

answer. You can't build your dream by what you're going to do or planning to do or intending to do. You only build your dream by building it. You have to jump off the lily pad.

Life is *doing*. If you aren't doing, you're dying.

The Rhythm of Learning

I can read a book like James Allen's classic *As a Man Thinketh*, return it to my bookshelf, then come back a year later to read it again—and it feels like somebody sneaked into my room while I was sleeping and *completely rewrote* the thing. In fact this happens to me all the time. I'm constantly discovering, or rediscovering, all sorts of insights in books that I'd already read before, even many times before. Why? Because of the learning by doing I've gone through in the interim. My experiences have changed my perspective. Now, when I read a particular passage or point the author makes, I understand it in a way I could not have possibly seen a year ago. And that in turn informs my behavior. Now, when I go to engage in my activity of the next day, I can apply what I've learned from Allen in a way that I would not have thought of even twenty-four hours earlier.

"Knowledge without practice is useless," said Confucius, but he added a second line: "And practice without knowledge is dangerous." It isn't that street smarts are *better* than book smarts. They're both critical. One without the other, as Confucius pointed out, is either useless or dangerous, and either way, it sure won't put you on the success curve.

Book smarts, street smarts. Learning by study, learning by doing. Read about it, apply it, see it in action, take that practical experience back to your reading, deepen your understanding, take that deeper understanding back to your activity... it's a never-ending cycle, each aspect of learning feeding the other. Like climbing a ladder: right foot, left foot, right foot, left foot. Can you imagine trying to climb a ladder with only your right foot?

Not only do the two work better when they work together in a rhythm, each amplifying the other, but the truth is they really cannot work separately *at all*. At least not for long. You can't excel based purely on knowledge learned through study; and you can't excel purely through knowledge gleaned through action. The two have to work together. You study, and then you do activity. The activity changes your