Assignment 1:

Discussion Post

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I am an adjunct professor at a small Bible college where I live. I already have a terminal degree, so I have taught all the levels, including doctoral level courses. Therefore, to utilize some of Knowles' thoughts, I have some experience that has created some active and ingrained ideas. However, I have recognized that this experience is limited to that specific context. For example, when I taught the doctoral level course, I leaned heavily on Knowles’ theories on andragogy.I leaned heavily on self-directed learning, the integration of learners’ experiences, readiness to learn based on developmental tasks, and internal motivation. I leaned heavily on the ideas that adult learners are autonomous, goal-oriented, and bring a wealth of life experience that can enrich the learning process (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). However, I was slightly wrong. There was a lot of “unlearning” that needed to happen. In a Bible college setting, people come with their own preconceived notions, or ingrained ideas, as mentioned on Janet Filay’s youtube video (Filay, 2010). I had to introduce the idea of “unlearning.” This “unlearning” created a shift to pedagogy that required me to shift to a more content material. I had to explain how they should interact with scholarship, even if they disagree with it. It was teaching them how to engage the disagreeing argument, instead of just dismissing it. Notwithstanding, when I taught undergraduate level courses, I assumed a more pedagogical approach. I knew they were building the foundation. However, the students pushed me in areas of andragogy, wanting more direction in guiding their own learning and self concepts. They had a motivation to learn, as Filay mentions. Therefore, I don’t think it has to be one over the other. Some scholars argue that the principles of andragogy can be applicable to younger learners, particularly those demonstrating independence and maturity, and conversely, that some adult learners may benefit from pedagogical approaches (Hartree, 1984). My experience, albeit limited, is with adult learners, I found that I had to integrate practices of both pedagogy and andragogy. Merging the two encourages educators to consider learner autonomy, relevance, and experiential engagement, and adds content that helps guide the process. However, that content needs to be engaged critically and contextually, acknowledging the diversity of adult learners. It creates a wonderful atmosphere of learning.

**Works Cited:**

Finlay, J. (2010, May 17). Andragogy (adult learning) [Video file]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLoPiHUZbEw [Time 8:27]

Hartree, A. (1984). Malcolm Knowles’ theory of andragogy: A critique. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 3(3), 203–210.

Merriam, S. B., & Bierema, L. L. (2014). Adult learning: Linking theory and practice. Jossey-Bass.