Course Learning Journal

Antwan D. Brown

OMEGA Graduate School

PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education

Dr. Sara Reichard

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**Introduction**

PHI 800-12 was intended to provide a foundation to help introduce students to the philosophy of adult education. The course intends to help students differentiate between andragogy and pedagogy. The course will focus students on themes such as role in adult development, the importance of self-directedness in adult learning, and transformative learning theory. The course is integral to the overall mission of OMEGA Graduate School by equipping students with the tools necessary to promote critical reflection for transcending barriers to personal growth and social impact. It does well to have this course as part of the initial core because it sets the foundation for adult student learning throughout this graduate experience.

**Personal Growth**

This course was challenging, but in a way that made me want to engage with the material. It forced me to be heavily involved in academic research and to be intentional in ensuring I was looking for material germane to the course material. Far too often, while engaging the material, I found resources that dealt more with pedagogy. I had to be diligent in my research and gained better resources when researching subjects such as Transformative Learning Theory and Educational Taxonomies. Transformative Learning Theory was one of the bright spots during this course. Engaging with the transformative learning theory phases should culminate with an understanding, leading to a more inclusive, adaptive, and autonomous worldview (Mezirow, 1991).

I was also stretched because I had to return to the habit of conducting research and writing. I was leery of entering a postgraduate course, especially in my late 40s, because I was not too confident I’d have the time necessary to complete the coursework and reading assignments while working in ministry full-time and attending to all my other obligations. I was further concerned because I did not know how OGS would cater to my learning style so that I could successfully complete the assignments. I’m grateful that OGS is a practitioner of the curriculum it pushes, which has been critical in my success. Making it through this course and the different courses within the core gave me the confidence I needed to move forward in my studies.

**Reflective Entry**

As I engaged in the coursework, read the source material, prepared the papers, and interacted with the discussion post, I was able to take a look at my context and how I’ve functioned as an adult learner who is charged with teaching adults within the ministry context. Most leaders are afraid to evaluate or critique their learning abilities or confront their weaknesses or shortcomings because they see it as admitting that they’ve encountered a task that they are not fully confident they can complete. Fortunately, I believe that recognizing where I have been unable to achieve the standard does not make me a failure. Further, realizing where I had failed offered me an opportunity to improve and strengthen my weaknesses and perfect my strengths.

My greatest asset during this time has been recognizing and verbalizing what I did not know. When I started in the course and looked at what was required of me to complete the coursework and the time I believed I had, I encountered what Mezirow would call a “disorienting dilemma” (Mezirow, 1991). As I took inventory of my own learning journey, I assessed where I felt I was within the phases of the Transformative Learning Theory; I feel I’m somewhere between “perspective transformation” and “dialogue”.

I desire that as I seek to lead others, I am careful to ensure I also do well in leading myself. To be a leader effectively within my ministry context, I must know that a great leader is a sincere learner. How can I effectively pour into others when my pitcher is empty? While I struggled in some sense while completing the coursework due to my visual learning style, I had to adapt to the method of instruction offered by the institution. I had to maintain an open mind and be willing to submit to the process of instruction made available to me. Early on, I didn’t believe I could complete the coursework, but the more I engaged, the easier the work seemed, and I could complete the course. This paradigm-shifting educational model has rekindled the fire to learn and instruct those under my tutelage.

**Conclusion**

Overall, this course, with the exceptional instruction and guidance offered by Dr. Reichard, has been masterful in helping me attain my professional and educational goals while also contributing to my personal growth. This course more than achieved its intended outcome and reached its target of equipping me with the tools necessary to be a better and more effective adult learner. OMEGA Graduate School has instilled in me the belief that I can complete the coursework ahead of me, matriculate from this fine institution, and take my place in society as a social change agent looking to make our world a better place for all humanity.

Works Cited

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Mezirow, J. (1991). Transformative dimensions of adult learning (First ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J., & Taylor, E. W. (2011). Transformative learning in practice (1st ed.). Wiley.