## Transformative Learning and Adult Education

Rachel Gonatas

Omega Graduate School

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Dr. Sara Reichard

Experience is an invaluable dimension of informal and formal learning processes of andragogy.

**Source One:** Siegel, S. C. (2015). Everything Connects: How to Transform and Lead in the Age of Creativity, Innovation and Sustainability. *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*, *20*(1), 115.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** The idea of a leader requires the presence of a follower. A natural leader who commands respect and sensibility is required for groups of highly conscious people who are to be led. Developing a connection to an individual's particular loves, heartbreaks, favorite colors, goals and fears, families, and known and undiscovered skills. One must appreciate the sentience of other people to get the highest achievements from other people.

**Essential Element:** Educational Taxonomies, Andragogy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This furthers my belief that connecting with someone's unique joys, heartbreaks, favorite colors, aspirations, anxieties, families, and known and undiscovered abilities is essential. Learning as an adult to see people where they are as valuable and not with a biased, judging

lens is a valuable adult life lesson.

**Contextualization:**  I once had a conflict with a colleague. My financial administrator and I didn't communicate well. She required a lot of consoling and reassurance, and I didn't have the time to provide it to her. I decided to take a week off, put everything else on hold, and try to get to know her on a deeper level. We participated in personality tests and get-to-know-you activities. After the week, I took her to lunch, and we discussed how we thought and came across to one another. It was an excellent first step in making her feel valued and appreciated and was well worth delaying the rest of the week's plans. Later, I asked the same questions at the start of every new school year, along with a few more ridiculous ones with all the staff. Later on in the academic year, using these forms, I created a murder mystery team-building activity that became a popular and sought-after annual event. Even the families commented on how much they could feel our love of teamwork, which ultimately improved the school's atmosphere.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** You become a more objective observer of your experiences by watching how someone else reacts when asked a question instead of acting without thinking about it. We don't have to work based on our beliefs and habits. Instead, we can serve based on the situation. The things that happen to us personally significantly impact how we lead. We need to learn how to deal with life's challenging stimuli better and get the tools we need to be successful.

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** My comprehension of moral attentiveness and the need to put aside our preconceived notions and focus instead on those of others has been enhanced as a result of this new information.

**Contextualization:** A few years ago, my husband suddenly fell into a severe depression. He was incapacitated and quit his job. Our family was in disbelief, and my life was turned upside down. I had never experienced this, nor did I know anyone who had. A few years later, one of my employees encountered a similar situation and struggled to complete her work and satisfy her responsibilities. Before my interaction with someone who suffered from depression, I would have wanted to tell the employee to "buck up, little camper." My beliefs and work ethic must be adapted to the circumstances, and my personal experiences have provided me with the tools to support my employees more effectively and achieve a more successful outcome.

**Source Two:** English Standard Version Bible. (2001). ESV Online. https://esv.literalword.com/

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2

“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.” 1 Corinthians 13:11

**Essential Element:** Andragogy, Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This statement contributes to the understanding that when individuals enter adulthood, they are expected to consistently develop and relinquish their juvenile tendencies.

**Contextualization:** I have encountered several instances of personal transformation throughout my adult life. The concept of renewing one's thinking may be seen as aligning one's worldview with the principles and perspectives advocated by God. During my childhood, I had a sheltered life primarily focused on religious activities inside the church. I had amazing life experiences and a loving family. I didn't realize, due to my upbringing, that it is OK to coexist with divergent opinions while maintaining personal convictions and demonstrating respect for others' perspectives.  This might be seen as a process of cognitive rejuvenation and abandoning childish ways. Many individuals encounter this phenomenon throughout their early years, while others exhibit childlike behaviors throughout their adult lives, extending till the end of their days on earth. This may be seen as an accurate representation of relinquishing immature behaviors.

**Source Three:** Christensen, O. (2019). Montessori identity in dialogue: A selected review of literature on teacher identity. *Journal of Montessori Research*, *5*(2), 45-56.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase** Montessori teacher education entails an intense and continuing transformation for the teacher. This experience contributes to the formation of a distinct teacher identity. According to research on teacher identity in general, although such an identity may provide advice and support, it can also constrain instructors and hinder them from exploring alternate ways to benefit them and their students. This impact becomes troublesome when instructors encounter periods of ambiguity and conflict in their teaching profession. Teachers may need to embrace identities not expressly stated in Montessori teacher change as Montessori classrooms grow more diverse. This research study looks at the components of a Montessori teacher identity and, more generally, the consequences of teacher identity, as well as aspects of anti-bias and antiracist teacher-identity formation, such as inner reflection and an activist approach to teaching.

