

PERFEC™ WORKSHOPS

Growth Mindset & Emotional Resilience

“Chin Happens”

Important things you rarely think about

Wi-Fi Pass:

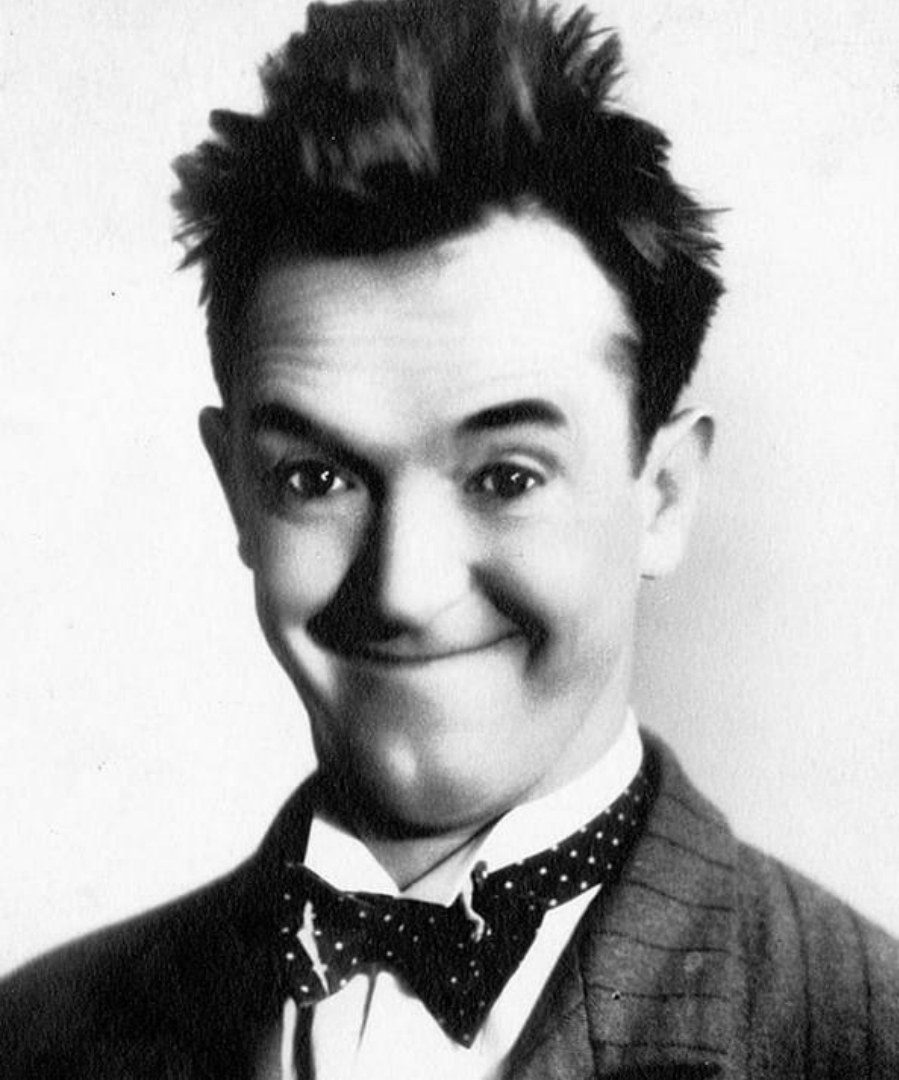


— QUESTION

Why do we have a chin?

Many anthropologists now argue the chin is not an adaptation for chewing or strength, but an unintended consequence of evolutionary changes in the face.

On the road to excellence mistakes aren't detours - they are the road.

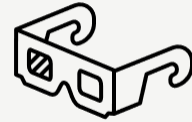


— QUESTION

What Is a Mindset?

