PRAXIS and TRANSMISSION options

1. Educators of adults have available two general options for helping adults learn. One teacher-oriented option is an instructional perspective for knowledge transmission familiar during secondary and higher preparatory education for young people who share similar preparation, and use achievement exams to demonstrate successful completion, but whose actual performance occurs later in various life roles and contexts.

   A second praxis option is life-long, life-wide, and life-deep collective learning by educational program participants, instructors, mentors, coordinators, evaluators, media specialists and other program stakeholders; focused on enhanced performance in roles such as family, work, community, recreation (team, music); that entail combinations of knowledge, skills, and predispositions; along with situational influences or simulations.

2. Educational opportunities for adults with a knowledge transmission or praxis rationale along with other learning orientations; share some other features related to program decisions and effectiveness by EDUCATORS of adults, such as:
   a. Have experience with paid and volunteer roles in various helping professions such as: teaching, health, counseling, clergy, librarian, journalists, and community development.
   b. Can use observation, oral, print and digital forms of communication for learning, practice, reinforcement, and evaluation feedback.
   c. Depend on connections with provider organizations (such as: school, community college, university, enterprise, faith community, association, library, community agency and neighborhood group); regarding resources, planning, standards, expectations, and related associations.
   d. Help program participants use what they gain from their learning activities.

3. A Compendium map published in 2017 by Stylus publishers and the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) along with recent publications, are providing an international overview of publications to enhance performance by educators of adults from various provider organizations and related associations. The AAAE website https://www.aaace.org/page/CompendiumVirtualForums Compendium page includes: information about topics and authors of Compendium articles; thesaurus concept definitions; nine archived bimonthly computer-based one hour discussions during 2018 – 19 with Compendium article authors for up to 50 members of AAACE and partner associations; a 2019 quarterly series of Adult Learning reflections on future directions; use of a Compendium library edition by graduate programs in various regions to facilitate communication with scholars and practitioners regarding publications and archival materials for joint projects.

4. A praxis rationale evolved during two years following completion of Compendium articles, as more than a dozen colleagues contributed concepts, illustrative publications, and examples. In contrast to a teacher oriented preparatory education perspective for knowledge transmission in secondary and higher education, many life-long, life-wide and life-deep educational opportunities for adults have the following distinctive features:
   a. Various program stakeholders (participants, instructors, mentors, coordinators, evaluators, media specialists) actively engaging inquiry, learning, program development and enhanced performance. (As illustrated by virtual seminar colleagues who contributed to the praxis rationale).
b. Enhanced performance by program participants and stakeholders, during successive approximations, guides additional assessment; ongoing evaluation feedback to stakeholders, and alignment between educational program priorities and stakeholder experience/aspirations.

c. Positive and negative organizational and societal influences are recognized as part of program related learning and change.

d. Initial collective program participation includes shared information about varied participants and other stakeholder experience and program expectations; to facilitate trust, responsiveness, cooperation and options.

e. Sustained series of learning sequences are important for enhanced performance; and especially for beneficial exchanges. [Cascade of learning example of diffusion are, Martin & assoc (2015); Cutrer & assoc (2017).

f. Brief examples on uses of praxis rationale.
   1) series of family counseling sessions with members during a difficult transition.
   2) community development specialist guiding exploration of ways that community members can understand and monitor conflicts and improve relationships.
   3) quarterly improvement [QI] procedures by organization members to enhance teamwork and results.
   4) leader of a musical or medical group helping members to improve performances.


6. The directions of recent societal polarization and turbulence, contrast with the century long trend by educators of adults who have enhanced publications and educational opportunities for improved performance and quality of life by adults. This calls for inclusion of effective and responsive educational opportunities; some with a knowledge transmission orientation (in part because preparatory education university departments emphasize knowledge creation and preservation, as well as transmission and utilization). Some University (and most community college) outreach and continuing education
programs are praxis oriented, as are most continuing education programs provided by enterprises (such as quality improvement), community education, associations, faith communities, libraries, and community agencies. (Educational technology can facilitate access for some adults, but reduce access for adults who have limited familiarity with technology, so hybrid publications are desirable.) Four alternative perspectives explained by Pratt & Smulders (2016) are: apprenticeship, developmental, nurturing and social reform; which are similar to a praxis rationale.

