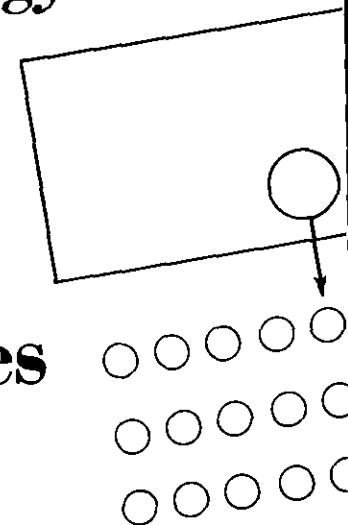


# THE MODERN PRACTICE of ADULT EDUCATION

*Andragogy Versus Pedagogy*

by

**Malcolm S. Knowles**



**ASSOCIATION PRESS • New York**

THE MODERN PRACTICE OF ADULT EDUCATION

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## *Preface*

### WHY THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN

This book started out being a revision of my *Informal Adult Education*, which was published by Association Press in 1950 and was out of print in the early 1960's. *Informal* had been used by quite a wide range of practitioners of adult education during the 1950's as a planning guide and as a reference to turn to when they needed help on a particular problem. And so when it went out of print and calls for it kept coming in, the publisher suggested that it would be a relatively simple matter to update it and bring out a revised edition. When I started on this task, I soon discovered that my conception of the theory of adult-education practice had moved so far from where it was in 1950 that I really had to write a new book. I was pleased to discover, however, that much of what I had written in 1950 on program operation was intuitively in tune with what had later emerged as a comprehensive theory of adult-education practice, and so substantial portions of *Informal Adult Education* have been incorporated, with some revisions, into Part III of this book.

So this book has the same general purpose as *Informal*—to serve as a guide in planning and as a reference for solving problems, but with the added purpose of exploring a comprehensive theory that will give coherence, consistency, and technological direction to adult-education practice—and, it is hoped, involving the practitioners of the field in this pioneering venture. This was my challenge; and now it is yours.

M. S. K.

Boston University

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# I

## *Introduction*

### SETTING A CLIMATE FOR INQUIRY

This book, if it practices what it preaches, should be a good adult-learning experience for you, the reader. Since I believe that the single most effective teaching device available to a teacher is the example of his own behavior, I shall do my best to make this book a good example of an adult-learning experience.

But this goal won't be easy to attain, because—at its best, an adult learning experience should be a process of self-directed inquiry, with the resources of the teacher, fellow students, and materials being available to the learner but not imposed on him. The learner should be an active participant, discovering for himself those things he is ready to discover at a particular phase of his personal development. But people typically don't read books in this spirit. They read books as they listen to lectures—to get answers to questions the author thinks are important rather than to explore questions and answers in a spirit of mutual inquiry. This is the problem: Most people have been trained to *read* books rather than to *dialogue* with them.

So if this book is to serve as a learning experience for you, we must at the outset establish a climate of mutual inquiry. And as we shall see later, I believe that this is the first step in developing any learning experience.

Now what, exactly, is involved in establishing a climate of mutual inquiry in a book? I'm not sure I know. Plato did it by actually writing in the form of dialogues between teachers and students. But this technique seems more appropriate to philosophical inquiry than to the more technological inquiry with which this book is concerned.

Perhaps for this kind of book the most important aspects of the climate are the attitudes of the author and reader. Speaking for myself, my attitude is that of a helper to you, not as your teacher in the traditional sense. I perceive you as coming to this book for help in discovering better ways to perform whatever adult-educational functions you are responsible for at this time and perhaps in the future. For some readers these functions will be different from those of others, and I shall try to resist the temptation to put you all in the same mold. I also perceive you as bringing a variety of experiences, previous training, and points of view about society and education to the reading of this book. I bring my experience, training, and point of view to the writing of it. I shall present my ideas with conviction and enthusiasm, not with the attitude that they are the truth or the best ideas but in the hope that they will provide a framework with

which you can compare and test your own ideas. My attitude is that I am sharing my experience, training, and point of view with you rather than imposing them on you.

This set of attitudes on my part sets up some requirements regarding your attitudes, though, if our climate of mutual inquiry is to come off. First and foremost, this book presupposes that you will come to it with an attitude of inquiry rather than one of dependent edification. By this I mean that I am expecting you to look to this book to help you formulate questions about your practices as an adult educator to which you will then seek answers from many sources, including this book, other books, training programs, colleagues, and above all, your own experimentation. An attitude of gentle skepticism would probably also be helpful. I shall feel less inhibited about expressing my ideas, assumptions, and convictions clearly and forcefully if I can rely on you to test them against your experience, to adopt those that make sense to you, and to build on them creatively.

Another aspect of the climate of this mutual inquiry that I think is important for us to agree on is the relatively pioneering nature of our undertaking. Although the education of adults is as old as civilization, and adult education as an identifiable field of study and practice is in its fifth decade, the notion that there is a distinct and different technology for adult learning is in its very beginning stages of development. Consequently, what we know about how to help adults learn is largely the product of artistic experience, and our theories about the phenomena of adult learning are highly speculative. Even the labels we give these phenomena and the categories we use to organize them (such as the typology of techniques in Chapter 11) are crude and constantly changing. We must await a good deal more research before we can start talking about the scientific foundation of our technology of adult education. But for adventurous souls with a high tolerance for ambiguity, this is much the most exciting phase in the evolution of a new discipline. So our climate must be characterized by a willingness to take risk, to experiment, to learn from our mistakes, and to construct theories that we know will have to be modified. People who need pat answers, neat categories, and proved theories will be uncomfortable in the climate required by this book—or, indeed, by the field of adult education as it is now.

### HOW THE INQUIRY IS ORGANIZED

This inquiry is organized into three parts. Part I attempts to bring out into the open certain assumptions about the emerging role and technology of adult education on which the rest of the book is based. Chapter 2 presents assumptions about who adult educators really are (including the assumption that there are many more of us than any statistics show), what their mission is as social practitioners, and what their role is becoming and must become in our changing society. Chapter 3 is a highly personal statement of a beginning theory about adult learning for which I have borrowed the label "andragogy" from my European colleagues. I am not sure, of course, that all the assumptions in Part I are right. But they are there in broad daylight to be challenged, tested, and modified through the process of your inquiry. I can testify, though, that they have made a difference in my own practice, have given me the security of knowing what I am doing and why I am doing it, and have brought a sense of consistency to my actions.

Part II constitutes a kind of how-to-do-it manual for applying the principles of andragogy to the organization and administration of comprehensive programs of adult learning. There is one chapter for each phase of the andragogical process: establishing a climate and structure, assessing needs and interests, defining purposes and objectives, constructing a design, operating the program, and evaluating the results. This section is liberally illustrated with examples of materials developed by a variety of institutions, not all of which are equally congruent with andragogical principles—a fact which presents the reader with the opportunity to take a clinical rather than an imitative stance toward the illustrations. A larger number of illustrations are drawn from one institution—the Learning for Living program of the Chicago Central YMCA Community College—than from any other both because it is a superior program and because it seemed to me that it would be useful to show how the various elements of a program can reinforce one another. Chapter 10 brings this section to a close with some new tools for planning.

