Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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10/19/2023

Professor

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Assignment #1 – Course Essential Elements

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Weekend Residency: Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited

sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage

with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.

b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade

assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

Andragogy is a term that distinguishes the dimensions of adult learning from the learning methods of children, called pedagogy. Malcolm Knowles developed a learning theory for adults listing five key dimensions for adult learning. These include self-concept, adultery learner experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn. In exploring adult learning, Knowles came to appreciation how these integrate to facilitate adult learning (Pappas, 2013)

Self-concept describes the movement of an individual from being a dependent personality to becoming a self-directed person through the learning process. Adult learning experience references that adults come with an existing “reservoir of experience” which is utilized and integrated into new learning. Knowles also found that an adult’s readiness to learn was correlated with his/her developmental tasks social roles. He also found that adults best learn when focusing less on abstract subject mastery and more on problem solving. Lastly as a person becomes an adult and matures, the motivation for learning shifts from external pressures and expectation toward internal desires and values. (Pappas, 2013)

Based on his research, Knowles suggested four guiding principles for adult learning. First, adults should be involved not just as receivers but also as planners and evaluators of their own learning. Second, to recognize that for adults, experience, both success, and failure, is the ground in which new learning takes root. Third, adults will be most interested in subjects that have tangible benefits for their professional and personal lives. Lastly, adult learning is problem focused rather than merely content oriented. (Pappas, 2013)

These factors suggest adults learn best when they have a well-formed self-concept, are willing to tap into their experiences, are focused on specific goals that bring meaningful change, which is task and problem oriented, and will help them engage the future in a productive manner. Such practical learning is most likely to motivate the adult learner. Such learning is more likely to empower adults to make tangible changes not only in their personal lives but in society through their vocations rather than merely providing abstract content that may or may not lead to practical social change.

WORKS CITED

Pappas, C. (2013, May 9). *The adult learning theory—andragogy—of Malcolm Knowles*. eLearning Industry. <https://elearningindustry.com/the-adult-learning-theory-andragogy-of-malcolm-knowles>