them to "just keep swimming"?
- **Celebrate effort rather than outcomes:** Anybody who's taken part in a community race such as a 5K or 10K knows that everyone gets a medal at the end. While first-place winners are recognized, the emphasis is on finishing the race. Everyone is celebrated for setting a goal to run the race, making a plan to train for it, and doing their best to finish. A medal is a celebration of the level of effort everyone put into the entire process. Take time to think about how you can celebrate your child's work towards achieving their personal best – not just in athletics and schoolwork but in life.

Now it's time to practice the skills that you've learned in this module. To get started, take the 20-day InPACT Personal Best Activity Challenge.

20-day InPACT Personal Best Activity Challenge

The 20-day challenge aims to enhance your family's ability to develop SMART goals. Studies suggest that it takes 21 days to form a habit and over 90 days to establish a lasting lifestyle change. Our hope is that by completing the 20-day Personal Best challenge, your family will continue practicing the most effective activities until they become a lasting and positive habit.

| | Specific Does the goal make sense? Is it clear? | Measurable Is the goal measurable? Can I track my progress? | Attainable Is the goal challenging but not impossible? | Relevant Is the goal worth my effort? Will it benefit me and meet my needs? | Timely Is there a timeframe for achieving the goal? | SMART Goals |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|---|
| Week 1 Welcome to the SMART Goals Challenge! Start by reading the Personal Best handout! Then, choose a goal focused on mindset or mindfulness for this week. | Make sure your goal is specific! Watch Tense and Relax for Our Bodies and Minds and notice there is a clear purpose. Is your goal specific? | How will you measure your goal? In minutes, hours, days? Watch Energizing Mindful Movement and notice the goal is 8 minutes per day! | Review your goal- is it too simple? Too difficult? Watch Stuck in My Seat , a video about something that is difficult but possible! | Make sure your goal is something you care about. For example, watch Checking in with Myself . | Do you want to accomplish your goal in a week, a month, over the summer? Watch Balance and Strength and choose your timeframe! | SMART GOAL 1 Record your mindfulness goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job! |
| Week 2 This week create a physical activity goal! Maybe work towards getting the recommended 60 minutes per day. | Example: "This week I will do the calendar video each day!" Is your goal specific? Watch Cardio Kickboxing 2 to get moving! | How will you track your goal? In a notebook or on this calendar? Watch the Full Body Workout to get moving today. | Think ahead to next week. Do you think you can still do your goal? If not, you may want to adjust it! Watch Total Body Exercise with Lorenzo! | Make sure to choose a goal you enjoy doing. Goals should be fun to work on! Watch 12 Days of Fitness to get those active minutes. | When do you want to reach this goal? Watch Arm Circuit . | SMART GOAL 2 Record your physical activity goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job! |
| Week 3 This week make your goal about nutrition. Maybe try a new food or cook a new recipe with your family! | You're a pro at this by now but, double check... is your goal specific? Check out this new recipe to try! | How will you know you have reached your goal? Learn how to make a turkey and veggie roll-up here! | Make a plan with your parents for how many new recipes you can try each week. Try making apple cookies here . | Make a list of your dream foods and recipes to try. What is special about them? Learn all about fruits here. | Food is essential for our entire lives! Keep being curious and trying new things! Make a cucumber and chickpea salad here. | SMART GOAL 3 Record your nutrition goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job! |
| Week 4 Finally, choose a goal related to family. You can focus on spending more time with family, being physically active as a family, or trying new activities! | Choose your goal and share it with your family members! Do they agree it's clear? Play this family game with a specific goal for a fun activity! | Decide with your family how you want to track your goal! Should it be a friendly, family competition? In that spirit, try this Step-Up Challenge together! | Check that your goal is achievable for all family members! Do this FITT Workout and notice how modifications can make it possible for all family members! | Discuss as a group if this goal is relevant to your family! Will it help benefit your family? Then do Simple Total Body Cardio & Strength together. | When does your family think this new goal can be incorporated into your regular routine? Finish with this Kickboxing Workout . | SMART GOAL 4 Record your family goal: _____ _____ _____ Great job! |