Part III traces the application of the same basic process of adult education to the designing and managing of particular learning activities, in the andragogical spirit of helping adults learn, in contrast to the pedagogical spirit of how to teach adults. Chapter 11 carries the full weight of this part of the inquiry, but it is a big chapter. I debated whether to add a twelfth chapter that would give detailed suggestions on how to use the various techniques and materials described in Chapter 11, and decided that this need was already met in easily accessible current literature—and this is why the references at the end of Chapter XI are so voluminous and are given so much emphasis in the text.

Seven appendices have been added to provide illustrative material that might interfere with the flow of the text if included in the chapters. Because *andragogy* is a new word to American readers and has such a central place in this book, and because etymologists tend to take a critical stance toward the formation of new linguistic forms, I have included in Appendix A a reproduction of my correspondence with the publishers of Merriam-Webster dictionaries regarding andragogy. Appendices B, C, D, and E contain extended exhibits for Chapters 4, 6, 7, and 11 respectively. Then, I thought it might be helpful if I provided a couple of case examples in which attempts were made to apply the principles of andragogy to real-life situations; hence, the descriptions of the Girl Scout leadership-training program in Appendix F and of my own graduate program at Boston University in Appendix G.



PART I

*The Emerging Role and Technology of  
Adult Education*

## *The Role and Mission of the Adult Educator*

### WHO IS AN ADULT EDUCATOR?

Many more people are adult educators than know they are.

If "adult educator" is defined as one who has some responsibility for helping adults to learn, look at how many people in this country are entitled to bear this hallmark:

- hundreds of thousands of program chairmen, education chairmen, and discussion leaders in such voluntary associations as women's clubs, men's clubs, service organizations, religious laymen's organizations, P.T.A.'s, professional societies, civic clubs, labor unions, trade associations, farmers' organizations, and the like;
- tens of thousands of executives, training officers, supervisors, and foremen in business and industry, government, and social agencies;
- thousands of teachers, administrators, and group leaders in such educational institutions as public schools, colleges and universities, libraries, and commercial schools;
- hundreds of program directors, writers, and editors in the educational aspects of such mass media as newspapers, magazines, radio, and television;
- a few score full-time, professional adult educators who have been trained specifically for this vocation and who are making their permanent career in it.

But relatively few of this vast corps are conscious that they are performing the increasingly precisely defined role of "adult educator." Few of them are aware that there is a growing body of knowledge and techniques that they can learn to help them perform this role better. The reasons for this condition are not hard to surmise. In the case of the myriad of volunteer leaders, the assignment is to do a specific job in a finite period of time: "to serve as the program chairman of the XYZ club for one year." In the case of the executives and supervisors the assignment tends to be in terms of particular processes in particular companies: "sales manager, Parts Division." In the case of teachers the assignment tends to be in terms of subject matter: "instructor of mathematics." The fact is, though, that to the extent that all of these assignments involve helping other adults to become more competent, they have a common element—what we might call an adult-education component. And to this extent all the people carrying these kinds of assignments are partly adult educators.

### WHAT DOES AN ADULT EDUCATOR DO?

What are the functions an adult educator performs? To answer this question it is probably necessary to distinguish among several levels of the adult-education role.

At the firing-line level are the teachers, group leaders, and supervisors who work directly with adult learners on a face-to-face basis. Among their functions are the following: 1.) helping the learners diagnose their needs for particular learnings within the scope of the given situation (the diagnostic function); 2.) planning with the learners a sequence of experiences that will produce the desired learnings (the planning function); 3.) creating conditions that will cause the learners to want to learn (the motivational function); 4.) selecting the most effective methods and techniques for producing the desired learnings (the methodological function); 5.) providing the human and material resources necessary to produce the desired learnings (the resource function); 6.) helping the learners measure the outcomes of the learning experiences (the evaluative function).

At the program-director level are the committee chairmen, training directors, evening-school principals, extension deans, and other administrators who are responsible for planning and operating broad programs consisting of a variety of adult-educational activities. Their functions include the following: 1.) assessing the individual, institutional, and societal needs for adult learning relevant to their organizational settings (the diagnostic function); 2.) establishing and managing an organizational structure for the effective development and operation of an adult-education program (the organizational function); 3.) formulating objectives to meet the assessed needs and designing a program of activities to achieve these objectives (the planning function); 4.) instituting and supervising those procedures required for the effective operation of a program, including recruiting and training leaders and teachers, managing facilities and administrative processes, recruiting students, financing, and interpreting (the administrative and training function); 5.) assessing the effectiveness of the program (the evaluative function).

At the professional-leadership level are the small group of career adult educators who are responsible for such functions as developing new knowledge, preparing materials, inventing new techniques, providing leadership for coordinative organizations, training adult-education workers, and generally promoting the further development of the field of adult education.

### WHAT IS THE ADULT EDUCATOR'S MISSION?

At first sight the mission of the adult educator seems simple: to operate successful educational activities for mature men and women, success being defined in terms of the numbers and enthusiasm of the participants. But a reading of the history of the adult-education movement in this country indicates that the mission of adult educators is much greater than this. In fact, this mission can best be described in relation to satisfying three distinct sets of needs and goals: 1.) the needs and goals of individuals, 2.) the needs and goals of institutions, and 3.) the needs and goals of society.

### *The Needs and Goals of Individuals*

The primary and immediate mission of every adult educator is to help individuals satisfy their needs and achieve their goals. Usually if an individual is asked what these are, he will respond in terms of the acquisition of some specific competence such as "being able to speak in public" or "knowing mathematics." Or he might go one level of abstraction higher to such objectives as "being able to make more money" or "being able to get along with people better." These, to be sure, are important incentives to learning, but in this book they are treated as "interests" rather than as "needs," a distinction which will be discussed more fully in a later chapter. Interests are relevant to the adult educator's technology, but in relation to his mission we are talking about something different and more fundamental—indeed, about something about which individuals are less conscious than they are of their interests. We are talking about the more ultimate needs and goals of human fulfillment.

One such need can be stated negatively as the prevention of obsolescence. This need arises from the fact that most adults alive today were educated in their youth according to the doctrine that learning is primarily a function of youth and that the purpose of education is to supply individuals in their youth with all the knowledge and skills they will require to live adequately for the rest of their lives. But the rapidly accelerating pace of change in our society has proved this doctrine to be no longer valid. Facts learned in youth have become insufficient and in many instances actually untrue; and skills learned in youth have become outmoded by new technologies. Consequently, adult years become years of creeping obsolescence in work, in play, in understanding of self, and in understanding of the world.

The problem is that education is not yet perceived as a lifelong process, so that we are still taught in our youth what we ought to know rather than how to keep finding out. One mission of the adult educator, then, can be stated positively as helping individuals to develop the attitude that learning is a lifelong process and to acquire the skills of self-directed learning. In this sense, one of the tests of everything the adult educator does—whether it be to conduct a course in hat making, a human-relations workshop, or a staff meeting—is the extent to which the participants leave a given experience with heightened curiosity and with increased ability to carry on their own learning.<sup>1</sup>

Another ultimate need of individuals is to achieve complete self-identity through the development of their full potentialities. Increasing evidence is appearing in the psychological literature that complete self-development is a universal human need, and that at least a feeling of movement in this direction is a condition of mental health.<sup>2</sup> A. H. Maslow, for example, arranges human needs in the hierarchical order shown in EXHIBIT 1.

<sup>1</sup>For an elaboration of this idea, see Cyril O. Houle, *The Inquiring Mind* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961).

