Self-Growth Meta-Behaviors

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Abstract

Many insights about how to develop and sustain use of growth and self-growth capabilities were brought to light over the two-year course of the PE Expert Team Project. Among these were self-development strategies including the identification and application of meta-behaviors generated by generalizing situation-specific behaviors associated with successful advancement of growth and self-growth capabilities. Although not specified previously, existence of these meta-level behaviors can be inferred in previous Process Education (PE) scholarship describing a theory of growth and self-growth. Sets of meta-behaviors have been identified for growth and for self-growth, which are consistent with what has been described in past scholarship and practice about initiating and expanding self-growth mindset, consciousness, and capability. The identification of these sets of meta-behaviors allows us to distinguish the actions of growers from self-growers, thereby providing a resource for categorizing current actions belonging to the group of growth behaviors, self-growth behaviors, or neither. Because growth capabilities are the foundation for self-growth, it is important to think of a transition of conscious intent from the more focused growth meta-behaviors and goals to the open-system aspirations associated with self-growth meta-behaviors. It was discovered that most of the important meta-behaviors, and the practices they support, are associated with weekly transition, a process created during the PE Expert Team Project for reflection on experiences from the past week to capture the strongest insights and then to articulate new intentions for the upcoming week. Self-Growth meta-behaviors are used to design a growth action plan that takes full advantage of expected and created opportunities for applying growth and self-growth behaviors during the upcoming week. These meta-behaviors are also consistent with PE practices and the Profile of a Self-Grower.

Introduction

Growth and self-growth behaviors were discovered and described during the PE Expert Team Project, a two-year initiative (August 2021-August 2023) by author Apple to explore the use of self-growth coaching for advancing participant performance and life development in 20 PE areas of expertise described in modules within the *Faculty Guidebook* (Beyerlein et al., 2007). Project participants wrote and implemented weekly growth action plans that the group of participants then reflected on and assessed each week in order to clarify intentions and to plan the next iteration of growth objectives, as well as other details of the plans. Among the important insights gained was the value of selecting and creating new opportunities that had the potential to be life-changing in terms of quality of life (QoL) criteria (King-Berry et al., 2021). It became apparent that the transition from growing to self-growing was quite challenging and would require new approaches, resources, and practices. Among these was the use of an innovative practice called *weekly transition*, for which a draft of a new methodology was developed. Transition time puts a focus on reflection about previous progress and creating of new plans for the upcoming week.

The aims and methods of the PE Expert Team Project reflect the distinctive features of an evolving new PE framework that emphasizes mastery of self-development through growth and self-growth. This is an extension and a significant application of the educational foundations of the long-standing PE framework (Apple et al, 2016; Leise, 2023a). Foundational to the PE framework is learning to learn as a form of performance (Apple & Ellis, 2015; Leasure et al., 2020). The assumption is that performances can be enhanced, such as through the Methodology for Developing Performance (Van Slyke et al., 2021). The growth of performance requires a shift from understanding performance as a stand-alone function to appreciating its role for selective growth development.

Evolving From Growth to Self-Growth

As individuals master performance development, they are increasingly able to focus on the development of growth capabilities (Hurd et al., 2021) that include prioritizing performances for their potential effects on quality of life. If we use the metaphor of a journey, then we can say that one's life journey, as well as one's self-growth journey, are most effectively supported by developing self-growth capability (Apple et al., 2021). This is perhaps best achieved through the support of self-growth coaching (Batchelor et al., 2023; Stober et al, 2006). Enhanced growth capability increases individual potential for self-growth consciousness, which is characterized by the creation of the individual's own

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open system—a system that includes external interactions well beyond the individual's current needs and aspirations. Consciousness of the challenge of a self-growth journey takes time and reflection about how intentional decisions can evolve from a focus on growth itself to a focus on growth as a pathway for transitioning to self-growth.

Throughout the planning and implementation of growth objectives, consciousness of self-growth, with its open system mindset, contributes to a self-growth journey directed by an evolving personal representation of one's ideal self. Assessing the quality of growth behaviors is important for movement to self-growth behaviors because limitations in one or more of the growth behaviors needed for a self-growth behavior can delay or impede the desired development even if well-conceptualized in a plan. Self-Growth capability development can be strengthened through reflective consideration of nine psychological perspectives focused on sustaining growth and self-growth efforts (Leise et al., 2023b) and on the use of tools such as the Insight Methodology (Leise, Dombi & Apple, 2023) to add deeper meaning to significant observations as well as recognition of new intentions with respect to how to live life. Nevertheless, the experiences of participants in the PE Expert Team Project demonstrated that full transition is unlikely to occur quickly even if a few strong insights have led to successful self-growth action planning in some situations. Becoming an effective self-mentor (Batchelor et al., 2023) was among the aims of the project but it was clear that an association with a self-growth coach is essential before this potential can be actualized by most individuals.

