

Teaching Philosophy

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Andragogy is defined as the “art and science of helping adults learn”; therefore, as an adult instructor, my teaching philosophy targets the adult learner who engages differently with knowledge than children (Haddock & Whitman, 2019). Andragogy models state that adult learners need to understand “why they need to learn something”, “maintain the concept of responsibility for their own decisions and life”, join the educational environment with experience, and their “self-concept is independent and autonomous must be respected”. This model also states an adult learner’s “instruction should be relevant to developmental tasks” to engage readiness to learn, “real world scenarios of personal importance are integral” to the learning experience, and that adult learners are “internally motivated” by reaching goals and solving problems (Haddock & Whitman, 2019). Therefore, my philosophical teaching theory is Constructivism. As a Constructivist, I believe that adult learners are constantly building knowledge from their own lived experiences and these lived learned experiences travel with them into the educational learning environment (Haddock & Whitman, 2019).

Constructivist Theory aligns with my beliefs and core values because I believe that truth is subjective and is created through the interactions of individuals (Buckholder, et al., 2020). Constructivism’s strength lies in being grounded in the belief that “learners are active in building knowledge from their experiences”, the diverse adult learners create meaning from their subjective learning experiences, and the instructor’s role is to “guide and facilitate the learning experience by providing an environment conducive to exploration” (Haddock & Whitman, 2019). As a Constructivist instructor, it is my responsibility to create a learning environment that engages the learner in critical thinking and allows them to derive meaning while listening or watching (Alanazi, 2016). “Cognitive scientists report that when students think about material in

more meaningful ways, underlying brain structures will change to promote more enduring learning” (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014). The teaching strategies of Constructivists would support the reports due to seeking to engage the learner in dialogue, reflective learning and teaching, and seeking to foster student-driven approaches and lessons (Haddock & Whitman, 2019).

Because personal understanding is another important factor in constructivist approaches, I desire to engage adults in “metacognitive learning” and “learning in action” which presents the opportunity to become “more engaged” and “motivated to learn” (Alanazi, 2016; Haddock & Whitman, 2019). I desire to teach adult learners how to learn, critically think, and create collaboration to promote learning (Alanazi, 2016). I seek to foster a teaching-learning environment where learners are partners in the learning process and they contribute to the learning experience.

In closing, I am aware that adult learners will present to the educational environment from various backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, and learning experiences. I also recognize that thinking and learning are not always easy in the latter stages of life. However, I seek to engage the learner and support them when learning promotes a significant emotional response to allow that emotional response to build confidence as a thinker to allow the positive emotion to become the positive reward for being a scholar (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014).

References

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