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Schooling is Not Education | John Taylor Gatto

Speaker 1: Welcome to the Effortless English Show, with the world's number one English teacher, A.J. Hoge. Where A.J.'s more than forty million students worldwide finally learn English, once and for all, without the boring textbooks, classrooms, and grammar drills. Here's A.J. with a quick piece to help you learn to speak fluent English effortlessly.

A.J. Hoge: Hello, and welcome to the Effortless English Show. Today we discuss schooling and education. Schooling and education. I have another interview from John Taylor Gatto, the number one teacher in New York, when he was a teacher. This was several years ago. He got an award for the number one teacher. Great guy, has a lot of great ideas about school and education and learning. We're going to listen to more of an interview with Mr. John Taylor Gatto. Later in the show, I will also be answering your Twitter questions. Yes, you can ask me questions on Twitter and I will answer.

Today I just finished, just now, just finished recording the new VIP lessons for next month. I've got some cool lessons for you next month. Next month I've got a speech from Tony Robbins, super motivational speaker and leader, Tony Robbins. Now, Tony Robbins is not easy to understand. He speaks very, very, very quickly. In this new VIP lesson, I help you to understand all of the vocabulary that Tony uses, and I help you to speed up your listening so you can understand fast speech.

Also in these new VIP lessons, I teach you a powerful secret to improve your success five times faster, five times faster in anything. Success with English, success with relationships, money, exercise, doesn't matter. Powerful, powerful. That's coming next month for VIP members only.

John Taylor Gatto discusses the difference between schooling and education. He says, "Schooling and education are not the same. They're not the same thing." How are they different? Let's listen.

John Taylor G.: But schooling is not education. Schooling's an attempt to write the one right way for everybody. In that sense, it's an evil thing, because there's infinite variation in humanity.

A.J. Hoge: Ah, love that. That's so good. Schooling is the plan for there to be one right way for everybody, one way for everybody, right? It's like a factory. He says, "That is evil." He uses the same word that I use to describe schools. Evil, he says, "That is evil because human beings are infinitely different." Every single human being is different. We're not the same. To force, to force children or adults to learn in exactly the same way is evil. Let's continue listening.

John Taylor G.: Confining people in rooms and monitoring every minute of their lives in those rooms couldn't possibly fit into any definition of education that's come from any corner of the world.

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- A.J. Hoge: Ah, another point. He says, "Confining people like prison, forcing people, children especially, to be indoors in a room all day and to be monitored, to be watched, so that everything they do is watched all day long." He's like, "That is not education in any way, if we look at all different parts of the world in history, that is not natural. That is not what education, true education, is or was." That's schooling, to be watching, watching, so they're always watched, always monitored. That's prison, not education.
- John Taylor G.: None. I'm going to give you each a copy of this.
- A.J. Hoge: Next, you're going to hear a narrator, so you'll hear a woman talking. This interview is from a documentary, a short video about John Taylor Gatto. You'll hear him teaching, and then you'll hear the woman describing what he says. Then you'll hear John Taylor Gatto speak some more. At the end, you'll hear one of his students, one of his young students. He's a middle school teacher, so his students are about thirteen years old. All right, so let's listen to that, and then I'll talk more.
- Narrator: Gatto works hard finding ways to get students out of school. He teaches in the classroom because he has to, but his real curriculum is a combination of independent study, class field projects, community service, and apprenticeships.
- A.J. Hoge: Okay, wait, I'm going to stop there, because that's so great. This describes the positive. I have been talking a lot about the negative parts of school, attacking schools because they are evil, evil. What's the alternative? She talks about how he teaches, and I agree. Such great things. She says, "He teaches in the classroom because he must." That's where the teaching happens nowadays, although he quit. This is an old documentary. He doesn't teach in schools anymore. He did what I did, he quit. He left. Anyway, then she describes how he teaches. He teaches using a combination of apprenticeships, field trips, projects, mentorships. He tries to get his students out of the classroom as much as possible, into the real world. An apprenticeship, that is where students, doesn't matter, young or old, is connected to a master, a teacher. A master, though, someone who's good, great teacher, a coach. There's a strong relationship. It's a strong personal relationship. It's one-to-one. Not a classroom of one teacher with thirty. No, it's one-to-one. That's an apprenticeship, and that is the very, very, very, very old, traditional human way of education. Apprenticeships, that goes back thousands of years, and that is a very effective, true method of education.
- Projects, so projects, not tests, not textbook learning. Projects means you actually create something in the real world. You might actually build something physically, like you might build a little building or do something like that, or you might create an actual business or build an actual website that is useful, or whatever. There are many, many, many projects, but the key thing about projects, real world, not in some classroom. No, a project must work in the real world. It's something you create in the real world. So projects, project-based learning. Again, another powerful method of true education.