PE Framework

A concern for establishing long-term learning and performance behaviors (Ellis, 2007) guided development of the PE framework. Its six functions (knowing, learning, and learning to learn; and performing, growing, and self-growing) have been identified (Leise, et al., 2023a) as another hierarchical set of performance types that build on each other to lead to the capabilities needed to create a self-growth journey (Jain et al., 2020). PE as a framework for both educational and life development incorporates the intended application of self-growth meta-behaviors. Among the reasons this article focuses on the recently delineated sets of growth and self-growth meta-behaviors is to enhance the empirical basis of PE through assuring practitioners that behaviors can be described and made the focus of self-development in addition to educational applications and practices.

Life-Long Development

As will be further discussed in the literature review, meta-behaviors incorporate generalizations from experiential knowledge about situations and conditions and provide a significant source of insights about the potential uses of the Classification of Learning Skills (CLS) (Leise et al., 2019). This hierarchical compilation of 512 skills at all levels of complexity, exemplifies the breadth of behavioral skills that are foundational to the PE framework and to development of growth and self-growth meta-behaviors. The "broaden and build" emphasis of positive psychology (Fredrickson, 2001) matches this approach to capability development. Each person needs a unique set of capabilities for dealing with life and for attaining goals consistent with desired quality of life (QoL) (King-Berry et al., 2021) beyond what is presently possible. Ultimately, learners and performers must acquire the desire to make their new abilities useful in their lives going forward; without it, any change in ability will not translate into life-long capabilities.

Intentional Change

An important aspect of planning is establishing a valid correspondence between what is intended and what happens from implementing a strategy. Lonergan (1957/1992) describes intentionality as part of intelligent inquiry, which fits the meaning of intentions in this article. The purpose of intentionally making behavioral choices is to improve quality of life by increasing self-determined growth. This includes planning and taking deliberate actions to make a positive impact on the world and producing an enhanced internal compass for guiding development of a better version of oneself.

Concentrating attention on iterative clarification of growth meta-behaviors during the PE Expert Team Project helped to keep stated growth intentions from being too situationally specific or too abstract for effective and measurable action. The meta behaviors also leverage the more complete description of self-growth found in the Profile of a Self-Grower, available in Appendix A (Apple, 2022).

Three general factors are significant to consider for intentional behavioral change to be realized by applying resources and strategies within the PE framework. First, gaining autonomy over personal choices requires effective expansion of many discrete learning skills to create a broad base of activation and motivation for meaningful life decision making. Second, having an open mind is needed to allow disconfirming evidence, such as negative experiences, to be fully examined while continuing to assess how to use the principles and processes of the PE framework to overcome setbacks. Third is recognizing that the ideas and behaviors important to intentional action planning within the PE model are an open category that can be expanded and deepened as reflection on multiple experience perspectives improves action insights (Leise et al., 2023b).

Review of Literature

Metacognition theory differentiates object-level thinking (specific to a task) from meta-level thinking. Koriat (2015) identifies monitoring and control, i.e., self-regulation of performance, as the basic components of metacognition which is defined more generally as thinking about one's thinking in judgment situations. At the meta level, monitoring and control are guided by subjective feelings and beliefs, sense of fluency in managing a task and confidence in ability. The PE Expert Team Project focused on generalizations of the metacognitive thinking of participants through use of self-growth coaching to strengthen intentional growth processes and outcomes. A significant issue that came to light during the project was the variation in planning strategies for attaining what appeared to be clearly conceptualized growth objectives. Amran et al. (2021) argue that metacognition is initiated as a cognitive process but for completeness must incorporate follow-through action planning guided by meta-behavioral skills that support reliable selection and achievement of specific action outcomes.

Definition of Meta-Behavioral Skills

Amran et al. (2021) define *meta-behavioral skills* as conscious choices that follow metacognition to increase the effectiveness of how one takes action. Meta-behaviors incorporate experiential knowledge about situations and conditions as well as awareness of the potential of certain types of strategies to reach an aim relevant to the individual's purpose as defined through metacognition. Meta-behaviors are generalized forms of action that can become internalized from a series of specific experiences in related contexts. Personal or professional practices are supported by structured methods such as an Insight Methodology (Leise, Dombi, & Apple, 2023) and the meta-behaviors that guide self-regulatory choices. Thus, a growth practice may put emphasis on the meta-behavior of reflection on observations as a means to gain stronger insight into one's parenting or teaching meta-behaviors.

Amran et al. (2021) argue that the construct of meta-behavior is needed to fill an important gap in research on metacognition within practice contexts. The direction and preparation of a fully effective response to a life opportunity requires internal planning, monitoring, and evaluating that draws upon memories, general knowledge, strategies, and self-regulation of motivation. Meta-behaviors incorporate preparation and guidance of decisions about how, when, and with whom to engage in upcoming situations chosen for potential to attain a valued life outcome. The following sections illustrates the extensive research literature describing and analyzing planning as an intentional strategy with predictable features that can be learned and applied to growth objectives. More extensive development of growth and self-growth meta-behaviors is also a significant part of intentionally aiming for life outcomes related to one's representation of ideal self.

