YOU GRANT WISDOM TO MAN

KNOW IT ALL

SHEMONEH ESREI SERIES
10,000 Hours May Not Make a Master After All
By Maia Szalavitz @maiasz May 20, 2013 Follow @TIMEHealth

There are many roads to greatness, but logging 10,000 hours of practice to help you perfect a skill may not be sufficient.

Based on research suggesting that practice is the essence of genius, best-selling author Malcolm Gladwell popularized the idea that 10,000 hours of appropriately guided practice was “the magic number of greatness,” regardless of a person’s natural aptitude. With enough practice, he claimed in his book “OUTLIERS”; anyone could achieve a level of proficiency that would rival that of a professional. It was just a matter of putting in the time.

But in the years since Gladwell first pushed the “10,000-hours rule,” researchers have engaged in a spirited debate over what that rule entails. It’s clear that not just any practice, but only dedicated and intensive honing of skills that counts. And is there magic in that 10,000th hour?

In an attempt to answer some of these questions, and to delve further into how practice leads to mastery, Zach Hambrick, associate professor of psychology at Michigan State University, and his colleagues decided to study musicians and chess players. It helps that both skills are amenable to such analysis because players can be ranked almost objectively. So in their research, which was published in the journal Intelligence, they reanalyzed data from 14 studies of top chess players and musicians. They found that for musicians, only 30% of the variance in their rankings as performers could be accounted for by how much time they spent practicing. For chess players, practice only accounted for 34% of what determined the rank of a master player.

“We looked at the two most widely studied domains of expertise research: chess and music,” says Hambrick. “It’s clear from this data that deliberate practice doesn’t account for all, nearly all or even most of the variance in performance in chess and music.” Two-thirds of the difference, in fact, was unrelated to practice. And while one player took two years to become a grandmaster; another achieved that level only after 26 years, giving them huge variance in the hours of practice they did.
So do the results suggest that the untalented among us are doomed to mediocrity?
Fortunately, not everyone believes we should be so quick to discount the value of practice. Not surprisingly, K. Anders Ericsson, professor of psychology at Florida State University, whose research originally characterized the “10,000 hour” rule, says the studies Hambrick and his colleagues included did not measure practice time appropriately, in part because people often remember it inaccurately. “None of the reported relations proves that deliberate practice could not explain all of the variance,” he says. “With better research using daily practice diaries during the entire development of music and chess performance, we might find that individual differences in the amount and timing of deliberate practice [do] not account for all observed variance, but current data cannot claim to show that.” Ericsson doesn’t deny that genetic limitations, such as those on height and body size, can constrain expert performance in areas like athletics — and his research has shown this. However, he believes there is no good evidence so far that proves that genetic factors related to intelligence or other brain attributes matter when it comes to less physically driven pursuits.
“[I prefer to wait for future studies that show what the detailed training factors and the detailed genetic factors are,]” he says, adding that he has seen no convincing evidence that brain-related genes put an absolute limit on expert performance.

Hambrick says his goal in conducting the research was to expose some of the complexities of the interaction between practice and proficiency, and with his latest results, he hopes to fight unrealistic expectations fostered by theories like the “10,000-hour rule.” He says his research does not support “the egalitarian view that anyone who is sufficiently motivated can become an expert.” However, “the silver lining here is that if people are given an accurate idea of their abilities, they can select activities where they actually have a realistic chance of becoming expert through deliberate practice.”

Ericsson disagrees, insisting that there is no evidence — outside of obvious physical limitations — for significant constraints. But Kaufman takes the middle ground. “Everyone can’t be a genius in everything,” he says. “But I’m coming around to the idea that every single person has the potential for genius in something.”

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- WHAT ARE YOU NATURALLY GOOD AT? HOW MUCH PRACTICE DO YOU INVEST IN IT?