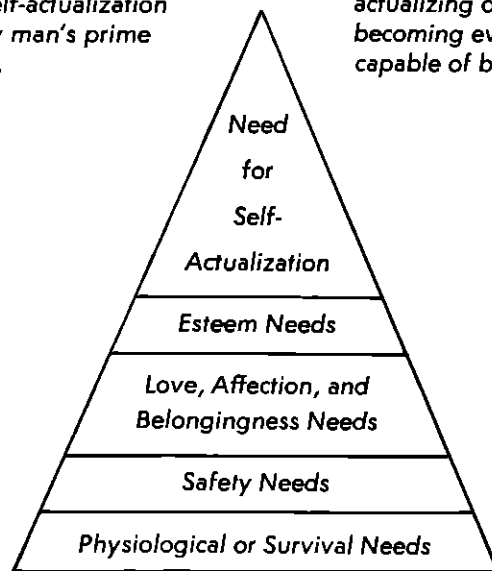
<sup>2</sup>See Gordon Allport, *Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Basic Psychology of Personality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955); Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950); Kurt Lewin, *A Dynamic Theory of Personality* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1935); Gardner Murphy, *Human Potentialities* (New York: Basic Books, 1958); and Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961).

## Exhibit 1

## MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF HUMAN NEEDS

Maslow emphasizes that the need for self-actualization is a healthy man's prime motivation.

Self-actualization means actualizing one's potential, becoming everything one is capable of becoming.



Most basic needs have to do with survival physically and psychologically.

On the whole an individual cannot satisfy any level unless needs below are satisfied.

He then proposes the following principles of operation for these needs: 1.) Gratification for the needs on each level, starting with the lowest, frees a person for higher levels of gratification. 2.) Those persons in whom a need has been satisfied are best equipped to deal with deprivations of that need in the future. 3.) The healthy person is one whose basic needs have been met so that he is principally motivated by his needs to actualize his highest potentialities.<sup>3</sup> This concept implies that the adult educator's mission is to help each individual learn what is required for gratification of the needs at whatever level he is struggling. If he is hungry, we must help him learn what will get him food; if he is well-fed, safe, loved, and esteemed, we must help him explore undeveloped capacities and become his full self.

A third ultimate need of individuals is to mature. Harry Overstreet equated maturity with "linkages with life" as follows:

<sup>3</sup> A. H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954).

A mature person is not one who has come to a certain level of achievement and stopped there. He is rather a *maturing* person—one whose *linkages with life* are constantly becoming stronger and richer because his attitudes are such as to encourage their growth. . . . A mature person, for example, is not one who knows a large number of facts. Rather, he is one whose mental habits are such that he grows in knowledge and the wise use of it.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of maturity as a goal of education must be defined more specifically than this, however, if it is to serve as a guide to continuous learning. Out of the psychological literature comes the notion that there are several dimensions of the maturing process, each with its own unique cycle of development. If the really critical dimensions of the maturing process could be identified, then the adult educator would have some reliable yardsticks against which to measure the accomplishment of his mission. As a starting point, the fifteen dimensions in EXHIBIT 2 are nominated for consideration. (Note that these dimensions describe directions of growth, not absolute states to be achieved.)

## Exhibit 2

## DIMENSIONS OF MATURATION

From	Toward
1. Dependence	→ Autonomy
2. Passivity	→ Activity
3. Subjectivity	→ Objectivity
4. Ignorance	→ Enlightenment
5. Small abilities	→ Large abilities
6. Few responsibilities	→ Many responsibilities
7. Narrow interests	→ Broad interests
8. Selfishness	→ Altruism
9. Self-rejection	→ Self-acceptance
10. Amorphous self-identity	→ Integrated self-identity
11. Focus on particulars	→ Focus on principles
12. Superficial concerns	→ Deep concerns
13. Imitation	→ Originality
14. Need for certainty	→ Tolerance for ambiguity
15. Impulsiveness	→ Rationality

<sup>4</sup> Harry A. Overstreet, *The Mature Mind* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1949), p. 43.

Perhaps the meaning of this conception of dimensions of maturing can be made clearer by brief elaborations on them.

1. *From dependence toward autonomy.* Every individual enters this world in a completely dependent condition; his every need must be fulfilled by someone else. One of the central quests of his life is for increasing self-direction (although the opposite of dependence in our complicated world may not be independence so much as self-directing interdependence). The fact is that every experience we have in life tends to affect our movement from dependence toward autonomy; and to the extent that a given experience helps us to move away from dependence it can be said to be educational, while to the extent that it tends to keep us dependent or make us more dependent, it can be said to be antieducational. Think of the effects on this dimension of maturing of the traditional conceptions of the roles of teacher, parent, minister, boss, and leader, which tend to put the individual in an essentially dependent role.

2. *From passivity toward activity.* Throughout childhood the individual who is maturing becomes increasingly active in exploring the world about him and tends to engage in an expanding number of its activities. In adulthood the emphasis is likely to shift from quantitative activity to qualitative activity, but whether on a qualitative basis or a quantitative basis, the maturing individual tends to be a participating individual. And the way he is taught to participate in school and in other educative experiences—whether he is put in the role of the passive recipient of knowledge or in that of the active inquirer after knowledge—will greatly affect the direction and speed of his movement in this dimension of growth.

3. *From subjectivity toward objectivity.* It is a universal characteristic of infancy that the world revolves around “me,” takes on its meaning from “my” perception of it, and is subject to “my” commands. One of the most difficult adjustments a person has to make in life is to move himself out of the center of the universe and to discover where he really fits into it. The extent to which each experience in life helps him to look at himself realistically, and to maintain self-respect in the process, is certainly one of the tests of its educational quality.

4. *From ignorance toward enlightenment.* It is in this area of maturing that schooling has traditionally placed its emphasis. But are we clear about what “enlightenment” really is? Certainly it can’t be knowing everything—the volume of modern knowledge is too vast for any individual to encompass it. In his *Some Things Worth Knowing* Stuart Chase poses this as one of the most pressing problems our civilization must solve, and he suggests one possible line of attack. He proposes that every individual should be perceived as being both a specialist and a generalist. As a specialist, he needs to master deeply the knowledge and skills of his vocation. But as a generalist he needs to master and keep up to date on a core of knowledge from all those specialties that bear on the practical problems of life—thus suggesting a kind of “core curriculum” for adult education, which would consist of a distillation of the essential elements from every discipline that all citizens should know. Only through such a process as this, Chase argues, can true enlightenment be achieved.

5. *From small abilities toward large abilities.* There is a tendency in human nature, once we have learned to do something well, to take pride in that ability and to rest on the laurels it wins us. Since each newly developed ability tends

to be learned in its simplest form, this tendency can result in an individual becoming frozen into the lowest level of his potential performance. A skillful facilitator of learning helps each individual to glimpse higher possible levels of performance and to develop continually larger abilities.

6. *From few responsibilities toward many responsibilities.* Another curious tendency in human nature, especially among parents, teachers, and supervisors, is to underestimate the amount of responsibility a child, student, and subordinate can carry. And so the maturation process is frequently retarded by the parent retaining responsibility the child is prepared to take over, the teacher making decisions the students are ready to make, and the supervisor carrying functions the subordinates are ready to have delegated to them.

7. *From narrow interests toward broad interests.* The child’s world starts with a field of interests that is bounded by his crib, and one significant sign of his continuing maturation is the extension of this field in ever-widening circles for the rest of his life. Anything that causes an individual’s field of interests to become fixated within a given circle or to recede to smaller circles is interfering with an important dimension of maturation. This dimension has special relevance to work with older people, in which the myth is widely held that it is natural for interests to diminish with age. Gerontologists who have made the opposite assumption—that older people are able to develop new interests and are healthier if they do—have had spectacular results.