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Field trips, again, a field trip, it just means going out into the world to observe, to watch how things work in the real world. The focus of his education method and philosophy is getting out in the real world, pushing the students, getting them out of the schools, get them out of the classrooms, which are evil, and into the real world, connecting with real people, doing real things. That's how you learn. You learn by doing, not by memorizing a bunch of stuff from a book.

Narrator: Because he says, "Only in real life experiences can students teach themselves and test themselves."

A.J. Hoge: "Only in real life experiences can students teach themselves and test themselves." This is our final point.

Student: You can't really be taught. You got to teach yourself. He can only open the door for you. You got to learn what you want to learn. That's how it should be.

A.J. Hoge: Ah, and that is one of his young students, so smart, saying, "You got to teach yourself. You must teach yourself." He, meaning the teacher, the coach, the teacher, "Can only open the door for you. But you have to do it. You have to learn what you want to learn." This is active education, active learning. That's a thirteen-year-old kid saying that. That is amazing. That's so fantastic. That is the opposite of school, the opposite of schooling, where everything is passive, where the teacher decides what you learn, and then you must do it. You sit there. Where the teacher's the big boss telling you what to do, you must study this, there will be a test on this, you must memorize this and this, you must do page four, five and six, you must do this worksheet, you must write this paper. This is passive, passive, passive. That's not education. That's control, that's mind control.

What that boy was talking about, he's saying, "No, no, no, no. You have to decide. The student should decide, I want to create this project. I'm going to create this. I'm going to write this. I am going to make this. I want to learn this or this or this." The teacher, the coach, is there to guide, to help, to open the door, to motivate, to support. But it's the student who's the leader. It's the student who's the boss and that is pushing their own learning. When you learn that way, with that true education, it's so powerful. Then there's no problem with motivation. There's no problem with boredom, there's no problem with fear, nervousness, embarrassment, grades, tests, all of that bullshit. Nope. True education, that is my mission in life. That is my purpose in life. That is what Effortless English is about. Real education, true education. I can only open the door for you. I give you understandable English. I give you the Effortless English system and methods with my book, with my free email course, with my courses. I am opening the door for you, but you must do it. You, you are the boss. You decide to listen to the lessons or not. You're the boss. I won't punish you. I won't embarrass you. I won't say anything. If you do nothing, that's your choice. You're the boss.

If you decide you want to read some extra books and read some novels, listen to podcasts, watch TV shows or movies, great. You're the boss. You are the boss of

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your learning. I'm just your coach. I'm here to motivate you. I'm here to help you. I'm here to open the door, inspire you. I'm here to help you feel more strong, more confident, so you will be strong and be the master of your own learning. That's why I'm so emotional, so excited, because the schools are evil. They're evil, evil, evil. They destroy people. They start with fearless, curious children and they create fearful, weak adults. That makes me angry and that is why they are evil and that is why I will fight them and fight them and fight them as long as I live.

That is why I will also do everything I can to help you unlearn that, to help you become strong again, to help you become fearless again, to help you become curious again, to help you, once again, become like that young child, excited about learning, curious about everything, English, the world. And active, active, active, active, actively learning because you want to, comes from you. I am not your boss. I am not your master. I'm just your coach. I'm here to encourage you. I'm here to open the door.

