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A SOCIAL COGNITIVE APPROACH TO MOTIVATION AND PERSONALITY

The *goals* that individuals pursue create the framework within which they interpret and react to events.

- ▶ **performance goals** are those in which individuals are concerned with gaining favorable judgments of their competence or avoid unfavorable judgments—that is, they work and study because *they will be praised, recognized or they want to avoid looking stupid and incapable*.
- ▶ **mastery/task goals** are those in which individuals are concerned with increasing their competence—that is, they work and study because *they enjoy the task, they want to learn and become stronger scholars*.

But why do individuals pursue different goals?

- ▶ because they have different **implicit theories** (self-conceptions) about the nature of intelligence.
 - ▶ **fixed entity** view - intelligence is fixed, it is biologically or genetically determined, and it cannot be changed. We can do very little about the "amount" of intelligence we have.
 - ▶ **incremental/malleable** view - intelligence is malleable, it depends on the effort we expend. The harder we work, the more intelligent we may become.

The implicit theory about intelligence that we hold helps determine the goals we set and the motivation and behavior pattern we undertake.

Theory of intelligence	Goal orientation	Self-Efficacy	Behavior pattern
Fixed entity	Performance (Goal is to gain positive judgments/ avoid negative judgments of competence)	High Low	Mastery oriented (Seek challenge; high persistence) Helpless (Avoid challenge; low persistence)
Incremental/ Malleable	Mastery/Task (Goal is to increase competence)	High or Low	Mastery oriented (Seek challenge that fosters learning; high persistence)

- ▶ Research indicates that an incremental theory of intelligence is more consistently associated with adaptive motivational patterns.
- ▶ The implicit theories themselves may be at the root of maladaptive patterns of behavior.
- ▶ Perhaps the most appropriate view represents an integration of both entity and incremental theories, that is, a recognition of present differences in relative ability but an emphasis on individual growth in ability (Dweck & Elliot, 1983; Dweck & Leggett, 1988).