



**"IN THE 21ST CENTURY, WHAT IS RELEVANT IS NOT WHAT YOU KNOW,
BUT WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH WHAT YOU KNOW."- TONY WAGNER.**

As we move into an era where terms such as: proficiency, practicality and utility are becoming our everyday obsession, it worries me that we as a society are starting to forget terms such as: curiosity, innovation and creativity, all of which have created a path for the discovery of ideas; The ideas that instigate our thought processes to the extent where we can transform them into application both in theoretical and physical terms.

Knowledge is accessible in all shapes and forms today; in fact we are surrounded by it. Computing all the information in our memory storage assists in forming a knowledge base that is yet to be shared with the rest of the society. However the flaw in the system is that knowing things isn't enough; acquisition and retention of information is quite trivial in the absence of application.

Now when we talk about the application of knowledge, it is safe to say that once the knowledge is applied, it transforms into shared knowledge. And once it is withdrawn, it transfers from shared knowledge back into its original form. This cycle demonstrates that the value of knowledge isn't only defined by its application but also by its lack of application. One example is that in rural areas, people know that education is free in India and despite this, they don't send their children to school. The knowledge is present, they know the benefits but despite all of this, for one reason or the other, they still don't send their children to school.

Another area in particular where we can see this process is History. In history the shared knowledge is directly applied in the world and therefore its value has significance. In fact the study of history solely relies on the act of sharing knowledge, this can be seen through numerous sources such as: documentaries, history texts, interviews and all other formats that are capable of sharing significant information about the past in a public forum. Regardless of the fact that many of the leaders who shaped the world we live in today aren't alive; those who have cited all their events and transformed it into documentaries and textbooks aid in the process of making it shared knowledge. This process can be validated through the means of education; History is being studied as a subject in schools all around the world and is also discussed in many social situations, leading to its increase in application.

It is a fact that history repeats itself, however it is still important to acknowledge and learn from the errors that were presented in the individuals past. Privatizing history



could seriously tarnish its value, just as privatizing important information from the world would be giving of the implication that there was never a past to begin with.

A real life example to support this claim is Hiroshima and Nagasaki when the atomic bomb was thrown at these two cities and millions of people died. The occurrence of the crisis was devastating, however the immediate impact the media made through covering stories on the scene, and posting pictures and interview about the attack was remarkable. Warning the rest of the world about preventing their country from repeating such a mistake. In fact almost twenty years after the attack, the then president of the United states, John F. Kennedy's, pacifying tactics helped preventing what could have been one of the deadliest nuclear holocaust. Now if the crisis in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was kept private, then other countries, governments and people would not have enough knowledge about it's effect in order to prevent such a crisis happening again.

This example is an appropriate representation of the positive impact that the application of knowledge has had on our lives. When Tony Wagner said, "In the 21st century, what is relevant is not what you know, but what you can do with what you know" made me realize that the reason such a mindset is so successful in the 21st century is because of it's implementation in the past, the way this mindset prevented tragedies such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki occur and repeat itself again has led to a more revolutionized present. This realization has restored my faith in the claim that acquisition and retention of information is quite insignificant in the absence of application.

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