8. *From selfishness toward altruism.* The infant comes into the world in a state of total self-centeredness, and one of his central tasks for the rest of his life is to become increasingly able to care about others. Conditions which induce a spirit of rivalry toward others rather than helpfulness toward others—such as the competition for grades promoted by traditional schooling—interfere with maturation in this dimension. Incidentally, there are some psychiatrists (e.g., Franz Alexander) who hold that altruism is the single best criterion of mental health.

9. *From self-rejection toward self-acceptance.* While a child’s first impression of himself is probably that he is king of the mountain, he soon learns that much of his natural behavior (making noise, getting into things, not eating correctly, etc.) is “bad.” And so his attitude quickly changes from one of self-adulation to one of self-rejection. But a mature person is one who accepts himself as a person of worth (which, incidentally is a prerequisite to his being able to accept others as having worth). And so the extent to which subsequent life experiences help the individual move from self-rejection toward self-acceptance will largely determine whether an individual matures in this dimension or not.

10. *From amorphous self-identity toward integrated self-identity.* Erik Erikson has provided the deepest insights concerning this dimension of maturation, mapping out its course through the “eight ages of man,” as follows:

- a. *Oral-sensory*, in which the basic issue is trust vs. mistrust.
- b. *Muscular-anal*, in which the basic issue is autonomy vs. shame.
- c. *Locomotion-genital*, in which the basic issue is initiative vs. guilt.
- d. *Latency*, in which the basic issue is industry vs. inferiority.
- e. *Puberty and adolescence*, in which the basic issue is identity vs. role confusion.
- f. *Young adulthood*, in which the basic issue is intimacy vs. isolation.
- g. *Adulthood*, in which the basic issue is generativity vs. stagnation.

h. *Maturity*, in which the basic issue is ego-integrity vs. despair.<sup>5</sup>

Although no stage is completely fulfilled at any point in life—and we continue to actualize each stage further throughout life—if any individual's development in a given stage is mostly frustrated, he is likely to remain fixated at that stage. Erikson's concepts of the process of identity formation are far too complex and provocative to be described in this book. But perhaps this taste is sufficient to indicate that the dimension of maturation from "I don't know who I am" toward "I know clearly who I am" is a delicate and crucial one.

11. *From focus on particulars toward focus on principles.* To a child's mind each object is unique, and each event is unconnected with any other. The discovery of principles which enable a person to group objects and connect events is the essence of the process of inquiry. One of the tragic aspects of traditional pedagogy is that it has so often imposed principles on inquiring minds and has therefore denied them the opportunity to mature in the ability to discover principles.

12. *From superficial concerns toward deep concerns.* The young child's world is an existential world; all that matters is the enjoyment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain at the moment. One dimension of his maturing consists of his gaining perspective on what more deeply mattered in his past and is likely to more deeply matter in his future—and, having accomplished this feat, gaining perspective on what matters in the past and future of others. Too often this process is retarded by society's trying to impose its deep concerns on him before he has discovered his own.

13. *From imitation toward originality.* The child's first technique of learning and adapting is that of imitation. The adult world has long tended to accept this method of learning as not only natural but *best*, and has geared much of its educational system to produce conformity through imitation. And the consequence has been the retardation of generations of human beings in their maturation toward the more self-fulfilling end of this dimension, originality.

14. *From the need for certainty toward tolerance for ambiguity.* The basic insecurity of the child's world imposes on him a deep need for certainty. Only as his experiences in life provide him with an increasing sense of security and self-confidence will he be able to move in the direction of a mature tolerance for ambiguity—a prerequisite for survival in a world of ambiguity.

15. *From impulsiveness toward rationality.* Traditionally, the naturally impulsive behaviors of children have been controlled through systems of reward and punishment—with emphasis on the latter. Too often the consequence of this policy is reactions of irrationality—rebellion, withdrawal, and fantasy. True maturing toward rationality requires self-understanding and self-control of one's impulses.

Perhaps there are other dimensions of the maturing process that ought to be added or that ought to replace some of these dimensions, and certainly, until further research is done on this important aspect of human development, we shall have to regard any such formulation as highly tentative. Meantime, the general

<sup>5</sup> Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950), p. 273. See also his *Identity and the Life Cycle*, International Universities Press, *Psychological Issues*, Vol. I, No. 1 (1959).

notion that one of the missions of the adult educator is to assist individuals to continue a maturing process throughout life provides some useful guidelines for the development of a sequential, continuous, and integrated program of lifelong learning.

A few implications of this multidimensional theory of maturation can be suggested to illustrate this point:

1. Every educational activity provides an opportunity for growth by each individual in *several* dimensions. For example, although focusing on stimulating growth toward increased enlightenment, a course on world affairs can be planned so as to stimulate growth toward greater independence of thought, broader interests, greater objectivity, and tolerance for ambiguity.

2. The dimensions of maturation tend to be interdependent, so that changes in one dimension have an effect on other dimensions. For example, considerable growth toward enlightenment might be produced by methods (such as those used in the traditional lecture course) which cause the student to become increasingly dependent on the teacher. Although a choice may sometimes have to be made between such values, a truly artistic teacher will try to induce positive growth in all dimensions.

3. Every person moves on a scale from zero to infinity in each dimension throughout life, and tends to incorporate learnings from a given experience in proportion to their relevance to his stage of development on the scale at that moment. For example, in a group of fifteen adult students, the individuals would be ready to take fifteen different degrees of responsibility for their own learning; and if the learning experience is to be maximally useful, provision must be made for this range of differences.

No doubt other ultimate needs could be identified, but these serve to illustrate the point that the adult educator's mission in helping individuals is far more complex and significant than it might appear on the surface. Perhaps the classic summary of individual needs and goals that define the adult educator's mission and challenge his art is contained in these words of Eduard Lindeman:

In what areas do most people appear to find life's meaning? We have only one pragmatic guide: meaning must reside in the things for which people strive, the goals which they set for themselves, their wants, needs, desires, and wishes. Even here our criterion is applicable only to those whose lives are already dedicated to aspirations and ambitions which belong to the higher levels of human achievement. . . . Viewed from the standpoint of adult education, such personalities seem to want among other things, intelligence, power, self-expression, freedom, creativity, appreciation, enjoyment, fellowship. Or, stated in terms of the Greek ideal, they are searchers after the good life. They want to count for something; they want their experiences to be vivid and meaningful; they want their talents to be utilized; they want to know beauty and joy; and they want all of these realizations of their total personalities to be shared in communities of fellowship. Briefly they want to improve themselves; this is their realistic and primary aim. But they want also to change the social order so that vital personalities will be creating a new environment in which their aspirations may be properly expressed.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Meaning of Adult Education* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1961), pp. 13-14. By permission.

### *The Needs and Goals of Institutions*

Adult education takes place under the auspices of institutions, and adult educators are employed by institutions; and these institutions, too, have needs and goals that help to define the adult educator's mission. At least three sets of these needs and goals can be served, and in some ways served best, by adult-educational means:

1. The development of individuals in the institution's constituency in the direction of the institution's goals for them.

