

Growth & Goals: a module for any context,
designed to develop learning skills

GROWTH & GOALS: A MODULE FOR ANY CONTEXT, DESIGNED TO DEVELOP LEARNING SKILLS

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Welcome! Time to own your learning!



This Growth & Goals module is designed to help you take greater control of your learning process and guide you through essential components of becoming an efficient and effective learner.

These aims will be achieved by:

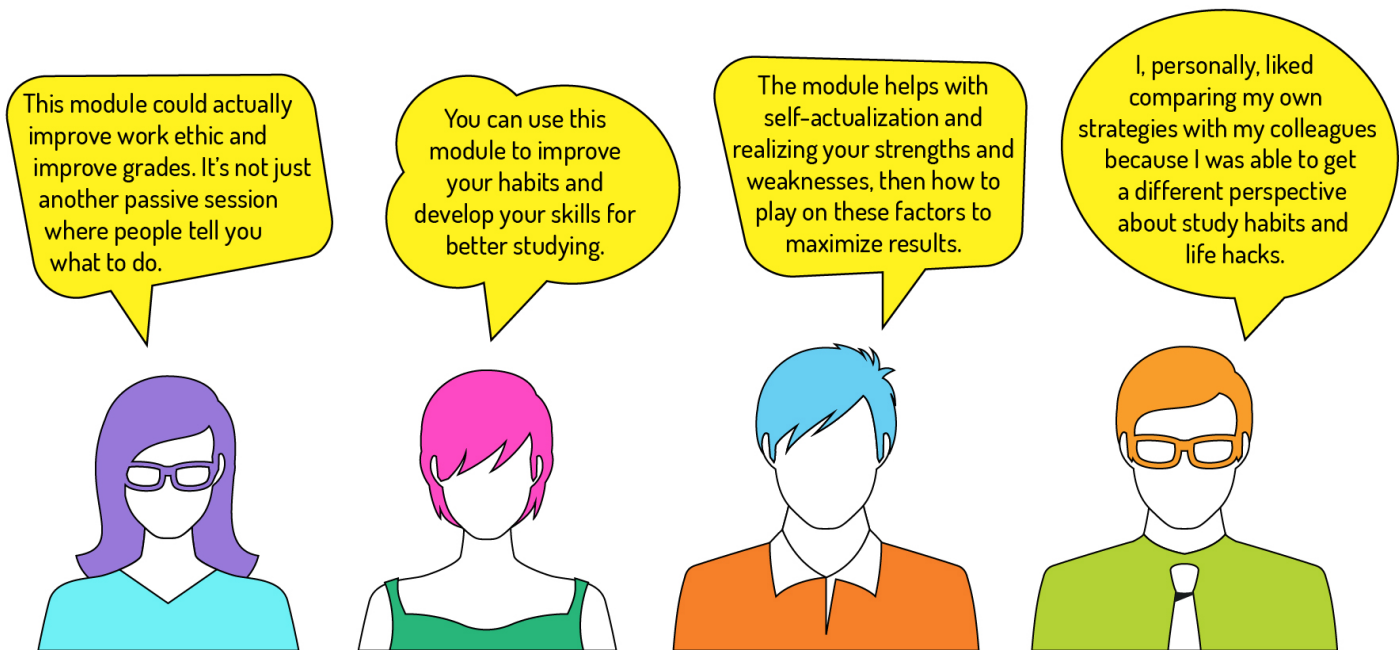
1. Helping you learn **metacognition** skills so you may monitor and decide what to do for your learning.
2. Guiding you through the process of **self-regulated learning (SRL)** and goal-setting, which will help you make your goals more attainable.
3. Exploring the differences that your mindset can have and teaching you to develop a **growth mindset**.
4. Explore and develop the concepts of **mindfulness** and **resilience**.

Learning can be difficult and that's okay! Success takes effort and requires dedication and at times it can be very frustrating. Research has shown that the best learning is happening when it feels the most difficult so don't worry if you're feeling this way; it means you're on the right track!¹ Even professors and professionals have struggled (and failed!) too! The goal of this module is to help you develop learning skills and strategies to help you gain success — in university, your career or even your personal life.

In the past, some individuals have found some aspects of the module challenging because it took them out of their comfort zone but they found it was well worth the effort.

**“I’ve never met a successful person who had an easy path.”
—Robyne Hanley-Dafoe**

See what actual people (students) have to say about this module
[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 55kb):

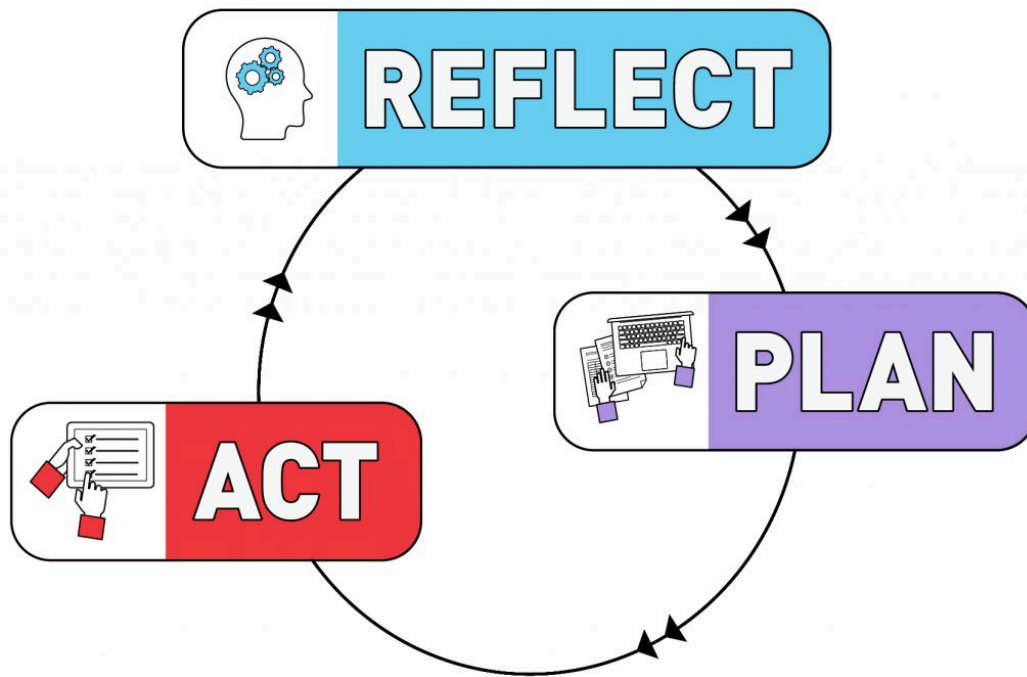


What is self-regulated learning (SRL) and why should I use it?

Self-Regulated Learning means taking strategic control of how you approach your goals and being prepared and willing to face any challenges and seize any opportunities that might arise as you work to make your goals your reality.²

The self-regulated learning cycle

The **SRL cycle** has three phases: reflect, plan, and act.



- The **REFLECT** phase involves looking back on past performances to identify your strengths and the areas you think you need to focus on. You'll also identify your learning beliefs, your mindset when faced with challenges and your existing knowledge. Finally, you will set and refine the goals you want to achieve.
- During the **PLAN** phase, you will identify strategies and develop a plan and schedule to achieve your goals from the reflect phase.
- Now that you have goals and a plan it's time to enter the **ACT** phase. Here you will carry out your plan, continually monitoring your progress and making adjustments as you feel necessary.

The SRL cycle can be repeated multiple times as you face **deadlines** – How did your plan come together? What would you change? What goals did you realize? What goals need more work?

Once you've completed the module you can keep using the SRL cycle in other aspects of your life.

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1. Brown, P.C.; Roediger III, H.L.; McDaniel, M.A. Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, 2014.
2. Zimmerman, B. *J. Am. Educ. Res. J.* **2008**, *45* (1), 166–183.

Intended learning outcomes

Overall goals:

Learning does not occur by accident! In this module, we hope to empower learners to take greater ownership of their learning, set strategic goals with a defined pathway to achieving them, and develop increased autonomy.

Short term **learning outcomes**

1) Use the concept of self-regulated learning and its associated 3-phase learning cycle to:

- Describe self-regulated learning in your own words
- Describe each of the three phases of the self-regulated learning cycle in your own words
- Identify common myths about learning
- Self-assess (study) habits and thinking
- Rate personal feelings towards an upcoming **deadline**

2) Use the concept of mindfulness to:

- Develop and practice your **present-time awareness**

7 | INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Recognize that thoughts and feelings are natural products of the mind, and by exercising control, you can let them pass without becoming entangled or distracted
- Learn to not be overpowered by emotions or thoughts in directing your actions
- Practice developing mindful awareness through meditation activities
- Incorporate mindfulness into daily activities
- Apply the mindfulness skills learned in the Growth & Goals module to future courses and life challenges

3) Use the concept of mindset to:

- Describe a growth and fixed mindset in your own words
- Identify growth and fixed mindset statements
- Transform fixed mindset statements into **growth mindset** statements
- Construct strategies to deal with failure and build resiliency (Note: this learning outcome is currently not addressed but will be added to the module)

4) Use goal-setting skills to:

- Identify and construct **SMART goals**
- Construct a personalized schedule to achieve goals
- Define and refine your priorities and use them to set your own goals

5) Use the concept of metacognition to:

- Rate your current ability towards the learning outcomes or expectations you face and provide an explanation for your rating
- Identify resources and strategies that you will use to reach your goals
- Explain to what extent the skills acquired from the module can be used in other settings

- Apply skills from the Growth & Goals module to other life challenges
- Describe the intended learning outcomes you face in your own words

Long-term learning outcomes

Learners who complete this module will ideally use the new concepts and skills in new contexts, develop greater self-awareness, ability to self-correct and **self-monitor**, set and achieve **SMART goals** in any aspect of their lives, develop greater efficacy for learning, experts in their own learning, become better able to embrace and take risks, including accepting failure and bouncing back (**resiliency**).

What are your intended learning outcomes for the module?

In this section, write down the learning outcomes you wish to achieve with this module by referring back to the list of intended learning outcomes we provided. Re-read the list and reflect on which learning outcomes you feel you need to focus on, or which outcomes you feel would be especially valuable to you and your learning.

If you are using the PDF version or are unable to access the interactive activity, don't worry! Write your answers on paper.

Be sure to write these intended learning outcomes down and save them in a safe place, or copy the text into a document to save to your device. You will refer back to these learning outcomes later to see if you have met your personal goals!



