Who is an adult learner

- Being an adult learner is a state of readiness to learn, rather than an having achieved a chronological age
- Willing to accept responsibility for learning
- Generating goals for one’s own learning
- Integrating course content with professional activities
- Engaging with others, the content, and the instructor to produce meaningful learning.

What is adult teaching?

- It is about developing a **Product**—helping learners to acquire information.
- It is about a **Process**—helping learners to use their experiences to master the content and involving the learners in the way the class is conducted.
- It is about **Potential**—helping learners test their ideas, retain new information, and apply that information to real world situations.

Becoming a teacher of adults

- teaching adults is defined as developing a relationship with learners,
- building on the capabilities and interests of your learners
- becoming aware of the ways in which adults approach learning
- to become a really good teacher of adults, it is not enough to love to teach. You have to practice, reflect on your practice, and continually improve your practice. You have to be aware of your practice and its effects on your learners

First Premise

- Adults come to class with the capacity to do the work
- Adults have been successful in other learning experiences
- Adults may come to our classrooms with different levels of knowledge and experience with our subject matter. (prior knowledge)
- Knowledge can be accurate/insufficient, inappropriate, or inaccurate.

First Practice: Ask, Observe, Listen

- ask questions about the content to see what the knowledge level is
- provide an opening activity to let the learners determine their level of knowledge
- ask their prior experience with the situations covered in the class
- help your learners find out what they think they know and what they really do know
Second Premise
- Adults are accountable for their own learning
- Adults are decision makers.
- Adults choose to learn or not to learn

Second Practice
- Begin instruction with a problem
- Relate the problem to everyday situations the learners will encounter
- Use stories to illustrate the importance of the problem

Third Premise
- Adults learn in the here and now
- Apply new concepts immediately
- Learning is a means to dealing with current issues

Third Practice
- Apply new information as part of the learning session.
- Design collaborative, problem-solving activities
- Suggest ways that new ideas can be used

Fourth Premise
- Adults attempt to integrate learning with other aspects of their lives

Fourth Practice
- Have the learners do the work of learning
- Develop learning tasks rather than teaching tasks.
Teaching vs. Learning Tasks

- In the teaching task approach, the instructor speaks and students listen.
- The instructor prepares the content and students receive the instruction.
- The teacher asks questions and students respond. Students take tests and the instructor assigns grades.
- The instructor did the work of learning.

Teaching vs. Learning Tasks

- learning tasks focus on activities students do that contribute to learning rather than the actions teachers do.
- In learning tasks, students examine new content, find ways to relate that content to experiences they have encountered, work on that content in contexts that approximate real-world situations under guidance, and apply that content in situations that are relevant to their work lives.

Fifth Premise

- Adults learn when fully engaged (cognitively, emotionally, and physically)
- thoughts, feelings and actions are part of every teaching transaction
- Adult learners respond emotionally to instructional encounters

Fifth Practice: The Four Learning Tasks.

- Inductive Tasks
- Input Tasks
- Implementation Tasks
- Integration Tasks

Sixth Premise

- Adult bring expectations of the instructor to the classroom
- expect that we will be organized in our lessons
- supportive in helping the learners to accomplish the material
- respect and honor their role as learners who will be working in our fields
- consistently keep up to date in our fields
- be knowledgeable about how work in the world outside the classroom is accomplished.

Sixth Practice

- creates a comfortable climate by allowing your learners to share with you their previous knowledge and experiences with the content you will be teaching
- take the time to find out what the learners want to learn and what the students already know.
- learners feel the classroom is being shared with them and that the instructor is listening to the concerns of the learners
Seventh Premise

- Our learners are changing daily as new ideas and new skills are acquired.
- Adult learners look for increased competence for their investment of time and energy in learning.
- Each teaching session should produce a change in the way the learner thinks, feels, and acts.
- If a learner does not exit the classroom differently from when entering, then learning has not occurred.

Teaching Adults

- In adult classrooms the learning is active
- Learning is problem centered
- Learners take ownership of the classroom
- Learners are accountable for demonstrating mastery
- Learners feel safe, respected, and successful

Read more about adult learners