

You Can Do It!

What to Know

When you say, "I can't," sometimes you mean you don't want to or you're choosing not to. You might *actually* believe you *can't* do something. But with the right mindset, a positive attitude, and a clear idea of what you want, sometimes the only thing holding you back is yourself.

When people say they "can't" do something, they often doubt themselves before trying because they lack confidence, or they are afraid. This is called having a **fixed mindset**. If you can stop being afraid and have confidence while believing in yourself, you'll be able to achieve great things. This is called having a **growth mindset**.

Your attitude is everything. It can be easy to have a negative attitude, complain, and say, "I can't do it!" But if you change your attitude, things can change in a big way. Remember the following ideas.

- **It's OK to fail.** When something doesn't go your way, face it, learn the lesson, grow from it, and move on.
- **Write down what you want.** Write it on post-its, notecards, or type it into your phone.
- **Tell a friend and talk about it.** Discuss your goals and what you want. It helps to say it out loud and tell another person. It's almost like saying, "Hey, I bet I can do it—watch me!" When you succeed, it's rewarding and will motivate you to do other things.
- **Stop yourself from saying, "I can't."** Imagine that the word "can't" is the worst word you can use. Stop yourself from saying it and turn your perspective around—you can do it, you will do it, and nothing is impossible!
- **Practice positive self-talk.** Before you know it, the word "can't" will not be part of your language.
- **Do something to reduce your uncertainty.** If you catch yourself saying "I can't do it," or, "I don't know _____," look up information on that action or subject, do some research, and educate yourself. This can reduce your uncertainty. Sometimes, you think you can't do something because the idea seems like too much. You skip the small steps and focus on the result. So, just focus on the first small step, then the next step, and so on. When you

take one step at a time, before you know it you will have done something you previously thought you couldn't do.

What to do

First, answer the following questions.

What do you think you *can't* do? What seems impossible?

Why do you think that way?

What are you afraid of?

Why should you try?

What can you do to keep obstacles from standing in your way?

Who can you talk to about this?

If you don't have enough information, where can you get more information?

What will happen if you fail?

What are some positive things you can say to yourself?

Next, cut out the rectangles on the next page. In each rectangle, there are statements you might say. Some of them refer to having a fixed mindset ("I can't") and others refer to having a growth mindset. See if you can tell the difference. Paste or tape each statement in the appropriate column.

<p style="text-align: center;">I can't (fixed mindset)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">I can—with the right strategies! (growth mindset)</p>

It's not going to work anyway.

I can learn from my mistakes.

I'm just not good at this.

It's not going to work anyway.

It'll take some time and practice to get this.

I don't have to be perfect—if I try to do my best.

What can I learn from my friend?

I give up!

I can't do this.

I'll never get any better at this.

I can do it! Nothing is impossible when I set my mind to it.

I tried and it didn't work out.

This is too hard.

I'll try it a different way.

I need help understanding this.

Who can I ask to get more information?

I'm such a failure.