**Accelerated Learning Techniques**

From a neurological perspective, there are few things that are better for the development of true intelligence than to learn multiple subjects. This encourages the use of multiple brain areas and by learning lots of different subjects you can use them *together* – thereby enhancing the interconnectivity of your brain. Learning itself triggers the release of dopamine, BDNF and other neurotransmitters that enhance plasticity – meaning that the more we learn, the easier learning becomes.

And having multiple skills means we can thrive in multiple different situations. This is one benefit of being a freelance writer – I’ve learned countless skills from how to pick a lock to how to fix the toilet!

And if you want to learn more, faster, then you only need apply a range of ‘accelerated learning’ techniques. Here are some of the best…

**The Feynman Technique**

The Feynman Technique is a mental model named for Richard Feynman. The aim is to learn and to increase your depth of knowledge by making sure you can *teach* someone else the subject. The idea is that if you can’t explain a subject simply, you don’t fully understand it.

To this end, Feynman suggests a flow chart of steps.

Start with the concept and then ‘explain like I’m five’ (ELI5). If you don’t understand, pinpoint the gap in your knowledge. Then try using an analogy to explain that (which actually taps into the way we understand the world – using embodied cognition) and then simplify that concept.

Then repeat the cycle.

Writing an explanation of the topic you’re trying to learn can often help to this end.

**DiSSS**

Tim Ferriss, author of *The 4 Hour Workweek* has a different method for learning subjects more quickly. He calls this the DiSSS method.

The phrase is of course an acronym, which stands for:

* Deconstructing (what are the minimal learnable units?)
  + iNterviewing (asking people who have already mastered the skill)
  + Reversal (looking at the end goal – for instance, Tim recommends learning finishing moves *first* in chess and then working backwards to learn how to get to that point)
* Selection (which 20% of the minimal blocks should I focus attention on?)
* Sequencing (what is the best order to learn said blocks in?)
* Stakes (how can you set up stakes to motivate yourself to keep learning)

**The First 20 Hours**

*The First 20 Hours* is a book by Josh Kaufman, that explains an alternative accelerated learning method. The central conceit is to aim for a ‘target performance level’ or more specifically, to know what you want to achieve through learning. In particular, if you want to learn to code, then don’t set out to ‘learn to code’ which is much too vague, but instead set out to create a *specific* goal. Not only is this much more intrinsically motivating with more of an emotional drive, but it also gives you much more structure and it shows you precisely which skills you need to develop.

**Conclusion**

Combine these methods with adequate interest and with strategies to increase brain plasticity and you can rapidly accelerate your learning and become a far more formidable mind.