American adults from various communities, regions, traditions, stages and walks of life, currently have access to educational opportunities related to each of their life roles (family, community, work, health, recreation, society); which are influenced by societal, political, demographic, and economic conditions and trends. Effective educators of adults seek to address program alignments between learner experience and aspirations; and the combination of local, national, and international trends and conditions that are relevant to learner’s lives. Educators use of educational needs assessment regarding past experience and aspirations, and analysis of the organizational and societal context and trends related to the program. The AAACE website item on pyramid relations among educators of adults, explains the important contributions that educators toward the apex with additional preparation can provide for colleagues toward the base who tend to be volunteers and part-time stakeholders [This helps keep program activities close to local and member concerns.] Alignment and exchanges between educators and society occurs at five levels: personal and provider organization team interaction; collaboration by provider organization stakeholders with members of other provider organizations in the community and region; interactions in professional associations related to provider organizations; connections among partner association representatives; and field-wide organizations and academies.

In each provider organization, educators of adults can engage in visioning, SWOT analysis, strategic planning and review of program priorities; to guide individual and collective goals, decisions, and cooperation with related organizations. The results can contribute to program marketing; external collaboration; and acquisition of resources, contributions and mutually beneficial exchanges.

In related associations, members can modify mission statements to align them with member provider organizations, cooperation with related associations, especially with societal trends and issues related to their mission and member benefits.

In the general international field, association representatives and prominent advocates can build on the accomplishments and mission of provider organizations, related professional associations, publications, communications, and supporters, in relation to policy makers and government and nonprofit organizations.

Seven general themes are suggested that educators of adults can understand and use with a praxis rationale to improve their professional learning.

a. **System- open systems concepts** (such as a logic model) can help us recognize pertinent influences on program goals, plans, activities and evaluation.

b. **Collaboration-** focus on a pragmatic orientation toward how things work can be gained by inquiry and refined by practice and feedback; along with familiarity regarding terminology and trends.
c. Coordination- appreciate coordinator use of mutually beneficial exchanges for sustained cooperation and enhanced performance.
d. Performance- clarify pertinent values and predispositions related to program development, standards and engaged performance.
e. Inquiry- use ongoing inquiry and evaluation feedback to program stakeholders to guide progress.
f. Outcomes- recognize the cascade of learning that can occur from publications and mentors that result in subsequent learning, innovation, and enhanced performance.

7. The following examples illustrate basic ways in which educators of adults can apply combinations of their knowledge, skills and predispositions to guide praxis learning transactions.

a. A faculty member guiding a practicum course or workshop for educators of adults can arrange for several students to each explore with local experienced practitioners from different types of provider organizations, their effective use of some praxis learning transactions, procedures; and then submit a manuscript based on comparative analysis of such case examples for print or digital publications read by educators engaged in various types of provider organizations.

b. A prominent educators of adults can initiate a monthly roundtable of interested practitioners and scholars in the local region, on behalf of their provider organizations (such as community college, library, community education, enterprise, community agencies, university outreach), to use media and meetings to arrange for mutually beneficial activities that include adults who are typically underserved by further education opportunities.

c. Educators in a multistate region in which at least one Compendium university library edition can enable leaders of national professional associations interested in regional activities in that multi-state region, to cooperate regarding enhanced ability, resources, materials, and innovative projects.

d. Representatives of national professional associations that have partner arrangements can share information about awards for outstanding programs, excellent publications, and criteria for standards; to illustrate for regional, national and international policymakers, major benefits from a variety of effective educational programs for adults.

e. Future directions for the field can be explored by members of a rotating panel composed of prominent and representative educators of adults from various associations (such as Association past presidents, Hall of Fame members, previous Handbook and Journal editors, and award recipients. Including representative panel members is important, by rotating term limits and variety regarding career stage, types of providers, scholars and practitioners, as well as attentive to past trends and alternative future directions. Results could include attention to international field-wide communication, recognition for excellence, and advocacy.

8. In conclusion, praxis program coordinator roles are central to guide stakeholder use of learning and evaluation concepts and procedures that are responsive to participant experience, progress and enhanced performance.

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