

Unlearning: A Strategy for New Learning

Unlearning is the intention to let go of what we have already learned or acquired. It is not about right or wrong. It is about being open to and exploring new ideas and new and different ways of doing things. It can help you become open to new skills, experiences, behaviors, and knowledge.

In order to pick up a new skill, even if it's similar to something you already can do, learn what makes it different. All of us repeat things that worked in the past, even when they don't apply to the now. Repeating isn't always a bad strategy, but when there is a significant difference, the old approach holds you back.

By refusing to unlearn old rules and old ways of doing things with the thinking, "this is the way we have always done it," you miss learning opportunities and avoid moving forward.

Here are some ways to accelerate the unlearning of old judgments and limitations:

- 1) Learn to play again. Let go. Be creative and innovative.
- 2) Take more risks. Seek out new experiences. Do something that gets you outside your comfort zone. These experiences invite the brain to consider things it might not otherwise encounter.
- 3) Seek out experiences that help you not take yourself so seriously. Taming the ego allows you to make mistakes, even fail, and still feel okay about yourself.
- 4) Trust your unconscious. Our unconscious mind, or intuitive self, has a lot to teach us. Any way you can see beyond your ordinary consciousness opens you up to new ways of seeing.
- 5) Ask for feedback. The more people who can help you reflect on your behaviors, the greater your chance to gain an accurate sense of how other people perceive you and which actions to unlearn.
- 6) Examine your beliefs. Your beliefs determine your behavior and it's difficult to act inconsistently with your beliefs for very long. When you believe you already know the right way to do things, everything else can seem wrong. Why then would you want to unlearn what you're currently doing, let alone replace it with something else?