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MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM WALT DISNEY

Parenting from the Heart

10 ways to inspire a love of learning

Never Too Old to Learn



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Never stop learning

As a mother of six, a grandmother of eleven, a certified homeschool teacher, and currently a part-time instructor of children on the autism spectrum, education has always been a topic close to my heart. I love to find new and innovative ways to teach children, and I love to keep learning to update my own skills also.

When researching the topic of education, I came across numerous articles on ways to educate or receive an education, and stories of people who, despite personal, financial, or circumstantial obstacles, found ways to get the education they needed and wanted to realize their dreams.

Walt Disney was one of those people (page 3), and Nola Ochs (page 10) another. Their stories inspire me that regardless of our circumstances, ability, age, or the way we choose to educate ourselves—formally or informally—the most important thing is to keep learning.

I hope the stories and articles in this issue of *Motivated* will help to rekindle your love of learning, and encourage you that where there is a will to learn, there is always a way.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

Issue Editor

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What We Can Learn from Walt Disney

Adapted Web Reprint

Walt Disney's life and work show the value of imagination and dreaming big. But he also showed us that it's not enough to have big dreams. Hard work and persistence were the keys to overcoming the obstacles in his path, as they are for so many others who have overcome even the most seemingly insurmountable odds.

Disney's formal education ended in the eighth grade, and his education up to that point was often interrupted. Some have suggested that the many jobs Disney held, and his struggle in school, were due to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and he is often included on lists of famous people with ADHD. However, there's little credible evidence to suggest that this is true. It's more likely that his poor performance in school was due to being forced to needlessly repeat a grade, being pulled out to work, and being so tired from working for his father that he often fell asleep in class.

Despite his lack of formal education, Disney never stopped learning: reading, teaching himself animation, tirelessly experimenting, and working to improve his craft. He showed that it's possible to be successful despite following a different path from the expected one, or through alternatives to college, like the apprenticeship he took.

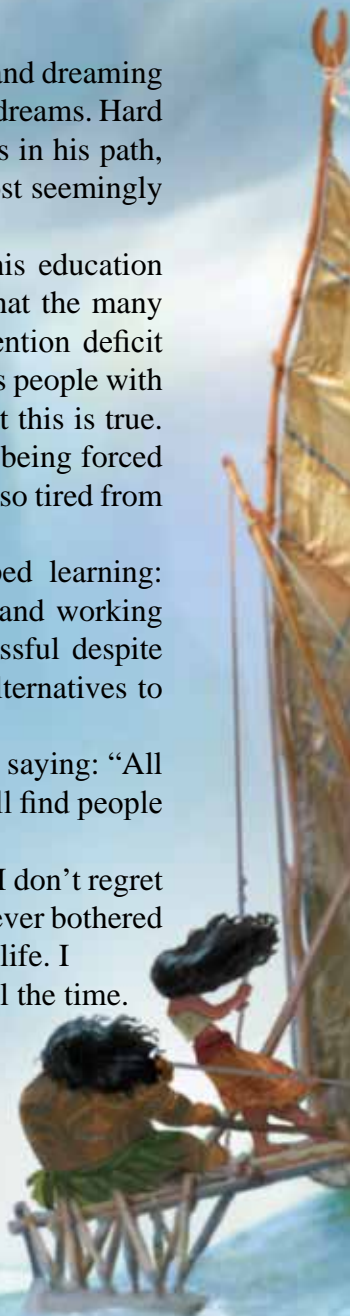
But he knew, too, the value of learning from others' expertise, saying: "All you've got to do is own up to your ignorance honestly, and you'll find people who are eager to fill your head with information."

Of his time as a young boy working the paper route, he said: "I don't regret having worked like I've worked... I can't even remember that it ever bothered me. I mean, I have no recollection of ever being unhappy in my life. I look back and I worked from way back there and I was happy all the time. I was excited. I was doing things."

Of the failure of Laugh-O-Grams he said: "I failed... I think it's important to have a good hard failure when you're young... I learned a lot out of that."

"All the adversity I've had in my life, all my troubles and obstacles, have strengthened me. ... You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you."

