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FECHA DE RECEPCIÓN: 18 DE MARZO DE 2015

FECHA DE EVALUACIÓN: 15 DE ABRIL DE 2015

FECHA DE ACEPTACIÓN: 26 DE MAYO DE 2015

# SEVEN FUNDAMENTAL LEARNINGS\*\*\*

*Siete aprendizajes fundamentales*

*Sete aprendizagens fundamentais*

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\*\*\* This paper relates to the theoretical framework in the research *Trayectorias laborales intergeneracionales y perspectivas sobre el trabajo docente universitario en Colombia* (labor intergenerational trajectories and a subsequent perspective on the university teaching work in Colombia), financed by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research of the Nueva Granada Military University; dated February of 2014 and to be published in February 2015



1)  $2x^2 = 10$   
2)  $3 + 7(x - 4) = 109$   
3)  $5x =$

Cómo citar este artículo: Cabrales Salazar, O. y Centeno, V. (2015). Seven fundamental learnings. *Revista de Educación y Desarrollo Social*, 9(2), 58-73.

## ABSTRACT

This paper states arguments on the matter of discussing which the seven basic learnings that are suggested by the current educational trends are. Through this document, there will be mentions of the abilities and skills that would allow the students to discern what kind of information they should use so as to perform ideally in an ever changing world. Due to the vast information available nowadays, and due to the many –and easy– ways one could acquire any kind of it, the teacher will have to play a major role in having students develop skills that

will let them surf freely through this ocean of knowledge. To begin with, we have based this discussion on the four basic learnings addressed by Jacques Delors: learning how to “know”, learning how to “do”, learning how to “live”, learning how to behave in a social context; all of which are joined in such way that they become a single “overall experience” that seeps in through life, at all levels, and to which three new skills are added in consideration of what the student should develop in the XXI Century.

**Key terms:** Basic learnings, creativity, self-acknowledgment, meta-cognition

## RESUMEN

El artículo argumenta al respecto de cuáles son los siete aprendizajes fundamentales que se sugieren para tener en cuenta en la educación del siglo XXI. Se mencionan las habilidades y competencias que les permitan a los estudiantes discernir sobre qué tipo de información deberán usar para desempeñarse en mundo en permanente cambio. Debido a la gran cantidad de información disponible y a la multiplicidad de formatos en que pueden ya encontrarla, será tarea primordial del educador desarrollar en sus discentes las habilidades que les permitan navegar con idoneidad en ese vacío de las corrientes informativas. Se parte, de los cuatro “aprendizajes fundamentales” o cuatro pilares de la educación que Jacques Delors propone: Aprender a conocer, aprender a hacer, aprender a vivir juntos y aprender a ser, a las que se le suman tres nuevas competencias en cuanto al ser, de tal forma que se conviertan en una “experiencia global” que permee toda la vida del estudiante.

**Palabras claves:** aprendizajes fundamentales, creatividad, autoconocimiento, metacognición.

## RESUMO

O artigo argumenta sobre quais são as sete aprendizagens fundamentais que são sugeridos para ser considerados na educação do século XXI. São mencionadas as aptidões e competências que lhes permitam aos estudantes discernir sobre que tipos de informação devem usar para desempenhar-se num mundo em constante mudança. Debido à grande quantidade de informação

disponível e à multiplicidade de formatos em que já podem encontrá-la, vai ser tarefa primordial do educador desenvolver em seus alunos as habilidades que lhes permitam navegar com idoneidade nesse vazio das correntes de informação. A partir dos quatro “aprendizagens fundamentais” ou quatro pilares da educação que Jacques Delors propõe: aprender a conhecer, aprender a fazer, aprender a viver juntos e aprender a ser, às que se acrescentam três novas competências enquanto ao ser, de forma que se tornem uma “experiência global” que permeiam toda a vida do estudante.

**Palavras-chave:** aprendizagens fundamentais, criatividade, autoconhecimento, metacognição.

## LEARNING HOW TO “KNOW”

But that which is inherent to mankind is the development of a representative intelligence and the power conveyed by such to reproduce the concrete universe throughout a symbolic one; enabling one to substitute real actions with structurally identical activities; this way having the latter take place in the Universe of symbols and, hence, in less onerous and much more flexible conditions.

