

Andragogy vs. Pedagogy



Task 1

Think of something you have learned successfully as an adult (it could be a skill such as driving or word processing, a foreign language, a sport or game such as skiing or chess, or something more informal such as cooking or car maintenance). Then make brief notes about it in response to these questions:

- i. What motivated you to learn this in the first place?
- ii. Did you set yourself specific goals or targets?
- iii. What steps or stages did the learning involve?
- iv. To what extent did you set your own pace of learning?
- v. What procedures did the learning involve? (e.g. trial and error, imitation etc).
- vi. Were you taught or did you learn independently? What difference did this make?
- vii. Were you in a group or class of some kind? If so, how did this affect your learning?
- viii. Did you experience any problems or setbacks in the course of your learning? If so, how did you deal with them?
- ix. How did you organise the time and space you needed for learning?
- x. How and by whom was your learning evaluated?
- xi. Compare all this with your learning at school as a child. What are the similarities and differences?

Discuss your conclusions in groups of 3/4 and report on anything interesting that emerges.

Task 2

Working individually at first, and then in the same groups of 3/4, state whether your experience leads you to agree or disagree with the following statements.

- i. Adults generally prefer to choose their own way of learning.
- ii. Adults don't need to be pushed to learn effectively.
- iii. Adults usually have their own proven learning strategies.
- iv. Adults are generally more open to new ways of learning than children.
- v. Adults worry more about failure than children.
- vi. Adults learn best when they work alongside fellow learners.
- vii. Adults are generally good at listening during group discussions
- viii. Adults are generally better than children at communicating effectively in large groups.

When training trainers, especially those whose experience is mostly at school level, I find it useful to make a distinction between the techniques and approaches appropriate to working with adults and those suitable for teaching children. This activity helps me to broach this distinction

(Rod)