Mindset is a lens

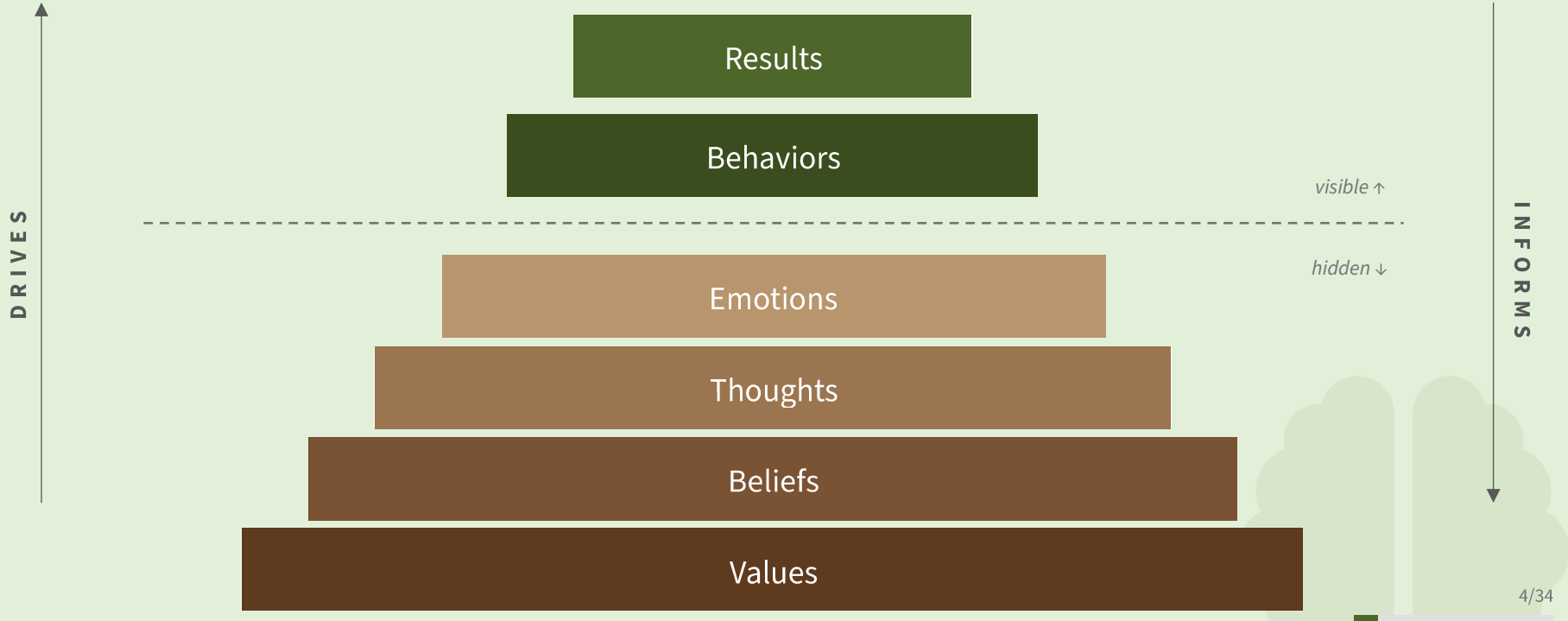
- Belief or set of beliefs informing our perception and reactions.
- Not a trait, not a strategy, but somewhere in between.
- A precognitive filter which determines how we judge a situation.



Problem with beliefs is that we know, but don't practice them.
Setting up a mindset is about internalizing and applying beliefs.

— EXERCISE

Iceberg of Behavior



— EXERCISE

Which belief statement is typical for a fixed or growth mindset?



"People can change"



"Others' success is a threat"



"Failure can be tolerated"



"A good process leads to better results over time"



"Talent beats effort"



"Everyone should stick to their area of expertise"

Growth vs Fixed Mindset

Growth Mindset

Processes as experiments and mistakes as opportunities to improve.

Fixed Mindset

Non-critical adherence to existing process and mistakes as capability limits.

"Questions you cannot answer are usually far better for you than answers you cannot question."

— Yuval Noah Harari

**Growth mindset is the belief that
cultivating qualities is possible
and within our control.**

(Fixed mindset isn't stupidity or stubbornness, but a surrendering of opportunity for certainty.)

— QUESTION

How does our mindset affect our work?