"To the youngsters of today, I say, believe in the future, the world is getting better; there still is plenty of opportunity. It's kind of fun to do the impossible." ■



Experience Or Education: Which One Lands You the Job?



By Claire Bradley, adapted

Take this scenario: Bob and Joe are both applying for the same job. They each interview well, but Bob has 15 years' experience and no degree, and Joe is fresh out of university with no experience. Who gets the job? The answer is: it depends. Here are some factors to consider when it comes to the duel between education and experience.

Career Field

There are some careers where experience trumps education and vice versa. In sales for instance, having a track record of dollars brought into the company

will far outweigh any degree. Likewise, in a high-tech field, a recent university degree that consists of studying the latest developments might give you a leg-up over the guy with the experience in your field. Vocational fields like construction will value experience over education for obvious reasons. Your chosen career field will dictate how education and experience stack up against each other.

Reputation

Not all experience or education is created equal. A degree from a top school in your field will open doors simply for

its reputation; a degree from a university with a lesser reputation won't help you nearly as much. Did you earn your degree while working full time? That gives you a reputation of being a dedicated hard worker willing to make sacrifices—a reputation that will help you when you sit down to interview for a job.

When it comes to experience, reputation is just as important: simply clocking 40 hours a week for 15 years isn't going to win you any points. How did you add to the company's bottom line? Did you innovate, win awards, bring in new business, promote? Reputation matters when it comes to both education and experience.

Company Policy

Let's say Bob with the 15 years of experience is applying for a job within his company—an internal promotion he's convinced he's qualified for. The sad news for Bob is that the job may still go to Joe, fresh out of school with zero experience. Some companies may allow you to substitute experience for a university education, but others have a tougher policy, requiring a degree, no substitutions. Bob may be the best candidate, but unless he goes to school, he'll be stuck where he is. Also note that certain industries, like education and healthcare, require education to qualify for necessary certification.

Money, Money, Money

Over the last few decades, employees with a degree earn roughly 77% more than those with only a high school diploma, making a strong case for a university education. It also reports

a lower unemployment rate for those with a degree: 4.4% for workers with a bachelor's degree or higher, versus 10.8% for those with only a high school diploma.

Does this mean you should sign up at the nearest university? Not so fast—study debt is on the rise, with many graduates struggling to pay their ballooning student loans. The cost of a one year of tuition at a private school runs over \$29,000, with public education setting you back about \$8,600. Consider your career field, the university's reputation and your finances carefully before committing.

Solutions

So what to do if you lack education or experience? For university graduates, interning offers a great opportunity to get that experience and show you're willing to invest into your career. Likewise, volunteering can give you a resume boost; look for positions that will give you the experience you need, even if it's not in your field.

If your resume lacks in education credits but you can't commit to a four-year degree, look at taking classes in your field to show that you're investing in your career and thinking ahead; technology skills are always in demand, and many (public) universities offer online classes and certificates.

The Bottom Line

When it comes to experience versus education, there's no clear winner. If you're on the hunt for a job, find ways to strengthen the part you're missing, and you'll be sure to beat both Bob and Joe. ■



HOLISTIC EDUCATION

Web Reprint, adapted excerpts

Consider your life's greatest challenges. What did you need to know to overcome the obstacles you faced? Consider your greatest successes. What did you need to know in order to achieve those successes? Then ask yourself, how many of those things that I needed to know did I learn in school?

For thousands of years, before schools, there were social groups that taught people about the great adventure of being human; its trials and tribulations, its challenges, and its enormous possibilities for human goodness, and even greatness. These groups were extended families, communities, tribes or clans, and religions. For the most part, these groups have disappeared or become compartmentalized in people's lives.

Now, it is predominantly popular culture—the media, music—schools, and peers from which young people learn about what it means to be human. But this kind of culture has its own agenda.

Why holistic education?

More and more parents realize that just learning academics is not enough, and they see young people in their communities suffering from a lack of needed learning to become good citizens, and society suffering as well.

