



ALTERNATIVE CHALLENGE: BACK TO SCHOOL

The 'core curriculum' of challenges for The Kin Project focuses on what we can do for our planet and those we share it with. However, the alternative challenges focus on what we can do for ourselves. It's hard to do anything for anyone else if you are burned out. These alternative challenges are here to refuel our tanks.

This particular challenge is about being a life-long learner. When was the last time you did something for the first time?

PART 1: THE BENEFITS OF LEARNING

1. Fun

It's simply fun to learn something new. As it's something we haven't tried before, it captures our attention and requires our concentration. As adults, we often run on auto-pilot - learning something new snaps us out of our semi-comas and awakens all our senses. It's also - if you put your ego aside - fun to laugh at yourself. When you're learning something new, you'll have plenty of opportunity to do that.

2. Accomplishment

There is nothing quite as satisfying as mastering something new. The first time you hit a really nice drive on the golf course, the first time you stand up on a surfboard, the first time you successfully tell a joke in a new language - it's a wonderful feeling of accomplishment. If you never try to learn anything new, you'll never feel that.



3. New Friends

While it's often intimidating to attend a class or activity for the first time, it's a fantastic way to meet new people and make new friends. For those of us who have moved frequently throughout their lives, we know that going along to a language exchange or yoga class is a quick way to meet other people who are new to the city and with whom you'll likely have something in common.

4. Memory Improvement

When you flex the muscles of your mind by learning something new, you're firing up new synapses. This improves your memory as well as staving off diseases that attack the brain, such as dementia and Alzheimer's.

5. Discovering a passion

My sister discovered kitesurfing and pole-dancing in her late thirties - and she's now so good at both that she gives classes in pole-dancing and spends her vacations kitesurfing in places like Brazil. She also met the love of her life on a kitesurfing holiday with mutual friends. You're never too old to discover something you love to do - it might also lead you to somebody you love.

PART 2: CHOOSING WHAT TO LEARN

The options are endless! Whether it's something 'mental' like learning a new language, or something physical, like going horse riding for the first time since you were a kid, there are so many different activities to try.

Where are you going to begin?!