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory, Educational Taxonomies

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This statement reinforces the principle that although it is crucial to undergo personal growth and establish a sense of self, it is also necessary to avoid being so consumed by this process that one becomes resistant to further change, particularly about meeting the educational requirements of one's students.

**Contextualization:** During my time as the head of a local Montessori school, I was responsible for overseeing the work of a particular teacher. She was a competent educator with exceptional organization skills and a deep understanding of Montessori philosophy and principles. Frequently, a conflict arose due to her pursuit of an ideal child who would seamlessly integrate into her meticulously curated classroom setting, designed to facilitate the process of normalization. The teacher developed such a high level of organization that she found it difficult to distinguish a child who had not yet achieved a normalcy and thus required certain adaptations in the surroundings. She expected that all adaptations would conform to her environmental preferences. The teacher intensely focused on a particular facet of the Montessori approach, impeding the proper implementation and realization of its philosophy and principles.

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase**, The concept of transformation, is a repeated theme while considering and advocating for Montessori teacher training. Transformative experiences include characteristics that are both epistemological and personal. The epistemic reveals new information previously inaccessible or unfamiliar to the person before the transformational encounter. The phenomenon of undergoing a profound change upon assuming the role of a teacher is not exclusive to the Montessori educational approach. Educators often articulate the journey of becoming a teacher as a transforming event, emphasizing that acquiring pedagogical knowledge is equally significant to developing teaching skills.

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This information adds to my understanding of the andragogy process within the context of Montessori instruction. The gaining of knowledge and enlightenment that occurs using the immersive experience of Montessori Philosophy is a transformative process that fundamentally alters one's perspective on teaching.

**Contextualization:** During my Montessori credential residency, one of our assigned tasks was participating in a quiet stroll with my cohort. This activity aimed to get a more comprehensive understanding of the local community in New York. We were instructed to proceed composedly, at a leisurely pace, and in complete silence, just engaging our senses for observation. Initially, we had little knowledge about the specific criteria to consider. However, we consistently reconvened daily to exchange and discuss our insights. Every day, for fourteen days, the situation remained consistent. During the latter part of the first week, my shift changed from the community to an individual. Every morning, as we walked through the city, I perceived the delightful aroma of freshly baked bread. Every morning, the elderly woman would emerge from her shop, donning her apron, and generously distribute portions of her bread to passersby. We expressed our acknowledgment and respect for her by smiling and making a gesture known as Namaste, according to the advice of maintaining quiet and engaging in observation. As I directed my gaze toward her pleasant smile and the creases adorning her face, my thoughts turned to the absence of her familial relations and attendants. The observer was drawn to the aesthetic elements shown in the store windows and the meticulous effort invested by the woman in adorning the café tables outside her establishment with freshly arranged flowers. I saw a little dog that begged at the entrance, anticipating the woman's giving of food. I inadvertently neglected to consider the prominent city of New York City and instead focused only on this person. It quickly became apparent that our walks aimed to achieve this objective. This is where the transformative learning came in. We are so busy searching and looking at the wrong things. We should be looking at each individual's uniqueness and inner self. We forget to see the creation God made.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** A fundamental aspect of Montessori teacher education entails the revision of long-standing presumptions, judgments, and beliefs concerning children and their societal position. Subsequently, particular elements of the Montessori teacher identity, carefully identified and described by Dr. Montessori many years ago and remain fundamental to the concept today, are delineated in the following section. They concern age-old presumptions, judgments, and beliefs regarding children and their place in society. Subsequently, particular elements of the Montessori teacher identity, carefully identified and described by Dr. Montessori many years ago and remain fundamental to the concept today, are delineated in the following section. Excellent and Moral, the introduction of Dr. Montessori's new method of education was accompanied by attributes associated with "the new teacher": physical elegance, steadfast dedication to the profession, and esteemed virtues. Spiritual preparation encompasses a process of critical self-reflection. It aids in developing numerous practical skills crucial for cultivating a high-quality Montessori classroom environment, including observation, formative assessment, and refined movement. Dr. Montessori posits that pride and wrath are pervasive human flaws that permeate adult relationships and interactions, provoking strife, avarice, and even armed conflict. In addition to impeding Dr. Montessori's vision of fostering harmony through education, these flaws hurt human development. As a result, she emphasized the pivotal role of modeling and promoting the growth of qualities, including happiness, self-assurance, collaboration, and autonomy. Pursuing this objective, she advocated substituting pride and wrath with humility and forbearance, virtues that she considered antithetical to these two. Dr. Montessori espoused the view that humility was essential for recognizing and relinquishing preconceived notions regarding the development and behavior of children. She argued that patience was required to patiently observe and acknowledge developmental possibilities and devise strategies to facilitate that growth optimally. The ability to observe, reflect, and guide observation is arguably one of Montessori educators' most essential skills. Before commencing a vocation in education, an adult must devote countless hours to meticulous and reflective observation of children to truly see and comprehend them. Observation can enhance and refine teachers' comprehension and behavior of students and the requirements of the classroom community while they are at work (Montessori, 2016/2021). Practices of observation are also a component of critical self-reflection. Dr. Montessori posited that the predominant causes of challenging behavior in young children were miscommunication, misunderstandings, and unfulfilled developmental necessities distinct from one another. She argued that through observation and self-reflection, educators can identify these needs, consider how adult beliefs or behavior may impede development, and generate curriculum modifications that better serve the child.

