

I'm Not a "Theory" Person: Practical Ideas and Applications to Help YOU Use Theory to Improve Your Teaching

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Self Directed Learning

- An approach to learning controlled by the learner
- “Individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating those learning outcomes” (Knowles, 1975, p. 18).

Self Directed Learning Contract

Learner:

Learning Experience:

What do you need to learn? (objectives)	How are you going to learn it? (specific resources, strategies, people, etc.)	What barriers might you encounter?	Duration and target date for completion?	How are you going to know you learned it? (evidence)

Table 2. Staged Self-Directed Learning Model

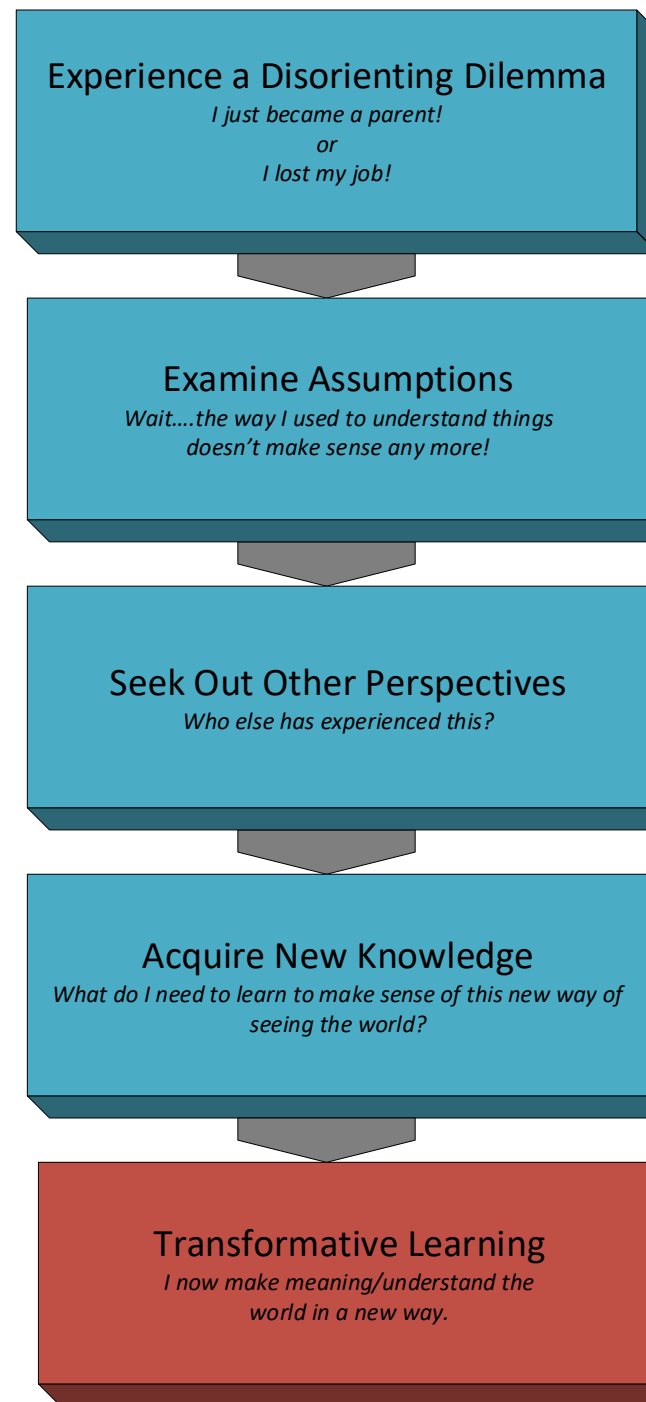
Stage	Students	Teachers	Examples
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority, Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance.
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator, Guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitator	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group projects.
Stage 4	Self-Directed	Consultant, Delegator	Internship. Dissertation. Individual work or self-directed study group.

Grow, G. (1991). Teaching learners to be self-directed. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 41(3), 125-149.