**Louis Not**

To learn how to “know” is the first of the above mentioned skills that, in a certain way, Jacques Delors (1996) has helped us elucidate as a priority in the education of the Future. It is with this kind of learning that we mention the ability to discern

what is to be wrought in the student, alongside the self-acknowledgment and the tools to reach it. In this sense, the knowledge that helps us identify and use learning and the recognition of instruments given by it, should be a part of the daily experience. Not only including the indiscriminate accumulation of information, but the development of tools that will enable the student to select and validate such information, will be a relevant factor in their intellectual and professional performance, encouraging sound judgment and autonomy.

These factors will contribute to the formation of a general culture that, to the extent of its focus and coverage, will also allow its expansion towards a great amplitude of disciplines in the “Global Village”. To learn how to “know” also implies the exercising of memory, attention, and focus and the development of the structured thinking. In a society invaded by mass media, the student will have to develop the capacity to focus and to organize his/her brain functions so as to exercise this kind of thinking; becoming aware of one’s cerebral capabilities.

In that sense, it is necessary to have the student understand the importance of language as a constitutive cultural patrimony as well as understanding the human role as the only concrete language thinker; for it is only the human kind the one in which this necessary attributes have been translated into actual words. As it is stated by Professor Francisco Cajiao (2003) “language is, then, the crucial point of human experience, and its domain and use make up the possibility for individual and collective progress; for all which is human requires a language –of any kind- to be structured amongst the minds of people and within the social network in which things acquire their meaning” (s. p.).

It has to be taught that the ability to think can be permanently developed, urging our brains to exercise by following elemental procedures under a new process perspective and demanding a higher concentration and metacognition level. Scilicet, it has to be explained to the students how to carry out these processes of awareness by self-evaluating their learning pace.

People who think, reflect about their functions, their capacities, and their potential. They develop the ability to differentiate concepts, to be self-taught students, and to control their own impulses; they have the chance to be optimistic, to improve themselves continuously; motivating others.

That is why a deep learning of languages has to be reinforced through the whole educational experience; being such the main mean of communication for concepts and ideas. Language is the main tool through which thought is deployed; including the cognitive and metacognitive skills development on elemental procedures when aiming at grasping and applying knowledge into logic-verbal reasoning for the construction of strategies that facilitate the solution of structured problems.

It is common today to talk of a crisis, the world discusses the existence of a humongous breach between teachers and newly introduced University students. It is due to the persistent ignorance of language and the proper use of it through today’s technology. “There is a countless number of indicators that point to the complexity of this crisis, including the growing difficulties when teaching a juvenile culture, raised among the manipulation of visual cybernetic and media symbols, how to read and write” (Torres, 2001, p. 43),

and not by teaching them through the use of phonemes, the alphabet, the words; through the use of properly written texts.

As it is stated by the same author:

There is a profound crisis in the understanding of the pedagogical object. That, which could be named as an endemic crisis of systems, evidenced in a real and symbolic dislocation between the messages of teachers and students and, by the same way, evidencing a dislocation between the messages of the new generations (what has been called the 'Nintendo generation') and the adult generations (Torres, 2001, p. 43).

Before such circumstances, it is necessary for teachers to stop regretting the literacy difficulties of their students; for it is a fact that the previous generations, perhaps more stable and more fond to long readings, is not coming back; and there is no point in trying to keep on educating students into a context that is now almost extinct; a context of which teachers still feel nostalgic, a context in which the speech and the oratory, alongside writing, were the base for learning; a context where certain life codes were only accessible once people reached adulthood. That is why it is, not only highly irrelevant, but stubborn, to persist on educating our students' literacy for a world that is not coming back for, if it is possible in today's society to "triumph" by learning from different sources and interpreting different kinds of language; for which the young have better predispositions and skills due to they having been born and raised

nearby them; whilst some of us, the "digital immigrants", have had to hardly, and badly, learn, with certain disdain and sometimes from our students themselves, how to cope with such new tools.

