

The Adult Learner

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EN to SN Conversion Course

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Adult Learning

"I shall only ask him, and not teach him, and he shall share the enquiry with me: and do you watch and see if you find me telling or explaining anything to him, instead of eliciting his opinion."

Socrates c.400B.C.

Knowles distinguishes between the concepts of PEDAGOGY and ANDRAGOGY

PEDAGOGY = ".....the art and science of teaching children."

ANDRAGOGY = "..... The art and science of helping adults learn."

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With pedagogy the teacher has full responsibility for making decisions about:

1. What will be learned
2. How it will be learned
3. When it will be learned
4. If it has been learned

The teacher here has direct power and directs not only the content but the process of education.

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philosophy of adult education

andragogy

Teacher shares responsibility for the process of education with the learner in an atmosphere of mutual recognition and respect.

As Rogers (1965) states:

"I know I cannot teach anyone anything, I can only provide an environment in which he can learn."

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The andragogical model is based on several interrelated and independent assumptions:

1. The need to know.
2. The learner self-concept:
 - Responsible for own decisions
 - Responsible for own lives
 - Resent and resist situations in which others impose their wills on them

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3. The role of the learners:

- Background
- Learning experience and styles
- Motivation
- Needs
- Interests
- Goals

4. Readiness to learn.
5. Motivation.
6. Orientation to learning.

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Knowles argues that negotiated and experiential learning are those types of education best suited to adults because:

- Adults both desire and enact a tendency towards self-directedness as they mature, although they may be dependent in certain situations.

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•Adults' experiences are a rich source for learning. Adults learn more effectively through experiential techniques of education such as discussion of problem solving.

•Adults are aware of specific learning needs generated by real life tasks or problems.

•Adults are competency based learners in that they wish to apply newly acquired skills or knowledge to their immediate circumstances.

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The aim of nurse education has been identified as assisting:

“...individual learners to reach their full potential as registered practitioners with a well developed readiness to learn, therefore, curricula with appropriate methods to facilitate learning must be developed.” (E.N.B., 1987)

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As an adult student:

•You have to take responsibility for your own studies: 'to opt in'.

•You decide how much effort to put into studying the various subjects.

•The teacher will not pressure you into learning but will facilitate, via negotiation, your individual goals.

•You have to manage things for yourself – delineate your own priorities, set your own targets and work out your own strategies to achieve your required outcomes.

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“You can't fly a kite unless you go against the wind and have a weight to keep it from turning somersaults. The same with man. No man will succeed unless he is ready to face and overcome difficulties and is prepared to assume responsibilities”

-- William J. H. Boetcker

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Adult learners are not simply passive recipients of parcels of 'knowledge' but active seekers for 'understanding'.

Education is perceived of as a journey, a process, and therefore can have no limit.

It is a life-long activity

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AIM

**TO BE AN INDEPENDENT
LEARNER**

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The approach to learning within a faculty is based on adult learning theories :

Learning is a lifelong process and is essential to personal and professional development. It is therefore a process to be valued by the individual nurse.

Teaching and learning are shared processes and are best achieved in an environment in which the student is free to question and to share in the evaluation of learning experiences.

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Encouraging the student to assume ultimate responsibility for his/her learning and for self-evaluation.

As nursing is an interpersonal process, a multiplicity of approaches are adopted aimed at promoting self-awareness, self-direction and self-discipline. Emphasis is given to the learning of principles rather than particulars.

The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning, thereby assisting the learner to develop flexibility and achieve her/his full potential.

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