PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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Professor

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Assignment #1 – Course Essential Elements 1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline: a. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL. b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC)

**Adult Education: Foundations, Learners, and Transformative Learning Environment**

The development of adult education throughout recent decades has been driven by theoretical frameworks emphasizing the independent learning styles and experiential backgrounds of adult students. Although adult education builds upon older educational models its evolution now embraces learner focused transformative methods which take into account adult learners' professional and emotional needs.

The foundational concept of the field stems from Malcolm Knowles' original andragogy framework and has been extended through modern academic work to incorporate technology advancements and enhanced learner autonomy. The study by Elsey and Henschke (2023) investigates the continued application of andragogical principles in digital adult education while focusing on flexible learning structures and relevant content that values learner experience. The shift toward hybrid and online learning formats has made it essential for adults to independently navigate their educational journeys.

Jack Mezirow's transformative learning theory describes how adults modify their core beliefs through critical reflection. The work of Hoggan and Finnegan (2023) examines how transformative learning theory has developed over four decades and underscores the necessity for ongoing refinement and adjustment as learners navigate the complexities of modern social environments. Instead of traditional knowledge memorization methods this pedagogical method promotes self-reflection and interactive dialogue to stimulate personal change. The methodology pushes students to examine existing norms and develop broader perspectives that embrace inclusiveness.

Adult learners exhibit fundamental differences from their younger counterparts. Adult learners display self-direction and intrinsic motivation while concentrating on educational material with direct real-world applicability. The unique traits of learners require educational settings that build critical thinking skills while promoting joint efforts and acknowledging students' personal backgrounds.

A successful adult learning environment needs to nurture individual development and promote opportunities for social involvement. Educators must function as facilitators who advance active dialogue and reflective questioning while maintaining a safe environment for transformative learning experiences. The model nurtures personal development while motivating learners to use their new viewpoints in community and professional situations leading to valuable social transformation.

Adult education remains influenced by andragogy and transformative learning theories which emphasize learner autonomy and reflection while maintaining relevance. Educational frameworks play a crucial role in developing learning spaces that support adult learners' intellectual, social, and civic development.

**References**

Elsey, M., & Henschke, J. (2023). *Andragogy in the age of AI: Transformative pathways for adult learning*. Franklin University Faculty Publications. https://fuse.franklin.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1139&context=facstaff-pub

Hoggan, C., & Finnegan, F. (2023). Transformative learning theory: Where we are after 45 years. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2023(179), 9–20. https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.20540