Likewise, it is also important to train the teacher in the use and appropriation of new technologies, having University level education encourage the impulse to remain a learner for as long as we remain living (Aspinwall, Staudinger, 2007). This type of learning understood, as explained by the European Union, as:

The development of the human potential in people through a constant support process that encourages and trains our learning subjects to acquire knowledge, values, skills, and the understanding of things that are to be necessary so as to become able to apply them freely and in a creative and joyful way; no matter the role, circumstances and environments they see themselves in throughout their life (Longworth, 2011, p. 4).

## LEARNING HOW TO KNOW YOURSELF

The first approach made to this topic was done by Foucault, through self-care and explained as follows:

In the first place, it is a general attitude, a way of behaving in regard of oneself, the others and the world. It is a determined form of attention; a certain perspective. To worry about yourself implies that you displace your sight from the exterior world and into the inner one; it designs a

way of acting that relates to the self and through which one can be modified, purified, transformed and transfigured. It also implies a “corpus” that defines a certain way of being, an attitude, which turns it into an extraordinarily important phenomena for the history of the practices of subjectivity” (Foucault, 1994, p. 35).

Socrates was one of the first to urge the ancient Greeks to start a self-acknowledgment process. Deprived of a holy book, the Greeks were forced to become exegetic analysts; as mentioned by Cuadros: *“the lack of a holy book: the fact of one having to live without being prescribed some specific desires and hopes, led them to better interpret both, themselves and their world. That “lack of knowledge, the non-existent prescription of a truth led them to become hermeneutic thinkers of their selves”* (Cuadros, 2009). Foucault (1994) states it as follows: The subject is not substance per se. It is a form of it and, as such, it is not always the same [...], what matters to the discussion is, precisely, the historical constitution of these different forms of the subject in relation to the game of truth. The latter implies a thorough knowledge of the self, focusing on the truth and recording a detailed inventory of what has been. According to Saravia (2009), Ricoeur expresses it in the following way:

For Ricoeur, the subject cannot be experienced in an immediate way –as it has been stated- unlike the Cartesian Cogitos that, as we think, is founded as the first truth. Access to oneself occurs through the long and poetic way, scilicet, it undergoes an

interpretation, a reading that characterizes the indirect access to the inner self. The subject will reach the experience and the knowledge of the self through a reflective movement, a comeback to oneself, based on a long trip mediated by the others; by the narrative and the world (p. 40).

By reaching the knowledge of the self, the conscious of such is developed; that understood as:

The ability to feel and perceive, a fascinating competence, real and natural, as it is strongly bond to life, behavior, and the physiology of the more developed, brain given, organisms; particularly, the human brain, whose main traits are: temporality, activity, content, unity and quality; being based on the classic “mind as a stream” metaphor by William James (Diaz, 2008, p. 15).

Self-acknowledgment transcends the mere knowledge of the self, for it refers to the evolution of the inner conscience; in the sense that it is connected to a superior –divine, if pleased- conscience; giving the person, and for the particular case, the student, a sense of security and trust not given by any other competence.

Developing the conscience of the self, is the ability to get to have a certain acknowledgment for the individual as different and opposed to most external realities, as well as recognizing it as the author of any executed thought when so perceived. In summary, it is the ability to identify oneself as an individual subject, which implies

having a deep knowledge of what one is and who one is (Cabral, 2010). Heidegger, as written in his *letter to humanism*, warns that the human being must only be thought of in the existent relationship between the being and the inner self, he stated that it is the man the one who listens to this self, and that it is not by the individual means that one can grasp one's destiny but, otherwise, by becoming true to the self thereby revealed (Heidegger, 2000, pp. 259-297).

Scilicet, the concept of self-acknowledgment is understood as the "faculty of the mind to register its processes and recreate a depiction of its related organism" (Díaz, 2008, p. 15), which surges from the thorough exercise of introspection, from the focus of conscience to the inner self; allowing the student to augment any existent self-acknowledgment as in the proper care for the self and for the surrounding community, for which it is important to become aware of oneself, of one's physical and spiritual particularity, for that demands the ontological knowledge of the individual being, the others and of one's reality.