Self Directed Learning Example

- A student is struggling to write a cover letter for a job application. You help the student to create a learning contract that will:
 - encourage accountability
 - outline specific steps and resources to achieve success
 - allow as much/little support as needed
 - doesn't hold back other learners ready to move forward

Transformative Learning



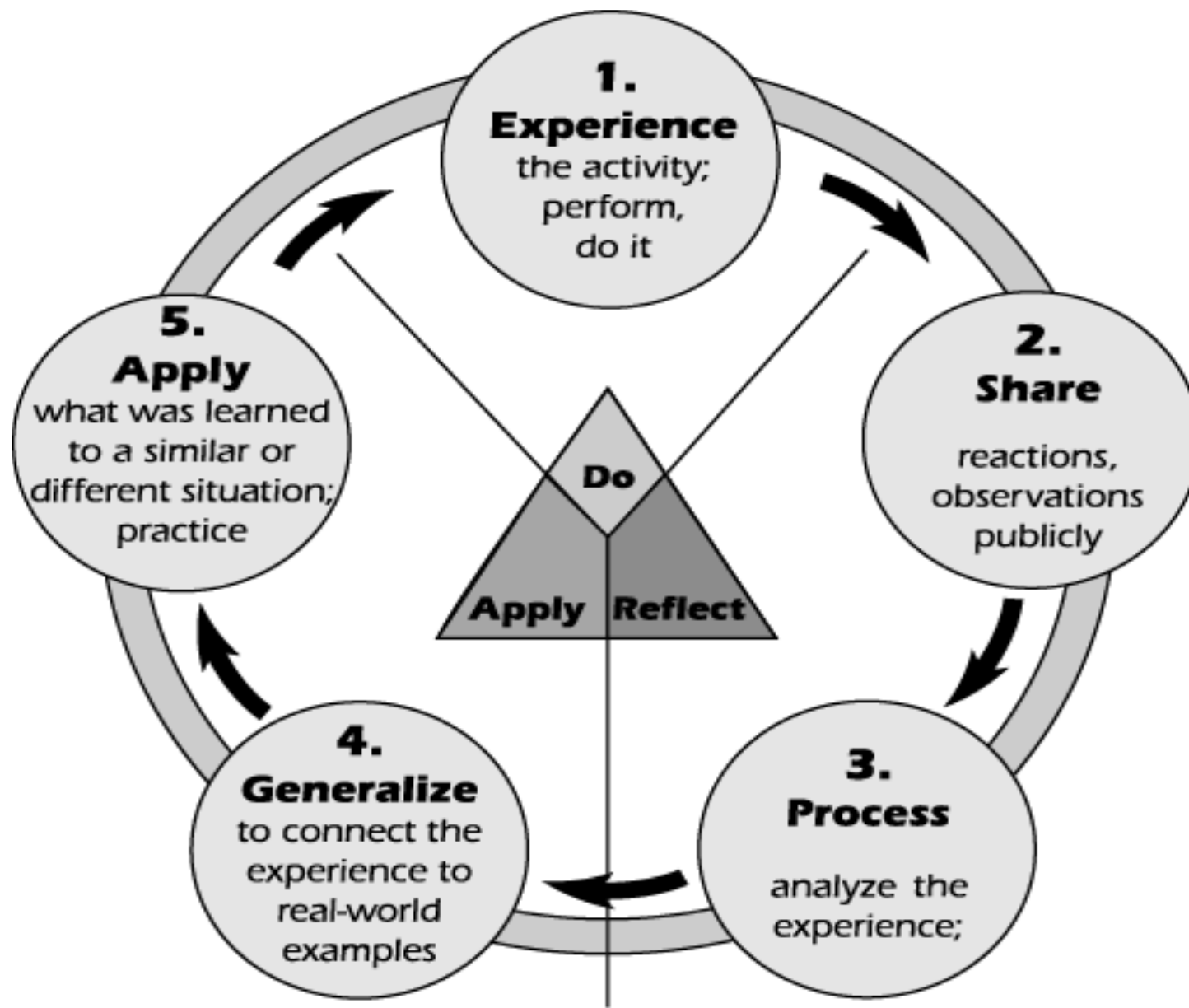
Transformative Learning Example

- A student has recently moved to your community from a non-English speaking culture (this is a disorienting dilemma for her.) She is taking a course from you to improve her workplace readiness skills. One of those skills is improving her writing abilities. In your course you give her the opportunity to practice her writing *and* encourage a safe space for critical reflection on her experiences in order to make meaning of them. To do this you encourage her to:
 - Journal about her experiences in her new community
 - Choose a journal entry and share two main points with you

Experiential Learning

5 Tenets:

- Choosing an experience
- Framing the experience
- Facilitating the experience
- Processing the experience
- Transfer of learning



Experiential Learning Example

- A class of learners is asked to complete group project, but they are struggling to work effectively as a team. You set up a few initiatives (blind square, capsized raft, etc.) that will:
 - Encourage teamwork
 - Allow time for reflection on what worked, didn't work, and why
 - Encourage transfer of those same teamwork skills to the group project (and possibly to group projects in a future workplace)