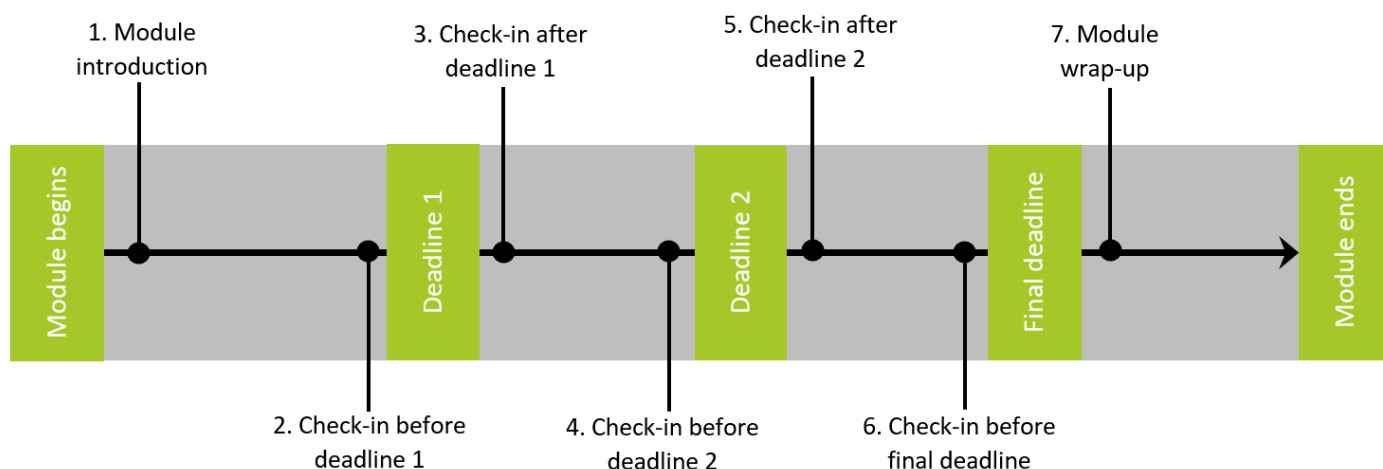
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Now that you have written down your goals, let's take a look at the knowledge, strategies, and approaches that will help you reach them.

An overview of the Growth and Goals module

The first Growth & Goals cycle takes about 2 hours to complete, although some people may find it useful to spend more or less time. There are 20 activities, interspersed with information before and after each activity. The activities are intended to be completed in the order in which you encounter them in the module.

Start by identifying three **deadlines** that you have coming up in your semester or next few months. These **deadlines** could be exams, assignments, competitions, performances, or simply specific timepoints. Put your deadlines in a calendar, with reminders to yourself to complete each of the next activities. We suggest doing them one week before and within one week after each **deadline**.



The Growth & Goals cycle will repeat before and after **deadlines** you are working towards and before and after the final deadline you plan to work through using this module, but will take less time to complete compared to this first cycle. For example, students may choose to complete the module before and after midterms, major assignments, or presentations. They often choose the final examination in the course as their final **deadline**. It's important to choose **deadlines** you face that are important to you and that you feel you would benefit from or perform better on after completing this module. Decide the three **deadlines** you want to work towards now!

There are a number of interactive activities in this module. After completing each activity, you may wish to save your responses by taking a screen capture or copying the text. You will need to refer back to some of your responses at different points so be sure to save your work in a safe place!

GROWTH & GOALS

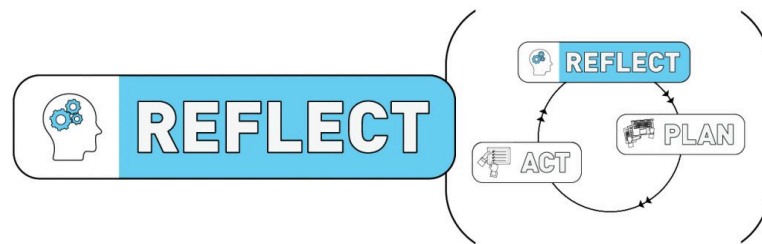
Now that you've been briefly introduced to the content of this module, please take a minute and complete the activity below!



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Reflect phase



Are your study strategies effective? Do you believe myths about learning?



Meet Tracy, who is about to face a **deadline** (an exam).

Complete Activity 2 below to see how she's been preparing leading up to this **deadline**.



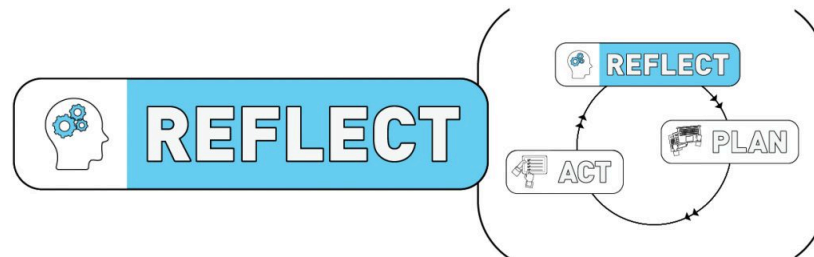
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Now complete Activity 3 to see if you believe some common myths about learning.¹



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What are your feelings about the deadline you're facing?

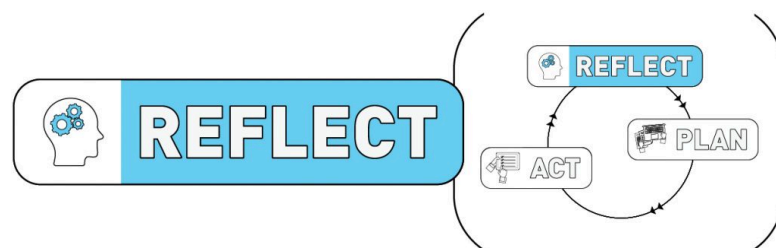


Complete Activity 4 below, which asks you to rate opposing words to help you take stock of your feelings about this deadline as you begin to prepare.²



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What are your thoughts going into this deadline?



Complete Activity 5, where you will rate the various thoughts you may have as you approach this **deadline**.



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Now that you've reflected on your feelings towards this course, let's move on to discuss the concept of **mindfulness**. In the next couple of chapters, you will reflect on your **present-time awareness** and mindful qualities; both of which are necessary skills to **self-regulated learning** and will help you stay focused this semester.

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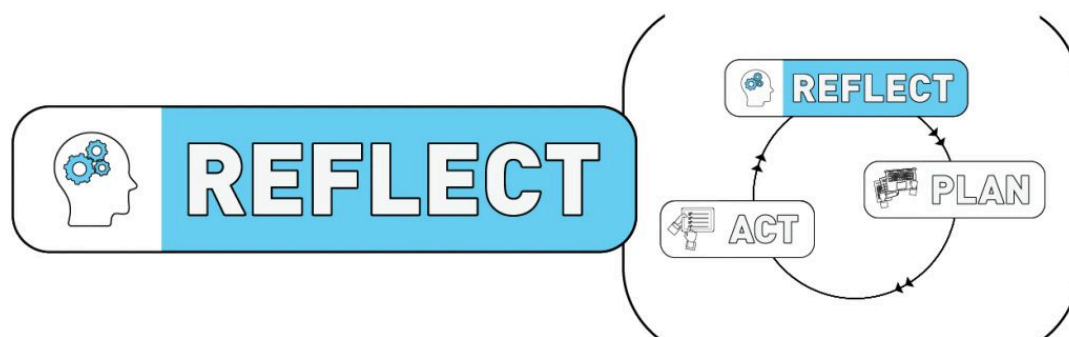
1. "You Probably Believe Some Learning Myths: Take Our Quiz To Find Out." NPR, 22 Mar. 2017, [npr.org/sections/ed/2017/03/22/520843457/you-probably-believe-some-learning-myths-take-our-quiz-to-find-out](https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/03/22/520843457/you-probably-believe-some-learning-myths-take-our-quiz-to-find-out).
2. Xu, X.; Lewis, J. E. J. Chem. Educ. 2011, 88 (5), 561–568.

Mindful qualities

Present-time awareness, acceptance, and disentangling from your thoughts

“The feeling that any task is a nuisance will soon disappear if it is done in mindfulness.” – Thích Nhat Hanh

We spend a lot of our time in the past, caught in regret about past failures or in the future, worrying about possible future failures or things that we would sooner be doing; rather than in the present, where we are doing what shapes our lives. In order to be a good **self-regulated learner**, you need to be aware of your thoughts, feelings and behavioural tendencies towards your learning so you can loosen the control that thoughts and feelings have over your behaviour and get out of automatic ways of responding that lead you away from your learning goals.



Mindfulness is a practice that allows you to develop **present-time awareness** of thoughts, feelings and accept thoughts and feelings as natural products of your mind that you can observe and let pass without becoming entangled, distracted and off track. Through the module, you will work on activities that will help you to develop these essential qualities.

The mindful learner...

“Be where you are, otherwise you will miss your life.” – Buddha

How present are you?

Distraction is an inherent part of life. Apart from thoughts and worries about the next due date or major deadline, paying the rent etc., being constantly plugged in, social media, multi-tasking interferes with our ability to alert ourselves to important information and direct and maintain our attention on that information.

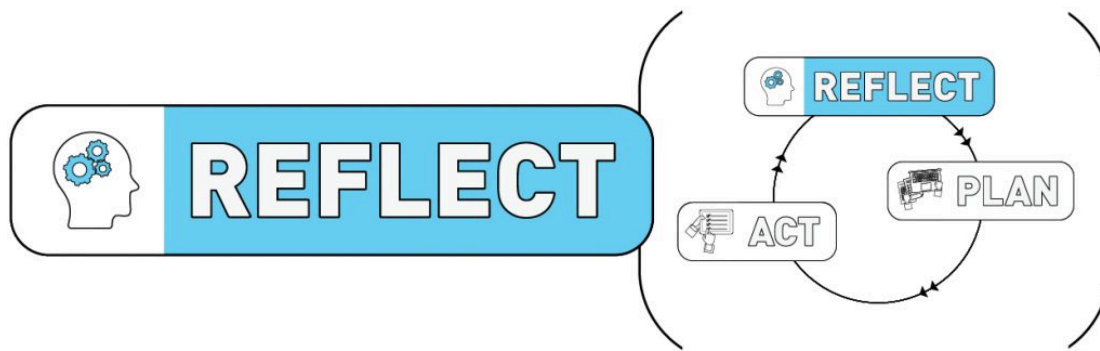


Activity 6 asks you to reflect on your **present-time awareness** and how present you are in your day-to-day experiences. Research shows that persons who engage in practices that build mindful qualities have greater levels of present-time awareness. Zen meditation practitioners, for example, score higher on average than individuals who do not practice mindful awareness. Mindful awareness among Zen practitioners correlated with the number of years they had been practicing. In the same study, mindful awareness was also associated with greater well-being.¹

Complete Activity 6 now!



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Are there particular times and places that you are more or less present? We will check in again later in the module to see whether your focus has changed over time.

Where does your mind take you?

Mindful qualities extend beyond being aware of present-time experience to how you are experiencing your thoughts, feelings and actions. Activity 7 asks you to consider scenarios relating to social and learning situations and how you would respond in your thoughts, feelings and actions.