Intentions, Motivation, and Growth

Growth intentions and associated meta-behaviors are complex by nature, i.e., they rarely are yes/no. Many yes/no decisions that are specific to a situation, even some clearly significant for QoL such as whether and when to purchase a house, tend to be influenced by external criteria—in contrast, growth intentions are intrinsically motivated. Growth intentions emerge from reflective insights about substantive experiences that are difficult to clearly define in terms of optimal actions and outcomes.

Bandura's (2001) agentic perspective integrates these challenges of intention, including cognitive as well as behavioral and situational factors. Ajzen's (1991) *theory of planned behavior*, and Gollwitzer's (2018) *Rubicon model of action phases*, focus on more specific sequences and self-regulatory issues required for turning positive intentions into successful outcomes. Ajzen (1991) emphasizes that even intended future outcomes are not yet "real," but through cognitive representation it is possible for "anticipatory guidance" to motivate and direct attention to projected goals and expected outcomes. Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) proposed a *theory of reasoned action* expanding Ajzen's 1991 model. These models assume that motivation is reflected in intentions to attain a goal or outcome. The hypothesis is that control is increased through improved cognitive modification of beliefs, consideration of behavioral norms (i.e., Is the outcome usually achievable by others similar to me?) and conditions (i.e., Is the situation conducive to goal achievement as I am thinking of it?).

Sniehotta (2009) concludes that Gollwitzer's (1999) *implementation intentions model* accounts for a consistent but relatively small proportion of outcome variance in health experiments because it does not put enough emphasis on ongoing self-monitoring and self-regulation. Sniehotta's analysis emphasizes that consciousness of criteria and changes in conditions must be addressed over time, even if not envisioned in the initial intention. Orbell & Sheeran (2006) found that intentions initiate motivation, but additional awareness and effort are important for consistency in pursuing improvement in health habits and choices (a dynamic comparable to planning and carrying out growth intentions). Sniehotta et al. (2005), identify these frequently found inconsistencies in follow-through as an "intention-behavior" gap that must be bridged with effective planning to assure that actions continue to be con-

sistent with health objectives. The challenge of becoming conscious of intention-behavior gaps is greater for self-growth because these are autonomously generated and oriented to ideal-self aspirations.

Growth and self-growth meta-behaviors, as presented in this article, provide a way of bridging the gap between intentions and growth objectives by increasing generalized readiness to meet and resolve unexpected challenges, for instance capability limitations or substantial changes in conditions. The research and theory reviewed indicates that preparing to realize the complex intentions involved in growth and self-growth action plans must include strategies to self-regulate the cognitive representation of intentions, impediments, and the criteria for success. Growth and self-growth meta-behaviors (Table 1) play an important role by directing conscious attention to the kinds of skills, attitudes, and characteristics that bridge the gap between intentions and attainment of growth or self-growth objectives.

Gollwitzer (2018) presents the Rubicon model of action phases, which is partially based on the seminal insights of Lewin et al. (1944), who believed that action was essential to understanding the motivation of goal setting. The Rubicon model phases include predecision (deliberation about what goal to choose), pre-action (planning concrete strategies), action (enacting planned strategies), and post action (assessing outcomes). The term *Rubicon* refers to Julius Caesar's famous crossing of the Rubicon river and emphasizes the critical importance of the first "boundary," a definite decision to act, that creates a "border" between the predecision and the preaction steps. Within the PE framework, similar phases are included in methodologies such as the Methodology for Developing Performance (Van Slyke et al., 2021). The articulation of the borders between the Rubicon phases seems most obvious for the PE performing function level, but can be applied to goal setting involving any of the PE function levels (Leise et al., 2023a). The synthesis of capabilities based on learning skills from across function levels supports individuals in an open system of growth. Growth capabilities attained through these open-system decisions increase the potential for self-growth development that is essential for self-determined and self-regulated movement towards an ideal self oriented beyond individual goals.

Self-Regulation of Intentions

Authentic self-growth requires self-assessment and reflection skills for reliably discovering how intentions supported by meta-behaviors lead to improved quality of life and increased meaning of life. The emphasis on action in the models presented by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) and Gollwitzer (2018) supports the conclusion that successful planning, executing, and assessing of growth and self-growth capabilities requires command of many situational and interpersonal details—especially factors that are likely to impede success. Gollwitzer's *self-completion theory* (2018) is relevant as an explanation of one type of impediment that can block self-growth by creating a blind spot in objectivity about the individual's direction of growth. Self-Completion theory identifies the cognitive schemas or mindsets for representing self and identity when personal goals that have been selected and known to others have not been fully achieved. Claiming related but "incomplete" symbolic representations (e.g., telling about the success of the first stage of a project never completed) or mentioning characteristics (e.g., credentials that give the appearance of being successful) may be convincing ploys for the individual's public audience but are inauthentic and unproductive.

