PHI 800 Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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Date (May 25, 2024)

Professor

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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** – Summarize 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.

**Introduction**

According to the syllabus the outcome for PHI 800 Transformative learning and adult education is to help the student apply transformative adult learning principles in self-directed lifelong learning and influence other adults toward transformative, lifelong learning. This course coming at the beginning of core one lays the foundation and gives the framework for the student to use as they work through the remaining courses in their program of study. The key elements in this course are andragogy, transformative learning theory, educational taxonomies, and multiple intelligences theory. The following definitions came from a search on Google.

* Andragogy is the method and practice of teaching adult learners.
* Transformative learning theory explains how adults receive, process, and use new information to view the world around them.
* Educational taxonomies are a set of hierarchical models that is applied to classify educational learning goals or objectives into a certain level of complexity.
* Multiple intelligences theory is a theory describing the different ways students learn and acquire information.

These key elements allow the student to have a firm understanding of transformative learning and adult education. Without this course students would be stuck in their preconceived ideas and understanding about how to learn and how to teach. It is not a coincident this course is listed first in the doctoral program.

**Personal Growth**

For the past 40 years I have been involved in adult education mainly in Africa training church leaders and teaching in bible colleges. This course has forced me to reevaluate my training style and has opened my understanding to a better way of training through critical reflection. The process of critical reflection was painful in ways, but the outcome was life changing. From my years of experience, I had already understood the unique needs of adult learners and this study helped add vocabulary to the things I had learned over the years of teaching adult learners in Africa. Andragogy, educational taxonomies, and multiple intelligence theory were things I had learned through trial and error but had no framework for explaining them. As a result of this course, I now have the framework and vocabulary to not only understand these concepts, but I am now able to explain them to others in my organization. The eye opener for me was transformative learning theory which expoed me to the fact that training is not so much about passing along information as it is about people’s lives being transformed to live a biblical worldview.

It was interesting to me that I talk about and teach about the transformative power of the gospel, but I had never applied that same principle to my training model. It is now abundantly clear to me that everything we do in ministry is to lead toward transformation in people’s lives. The gospel causes people to critically reflect upon their life, their sin, their shortcomings, and their need to be transformed by the power of God. When I teach people the Word of God, I should expect the same transformational process in a person’s worldview as I see when they are confronted with the Gospel. May I never again simply stand in front of people to only give them information but may I always have the objective to see people transformed by the power of God’s Word

**Reflective Entry**

Traditionally the training model of the ministry I work with, for church planting, has been a talking head standing in front of the class giving out information for the student to absorb and to give back to during assignments and exams. This OGS class challenged that mode of training and gave alternatives methods of training that leads to transformation. By teaching students the art of critical reflection, they are able to challenge their preconceived ideas and accept there may be a better way to do the things God has called them to do. Our ministries entire training model has changed to be more interactive. We are now doing shorter lectures and then putting the students is small groups where they are given questions to help them discuss what they just learned. Each discussion group then shares with the class what they discussed in their group. This teaching model allows the students to hear different views from their classmates and it helps them to start questioning their own ideas. This one change made a huge difference in the retention and activation of the material studied by the students.

Within weeks of starting this course I was able to employ the changes to our training model I learned during my research for the first assignment. Our ministry’s updated training model was implemented during trainings in Zambia, Malawi, and South Africa. By implementing these changes, the students starting to critically look at their worldview and question the way they have always done things. In the past after teaching about church planting it would take the students months before they planted their church. Now the students after reflecting on the shortcomings of their understanding of church planting and seeing a better way they are planting their church within a week or two of finishing the training. This course has helped our ministry move from an addition mindset to a multiplication mindset. The changes we are implementing will allow us to move from planting a church per hour to planting a church per minute. Through transformative learning we can help leaders around the world form networks of leaders who are also using transformative learning to train others. 2 Timothy 2:1-2 tells us, “ you then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

**Conclusion**

This course has surpassed all expectations that I had entering the course. With 40 years of experience, I assumed that I was an expert in training church leaders in the things of God. Transformative learning theory took hold of my mind and my heart to such an extend it is consuming my research. I have come to understand the problem I saw with culture identity having a negative impact on church unity in Africa can only be resolved through transformative learning. As a result, I am exploring the idea of creating a curriculum addressing this situation that can be used in discipleship groups, bible college classrooms, and bible studies throughout the churches in Africa. By taking this course I will be more effective in my training model for church leaders and more effective in my own personal growth and ministry.