Any teacher in a school, anywhere, who tells you what to do, who says, "You must do this or I will punish you with a bad grade. You must study this and do this test or I will punish you with a bad grade, a bad result." They're not your helper. They're not your friend. They're not your coach. They're the enemy. Realize that, because they are trying to control you, not help you. It's all about control. Schools are all about control. That's the real purpose of schooling. It's not the same as education. Education is what you do. You create education. It must come from the learner. True education must come from the learner with the support of a coach or a master. That's what the old apprenticeships were like. The apprentice, the student, the learner, wanted to learn something. Maybe it was art, maybe it was philosophy, maybe it was building, making buildings with stone, which is called a mason. Whatever. But they decided, "This is what I want to do." Then they had to go to the master, they had to find a master to accept them as a student. "Master, will you please accept me and please teach me." Why? "Because I want to learn." The first step was the student asking, wanting, was their desire.

Then what did they do? Did they take tests and study textbooks? No, of course not. Ridiculous. That's our modern, evil school system that believes that you learn by memorizing stuff and taking tests. No, no, no, no. They work, they did work. They worked with the master. Now, of course, in the beginning, the learner, the student, the apprentice, would just do very, very easy, simple things, because they're a total beginner. So they would have them doing kind of boring stuff. But most of all, what they were doing was working with, in the same room, usually, with the master. Maybe the master had a couple other learners that were more advanced. The first step was that the student, the learner, would just be watching, watching the master work. So learning by watching, learning by observation. Not textbooks, observation. Watching the masters, watching and listening to the masters and the advanced students.

We learn a lot just by that. If you're just around people, you can learn a lot by just being around masters. Of course, the master would coach them some, and they

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would learn some very basic, easy skills. But then, more and more, they would start to do more difficult work. They would learn by doing. They were doing. Those apprentices were not lazy. They were not just sitting at a desk doing nothing. No, they had work to do. They were helping do the work. They did the simple jobs, then they would learn a little more. They would do more difficult jobs, and then more difficult, and more difficult. They would gain skill through doing, actively doing with the master as the coach. That's natural education. That's the natural education we have had, as humans, for thousands of years. Only recently did the world adopt, create, this horrible factory system of schools that we have now. That's recent. That's only been a short time, maybe a hundred years. It's not a long time. It's totally unnatural, and it doesn't work anymore. Maybe it worked back in the industrial age. Now we're in the information age, and it's a failed way of teaching, and it's a failed way of learning.

Which is why so many, so many people, so many students, do so badly in these school systems. Even the good ones, I sometimes think the good students are the worst. Sometimes I think the good students are the most sad, the saddest. Why? Because the good students learn to be afraid, learn to be the same as everyone. The good students usually are the weakest. They just obey. They obey, they do what they're told. Obey, obey, obey the teachers. Obey, obey, obey, obey. They don't think creatively. They're kind of successful, but they're sad and weak people. Often you'll see the really big, successful people, the ones who start huge companies and have massive success, Steve Jobs and that kind of person, they quit school. They're not the most successful students. They're successful at life, not at school. People who are successful at school may get some success, but they never get really big success, not usually. They're too weak. Unless, unless, unless they unlearn what they learned in school. That's possible.

That's the good news. I had a lot of schooling too. I needed twenty years to unlearn it all. It took a lot of work, but you can do it too and you can do it faster. That's the good news. Education, we need true education. That's what's so exciting now with the internet, is that you have everything, so much knowledge, so many great coaches, so much great information, so much great learning right there on the internet. Oh my God, I mean, Effortless English. Just for English, just for learning English, you've got Effortless English, effortlessenglishclub.com, my book, this podcast, my YouTube videos. When you're ready for real success, my courses. Then on YouTube, online, thousands, thousands of TV shows, thousands of movies in English, native speakers. With one click you can get it, on your phone, carrying it with you everywhere. Amazing.

It's not just English, it's any skill. Business skills, I taught myself business. I did not go to business school, thank God. Thank God I never went to business school. Never took a business course. That's why I'm successful. That's why I'm not some employee. That's why I own my own business that's very successful. I learned it myself, independently, online, from online courses. I bought and paid for some really great online business training. I also read a lot of books that were not expensive, and also found a lot of good, free information online. Amazing. You can

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teach yourself anything now. This is a great time to be alive. This is a great time for true education. All you need to do is forget schools, forget that schooling, forget all those bad, evil things you learned in school. Forget that bullshit. Get online and independent learning. True education is back.