Most institutions with adults in their constituencies have some sort of image of the kind of people they want to influence their members to become. For example, labor unions want their members to understand and support the cause of unionism, appreciate its historical role, participate effectively in the activities of their union, understand their legal rights and obligations, exert influence on public policy, be wise consumers, and enjoy the cultural life of their communities. Religious institutions have various ways of describing their goals for their members, but they tend to converge on a conception of "committed" members who believe and live according to the creed propounded by the institution. A public school's image for its adult constituents is likely to be flavored by such symbols as "responsible citizen," "efficient worker," or "good parent"; that of a university, by "intellectual leader" or "professional leader"; that of a trade association, by "industrial statesman"; and so on. Institutional leaders expect adult-educational programs to help to produce these kinds of qualities in their constituents, and they evaluate the programs at least partly on the basis of their effectiveness in doing so.

Even in institutions whose constituents are primarily children and youth, adult education is perceived as an instrument for helping them improve the quality of education of the young. Public schools, for example, are devoting increasing energy to improving the educative quality of the home environments of their children through courses, study groups, and lecture series on child development and home and family living for parents, parental counseling, and extracurricular activities for parents and children together. Many voluntary youth agencies, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA and YWCA, Sunday schools, and 4-H clubs, perceive the training of volunteer adult leaders as the critical element in their accomplishing their character-building goals with youth.

Not infrequently the needs and interests of individuals come into conflict with the needs and interests of their institutions, as when a member develops an independence of thought that contradicts the established doctrine of the institution. In such cases the adult educator may have to make a choice as to which mission to serve: helping individuals to grow or helping the institution to survive. Increasingly, however, adult educators are resolving such conflicts between education and indoctrination by taking the institution as his client and helping its leaders to engage in a process of self-study, as a result of which the institution's educational goals are often broadened to provide wider areas of freedom for individual growth.

2. The improvement of institutional operation.

A growing number of institutions—especially in industry and government—have come to recognize that one of the most efficient means for increasing the effectiveness of their operation is the continuing education of their employees.

This recognition has reached such a point in industry, in fact, as to move two serious students of the phenomenon to describe the educational activities of American industry as a third great educational force on a par with our public-school and higher-education systems.<sup>7</sup>

What industry has discovered is equally applicable to every other institution—namely, that adult-education processes are basic tools of organizational growth and development. These processes are now used routinely for the orientation of new employees, for on-the-job training in technical skills, for the preparation of personnel for advancement, for executive development, for supervisory training, for the improvement of interpersonal relations within the organization, and for the improvement of the institution's public relations. Increasingly these same processes are coming to be used for the planning and guiding of long-run institutional change.

One of the missions of the adult educator, then, is to help institutions become increasingly effective as institutions. In this sense, institutions are his clients as well as individuals, and part of his art is helping various target populations within institutions—governing boards, administrators, supervisors, departmental personnel, members, and the like—to learn new behaviors that will produce stronger institutions. In carrying out this mission the adult educator may take the role of direct instructor or trainer, but more frequently his role will be that of planner, consultant, or "change agent"—a specialized role to which modern adult-education literature is devoting increasing attention.

3. The development of public understanding and involvement.

An institution can build good public relations through either a Madison Avenue type of sales approach or through involving its public in the serious study of its needs, problems, and goals. Although each approach has its place, the adult-educational approach tends to produce deeper and more lasting understanding and caring.

In the case of public schools, for example, it is ironic that although one of the first contributions of adult education was the education of the public about childhood education,<sup>8</sup> this potentially invaluable function was largely neglected until the past few years. During the years following World War II, when expanding enrollments and rising costs were causing school budgets to be scrutinized critically by the various watchdogs of the public treasuries, school superintendents in a number of cities found that their most effective supporters came from among the adult citizens who had participated in their evening programs for adults. But the Seattle Public Schools proved in a dramatic experiment in 1957–58 that adult education processes were even more effective in mobilizing public support when used directly for this purpose. After a series of setbacks in school-levy elections in the early 1950's, in spite of all-out publicity campaigns, a Citizens School Levy Committee in 1957 organized a city-wide program of citizen conferences and study groups in which information about the needs and program of the schools was presented and discussed. When the school levy was again presented to the

<sup>7</sup> Harold F. Clark and Harold S. Sloan, *Classroom in the Factories* (Rutherford, N. J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1958).

<sup>8</sup> The lyceum movement, which flourished in the 1830's, had as its objective "the advancement of education, especially in the common schools." It succeeded in mobilizing public opinion in favor of tax-supported public schools. See Carl Bode, *The American Lyceum* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

people in March, 1958, it was approved—a result credited largely to the educational approach taken.<sup>9</sup>

The periodical literature of adult education contains other reports of the use of adult-education processes to produce public understanding of such diverse institutions as the armed services (exhibits, documentary films, guided tours), universities (public lectures, cultural events, citizen advisory councils), the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis (which preceded its nationwide campaign of Salk vaccination with community-by-community educational programs), and the United States National Commission for UNESCO (which sponsored nationwide citizen discussion programs). In general, these programs succeeded in producing real public understanding to the extent that they were informative rather than indoctrinational and to the extent that they involved citizens in meaningful participation in the work of the institution.

It is a legitimate mission of the adult educator to use his art to bring about a better understanding of his institution, but this is a mission requiring the highest ethical commitment, for the line of demarcation between education and propaganda is a fine one.

### *The Needs and Goals of Society*

Every society has used adult-education processes to continue the development of the kind of citizens visualized to be required for the maintenance and progress of that society; and the perception of the kind of adult required is different for each society. For example, the perception in Soviet society is quite different from the perception in Western society; the perception in urban society is different from that in rural society; the perception in Jewish society is different in some respects from the perception in Catholic or Protestant societies; the perception in professional society is different from that in industrial society; and so on. The challenging fact is that every adult educator is the agent of several different societies whose needs he is expected to serve simultaneously. And one of the measures of his artistry is the extent to which he is able to understand and serve these differing needs.

But there are more general needs of American society, perhaps even of world society, that define an even broader mission for the adult educator.

A society whose central dynamic is change—economic and technological, political, social, cultural, and even theological—requires a citizenry that is able to change.<sup>10</sup>

A society whose elements—geographic, economic, intellectual—are becoming increasingly complex and interdependent requires a citizenry with broader knowledge, less parochial values, more tolerant attitudes, and greater skill in human relations than past societies required.

A society in which machinery is doing more and more of the work of man requires a citizenry capable of performing increasingly complicated occupational roles and capable of creatively using more leisure time.

A society in which gaps between people (youth vs. adult, black vs. white, East vs. West, rich vs. poor) are becoming better defined and less tolerable requires

<sup>9</sup> See Donald Nylan and Dale Goss, "We Heard a Knock at the Door," *Adult Leadership*, Vol. VII (September, 1958), pp. 61-69.

<sup>10</sup> See *Daedalus*, "Toward the Year 2000," Vol. 96, No. 3 (Summer, 1967).

a citizenry that is liberated from traditional prejudices and is able to establish open, empathic, and collaborative relationships with people of all sorts.

A strong case can be made for the proposition that the greatest danger to the survival of civilization today is not atomic warfare, not environmental pollution, not the population explosion, not the depletion of natural resources, and not any of the other contemporary crises, but the underlying cause of them all—the accelerating obsolescence of man. The evidence is mounting that man's ability to cope with his changing world is lagging farther and farther behind the changing world. The only hope now seems to be a crash program to retool the present generation of adults with the competencies required to function adequately in a condition of perpetual change. This is the deep need—the awesome challenge—presented to the adult educator by modern society.

