

A person is sitting on a tall stack of books, reading a book. The person is wearing dark blue jeans with the cuffs rolled up. The background is a bright, slightly blurred indoor setting. The text is overlaid on a dark grey horizontal band across the middle of the image.

THE LIFELONG LEARNER

How Living a Life of Learning Will Change Everything

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Introduction



Why is it that so many of us stop learning things as adults?

Ask someone this question, and the first thing you're likely to hear is a lack of time. We all indeed live busy, hectic lives these days. Learning anything of value can require a large time investment.

You might argue that your life is just fine the way it is. You are blessed with amazing people as relatives and friends. You couldn't imagine a better life. Financial and emotional ability make your life wonderful. You can't think of anything you'd like to learn and don't see the need to learn something new.

What if we told you that continuing to learn new things throughout your life can make you live longer? Then what if I made that statement even stronger, telling you that those extra years of life could be enjoyed with a sharp, smart and capable mind. Additionally, you'll be less likely to have cognitive decline and develop neurological diseases and illnesses like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other forms of dementia.

Those benefits of lifelong learning have been proven. They were reported by the Harvard Medical School. Here's what Dr. Ipsit Vahia says about continuing to exercise your brain throughout your lifetime.

"When you exercise, you engage muscles to help improve overall health. The same concept applies to the brain. You need to exercise it with new challenges to keep it healthy."

The good doctor is the director of geriatric outpatient services for McLean Hospital, which is affiliated with Harvard. She speaks about something wonderful that's capable in the human brain, even later in life.

"New brain cell growth can happen even late into adulthood. The process of learning and acquiring new information and experiences, like through structured classes, can stimulate that process."

Simply put, your brain is healthier, stronger, and more capable when constantly learning.

By the way, you don't have to sign up for a class in a physical setting. You don't need to take college courses online. Traditional academic study is not the only way to enjoy the many benefits of lifelong learning. We will discuss this later.

When you learn any new skill, such as how to speak a foreign language, you grow new brain cells. The size of your brain actually grows when you learn anything. It doesn't have to be some major achievement, either.