

Reshape Your Mind

Create a better life.



by Jeff Davidson

JUST AS YOUR MUSCLES GET flabby and weak when they're not regularly exercised, so does your mind. Life is an exciting adventure, and you do not want anything, especially your mind, to work against you.

Take action. New life situations may mean changing your life. If you can't ponder new concepts or learn new things, you can't positively change your life. An out-of-shape mind is no longer adept at the mental skills of creative thinking and learning. Without substantive thought, deliberate action doesn't occur. Without action, change doesn't occur.

Many people buy self-improvement books, read them, and put them on a shelf next to a bunch of other self-improvement books. Meanwhile, their lives continue, no different than before. When people do this, they're not really thinking about what they're reading. No substantive thought takes place as a result. Reading can be a useful tool, but it must be used correctly. Be alert and retain the knowledge that you gain from it.

Find your learning niche. Everyone has different learning styles. While some people prefer self-guided learning, others find that they learn more effectively within some sort of structured educational program. If you're one of those people, then going to college or going



back to college, may be a great way for you to exercise your mind. What better way exists to get your brain going than through structured learning? You can take non-credit continuing education courses or enroll in courses for credit in an area in which you're interested, without enrolling as a degree-seeking student. You can enroll in a certification program to gain a new skill.

Go back to college. You could also enroll in an undergraduate or graduate degree program. If you're interested in taking college courses, get in touch with

your local institutions of higher education. Check out their Web sites and list of programs and course offerings. Learn what options are available to you and determine whether or not any of them spark your interest.

Some schools have adult degree programs that offer flexible scheduling, distance learning, and individual curriculum design. More colleges are offering courses and degree programs online.

Many adult students also report that their college education is much more fulfilling and rewarding. Older students typically are more responsible and mature.

Re-shaping your mind can take place from a seemingly small action, like reading, or from large milestones, like returning to college for your degree.

Whichever path you choose, remember that life requires an open, limber mind. You can't change your life without changing your way of thinking. **PE**

Jeff Davidson is a popular speaker and the author of The Complete Idiot's Guide to Reinventing Yourself (Alpha) from which this article is adapted. Visit www.BreathingSpace.com.

ACTION: Exercise your mind.