



Book Recommendations

A More Beautiful Question: The Power of Inquiry... by Warren Berger

Warren Burger is a renowned journalist who shares stories of artists, teachers, entrepreneurs and social activists. His book has the potential to hold the interest of many people from a wide range of contexts, whether it be part of reading for a course or simply for general application. One cannot deny its relevance to the world we inhabit:

“With the constant change we face today, we may be forced to spend less time on autopilot, more time in questioning mode - attempting to adapt, looking to recreate careers, redefining old ideas about living, working and retiring, re-examining priorities, seeking new ways to be creative, or to solve various problems in our lives or the lives of others." Who is not affected? Berger establishes that we had the ability as children to ask questions, but that we have lost or curtailed it as we age, partly because in many contexts the question is not only not valued or rewarded but also seen as challenging and subversive.

Berger defines a beautiful question as: “an ambitious yet actionable question that can begin to shift the way we perceive or think about something - and that might serve as a catalyst to bring about change". He introduces an inquiry model of, 'Why - What If- How', for forming and tackling these questions. The 'Why' involves becoming aware of the problem by stepping back and taking the time to notice. The 'What If' involves the dropping of constraints to fire the imagination and expand the thinking of possible solutions and the 'How' is selecting one idea to try to enact. Experimentation is applauded. ‘Failing’ can be progress! Some revolutionary re-framing has occurred here! What simplicity and elegance.

This text gives authority to all of us to question; we do not have to be experts. In fact, the converse is hailed: acknowledging the ‘not knowing’ and being comfortable with our ignorance. We do not have to know the answer to ask a beautiful question! From this ‘beginners’ mind’ state and model, comes the possibility of a powerful question from which to break new ground. Centering the power within the individual and exhorting them to be their own inquirer, aligns with the coaching approach of **my manifesto**. We do laud seeking wise counsel, and Berger provides many examples from sages, however, we believe the best seat of knowledge about you is you. Ask questions of yourself, avoid the comfort of ‘autopilot’ and seek to create your innovative 'way of being' in this challenging world.