

Deconstructing the Experience of Growth: Autonomy, Competence, and the Hero's Journey

Scott Rigby

The concept of growth plays an important role in SDT as both a fundamental characteristic of life and a need-satisfying experience often linked to our basic need for competence. In years of applied commercial research, our group has found the experience "I am growing," to be a consistent driver of sustained engagement and value. As such, we've wanted to better understand the phenomenology of growth, which has led to some interesting deconstructions and potential new conceptualizations that integrate basic needs with experiences such as novelty, exploration, and surprise. In this talk, I'll unpack some of these ideas, the work inspiring them, and implications for further research and application.