**Learning: We All Do It But How ?**

Ever wondered how the human brain works when it comes to learning? Well Dr. Rita Smilkstein has, and has performed research on learning process of the brain. Her research became known worldwide, she began teaching professor what she learned. Her research is called the Natural Human Learning Process (NHPL). Dr. Smilkstein stated that there are five to six steps in the learning process. Motivation, which gives us the strength and drive to even begin something new. Beginning practice, also known as the hardest part of NHLP. Advanced Practice, where you begin to see improvement because focus. Skillfulness, after constantly practicing it becomes easier, and you have start being noticed, receive praises, and maybe even rewarded. Refinement, now you are starting to get cockiness, challenging yourself. Finally, mastery, where you are the teacher, have been performing it so much you may enter competitions (Smilkstein).

Everyone goes through this process because that is how the human brain learns. One of the things I have mastered is raking the leaves in my yard. My motivation was wanting to hang out with my friends, but I could not until the leaves were all gone. The first time I raked my yard was terrible and took me two days to finish. This was my beginning practice in the learning process. Now that I’m older, I have moved to the next step next - advance practice. I have developed some techniques. This technique enabled me to bag leaves faster than normal. After that my skillfulness at raking leaves, was getting recognize from my family. During the summer I would raked people's yards for money. In my neighborhood I was known as the master of leaves raking.

In our brains, we have cells that are called neurons. Neurons are similarly structured like a tree, and its roots system. The neurons are composed of seven separate parts, the cell body, soma, electrical-chemical impulses, synapses (synaptic gap), dendrites, axon, axon terminal bulb, and the myelin sheath. All five parts play an important role in the learning process. Cell bodies are what holds the dendrites, and the more in learn then the more dendrites there will be (Smilkstein Chap.3).

Synaptic firing, very much like a spark plug because they’re both fueled by something. Synapses are the gaps between axon terminal bulbs and their neurons causing neurons to grow and dendrites to keep developing. This process is much like electricity passing through a spark plug. Synaptic firing is fueled by endorphins hormones, which are those feel good emotions like happiness and confidence. Synaptic firing is not always fueled by feel good emotions. It can fueled by norepinephrine (or noradrenaline), emotions like stress or being overwhelmed. Norepinephrine is like having water in your gas tank. You don’t want that.

Learning can become difficult when emotions get involved. Emotions can control the ability to learn and that can be a good or bad thing

Being confident, calm, and happy to learn something new will help with understanding the subject. Learning new skateboard tricks is always easy for me because I love skateboarding and I am always excited to learn something new. Feeling overwhelmed or stressed while learning something new, can be very difficult. Every time I learned something new while feeling stressed, it is always hard for me to pay attention because my mind was somewhere else. So when it comes to learning, try to be happy, positive, and everything will come naturally.

Everyone goes through this process so learning is what you make it. Next time you are learning something new, try to remain positive because it will be easier. If you’re too stressed and cannot calm down, then take the day off. Learning something new during this time will only add to your stress. Learning is what you make it, so if you’re negative about it then the result will be negative. “Whether you think you can or you think you can’t, either way, you’re right.” - Henry Ford

Works Cited

Smilkstein, Rita. *We're Born to Learn: Using the Brain's Natural Learning Process to Create Today's Curriculum, 2nd Ed.* Thousand Oaks, Cal.: Corwin, 2011.