Foucault (1994) mentioned the "care for oneself" when trying to explain the techniques, procedures and ends that an ethical subject may constitute in a certain introspective relationship. He began by addressing the care for oneself as the basic principle for ethical reasonability and at the same time the necessary conditions for philosophy, as knowledge and as a way of living. "Philosophy is the group of principles and practices which with one can count and that can be put to the service of society so as to care properly of oneself and others" (Foucault, 1994, p. 61). As it can be seen, caring for

oneself is an attitude rewarding for the individual one and the others, as well as being itself a relationship with the universe. Having students learn about the importance of caring for oneself allows them to circumscribe that part in them that defines their position in time (now and tomorrow), also getting them to set a certain personality in relation with moral accomplishment; they reach control, they transform themselves; they perfect themselves.

As stated by Moll (2014):

The more conscience your students acquire, the higher the degree of independence they will gain; displaying a better ability for decision making and conflict solving. Furthermore, they will be enabled to solve their own conflicts by themselves for the degree of self-confidence thereby reached will be much higher, as will be their self-perception and self-esteem. When you educate a student, not from knowledge, but from the responsibility implied by that knowledge, you are making them become more independent and, hence, more free; for their ability to choose will also be better. Do not forget that students will never improve by having them follow your commands; a command is not able to create choice, while a personal responsibility is (s. p.).

## LEARNING HOW TO "DO"

What we pretend with this concept is to go beyond the formation for employment most universities are now dedicated to. The constant

change in developed and developing economies -being every time turned towards an increase in the productivity of machines and towards the ability of improving their production, distribution, and sales cycles- has set the pace in the process of unhurriedly replacing human workforce with machines (Gorz, 1991; Offe, 1985; Rifkin, 2004). The great employment crises serve as an exhibit for that phenomena. Education must then set its focus on the creation of entrepreneurship and new employment and, above all, it shall conceive self-employment as a viable alternative. The trend of intellectualizing labor demands a modification in the educational structures so that students develop self-control and discipline, so they learn and unlearn by themselves, becoming competitive sailors in an ever changing world.

To learn how to “do” also implies the development of generic competences, for the simple idea of a competent professional as the one who possesses the necessary knowledge and skills that permit them perform successfully in a certain profession has been left behind and has been understood as the comprehension of the personal competence as a complex phenomenon, which assesses the potentialities of an individual to direct their actions within the exercise of a profession with initiative, flexibility and autonomy, in heterogenic and diverse scenarios, based on the integration of knowledge, abilities, motives, and values that are evidenced in an efficient, ethic, and socially committed professional performance. In the words of Delors (1996), it is not enough to know and to know how to do, it is also necessary to be professional.

Aiming at those effects, it is necessary to develop in our students the basic or transversal competences, as well as considering this competence approach as a consolidated and attractive alternative created to promote University education so that it, altogether, harmonizes the needs of people, the industry, and society; setting a new paradigm in the existing relationship between the Education and Production systems in which certain consequences, regarding the areas of labor market and human resources management, are set towards their improvement. Some of the most basic competences would be: conflict solving, information management, teamwork, oral communication, written communication, critical thinking, analytical thinking, and lateral thinking; among others.

## LEARNING HOW TO LIVE TOGETHER

Before the grudging of indifference and of some of the violence generating factors, education must be conceived so as to encourage knowledge and respect to others, their culture, and their transcendence. This must include respect towards those different forms without ever trying to change them, promoting the capacities to understand and recognize the other from the alterity; as another human being in the Universe. Such is the philosophical view of Emmanuel Lévinas, whose work claimed ethics (in the study of respect and the recognition of the other, where it is founded on the personal encounter had with the proximal individuals; and the responsibility born from it; even before one becomes aware of their own existence) as the original philosophy.