**Essential Element:** Educational Taxonomies, Multiple Intelligences Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This information strengthens the awareness of the significance of observation in fostering a strong connection and comprehensive understanding of a student's needs and capabilities.

**Contextualization:** This makes me reflect on an incident where I recently had the opportunity to supervise two students who were sent to recess detention in my office due to two distinct incidents. One student in the seventh grade was identified as twice-exceptional, displaying characteristics of autism. This student had challenges maintaining appropriate social behavior, particularly refraining from negative remarks toward others who did not adhere to his beliefs about healthy eating and weight management. The second student was an eighth-grade individual with ordinary but notable academic abilities but often faced disciplinary issues due to his disrespectful behavior and tendency to confront instructors verbally. During my conversation with the seventh-grade student about suitable and unsuitable conversational interactions, he inquired about the appropriateness of asking about the reason for the other student's detention. I spoke with the other student about their willingness to share or abstain from doing so. The interaction between the two students began with the seventh grader continually questioning more knowledge of the student's reasoning. It prompted the other student to reflect on his motivations and actions. Additionally, he demonstrated an improved ability to manage his frustrations more appropriately. The exchanges brought surprise over the dynamic discussion of inquiries between one student and the profound introspection shown by another student. There was little need for me to intervene in a beautiful exchange of thoughtfulness, questioning, and reflection between the students. I was able to observe and learn more about each student and better understand how each worked through their academic journey and frustrations.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase** Montessori believed that through children's education, it was possible to surpass the present state of affairs and achieve justice and harmony; this was a fundamental aspect of her philosophy. According to the Montessori approach, educators cannot interfere with a child's social development or self-discoveries. Instead, their function is to observe and provide guidance, guaranteeing that the setting is secure and conducive to the child's growth and development, encouraging collaborative, communal work. In contrast, anti-bias education imposes a significant responsibility on educators to address instances of explicit or implicit bias. To effectively and appropriately address the biases that may be present in the classroom and which they may have internalized, educators must dedicate a significant amount of time to self-reflection. Raise awareness of the explicit and implicit biases that manifest in educators' daily actions; this is a crucial initial step toward becoming an ABAR educator. Montessori proposed that the transcendence of justice and peace could be achieved through children and that education played a pivotal role in this endeavor. According to the Montessori approach, educators cannot interfere with a child's social development or self-discoveries. Instead, their function is to observe and provide guidance, guaranteeing that the setting is secure and conducive to the child's growth and development, encouraging collaborative, communal work. In contrast, anti-bias education imposes a significant responsibility on educators to address instances of explicit or implicit bias. To effectively and appropriately address the biases that may be present in the classroom and which they may have internalized, educators must dedicate a significant amount of time to self-reflection. Raise awareness of the explicit and implicit biases that manifest in educators' daily actions; this is a crucial initial step toward becoming an ABAR educator.

