

A super quick summary of the book

Would you tend to agree with this assessment of young people these days?

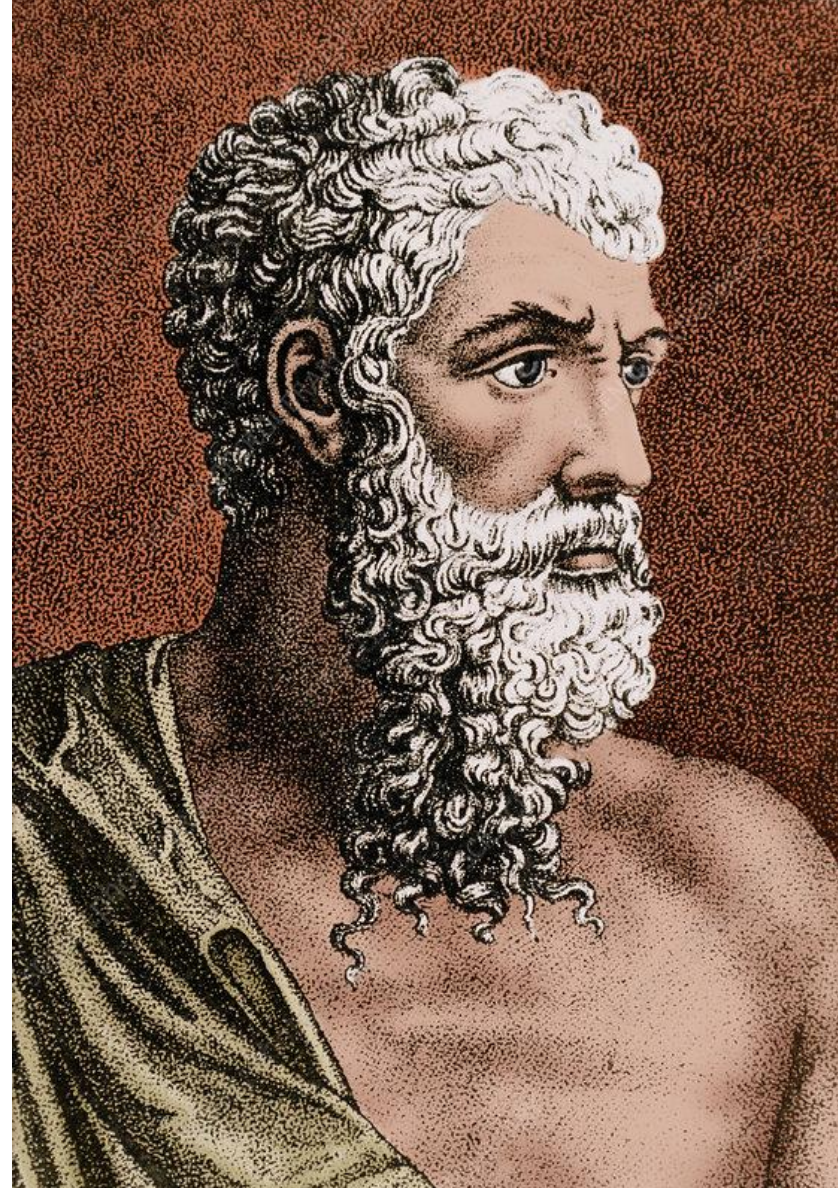
Young people are often driven by strong desires and an eagerness to pursue them. They tend to prioritize physical pleasures, especially those that bring immediate gratification, and often struggle with self-control in these areas. Their interests and desires can shift quickly—they pursue them with intense enthusiasm but may lose interest just as rapidly, reflecting a will that is intense but not enduring.

They are emotional, quick-tempered, and prone to acting on impulse, finding it hard to manage their feelings. Their strong sense of ambition makes them sensitive to disrespect, and they react strongly when they feel wronged.

What would you say if you knew that this was said by Aristotle? (who lived during 384-322 BC?)

When each successive generation grows up, we look down on the next generation as though we have forgotten what it feels like to be young. Then we call the next generation immature. When most adults think about their youthful indiscretions, they do so with a wink and a laugh. But when they think of today's generation doing the same things, they ring the alarm bell about the decline in "kids these days"

According to Dr David Yeager, this generational moral decline is a cognitive illusion – and focusing on it blinds us to the underlying cause of our conflict with young people. What is that?



The main cause of our conflict with younger people is not their incompetence or values but the process their brains are going through



The adolescent brain is still developing and is complete only around 25. This is specially true of the prefrontal cortex, which controls planning and decision-making. This means young people often struggle to consider the long-term consequences of their actions, acting impulsively due to the hormonal shifts that make them prioritize short-term rewards.

