



Transcript

Five Daily Helpers

# The Indisputable Fact that Lifelong Learning will Help you Flourish

# Lesson #4

# Keep Learning



**Jim Lucas**

**Jim:** Hello again and welcome back to 5 Daily Helpers – the course where I teach you how to get the most out of life by taking 5 simple actions. Today is Lesson #4 – Keep Learning

Learning begins at the start of your life and then well it doesn't really stop. When you are little, you learn who your parents are and whether they'll look after you. You learn how safe the world is depending on what happened in yours. And, you also learn words and language. You start to put words to things like milk and mummy.

Then as you get older, you learn other things. You go to school and you make friends. Your mind absorbs information all of the time and organises it. How you learn is influenced by your personality and your history. For example, you might be someone who prefers to get all the theory stuff before you try to put it into action. Or not. You might be someone who just likes to get on with it and learn as you go. People have different learning styles.

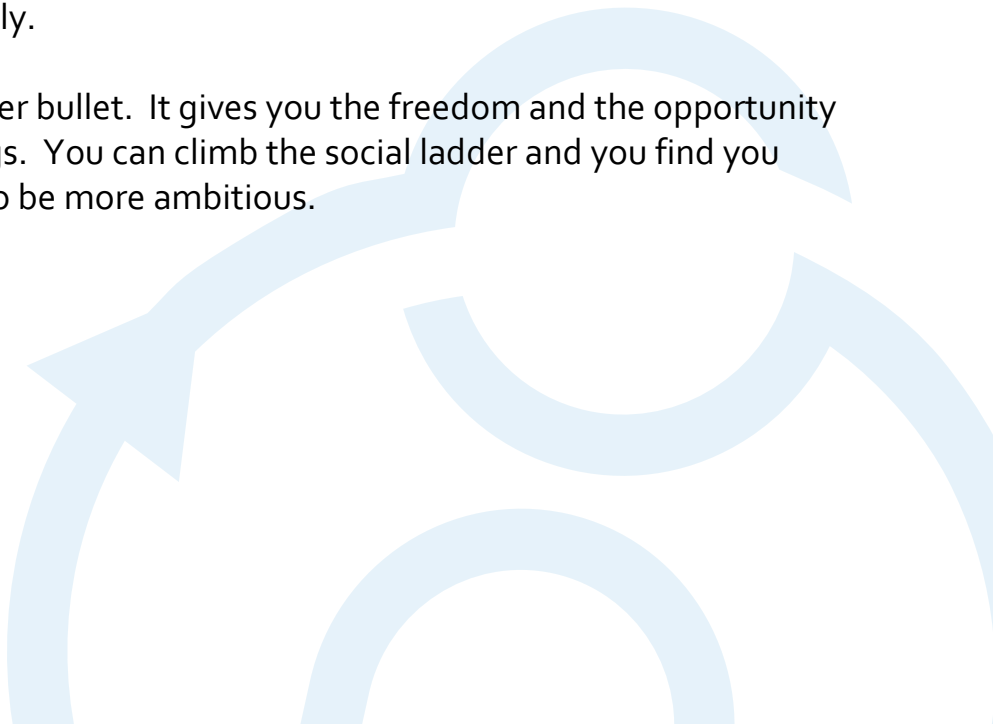
# 2

Your history i.e. your memories of learning environments can impact how you learn as an adult. For example, if you got on well at school and received lots of encouragement, then you'll more likely choose a career that enables you to keep learning. Alternatively, if you didn't have positive experiences at school – if it was disruptive, you were bullied or ignored – then your learning experiences are negative. The thought of learning as an adult then brings up all these memories and feelings, which are going to be hard to deal with.

## **So why is learning so important to your wellbeing?**

Well, your ability and motivation to learn can have a huge bearing on how your life turns out. If you have negative experiences of learning in your past, then it is going to limit your money earning potential and life opportunities. Without qualifications, it makes it so much harder to get well paid jobs. You then have to take jobs that are more unskilled. You might have to work longer hours just to pay the bills. Or you find you need two or three jobs just to have enough left over to buy things for the family.

A good education is a silver bullet. It gives you the freedom and the opportunity to change your beginnings. You can climb the social ladder and you find you develop the confidence to be more ambitious.



# 3

Now, I know this isn't absolute. Not everyone who had a bad education avoids learning opportunities as an adult. I've met several people over the years who fit that very description. They've worked hard to learn new skills and acquire knowledge. One lady I met years ago had a humble start in the Caribbean, came to the UK and trained as Nurse and Midwife and a Health Visitor. Learning was something that clearly made a real difference to her wellbeing, which is why she worked hard at it.

