PHI 800-12 Transformative Learning and Adult Education

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Omega Graduate School

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Professor

Dr. Sara Reichard

Assignment #1 – Course Essential Elements

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Weekend Residency: 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).

Transformative Learning Theory

The critical element chosen by me is Transformative Learning Theory (TLT). The video file by Dr. Barter was my first introduction to TLT. Having been raised in the early 1970’s, my schooling was certainly top-down. The teacher told me what I was to learn and how to learn it. Respectful students did exactly as they was told. This type of learning was also how I learned at home and at church. My mother told me what I needed to know and there was no need to question or develop too many of my own thoughts. Doing so would lead to a conflict in which I certainly would not win. Similarly, in church I was taught what I needed to learn. Even more frightening than disagreeing with mother was the idea of disagreeing with my religion. I was never to think critically about God, religion, or the bible. To do so might cause me to spend eternity in hell. Even as an adult, my mother’s pastor called me out from his pulpit and reminded me that there was a hell and if I was certainly going there if I didn’t stop having an open mind.

Aside from my personal safety, regurgitating facts came with a bonus of being highly favored by the adults I desperately wanted to impress. Doing what I was supposed to do, thinking what I was supposed to think and following the rules has kept me for most of my life. It has kept me safe and, at times, a lazy thinker.

The Omega Graduate School (OGS) approach to learning is new to me. In my prior educational experiences I was an adult learner in a system where I was not fully treated as an adult. Honestly, it worked for me. I enjoyed the knowledge and teaching from those I considered the authority. Plus, it fit with my idea of what education looked like.

If TLT promises a dramatic change that keeps me from going back to where I was, then I look forward to the ride. I do have a wealth of experiences that are brought to this learning process. The thought of self-directed learning is a concept I can get behind, even if it promises to stress me out as I seek more input.

In the journal article *Challenges and Expectation of Baby Boomers Seeking a Graduate Degree* (2023), the authors examined the learning experiences of current and recently graduated baby boomers. A conclusion that resonated with me was the baby boomers who participated in graduate education noted personal growth experiences in critical reflection and thinking outside the box. I expect no less than the same for myself. I look forward to studying the work of Malcolm Knowles, Jack Mezirow and Patricia Cranton further.

WORKS CITED

Barber, W. (2014, June 6). *Transformational Learning Theory*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sOKPhdGl3o

Broughton, P., Dotson, K., & Harder, J. (2023). Challenges and Expectations of Baby Boomers Seeking a Graduate Degree. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 89*(5), 53-62. https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/challenges-expectations-baby-boomers-seeking/docview/2866894776/se-2