- WHAT DO YOU WORK REALLY HARD AT TO BE GOOD AT EVEN THOUGH YOU AREN’T NATURALLY GIFTED IN THIS AREA?
### WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pirkei Avos Chapter 3: 17</th>
<th>משנה מסכת אבות פרק ג משנה יז</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If there is no intellect there is no knowledge, and if there is no knowledge there is no intellect.</td>
<td>אם אין בינה אין דעת אם אין דעת אין בינה</td>
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### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND INTELLECT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rashi's Commentary</th>
<th>ר'Şי</th>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge is greater than intellect, for if a person asks another person something, and he says that it is true and he shows him and explains a reason for that which he said, that is knowledge, like this person who shows a coin to a moneychanger and he tells him whether it is good or bad currency, and he pulls out another coin from his purse which is similar to the first coin and he shows it to him.</td>
<td>דעת גדוול מבינה לפיה שואל אדם שלומי ול тогда בא ויהי אומר זה הוא מראה רשות סלע לשלחני ואת אמר לו טוב או רע ומוציא לו אחר ממחק חודחו ול מסר חבית: בן שנייה שלמי בא וואל אמר שלוחין:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intellect means that he knows how to infer one thing from another, but he cannot explain to you the reasoning behind it.</td>
<td>בינה ידע הוא חבר אחד מה ידועו לא יכול להסביר חשבונות:</td>
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</table>
Wisdom is that which you learn from others, insight is inferring one thing from another based on comparisons, and knowledge is that which you understand from your own intellect. And this is what the Mishna said if there is no knowledge then there is no intellect, for since you do not have the ability to understand something inherently from your own wisdom, and how could you learn something by a comparison, for knowledge comes before intellect, and without knowledge you cannot have intellect.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM?

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The Brachos of the Shemoneh Esrei are split into 3 sections: Praise, requests and thanks. This bracha begins the section of requests.

Since the only difference between man and animal is intellect and knowledge, therefore Atah Chonein was established as the first of the middle brachos, for if there is no intellect, there is no possibility for prayer.
**WHY DO YOU THINK INTELLECT IS NECESSARY FOR PRAYER?**

**HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THIS PRAYER?**

**WHICH PART DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH MOST?**

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**KNOWLEDGE TO DIFFERENTIATE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mishna Brura Gloss</th>
<th>משלמה בראה על שם כל פק א</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>We must have proper concentration, for this is the primary request that a person must ask of Hashem to grant him intellect and proper knowledge to despise evil and to choose good...And that which we recite Havdalah during this bracha is because it is a wisdom that a person can distinguish between one thing and another, therefore it was instituted in the bracha about wisdom, and a hint to this is that the word binah is an acronym for besamim (spices), yayin (wine), ner (candle), and havdalah.</strong></td>
<td><strong>צריך לכוין בה כראוי согע עיקר הששה שבירה שצירק האדם לשבש מאת הבזר וית שמחת לא שבל דעה יישר למלאות בגרAlchemy טעב ויהי חמודיל לךרכה והא דמבדילים בברכה זו כי בוחה חכמה שארים מבודד בזר בחר לכה לברך בכת_relationship בינה BETWEEN בשמים וינר נר הבדלה.</strong></td>
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On Saturday Night we insert this addition into this bracha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On Saturday Night</th>
<th>בַּהֲעַבְדוּתֵנוּ:</th>
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<td>You have graced us with intelligence to study Your Torah and You have taught us to perform the decrees You have willed. Hashem, our God, You have distinguished between the sacred and the secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and peoples, between the seventh day and the six days of creation. Our Father, our King, begin for us the days approaching us for peace, free from all sin, cleansed from all iniquity and attached to fear of You.</td>
<td>אַתָּה חונַנְתָּנוּ לְמַדַּע תורָּתֶךָ. וַתְלַמְדֵנוּ لַעֲשות חֻקֵי רְצונֶךָ. וַתַבְדֵל ה' אֱלהֵינוּ בֵין קדֶשׁ לְחל. בֵין אור לחשך. בֵין ישראל לָעַמִּים. בֵין יום חשבת לשהות. בֵין מְנֻקִים מִכָּל עָון. וּמְנֻקִים מִכָּל חֲשוּכִים. וּמְדֻבָּקִים בְּיִרְאָתֶךָ.</td>
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**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE ABILITY TO DIFFERENTIATE?**

**WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TYPES OF DIFFERENTIATION WE MAKE IN LIFE?**

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

- Some of our abilities are natural and we are given them however we have to work very hard for others. In this blessing we are asking God’s help for both.
- This blessing, asking for knowledge is the first of our requests, in it we ask God to help us know what to ask for.
- One of the most important parts of knowledge is the ability to differentiate, between good and evil, right and wrong and holy and secular. This is why we say Havdala in this bracha.
- We ask God to give us the knowledge and capacity to ask for the right things.