Team
dynamics



Feedback
culture



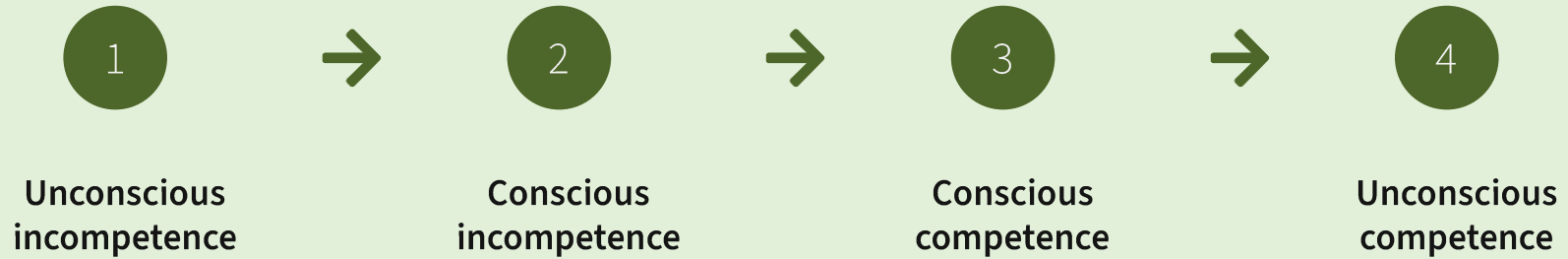
Behavior
under pressure



Flow
state

— EXERCISE

Phases of Learning



Growth mindset isn't easy. It hurts, but just a bit and for a short while only.

Changing Mindsets

Challenging beliefs is slow and fickle

Environmental Design



Leading by example



Feedback systems



Incentive structures



Retrospectives approach



Language



Performance reviews

“Kind” vs “Wicked” Problems

Key Characteristics

	“Kind”	“Wicked”
Problem definition	Clear	Part of the problem
Success criteria	Clear	No clear criteria
Answers	Right or wrong	No right or wrong
Boundaries	Clear	Unclear
Solutions	Repeatable	Not repeatable (solution often changes the problem)
Skills	Specialization, pattern recognition, depth	Analogical thinking, reframing, breadth
Examples	Chess, math, technical execution, process tasks	Poverty gap, business models, team management, client relations

With “wicked” problems we default to scripts and biases

The “Sequel”

Availability heuristic

Defaulting to the most recent or memorable solution

The “Crowdpleaser”

Social desirability bias

Avoiding conflict by suppressing concerns or disagreements to maintain group harmony

The “Epic”

Survivorship bias

Focusing only on successes stories while ignoring stories of what didn't work

Better ways to handle “wicked” problems

- 01 Iterative reframing**
Revisit problem definition, stakeholders' opinion often differ
- 02 Collaborative sensemaking**
Different perspectives on concerns, values, dependencies
- 03 Safe-to-fail experiments**
Small interventions, amping up success, dampening failures
- 04 Satisficing over optimizing**
Optimal answer a trap, look for good enough for given context
- 05 Boundary setting**
Rescope problems into manageable chunks, stay honest boundaries are arbitrary
- 06 Stakeholder negotiation**
Admitting inherent politics and negotiating trade-offs (no 100% right answer, nor consensus)
- 07 Non-categorical statements**
Convert "should" into "might" when suggesting ways forward

— EXERCISE

Reframing Practice

Client rejected an offer the team spent a week developing with extra care

Colleague's work gets consistently more praise than another's

The team is expected to use tools they've never touched

An already demotivated colleague's idea gets shot down in a team meeting



Mistakes

*A mistake remains nothing but a mistake
only if you repeat it*

Mistakes Perception

"Desirable Difficulties"

To grow, mistakes need to happen. See them as "desirable difficulties". "Love the bomb" (improvisational theatre principle) invites to not just accept mistakes, but revel in the experience.

"Pain plus reflection equals progress."

