

True Grit and a Growth Mindset: traits that predict success for women in the law



Foundational Principle & Definitions

- In light of the systemic inequities facing women in law, the scientific research shows that grit and growth mindset are *the most dispositive factors* for women lawyers to overcome these inequities & maximize success in the law.
- **Grit:** perseverance and passion for long-term goals & ability to maintain effort and interest over years despite adversity, failure, and plateaus in progress.
- **Growth Mindset:** the (scientifically proven) belief that intelligence & talent can be grown and developed through dedication and hard work, & that perseverance/persistence/effort eventually pay off in long-term success



The 6 Core Components of Grit [the key to enhancing resiliency & success in law, & life]

- 1) **Cognitive Reframing:** mentally re-frame “live” challenges as *opportunities for greatness/growth*, rather than threats of failure
 - “old lady / young lady”; overturn brain’s default interpretation by purposefully identifying 1-3 +opportunities; UBS Bank example
- 2) **Growth Mindset:** detachment of self-esteem from outcomes/perfectionism & purposeful growth through setbacks/failures
 - natural talent is overrated; each error = exciting growth moment; “fail your way to success”; baby learning to walk; Thomas Edison
- 3) **Internal Locus of Control:** staunchly accept reality & adaptively respond to that reality [internal v. external locus of control]
 - Daily calendar *will* get blown up! Byron Katie: our stress results from resisting reality (“Meow, doggie!”); Viktor Frankl
- 4) **Deliberate Practice:** consistent, uncomfortable practice over the long-term
 - 10,000 hour rule; Mozart; become comfortable with the uncomfortable; this long-term practice also applies to emotional growth
- 5) **Compassion for Injustice:** diffusing the palpable resentment & not conflating compassion with condonation
 - our resentment poisons us & leads to burn-out; Nelson Mandela (MLK, Ghandi, Mother Theresa); compassion = ↑ effectiveness
- 6) **Higher Purpose:** connect your work to a purpose/meaning *greater than yourself*, and remember who you *truly* are
 - the bricklayer: “building a cathedral”; tie rudimentary/rote tasks to higher purpose/meaning; *I-amnesia*; identity ≠ career/externals