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This information contributes to my pre-existing understanding of inherent biases inside individuals, necessitating a need for their discerning. Suppose individuals engage in self-reflection and provide support to students by recognizing the importance of appreciating each individual and accommodating their unique needs and circumstances. Maintaining an unwavering commitment to our dogmas is possible without harboring prejudices against others.

**Contextualization:** During my Montessori Credential training, I was a member of a cohort comprising many diverse individuals. An African-American Baptist woman, an outspoken liberal lesbian activist, and an atheist woman became my dearest friends. Through our numerous conversations, openness, and lack of judgment, we have all become close friends and respect one another. We can communicate openly and ask each other queries out of genuine respect and appreciation. We frequently hold Zoom meetings to stay in contact, discuss topics on which we all agree, and also chuckle at and learn from one another's differences. Due to this nonjudgmental companionship, I've been able to share God with them in ways I never would have been able to previously.

**Source Four:** Loeng, S. (2020). Self-directed learning: A core concept in adult education. *Education Research International*, *2020*, 1-12.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase** Learners execute educational “procedures” in the pedagogical dimension. Self-directed learning relies on flexibility in setting learning objectives, planning, execution, assessment, and other pedagogical aspects of learning activities. Self-direction is a pedagogical objective that may be learned. This allows self-directed learning without social isolation. Self-directed learning may happen in groups or with institutions. No social isolation or utter independence is needed. Adults psychologically need to seem self-directed. Research suggests people are not inherently self-directed. A great deal has been made of the assumption that self-direction is an intrinsic adult trait, evident in all teaching-learning interactions. Prescriptively, self-direction should serve as a goal in learning contexts and a primary objective in adult education to assist individuals in becoming more self-directed. Self-directing ability represents what adults should be, not a generic statement.

**Essential Element:** Andragogy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This supports my understanding of self-directedness in adulthood and its relationship to innate motivation throughout childhood. This finding provides evidence that these objectives may be effectively taught.

**Contextualization:** Because not every employee exhibits the same go-above-and-above mentality as others, I often get irritated. Some people have an inherent desire to enhance and better things. Others carry out their duties and do what is necessary, and that is all. In hindsight, the person who completes their task before stopping is correct since they met it. However, those with self-directed drive are innately compelled to improve and make the world a better place.

**Source Five:** Mégret, J. M., & Eneau, J. The relationship between formal and informal adult

Learning. Exploring learning contexts: *Implications for access, learning careers and identities,* 203.

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase** The foundation of adult education is predicated on acknowledging the experiential knowledge acquired through their life experiences. Knowles proposed many principles of adult learning. One direction is acknowledging that adults have a distinct self-concept, which influences their learning process. Additionally, adults possess a wealth of life experiences that may be used as a valuable resource for learning. Furthermore, adults are often driven by intrinsic motivation, which plays a significant role in their engagement and commitment to education. The pedagogy used in the MAP program is grounded on adult learning principles. Additionally, it incorporates a socio-historical perspective that addresses the many personal and societal barriers that have hindered MAP students from pursuing higher education. The socio-historical and relational frameworks emphasize the role of environmental and personal factors in constraining educational possibilities and participation. Addressing these constraints is crucial in designing and implementing teaching and learning strategies for the MAP program. The focal point that arises from this foundation is centered upon the concepts of access and participation.

**Essential Element:** Multiple Intelligences Theory, Andragogy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This observation aligns with the understanding that life experiences are fundamental building blocks for adult development and education.

**Contextualization:** This reminds me of the expression, "You are what you have been becoming." Either the actions must begin or must continue to convert the events of the past into a whole new set of conventional ideas. To be sure, I never expected to work in the capacity that I do today. Every experience, attitude, and journey I've had has equipped me for the next phase. As I develop and get more experience, everything I have gone through and learned will continue to assist me in molding and getting me ready for the next opportunity. Everything we do is based on information that we already know. We all discriminate based on our prejudices, whether we realize it or not. We may quickly judge someone before they can prove their worth if we are unaware of these distinctions. Let me give you an example from my first week as the executive director of a Montessori school. Since I was not trained in Montessori, many of the staff members I would be supervising would need to recognize the value of my background and experiences to support me in this role. I was driven to finish a two- to three-year certification program in a single year so that the staff would be assured of my Montessori expertise and leadership skills. I ended up being a fantastic fit and resource for the organization.