The cognitive architecture of the 10- 25 year old brain is still affected by its surroundings – does not mean it is immature; that it is still adapting and not stuck in its ways.

So what you learn from this book is something you can apply with your team as well as your teenager child.

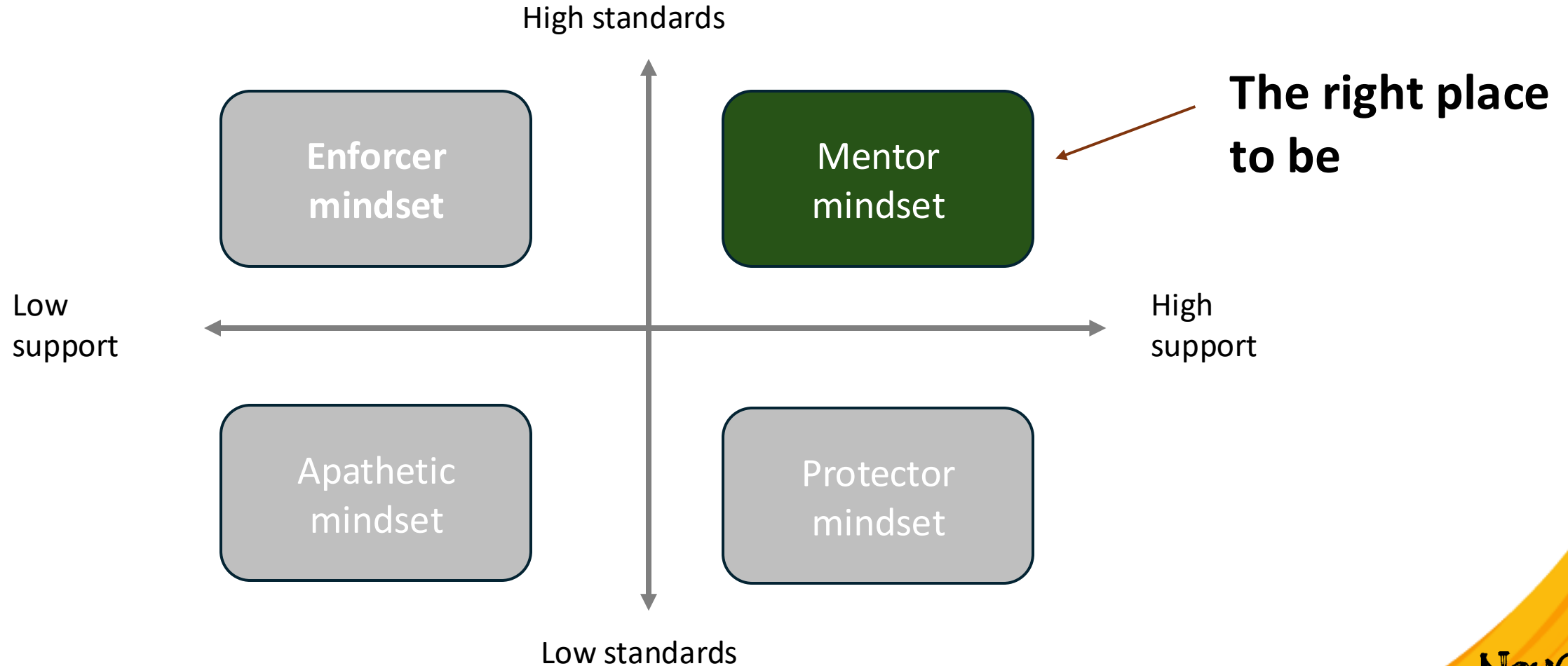
If we want to connect meaningfully with young people, we have to find ways for them to meet their two fundamental psychological needs

Status

Respect

Earned by making meaningful contributions

We can respond to these needs in one of four ways



The mentor mindset

One where young people are held to high standards but are also given the support they need to meet those high standards.

Comes from the belief that young people are capable of important, even astonishing, contributions when managed correctly.



5 mentor mindset practices to augment status and respect

Transparency – A simple and clear declaration of your intentions at the start of any “threatening” interaction. “I’m giving you these comments because I have very high standards and I know you can reach them”.

Inquiry – Asking people to explain their thinking logically, and responding non-judgementally

Respect – honour their status and presume agency

Explain purpose – how the task helps them, customers and the organisation

Help create belonging – foster a sense of community. Uncertainty about whether they belong to a place leads to them avoiding help and hiding difficulties; leads to worse performance

Easier said than done?

If you'd like to know more about how we incorporate this understanding into our design of Campus to Corporate programs or into workshops that help managers integrate early career folks better, write to deepa@navgati.in