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Power Choices© December 2008

Power Choice – Learn

Definition of Learn (According to *The Free Dictionary by Farlex*)

- 1. To gain knowledge, comprehension, or mastery of through experience or study.**
- 2. To fix in the mind or memory; memorize:**
- 3. a. To acquire experience of or an ability or a skill and
b. To become aware**
- 4. To become informed of; find out.**

Why Learn? Are you an explorer? Would you like more adventure in your life? Are you interested in leveraging your potential? Then make the power choice to **learn**. Whether we are four, forty or eighty, increasing our knowledge or skills, enhancing our comprehension, mastering experiences or technology is even more important to our personal and professional success than life itself!

How can you Learn? Through **B.O.O.K.S.!** Whether we are **learning** to just like riding a bike, flying a plane, writing a book, selling a product or leading a company find a way to create a course of action that supports you and your success.

Build a process to **learn**.

Open your heart, your mind, your soul and become passionate about **learning**.

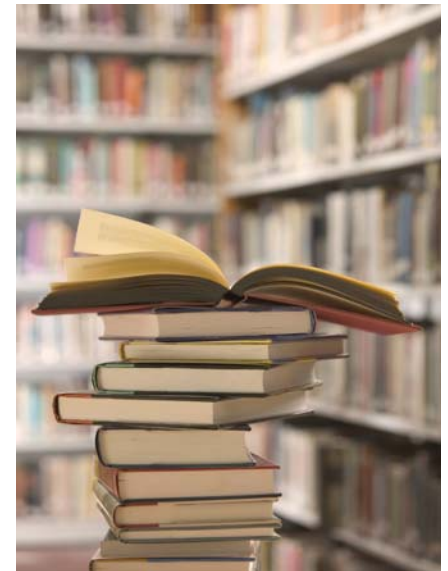
Own you ideas, your interest, your creativity and your goals for **learning**

Know that applying your knowledge is the real power in **learning**.

Set goals to teach others what you have **learned**.

**"The road to
wisdom?-
Well, it's plain
and simple to
express:
Err
and err
and err again
but less
and less
and less."**

Piet Hein,
Danish inventor & poet



**"The meaning of success
has changed in a lot of
ways for me. I guess I've
gone through a period of
my life where success
might have been fast
cars, money... but now, as
I get older, I'm learning
that success lies within
me."**

Anonymous

Happy Holidays!



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**"Knowing is not enough; we must apply.
Willing is not enough we must do."
Goethe**

*There are No Mistakes –
Only Lessons Learned*
Laura Novakowski

*"I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can **learn**."*
Albert Einstein

When my daughter was about eight years old, we were discussing some challenges that she had with math. I moved into my *mom, let's fix it, mode* and tried to teach my child to figure out how to deal with her "mistakes." Suddenly, she stopped me short and taught me a valuable lesson. "Mom, I don't make mistakes, I learn a lot of lessons." In that moment, my little girl became my mentor, teacher and guru – changing a potentially toxic mindset around in an instant. Suddenly, we shifted our conversation from negativity and feeling bad to a positive mindset and feeling optimistic and energized. That has made a huge difference in my life and I discovered the value of **learning!**

Henry Ford once said, "Life is a series of experiences, each of which makes us bigger, even though it is hard to realize this. For the world was built to develop character, and we must **learn** that the setbacks and grieves which we endure help us in our marching onward." In these times of panic and fear, we have the opportunity and the obligation to challenge our minds and our spirits and learn to become more creative, more resourceful, more purposeful, more service oriented to others and to our selves.

In the late 1800's in a small town in Scotland, a little boy spilled milk. Now for many that could have been a huge mistake. The family was poor and the food was not to be wasted. His mother saw the "mistake" and immediately time stopped. What would happen next influenced the course of history. "Alexander, you've made a mess and we must clean it up, but before you do, let's play!" I'm not sure how true this story is, I'd like to believe it is. For you see the little boy was Sir Alexander Fleming the Scottish physician and scientist that later through another "accident" discovered the mould culture that would fight the bacteria *staphylococci* – the antibiotic **Penicillin**.

We can continue to beat each other and ourselves up for the state of the economy, the environment, the health challenges we face and ... Or, we can choose to **learn** lessons, move forward and make astonishing, life changing discoveries.

Our minds are our greatest resource. Science and research has been demonstrating that we are using less than 10% of our brain's power. However, our body has tremendous regenerative potential. According to a landmark Salk study conducted in the late 1990's, "new cells are born in human brains all the time" – even in times of terminal illness. We all have a tremendous capacity to **learn**.

There are no mistakes, only lessons learned. I'll leave with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. **Learn** as if you were to live forever."



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To Learn Is To Do With Risks

Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.