### THE CHANGING AND CHALLENGING ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATOR

As the mission of the adult educator has become more complex and more significant, the character of his role has been gradually changing. And the demands on him to prepare more carefully for performing the role have increased proportionately.

For many years it was assumed that the principles and techniques that were used in the education of children would be equally effective in helping adults to learn. People were therefore recruited to direct institutional programs of adult education on the basis of having had experience in directing programs of youth education; teachers of children were recruited as teachers of adults; and it was taken for granted that any reasonably well-educated person would know how to do a good job as program chairman or study-group leader of a voluntary organization.

But as knowledge accumulated both from experience and from research in adult education and related social sciences, it became increasingly apparent that an adult was more than just a grown-up child, that he possessed certain unique characteristics as a learner that required different principles and techniques from those employed with children. And with this new knowledge, which the rest of this book is concerned with describing, came the insight that good adult educators don't just happen; they become good by learning these principles and techniques. As a result, the role of adult educator has moved gradually in a direction away from that of willing amateur toward that of trained specialist, and opportunities have multiplied for the requisite training to be obtained at all levels: for the firing-line leaders and teachers, through short-term institutes and literature; for program directors, through summer workshops, courses, and literature; and for professional leaders, through master's and doctoral programs in graduate schools of education.

Another way in which the role of adult educator has been changing is in its basic theoretical conception. Initially, an adult educator was conceived loosely as "one who educates adults," in the sense of transmitting knowledge to them, telling them what they ought to know, or at best enticing them to learn. His clientele was perceived as consisting mostly of underprivileged adults, and his function was perceived as being primarily remedial—helping individuals to catch up to normal. In recent years, however, the adult educator is referred to increasingly



in the literature as a "change agent" and as performing a "helping role." His clientele is perceived as consisting of all types of individuals (indeed, it is the better-educated persons who now predominate in adult-education enrollments), institutions, and communities. His function has moved increasingly away from being remedial toward being developmental—toward helping his clients achieve their full potential.

As an agent of change his responsibilities now extend far beyond the routine scheduling of activities in response to cursory expressions of interest. His responsibilities entail, rather, the involvement of his clients in a penetrating analysis of their higher aspirations and the changes required to achieve them, diagnosis of the obstacles that must be overcome in achieving these changes, and planning of an effective strategy for accomplishing the desired results. His part in this process is that of helper, guide, encourager, consultant, and resource—not that of transmitter, disciplinarian, judge, and authority. He recognizes that it is less important that his clients know the right answers to the questions he thinks are important than that they know how to ask the important questions and find the answers for themselves. His ultimate objective is to help people grow in their ability to learn, to help them become their mature selves.

The fact is that the role of adult educator is changing from a somewhat marginal status in society, as all pioneering roles are initially, to a more central status. This shift is the natural consequence of the fact that so many institutional concerns (productivity, morale, growth) and so many societal problems (wars, deterioration of our cities, crime, illiteracy, and disease) can be more adequately solved through adult educational processes.

In 1950 I wrote, "The society of our age cannot wait for the next generation to solve its problems. Time is running out too fast. Our fate rests with the intelligence, skill, and good will of those who are now the citizen-rulers. The instrument by which their abilities as citizen-rulers can be improved is adult education. This is our problem. This is our challenge."<sup>11</sup>

Almost two decades later I can report that our society has become concerned about time running out; it has made adult education a major instrument of national policy. Where the national, state, and local governments were spending only millions of dollars for adult education in 1950, they spent billions in 1969. And expenditures by business and industry, universities, religious institutions, and voluntary agencies have increased proportionately. Where adult-education resources in 1950 were devoted overwhelmingly to the vocational and avocational welfare of individuals, by the late 1960's they were devoted increasingly to such problems of societal welfare as the urban crisis, racial inequalities, illiteracy, unemployment, automation and the like.

The mission of adult education is becoming clearer: It is to develop a total environment conducive to human growth and fulfillment—an educative community.

<sup>11</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles, *Informal Adult Education* (New York: Association Press, 1950), p. 10.

## FOR YOUR CONTINUING INQUIRY . . .

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## ***Andragogy: An Emerging Technology For Adult Learning***

### FAREWELL TO PEDAGOGY

Most of what is known about learning has been derived from studies of learning in children and animals. Most of what is known about teaching has been derived from experience with teaching children under conditions of compulsory attendance. And most theories about the learning-teaching transaction are based on the definition of education as a process of transmitting the culture. From these theories and assumptions there has emerged the technology of "pedagogy"—a term derived from the Greek stem *paid-* (meaning "child") and *agogos* (meaning "leading"). So "pedagogy" means, specifically, the art and science of teaching children.

One problem is that somewhere in history the "children" part of the definition got lost. In many people's minds—and even in the dictionary—"pedagogy" is defined as the art and science of teaching. Period. Even in books on adult education you can find references to "the pedagogy of adult education," without any apparent discomfort over the contradiction in terms. Indeed, in my estimation, the main reason why adult education has not achieved the impact on our civilization of which it is capable is that most teachers of adults have only known how to teach adults as if they were children.

Another problem with pedagogy is that it is premised on an archaic conception of the purpose of education, namely, the transmittal of knowledge. As Alfred North Whitehead pointed out a generation ago, it was functional to define education as a process of transmittal of what is known so long as it was true that the time-span of major cultural change was greater than the life-span of individuals. Under this condition, what a person learns in his youth will remain valid for the rest of his life. But, Whitehead emphasized, "We are living in the first period of human history for which this assumption is false . . . today this time-span is considerably shorter than that of human life, and accordingly our training must prepare individuals to face a novelty of conditions."<sup>1</sup> An attempt is made in Exhibit 3 to portray Whitehead's concept graphically.

Note that up to the early part of the twentieth century the time-span of major cultural change (*e.g.*, massive inputs of new knowledge, technological innovation, vocational displacement, population mobility, change in political and eco-

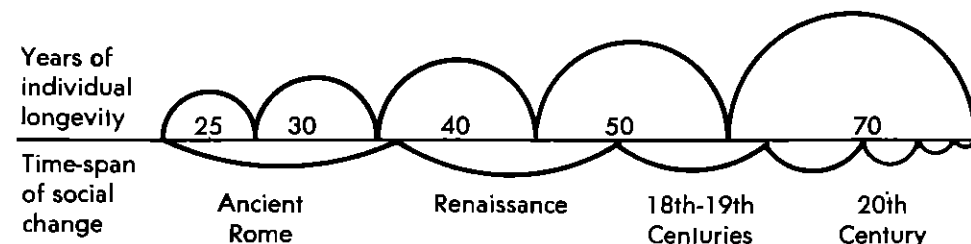
<sup>1</sup> Alfred N. Whitehead, "Introduction," Wallace B. Donham, *Business Adrift* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1931), pp. viii–xix.

conomic systems, etc.) required several generations, whereas in the twentieth century several cultural revolutions have already occurred and the pace is accelerating. Under this new condition, knowledge gained by the time a person is twenty-one is largely obsolete by the time he is forty; and skills that made him productive in his twenties are becoming out of date during his thirties. So it is no longer functional to define education as a process of transmitting what is known; it must now be defined as a lifelong process of discovering what is not known. What children should learn is not what the adult world thinks they ought to know, but how to inquire. This is why traditional pedagogy is irrelevant to the modern requirements for the education of both children and adults.

