Approaches to Training and Learning

William Brieger, MPH, CHES, DrPH
Johns Hopkins University
This lecture looks at two issues

First, some principles of learning will be explored
  ★ *Gerald J. Pine and Peter J. Horn*

Secondly, adult education approaches to training and learning will be examined
  ★ *Malcolm Knowles*
Section A

Principles of Learning, Part 1
Principles of Learning

Learning is an internal process

Learning is a discovery of meaning

Learning is a consequence of experience

Learning involves cooperation, collaboration

Learning is evolutionary, a slow process
Principles of Learning

Behavior change can be painful

The learner is a rich resource

Learning is emotional and intellectual

★ “People problems” must be addressed

Individuals have unique learning styles
Principle 1

Learning is an experience which occurs inside the learner and is activated by the learner.

The process of learning is primarily controlled by the learner.

Changes in perception and behavior are more products of human meaning and perceiving rather than any forces exerted upon the individual.
The learner has to do with something, which happens in the unique world of the learner.

Health workers may resist learning new record keeping skills unless these are seen to have meaning.
Principle 1

Teaching is seen as a facilitating process that assists people to explore and discover the personal meaning of events for them.

No one directly teaches anyone anything of significance.
Principle 2

Learning is the discovery of the personal meaning and relevance of ideas.

People more readily internalize and implement concepts and ideas which are relevant to their needs and problems.

Training patent medicine sellers builds on experience and provides relevant skills.

Continued
Learning requires the exploration of ideas in relation to self and community so that people can determine:

- What their needs are
- What goals they would like to formulate
- What issues they would like to discuss
- What content they would like to learn
Principle 3

Learning (behavioral change) is a consequence of experience

People

- Become responsible when they have really assumed responsibility
- Become independent they have experienced independent behavior
- Become able when they have experienced success
People

- Begin to feel important when they are important to somebody
- Feel liked when someone likes them
- Do not change their behavior merely because someone tells them to do so or tells them how to change

For effective learning, giving information is not enough
Principle 3

People become responsible and independent

★ Not from having other people tell them that they should be responsible and independent— but from having experienced authentic responsibility and independence

Training can help health workers feel responsible for analyzing and using the data they collect
Principle 4

Learning is a cooperative and collaborative process

Cooperation fosters learning: “two heads are better than one”

People enjoy functioning interdependently

The interactive process appears to “scratch and nick” people’s curiosity, potential, and creativity
Principle 4

Cooperative approaches are enabling

People learn to define goals, to plan, to interact, and to try group arrangements in problem solving

Training should offer opportunities to share and collaborate on problem solving

Continued
Paradoxically, as people invest themselves in collaborative group approaches, they develop a firmer sense of their own identification. They begin to realize that they count, that they have something to give and to learn. Problems which are identified and delineated through cooperative interaction appear to challenge and stretch people to produce creative solutions and to become more creative individuals.
Section B

Principles of Learning, Part 2
Principle 5

Learning is an evolutionary process

Behavioral change requires time and patience

When quick changes in behavior are demanded

★ We often resort to highly structured procedures through which we attempt to impose learning

Whether such learning is lasting and meaningful to the learner is doubtful

Implicit in all the principles and conditions for learning is an evolutionary model of learning
### Principle 5: Learning Situations Are Characterized By

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free and open communication</td>
<td>Cooperation and collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Ambiguity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>Shared evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Active and personal involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to make mistakes</td>
<td>Freedom from threat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-revelation</td>
<td>Trust in the self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All evolutionary in nature

*Continued*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle 5: Learning Situations Are Characterized By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free and open communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation and collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active and personal involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to make mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom from threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-revelation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in the self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All evolutionary in nature
Principle 6

Learning is sometimes a painful process

Behavioral change often calls for giving up the old, comfortable ways of believing, thinking, and valuing

It is not easy to discard familiar ways of doing things and incorporate new behavior

However, the pain of breaking away from the old and the comfortable is usually followed by appreciation and pleasure in the discovery of an evolving idea or a changing self
One of the richest resources for learning is the learner himself.

In a day and age when so much emphasis is being placed upon instructional media, books, and speakers as resources for learning, we tend to overlook perhaps the richest resource of all—**the learner himself**
Each individual has an accumulation of experiences, ideas, feelings, attitudes … which comprise a rich vein of material for problem solving and learning.

Youth learn about violence and sexual coercion through sharing their own experiences and developing drama to educate others.
Principle 7

Learning situations need to enable people

- To become open to themselves
- To draw upon their personal collection of data
- To share their data in cooperative interaction with others to maximize learning
Principle 8

The process of learning is emotional as well as intellectual

Learning is affected by the total state of the individual

People are feeling beings as well as thinking beings

★ When their feelings and thoughts are in harmony, learning is maximized

To create the optimal conditions in a group for learning to occur, people must come before purpose
Principle 8

Regardless of the purpose of a group, it cannot be effectively accomplished when other things get in the way.

Barriers to communication exist in people:

- Before we can conduct “official business,” we need to work with the people problems that may exist in a group.

To maximize the acquisition and internalization of ideas, it seems reasonable that the people problems would have to be dealt with first.
The processes of problem-solving learning are highly unique and individual.

Each person has his own unique styles of learning and problem solving:

- Some personal styles of learning and problem-solving are highly effective.
- Other styles are not as effective.
- Still others may be ineffective.

Continued
Learners need recognize the approaches they ordinarily use so that they can become more effective in problem solving.

Training experiences should expose learners to different approaches to learning.
Principle 9

As people become aware of how they learn and experience new models, they define and modify their personal styles so that these can be employed more effectively.
Section C

Adult Education Approaches
### Adult Learning Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underlying Assumptions</th>
<th>Pedagogy: Teacher-Directed Learning</th>
<th>Adult Education: Self-Directed Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept of the learner</td>
<td>Dependent personality</td>
<td>Increasingly self-directed, self-actualizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of learner’s experience</td>
<td>To be built on rather than used</td>
<td>A rich resource for learning and to be shared among learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to learn</td>
<td>Varies with levels of maturation</td>
<td>Develops from life tasks and problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation to learning</td>
<td>Subject-centered</td>
<td>Task- or problem-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>External rewards and punishments</td>
<td>Internal incentives and curiosity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continued*
# Adult Learning Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Learning Elements</th>
<th>Teacher-Directed</th>
<th>Self-Directed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Climate</strong></td>
<td>Formal, authority-oriented, competitive, judgmental</td>
<td>Informal, mutually respectful, consensual, collaborative, supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong></td>
<td>Primarily by the teacher-trainer</td>
<td>By participative decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diagnosis of needs</strong></td>
<td>Primarily by the teacher-trainer</td>
<td>By mutual assent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting of goals</strong></td>
<td>Primarily by the teacher-trainer</td>
<td>By mutual negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Designing a learning plan</strong></td>
<td>Content units, course syllabus, logical sequence</td>
<td>Learning projects, learning content sequenced in terms of readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning activities</strong></td>
<td>Transmittal techniques, assigned readings</td>
<td>Inquiry projects, independent study, experimental techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Primarily by the teacher-trainer</td>
<td>By mutual assessment of self-collected evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>