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It's quite normal for us to react in ways that are emotion-filled and cause

us to behave in ways that don't really work for us. In the social situation, perhaps you responded by thinking "What did I do to make them upset?". Perhaps you felt anxious, or maybe angry that a friend would walk right by without acknowledging you. Perhaps you responded by returning the snub or anxiously texting to see what's wrong.



In the performance situation, perhaps you responded by feeling sad and disappointed with yourself; by thinking "I am such a phony. Why should I bother?" As a consequence, you may have avoided future work as it made you anxious that you would fail.

As a **mindful learner**, we want to learn ways that we can skillfully respond to these situations rather than react automatically in ways that might not work very well for us.

Qualities of the mindful learner

The mindful learner has three qualities essential to **self-regulated learning**. The mindful learner is able to:

- Maintain awareness in the present moment;
- Know their thoughts and feelings relating to learning; and
- Not be overpowered by emotions or thoughts in directing their actions.

Having mindful skills allows you to “unhook” from unpleasant thoughts (e.g., “I can’t do this”) and feelings (e.g., fear, anxiety, boredom) that would otherwise cause you to avoid and/or distract yourself from certain activities that are important and require focus. While mindfulness activities are not designed to reduce stress, those participating in such programs have reported reductions in distress during stressful periods of their life.

Developing mindful qualities

Mindful qualities are skills built through practice. You will start by doing simple activities to develop mindful awareness and practice these skills in different situations. Research shows that these activities can improve attention and energy, even after being practiced for a short time (i.e., 5 days).



The following activities are taken from the Frantic World website. Frantic World has information and resources to help build mindful awareness that can be found [here](#).

Mindfulness of the body and breath

The first **mindfulness** exercise will get you to practice drawing your attention to your own breath and holding your attention while you allow thoughts and feelings to enter and leave your mind. This exercise is a great place to start with mindfulness and takes about 8 minutes to complete.

Mindfulness of the Body and Breath Meditation ([begin meditation here](#)).

[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 115 KB).

Practice this exercise for the next 5 days. Also, take time to notice how

present you are in your daily activities (see Mindfulness in Everyday Life below). After some practice with this exercise, you may wish to explore more mindfulness exercises. Links to progressions on this exercise from Frantic World are provided below.

Body Scan Meditation ([begin meditation here](#))- This is often the foundation of meditation. Here, we develop the essential skill of opening up to our experience as it is unfolding, right now.

[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 96 KB).

Three Minute Breathing Space ([begin meditation here](#)) – This is a short exercise that you can use at any time during the day. Practice this exercise, especially when you don't need it (i.e., when you aren't stressed) to develop your present time awareness.

[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 84 KB).

Sounds and Thoughts Meditation ([begin meditation here](#)) – This is a good follow-up to the Body and Breath Meditation. It helps you develop awareness around how you receive internal thoughts and external sounds.

[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 87 KB)

The Befriending Meditation ([begin meditation here](#)) – This meditation introduces and develops the important quality of self-compassion or caring for yourself. With all of the ups and downs of work and relationships, this is particularly relevant.

[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 87 KB).

Mindfulness in everyday Life

Being **mindful** is not just about sitting on a cushion and breathing. You can incorporate **mindfulness** into many of your daily life activities. Over the week try the following, once per day:

Mindful eating – When eating your next meal, take the time to notice

the feel of the utensil, your movements while eating and of course the taste and texture of the food you are eating. Single out every bite and chew, paying attention to each of the activities involved in eating.



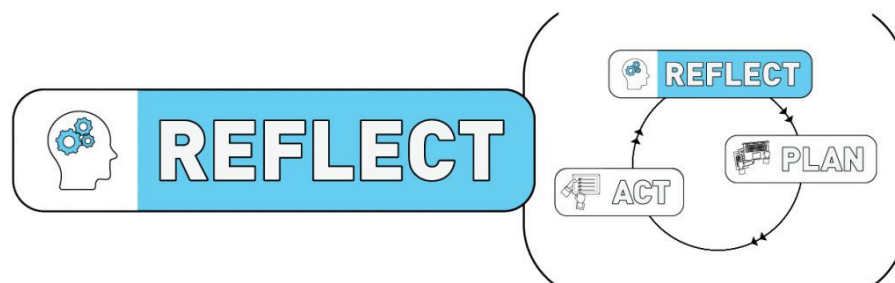
Mindfully brushing your teeth – Take the time to notice grasping your toothbrush and toothpaste. Notice squeezing the toothpaste onto the brush, turning the tap to run the water, the movements of brushing and sensation of the toothbrush in your mouth.

Mindfully showering – To mindfully experience showering, notice turning and adjusting the taps, stepping into the shower, the feel of the wet shower floor, the sensation of the water striking your skin, the feeling of soap lather and shampoo and the feel of the towel drying your skin after, remarking on the fresh feeling you get.

Mindful relating – The next time you are chatting with your friends or family members, take the time to really notice what they are saying, while noticing your tendency to think of your reply or to interrupt.



Other activities can also be done mindfully. For example, putting on and tying your shoes, waiting in line at the grocery store or simply waking up and taking a mindful breath before preparing yourself for the day can help build your awareness.



Now that you have an idea of what mindfulness can bring to your learning experience, let's move on to talk about another quality of the mind – the **growth mindset**.

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1. Brown, K.W. & Ryan, R.M. The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **2003**, 84, 822–848.

What is a mindset?

“Mindsets are beliefs – beliefs about yourself and your most basic qualities and abilities.”¹

What is a growth mindset?

According to Carol Dweck from her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, “[In a growth mindset,] people believe their most basic abilities and qualities can be developed and cultivated through dedication and hard work. Brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities.”² Another way to state this would be: Great learners are *made*, not *born*.



What is a fixed mindset?

“In a fixed mindset, most people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them.

They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. They're wrong."²



Click [here](#) watch a video that illustrates the difference between a fixed and a growth mindset.³

So what do you do if you have a fixed mindset? [This video](#) may help!⁴



Success comes through effort and failure



As you watch [this video](#), consider the ways you can relate this famous failure to your own experiences with effort, failure and success.⁵

You can watch [more inspiring videos](#) about the amount of effort and failure it can take before achieving success or continue on with the module.⁶

By the end of Activity 8, you will be able to identify a growth versus a fixed mindset.



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Recognize and change your fixed mindset voice

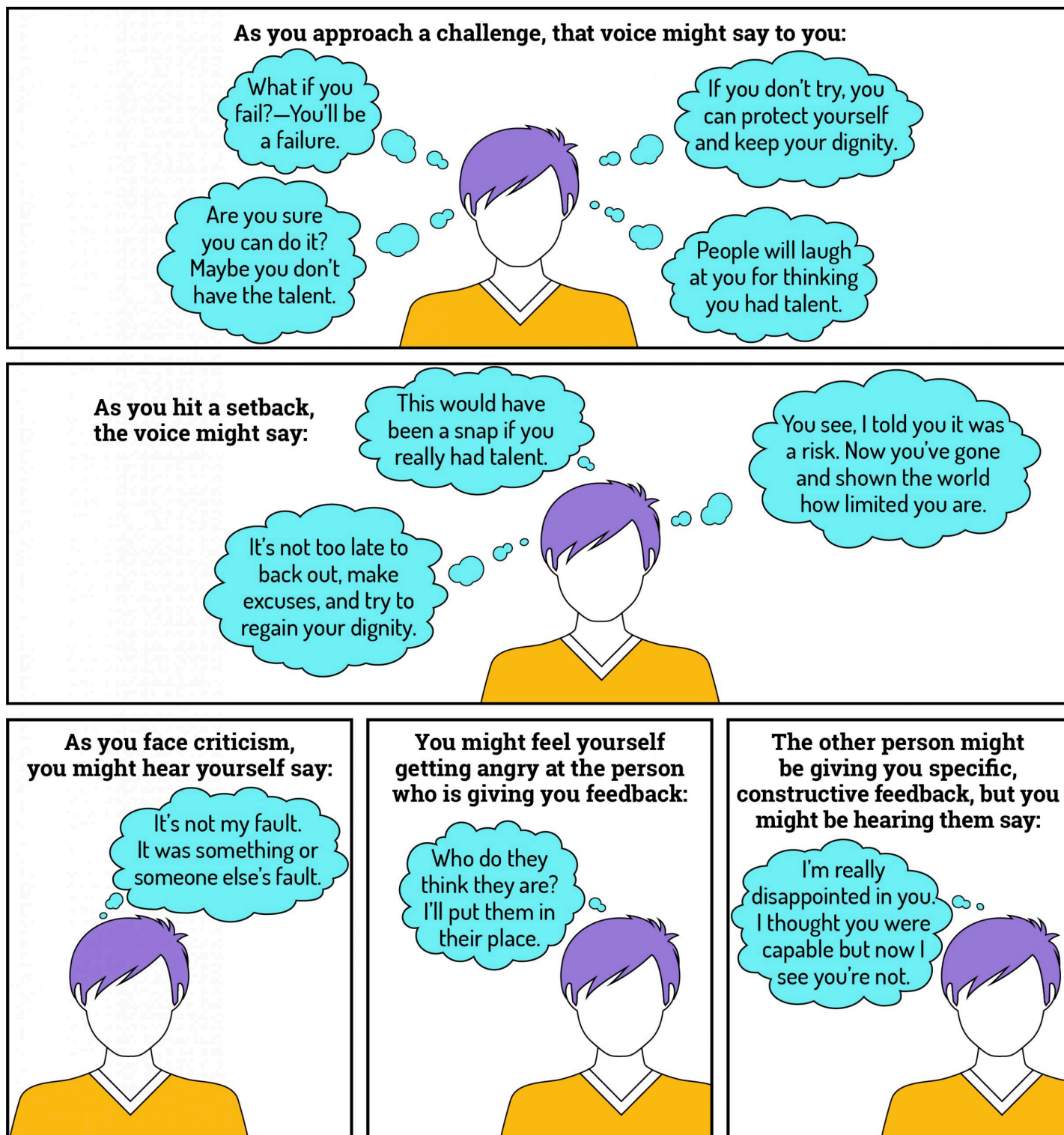
There are four main steps to changing from a fixed to a growth mindset.²

STEP 1

Learn to hear your fixed mindset voice

To get the most out of learning opportunities, you need to recognize when your own mindset might be getting in the way of your learning and use strategies to change it.

[Transcript](#) (.pdf, 80kb)



STEP 2

Recognize that you have a choice

How you interpret challenges, setbacks, and criticism is your choice.



So as you face challenges, setbacks, and criticism, listen to the fixed mindset voice and...

STEP 3

Talk back with a growth mindset voice

As you approach a challenge:

THE FIXED MINDSET says:

Are you sure you can do it? Maybe you don't have the talent.

THE GROWTH MINDSET answers:

I'm not sure I can do it now, but I think I can learn to with time and effort.

What if you fail?—You'll be a failure.

If you don't try, you can protect yourself and keep your dignity.

Most successful people had failures along the way.

If I don't try, I automatically fail. Where's the dignity in that?

