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When I was about 4 years old, I used to stand on the window sill in my living and jump off head/hands first, thinking that I would gracefully slide across the wooden floor. Never happened, I always belly flopped, and it always hurt, but I stubbornly continued to try... at least until we moved to a wall to wall carpeted house.

It never occurred to me that there was any significance to this "experience," but when I thought about what was most provocative for me in Mindstorms, it was the idea that the fear of learning often prevents us from learning or even attempting to learn. Papert points out that often times our talents in one area eclipses other areas of learning, but instead of seeing the positive aspect of our strength in one area, we identify ourselves as deficient in our relative weaknesses. I agree that this feeling of deficiency prevents us from wanting to learn. I have always thought of myself as "literarily challenged" and even now, I never get through a novel without help from Cliff Notes. I don't trust myself to perceive what the author is trying to say, or interpret that purpose of the novel, etc.

So, going back to the "jumping head first onto the floor" experience. I **think** the reason why I kept trying, is because I was convinced that I was jumping off the sill in an incorrect way. I think, at that age, I had no fear of learning and consequently, no fear of repeated failed attempts. It never occurred to me until now that, at some point, we become self conscious learners. And as Papert has illustrated in several stories, fear of learning becomes a huge obstacle to learning.

I think Papert's prediction on the future of computers was on target in many ways. His beliefs in the availability and varying uses of computers has been accurate. And I think, in some ways, his fears of the one-sided interactions with computers does occur today. While we do interact with computers, for most people, the computer is a vehicle to input/output and store information. In this digital age, computers are used more as tools for communication and computation, rather than as tool to stimulate learning and creativity.