

LIFELONG LEARNING

“I don’t think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday.” – Abraham Lincoln

“I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.” – Mark Twain

Lifelong learning is the continued educational experience that utilizes non-credit academic courses, educational travel, and community service and volunteerism to fully engage the brain, heighten physical activity, and maintain healthy social relationships. Lifelong learning involves the physical, mental and emotional parts of our body. The benefits to lifelong learning are well worth the time and effort it takes. Here are ten suggested benefits to lifelong learning.

1. Lifelong learning helps fully develop natural abilities. When we no longer work full time or have young children at home, we may have the opportunity to fully explore and develop our abilities.
2. Lifelong learning opens the mind. Lifelong learning gives us a chance to exchange ideas and viewpoints that may open our minds to new levels of understanding.
3. Lifelong learning creates a curious mind. The more we learn the more we want to learn. Our desire to learn fuels itself and we keep looking to see what is just around the corner.
4. Lifelong learning increases our wisdom. Lifelong learning helps us understand our past successes and failures which leads us to fully develop wisdom in our later years.
5. Lifelong learning makes the world a better place. Older learners can give back to their communities and to the world. Our insight and wisdom can be a major benefit to the world around us.
6. Lifelong learning helps us adapt to change. Lifelong learning enables us to keep up with society’s changes-especially the technological ones. Learning with our peers is a way to stay abreast of change while having a good time.
7. Lifelong learning helps us find meaning in our lives. Learning can help us deal with the past.
8. Lifelong learning keeps us involved as active contributors to society. Older citizens are demanding to be a part of society by offering to share their wisdom and expertise.
9. Lifelong learning helps us make new friends and establish valuable relationships. Lifelong learning is a way for older adults to stay in touch with old friends and forge new relationships.
10. Lifelong learning leads to an enriching life of self-fulfillment.

SHARE YOUR LIFELONG LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Take a moment or two and have members share at least one experience they have had with Lifelong Learning. Have members tell the benefits they received as a result of their experience. Encourage everyone to participate. If you have enough time, share a lifelong learning experience each member hopes to try within the coming year.

Lifelong learning encompasses more than classroom education. Life experiences, formal education, and recreational pursuits all lead to new ideas. We may have times when life seems to be stuck in the same daily pattern. If you want to break the pattern in your life, try some of these suggestions.

*Expand your reading list.

*Try new activities.

*Join discussion groups, book clubs or social clubs.

*Sign up for a class or lecture.

*Use reference tools like online dictionaries to learn new words.

*Shake up your daily routine.

*Explore new places in your town, community or country.

*Slow down and observe.

*Keep a "To-Learn" List.

*Start a new project.

*Make learning a priority.