- Ray Dalio

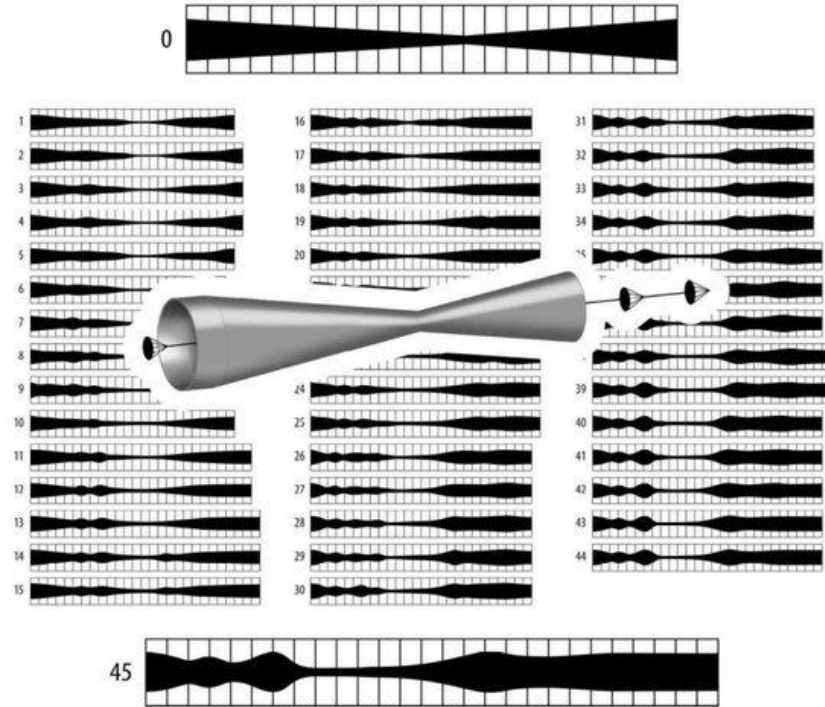
Perfectionism Trap

Avoiding mistakes through perfectionism, aka "insecurity with lipstick", leads to chronic dissatisfaction as perfect never comes - the Arrival Bias.

"Give them the third best to go on with; the second best comes too late, the best never comes"

— Sir Robert Watson-Watt

Marginal Gains Example



The original nozzle is at the top. The final nozzle, after 45 generations and 449 iterations, is at the bottom. It has a shape no mathematician could possibly have anticipated.

When Mistakes Happen

THE APOLOGY RULE (CARL SAGAN)

- 1 Apologize
- 2 Make right
- 3 Do what you can to prevent the mistake from repeating

“THE DRAMA TRIANGLE”

No victims

✗ "Poor me"

✓ "With necessary effort I can manage"

No finger-pointing

✗ "It's your fault"

✓ "Let's see where the setup failed and repair the process"

No saviors

✗ "I will handle this"

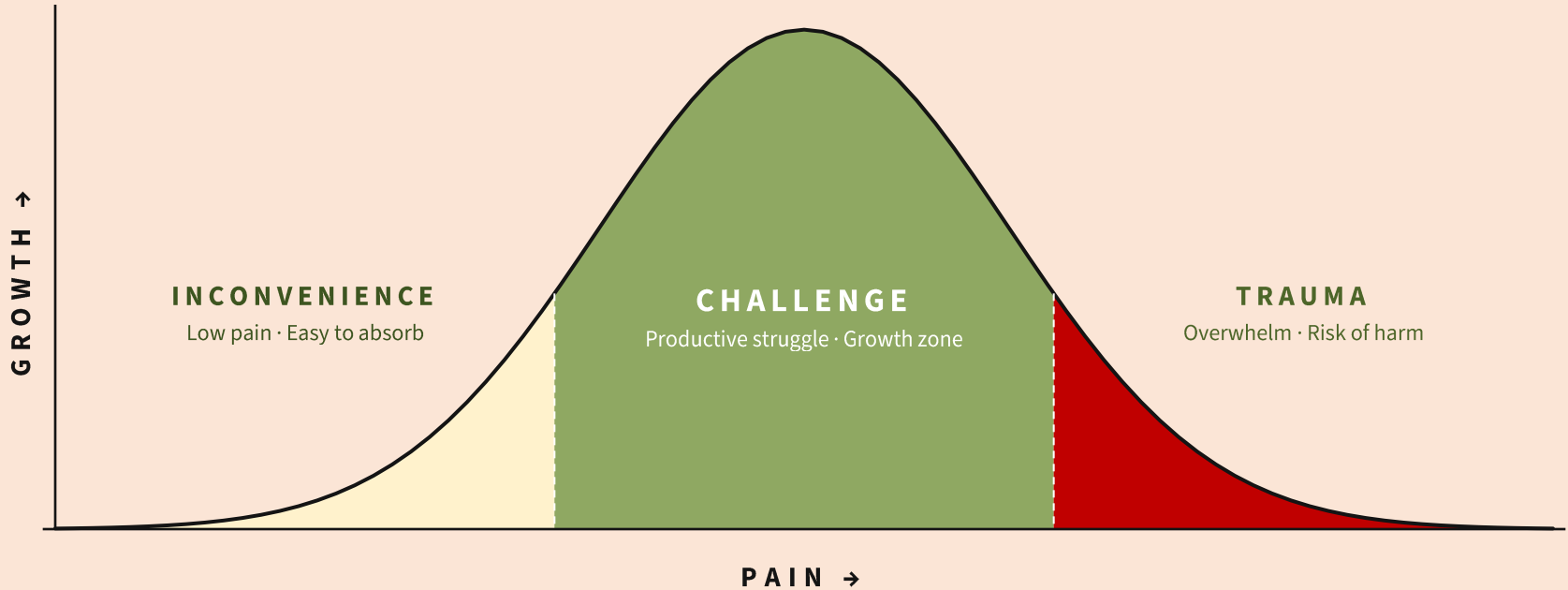
✓ "Let's provide necessary support to enable you to resolve this independently next time"

