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No Parroting Allowed!

Learning Emergence by Asking Questions



"Learning to Love Math"

Questions for the Week of April 16, 2007

When asked, "how do you best learn?" most people usually respond with either a technique, like "in a classroom," or by naming their favorite sense, like "I learn best visually." Unfortunately, this implies that most people define "learning" as the ability to parrot the correct answer.

What is wrong with this? "Parroting the correct answer" creates parrots, not students; dullards, not Einsteins. So how can we create more Einsteins? By asking questions **which are intended to provoke the student's own questions**. More important, this turns out to be the best way in which to reawaken in students their lost love of learning.

This week, our topic is "**Learning to Love Learning Math.**" Would you like to awaken a love of learning in you about this topic? You can, simply by reading the teacher's questions and then, by asking yourself, "what questions did these words just provoke in me?"

"Learning to Love Math"

The Teacher's Questions (asked by John)

Recently, I realized that arithmetic, algebra, geometry, physics, and calculus are all ways in which math connects us to our world. Prior to my realization, I saw these studies as disciplines separated from the real world. In other words, I used to see them as studies which existed without a direct relationship to the way we live.

Perhaps this is why I formerly spent most of my time learning math just plodding along and trying to parrot and memorize as much as I could, and guessing at what I could not. In the end, until I connected math to our living world, I had no real true understanding of any of these disciplines.

- How is it possible that I am learning to love math for the first time?
- How did my having Learner's Block about fractals change me into having a love for math?
- How did my anger and defiance regarding Steve's definition of fractals send me toward learning

about fractals?

- Can we learn information if it is not personally relevant?
- This learning happened after I transitioned from suffering and feeling alone to connecting then understanding. Can know if it will end in a true love or will it be just temporary?
- How do I change the pattern wherein I get so resistant to learning?
- Is not knowing things inherently shocking to everyone or just some of us?
- What makes connecting so difficult for me when I do not understand something?

Sample Student Response Questions (asked by Inetta)

Hi John. Your love of math seems to have began on such an exciting journey. When did you learning math move the connection to the "living world?" This seems like this is such a large shift.

Your question about learning occurring in personal reference provoked an emergence in me about how I learn sometimes. I realized that it's not the material that frustrates me. It's trying to learn the material in a way that I think the teacher wants me to learn.

My questions are:

- Can a "dead stop" lead the learner back to an emergence learning?
- When we learn in the state of "aloneness," how does this experience encourage us to move with forward momentum?
- Does Momentum Learning occur in two directions?
- Does falling 'in love' with the material affect the degree to which "Dead Stops" occur? For example, John, you fell in love with geometry, then later, via learning by extension, connected what you had learned about math to the world. Did your "Dead Stop" end when you began to love Geometry?



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