Parents worry about the negative social impact that affects their children. Parents see themselves having less influence on their children's behavior, relationships, and attitudes than the media and marketing campaigns that directly target their children. As a result children's sense of self and self-esteem are under pressure. This pressure is expressed in:

- Increased competitiveness in many aspects of a child’s social life, such as sports, out-of-school activities, and of course, school.
- Obsessive concern for their “look,” from their body shape to their clothes.
- Violence in many forms, from the physical to the psychological and emotional.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Decreased lack of concern for others and society at large.

Parents also worry about negative learning attitudes developing in their children. Parents remember their children as infants eager to learn, yet learning becomes a necessary chore, driven by rewards and punishments, and too often devoid of direct meaning in their children’s lives.

Social problems are increasing, and many parents wonder what they can do to teach their children to live a meaningful and caring life.

What do children need to learn?

Children need to develop academic capacities as well as other abilities and attributes.

Children need to learn about themselves. Conveying to children that they are worth knowing about is fundamental to healthy self-respect and self-esteem.

Children need to learn about building healthy and positive relationships. Yet educational institutions devote little to no time, nor resources to this kind of learning.

Children must also learn resilience. Resilience is fundamental to overcoming

difficulties, facing challenges, and long-term success in any field.

Finally, teaching children to see beauty in little things, and to discover life’s values, are other aspects of learning that are often overlooked.

Helping children learn what they need to learn.

Holistic education employs “meaning-making” in educational processes. People of all ages find it difficult to learn things which are not meaningful to them, and conversely, they find that it requires much less effort to learn things that are meaningful. A holistic approach to education will respect and work with the meaning structures that a child comes with rather than begin from a perspective of what “should” be meaningful to a child.

Academic skills can be taught while using events or relationship dynamics that are already part of a child’s life. Children’s emotional experiences—fears, conflicts, and friendships—can all be used to enhance a child’s learning.

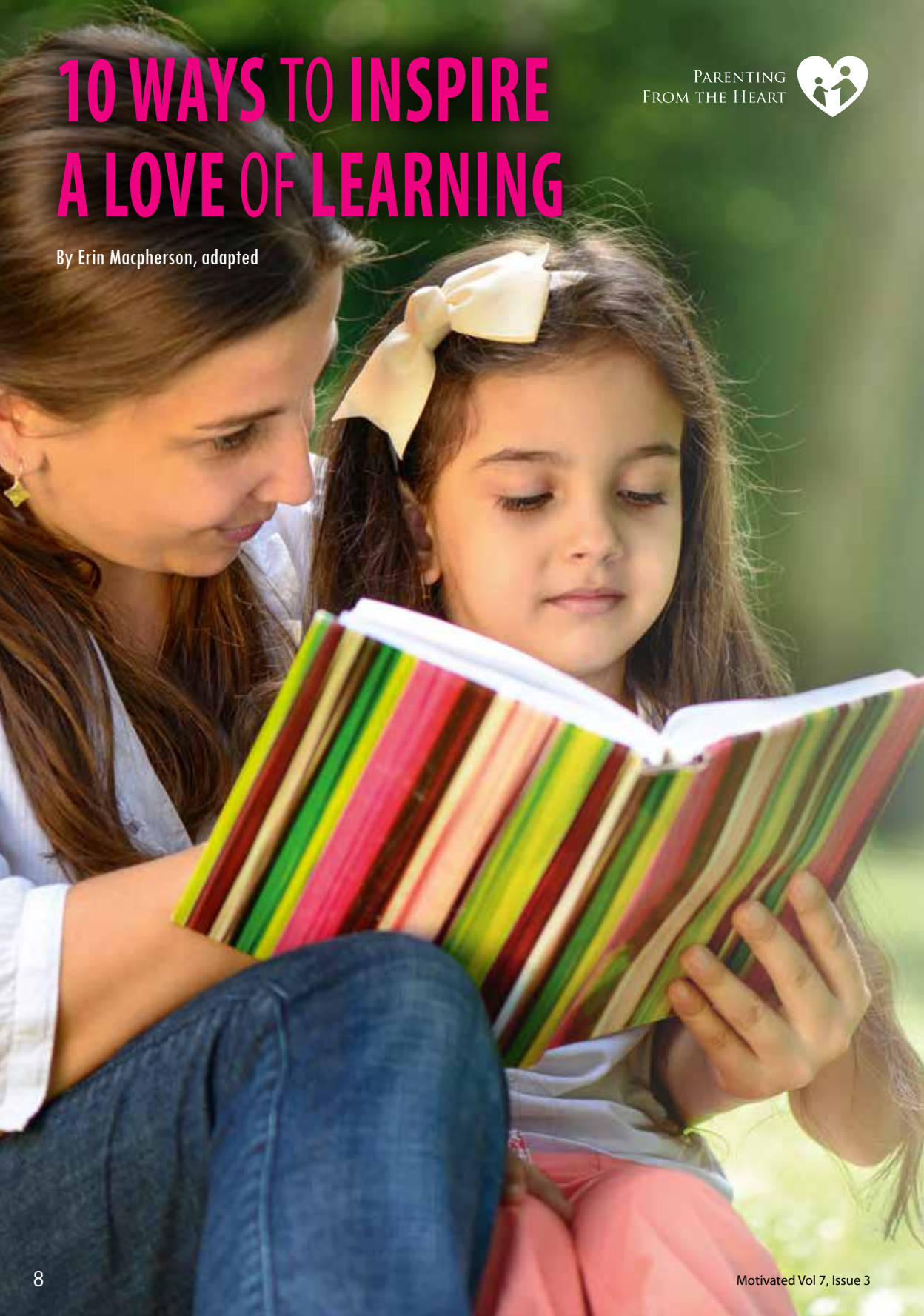
Another tool that holistic education uses to help children learn is flexible pacing. Not all children learn at the same speed, and no child learns at the same speed all the time. A child gets bored when learning is not at their intellectual level, and he’ll also lose interest when the speed and level of learning is either too slow or too fast.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.” ■