Knowing WHAT a growth mindset is helps build a foundation.
But to be able to maintain even when it's not easy, we need...

Emotional Resilience

— QUESTION

What is emotional resilience?



"Only things guaranteed in life are pain, uncertainty and constant work." - Phil Stutz

Resilience-Empowering Mindsets

Self-Efficacy

Belief that success is possible, i.e. ignoring negative self-talk.

Social Accountability

Not going through the stress alone. Finding a pain-buddy.

Enforced Cheerfulness

Raising the spirit even if by force.

“Do or Die” Attitude

Raising the commitment perception to minimize importance of obstacles.

Resilience as Identity

Become a person who does hard things. Not just a single challenge or a process.

— QUESTION

Why is emotional resilience important?

Individual / Human

Mental health implications

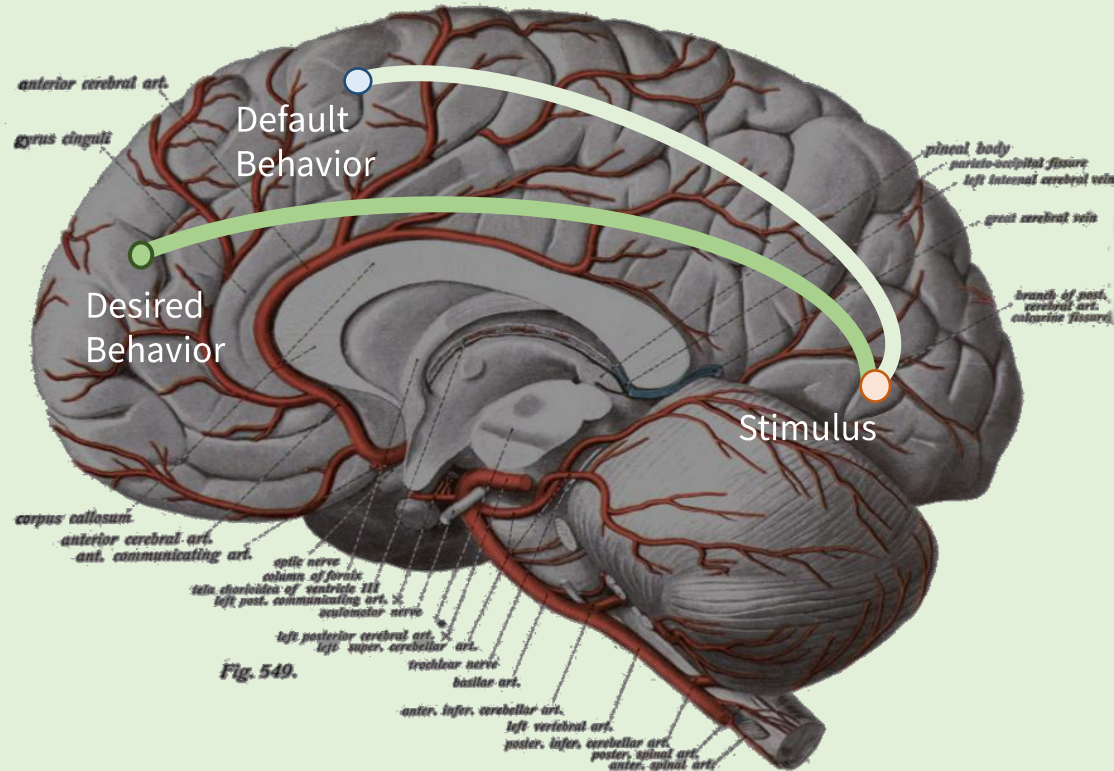
- “Brain fry” epidemic (e.g. passive use of tech, constant volatility)
- Burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, loss of purpose)
- Anxiety, depression, etc.

