

## Chess and Life

I teach Chess as a metaphor for life. To succeed in life (Chess) you must have a plan. That plan must be flexible and allow you to adapt as changes occur. Life is about making decisions and each decision has consequences. But with careful thought you can make the right decisions. Life is also about opportunities and taking advantage of them as they arise. Each move (decision) has certain risks but if analyzed carefully these risks can be minimized and may even become an advantage. It feels good to be successful in life. But even losing can be beneficial if you learn from your mistakes. Learning is a change in behavior brought on by a positive or negative experience. Analyzing and learning from your mistakes will ultimately lead to you becoming successful in playing chess and in life.

The students learn valuable skills by playing Chess such as problem solving and critical thinking, being able to analyze situations and make strategic decisions. They learn organizational skills and resource management. They also learn how to adapt and overcome obstacles and how to deal with and recover from material losses. Their success or failure depends on their ability to organize their resources (chess pieces) and manage them wisely throughout their game. In life we must manage what life gives us, plan wisely, make sound judgments, and minimize our losses.

Students come to the game of Chess full of uncertainty and self-doubt. Once they begin to understand and learn the principles of the game their self-confidence and ultimately their self-esteem grows. They learn to accept defeat, not as failure but as a learning process. And with each win they achieve a new level of growth and self-confidence to willingly seek even greater challenges. And they learn playing Chess can be fun. Sir Isaac Newton said, "If I have seen further than other men it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." To Master the game of chess learn from the Masters.

The game of Chess crosses all social classes. It is not a game of the rich or affluent and you need not have exceptional intelligence to be successful. You must be constantly be willing to learn, believe that hard work has its rewards, and apply what you've learn from your experiences for personal growth. Learning, knowledge, and experience are the keys to success. In that sense, learning to play Chess is learning for life.

Enjoy chess.

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