

Note: This document is a continued work in progress.
What you see here is a snapshot of its state as of 1st August 2007.

A Year-Long Leave of Absence from University

- Contents

Foreground

- The Year-Long Goal

- Criteria

- The Plan

- The Long-Term Goal

How Will I be Learning ?

- The Web Crawler Analogy – The default learning method

- Future Plans

Framework

- Purpose of the Framework

Ad-hoc Interests

Learning Projects

- Future Plans

Record Keeping and Ensuing Credibility

- Purpose

- Format for Records

- Current Push

Improving my Learning Skills and Resources

- My Current Viewpoint

- Current Push

- Future Plans

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- Foreground

The Year-Long Goal:

To achieve seamless assimilation of Self-directed Learning into my daily life.

Criteria:

Self-directed Learning should become:

A Daily Habit that is
Flexible and Resilient enough to
Adapt and Evolve in response to
Shocks and Changes in my work / school / play schedules

The Plan:

Pursue Self-directed Learning
Guided by an extensible Framework
Over an extended Period of Time
With the intention of assimilating Self-directed learning into my daily life

The Long-Term Goal:

To make Directing my Education:

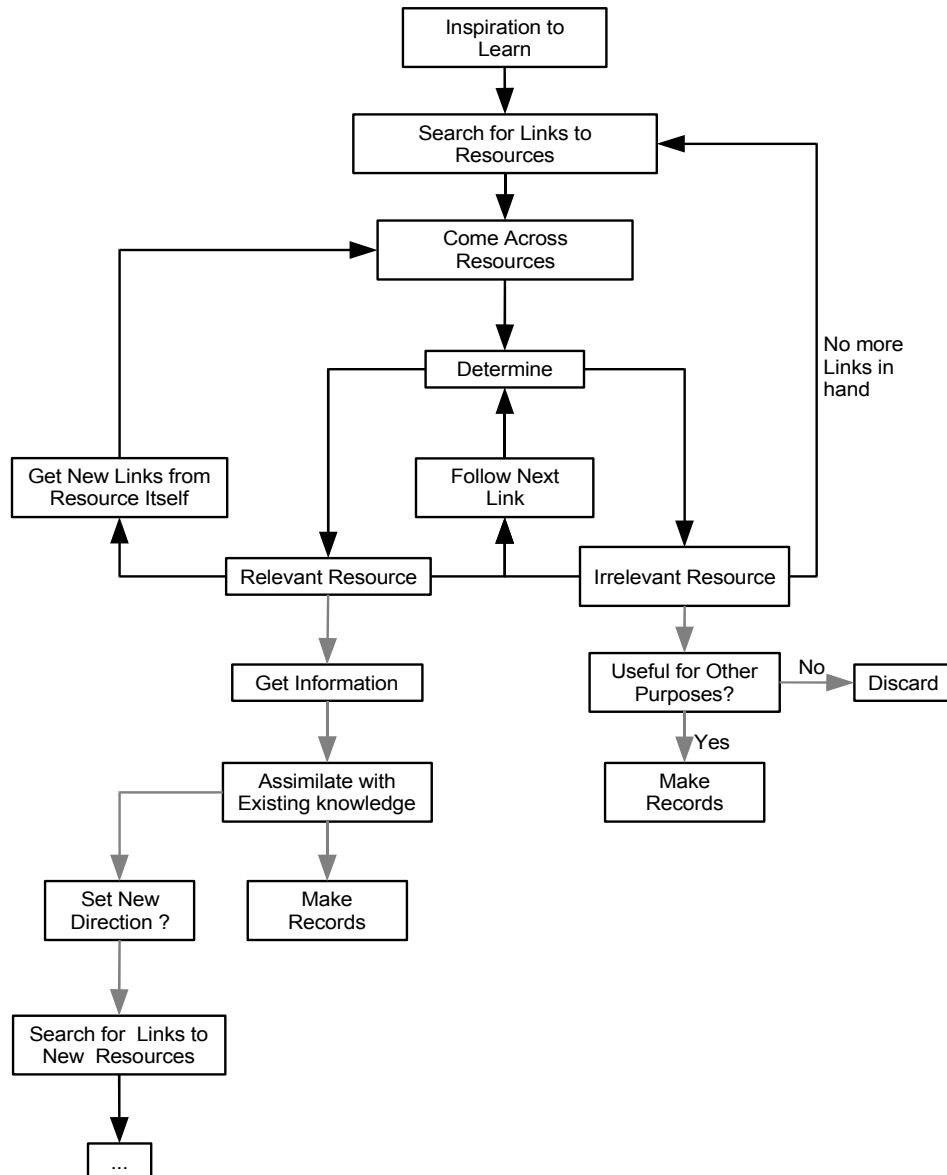
A Second Nature of mine that is
Explicitly useful in my Daily Life and is
Viewed as Beneficial, Valuable and Credible
Both by Myself and by Others

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- How Will I be Learning?

The Web Crawler Analogy- The default learning method



Learning Using the Web Crawler Analogy

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- How Will I be Learning?

The Web Crawler Analogy- The default learning method

When the Inspiration to Learn arises
Links to Resources are sought after

The Initial Links are Derived from

The Inspiration itself or
The Internet
In Sources such as
Wikipedia and
Web Searches and
Books on the topic of interest

New Links are usually Gained from

References
Bibliographies and
Author's Recommendations found in books and articles

And Also from

Leads during Discussions
Joining Interest Groups and
Looking Into
Biographies of Protagonists and Authors

In effect
Anything and Everything that can be a relevant resource
Is used

As more Information is gained, the
Direction for Learning
Is likely to Change

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- How Will I be Learning?