Levinas will propose that we rethink our view of philosophy; looking at it not as the fraternal love for wisdom, but otherwise, as wisdom being born from love. For everything which defines the human being is not the being per se, nor the interest on it, but the disinterest itself. Hence, we are to distance from the traditional thought of a cogitos, the system of the established and the logic, for these terms shaped the western lifestyle and the way it was thought to its current state, and recreate a philosophy based on difference for the being itself is not the most important concept, whilst the true difference between one another is (Gil, 2007, s. p.).

That alterity, according to Levinas, consists on the acknowledgment of the other to its fullest; for I can only exist once I am named and recognized by someone else. This kind of thought must start, as previously seen, from knowledge itself; where the main role of the University will be to ease the young student the ability to acquire self-acknowledgment, meaning, to help him discover who he or she really is; being places in the position of others, understanding their reactions and needs.

That is why we should worry about each other and see them as someone we face, for, every other way, my existence is owed to the responsibility of one another for we are the result of someone else's care. Thanks to that, we can feel non-substitutable because, even though there are

others, such are entirely different to us. It was like this that Levinas proposed a humanism directed to another man, a man responsible of the other (Gil, 2007, s. p.).

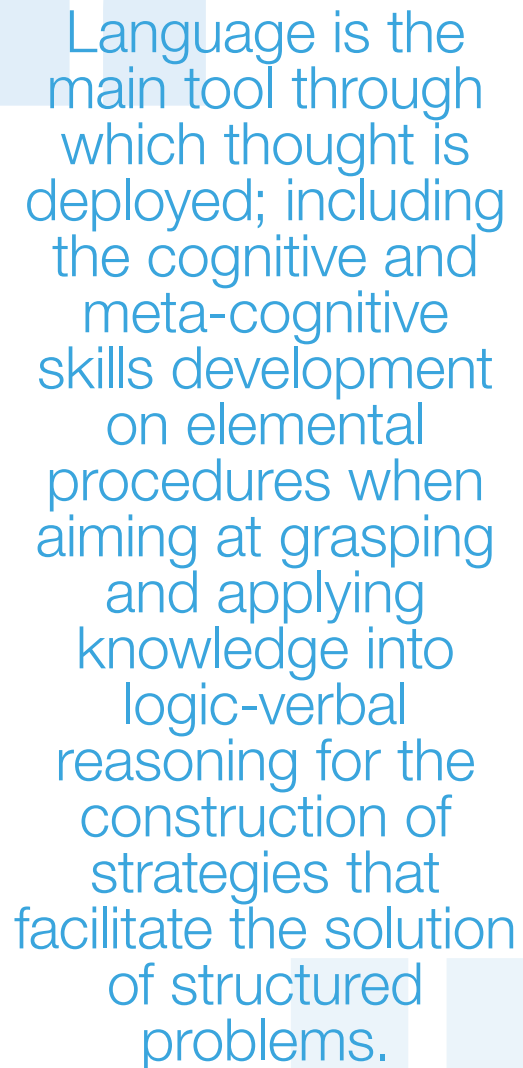
In such way, we can conclude that alterity itself is a fundamental attribute in the exercise of teaching, for it leads to the student learning about the circumstances of respect that must be inserted amongst any human relationship and, furthermore, the condition of vulnerability and defenselessness that other human beings have been thrown to by the neoliberal economy system. This sensibility will make it more viable to learn how to live together.

Alongside the previously mentioned competences, being capable of generating an integral development in the student, promoting his or her cognitive, professional, disciplinary and human skills, and develop them so as to learn how to harmonically live together. The acknowledgement given to the other promotes affection within the surrounding individuals; this serves as an additional element in the teacher-student relationship.

Human affection is one of the most relevant studies addressed by the positive psychology. It has awakened a great interest in the scientific research areas within the pedagogics in the later years, in fact, some trends state this to be integrated to knowledge, motivation, and neurophysiological functioning themselves. Opposite of the perception had prior to such trends, which always considered affection and cognition to be antagonistic and, naturally, different, for it was, and has been, widely thought that these were comprehended by separated brain channels.

