LDR807: Leader Development: Transforming Self- Concept

PHI800: Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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Professors

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Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course. The

Learning Journal integrates the essential elements of the course within your professional field of

interest. The objective of the course journal is to produce a degree of acculturation, integrating

new ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to

communicate with your professor insights gained as a result of the course. The course

learning journal should be 3-5 pages in length and should include the following sections:

1. Introduction –Summarise the intent of the course, how it fits into the graduate

program as a whole, and the relevance of its position in the curricular sequence.

2. Personal Growth - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or

challenged you– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during

the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

3. Reflective Entry - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or

adaptation and relevant application) of new learning in your professional field.

What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result

of your study?

4. Conclusion – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional,

religious, and educational goals.

**Learning Journal**

This term was one that really challenged my abilities to balance life, work and study. I was exposed to new topics around a common theme of transformation. This sub term I participated in two courses-LDR807 Leader Development: Transforming Self- Concept and PHI800: Transformative Learning and Adult Education. It has been an intense eight (8) weeks with new learning, exposure and defining moments.

**LDR807: Leader Development: Transforming Self- Concept**

For the LDR807 course, the intent was to explore theories of moral development and its impact on leadership; examine self-concept and leadership and explain the concepts of spiritual leadership theory and formative spirituality/formative theology while using interdisciplinary research to explore the discourse around self-concept, spirituality and moral development as essential to leadership development.

This course is important to the DSL programme as it examines leader development from an interdisciplinary approach which is important in Christian leadership with explorations of solving key societal problems. It explores ethical and moral leadership and other concepts which are aligned with the outcome of the DSL programme.

At the beginning of the term, when I reviewed the video on Adrian Van Kaam’s trailblazing work on formative spirituality or formative science as he termed it, I found it was a very interesting and revolutionary based on his interpretation of spiritual connectedness, in particular when examined against spiritual leadership theory. From my worldview and interpretivist standpoint, there are theological connections that can be drawn from both viewpoints and contribute to the literature on spiritual transformation.

This course challenged me to think more critically about how leadership development and leader development differs and how self-concept and knowledge of self are grounded in a knowledge of God given that we are made in the image of Christ (imago Dei). The spiritual leadership theory was very new to me but aligns with my thinking and values as a leader. Overall, I have learnt a lot but there are some areas in which more reading and exploration is needed to assimilate the new learning for transformative practice and application in my daily life.

Contextually, the learning around leadership development has been useful in my professional practice at the University. I have reflected on my own leadership journey, practice and development and how it relates to my spirituality and self-concept and I continue to reflect on being able to transform my leadership.

**PHI800: Transformative Learning and Adult Education**

For the PHI800 course, the intent was to examine how transformation takes place in adult education through andragogical practices; explore andragogy as a method, in particular how Malcolm Knowles, Jane Vella, Carl Rogers and other theorists view adult education theory and adult learning methodology for the teaching and learning process and understand and critique transformative learning theory as pioneered by Jack Mezirow and expanded by other theorists such as Patricia Cranton, Stephen Brookfield and many others.

This course is a good addition to the DSL programme as it helps in the process of development of arguments to be able to communicate interpretive processes and explores my own process of transformative learning as I approach the dissertation research and seek to develop my own methods of teaching as a lecturer at a University.

I was particularly enlightened and enthralled with Mezirow’s take on transformative learning theory and that has helped with contextualization of my experiences and others in order to model decisive interpretations. This course caused me to examine how I learn as an adult and the type of transformation I am undergoing through the process of learning at Omega Graduate School: the developmental readings that allow me to further develop my research and literature review skills, the new ways of thinking that took place through the exploratory, explanatory and expository essay and the dialogue and discussion that took place in residency week and through the scholars porch discussion. The entire process has stretched me to think, analyse, review and conduct research for transformative learning. I believe I have gained some mastery over the transformative learning theory. I am encouraged by this theoretical worldview through its approach to appreciation of prior experience and knowledge while allowing the freedom to explore other worldviews, values and ideas through dialogue with colleagues and Professor Reichard. The process of reflection that takes place in transformative learning is critical as learners examine the new knowledge and its usefulness for their world and reality, looking at the information through a critical lens before adaptation. Taylor’s view that transformation is individualised is very important.

The course was useful and it challenged me to think critically while examining my prejudices and look at new works and artefacts through a new lens and interpret from my own worldview and cultural experiences in contrast to the author’s own context. There is much more to be gained and learned from adult education theory and transformative learning theory and though the course is done, the process of learning will continue. The assimilation and acculturation of the material will take its course as I engage in my profession and work in higher education. My thinking will expand as I make connections in my course of study.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the growth process has been real and is ongoing. I look forward to the andragogical rigour of the courses that I will take in the spring. The sub term was met by some personal challenges that impacted my ability to balance and assimilate the material in a timely manner, but I am eternally grateful for all the new learning and knowledge resources which I will continue to build on.