Reasons for a Change in Learning Direction Include:

Having Insufficient Prior Knowledge whereby
The Necessary Prior Knowledge will be sought
Becoming Interested
In Another Perspective
In a Related Field or
In Something I happen to Chance Upon

Records will be updated accordingly and
The Process Continues

Future Plans:

Initial Links:

Use
Encyclopedias and
Books for
Children and Teens as a
Source of
Basic Information and to
Gain an
Overview of the subject
Quickly
Easily and in a
Visually & Linguistically
Exciting manner
Ask Experts Directly to
Break Down subject / field
To the Basic Concepts &
Recommend Research Strategies

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- How Will I be Learning?

Change in Learning Direction:

Want a strong Grounding in subject / field

Further Research

Specialist Websites

In-depth Books

Further Discussions

Expert Recommendations

Practice

Solving Problems

Using Skills / Concepts Learned

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- Framework

The Framework:

Ad-hoc Interests
Learning Projects
Record Keeping and Ensuring Credibility
Improving my Learning Skills and Resources

Purpose of the Framework:

To give Self-directed Learning a structure
So that
Learning Activities / Pursuits can be Organized
Progress / Results can be clearly seen
Credibility can be ascertained
Priorities can be highlighted

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- Ad-hoc Interests

Ad-hoc Interests:

Ad-hoc Interests are the
Thoughts
Questions
Ideas
Comments
Perspectives that
Everyone gets interested in from time to time

This Framework entrusts Ad-hoc Interests to
Start off Learning Activities / Pursuits and
Keep them going

Learning is thus
Initiated & Developed
Intrinsically while
Resources and Guidance
From the Outside
Are enthusiastically sought after

Ad-hoc Interests are
Individually small but
Collectively they
Define one's individuality
Give direction in setting plans / priorities and
Are the only starting points in the pursuit of
Special Skills & Talents

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- Ad-hoc Interests

Understandably Ad-hoc Interests are
Usually Suppressed as we feel they are
Not important
Not worth the time and that
Other things should be allocated the time instead (especially school / work)

In this Framework however
Ad-hoc Interests
Are the Sparks and Fuel for Learning

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- *Learning Projects*

Learning Projects:

Learning Projects Form the Core of my Self-directed Learning

They Serve to

Organize and Document my Learning Pursuits &

Set Direction / Priorities in my Learning

Learning Projects

Start Off as

Ad-hoc Interests

Which have developed into

Specific Aims &

Learning Plans

They Continue on as an

Investigative Process and are

Generally not bounded by

Depth or

Breadth

As a Learning Project Evolves however

It may be

Split into

Two or more Forks or

Merged

With other Learning Projects

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- *Learning Projects*

This is to ensure that the Learning Project remains
Flexible yet
Organized

Learning Projects are usually left open ended
To symbolize that Learning Never Ends and
For Future Pursuits
But may Reach a Conclusion and Ending
If Deemed Appropriate

Records form an Instrumental Part of all Learning Projects

And Special Attention is paid
To Documenting
The Investigative Trail
Resources Sought
Keywords Used
Thoughts Gathered &
Reflections which lead to
Modified Strategies

Future Plans:

The Assimilation of Learning Projects
Into Daily Life which is one of the
Chief Practice Elements

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- Record Keeping

Record Keeping:

Records are kept of

Ad-hoc Interests

Learning Projects

Resources

Purpose:

Record Keeping serves as

A Compilation of

All My Learning

Pursuits &

Achievements

Enabling Better

Evaluation and Criticism by

Me and by Others

Record Keeping also enables

These pursuits and achievements

To be

Stored and

Retrieved

For a much longer time than they will

Remain in my Memory

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- Record Keeping

Format for Records:

Criteria

Easy for Visual Scanning to
Facilitate Quick Information Retrieval
Flexible as
A Large Variety of Pursuits / Achievements
Are to be Recorded yet
Concise

Current Format

Each point occupies its own line
Sub-points are indented to the right &
Joining words are used where it improves readability

Headings are Used
With a Semicolon at the end to
Distinguish Them from non-headings and
Reduce the Number of Indentations required

Digital Records are kept in Text files

So that they are
Platform Independent
Software Independent and
Take up very little disk space

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- Record Keeping

Current Push:

Format

Making the flow better so that

It Facilitates both

Visual Scanning and

Actual Reading

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- Improving my Learning Skills and Resources

Special Attention is given to this area because of
The Self-directed Nature of my Learning

My Current Viewpoint:

The Pinnacle Reason for Learning is to

Make as much Knowledge Gained as possible
Useful Practically and
Assimilated into Daily Life

I therefore take the following as

Key Focuses during my Learning Process

Differing Perspectives
Details
Outreach to People
Trying to Push Knowledge Gained
To the level of being
Useful and
Assimilated into my Daily Life

The Levels of Knowledge

Not Understood
Understood
Understood and Useful in certain situations
Understood, Useful and Assimilated into daily life

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- Improving my Learning Skills and Resources

I find that I can effectively Gain Knowledge from

Books

The Internet and

Other Media such as

Videos

Speeches

Thus, I intend to

Link up with Real People to enhance my Learning

Current Push:

Linking up with Real People

Learning Buddies

Experts in Field and

Interest Groups

Future Plans:

Learning through Travel

Statistical Analysis Tools

Getting Accustomed with Statistical Tools to

Go beyond averages and

Check for common statistical misinterpretations

Including Additional Types of Resources

Using Databases

Interest Groups from the

Community and the

University

Learning Buddies and

Experts as Mentors