Recent research have shown that affection has a positive effect on cognition and has indicated that an emotionally healthy can greatly provide thought, creativity and learning developments with benefits. One being the ability to activate the capacities that lie underneath innovation and creativity; the ability to solve conflicts and, indubitably, the ability to provide solutions for the more general troubles (Isen, 2007).

Researchers such as Alice Isen (2007) have managed to document evidence that suggests that positive affection would, not only, improve the development of innovation and problem solving skills, through the use of creativity, but furthermore, it would help the individual organize memories, promoting cognitive optimization processes for the sake of such improvements. For instance, the studies have shown that people who count with a certain degree of positive affection, can be attentive to more alternatives when looking for a solution within the context of a certain problem; such an individual would try to find more solutions to the more difficult adversities, counting with a broader criteria system when making decisions, so as to obtain safer and more pleasant results, and being capable of undergoing negotiating processes in which integration is required, also, it becomes more plausible that the individual would be interested in negotiations beyond the economic aspect; even beyond the concept of a compensation; motivated by otherness, thinking in a more flexible, open, way about others (Cabrales, 2010, p. 251).



Language is the main tool through which thought is deployed; including the cognitive and meta-cognitive skills development on elemental procedures when aiming at grasping and applying knowledge into logic-verbal reasoning for the construction of strategies that facilitate the solution of structured problems.

Love and affection are topics that psychology still isn't prone to consider as a rigorous discipline; although the latest trends in the fields of scientific production on human potential have agreed on the importance that these feelings have when referring the development of intelligence and happiness of students: there is no motivation more effective, determining, and definite than love itself, the affection projected towards other human beings and, fundamentally, the one projected towards students (Aspinwall and Staudinger, 2007).

## TO LEARN HOW TO "BE"

In a world of constant change and suffering of a high dehumanization level, freedom is only attained through the liberty of the soul, and such liberty is only conquered upon the conscience of oneself. This implies that one is to have the deep and confident conviction that belonging to the human species, means belonging to the only specie known to mankind capable of defining the fate of many other life forms; something both, terrifying and exceptional.

In that sense, as members of the only life known (for now) to inhabit within this Universe, this Earth, it is necessary that the student realizes that we are all to remain amongst the essence of this planet and the Universe itself for, as does our conscience, the Universe is ever-expanding; ever-transforming. It is inside us that it, and all that exists, survives; it is inside us that we find our origins; infinity. We, as humans, are to understand that as long as we do not feel connected to this existence we are being shaped in and are bond to this infinite Universe, we will not cease to destroy the world we live in.

Being, as the act of being *per se*, relates to the human condition of corporeity, thus it is set by the fact that we possess a body that comes from the Earth, from which the attribute of earthliness is born. It can then be said that "we are ludic beings captured in a chrysalis made of cocoons containing the whole of existence in the Universe" (Jimenez, 2008), which implies that we inherently carry the essence of life, Earth, and existence.

Quoting Zambrano may suit the closure of this appendix best, for as he said "The word human has its etymological roots in the Latin voice *humus* meaning Earth, and the term culture has its own in the word *cultivare* meaning to grow, or to cultivate the soil. Humanity, let it be said, is the cultivated *humus*, which would etymologically be then related to the word civilization, meaning that humanity would be in the process of moving from the cultivated soil towards the urbanized lands; *civitas*" (Zambrano, 2007).

## TO LEARN HOW TO CREATE

As important as media and technology are today, for they provide the student with the tools needed to be creative and create, it is necessary to help students develop the abilities required for creation processes through the use of schemes of thought expansion and contraction, mind activation techniques used to stimulate the production of original and non-conventional ideas, and lateral thought schemes to design concrete and abstract products and, finally, help them develop the ability to apply the concepts and procedures learned throughout their University and daily life.

The development of nations within the current context of globalization, is based on the creative and innovative capacities of their men. The changes that have been lived through the past decade by the enterprising companies are the result of decisions made by capable leaders who were determined to promote innovation and creativity as tools for progress. The need of such capabilities within companies is becoming evident for the reason that they allow them to reduce costs, time, and the amount of other resources invested in favor of optimal production and distribution; they make planning, organizing, directing, and controlling effective practices; meaning they enable a company to fulfill its objectives. They all constitute fundamental elements for the success of a business venture, which, in the end, benefits consumers, users, and citizens in general (Castillo, 2005, s. p.).

