

Future Learning Goals: My Real Future

Until very recently, I never really saw myself as a scholar, at least not in the formal sense. I've always enjoyed reading philosophy and history, but more as a pastime, less as a profession. I'm drawn to the philosophy behind why and how we learn. This essay will reflect on my understanding of the changes I've gone through over the past few years as an adult learner, and how my visions are circling into focus... Clarity.

If I'm gazing out around 7 years from the time I'm writing this, with the proper strategy, I should be able to attain the goals I will set forth in this moment. The first step is to complete my Master of Arts in Education at Michigan State University. The plan is to roll my experience into launching a new private high school in a semi-rural area of Thailand. I'll be responsible for developing curriculum in a charming and professional environment. I'll find ballast with a group of like-minded professionals, and with effort, improve the lives of an eager student body and teaching staff. I would like to carry on with these responsibilities as I work on my second goal.

I don't believe the current level of momentum I've developed will allow me to discontinue my scholarly pursuits. My second aspiration is to approach a hybrid doctoral program focusing on educational psychology and educational technology. If you asked my five years ago whether this were something I felt myself capable of, I would have been uncertain. I am now more certain. I encountered the TPACK model while studying my master's degree. I have included a link for brevity, but essentially, my understanding is the model focuses our knowledge, ability to convey our knowledge, and the ability to do so using technology into one flowing overlapping rhythm.

The logic of this framework has helped me develop a more concentrated plan for my future. Until recently I thought if you were to approach technology in a scholarly sense you would need to be some kind of master programmer destined for a corner office in Silicon Valley. I may not be what most would consider a tech expert, but I've always been good at showing people how to do things, even if I myself am doing these things for the first time along side them. I credit this skillset to my 30 years spent in wargaming as a hobby. I grew up painting and gaming with Games Workshop products: Warhammer, Middle Earth, Hero Quest. In my adolescence I was at times shy about my *nerd* persona. Looking back now I've a near epiphany regarding what I have learned: patience, strategy, and what I believe complements pedagogy in such a profound way, the ability to show others how to perform complex tasks. The rule sets in these fantasy worlds are huge and expansive. They involve a great deal of thought and practice. Showing a small group of teenagers how to perform them in real time, whether 20 some odd years ago or today, is nothing short of a major feat in critical thinking. I think with the proper focus and guidance I can complete a hybrid doctoral program in five years' time. This will enable me to jump into my legendary quest.

I've spent the past decade cultivating a network of professional contacts in South East Asia. Over the next seven years I plan to take what I've learned and maneuver into launching a department of education at a university I'm associated with in the country I currently reside in. I already have willing partners who made this epic suggestion. I'm really more of a willing actor in their grand vision, which I believe is helping to construct an attainable result. They're serious and need my assistance. It is now my responsibility to increase my knowledge, abilities, and credentials. Does this sound like a lofty goal? Certainly, it does. Great things are born of this sort of imagination. I know myself. If I leverage my full potential all these things will come to pass.

I feel at times like I hardly know myself from my past. I am excited to know myself in the future. In the preceding sections, I have laid out the framework of what I believe are my future goals. With a great deal of effort, and perhaps even a little bit of magic, I should see these goals come to fruition. I'm dreaming, but I'm focused at the same time.