*“No man is free who is not master of himself.” —* **Epictetus**

1. The essence of this quote is that our freedom depends on who or what has power over us and controls us; if we are in control of ourselves, then we are free.
2. In other words, if someone or something else has power and control over us, in any regard, then we are limited in that respect and we are not truly free.
3. For example, when I drive my car, I am free to go wherever I want to, but I must adhere to and follow traffic laws. So, I am free as to destination, but I am not free as to manner of driving. To give another example, when I was younger, I fell out of a tree and injured myself but didn’t break anything. Since then, I have been apprehensive about climbing anything and this has transformed into a fear of heights. So, I am free as to activity with this limitation. I am not truly free because there are limitations on me.
4. To give you a metaphor (or analogy) so you can better understand what I am saying, imagine water. It is free to flow over whatever surface it happens to be upon. However, when it is put into a container, that freedom disappears; the water is restricted to the container.

*“The first step to knowledge is to know that we are ignorant.” —* **Cecil**

1. The essence of this quote is that learning cannot take place if you don’t think you have anything to learn.
2. In other words, we must know there is something to learn to begin to learn. There are four stages of learning: Unconscious Incompetence, Conscious Incompetence, Conscious Competence, Unconscious Competence. Before we begin learning anything, we are in a state of ignorance: we don’t know what we don’t know. As soon as we realize what we want to learn, we understand that there is much we don’t know about it. We may not know what this learning will entail, but at least we can start.
3. For example, if I decide to go to school to become a doctor, I must first realize that I currently do not have the knowledge of a doctor. This leads to two very important questions: What knowledge does a doctor have? and How do I get that knowledge? The answer to those questions will help me find a path forward.
4. To give you a metaphor (or analogy) so you can better understand what I am saying, learning is like opening a birthday present. When I am presented with this gift, I do not know what is inside and I realize I do not know. If I do not recognize this as a gift or that there is something inside, I will never open it.

*“What is not fully understood is not possessed.” —* **Goethe**

1. The essence of this quote is that to learn something is to internalize it.
2. In other words, when you truly understand something, it becomes a part of your usable knowledge base and it becomes a part of your mind. In this quote, there are two phrases that are essential to understanding it: “fully understood” and “possessed”. “Fully understood” means that the information has been so thoroughly processed and investigated that there is no aspect of it that you cannot explain to someone else. “Possessed” means that the information has been integrated into your systems of knowledge within your mind. Information must be thoroughly investigated, processed, and integrated into your mind.
3. For example, I can fold an origami crane blindfolded. I have been doing origami since I was a kid and have made thousands of origami cranes. The steps used to create this are so well ingrained in my mind that I can do this without seeing the paper. I have used this as a talent in shows and it seems to impress people.
4. To give you a metaphor (or analogy) so you can better understand what I am saying, imagine a sponge. It is used to absorb water or other liquids. If I put the sponge into a bowl of water, the sponge will soak it up provided the sponge is large enough. However, if I add rocks to the water, the sponge will not soak up the rocks.

*“If you would thoroughly know anything, teach it to others.”* **— Tyron Edwards**

1. The essence of this quote is the degree to which you know something is reflected in what you can teach to others.
2. In other words, if you try to explain the information, you will have trouble explaining anything you don’t truly understand yourself.
3. For example, I am responsible for creating and sending out weekly Land Surveying questions to my department to test knowledge. This is a good way for us to maintain our knowledge and help those looking to become licensed. At the end of each week, I have to send out the answers with explanations. If there is something I have trouble explaining in the answer, that generally means that I need to take a closer look at the problem.
4. To give you a metaphor (or analogy) so you can better understand what I am saying, imagine you are trying to put together a kit for a piece of furniture. In order to be successful with this, all required parts have to be present and the instructions have to be clear. If there are any missing parts or the instructions are vague or steps are omitted, the furniture cannot be assembled.

*“Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is the probable reason why so few engage in it.” —* **Henry Ford**

1. The essence of this quote is that many people don’t want to put in the required effort for critical thinking.
2. In other words, many people don’t intellectually persevere and will take shortcuts or give up.
3. For example, a few years ago, I was gifted a Ravensburger Krypt jigsaw puzzle for my birthday. This puzzle is solid silver with over 800 pieces. It took me about 2 weeks to complete and the process was extremely arduous. I love puzzles, but this was not fun. For my next birthday, I was given the black version of this. The puzzle remains unopened because I don’t want to go through this again.
4. To give you a metaphor (or analogy) so you can better understand what I am saying, thinking is like taking the stairs when an elevator is available.