The Laws of Growth
By: The John Maxwell Company

At what age did you stop growing taller? The average age when the human body reaches its full height varies, but it’s generally between the ages of 15 and 21. I often wonder at what age most leaders quit growing. Unfortunately, judging from my observations, most people stop by the end of their 20s. Rarely will you find a person committed to a comprehensive personal growth plan into their 30s, 40s, or beyond.

Leaders never get to the point where their influence has maxed out; they always have unreached potential waiting to be fulfilled. In leadership, how far you go depends on how much you grow. Unlike your physical height, your growth as a leader is within your control; you can do something about it. You’ll grow the most when you know the most about how the process of personal development happens. In this lesson, I’d like to share three basic laws of personal growth to help you get started.

1) The Law of Intentionality: Growth Doesn’t Just Happen

Seldom do we lack access to information that can help us grow, but rarely do we apply the resources at our disposal. Put simply, knowing isn’t the same as growing. Old age may happen automatically, but growth doesn’t necessarily come with experience.

To grow to our potential, we have to discard the mistaken beliefs that prevent us from moving forward. Two such beliefs are 1) that failure is fatal and 2) that we don’t have time right now to pursue a growth plan. For starters, failing doesn’t mean that someone is a failure. Mistakes are an inescapable part of life, and failures often teach us lessons that we could never learn otherwise. Indeed, failures are steppingstones to success. With respect to time, the longer we intend to do something without taking action, the greater the odds that we will never do it. Time is the one resource we cannot recapture once it’s lost; there’s no way to make up for months and years of neglecting personal development.

2) The Law of Awareness: You Must Know Yourself to Grow Yourself

Personal growth isn’t a one-size-fits-all strategy for self-improvement. For personal growth to be beneficial, and not a waste of energy, it must be suited to your unique strengths and particular temperament. Not everyone shares the same learning style: what works for one person may be completely inappropriate for another. In addition, personal growth requires you to identify your purpose in life. Unless you’re clear where you’re headed, you won’t know which ways to grow. On the other hand, once you have a definite vision in mind, you can begin to develop the specific set of skills needed to accomplish it.

Anyone who has successfully lost weight through regular exercise can tell you that there were days when they didn’t feel like going to the gym. All of the excitement about getting in shape dissipates at 5:00 am when the alarm clock rudely reminds you to get out of bed for a morning workout. To develop the discipline to keep growing, we must constantly remind ourselves why personal development means so much to us. For example, I desire to be physically fit because I want to have fun with my grandkids, enjoy life with my wife, and continue training leaders. Remembering my passion and purpose allows me to stay disciplined in those activities I do not enjoy (like running on a treadmill!).

To get where you want to go in life, personal growth cannot be overlooked, postponed, or taken for granted. Your development requires intentionality, focus and accountability. It also requires a plan. That’s why I’ve worked closely with my team to create the The Maxwell Plan for Personal Growth. Expertly designed to yield measurable growth, this resource channels your desire for self-improvement into a practical and purposeful structure. From personal experience, I know that growth doesn't happen apart from a deliberate plan.

Do you have a deliberate plan for growth? Do you desire to take your influence to the next level? Invest in yourself and your path to progress today by visiting www.maxwellplan.com and launching your own personal growth campaign.