Skillful adult educators have known for a long time that they cannot teach adults as children have traditionally been taught. For adults are almost always

### Exhibit 3

#### THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE TIME-SPAN OF SOCIAL CHANGE TO INDIVIDUAL LIFE-SPAN



voluntary learners, and they simply disappear from learning experiences that don't satisfy them. So the practice of adult education has in fact been departing from traditional pedagogical practices for some time. And often this deviation has been accompanied by misgivings and guilt feelings over the violation of long-established standards, for adult educators have not had a coherent theory to justify their treating adults as adults.

This lack is now on the way to being remedied. For adult-education theorists in both Europe (especially in Germany and Yugoslavia<sup>2</sup>) and in North America are rapidly developing a distinctive theory of adult learning. And from this theory is evolving a new technology for the education of adults. To distinguish it from pedagogy, this new technology is being given a new name: "andragogy," which is based on the Greek word *anēr* (with the stem *andr-*), meaning "man."<sup>3</sup> Andragogy is, therefore, the art and science of helping adults learn.

But I believe that andragogy means more than just helping adults learn. I believe it means helping human beings learn, and that it therefore has implica-

<sup>2</sup> See Dusan Savicevic, "Training Adult Educationists in Yugoslavia," *Convergence*, Vol. I (March, 1968), p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> For further elaboration on the etymology of "andragogy" see the correspondence between the author and the publishers of Merriam-Webster dictionaries in Appendix A.

tions for the education of children and youth (which are developed later in this chapter). For I believe that the process of maturing toward adulthood begins early in a child's life and that as he matures he takes on more and more of the characteristics of the adult on which andragogy is based.

#### SOME ASSUMPTIONS OF ANDRAGOGY AND THEIR TECHNOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Andragogy is premised on at least four crucial assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners on which traditional pedagogy is premised. These assumptions are that, as a person matures, 1.) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directing human being; 2.) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning; 3.) his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles; and 4.) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem-centeredness.

Each of these assumptions will be described briefly and some of its implications for the education of adults will be explored.

#### Self-Concept

Children enter this world in a condition of complete dependency. Their every need, except for purely biological functions, must be taken care of by someone else. The first image a child gets of himself as a separate entity is that of a dependent personality whose life is managed for him by the adult world. At home, at play, in church, in the community, and in school, he expects the will of adults to be imposed on him. That's what life is like when you're a kid.

This self-concept of dependency is encouraged and reinforced by the adult world. In fact, society defines the normal role of a child as that of learner; this is his full-time occupation, the source of his rewards and self-fulfillment. And on the whole, this role is defined as the more or less passive one of receiving and storing up the information adults have decided children should have.

As the child's self-identity begins to take shape, he begins to see himself as having the capacity to start making decisions for himself, at first experimentally and in small matters that don't impinge on the adult world. But increasingly, as he matures, the child's self-concept moves in the direction of greater self-direction, and during adolescence his need to take significant responsibility for managing his own life becomes so strong that it often puts him in open rebellion against control by the adult world. The tragedy is that in our culture the adult world tends to hold on to its concept of the child as a dependent personality until the last possible moment.

This cultural lag has been especially evident in regard to the education of children. Interestingly, in the kindergarten and early primary years our teachers typically involve students in planning and conducting learning activities to a considerable degree. But as the child moves up the educational ladder, he encounters more and more of the responsibility for his learning being taken by the

teacher, the curriculum planners, and his parents. The net effect is to freeze him into a self-concept of dependency.

But something dramatic happens to his self-concept when an individual defines himself as an adult. He begins to see his normal role in society no longer as being a full-time learner. He sees himself increasingly as a producer or doer. His chief sources of self-fulfillment are now his performance as a worker, a spouse, a parent, a citizen. The adult acquires a new status, in his own eyes and in the eyes of others, from these noneducational responsibilities. His self-concept becomes that of a self-directing personality. He sees himself as being able to make his own decisions and face their consequences, to manage his own life. In fact, the point at which a person becomes an adult, psychologically, is that point at which he perceives himself to be wholly self-directing. And at that point he also experiences a deep need to be perceived by others as being self-directing.

For this reason, adults have a need to be treated with respect, to make their own decisions, to be seen as unique human beings. They tend to avoid, resist, and resent situations in which they feel they are treated like children—being told what to do and what not to do, being talked down to, embarrassed, punished, judged. Adults tend to resist learning under conditions that are incongruent with their self-concept as autonomous individuals.

Often there is another ingredient in the self-concept of an adult that affects his role as a learner. He may carry over from his previous experience with schooling the perception that he isn't very smart, at least in regard to academic work. This fact about the adult psyche has several consequences for adult education. In the case of some adults the remembrance of the classroom as a place where one is treated with disrespect is so strong that it serves as a serious barrier to their becoming involved in adult-education activities at all. If these adults are to be enticed back to systematic learning, the rewards of learning must be made so great that they outweigh the anticipated pain of learning. But even adults who overcome this barrier typically enter an educational activity expecting to be treated like children, and this expectation is frequently so strong that adult students often put pressure on their teachers to behave toward them in this way. Once a teacher puts adult students into a dependent role, however, he is likely to experience a rising resistance and resentment.

On the other hand, when adult students are first exposed to a learning environment in which they are treated with respect, are involved in mutual inquiry with the teacher, and are given responsibility for their own learning, the initial reaction is usually one of shock and disorganization. Adults typically are not prepared for self-directed learning; they need to go through a process of reorientation to learning as adults—to learn new ways of learning. Once an adult makes the discovery that he can take responsibility for his learning, as he does for other facets of his life, he experiences a sense of release and exhilaration. He then enters into learning with deep ego-involvement, with results that are frequently startling both to himself and to his teachers. Teachers who have helped their adult students to achieve this breakthrough report repeatedly that it is one of the most rewarding experiences of their lives.

#### *Technological Implications*

Several implications for the technology of andragogy flow from this difference in assumptions about the self-concept of the child and the adult.

1. *The learning climate.* Certainly it has a strong implication regarding the nature of the social climate of the environment in which adults learn. It suggests that the physical environment should be one in which adults feel at ease. Furnishings and equipment should be adult-sized and comfortable; meeting rooms should be arranged informally and should be decorated according to adult tastes; and acoustics and lighting should take into account declining audio-visual acuity.

Even more importantly, the psychological climate should be one which causes adults to feel accepted, respected, and supported; in which there exists a spirit of mutuality between teachers and students as joint inquirers; in which there is freedom of expression without fear of punishment or ridicule. A person tends to feel more "adult" in an atmosphere that is friendly and informal, in which he is known by name and valued as a unique individual, than in the traditional school atmosphere of formality, semianonymity, and status differentiation between teacher and student.

In andragogical practice care is taken to determine what are the symbols of childishness to particular groups of adults, and to remove them. For some—particularly undereducated adults—it is a school building, in which case social-agency facilities, churches, commercial properties, or living rooms would probably be environments more conducive to learning. For others a podium on a stage makes them feel that they are being talked down to, in which case a small table on the floor would provide a more appropriate work space for the teacher. Many adults associate rooms in which chairs are placed in rows with childhood regimentation and passivity, and find rooms in which participants are seated in small groups in circles or around tables more conducive to adult-type relationships. A few adults report that blackboards are a symbol of childishness to them, which may help to explain the growing popularity in adult education of newsprint-pads on easels.

