Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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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.

**Course Learning Journal**

The Transformative Learning and Adult Education course has been a pleasant experience for me. The fact that I can rethink how I learn if I am open to do so is intriguing. The course has challenged me to look at the way I acquire knowledge, and the way others learn too. The intent of the course is to provide Omega Graduate School, (OGS) students like me with an understanding of adult learning. The class also provided understanding into the institution’s learning methods. Three of the four essential course elements andragogy, transformative learning, (TL) theory, and multiple intelligences have all left an impression on me, and I can imagine utilizing them inside and outside the workplace.

For me, how the colloquium fits into the Doctor Social Leadership degree, which is my program, is that it demonstrates how adult learning is necessary for older students in charge of their own learning journey. In addition, the course’s position in the curricular sequence is that it definitely aligns with what should be learned at the beginning of this degree program (core one). This course reminds me of a compass or GPS that one wants to use at the beginning of a trip to ensure that no one gets lost while traveling.

**Personal Growth**

There are two ways that this course has contributed to my personal growth. The first way that I have been enlightened is even though at my job I provide continuing education to social workers in a national program, and I have a tertiary education, I never knew about andragogy. Understanding and applying adult learning principles is frankly liberating. In fact, I have been examining constructivism because of what I have learned about andragogy. In a way this course also gives me permission to be a grownup allowing me to independently explore all OGS’s learning opportunities without heavy supervision as is often done with children in schools. There is also no micromanagement. It should be noted that I realize that adult learning is not always easy especially when one has to apply critical reflection, but as an adult learner challenging my own assumptions is important and part of my due diligence as a scholar. I am also receptive to how TL will support, dispel or reshape my ideas in ways that I am unable to fathom, but in the end will lead to healthy and productive professional and personal growth. Secondly, also related to my personal growth is I have allowed my imagination free range, in that I have been contemplating the different ways TL might affect my life and how I can use TL to help the lives of others in positive ways. What will actually happen in the future is to be determined, but again I am hopeful and willing to explore possibilities involving TL.

It is also good to mention one impactful learning experience that has already happened to me. In doing research on multiple intelligences, a theory created by Howard Gardner, I came upon an intelligence that he rejected: spiritual intelligence. Though not embraced by Gardner; after learning about this type of intelligence, I wholeheartedly believe in it and hope to learn more about how I can use it like workforces use emotional intelligence to cultivate meaningful outcomes in different industries. I believe spiritual intelligence one day could have a mass appeal and be utilized to advance best practices that help people to live better lifestyles while also enhancing thriving equitable communities.

Where I was able to master the overall course content was through the developmental reading assignment, specifically the readings on Malcom Knowles. Those readings challenged my preconceived notions of learning. Before the assignment, I thought that learning involved some type of continuum—a natural flow from childhood learning to adult learning. However, being introduced to Malcom Knowles and his principles opened my eyes to the reality that children and adults learn completely different and that there is not necessarily any connection between their learning styles. One of the major takeaways for me which I found to be insightful is how adults draw on their life experiences to learn. In retrospect, I look at myself, growing up in the Washington, DC area having the privilege (though I did not understand all she was saying) to hear congressperson Shirley Chisholm while in elementary school speaking on civil duties and democracy. In 2001, as an adult in DC witnessed the 9/11 attack and then on January 6, 2020, the U.S. Capitol riot, in both instances understood the U.S. is strong, but also has its vulnerabilities literally and symbolically. I am aware that these experiences I have had will shape my understanding of leadership and social change ongoingly as I seek my doctorate degree in Social Leadership at OGS.

**Reflective Entry**

As a reflective entry, what this course caused me to realize is that professionally I may have to transition from being a communication marketer to more of a change-agent. Although social and behavior change communication, (SBCC) and social marketing are under my field’s umbrella, I see them as aspects of change but not necessarily catalysts to change. I want to be involved in building the type of frameworks that transform lives and societies. I realize this transition will be no easy feat. I will need to learn new skills such as advocacy, conflict resolution, policy development and diplomacy. At this writing, I have no idea about how I will be making this quantum leap, but at least now I know that one of the tools that will help me get there is TL.

Jack Mezirow, the educational theorist behind transformative learning identified what I am feeling while I am in limbo as disorienting dilemma. Disorienting dilemma is a situation where one’s beliefs are questioned or challenged to make way for new beliefs. I have been in the field of communication and marketing for 20+ years, but this year I am being pulled in a different direction involving wanting to contribute to humanitarian efforts. In addition, there is a strong desire to factor in my faith and my spirituality into how I work instead of just relying on my business acumen.

**Conclusion**

In closing out this journaling exercise, I would conclude that I am presently on God’s potter’s wheel (Jeremiah 18:1-16) and though I can not say who I will become yet professionally or personally, I am confident that this course on Transformative Learning and Adult Education is one of the stages leading to my evolutionary process.