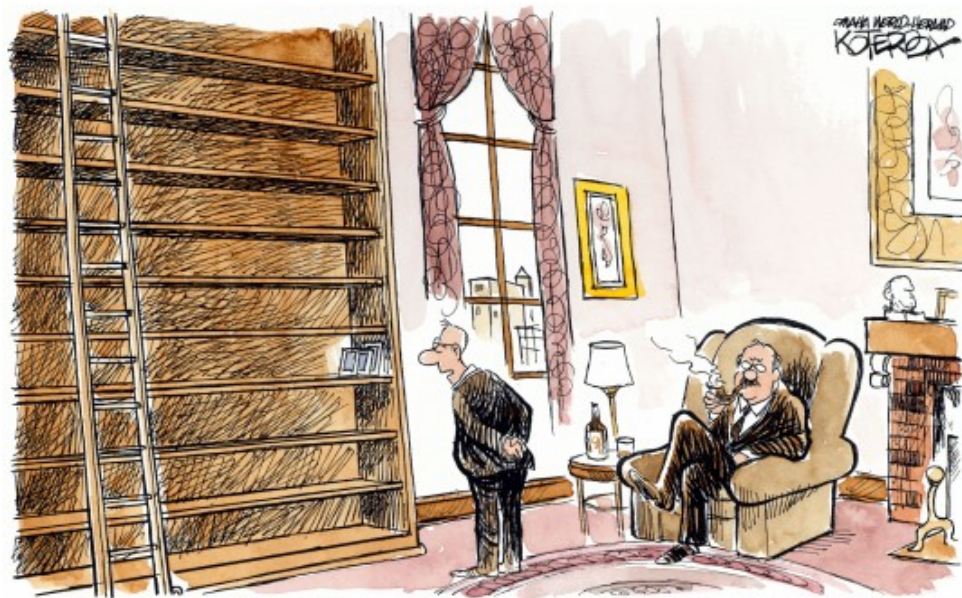


Cultivate your intellectual nutrient base



"KINDLE, NOOK, SONY READER... I SAY, HARDWICK, THIS SURE IS AN IMPRESSIVE LIBRARY."

July 30, 2010

Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death. —Einstein

Just as we all have a biological nutrient base—we routinely digest a suitable and adequate amount of physical nourishment—we need an intellectual nutrient base (INB). On a regular basis, we must feast on proven sources of “food for thought.”

My intellectual nutrient base includes:

- Books—I read a book a week. Click [here](#) to read a previous post on the value of reading.
- Magazines and newspapers— I read National Geographic, Smithsonian, Harvard Business Review, Fast Company, and the weekend edition of the New York Times.
- The Great Courses (www.thegreatcourses.com)—there are 558 available courses taught by noted professors that can be downloaded in audio or video formats. I’m currently watching *The Philosopher’s Toolkit and Scientific Secrets for a Powerful Memory*. Lectures are 30 minutes in length. About four nights a week, I watch a lesson before I go to bed. Subscribe to their free catalog for special pricing.
- TED talks are short, engaging, and free. Go to www.ted.com, search by topic, and enjoy.
- Engaging friendships. I spend time with friends that challenge and stimulate my mind.
- Times of meditation and reflection. I often find a quiet place to just be quiet and think.

Customize your own intellectual nutrient base. Just as you have a unique preference for physical food, discover what best nourishes your mind. Experiment with many options and commit to a few.

Your INB will keep you fresh and vital.

When I meet someone for the first time, I can quickly surmise if his or her life is fresh and invigorating or if it’s grown stale. The symptoms of an atrophied life are obvious: threadbare curiosity, tired vision, unimaginative vocabulary, dated and overused stories, and a slow, almost languid pace.

People who have pushed the pause button on their personal development may be described by the fictitious gravestone that reads: “Died age 45; buried age 70.” Quite frankly, those people are

uninteresting and lifeless.

But people who are fully alive, current, and vitally engaged with life are interesting to be with and have something to contribute to life and relationships. They provide stimulating conversations and insightful observations. Lifelong learning fosters interesting and growing relationships and is sustained by systematic consumption of an intellectual nutrient base.

Summary

What? - Just as we need physical nutrients to keep us physically fit, we need consistent intellectual nourishment to keep ourselves mentally healthy.

So what? - Your INB will keep you mentally fresh and invigorated.

Now what? - Define and use a personal INB.