As you hit a setback:

This would have been a snap if you really had talent.

That is so wrong. Basketball wasn't easy for Michael Jordan and science wasn't easy for Thomas Edison. They had a passion and put in tons of effort.

As you face criticism:

It's not my fault. It was something or someone else's fault.

If I don't take responsibility, I can't fix it. Let me listen—however painful it is— and learn whatever I can.

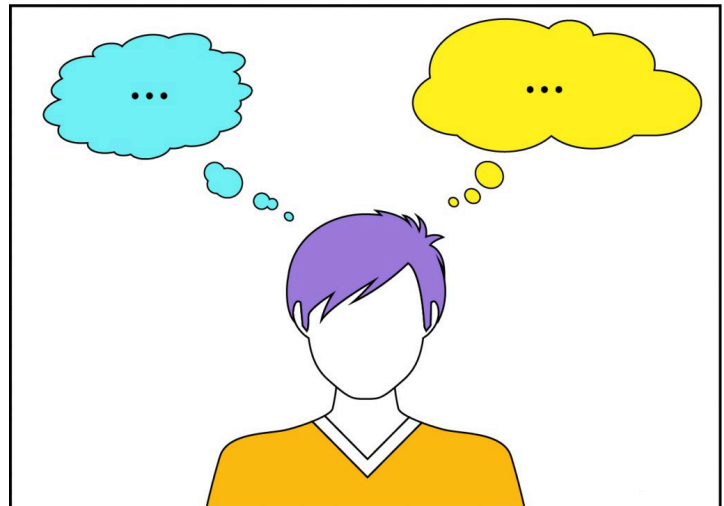
STEP 4

Take the growth mindset action

With practice you can learn to decide which voice you will listen to and act on.

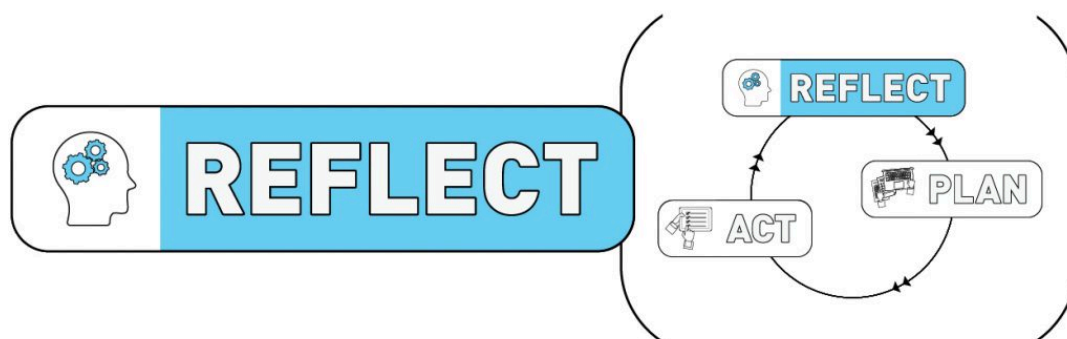
Ideally, you will:

- Take on the challenge wholeheartedly
- Learn from your setbacks and try again
- Hear the criticism and act on it



Practice listening to both and acting on the growth mindset voice. See how you can make it work for you. As we go through the next activities, try to be mindful of the voice you're hearing.

Set your priorities



As part of the reflect phase of **self-regulated learning**, it is important to have a clear vision of your priorities.

Complete Activity 9 to help you achieve this clarity.



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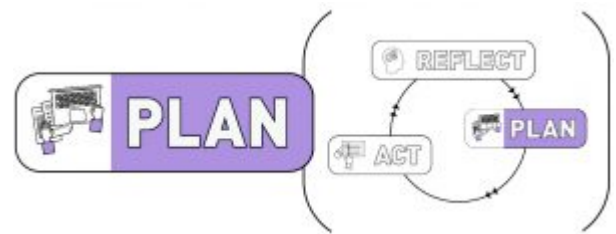
1. MindsetWorks. mindsetworks.com
2. Dweck, C. S. Mindset: The New Psychology of Success; Gildan Media Corp, 2007.
3. Mindsets: Fixed Versus Growth. youtu.be/M1CHPnZfFmU
4. The dirty little secret about growth mindset. youtu.be/zionUl13Dko
5. James Dyson discusses success through failure. youtube.com/watch?v=hG79AwLw3s&t=1s

6. Failure playlist: goo.gl/rTMQ4e

Plan phase

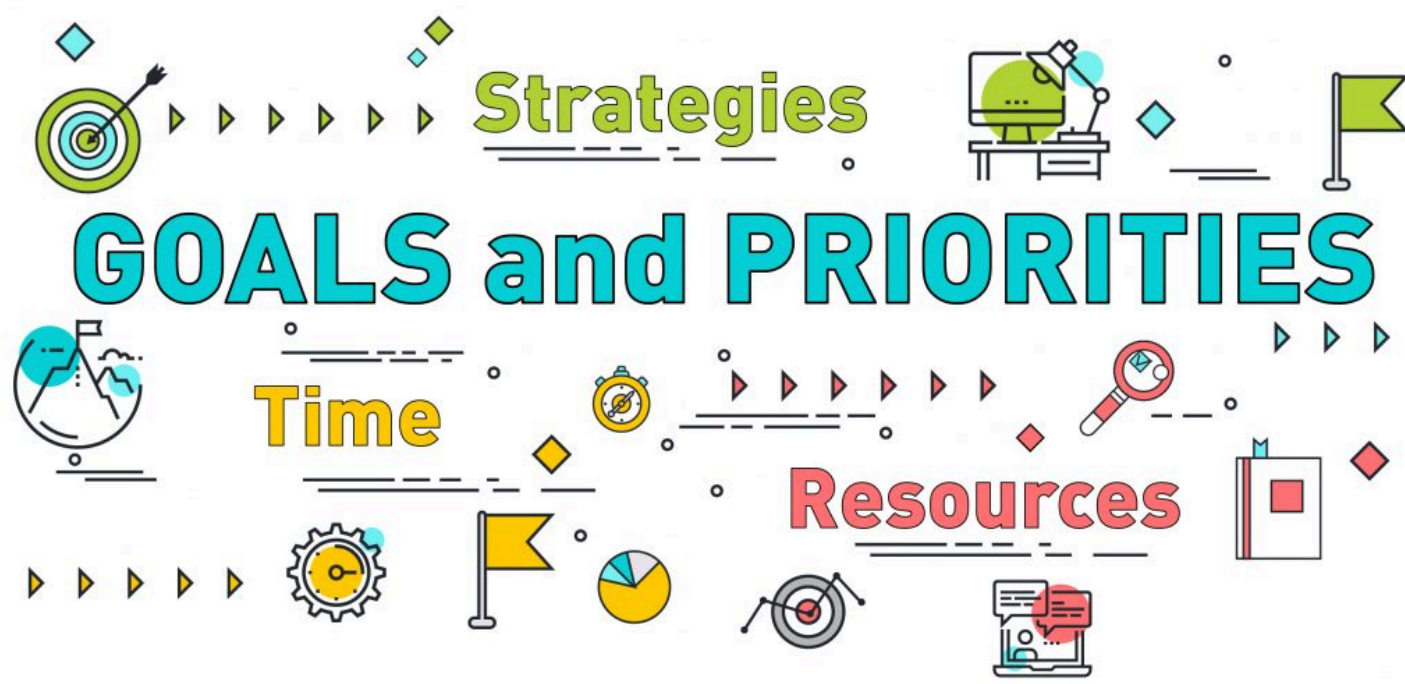
Planning for success

Achieving success with **SRL** and a **growth mindset** requires knowing your priorities and setting goals.

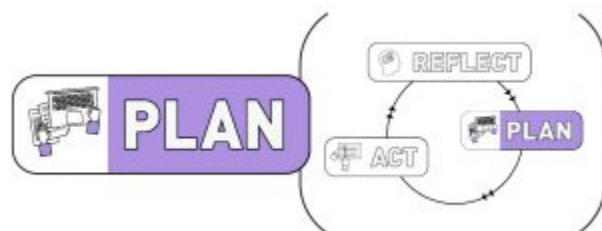


During the reflect phase you outlined your priorities. Now, with these priorities in mind, you can set your goals. In the plan phase you will chart your course to attaining your goals through:

- Deciding on strategies
- Planning your time
- Identifying resources you need



What is a SMART goal?



In this section, you will develop and refine brainstormed goals and transform them into actionable statements that you will be able to work toward during this module. Your brainstormed goals will become SMART ones.

People who set SMART goals are more likely to achieve their target. Let's take a look at the components of SMART goals. [Transcript](#) (.pdf, 11kb).

<u>S</u>pecific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try and make your goal as precise and defined as possible
<u>M</u>easurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a criteria to measure your progress • How will you know when you are on your way?
<u>A</u>ccountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a person who will help you and keep you responsible for your goals
<u>R</u>eachable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set reachable goals that you will be able to attain (high expectations are good) • Set small goals toward bigger goals
<u>T</u>ime specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a timeline • Having an end time will help you stay accountable to your goals

Complete Activity 10 to identify SMART goals.

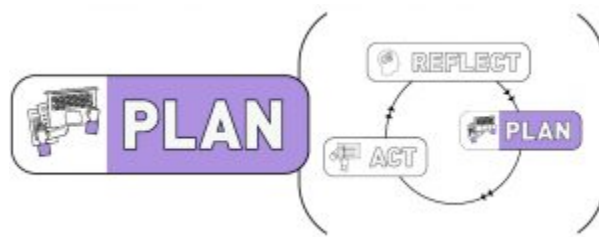


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Define and refine your goals



Complete Activity 11 below to outline your goals for the **deadlines** you've chosen and then refine them to make them more achievable.

Here are some examples of goals you may wish to work towards to help you get started!

- I will practice using a growth mindset voice and redirect myself whenever my mindset becomes fixed.
- I will construct a schedule for this semester and set priorities so that I stay on track.
- I will transform my previous goals into SMART goals.
- I will practice “present-time awareness” and mindfulness meditations so that I am more focused on the task at hand.



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Metacognition



Metacognition is thinking about your own thinking and it has two parts:

- Knowing what you know
- Deciding what to do for your learning

The next two activities will help you identify what you know and what to do about your learning and how to schedule your time.

At this early stage, you'll use Activity 12 to identify how well you know the prerequisite knowledge and skills needed to complete the first

deadline that you identified for yourself. It will also ask you about your learning strategies and to decide what you will do for your learning.



