

EXP105

Dr. Christine Johnston - Textbook Introduction

When you hear the word “learning,” what comes to your mind? Classrooms? Teachers? Textbooks? Tests? What kinds of feelings do you have when you hear that word? Maybe you say “Oh, I did that...I can do that well!” or maybe you have some concerns. Whatever you’re feeling, keep in mind that learning goes way beyond the classroom...way beyond tests and textbooks.

We learn every day of our life and I think that’s one of the most important things for us to understand. There are two things about learning: One is it’s probably the most universal human experience we have and it’s also one of the most personal experiences we have. It’s universal because in virtually every nation, under every flag across the globe, people are learning - day in and day out. What makes it very personal is the way in which they’re taking in the world around them and making sense of it and that’s really my definition of “learning.”

Learning is taking in the word around you, making sense of it, and - here’s the key - learning to respond appropriately. That’s kind of the kicker because learning is more than just knowing “stuff” and memorizing it. Learning is being able to actually use what you’ve taken in and use it appropriately. That’s where the personal piece comes in because you and I take in the world us differently.

While we all use the same five senses of taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing, the way in which we each individually use those can be very different. The way in which that stimuli coming through those senses is processed by our brain, is filtered by our learning processes, is translated by our mind and stored – that’s where the personal stuff comes in. So, if you don’t understand that about yourself, it makes it very hard for you to use it with intention and that’s the key to successful learning.



Successful learning revolves around your ability to take who you are as a learner and use it to respond appropriately in given situations of your life. Basically, that's why I wrote *Intentional Learning*, to be a guide to help you understand the advanced learning system called the Let Me Learn Process. It does guide you and it can help you take your personal Learning Patterns and be able to use them with intention in order to succeed.

The five issues that are covered in the text revolve around - first, understanding that learning is the key to success in the 21st Century but also, with the digital age, there are so many different things drawing and pulling us in different directions. Being able to attend to your learning is extremely important.

In the second chapter, we take a look at this advanced learning system and say, "how can you use it to guide you to use your learning processes with intention?" How can you make it work well for you?

In the third chapter we take a look at the key issues of college education, which are critical reading, critical writing, and critical thinking. How can you use your Learning Patterns to make that happen? To get deeper and richer into the text – not just superficial "take it in, stuff it down, memorize it and regurgitate it," but how can you use this in your daily life, in your career and interacting with other people and really learning how to live well?

In the fourth chapter, we take a look at developing study habits – we like to call them "personal learning strategies" – that can walk with you and help harness your Learning Patterns to be more effective.

Finally, in the fifth chapter we say "ok, you have all this going for you, how can you take this into your life? How can you take this into your work setting? How can you take this into work relationships? How can you take it into a career path?"

All of this takes intention and all of this takes your attention and that's what this is all about – helping you take your universal and personal learning processes and become a more effective, more productive, more successful learner.