Company / Business

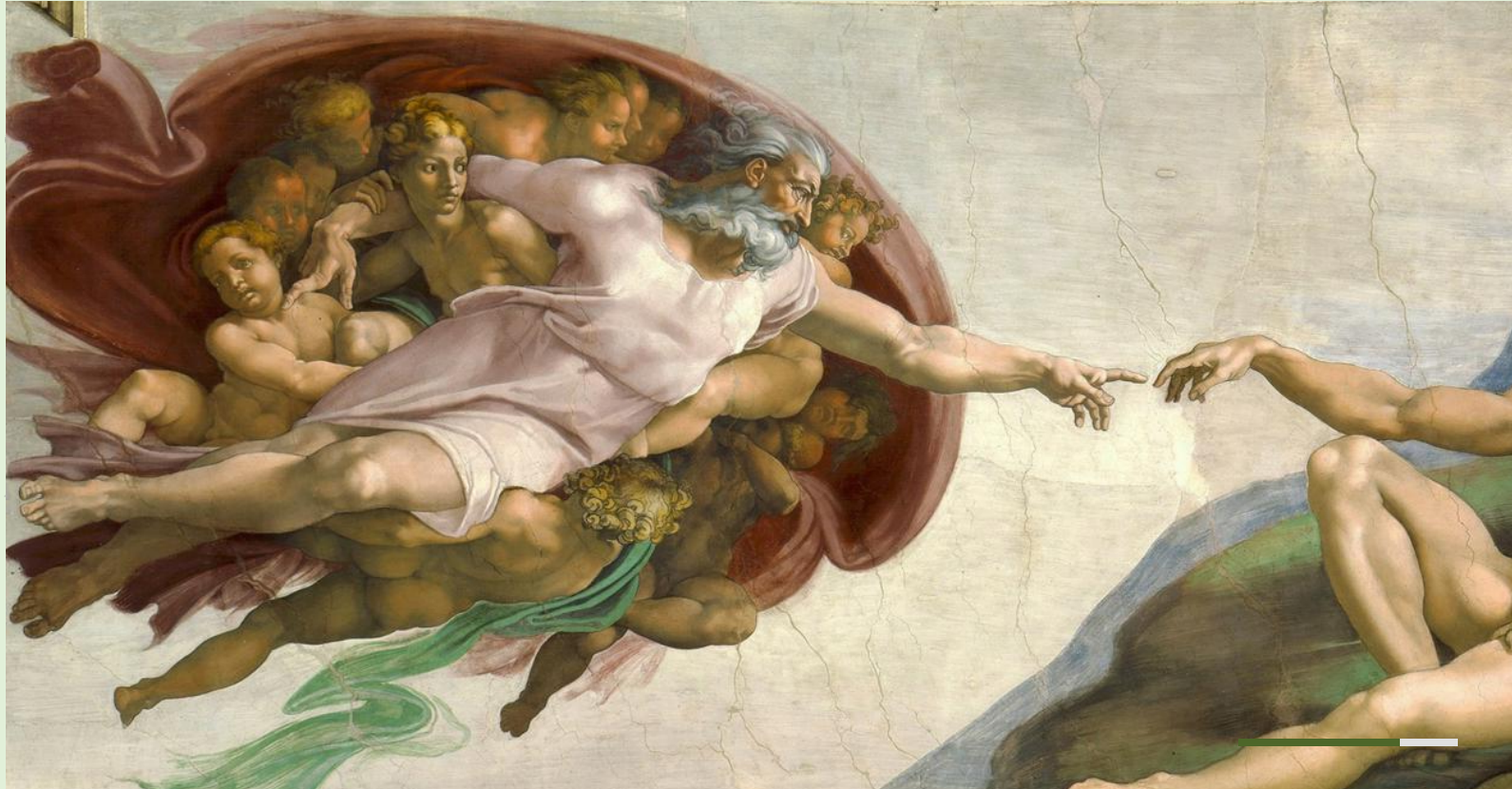
Organizational health implications

- Retention (\$1 invested in employee wellbeing = \$4 in retention & productivity)
- Personal & career development issues
- Psychological safety, culture, etc.

Understanding Neuroplasticity



Understanding Neuroplasticity



Basic Principles of Neuroplasticity

Use it to improve it

Everything you do, think or feel changes your brain.

You don't use it, you lose it

Avoiding unwanted behaviors and thoughts makes sense.

Salience matters

Create tasks and use cues to orient attention.

Repetition matters

Practice, practice, practice... then relax.

Neuroplasticity → Metacognition

Understanding neuroplasticity is taking responsibility for brain development



Applicable to all learnable traits

Including metacognition, i.e. rewiring behaviors



Pause between stimulus and reaction

The critical moment of choice



Contemplation & mindfulness

Monitoring + controlling skill development

Agile Leadership

*What does an emotionally resilient
leader do differently?*

Personal Level

Focus on the controllables

Compassionate Empathy

Moderate mix of cognitive & emotional (affective) empathy. Not just for others, but also for ourselves.

Accountability

Ownership of responsibilities, consequences, and **personal boundaries**.

Transparency & Honesty

Foundation of trust and **psychological safety**.
Knowing bad news is better than not knowing at all.

Adaptability

Resilience isn't about rigidity. It's about **recovery capacity**.
Finding purpose and physical recovery from stress.

Team Level

Using your privilege as a leader to enable others

Creating Psychological Safety

- **Recognize impact** of bad practices on cognitive bandwidth
- **Empower** through setting learning goals (apart from outcome goals) allowing progress even during setbacks
