You Can Grow Your Intelligence

Research shows that the brain is not fixed at birth. Inside your brain are billions of nerve cells that connect to each other. **When you learn, practice, or challenge yourself, these connections grow stronger and more numerous. When you avoid challenges, those connections do not get the same chance to develop.** This worksheet helps you notice how your past choices relate to growth and how future choices can strengthen your brain through practice

Quick Brain Check-in

Just like muscles grow when they are used, your brain strengthens when it is challenged. Before making changes, it helps to notice your current patterns.

Circle any of the following statements that feel true right now:

I sometimes avoid tasks because they feel too hard.

I believe some people are just naturall smarter.

I have improved at something through practice before.

I get frustrated when I do not succeed right away.

I want to build skills but do not always know where to start.

Missed Opportunies

When you practice something new, brain cells form stronger connections. The more you practice, the stronger these connections become. When you avoid an opportunity, those connections do not get a chance to grow. Looking back helps you recognize patterns without judgment.

List moments where you chose not to engage, try, or say yes:

Opportunity or Situation	What made me say no:

What Could Have Grown

Studies show that learning strengthens the brain by building new connections. Skills that feel hard now often feel easier later because the brain has changed through effort and repetition.

Choose at least one sitation from above:

Situation	Skill(s) Involved	What practice might have strengthened.

Mindset Works, Inc. (2014). You can grow your intelligence. https://www.mindsetworks.com

Reframing the Experience

Babies are not born knowing how to talk, but through constant practice, their brains physically change. Difficulty does not mean inability. It often means the brain is still building connections.

Short answer:

1. What felt hardest about this sitution at the time?

2. What does brain growth through practice suggest about that difficulty?

Try it Forward

Research shows that your brain keeps developing throughout college, especially when you push yourself to try unfamiliar classes, skills, or experiences. Growth comes from showing up and practicing, not from being "naturally good."

Apply this idea to something current or upcoming:

Upcoming Situation	One small action I will practice	When

Final Reflection and Action Steps

The more your brain practices learning, the easier it becomes to learn new things in the future. **Effort builds ability over time.**

I will challenge myself to practice new things instead of avoiding difficulty because my brain benefits. What are some of those things? Any final thoughts or ideas?