

Robin Sharma – February 22, 2011

## Why Learners Are Heroes



On an airplane. Reading about psychology and education.

Came across this quote from American psychiatrist Thomas Szasz: *“Every act of conscious learning requires the willingness to suffer an injury to one’s self-esteem. That is why young children, before they are aware of their own self-importance, learn so easily; and why older persons, especially if vain or important, cannot learn at all.”*

Powerful. Transformational. And that’s why I salute the brave thinkers among us.

The very act of learning something new disrupts the way you’ve always seen things-and the way you’ve always been. A fresh idea pushes you out of your comfort zone and threatens the very foundations you’ve built your view of the world on.

That’s scary for nearly everyone. Truly frightening for the vast majority. So rather than experience any form of discomfort, most people regress – and return to their Safe Harbor of The Known. It feels better. Seems safer. But, in truth, it’s not.

The problem is that refusing to learn and grow is the beginning of the end.

Leadership-and life itself-is all about making tomorrow better than today. And stepping into your next level of excellence with every passing hour. To cling to the thoughts and ways of performing that you’ve always known is to resign yourself to being average. And mediocre. A spectator versus in the game.

Neuroscientists will tell you that a single new piece of learning actually changes the very nature of your brain. The circuitry shifts. And the wiring expands. But in order to reach these new lands, we must lose sight of the shore-even for just a little while.

And that takes guts.

And a pure bit of leadership.