

Continuum of Effort and Commitment

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Mastery

Competent. Likely to be striving for continual growth in that area or related areas, OR ready to move on to the next challenge

Sticking with it

Efforts to complete task even with mistakes or rough-draft outcomes with a commitment to keep at it, gain skill, achieve mastery

Willing to try

Efforts to complete task, satisfied with adequate achievement for short-term outcome (grade, token, privilege)

Easily discouraged

Tries but gives up at first setback, often before having had a chance to experience success or progress

Learned helplessness

Willing to make an effort but only with a great deal of support and attention; sense of being incapable (real or imagined)

Too afraid to try

Afraid of making a mistake, looking foolish, being embarrassed.
(May be related to sensory issues: touch, noise, etc.)

Indifference

Can reflect lack of interest or awareness.

May also reflect sense of entitlement or power struggle (need to win, indifference to negative outcomes of refusal to participate or do the work).

OR may be related to fear: Better to look bad than dumb.

Note: Perfectionism may be an issue in several of these categories. I'm also thinking of instances of recklessness, over-confidence, or even a sense of delusion; refusing to accept honest, helpful feedback. I also believe that we all have experiences along the entire continuum. Ideas welcome.

For those of us who live or work with children, how do we help them move toward mastery?

What do we need to have in place (resources, climate, relationships, instruction, sensory accommodations, environment, etc.) to create a passion for learning and growth, or at least to overcome indifference, fear, and discouragement?