

- Persistence

HOW A POSITIVE CHANGE IN MINDSET LEADS TO BETTER LIVES AND PROGRESS

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IT is difficult to be at ease knowing that most of our countrymen experience hardships from Typhoon “Tino” and Supertyphoon “Uwan,” poverty, and other dehumanizing conditions.

The close friendship of Cesar, Jose, and Pepe, who are thinkers, intellectuals, national scientists, former officers and/ or employees of United Nations agencies, and/or former faculty of the University of the Philippines, always involves discussions on how Filipinos can have a better life and the Philippines can progress and compete. From their extensive international work experiences and direct contact with foreign and/or Filipino communities, these gentlemen repeatedly believed that a positive change in mindset would quickly realize their ideas. Sadly, they could not share, validate, and realize most of their ideas since they died from 2013 to 2019.

One of the most fascinating ideas shared is the story about how a change in our environment can change our mindset to produce positive outcomes.

In tribute to these gentlemen, and in support of their belief in the power of mindset, several elements support a positive change in mindset. The most apparent are 1) the interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach, or applying the combination of different disciplines to produce results; and 2) divergent thinking, which expands a solution into many and convergent thinking, which narrows multiple solutions into one, as defined by American psychologist Joy Paul Guilford.

The following are suggested for further review and testing to conserve resources:

1. For typhoons, use round or dome-shaped roofs for aerodynamic reason; clean and clear all estuaries (esteros), inland waterways, and seas from January to June (dry season), learning from the lessons of Tropical Storm “Ondoy” and Singapore river; plant more typhoon-resistant root crops; practice food preservation methods such as cured meat (tapa), dried fish (daing), and fermentation such as kimchi; and pick and harvest vegetables and fruits before the typhoon, gathering those still edible instead of letting them rot.
2. For food sufficiency, spread fishnets as safety nets around tree trunks to catch falling crops, like green mangoes. This practice is common in Greece and the Mediterranean for olives, oranges, and lemons. We should learn from the experience of oversupply of ripe tomatoes and convert them to spaghetti sauce and/or ketchup instead of throwing them. We should learn to sustain the environment, and at the same time, enjoy simple living by learning from videos of the Amazing Sea and buhay probinsiya Kabagis, both of which demonstrate how to catch or gather local food and cook.

Changing our mindset is a long process of consistently doing “value” activities or those that prevent “brain rot.” We should have an interest in value-added activities, particularly reading management and development books, viewing learning videos, attending lecture series/conferences/ seminars, learning ideas and insights from our intellectual group, exercising regularly, eating a balanced and healthy meal, practicing self-care and well-being, and enjoying the outdoors as in the culture of Scandinavian countries.

It is challenging to find those with a positive mindset or “deep thinkers” who make up only 1 to 3 percent of the population. We hope that once we find them, their mindset will benefit Filipinos, helping the Philippines progress and compete.