

How to develop your own learning identity

“To develop your learning identity we suggest below some ways to overcome your fixed self characteristics and improve your learning identity characteristics, thus tipping the balance toward becoming a learner.

Trust the process of learning from experience. For both Paulo Freire and Carl Rogers it is embracing the process of learning from experience that tips the balance from a fixed to a learning self-identity.

Trust your experience - Place experience at the center of your learning process, making it the focal point of your choices and decisions. This does not mean that you shouldn't learn from experts or the experience of others since this advice is also part of your experience. The key is to own your choice of what you learn and validate it in your experience. When you do this you take charge of your learning and your life. (...)

Trust the learning process - Avoid an excessive focus on the outcomes of immediate performance and focus instead on the longer term recursive process of learning by tracking your performance progress over time. Rarely is a single performance test a matter of life and death, and to treat it as such only reinforces a fixed identity. Every performance is an occasion for learning and improvement in future performances. (...)

Redefine your relationship to failure

No one likes to fail but failure is an inevitable part of doing something new. Thomas Edison provided a role model for the learning response to failure when he said “Failure is the most important ingredient for success.” (...)

Control emotional responses to learn from failure

Failures, losses and mistakes provoke inevitable emotional responses. Yet it is important to learn to control emotional reactions that block learning and feed into a fixed identity. Golfers who slam their club and curse themselves and the game after a bad shot lose the opportunity to coolly analyze their mistake and plan for corrections on the next one. (...)

Risk losing

Winning is not everything and too great a focus on it can block learning.(...)

Reassess your beliefs about how you learn and what you are good at

It is important to consciously reflect on and choose how you define yourself as a learner. Often people are unaware of the way in which they characterize themselves and their abilities. (...)

Monitor the messages you send yourself

Pay attention to your self-talk. Saying to yourself, "I am stupid." or, "I am no good at ..." matters and reinforces a negative fixed identity; just as saying, "I can do this" reinforces a positive learning identity. Beware of internalized oppression. Some of these messages are introjections from others that you have swallowed without careful examination. (...)

Balance your success/failure accounts

Most of us remember our failures more vividly than our successes. (...)

Seek positive learning relationships

Develop relationships that support the development of a positive learning identity and avoid those people and situations that make you feel bad about yourself and incapable of learning. (...)

Source:

'On Becoming a Learner: The Concept of Learning Identity' -Alice Kolb and David Kolb