Time for Twitter. Twitter, my Twitter, I'm going to talk to you about Twitter. Twitter, what is my Twitter? My Twitter is ajhoge. It's just my name, A-J-H-O-G-E. That's me, A.J. Hoge. On Twitter you can ask me questions. Yes, I will answer you. You can also leave nice comments. I get nice comments, so I appreciate that, makes me feel good, makes me more motivated to do shows for you. I like when you write me nice things on Twitter. Let's go to Twitter now. Let's see what we got.

We got a question from Ibrahim Ali again, asks me a lot of questions. Here's a good one. "A.J., with the original course, can I listen to a lesson set, a unit, for just one week? Or should I do it for two weeks?" Good question. Here's my answer. In general, I recommend at least, at least, at least one week. So you repeat the unit every day, day one, day two, day three, day four, day five, day six, day seven, same unit each day. That's the minimum. That's my recommendation. But if you want deeper learning, if the unit feels difficult still, you can do it for two weeks, day eight, day nine, day ten, day eleven, day twelve, day thirteen, day fourteen. Your choice. You could do three weeks. I have some Effortless English members, they're crazy about deep learning and repetition. They'll do one unit for three weeks or more.

See, this is where I'm saying, I am a coach, not your boss. I give you suggestions, but you're the boss. You have to decide. Everyone's not the same. I know this. I give suggestions because I know that for most people, for most people, seven days is a good minimum. I know that from all the many, many students I have taught. But everyone's different. Maybe you're a super genius learner and four days is enough for you, because you're just this great, super fast, genius English learner. Great, you can decide that. You're the boss. Or maybe, as I said, you prefer deep learning. You really like to go deep. You like that repetition. You want total mastery. You're patient. So fine, you listen to one unit for two weeks, three weeks, four weeks. You got to be the boss. I give you guidelines and suggestions. I'm your coach. I open the door for you. But ultimately, you're the boss. You have to decide. You can make little changes. You can adjust things for yourself, make those decisions. It's okay. I want you to make those decisions. I want you to be the boss.

Okay, this one is from Feliz on Twitter. She sent kind of a comment more than a question, but I'll talk about it. "A.J., achieving success isn't easy. We must work hard on ourselves, and even if we stumble and if we fail, it's necessary to have motivation and faith." That's a great comment. Absolutely, yes. You're going to fail. In life you will fail many times. You are going to make mistakes, many, many times. I have, and I still do. You will, everyone does. What creates success? Is it perfection? No. Really successful people make lots and lots and lots of mistakes, but they keep going. That's the key point. That's what makes you successful, is you keep going. It's that motivation and faith that Feliz mentioned. Good comment.

Another comment from [Mar-ee-him Ga-lal 00:27:52], sorry about the pronunciation. "I really loved all your latest Effortless English shows. Thank you, you're the best." Well, thank you. As I said, I like when you send me nice comments, because makes me feel good, right? We all like that. We like to hear nice things. We like to know we are appreciated, makes us feel good, gives us a little extra motivation, right? That's why I try to say powerful things to you. I want to encourage you. I want you to feel more energetic, feel more powerful. It works the same when you say these little nice things to me on Twitter. I get a little extra energy. I get a little extra motivation, extra power, and then I want to help you even more. Then I say, "Yes, I want to do another show. I'm going to make more VIP lessons. I'm going to do a better job. I'm going to have more energy to help my learners, my students, my apprentices." So thank you, thank you very much. I very much appreciate that.

Alright, join my VIP program. Try it for just one dollar, ten days for one dollar. Join it at effortlessenglishclub.com. Go to effortlessenglishclub.com. I love you and I'll see you next time. Bye for now.

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-AJ Hoge



Hi, I'm AJ Hoge

- ..the author of “Effortless English: Learn To Speak Like A Native”
- ..host of “The Effortless English Show” with over 40 million downloads worldwide.
- ..trainer of corporate leaders, government officials, and most importantly people like you to speak English successfully.
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