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Let's check back in with Tracy

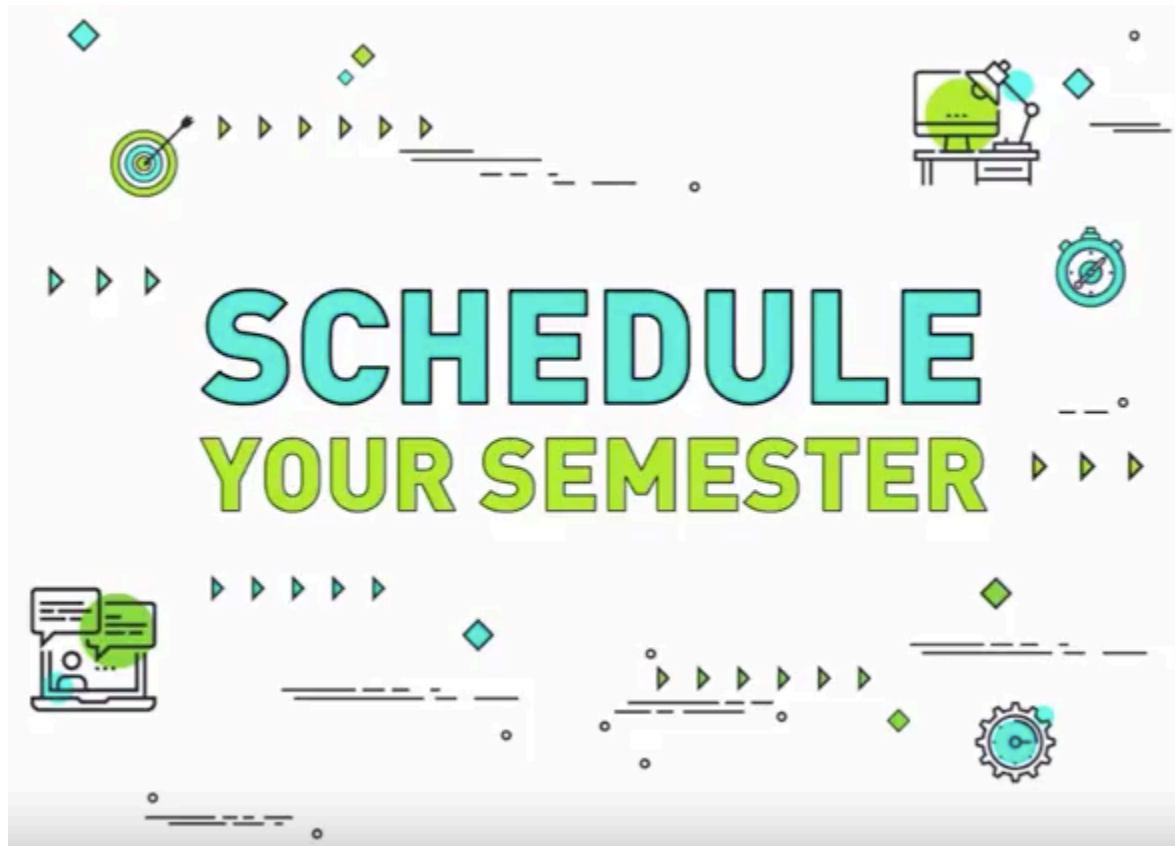


Tracy thought that her strategies for preparing for her **deadline** (an exam) worked really well for her, but she still wasn't reaching her goals. Previously she had been reading over notes before exams, but she tried

out a new strategy – testing herself throughout the semester. She found her performance improved, she could more easily remember the things she needed to know for the exam without cramming, and her grades increased. Don't be afraid to try new strategies for your own **deadline**, whatever that may be. Perhaps the way you've been approaching this **deadline** works, but are there better options or methods available you can try out?

Planning your time

Now that you have some strategies in hand, it's important to make a schedule to help you stay on track. In this video, Shaina explains strategies to schedule your semester.

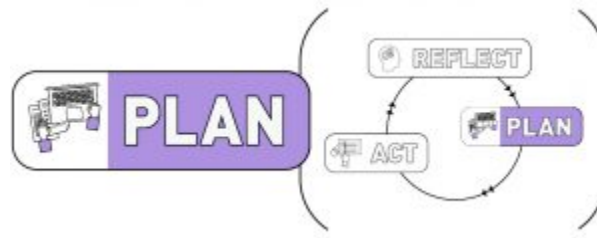


[Watch Shaina schedule her semester.](#)

You can use whatever technology you wish to do this, such as the calendar on your phone, a spreadsheet, software such as [Asana](#), [scheduling software](#), paper (!), *etc.*

Instead of an in-module activity, take some time to plan NOW and put your schedule somewhere that you'll see or notice it frequently. This way, you'll stay on track to reaching your goals for the deadline.

Identify resources needed to achieve your goals



In Activity 13, you'll identify resources that can help you achieve your goals. The most successful individuals will seek help to achieve their goals.

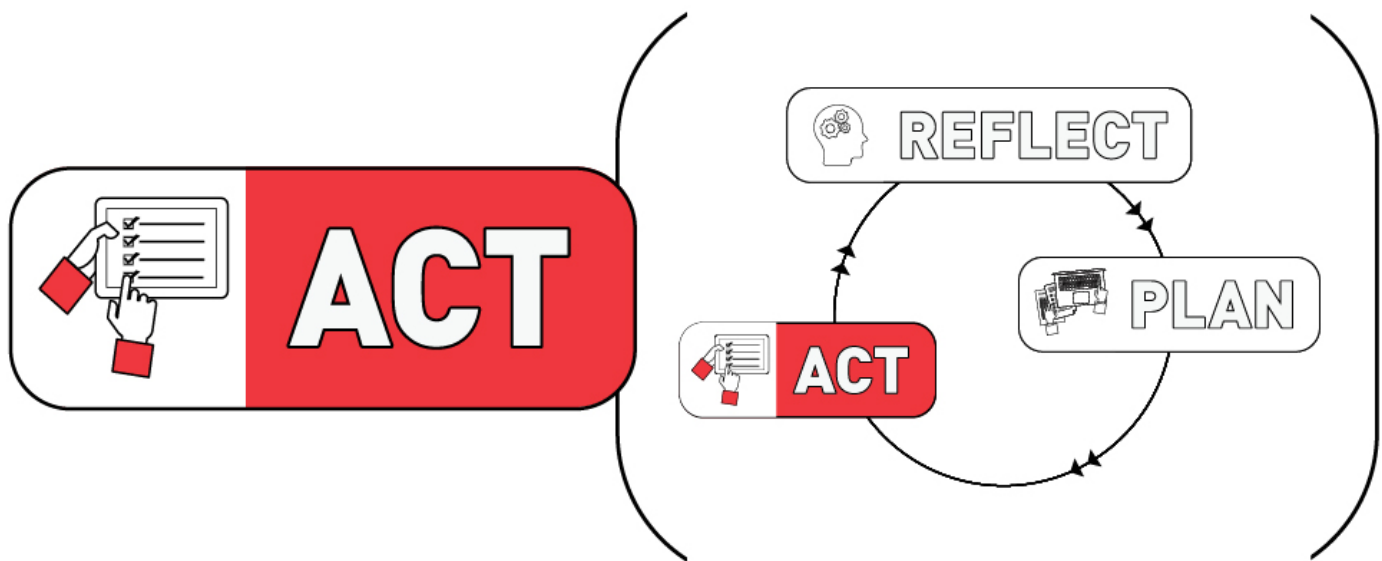


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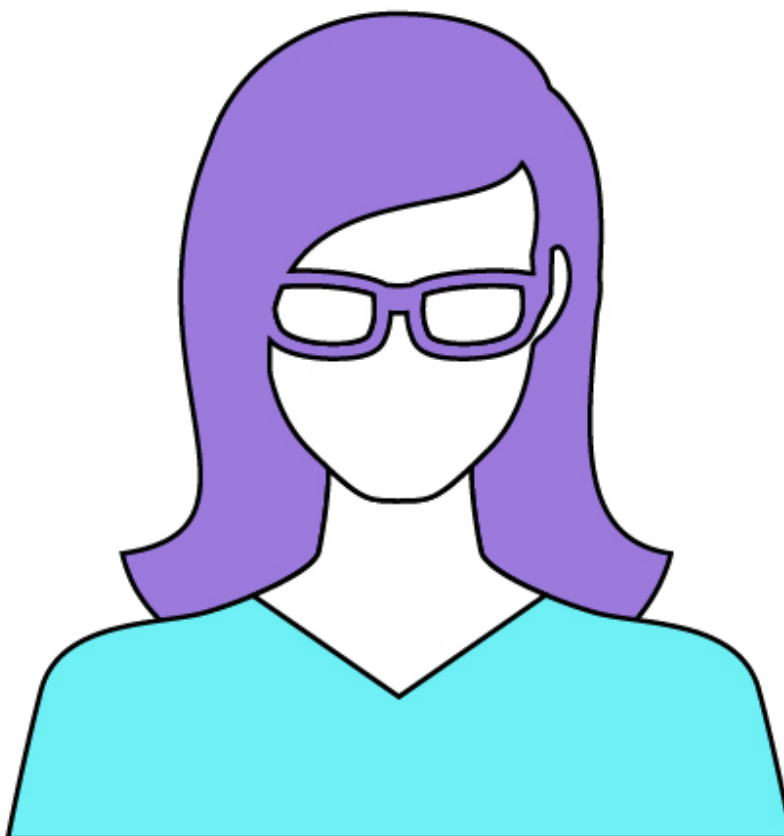


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Act phase



It's time to act!



At the beginning of this module we looked at how Tracy was preparing for her **deadline** ([refer back to Activity 2](#)).

If she were a **self-regulated learner**, those statements would have looked more like these ones in Activity 14. Complete that activity now.



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Hopefully you've worked through this module, set your priorities and goals, decided on a schedule (that you've put in a visible place), and have identified strategies and resources. Now you're ready to act!

