how to get better at getting better
01

LEARNING LIKE A JUNGLE TIGER
We learn best when we operate at the edge of our abilities, a little out of our comfort zone, when we're in the jungle.

02

DEVELOPING A GROWTH MINDSET
How we think about learning can impact how we do it. Developing a growth mindset is an essential first step to becoming a better learner.

03

DEALING WITH STRESS & DISCOMFORT
Stress, fear, and discomfort can hurt learning, performance, and decision making. We can change this by upgrading the way we think about about these tough emotions.

04

TAKING ACTION
Learning is a skill. In order to get better at it we have to practice it.

05

LEADERSHIP & TEAM BENEFITS
When we spend more time in learner mode we actually improve the learning environment for the people around us.
The best learning happens in the jungle.
We can choose to jungle tiger or zoo tiger.
Our fixed mindset builds our cage, fear keeps us in it.

In order to become a better learner, to spend more time in the jungle - we need to understand these two obstacles and how to overcome them.
The way we think about learning can impact how we do it

A growth mindset predicts better outcomes and learning

Intervention studies show that we can change our mindsets
mindsets matter

FIXED
The belief that we can't really change the skills that we already have

GROWTH
The belief that we can build and develop our skills over time

These can change
When has a growth mindset fueled your action?

When has a fixed mindset robbed you of action or an opportunity that could have helped you grow?
TOOLS FOR BUILDING A GROWTH MINDSET

REFLECT
We're all learning and growing constantly. Recognizing this progress can reinforce a growth mindset.

LEARN
Going through the learning process can remind us of our capacity to grow.

NEUROPLASTICITY
What fires together wires together. With action we can get better at pretty much any skill.

Identify some things that you're good at:

Once upon a time you weren't as good at those things as you are now - and that was changed with practice, experience and experimentation. This is proof you built those skills.
How we think about stress changes the way it impacts us.
We can't get rid of stress & discomfort, but we can change the way we interpret them.
When has stress, fear, or discomfort robbed you of an opportunity to grow?

(we all have 900 examples. just list a few)

**TWO APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH STRESS & DISCOMFORT**

**Suppression**
When we feel nervous before a performance, over 90% of people believe the best approach is to calm down/to not be afraid. However, research shows that this approach:

- Can hurt performance
- Increases the stress
- Creates shame around the stress
- Lead to an avoidance of situations that create discomfort

**Reappraisal**
When we understand that feeling nervous before a big moment is actually ok and often useful – we will perform better and approach more learning situations.

We take the power away from our emotions not be suppressing and denying, but by understanding and accepting them.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Treat this as skill. Start small and get reps. Feel weird but ask the question, have the tough conversation, volunteer for the project out of your comfort zone

Give yourself and others permission to feel. Like we saw in the studies, simply telling people that it's ok to be nervous can have a positive impact on learning & performance
caring + uncertainty = discomfort

(every time)
TOPIC 04
TAKING ACTION
TIPS FOR TAKING & SUSTAINING ACTION

Kinda Good > Mastery
You don’t have to master a skill for it to have an impact on your life. You just need to get kinda good.

Of course mastery takes a really long time, getting kinda good does not. You can get kinda good in a weekend, a week, a month - depending on the skill.

The best news: once you’re kinda good, you’ll use the skill more and that’s the path to getting really good.

Practice > Additional Planning
Don’t get stuck searching for the perfect plan. Start, reflect, and adjust as you go.

Copy & Paste
It’s helpful to find a model - someone who is good at the thing you’re focused on learning. YouTube is a great place to find a model, but so is your team. Most likely there’s someone here that’s good at the skill you’re working on. Learn from them. Steal from them.

Expand Your Definition of Skills
More things are skills than we realize.

If someone can get better at it, it’s a skill. Which means you can get better at it too. Of course we’re not going to reach their level overnight, but we can definitely get better at it. Skills are built, not born.

Reflection is Underrated
A little reflection after practice can be even more valuable than additional practice.

Find time to ask simple questions:
- What can I learn from this?
- What’s working?
- What’s not working?

Find Existing Opportunities
Sometimes a little extra time is required to build your skill. But for most skills we get a lot of reps and opportunities throughout the day. When we’re in learner mode we can take advantage of these opportunities, and build the skill without having to add more to our plate.

Start Small
We’re chasing action here. Sometimes when we start too big we’ll either burn out or never even begin. Start small, get reps, and build from there. This is the pathway to more sustained action and habit formation.

Goals vs Skills
There’s a difference between goals and skills. Goals are great at providing direction and a target to aim at. However, it’s helpful to go deeper and identify the specific skills that will help you achieve the goal.
And the magic is, once you get into a learning mode, once you’re really trying to improve yourself on a regular basis, and acquiring new skills - you actually improve the machinery in your brain that controls learning for everything.

- Michael Merzenich - "The Father of Neuroplasticity"

**LEARNER ACTION PLAN**

Identify one specific & useful skill that would make you better at what you do:


Why do you want to get better at this skill?


How can you practice this a little bit more?


Spending more time in learner mode helps:

Foster psychological safety
Diminish the curse of expertise

Both improve our ability to lead & the learning environment as a whole
CONNECTING THE DOTS

Everything we’ve talked about is connected and designed to help you spend more time taking action and building skills. This benefits both you and the group, big time.

- Growth Mindset
- Reappraising Stress
- Framing

Taking Action

LEARNER

Get better at stuff
Get better at learning
Become more resilient
Foster psychological safety
Diminish the curse of expertise

individual benefits
leadership benefits
RESOURCE LIBRARY

LEARNER HUB

thearnerlab.com/materials
A private page on my website just for you. All of the materials from our workshop will be there + a link to download the workbook PDF

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Topic: Learning
Peak by Anders Ericsson
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The Art of Learning by Joshua Waitzkin

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The Upside of Stress by Kelly McGonigal
Emotional Agility by Susan David
Permission to Feel by Marc Brackett
The War of Art by Steven Pressfield
Rising Strong by Brene Brown

Topic: Leadership
Fearless Organization by Amy Edmondson
Culture Code by Daniel Coyle
Creativity Inc. by Ed Catmull

I'm on your team and here to help.

Email me at: trevor@thearnerlab.com if you ever have a question about any of this