From a meta-analysis of interventions designed to promote healthy lifestyle changes, Hagger et al. (2022) found that Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior was validated in many of the correlational studies included in their sample of studies. Two factors identified in earlier versions of the theory were the influence of attitudes and social norms on intentions. A third factor called *perceived behavioral control*, which is similar to Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy beliefs construct, was of particular interest to Hagger et al. because it was previously unclear how much it matters to intentions whether one can effectively carry out an intended behavior. Hagger et al. concluded that when perceived behavioral control is high, the decision to do as intended is also high—essentially a yes/no decision based on the expected value of the outcome and not on self-efficacy for performing the behavior. However, when perceived behavioral control is low, the potential increases that the intention may be disrupted by impediments to carrying it out, such as recognition that present skills are inadequate (i.e., self-efficacy is low) or that difficulties are greater than initially estimated. These findings are consistent with the PE emphasis on the importance of entering decision situations with action plans based on command of the relevant learning skills needed to achieve a growth or self-growth objective.

Self-Growth Mindset

Hagger et al. (2022) examined the role of perceived behavioral control on how intentions are formed and carried out. They found that carrying out intentions was more predictable to the extent that an individual realized that the behaviors (e.g., skills) were feasible. An important question for Process Education is how much growth action planning depends upon positive self-efficacy related to specific capabilities that are central to following through on a growth intention. The approach taken in the PE Expert Project was that growth and self-growth are characterized

by a select set of meta-behaviors that apply to planning, preparing, and activating growth and self-growth action plans. An important role for a self-growth coach, therefore, is to support assessment and reflection that leads to awareness of what capabilities are important for each growth or self-growth objective. Implementing an authentic growth intention requires thoughtful consideration of each action planning phase in the Rubicon model (Gollwitzer (2018), but also assessment of which skills and other capabilities and supporting meta-behaviors are at least minimally developed for success to be a realistic expectation.

Intersubjectivity: Interpersonal and Situational Influences

Intersubjectivity factors related to learning, performance, and growth include contextual cues and interpersonal behaviors that are generated externally. These are challenging to plan for but, with repeated experiences, can be taken into account and used to advantage in facilitation (Smith, 2007). Bandura's (2001) agentic perspective on personal development emphasizes consciously intentional self-assessment and reflectiveness about how to increase one's capabilities while coordinating actions with others in social networks. It is possible to attain desired effects through personal efforts but also through relying on others to help secure desired results, as well as through collective interdependence as members or participants in organizations, political parties, and institutions. Opportunities vary in growth potential because environments can be imposed, selected, or constructed by others. Ultimately, individuals are capable of conscious self-determination and self-regulation despite external influences and varying opportunities, which means that growth and self-growth must be personally created.

Growth Meta-Behaviors

Aspiring PE Expert Project participants consistently demonstrated some growth behaviors during the beginning months. These behaviors were observed during weekly coaching interactions and identified as indicators of significant development of the growing function (Leise et al., 2023b). Mindsets associated with growth include being future-minded, being positive, and acting strategically. The 15 components of growth capability (Hurd et al., 2021) are also represented by the growth meta-behaviors in Table 1.

Making the Transition from Grower to Self-Grower

Why do people find developmental growth so challenging? In an analysis of "wickedness," Midgley suggests that most often evil occurs simply as a result of not making an alternative (substitute) response that would have produced

Table 1 Meta-Behaviors of Growers

Characteristics	Description
Continuous quality improvement (CQI)	Works on becoming stronger every day through the experience of every activity
Mitigating risk factors	Develops professional characteristics to mitigate personal risk factors
Way of being	Uses a "think first (why), plan, do the best you can, and assess" approach for structuring life moments
Performance development	Improves future performances through conscious performance development
Learning skills	Develops strong key growth and learning skills to enhance performance
Feedback	Produces, provides, and receives feedback to accelerate growth
Life plan	Is intentional with their life by designing and implementing a life plan
Knows oneself	Reflects on who they are and who they want to become
Clarify QoL	Seeks the meaning of life and explores the QoL they want
Decision making	Makes consistently effective QoL decisions using their own QoL criteria
Action plans	Is thoughtful about their growth efforts with clear action plans
Individual Accountability	Creates accountability for self-regulation of growth intentions

better outcomes (1984). She also observes that inner conflict is a normal experience that pits one's "shadow" selves, i.e., disliked or rejected aspects of oneself, against the self-image one prefers. Trying too hard to build self-esteem can produce what Gollwitzer (2018) found from researching his self-completion theory: public accountability about who one is can be avoided by displaying artificially positive symbolic and partial testimonies in place of authentic accomplishments and personal characteristics. These examples illustrate a few barriers that can impede even articulating intentions with respect to change and growth. They also suggest that engaging with a life path of growth leading to self-growth is about learning to respond with different meta-behaviors based upon the goals the individual values and by choosing experiences that inspire something better than the usual. PE scholarship offers a way forward by providing resources, insights, and practices about growth (Apple et al., 2018; Hurd et al., 2021) and self-growth (Jain et al., 2020).