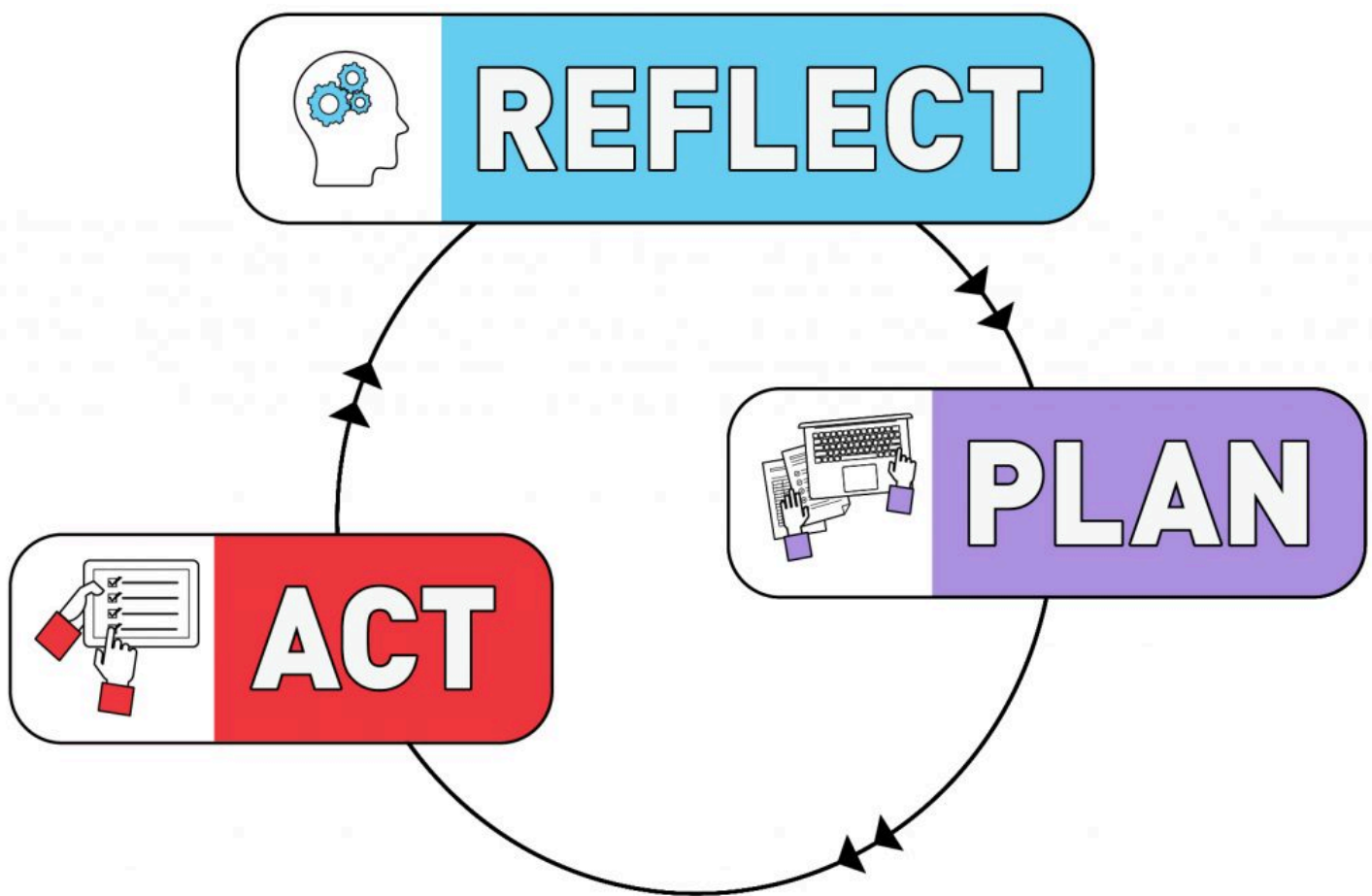
During the weeks and days leading up to your **deadline(s)**, keep asking yourself:



Set a reminder for yourself now to come back before your first **deadline** and do the check-in so that you can reflect on the progress you're making, revise your plans if necessary and then act on them. We suggest doing the next activities one week before and within one week after each **deadline**.

Be mindful and keep working toward a consistent **growth mindset**!

Pre-deadline check-in 1



In Activity 15, you'll check on your progress up to this point to see how you're doing and prepare for the upcoming **deadline**. As you answer, take note of any areas that you want to address in your preparation for your **deadline**.





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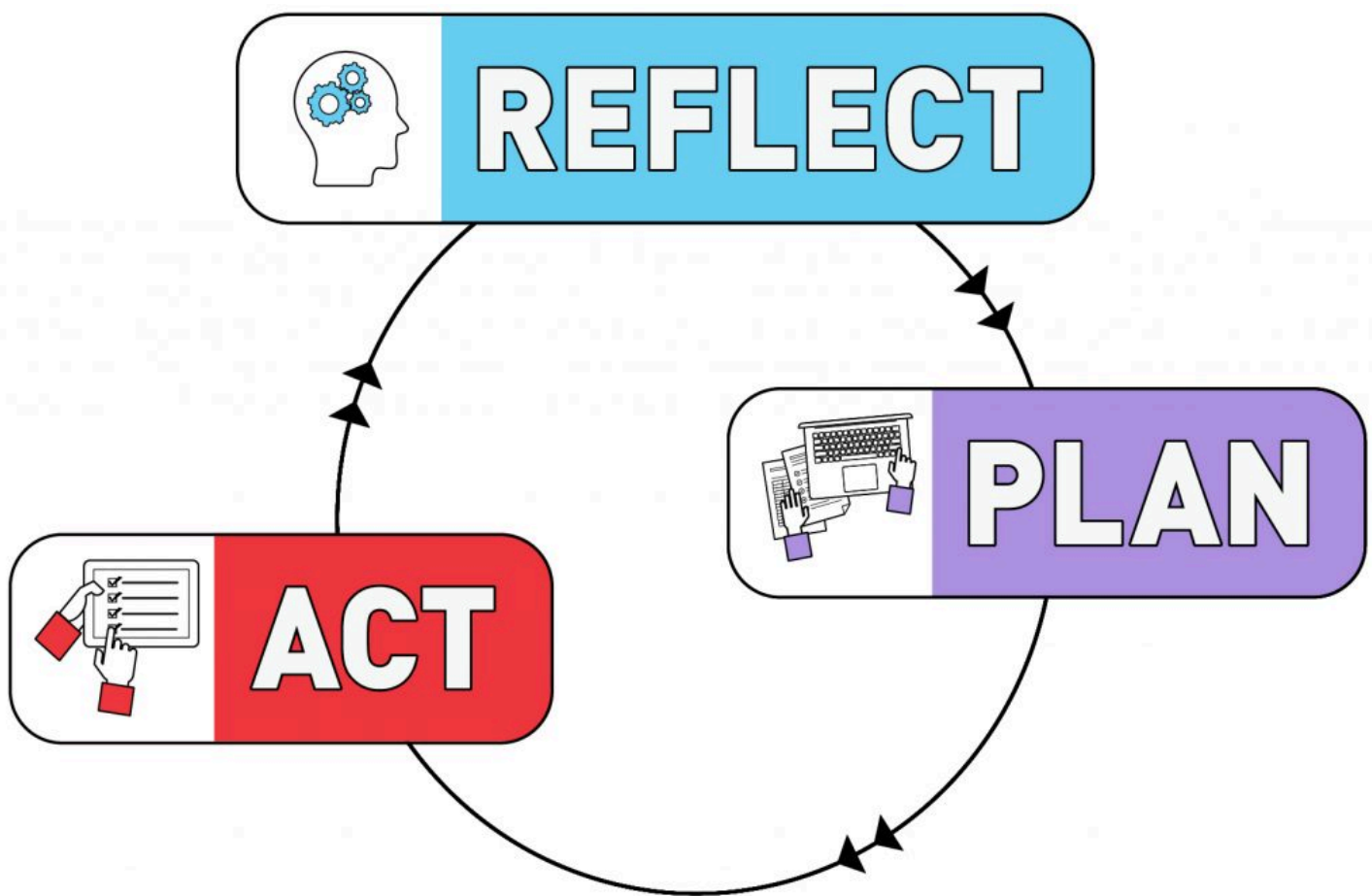
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You can use your insights from your answers to modify your preparation for your upcoming **deadline**, if appropriate. For example, you may realize that you want to consult with peers to test your own knowledge in an area or that you want to ask for feedback from your coach. Maybe you just want to spend a few minutes practicing mindfulness.

Post-deadline check-in 2



Now that you've finished the first **deadline**, you can take some time to check back in with your goals, reflect on how things went, and plan improvements (if necessary).

Complete Activity 16 now.



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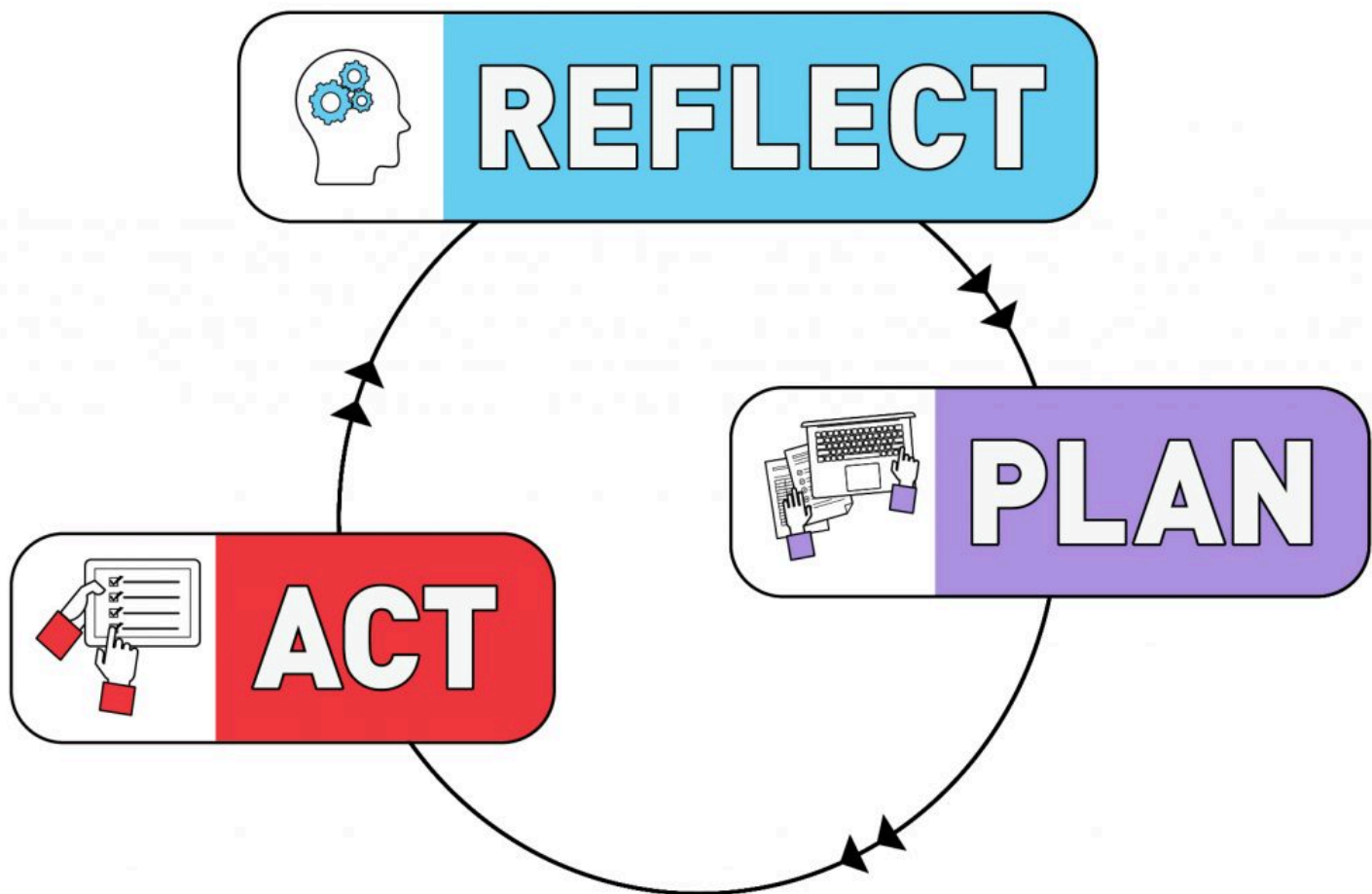


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It's important to identify any aspects that have not gone as well as you wanted and to make changes. Often, making changes involve changing our habits, which can be hard and can include reaching out for help. You can do it!