***"The way to learn to do things is to do things.
The way to learn a trade is to work at it.
Success teaches how to succeed."
Unknown***

One of the greatest fallacies in **learning** is that just by hearing or seeing something human beings have **learned** because they can immediately be able to replicate what they saw or heard. Sometimes, this does work, but usually to really **learn** something requires doing or practice and involves the risk of failure.

Remember, your early days in elementary school when you practice and practiced your arithmetic facts? Even today some 20, 40 or even 50 years later, you can still respond with lightening speed the answer to 12x12, but probably have trouble with the answer to 13x25. The reason is simple. Through repeated exposures (practice) you committed to long term memory the answer to 12x12, but probably have only had one or two exposures to the answer 13x25.

Over the years I have surveyed countless adults and ask how we **learn** in America. In spite of all the educational research, the new technology to the latest and greatest teaching strategy, **learning** in America is as follows: ***Read It, Learn It, Test It and FORGET IT!***

Years ago within our Agrarian economy, students took what they **learned** in school and immediately began applying it back on the farm from fractions to biology. **Learning** was directly connected to their farm life and the farming community. The risk for **learning** was always present, but the gain was always greater from better yield per acre to more milk per cow to sweeter tasting fruits.

Now, we live in a global community with a global economy driven by ever changing technology. Yet, our schools and most adult **learning** environments are still structured with beliefs that **learn** something and you can do it without practice or risks. **Learners** from young people or adults need to have opportunities for practice and this increases the potential for risks.

Think about programming the television or DVD remote. You **learned** it the first time you read it, but without reinforcement by repetitive actions (doing it), you probably need to refer back to those instructions. So did you really **learn** it?

There are many other examples where **learning** must be united with doing. Unfortunately, because of the risks hidden in the fears of making mistakes to not wanting someone else to know that you do not know, people fail to take action, to do.

Learning is about doing and accepting the risks that come from doing. Making mistakes is part of the risk process. A child does not immediately begin to run after her or his first steps. There will be a series of ups and downs until walking is truly **learned**. Then and only then can the child run and again that takes practice.

We must remember that **learning** is the acquisition of knowledge, but to reach that next level of success requires applying that knowledge or as the Nike motto goes: ***Do It!***



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Do you hear what I hear?

Stephen Sisselman

*Question for the Month: What have you **LEARNED** today?*

As the end of the year approaches, it's time to take a deep breath and congratulate yourself on a year well done. So, now, yes NOW, stop, take a deep breath in and out.....I'm waiting.....have you really done it? Once you have, say the following to yourself "I had a terrific year. With every challenge I faced, I rose to the occasion with all that I had and succeeded to **learn** everything I could to make life for myself and those I care about happy and peaceful". How did that make you feel? Did you realize that every time you **learn** something new you are making a difference in your life along with lives of others?

Learning is our way of expanding our minds and utilizing our ability to release the limitless potential we hold. It is often thought that the younger generations **learn** behaviors from the older ones. What better a gift to give the young ones we love this holiday season, than the opportunity to **learn** the behavior of **learning**?

Today, as I write to you all, I sit in a local Starbucks and notice all the **learning** going on. There are people on laptops **learning** new concepts for classes at college, others are preparing their syllabus for others to **learn** from, a barista **learns** how to do a French press for the first time, children **learn** the art of socialization, another barista **learns** the order of his next customer. Isn't it beautiful?

Although I'm Jewish, I can't help having a Christmas tune in my head (and it's not just because they are playing in the background at Starbucks either). "Do you hear what I hear, Do you hear what I hear?" I hear opportunities to **learn** around every corner I turn. I encourage you as you end this year and begin 2009, to **learn** how to appreciate yourself for every success you have. Remember, even those successes you perceive as small can really be huge. Take the opportunity to notice and **learn** all you can about the world you live in today.

Happy holidays to all and may you have a blessed new year.

Make everyday a day to remember!
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Special Section
Laura and Leanne



A How to Learn Questionnaire

On a Scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)

How self-directed are you? ____	
How much responsibility do you take for your learning experiences? ____	
How much do you seek experiences that are learning oriented? ____	
How much do you flourish when your abilities and life achievements are acknowledged and respected? ____	
How much do you prefer a practical and immediately relevant approach to learning? ____	
How readily do you learn from others? ____	
How often do you want immediate and regular feedback? ____	
How open are you to taking a risk when considering learning something new? ____	
How often are you ready to learn when an event in your personal/professional life sparks "the need to know?" ____	
Identify at least 4 areas/topics that you want to enhance your learning or actually learn something new	
1.	3.
2.	4.
Select one area that you want to increase your learning from the above list. _____	
Write the date for when you will start to learn something new in your selected area. _____	

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