As well as creating new opportunities, learning lets you focus on creating something. You develop a sense of self that is someone who can do things. You feel useful and the repeated learning over time reinforces your self-competence. Without consistent learning over a life time, you are more likely to experience drops in mood and hopelessness. Learning helps to carve out a path – a future – something you can look forward to and set goals for. These acts have been clearly linked with higher emotional wellbeing and life satisfaction.

## **The Drive System**

Learning also taps into an important system within your bodies. This is a system that when activated you feel excitement, desire and optimism. You become motivated to seek out new experiences and develop new skills. Your energy increases and you get more focused on achieving. This drive system is important, because it helps to regulate another system. This other system is your threat system, which when activated causes you to feel scared or angry. It prompts you to protect yourself and seek safety. Whilst this is useful, you don't want to be stuck in it all the time. You need to be able to experience more energised feelings. Ones that help you approach tasks rather than avoid them.

# 4

## What types of Learning are there?

You can learn in different ways. There are the styles I mentioned earlier like whether you want theory before you put stuff into action. Then there's the way you experience and absorb information. For example, do you like to read stuff, watch videos or listen to someone speaking – just like you are doing right now.

And, then there is formal or informal learning. Formal learning has an end point in mind. An end point where you attain something concrete like a qualification, a certificate or a new grade. Then there is informal learning, where the end point is not so important or visible. There is no qualification at the end of it. Instead, it's more about learning for the experience. Learning and getting better at something, because you enjoy it.

Learning can be something you do on your own or it can be something that you do with others. So, again if you want companionship, then putting yourself in a group learning environment is so useful. It lets you connect and bond with other people as well as giving you new cognitive or technical skills.

In respect of your 'Self', you develop stronger and more positive ideas about who you are as a person. As you get older, thoughts about your self can start to hold you back. And when you struggle with thoughts about your abilities or your worth, then you are more likely to get pulled down by low mood, fear and frustration. Learning acts as a buffer against this and it contributes strongly with an increased sense of wellbeing. Lifelong learning helps you flourish.



### **What can you learn?**

Thankfully, in the UK there are countless ways to learn. There are boundaries of course, like finance, language if you don't speak English, learning abilities, time constraints etc. But, if you can get around those, then there are many ways to learn. For example, you can attend a class somewhere. I live in Birmingham and there are many local community-based adult learning centres. You can learn a language at the Brasshouse. What's your local language school?

Then there are arts centres. Just looking at the programme for one of our arts centres, you can do courses in sculpture, pottery, jewellery making, creative writing, dance, stand-up comedy, guitar, drumming and design.

Then there is all the learning you can do digitally or online. Like this course. Online learning has really taken off. It gives people the freedom to choose when they'll learn and how they'll absorb the information. For example, you can listen this on your phone whilst you're walking or at home washing up. You can do it late at night or during your break at work. There are lots of choices with online learning that make it more convenient to you.



And, then there is self-taught learning at home. You do this through books, Youtube videos or just by having a go at something. My mate Matt did up his own house from scratch by plastering, building staircases and laying floors. He even taught himself how to do plumbing from a Polish DVD when as far as I know he only speaks English. I must ask him why he didn't use an English speaking one.

Learning can be as simple or as complex as you make it. It could be cooking something you've not cooked before. Or it could be rekindling an old hobby. It could be trying to repair something. I might offer a disclaimer at this point, that I can't be responsible for any accidents you suffer in your ventures. I do advise you take all necessary precautions to ensure your safety. Like don't try to replace a gas pipe if you aren't corgi-registered.

If you are stuck for ideas, have a chat with your parents. Ask them what you used to like doing as a child. Bounce ideas off friends and family. As you can hear, the message, try, try and try. You'll realise through the experience whether learning that particular thing cuts the mustard.

So, let's summarise today's lesson.

1. Learning is life-long and it helps you develop and it creates optimism
2. It can change your social and financial circumstances by creating new opportunities for fun and career development
3. It can reduce your stress and anxieties.
4. You probably have a preference for the way you want to learn or learn best. Find out what it is
5. There are different ways to learn formally and informally, in groups, online or as a solo pursuit.

That's it for today. Thanks for joining me. I hope you've learned lots and I'll be back soon with the final lesson in this course, which is about Giving.



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