- **Eliminate political repercussions** of taking risks
- **Remove stigma** of distress struggles

Organizational Level

Political battles worth picking

Resilience Drainers vs Resilience Builders

✗ Rigid hierarchy / centralized thinking



✓ Empowered flat teams / decentralized decision-making

✗ Perfectionist leaders / micromanagement & punishment



✓ Coaching culture / honest feedback

✗ Blurred work-life boundaries / no recovery



✓ Focus on recovery, self-care and relationship building

✗ Unclear sense of purpose / no added value



✓ Purpose-driven initiatives / real benefits & values

Companies using this practice: Microsoft, Telenor, Bristol-Myers Squibb, etc.

Principles from the Stoic playbook



Do the right thing.

(Be aware of your values.
Value check instruments:
Time tracking &
“Memento mori”)



Focus on the controllables.

(You are not responsible for
other people's emotions and
reactions, only your own)



Don't judge others by your own standards.

(Everyone is right for
themselves and has own
limitations, i.e. no one is all-
knowing or omnipotent)

Growth Mindset Culture Checklist

Individual impact

Recognize each individual's mindset affects them, coworkers and team culture

Commonality of knowledge

Establish common language, instruments, principles, beliefs, etc.

Mistake culture

Support risk-taking by budgeting for errors with long-term in mind

Psychological safety

Promote transparency, honesty and enable learning through healthy feedback systems

Critical process management

Manage business processes critically and conscientiously

“Good enough” and “bad enough”

Define “good enough” - where do we draw the line and move on.

Define “bad enough” - where do we need to intervene.

*Imperfect but better
is our best option.*

Chin happens.