**Source Six:** Tezcan, F. (2022). Andragogy or pedagogy: Views of young adults on the learning

environment. *International Education Studies*, *15*(1), 136-147.

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Acquiring knowledge and skills is essential to everyday existence. Therefore, this idea originates at birth and persists throughout an individual's lifespan. The acquisition of knowledge and skills among adults mostly occurs via informal means. However, individuals do engage in various formal adult education endeavors. Formal learning is characterized by organized learning activities that are purposefully designed and pre-determined in terms of content and length. In contrast, informal learning is derived from experiences and observations in everyday life. Furthermore, it is essential to note that the deliberate aim of the learner characterizes formal education, while informal learning often lacks this intentional aspect. Various variables, such as age and life challenges, contribute to adult learning. Formal educational endeavors strongly correlate with adult learners' requirements and desires.

**Essential Element:** Multiple Intelligences Theory, Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This contributes to my understanding of adult learning, in which formal or structured educational experiences are contrasted with informal learning derived from personal experiences and life lessons.

**Contextualization:** I heard a story about The Cecropia Moth, which I frequently consider when considering my position transition and purpose during my first year as Executive Director of the Montessori School. The Cecropia Moth must battle for a long time to break out from the cocoon, but the effort is what develops the wings powerful enough to fly. I was perplexed as to why I had been assigned to this position and, given all of these obligations that I had no clue how to handle.

I immediately realized that my function might be more of a repairer or a reset for the school, which meant that I was in a short-term capacity rather than a long-term one but would have a longer-term impact on the school's future. The Cecropia Moth exists alone to reproduce. That was my sole responsibility, one objective, to build the climate for someone else to take it to the next level. Sometimes, our roles in life require formal and informal educational experiences to accomplish a challenge we face.

**Source Seven:** Schreiber-Barsch, S., & Mauch, W. (2019). Adult learning and education as a response to global challenges: Fostering social transformation and sustainability agents. *International Review of Education*, *65*, 515-536.

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase** The possibilities of adult education and learning, is important to address social change, foster global-local collaborations, and relate to sustainability. Under the aegis of a necessary "great transformation," the conceptual framework developed by the authors serves to highlight the closely interconnected, contentious, and always power-related viewpoints of adult learners, adult education practitioners, academic researchers, and intergovernmental organizations. The responsibility and the mission of adult learning and education is not just raising but also hearing voices as part of a partnership discussion on equal terms. It also offers a criticism of indicators, monitoring exercises, and needs assessment methods. The authors propose a framework for organizing and tying together conceptual approaches to sustainability. They then suggest using this paradigm to apply adult learning and education as a sustainable element, moving it into the realm of education policy tools.

**Essential Element:** Multiple Intelligences Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This furthers my understanding of how adult education and learning have many options. It's essential to deal with social change and encourage global-local partnerships. Adult education and learning is about giving people a chance to speak out and letting them be heard in a partnership talk where everyone is treated equally.

**Contextualization:** "Establishing lasting peace is the work of education" is one of my favorite statements from Dr. Montessori. The potential for adult learning and education is crucial for addressing societal change, promoting global-local cooperation, and tying it to sustainability to effect change for future generations. This is accomplished only when adults have sufficiently grasped the idea to instill it in children who will be our future. "Within the child lies the fate of the future" -Montessori.

**Source Eight:** Morris, T. H. (2019). Self-directed learning: A fundamental competence in a rapidly changing world. *International Review of Education*, *65*(4), 633-653.

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase** Self-directed learning is a crucial skill for adults in today's rapidly changing social context, particularly in the digital age. This article explores its historical foundations, benefits, and outcomes. It considers humanistic, pragmatic, and constructivist epistemology, focusing on individual, purposeful, and developmental learning. The author discusses empirical studies on self-directed learning outcomes in informal and formal online contexts and formal educational settings. Research findings emphasize the importance of fostering learners' self-directed learning competence in traditional academic settings.

**Essential Element:** Andragogy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This adds to my knowledge that adults must learn independently because society is changing quickly, especially in the digital age.

**Contextualization:** OMEGA Graduate School serves as a notable example in this context, especially in relation to its 60-day assignments. The assignment provides specific instructions but allows us some autonomy in selecting themes and applying them to our personal fields of study and professional endeavors.

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