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.

Transformative Learning and Adult Education explores the difference between pedagogy and andragogy. There is a heavy emphasis on the transformative learning theory. The course also requires students to analyze the transformative learning theory in terms of the OGS educational structure. Self-directed learning is a key concept covered in the course. There is an opportunity to not only explore the facets of self-directed learning but also active participation of the concept in the course. For the Masters tract, the course is offered relatively early in the curricular sequence. I believe this was done intentionally. By taking the course early in the tract, it offers the student great insight as to how their learning will look as an OGS student. Additionally it provides a firm foundation for those learners who wish to educate adults.

The first time I took this class I was completely lost. I think it was because Jack Mezirow’s name was misspelled. That and I don’t think I really understood how personal the developmental readings needed to be. When I attended the pre-assignment Dr. Ward gave a very thorough explanation of not only the course, but the intent behind the class structures at OGS. The class went from overwhelming to exciting. I was still stretched though.

Prior to taking this class I thought I had a pretty good grasp on adult education and how that should look in an effective setting. I can admit it was a bit arrogant on my part. In addition to being a teacher for a BCPS, I taught a number of Professional Developments and also worked on the grant team. That team was responsible for developing curriculum and facilitating said curriculum to the teaching staff. The transformative learning theory completely shifted my perception of adult learning and self-directed learning.

Prior to the class I felt like adult learning was very similar to pedagogy. There are expected outcomes and a very detailed guide on how to reach said outcome. That is far from the truth. Andragogy is predicated on intrinsic value. Adults need to have a want for learning. It must contribute to their career or personal growth. Another difference I noticed is that although both children and adults are autonomous beings, the effective approach to adult learning requires the facilitator to lead with the autonomy of those beings in mind.

Self-directed learning tends to be difficult for me because it makes me unsure if I am headed in the right direction or not. I do like the freedom to really dig deep into the topics that are of interest to me; I just have a healthy fear of veering into the wrong direction.

The transformative learning theory beckons the learner to be transformed. When we apply to OGS we have to state what type of social change we hope to make upon graduation. During our tenure we get to explore that aspect of social change from every aspect. That is indeed the transformative learning theory in practice. If I am truly evaluating my calling from God and the social issues I want to address there is no way that I can remain the same. The deeper the understanding I have of the problem and how God has purposed me to address the issue it inherently transforms my being. I really saw this when I was learning about the concept of Imago Dei. When I started thinking about the parts of me, and how to make them dwell in harmony it was a complete mind blow, and then perspective shift.

I do think that while the transformative learning theory gave me insight, it certainly led to some questions that I was not fully able to answer in this course. OGS was formerly Oxford Graduate School so the learning structure is that of Oxford which is not an American system. Can this system actually be applied to Americans? Our education system is so vastly different. There is so much weight on tangible measurable outcomes as opposed to the creation of autonomous thinkers. I would like to work within the American college system; how can I marry the transformative learning theory with the current higher education structure? The issue I want to address is very niche. How can I attract adults to rally behind this issue? Will they find any kind of intrinsic value, or career value from supporting my cause? How does the transformative learning theory present in different cultures?

Then there is always the doubt if I am truly capable of completing an entire program that heavy on self-directed learning. I think as time progresses this doubt will leave. This doubt causes me to dig deep within and pull from there. I think this course has mentally stretched me to explore all the gifts God has given me in a different light.

Overall I enjoyed the course. I love learning. I especially love learning when I have a good foundation with a particular subject or if it can be made appealing to me. I think a better way to market- or phrase self-directed learning is Christ centered learning. A lot of the learning I have to do is in line with what I hope to accomplish with social change. That is a calling from God. This requires me to be in constant conversation with God in terms of my learning which is far from traditional but a very welcomed practice. I think this class meets my spiritual needs for sure. It affirms my calling, it equips me as a scholar to be well versed in interacting with the population I aim to serve post graduation.

The assignment response starts on the third page.

WORKS CITED