It seems that crises force people, families and companies to find solutions for their problems. When they see their resources grow scarce, the economic entities have to make decisions so as to being able to cope with the extreme circumstances and remain standing. Reproducing creativity within students requires the simulation of real life situations that involve crises where they can freely come up with original ideas without fearing rejection or judgement. There must then be provided the necessary environmental elements for the alumni to cultivate the creative attitude so that ideas can be

presented and innovational methods can be designed; so they *“think out of the box”* and dear break the traditional schemes.

We have, in example, the concept of “lateral thinking” devised by De Bono (2008), which is defined as the group of thinking methods that allow the student to transform knowledge, generate different points of view and increase the levels of creative production. It gathers a certain group of theories on “divergent thinking”, which are far from obvious and complicated to apply under the perspective of a traditional logic. This kind of thinking is concentrated in producing new ideas and in putting our perspectives under the lens of change. It is known that our brain addresses faced problems in a rational way, it simply is the way we have been taught to do so, remaining a dominant trend in the western culture. De Bono, then, sets a difference between the creative and the reactive thinking. The latter, in which he considers the most part of western tradition is based on, consists of dialoguing and dialectic argumentation, and where the usages are aimed at being able of replying to an interlocutor; they do so, however, no intending to produce ideas, as does the creative thinking in which the production of ideas can result without the need of argumentation.

We support our replies with that which we learn, in a historical sense and with a purely logical approach, for the aim of history, known as the compilation of facts that have taken place in the western world, has been built chronologically on a time line that sorts events as if they had not really been simultaneous, more prone to chaos than to such “historical organization”. This way

of sorting facts and historical events has also influenced the way we think and the way we try to solve problems, and so we have tried to organize ideas within time, in a sequence, one after the other; when we should probably consider their simultaneousness and chaos.

De Bono (2008), urges us to apply a different perspective when solving problems and to seek for other alternatives rather than the traditional way of logical thinking; as it is greatly limited when it comes to finding solutions to new problems that demand new approaches based on a more creative thinking. The term “lateral thinking” was coined so as to differentiating it from the “logical thinking” which he also named “vertical thinking”.

The ways “lateral thinking” work are shown when strange situations, absurd or illogical, to our brain require an explanation. We expose something that must be solved, something apparently difficult, but when we think of it in a “lateral” way; being the avoidance of traditional logic, we end up facing the old with the current, and both, with the production of new ideas.

Lateral thinking acts by releasing the mind from the polarizing effect of old ideas and by stimulating the new ones; and it does so throughout acumen, but above all, through creativity and cleverness; all in all, mental processes to which it is deeply related. Instead of waiting for these three traits to manifest spontaneously, De Bono introduces the use of lateral thinking in a conscious and deliberate way, as a technique to broaden the spectrum of brain functionalities (De Bono, 2008, s. p.).

We finish this part of the paper by quoting De Bono’s book *New Think*:

Most scientists could learn much about lateral thinking from artists, but many artists would be most uncomfortable if they had to follow lateral thinking through its proper end. Those people who believe that the artist’s way of living is the highest expression of lateral thinking have not yet understood the nature of the process. Lateral thinking does not intend to break the rigid and accepted ways something is approached, but to encourage the search of alternatives that are real and objective, not anarchic. This resource is but a mean to escape, not a goal. However, lateral thinking would serve a poor use if it only produced a new order rather than an old one. Its objective is to discover new ideas, simpler and more effective, but without affecting the fluency that allows an idea to be perfect through the pass of time (De Bono, 1985, p. 37).