10 WAYS TO INSPIRE A LOVE OF LEARNING

By Erin Macpherson, adapted

PARENTING
FROM THE HEART



Just think of the smiles on your kids' faces when you read them a great story, or how their eyes light up when you show them tiny plant buds just peeking through the soil. The great thing about teaching young children is that they have an innate desire to know more about the world. Sadly, this innate love of learning is often squelched by the time kids hit elementary school, crushed by ineffective academic standards and incorrectly implied curriculum that take the delight out of learning.

But it doesn't have to be this way! As a parent, you can make a big impact on your children's future love of learning by simply allowing them to learn in a way that's not only educational, but also fun. Here are a few ideas to help you do just that:

1. Teach them to be critical thinkers.

The adrenaline rush from solving a tough puzzle leads kids to want to do it again and again—and that creates life-long learners and problem-solvers.

2. Meet kids where they are. Some kids are kinesthetic learners and need activity to thrive. Others love games. Still others love to get wrapped into a good book. Work hard to show your kids that you value their unique interests and learning styles.

3. Inter-weave learning and play. Play and learn can go in parallel. For young children, play is learning, so work to incorporate concept teaching during fun activities such as building a sand castle or pretend-playing with a toy kitchen. Make education a fun and important part of any early learner's day from an early age.

4. Facilitate learning with technology. Kids love technology—and one of the

best ways to get kids excited about learning is to supplement your teaching with technology. Try letting kids play a related game on a tablet after you teach them to count, or reward good behavior with technology time.

5. Listen to your kids. Be willing to spend time talking to your kids and finding out what interests them so that you can adjust learning to fit.

6. Show your kids that you love to play and learn. Show them a copy of your favorite book and let your kids catch you reading it. Or, divert from an art activity to demonstrate your own love of painting. Show your talent with sand castle building or getting a toy sunk in the water... Participate and show your enjoyment in playing.

7. Recognize achievements. If you notice your child has mastered a particular skill or is excelling on a certain game, point out his or her achievement. Even little acknowledgements can serve as major motivation.