The meta-behaviors articulated in this article add to this picture by emphasizing the "action" aspects of growth. Special moments have extraordinary impact (Heath & Heath, 2017) and it is these experiences, rather than frequently repeated routines, that are often the key to understanding the individual's developmental path. As such, they are important for recognition of growth opportunities in the future. Among the growth meta-behaviors is attentiveness to the opportunities that occur every day and the creation of opportunities matched to self-growth objectives. Self-Growth opportunities invite actions that will increase quality of life if self-regulatory behaviors that need to be changed "in the moment" are addressed to meet the conditions and responses of others. Many self-growth opportunities are interactive (involve intersubjectivity) which adds to the complexity of predicting and preparing for who the stakeholders will be, what their motives may be, and alternative ways of responding as situations evolve.

How do growers self-assess their readiness for a self-growth challenge? The most essential factor is their consciousness of how their present growth capabilities make it possible to take on such challenges. Self-Growth is not a function level that can be developed all at once. For example, it takes reflection, (weekly) action planning, building a self-growth mindset, and enhancing diverse performance capabilities through self-mentoring, all to be used in meeting the challenge of improving how one represents their self-growth intentions.

As the PE Expert Team Project moved into its second year and the challenge became one of shifting the growth responsibility from external guidance (e.g., by the PE Expert Project self-growth coach) to internal motivation, including the necessarily changed mindsets and strategies, additional meta-behaviors came into focus. These were found to integrate the specific grower meta-behaviors in Table 1 with the 13 capabilities of self-growth found in the Profile of a Self-Grower (Appendix A). With this profile in place as a resource, ten critical practices (Appendix B) were identified to help each PE Expert Team Project participant use their growth behaviors to develop a set of self-growth meta-behaviors.

A fuller description of the self-growing function is presented in Leise et al. (2023a). Among the mindsets of a self-grower are sharing, being quality-oriented, behaving ethically, and being respectful, all of which are characteristics necessary for developing self-growth capabilities important for leading an increasingly intentional life. As the participants' self-growth meta-behaviors became more refined and decisive during the second year of the project, the participants began to discover increasingly valuable ways to improve their lives from each weekly cycle of growth action planning.

Mapping of Grower Meta-Behavioral Characteristics to Self-Grower Meta-Behavioral Characteristics

Table 2 presents the specific growth meta-behaviors (from Table 1) that produce working capabilities and characteristics that support the development of each self-growth meta-behavior. Column 1 provides a characteristic most descriptive of the self-growth meta-behaviors that are further described in the first sentence of each of the following 14 paragraphs that correspond to the Column 1 labels. Columns 2 through 8 introduce a specific set of growth characteristics from the list of 12 growth meta-behaviors in Table 1 that are most relevant to increasing the probability of success with developing each self-growth meta-behavior.

For some self-growth meta-behaviors, as many as seven growth behaviors may be important for greater success. For example, the first self-growth meta-behavior in Table 2 is labeled with the characteristic of "Opportunity focused," indicating that the self-growth meta-behavior is about choosing and being decisive in the use of opportunities valuable for a quality of life aspirations. The growth meta-behaviors with the most potential relevance to this self-growth meta-behavior are listed by the growth meta-behavior characteristics from Table 1: continuous quality improvement, learning skills, life plan, knows oneself, clarify QoL, decision making, individual accountability. An individual transitioning from growth to self-growth may learn that one or more critical growth meta-behavior limitations is preventing actualization of certain self-growth meta-behaviors and intentions.

Table 2 Growth Meta-Behaviors Needed to Advance to Self-Growth Meta-Behaviors

Self-Growth Meta-Behavior Characteristic	Characteristics of Foundational Growth Meta-Behaviors						
Opportunity Focused	Continuous Quality Improvement	Learning Skills	Life Plan	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL	Decision Making	Individual Accountability
Ideal-Self Focused	Way of Being	Life Plan	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL	Decision Making	Individual Accountability	
QoL Decisions Use QoL Criteria	Way of Being	Feedback	Life Plan	Clarify QoL	Decision Making	Individual Accountability	
Autonomy	Individual Accountability	Performance Development	Life Plan				
Empowering Others	Clarify QoL	Decision Making	Learning Skills	Way of Being			
Growth Development	Continuous Quality Improvement	Performance Development	Learning Skills	Feedback	Knows Oneself	Action Plans	Individual Accountability
Weekly Transition	Feedback	Life Plan	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL	Decision Making	Action Plans	Individual Accountability
Self-Growth Journey	Life Plan	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL				
Accepts Role of Director	Continuous Quality Improvement	Way of Being	Feedback	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL	Decision Making	
Self-Mentoring	Performance Development	Learning Skills	Knows Oneself	Action Plans	Individual Accountability		
Systematic Growth and Life Assessment	Way of Being	Feedback	Action Plans	Individual Accountability			
Self-Growth Coach	Mitigating Risk Factors	Performance Development	Learning Skills	Decision Making	Action Plans		
Shared Journey	Life Plan	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL	Decision Making			
Intersubjectivity	Knows Oneself	Clarify QoL	Individual Accountability				