Pre-deadline check-in 3



In Activity 17, you'll check on your progress up to this point to see how you're doing and prepare for the upcoming **deadline**.



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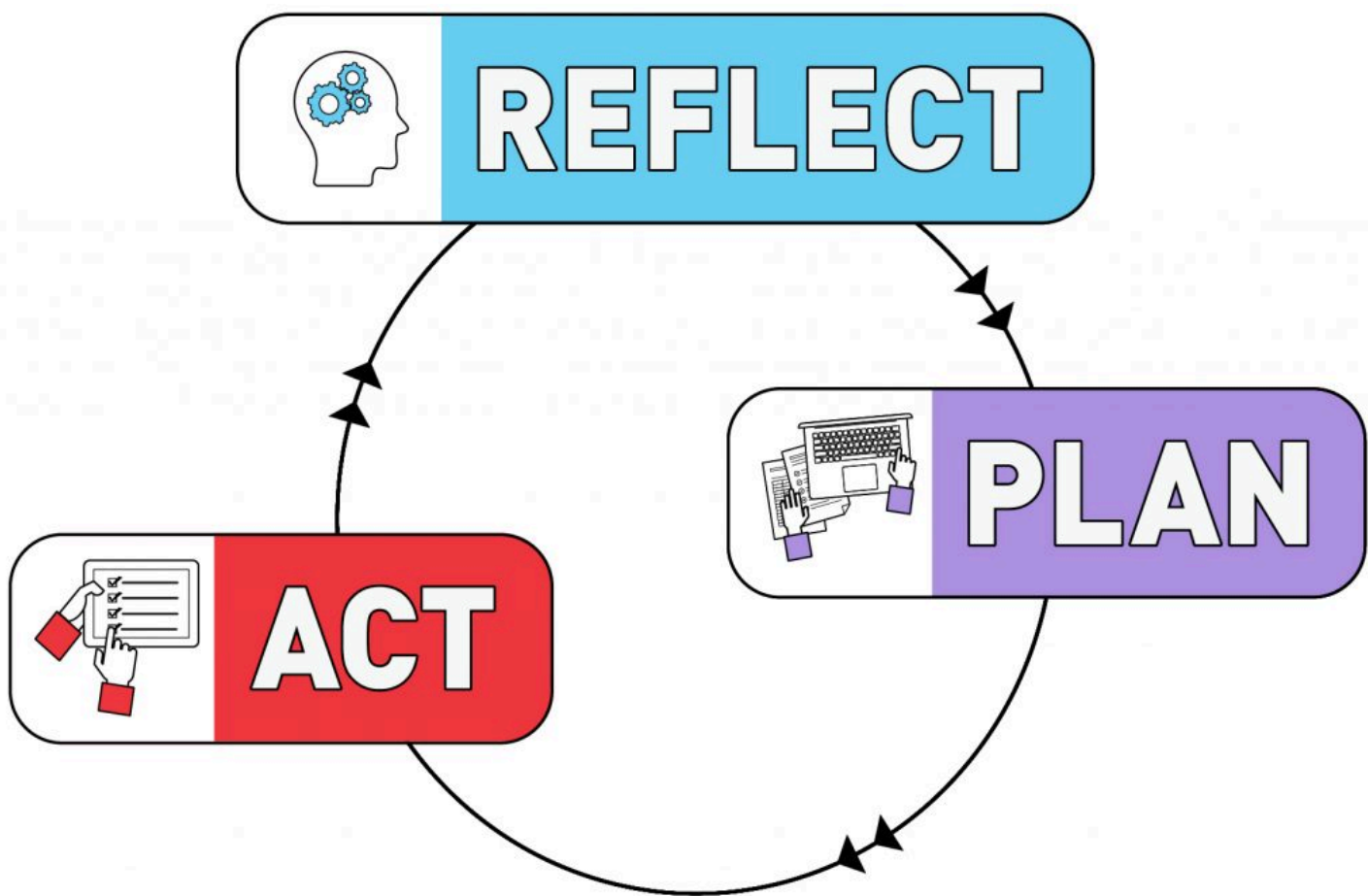
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You can use your insights from your answers to modify your preparation for your upcoming **deadline**, if appropriate. For example, you may realize that you want to consult with peers to test your own knowledge in an area or that you want to ask for feedback from your coach. Maybe you just want to spend a few minutes practicing mindfulness.

Post-deadline check-in 4



Now that you've finished the second **deadline**, you can take some time to check back in with your goals, reflect on how things went, and plan improvements (if necessary).

Complete Activity 18 below.



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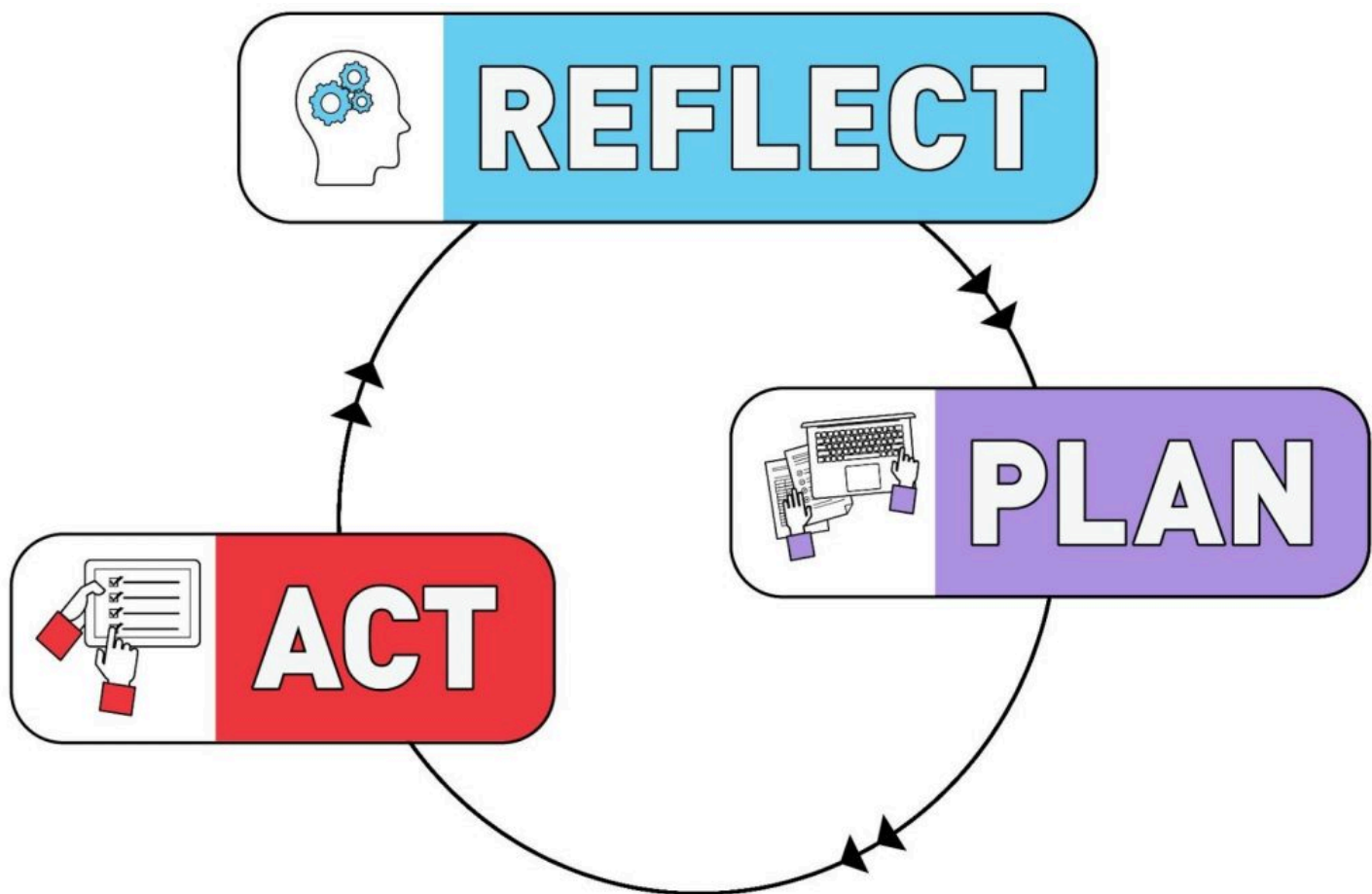
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It's important to identify any aspects that have not gone as well as you wanted and to make changes. Often, making changes involve changing our habits, which can be hard and can include reaching out for help. You can do it!

Check-in before the final deadline



In this activity, you'll check back in with your goals, plan, and progress to see how you're doing and prepare for the upcoming **deadline**.

Begin Activity 19 now!