## LEARN HOW TO “RESIST”

Today life, conditioned by success and in which everything has been structured for the benefit of a triumphant, has imposed new challenges to students who, perhaps facing failure, may be overwhelmed by it. Resilience, of the topics addressed by the psychology of human potential, serves as an example to teach students to persevere and remain standing before failure; in a world where the one who wins is always praised while the rest are forgotten. These studies have appeared since the

mid 1990s as a result of the research conducted by authors such as Martin Seligman, P. Baltes and Ursula Staudinger; all who have related the development of human potential with the concepts of wisdom, optimism, growth, resilience, altruism, successful aging, and the positive aspects of the human behavior; among other things. Although, the constitution of this new discipline has been rather tortuous, for as was stated by Lisa Aspinwall (2007) and Staudinger herself (2007), the psychological studies have been, in a greater way, dedicated to pathologies than to the research of the positive aspects of welfare and health.

One reason that the approaches in repair and healing psychology have been historically predominant could come from a question of values. It is much easier to define the desired adaptive change direction if the goal of this change is to restore a normal or previous state. On the contrary, it is much more difficult to define a human potential if one considers the psychological changes more than the return to the previous levels of functioning (Aspinwall and Staudinger, 2007, p. 28).

Evidently, it seems simpler to bring back the human mind to known states of normality and relative balance than to take it to unknown standards of productivity and efficiency in which it is turned into its own cure and can, even, prevent different kinds of pathologies related to depression, stress or sorrow.

The studies on human potential are related to positive psychology, and it can be defined as:

[...] an emerging branch of psychology that seeks to understand, through scientific research, the processes underlying the positive qualities and emotions of human beings, so long ignored by psychology. The purpose of this interest is none other than to provide new insights into the human psyche not only to help solve the problems of mental health suffered by individuals, but also to improve quality of life and wellbeing, all without departing from the most rigorous scientific methodology; itself, all health science. Positive psychology represents a new perspective from which to understand the psychology and mental health that comes to complement and support the existing knowledge (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 7).

In fact, more and more scholars on psychology are expanding their fields of research into the positive aspects of health and wellness rather than the negatives such as depression and disease. After arguing that scientific and organizational psychology has focused mainly on pathology, repairing and processes for interviewing people recent authors like Seligman and others made a call to turn back to the study of human potential and protection.

The purpose of using this new discipline is based on the need to argue about how the psychology of human potential works with a greater emphasis on resilience to failures, all being necessary skills that should be developed were one willing to improve life quality.

Staudinger (2007) defines human potential as “the ability to flexibly implement many different resources, however necessary, to solve a problem or to work towards a goal. This potential seems to arise discriminatory facilities or algorithms that help people benefit from the optimal characteristics or regulatory mechanisms, at the right time and the right degree.”

As it was previously mentioned, and in consideration to the multiple variables of a chaotic world involved in the development of school activities, it is sometimes necessary to consider the possibility of failure. If, as we have said, the world is now immersed in a constant evolution including untimely changes, today’s student should be able to overcome failure. “So, it was established that resilient people have a great sense of commitment, a strong sense of control over events and are more open to changes in life, while they tend to interpret stressful and painful experiences as a part of existence. It is generally considered to be a multifactorial construct with three main components: commitment, control and challenge. The concept of hardiness is closely related to existentialism” (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

## CONCLUSIONS

Consciousness itself is a process that begins with early childhood, when the child realizes that his image in the mirror responds and corresponds to a name, which will differentiate him or her from others and where ones structure will be forged into an identity (Cabrales, 2010). That first discovery is more elemental, it

is an ever ongoing process with a never-ending nature, because of the constant changes and rediscoveries to which it will be subjected. So, learning to develop self-awareness involves giving students guidelines for knowledge acquiring and evaluating and fro becoming aware of the changes that occur while identifying the causes and consequences of their actions.

Albeit, humankind is still to discover the principles that are yet unknown when it comes to the views we have about intelligence, knowledge and learning. What is so far known is that such act in diverse and multi-formal ways, hence, teachers are to reassess the way they approach the learning experiences lived by the alumni, as well as design strategies that promote a more efficient method for doing so. The aforementioned statements are supported on the idea that it is Education, in the end and above of all human sciences and disciplines, the one study that truly reaches and transforms one’s essence, and it is learning the only process through which one is capable to meet the true self.

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