Why Grower Meta-Behaviors are Necessary for Self-Grower Meta-Behaviors

As discussed, Table 2 displays characteristics of self-growth meta-behaviors (Column 1) and the mapping of the growth meta-behaviors (Columns 2-8) that support the advancement from growth to self-growth meta-behaviors (Leise et al., 2023a). The self-growth meta-behaviors are presented in the first sentence of each of the following paragraphs, along with techniques and strategies to help the reader evolve the development of these meta-behaviors in their clients or themselves.

Opportunity Focused

A self-grower who is opportunity focused, sees, generates, selectively chooses, and seizes opportunities to improve quality in all aspects of life (Nussbaum, 2011; O'Keefe et al., 2023). To do this they focus on a continuous quality improvement mindset to see the linkage between an activity and the growth potential. A self-grower who is opportunity focused must understand which learning skills can reasonably be developed. A self-grower will confirm that the opportunity aligns with their life plan and ensure that alignment exists with their ideal zone of development. A self-grower can determine the fit of the opportunity to enhance QoL. They can create the criteria that are needed for decision-making, and they are willing to act with autonomy.

Ideal-Self Focused

A self-grower who is ideal-self focused strengthens intrinsic motivation by listening to the counsel of their ideal self (Rogers, 1961). Self-Growers will leverage the perspective of the ideal self to determine the *why* for doing things. Alignment to the life plan is essential and clarity about their current and future self is paramount. By basing decision making on QoL criteria, they gain clarity regarding their current and future self. Meaning in their life and quality of life drive their conceptualization of their ideal self and the intentional decision to be accountable for their life decisions. Self-Growers who are ideal-self focused have a willingness to trust themselves over others.

QoL Decisions Using QoL Criteria

A self-grower who makes decisions about their quality of life reduces anxiety about life's uncertainty by using QoL criteria to make those decisions (King-Berry et al., 2021). A self-grower knows the *why* that anchors their plan, which is a significant aspect of the process for increasing the objectivity of decisions. They use reflection about the past to help inform the future and use their life plan to provide the context for decisions which are framed by their QoL aspirations. Self-Growers who make QoL decisions using QoL criteria are willing to deal with consequences the of their decisions.

Autonomy

Self-Growers seek greater autonomy to expand self-development opportunities by accepting increased responsibilities (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan et al., 2021). They experience individual accountability as they expand their performance development across all PE function levels and all levels of learning skills. Until they take personal responsibility and accountability for themselves, they will put limits on their expectations that more growth is possible.

Empowering Others

A self-grower will, with compassion, seek to empower others who have had minimal opportunities for growth (Bandura, 2001; Batson, 2011). To do this, a self-grower must have clarity about their QoL. Once an elevated meaning of life is established, they often acquire a sense for and need to help others.

Growth Development

A self-grower consciously expands targeted growth capabilities to increase productivity of their growth process (Maslow, 1987). A self-grower will continuously develop themselves which makes intentional growth possible. They will utilize growth plans as part of performance development. A self-grower views growth and learning skills as a critical part of their growth. They view assessment and feedback as essential for growth development and reflection as fundamental to intentionality. Action plans are used as part of the self-grower's active growth plan and are implemented meaningfully.

Weekly Transition

A self-grower uses reflection in weekly transitions to plan intentional growth into the upcoming weekly opportunities (Bandura, 2001). Self-assessment is always part of the weekly reflection. The self-grower's life plan provides meaningful context for weekly transition. Self-Growers know themselves, which helps to determine the relative importance of things. They will prioritize choices using QoL criteria and intentionality will drive decisions when creating the script for the week. The self-grower's performance plans will incorporate action plans. The self-grower must have individual accountability, otherwise they will not use the plan.

Self-Growth Journey

A self-grower uses the Self-Growth Methodology to consciously pursue a week-by-week self-growth journey towards their ideal self (Apple et al., 2018; Jain et

al., 2020). A self-grower's life plan is foundational to their self-growth journey. Knowing their current self and ideal self is the beginning and end of the self-growth journey. Meaning and quality of life occur in the ideal zone of development. (Leasure et al., 2020).

Accepts the Role of Director

A self-grower uses reflection to create growth action plans so they can determine, direct, and regulate their own lives (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Jain, 2020; McAdams, 2001). Continuous quality improvement is the fundamental driver of the director. The director asks and answers the questions *why* and *what*. They view feedback as an important part of reflection and continuously refine their ideal self. They use QoL criteria to guide intentions and for making all key decisions.

