PHI 800 - Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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Professor

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Assignment

### *Developmental Readings*

Review Assignment #3, the course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

* Refer to the “[Student Guide to Developmental Readings](https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V_FaYR2BnNGCSFUlWPjUSIQzcH04Hq/view?usp=share_link)” for updated information on sample comments, rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:** Asmara, A. H. D., & Alexander, H. (2020). Fostering religious education for

transformation in Indonesia: dialogue with transformative learning theory.

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “A habit of mind is a way of seeing the world based on our background, experience, culture, and personality. Habits of mind develop over a lifetime. They are rooted in one’s earliest experiences and are shaped through socialization. Habits of mind are uncritically shaped by our families, community, and culture and tend to remain unquestioned unless we encounter an alternative perspective we cannot ignore” (p. 130).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:**  I recently came to realize that even though I’m not working in the field of education, my role as a volunteer Hospital Foundation Director necessitates that I understand how to transform long-standing perceptions. Providing an alternative perspective––in a constructive way––can build bridges of understanding between the aims of our organization and those of adults in the community who have fixed perspectives. If the goal is to obtain greater community support for our cause, we must blend an individual’s existing perspective with ours in hopes that the person will *transform their thinking* and align it with our mission and purpose.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “To address and transform the unconscious and problematic habits of mind that have been deeply embedded in one’s vision of life, Mezirow suggests that one needs to perform *critical reflection* that involves challenging the validity of one’s assumptions about the world, others, and oneself” (p. 131).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** Are there many more difficult challenges than challenging one’s own assumptions? How do we stop ourselves in the midst of defending our assumptions? The world’s divisiveness proves the difficulty of this endeavor.

Our Hospital Foundation is no different. Not only do we cling to our individual assumptions; we also face those of the community at large and those of the governmental agencies who oversee the hospital itself. Transformative Learning Theory offers a potential way to break through to other ways of thinking by fostering *critical reflection*. Mezirow recommended the use of journaling, role playing and group discussion.

**Source Two:** Carter, P. L., & Nicolaides, A. (2023). Transformative learning: An emotional (r)

evolution. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2023*(177), 25-36.

https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.20476

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Mezirow (1978) identified 10 phases of transformative learning: ” (p. 28).

**Essential Element:** Andragogy and Transformative Learning

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Andragogy and Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** Transformative learning involves precipitating, facilitating, inhibiting, and reinforcing movement toward a change in a frame of reference: a disorienting dilemma, self- examination of feelings, critical reflection, relating discontent to others, exploring options for new behavior, planning a course of action, gaining knowledge to implement plans, experimenting with new roles, building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships, and reintegration. As I work to recruit new volunteers for the Hospital Foundation, I must recognize, honor and appreciate the multitude of rich life experiences that each adult volunteer brings.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Human development requires a continuous negotiation of

loss, as old assumptions, beliefs, and meanings encounter new knowledge and the

rational and emotional struggle to cope with the threat of re-orienting the

embodied system of self and world**”** (p. 30).

**Essential Element:** Andragogy andTransformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Andragogy and Transformative Learning.

**Contextualization:** In my work with Hospital Foundation volunteers, I appreciate Carter’s view of human development as a lifelong series of “negotiations” and changes. Our organization faces continual changes, and volunteers must adapt to them. Thus, when reviewing our volunteer engagement strategies, it is useful to hold up as comparison the adaptation to life changes with those changes within the organization.

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “A *disorienting dilemma* begins with an emotionally felt difficulty. The intensity of this alarm can lock down embodied cognition, becoming a barrier to the transformative learning process and manifesting as a sense of being ‘stuck’” (p. 31).

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

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory and Andragogy.

**Contextualization:** While I do not doubt the validity that disorienting dilemmas become a learning barrier within the educational setting, when contextualizing the concept for the purposes of volunteer management, it falls short.

Volunteers do not need to experience a disorienting dilemma in order to be motivated to volunteer. While certainly, life changes can raise personal existential questions, the person evaluating such questions does not need to experience a sense of alarm. Nor does this person necessarily feel “stuck” and thereby motivated to pursue volunteerism in order to become “unstuck.”

**Source Three:** Kilag, O. K., Catacutan, A., Abella, J., Arcillo, M., Figer-Canes, R. M., &

Zamora, R. M. (2023). Transformative Education: A Study of Teaching Values Education-Based on Paulo Freire’s Philosophy of Education. *Excellencia: International Multi-disciplinary Journal of Education*, *1*(1), 56-64.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Transformative education seeks to empower individuals to critically examine social structures and ideologies, challenge inequities, and work towards creating a more just and sustainable world” (p. 57).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** While clearly the aim of transformative learning theory is to help people transform their current beliefs into those embracing the beliefs of others, the comment above is simply a grandiose pronouncement. The concept of “a more just and sustainable world” mirrors contemporary rhetoric, yet the *attainment* of this ideal lacks specific step-by-step instructions on HOW to create a “more just and sustainable world” through transformative learning. In my work with the Hospital Foundation, time restrictions necessitate that we have an outlined pathway to follow if we desire to change our society at the local level.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “As an integrative literature review, this study does not involve direct interaction with human participants” (p. 60).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** I found this comment to be variant because Kilag’s study reveals itself to be removed from actual human interaction. Thus it does not carry the interactive qualities of Mezirow’s engaged perspective. As a student in a practitioner-based doctoral program, with a culminating *action research* project, the lack of qualitative interaction in this comment diminished its usefulness in my work.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The integration of transformative education and values education holds great potential for creating transformative learning experiences” (p. 58).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** While I am not in the field of education, I find that this comment addresses the concept of values in a way that resonates with my work. By incorporating dialogue into values education programs while training Hospital Foundation volunteers, the incorporation of participants’ values can facilitate meaningful discussions that challenge their assumptions, encourage critical thinking, and promote the exploration of diverse ethical perspectives.