8. Involve the entire family. Do some fun enrichment activities for your early learners as a family.

9. Mix it up. Try blended learning one day and a nature hike the next in order to let kids know that there are lots of ways to learn and grow.

10. Make a summary. It seems simple, but by making a short summary at the end of play, you can help kids retain what they learned. Taking a few minutes to recall what was learned through their play, will help their retention to increase. ■

Question for you:

How do you inspire a love of learning in your children? Tell us at: motivated@motivatedmagazine.com.

NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN

Adapted Web Reprint, www.values.com



I don't dwell on my age. It might limit what I can do. As long as I have my mind and health, age is just a number.

—Nola Ochs, 103 years old

For many people, the “golden years” are a time to slow down and recall past achievements. Nola Ochs—a Guinness record holder as the world’s oldest college graduate at age 95—sees age as an opportunity to take on new challenges and satisfy unfulfilled goals.

Born in 1911 in Illinois, Nola always loved learning. A good student, she graduated high school in 1929 and began college via correspondence course. After passing her teacher’s certification exam, she taught in county schools for four years before marrying her husband, Vernon Ochs.

Soon, the realities of farming sidetracked any thoughts of furthering her education, and Nola lived a good, full life on the farm, raising four sons. She always

yearned to learn more about the world she lived in, but not until after Vernon died in 1972 did Nola consider resuming her formal education.

“I just thought something off the farm would be fun,” she explained. “My first class was a tennis class at a Community College. That was in 1978, when I was 67.”

On campus, even though she has 13 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren, Nola was undaunted by her youthful classmates. Her natural wit and down-to-earth charm helped her fit in easily with her fellow students.

“The students on the campus accepted me. I enjoyed myself so much, that fall I enrolled in an agribusiness marketing class,” Nola said. “Really, I had no thought of ever graduating. For 10 years, I just took classes that were of interest to me, something that I would enjoy doing; mostly history and composition. And then one of the professors came to me and told



me if I would take college algebra, I would have enough credit hours to graduate.”

In 1988, at age 77, Nola received her associate degree from Dodge City Community College. Afterward, she was itching to achieve another goal.

“I still wanted to go to school. It was fun to go to classes. And if I had an assignment to do in the evening, that occupied my time in a pleasant way, you know,” she recalled.

She started out taking more classes at Dodge City but soon became more ambitious. She e-mailed an academic advisor at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas, mentioning that she had taken a course from the university years earlier. After some digging, the advisor located a 3x5 card stored in the basement of the administration building stating that Nola had indeed been a student, in 1930. When the advisor e-mailed back, she asked, “Nola, how old are you?”

At first Nola took classes long distance,

but eventually she moved 100 miles from her farm to live on-campus. As a student of history, Nola brought a refreshing perspective to her classes as she shared her personal experiences, and she became a favorite of both students and professors.

“I like to tell stories, you know,” Nola said, and after graduation, she got to do just that when Princess Cruise Lines hired her as a guest lecturer on a nine-day Caribbean cruise.

For most people, graduating at age 95 with a 3.7 GPA might be enough of an accomplishment, but not for Nola. In May 2010, at age 98, Nola Ochs received her master’s degree, making her the oldest person to receive that distinction. As she celebrated her 100th birthday in November 2011, Nola was continuing to pursue master’s-level classes, had taken a job as a graduate teaching assistant and was in the midst of writing a book—truly an example of someone living life to the fullest. ■

Never stop learning

NOTABLE
QUOTES



Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.—Nelson Mandela

For me, I am driven by two main philosophies: know more today about the world than I knew yesterday, and lessen the suffering of others. You'd be surprised how far that gets you.

—Neil deGrasse Tyson

The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change.—Carl Rogers

Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.

—Albert Einstein

The purpose of education is to replace an empty mind with an open one.

—Malcolm Forbes

The great aim of education is not knowledge but action.

—Herbert Spencer

The only fence against the world is a thorough knowledge of it.

—John Locke

The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future in life. —Plato

You cannot open a book without learning something. —Confucius

The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.—Dr. Seuss

Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.

—Anthony J. D'Angelo