Self-Mentoring

A self-grower uses self-monitoring and self-mentoring to alter growth intentions in the moment (Latham & Locke, 1979; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Their performance plans come from performance development. Learning and growth skills are foundational to their mentoring skills. A self-grower who self-mentors must know themselves as their ability to conduct reflection-in-action is built upon general reflection capability. They must have a strong foundation in the use of action plans. To self-mentor, one must be individually accountable as this is the greatest challenge to self-regulation.

Systematic Growth and Life Assessment

A self-grower uses a personal assessment system to advance learning, performing, and growing in support of self-growth plans (Ericsson & Pool, 2016). The use of feedback is an essential behavior for growth (Eskreis-Winkler, & Fishbach, 2022). Reflection-after-action, along with self-assessment, are primary components. The self-grower's assessment system enables them to receive and respond to assessment as part their action plans.

Self-Growth Coach

A self-grower identifies current impediments and determines capabilities to mitigate them effectively and efficiently from the perspective of a self-growth coach (Batchelor et al., 2023; Grant & Cavanaugh, 2019; Sharot et al., 2023). A self-growth coach understands risk factors, which helps with identification and acknowledgment of impediments to growth and self-growth. A self-growth coach views performance development as foundational to intentional growth. Their mentoring skills are built on growth skills. Their decision making around intentional growth is essential and their active growth plans are built on action plans.

Shared Journey

A self-grower who has a shared journey has determined the synergistic fit of a personal self-growth journey with a shared life journey, sharing common life goals with another. There is a delicate balance of interdependence and individuality necessary for the shared journey idea to manifest Reis (2007). To have a shared journey, life plans must be synchronized. The self-grower must achieve a synergy of their real self and future self within a shared journey. The fit of the shared journey is based on both meaning and quality of life. Collective decision making is based on the quality of individual decision making that takes intersubjectivity factors into account.

Intersubjectivity

A self-grower clarifies intentions of others within an activity to attain their own intentions while supporting others attaining theirs (DeVito, 2019). To do this, self-growers must know themselves. The more they understand themselves, the better they can understand others. A self-grower who understands intersubjectivity has clarity about their quality of life. The greater the consciousness of life's meaning and the clearer the definition of a quality life, the better they can understand intentions. Individual accountability is necessary so controlling one's own behaviors doesn't negatively impact the intentions of others.

Practices to Support Transitioning from Growth to Self-Growth

Towards the end of the PE Expert Team Project, it became feasible to define the major intentional changes one needs to go through to make the significant shift in practices from being a grower to becoming a self-grower. It gradually became clear that a *practice* incorporates meta-behaviors within a structured or designed strategy (such as a methodology or a profile that defines expected outcomes). Without meta-behaviors, a structured strategy may lead to ineffective interpretations of how to use such tools. An important role of the Self-Growth Coach during the project was to help participants make this shift by using the practices outlined in Appendix B. These supplement the recommendations presented in Table 2 for identifying which growth characteristics (behaviors) are important for a given self-growth meta-behavior.

Summary and Conclusions

Identification of growth and self-growth meta-behaviors during the PE Expert Team Project has provided a significant new perspective and improved practices for evolving from growing to self-growing. Meta-behaviors are more readily

observed, or inferred from outcomes, for the functions of learning, learning to learn, and performing than for the functions of growing and self-growing. However, the differentiation of growth from self-growth meta-behaviors herein helps to clarify why self-growth is a much greater developmental challenge. When opportunities arise for improving quality of life, the growth meta-behaviors become essential for keeping the individual's focus on objectives and criteria beyond performance alone. Growth in performance to improve quality of life is an essential characteristic of growth capability. Self-Growth opportunities require practicing meta-behaviors for self-determined goals that address not only quality of life but move the individual developmentally toward an imagined ideal-self based on an open-system of self-development. This includes prioritizing selecting opportunities with the potential to benefit others, oneself, and the world in wise, ethical, and creative ways.

Although more growth and self-growth meta-behaviors may be identified from further explorations of self-growth coaching, the diversity of the sets listed within this article illustrate the variety of needs when faced with challenging opportunities at either level. The Rubicon goal-setting model of Gollwitzer exemplifies the phases of predecision, preaction, action, and post-action which are prevalent in these behaviors. These phases are universal for attaining goals at any level such as life goals, annual growth goals, annual measures of success, and even weekly outcomes and growth objectives. For growth and self-growth goals, the meta-behaviors important for each of the Rubicon goal-setting phases are expressed or implicit in the articulation of the respective behaviors (e.g., making continual progress in performance development can be observed but, more importantly, indicates conscious growth action planning to make performances better). Awareness of the behaviors associated with growing versus self-growing makes it possible to also differentiate intentional planning strategies for attaining increased capability at either level. Description of behaviors informs practices that can be used to create personal development at either level through growth action planning.