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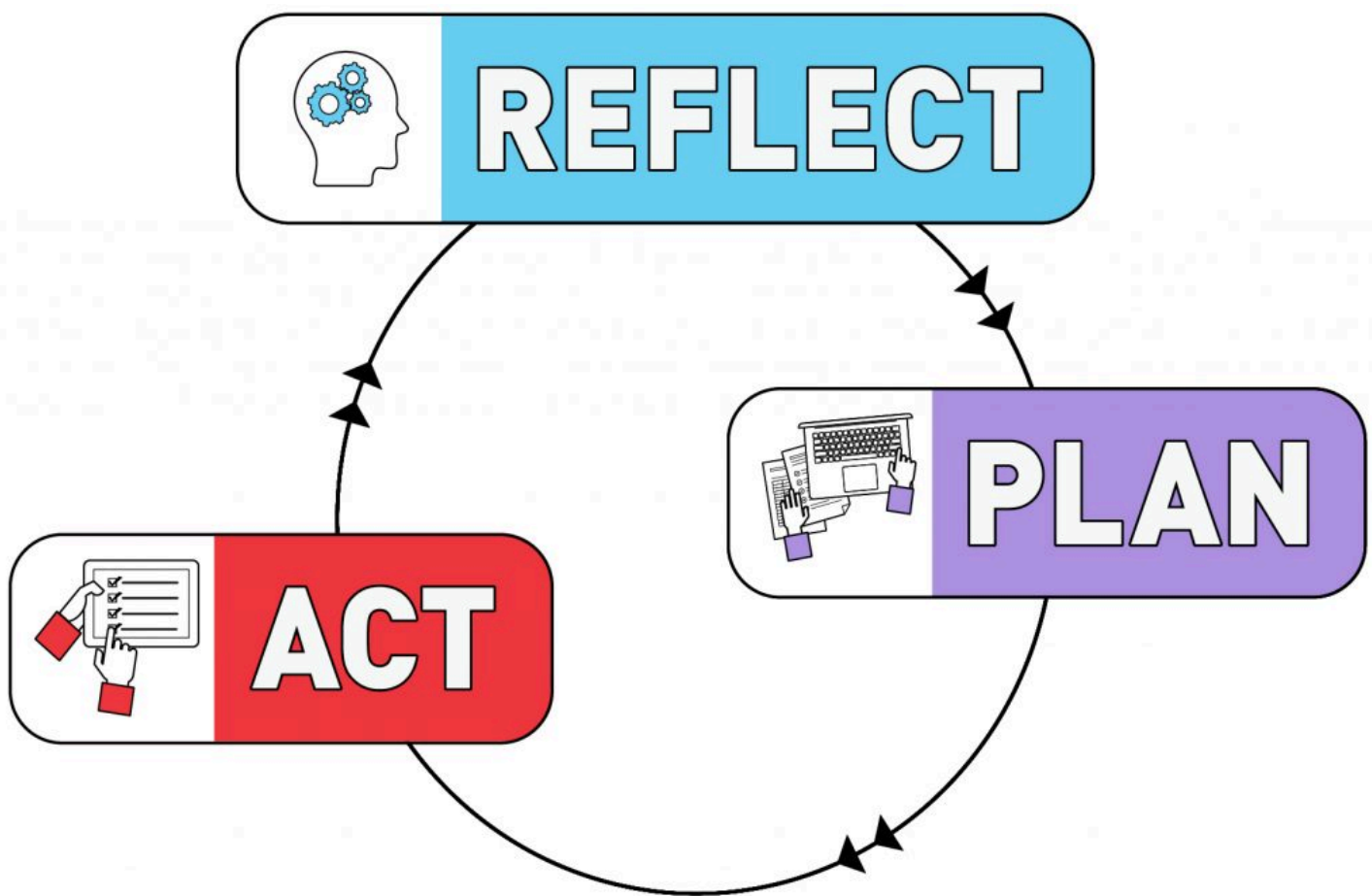


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Module wrap-up



This last questionnaire will help you reflect on your experiences after completing your **deadline** and plan for your next steps.

Complete Activity 20!



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GLOSSARY

Act Phase

This phase involves putting your plans into action. You will carry out your plan, continue to monitor your progress, and make any adjustments you feel necessary. Always ask yourself, *"How am I progressing toward my goals and the course's learning outcomes? What am I doing to achieve my goals?"*

Body Scan Meditation

Often thought of as the foundation of meditation, this technique allows us to open up to our experiences as they are happening. Body scan meditation allows us to be in the present and is an essential technique for mindfulness.

Deadline

A particular milestone in your semester or year that you are preparing for. The deadline could be an exam, assignment, competition, etc. The key idea is to identify specific timepoints using these deadlines so that you can check your progress toward your goals.

Fixed Mindset

The belief that your basic abilities, such as intelligence or talent, are fixed traits that cannot be changed or developed. Someone with a fixed mindset documents their intelligence and skills, rather than actively working to develop and improve them. They also believe that success comes from talent alone, but they are wrong. Success requires effort.

Growth Mindset

The belief that your basic abilities can be developed and cultivated through hard work and dedication. Someone with a growth mindset views their basic skills and talents as a starting point, therefore creating a love of learning and resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Great learners are *made*, not *born*.

Learning Outcomes

The demonstratable (outwardly visible) products of learning, which can include knowledge, skills, and values.

Metacognition

Metacognition requires you to think about your own thinking and is separated into two parts - knowing what you know and deciding what to do for your learning. This skill is essential for identifying how well you know the prerequisite knowledge, developing study strategies, and learning how to schedule your time.

Mindful Learner

A mindful learner has three qualities essential for self-regulated learning: they maintain awareness in the present moment, know their thoughts and feelings regarding their learning, and are not overpowered by their thoughts or emotions in directing actions. Mindful learners are able to detach themselves from unpleasant thoughts and feelings that would otherwise distract them from their learning.

Mindful qualities

Mindful qualities involves experiencing present-time awareness of thoughts, feelings and accepting these thoughts and feelings as natural products of your mind. By developing these skills you can loosen the control that thoughts and feelings have over your behaviour and better focus on your learning goals or the task at hand.

Mindfulness

The ability to be aware of present-time and remain aware throughout your day-to-day experiences. Mindfulness is the ability to resist distraction and temptations, and to remain present and focused on the task at hand. This skill also allows you to control your emotions and respond in a skillful way to emotionally challenging situations, rather than react automatically without careful thinking or emotional control. The skills needed for mindfulness are developed through practice. You must start with simple activities to develop mindful awareness in a variety of situations. Meditation is a common activity to practice awareness and to focus on the present.

Mindfulness of the Body and Breath Meditation

The mindfulness of body and breath meditation is designed to settle and ground you in the present moment. Using this meditation, you can take the time to notice how present you are in daily activities and strive to achieve more awareness in your everyday life.

Mindset

As stated by Carol Dweck in Mindset: "Mindsets are beliefs – beliefs about yourself and your

most basic qualities and abilities.” Identifying your current mindset is essential to guide and take control of your learning. Working towards a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset means you will be more open and hard-working and will allow you to be more motivated and dedicated to your goals, studies, and work.

Plan Phase

Planning involves identifying strategies and developing a plan and schedule to achieve your goals you set in the reflect phase. To plan, you will decide on strategies, plan your time, and identify the resources you need. By defining and refining your goals they will become more achievable.

Present-time awareness

Present-time awareness involves letting go of all of the distractions that are an inherent part of life and instead focusing on what is happening in the present. To be aware of the present one must push away incoming thoughts about future worries or tasks and instead focus only on what is happening in the present. To develop this awareness you will practice mindful qualities throughout the module.

Reflect Phase

Reflection involves looking back on your past experiences to identify your strengths and areas you think you need to focus on, as well as identifying your learning beliefs and mindset when faced with challenges. Reflection can be used to help refine the goals you want to achieve.

Resiliency

The capacity to embrace and accept failure as a part of learning and bounce back. Resiliency applies to your course work, midterms or exams, personal challenges, and other aspects of life.

Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring involves monitoring your progress towards your goals and making any adjustments you feel are necessary. This technique also involves using metacognition to evaluate your learning and decide what to do to improve your learning. Self-monitoring is key to reaching your goals and it allows you to stay on track.

Self-regulated Learning (SRL) Cycle

Self-regulated learning can be achieved through the SRL cycle. The SRL cycle allows you to

take strategic control of how you approach your goals and be prepared and willing to face any challenges and seize any opportunities that might arise as you work to make your goals your reality. The SRL cycle consists of three phases: reflect, plan, and act. Ideally, you should repeat this cycle multiple times as you create goals and tackle challenges.

SMART Goal

SMART goals can be used in all aspects of your life and allow you to develop your goals into actionable statements that you can work towards, rather than goals that seem overwhelming or difficult. There are 5 components to a SMART goal: Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Reachable, and Time Specific.

Sounds and Thoughts Meditation

This meditation helps to develop awareness around how you receive internal thoughts and external sounds. It is often a good follow up to the Body and Breathe meditation.

The Befriending Meditation

The befriending meditation introduces and develops self-compassion and the importance of caring for yourself and others. Through this meditation, you will take the time to show yourself kindness as well as compassion for those around you.

Three Minute Breathing Space

This short exercise can be used at any time during the day. Feel free to complete this exercise whenever it works best for you and your schedule. We suggest practicing this technique even when you don't need it (when you're not stressed) to develop present time awareness.

About the authors

The Growth & Goals Module is developed by members of the Flynn Research Group at the University of Ottawa. The Flynn Research group is primarily focused on Chemistry Education Research (CER) and works to develop innovative tools and methods to support students learning.

The Growth & Goals module is a Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), Growth Mindset, and Metacognition Module for post-secondary learning and beyond. The module allows students to address their strengths and weaknesses, to identify their current mindset towards their goals and learning, and to develop the SRL skills necessary to take control of their learning. University students have to learn in many different formats, often confront failure, and manage many different courses and life expectations simultaneously. To be successful, students need to know and continually monitor their learning plus develop autonomy and professional capacity skills. The Growth & Goals module aims to help students with this and to develop the framework and skills necessary to manage their learning and be successful in a post-secondary setting. For more information, visit [our website here](#).



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Alison Flynn is a bilingual Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biomolecular Sciences at the University of Ottawa. She is a 3M National Teaching Fellow, Canada's highest recognition for excellence in education at the post-secondary level and a member of the Global Young Academy. Her work includes developing open-access online learning tools and flipped course structures to support student learning, especially in high enrolment classes. Her research group studies student learning in organic chemistry. As uOttawa's Chair in University Teaching, she developed and is evaluating a new Growth & Goals Module for students.

Elizabeth Campbell Brown

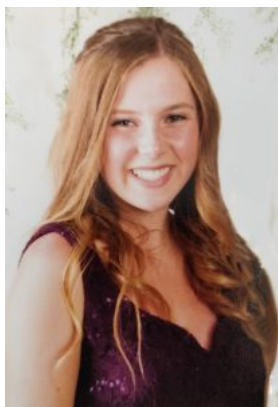
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Elizabeth Campbell Brown has been an instructional designer at the University of Ottawa's Teaching and Learning Support Service for the past 19 years. Her interest in current brain research and how it challenges our former understanding of the brain, learning and, therefore, how we design for learners made working on the *Growth & Goals* module a compelling project to participate in. Most of her work over the past 5 years has focused on developing fully online courses and workshops, collaborating with faculty from across disciplines in both French and English.



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Ellyssa Walsh is a third year honours B.Sc. Biomedical Sciences student at the University of Ottawa. She lead the transition of the Growth & Goals module into Pressbooks. Ellyssa worked to format, edit, and review the module so that it can be published in more accessible ways for students. Ellyssa also worked on formulating an interactive version of the module, as well as a non-course specific version that can act as a self-help guide for students or other professionals. Ellyssa is an active member in her school community and believes that students should have ample opportunities to enrich their education and experiences at University.

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Emily O'Connor is a professional engineer and a 3rd year honours B.Sc. Psychology student at the University of Ottawa. She was part of the development and evaluation teams of Growth & Goals and acted as project manager for the team from 2017-2019. She worked on improving the content and the usability of the module through feedback from both students and instructors. She also looked at data collected from the pilot implementation to evaluate the efficacy of the module. She was involved in supporting module adopters through implementation in their classes.



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Robyne holds the role of Senior Educational Developer at the Centre for Teaching and Learning, at Trent University. As a multi-award-winning psychology and education instructor, with over 13 years of teaching and research, Robyne works across educational landscapes bringing researched informed practices to everyday applications that are realistic, universal and sustainable. Outside of Trent, Robyne is a professional speaker, author, and consultant who specializes in resiliency, wellness and performance.