**Source Four:** Miller, R., Liu, K., & Ball, A. F. (2020). Critical counter-narrative as

transformative methodology for educational equity. *Review of Research in Education*, *44*(1), 269-300. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X20908501>

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Therefore, it is the transformative action and its ultimate outcome of enhancing educational equity that we focus on in our systematic review of research on counter-narratives in education” (p. 275).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is variant to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:**  While educational equity is an indisputable necessity within the school environment, I cannot find a place for it within the volunteer environment of our Hospital Foundation. My searches of contemporary scholarly sources served as a means of providing content for the Assignment #3 paper centered on the Essential Element of Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory. Thus, not all of the theory fits with my work with volunteers. However, this Essential Element was the nearest possible match to my work.

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Participants also have incentives to subject their counter

narratives and ideas to the same rigorous critical reflection they use in dealing with the initial majoritarian narratives, which not only enhances the quality of the resulting ideas but also further reinforces the habits of critical reflection for generative transformation” (p. 291).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is absolutely variant to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** This comment demonstrates the kind of overwritten, overly analytical discourse that makes “theories” uncomfortable and unappetizing. However, I incorporated it specifically as a way of illustrating why so much good research gets bogged down and therefore loses its message.

I cannot even slightly contextualize this comment to anything related to my efforts with volunteers for our Hospital Foundation.

**Source Five:** Rogers, C., Lyon, H., & Tausch, R. (2013). *On becoming an effective teacher:*

*Person centered teaching, psychology, philosophy, and dialogues with Carl R. Rogers and Harold Lyon*. Routledge. [SEMINAL]

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The Late Carl R. Rogers (1902–1987) has been called ‘the most influential psychologist in American history’ (Introduction).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** While I’m not in the education field, it is good to know who Carl Rogers was, and his influence on transformative learning.

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Student success in twenty-first-century outcomes like
social skills, self-initiative, participation, critical thinking, and self-esteem are particularly helped by strong person-centered student–teacher relationships” (p. 16).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory.

**Contextualization:** While not directly related to volunteer management, Rogers’ concept of person-centered teaching resonates with me. All of us Hospital Foundation volunteers have had our own adult life experiences and come from various backgrounds. When interacting, empathy should be high on our list of priorities. Facilitating understanding and support originates with the ability to empathize.

**Comment 13:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The experience of self-efficacy and control over one’s life is a necessary, though not sufficient, prerequisite for learning” (p. 20).

**Essential Element:** Andragogy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of Andragogy.

**Contextualization:** In my involvement with the Hospital Foundation, we rely upon the self-directed work of volunteers. Whenever instructions or directions are given we must remember that we are engaging adults, who bring with them the expectation that they will not be treated as children; rather, their life experience and perspectives will be honored and harnessed.

Self-efficacy, while not a prerequisite for learning, is valuable to our organization because the “ABCs” of life have already been learned in adulthood. Thus, our volunteer training can be streamlined and focus on specific tasks rather than a generalized orientation.

**Source Six:** Schnepfleitner, F. M., & Ferreira, M. P. (2021). Transformative Learning Theory–Is

It Tıme to Add A Fourth Core Element?. *Journal of Educational Studies and Multidisciplinary Approaches*, *1*(1), 40-49. https://doi.org/10.51383/jesma.2021.9

**Comment 14:**

Quote/Paraphrase: “As the world’s average human life span increases, and people can choose to change their employment direction more often, it makes sense that interest in adult and continuing education is growing and continues to grow” (p. 42).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning *and* Andragogy

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of both Transformative Learning Theory and Andragogy.

**Contextualization:** Schnepfleitner addresses a reality that I encounter when working with adult volunteers: their ability to ‘change direction’ as desired. This is where it is immensely helpful to frame volunteer management as a form of adult education and training. If the adult volunteers are perceived as individuals seeking personal growth, several core elements of Jack Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory (critical reflection, dialogue, and individual experience) apply.

**Comment 15:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “It is only by exposing our ideas or experiences to critical reflection and dialogue and comparing them to the lived experiences of others that we can begin to uncover those biases or reassure ourselves of their objectivity” (p. 45).

**Essential Element:** Transformative Learning Theory

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is slightly variant to my understanding of Transformative Learning Theory and Andragogy.

**Contextualization:** Although this comment is consistent with the principles contained in Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory, and is thus additive to my understanding of the theory itself, its context is *not* fully relevant to my volunteer work with the Hospital Foundation. Our volunteers aren’t seeking to expose their personal biases; their role is to help the Healthcare District uphold its mission and purpose.

While Foundation volunteers certainly share and grow––and thus learn––from one another through dialogue and reflection as they work, such dialogue and reflection does not include the exploration of personal biases.

**Comment 16:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The key message to be taken from this analysis of Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning is the need to help learners actively participate and engage with the concepts presented within the context of their own lives and both independently and with others critically examine the justification of new knowledge” (p. 46).

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

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This comment is additive to my understanding of both Transformative Learning Theory and Andragogy.

**Contextualization:** Of particular value, when working with Hospital Foundation volunteers, is the transformative value of active participation and engagement within the context of their own lives. As adults with years of life already lived, these volunteers naturally contextualize their engagement. This engagement is *educational* in part because it is shared experience with others who also have much life experience. Therefore, the shared engagement is transformed into an informal learning environment.

**Works Cited**

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