The transition from growing to self-growing does not occur suddenly or by depending upon well-established capabilities. Because growth capabilities and mindsets provide a foundation for self-growth meta-behaviors and mindsets, it is especially important for self-growth development to recognize which growth meta-behaviors have the most impact on readiness to move forward in a specific self-growth area. Table 2 presents the probable growth meta-behaviors needed for the transition to each of the self-growth meta-behaviors. If one or more of these meta-behaviors is missing or incompletely developed, the self-growth meta-behavior will be limited until all the important growth meta-behaviors are established at the level of expertise needed for remaining in one's zone of ideal development.

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Appendix A

Profile of A Self-Grower

Components of Self-Growth Capability	Dimensions of a Self-Grower
Self-Growth Methodology	Develop weekly scripts, using a weekly system's approach and the Self-Growth Methodology, to optimize wellness, develop healthier mindsets, yield new capabilities, increase QoL, enhance planned outcomes, and generate new action plans with opportunities for ongoing continuity of growth.
Shared Journey	Share their life journey, where they have determined the synergistic fit between their personal self-growth journey and how they would like to share their life journey with a special person with common life goals.
Reflection	Produce significant meaning through weekly reflection with a set of effective purposed questions that develop intentionality and insightfulness for the next week in three key aspects: to increase achievements and impact, to improve QoL, and to strengthen capabilities by slowing down to include describing what happened, processing feelings, evaluating meaning, analyzing impact, producing conclusions, and developing action plans.
Life Plan	Create a life plan with a strategy that aligns to their ideal self, maps out life goals to achieve a legacy, incorporates growth and developmental plans to increase desired capabilities, and generates (not just chooses) opportunities for achieving results.
Self-Growth Plan	Develop a self-growth plan that provides the self-growth consciousness to make intentional choices in the critical growth areas that support their self-growth journey.
Designing Assessments	Design assessments that provide the structure for improving one's life by putting in place the criteria for products, performance criteria for processes, broad criteria for QoL decision making and a monitoring system for enhancing growth as it happens.
Active Growth Plan	Develop weekly active growth plans that identify growth opportunities, assess previous outliers, develop action plan strategies, and support the targeted behavior change by addressing impediments with specific techniques and tools to leverage daily and annual perspectives.
CLS	Use the CLS in every life moment, are metacognitively aware of how they are using these skills, recognize when a specific learning skill is being used unsatisfactorily, and integrate the development of learning skills into future growth opportunities.
Mentoring Skills	Use mentoring skills' purpose and power to play a critical role in the empowerment of others and self, valuing the continual development of these skills through their emphasis in the self-growth plans.
Self-Growth Mindset	Have a self-growth mindset, believe in their unlimited potential, and extend beyond growers (even those with a growth mindset who feel they can improve or adapt) because while other growers sometimes say, "I can't do", the self-growers say, "I can overcome any liability".
Quality Mindset	Embody a quality-focused mindset to value life's ups and downs, not overreact to a situation but stay focused, being conscious of feelings, and make QoL decisions which increase weekly highs, decrease weekly lows, and contribute positively to life's randomness.
Self-Mentoring	Self-mentor by adapting and enhancing their active growth plans in the moment to address any current impediments holding them back so these impediments can eventually not only be eliminated but be turned into an asset leading to greater capabilities, performance, and results.
Self-Growth Coaching	Coach self-growth process and capabilities in others and self by helping to construct transformational action plans that move one towards their ideal self, empowering them to produce greater quality in identified criteria, performance criteria, and broad criteria by using self-growth coaches when needed.

Appendix B

Practices to Support Transitioning from Growth to Self-Growth

1. Use continuous quality improvement mindset to make each week better than the last by establishing growth objectives, making conscious QoL choices, and finding ways to increase productivity and impact.
2. Produce powerful personal insights to become a wiser faculty member by recognizing good observations, studying the implications, identifying significance, and expanding impact of their use.
3. Create new intentions by linking insights to one's own professional life, addressing needs, wants, and desires, and then making good QoL choices that improve growth and impact in the educational processes and systems.
4. Clarify personal impediments that currently cause resistance to self-improvement.
5. Build a dynamic model of an Ideal Educator Self with clear images of each of the desired Ideal behaviors.
6. Monitor each moment by comparing current actions and behaviors to the image of ideal-self behaviors.
7. Self-mentor in the moment by being prepared with plans for intentional growth linked to performance plans in order to increase the impact produced by the growth effort.
8. Generate, evaluate, and select growth opportunities that supply the growth challenges in desired areas, in order to rely on personal intentions rather than those of others.
9. Accumulate best practices to support development of ideal behaviors.
10. Own the responsibility to recognize everyone's intentions in a situation so collective and individual intentions are effectively carried out by expanding capabilities of everyone.