

Grit-Building in High School Adolescents: A Clinical Treatment Research Proposal

Grit and Mindset

Grit is a recently identified personality trait that is characterized by perseverance and passion for long-term goals. A gritty individual is described as someone who persists in efforts toward meeting goals despite a lack of immediate gratification; despite failure and adversity; and in the face of setbacks and challenges. Grit has been shown to be more predictive of long-term objective and subjective success over both IQ and talent.

Recent studies indicate that belief systems surrounding individual intelligence, known as mindsets, play a powerful role in individual “grittiness.” Whereas a fixed mindset endorses the belief that intelligence is predetermined and cannot be changed, a growth-mindset promotes the idea of intelligence as a malleable trait capable of being changed incrementally through sustained effort over time.

Study Importance

Adolescence can be a turbulent and uncertain time of transition and growth, which makes it a critical period for the development of personality traits such as grit. Grit is now well established as a personality trait in its own right, however, there is, as yet, no published research on how and to what degree grit might be influenced by interventions geared toward changing personal beliefs and belief systems.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to examine whether the introduction of growth-minded interventions into remedial and advanced high school math curriculums will increase participants’ scores on the Grit Scale from pre-test to post-test over a five month period. Because higher levels of grit are associated with higher levels of subjective and objective success, reliable means of increasing individual grit could positively impact long-term personal and academic trajectories.

Procedures

Treatment will be incorporated into standard mathematical instruction in both remedial and advanced math classes and will consist of a variety of multimedia interventions focused on promoting a growth mindset. All interventions have been previously tested and reported in published studies.

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