The behavior of the teacher probably influences the character of the learning climate more than any other single factor, however. The teacher conveys in many ways whether his attitude is one of interest in and respect for the students or whether he sees them essentially as receiving sets for his transmissions of wisdom. The teacher who takes the time and trouble to get to know his students individually and who calls them by name (especially by first name) obviously conveys the first set of attitudes. But probably the behavior that most explicitly demonstrates that a teacher really cares about a student and respects his contribution is the act of really listening to what the student says.

The notion of a climate of adulthood can be extended beyond individual classrooms and applied to total institutions. Indeed, such a climate is likely to be established in classrooms if it pervades the whole institution and is reflected in its architecture, decor, policies, procedures, leadership style, and human relations. One can sense rather quickly as he enters an institution, for example, whether it cares more about people or things, whether it is concerned about the feelings and welfare of individuals or herds them through like cattle, and whether it views adults as dependent personalities or self-directing human beings.

2. *Diagnosis of needs.* The adult's self-concept of self-directivity is in direct conflict with the traditional practice of the teacher telling the student what he needs to learn. Indeed, it is even in conflict with the social philosophy that society has a right to impose its ideas about what he needs to learn on him. Of course,

an adult will learn what others want him to learn if their power to punish him for not learning is strong enough. But he is more deeply motivated to learn those things he sees the need to learn.

In andragogy, therefore, great emphasis is placed on the involvement of adult learners in a process of *self-diagnosis* of needs for learning. As will be described in greater detail in a later chapter, this process consists of three phases: 1.) Constructing a model of the competencies or characteristics required to achieve a given ideal model of performance, so that the learner has some vision of the "good" supervisor, the "good" public speaker, the "good" parent, and the like—and of the competencies required to become "good"; it is in this model-building phase that the values and expectations of the teacher, the institution, and society are amalgamated with those of the learner into a composite picture. 2.) Providing diagnostic experiences in which the learner can assess his present level of competencies in the light of those portrayed in the model; this is an underdeveloped area of andragogical technology, but one in which there is currently a ferment of invention. Such techniques as critical incident processes, sociodrama, computerized games, laboratory methods, and simulation exercises are being developed to enable a learner to perform and then to get feedback that helps him in objectively assessing the strengths and weaknesses of his performance. 3.) Helping the learner to measure the gaps between his present competencies and those required by the model, so that he experiences a feeling of dissatisfaction about the distance between where he is and where he would like to be and is able to identify specific directions of desirable growth. This experiencing of self-induced dissatisfaction with present inadequacies, coupled with a clear sense of direction for self-improvement, is in fact a good definition of "motivation to learn."

3. *The planning process.* There seems to be a law (or, at least, a tendency) of human nature that goes like this: Every individual tends to feel committed to a decision (or an activity) to the extent that he has participated in making it (or planning it). Teachers of adults who do all the planning for their students, who come into the classroom and impose preplanned activities on them, typically experience apathy, resentment, and probably withdrawal. For this imposition of the will of the teacher is incongruent with the adult's self-concept of self-directivity.

Accordingly, a basic element in the technology of andragogy is the involvement of the learners in the process of planning their own learning, with the teacher serving as a procedural guide and content resource. When the number of students is small enough, they can all be involved in the planning directly; when the number gets much over thirty, adult educators make use of representative councils, committees, task forces, teams, or other devices through which the learners feel that they are participating in the planning by proxy.

The function of planning, with which the remainder of this book is largely concerned, consists of translating diagnosed needs into specific educational objectives (or directions of growth), designing and conducting learning experiences to achieve these objectives, and evaluating the extent to which these objectives have been accomplished. In andragogy, responsibility for performing this function is a mutual one between the learners and the teacher.

4. *Conducting learning experiences.* In traditional pedagogical practice (and in contemporary programmed instruction) the function of the teacher is defined as "to teach." The teacher is expected to take full responsibility for what happens

in the teaching-learning transaction. The learner's role tends to be that of a fairly passive recipient of the teacher's instruction.

In contrast, in congruence with the adult's self-concept of self-directivity, andragogical practice treats the learning-teaching transaction as the mutual responsibility of learners and teacher. In fact, the teacher's role is redefined as that of a procedural technician, resource person, and coinquirer; he is more a catalyst than an instructor, more a guide than a wizard. Andragogy assumes that a teacher can't really "teach" in the sense of "make a person learn," but that one person can only help another person learn. (In my own practice, when I succumb to the compulsion to teach my students something I know they ought to know but that they don't yet know they ought to know, which I sometimes do because bad habits take time to break, they report that it gets in the way of their learning. My practice has improved since I adopted the policy of authorizing them to signal me when they sense this happening.)

Later chapters describe procedures by which learners can responsibly share in taking responsibility for their own learning. Suffice it to say at this point that an andragogical learning situation, whether it be a course, an institute, a training program, or a conference, is alive with meetings of small groups—planning committees, learning-teaching teams, consultation groups, project task forces—sharing responsibility for helping one another learn.

5. *Evaluation of learning.* Probably the crowning instance of incongruity between traditional educational practice and the adult's self-concept of self-directivity is the act of a teacher giving a grade to a student. Nothing makes an adult feel more childlike than being judged by another adult; it is the ultimate sign of disrespect and dependency, as the one who is being judged experiences it.

For this reason, andragogical theory prescribes a process of self-evaluation, in which the teacher devotes his energy to helping the adults get evidence for themselves about the progress they are making toward their educational goals. In this process, the strengths and weaknesses of the educational program itself must be assessed in terms of how it has facilitated or inhibited the learning of the students. So evaluation is a mutual undertaking, as are all other phases of the adult learning experience.

In fact, what is happening in practice is that precisely the same procedures that are used for the diagnosis of learning needs are being employed to help the learner measure his gains in competence. For instance, by comparing his performance in solving a critical incident at the end of a learning experience with his performance in a similar critical incident at the beginning of the experience, a learner can quite precisely measure the changes produced by the experience. Because of the similarity of these two processes, I find myself now thinking less and less in terms of the evaluation of learning and more and more in terms of the *redagnosis* of learning needs. And I find that, when my adult students perceive what they do at the end of a learning experience as rediagnosing rather than evaluating, they enter into the activity with more enthusiasm and see it as being more constructive. Indeed, many of them report that it launches them into a new cycle of learning, reinforcing the notion that learning is a continuing process.

This shift from evaluation to self-evaluation or rediagnosis places a heavy burden on the teacher of adults. He must set the example of himself being open to feedback regarding his performance. He must be skillful in establishing a sup-

portive climate, in which hard-to-accept information about one's performance can be looked at objectively. And he must be creative about inventing ways in which students can get comprehensive data about their performance. Some of the techniques available to him in carrying this burden are explored in later chapters.

My own feeling is that the single most critical difference between children and adults as learners is the difference in assumptions we make about their self-concepts, and this is why these assumptions and their technological implications have been dealt with in such detail. But there are other important differences.

### *Experience*

Every adult enters into any undertaking with a different background of experience from that of his youth. Having lived longer, he has accumulated a greater *volume* of experience, but he also has had different *kinds* of experience. Few children have had the experience of making their own living, marrying, having children, taking real community responsibility, or being responsible for the welfare of others.

There is, it seems to me, another rather subtle difference between children and adults as regards their experience. To a child, an experience is something that happens to him; it is an external event that affects him, not an integral part of him. If you ask a child who he is, he is likely to identify himself in terms of who his parents are, who his older brothers or sisters are, what street he lives on, and what school he attends. His self-identity is largely derived from external sources.

But to an adult, his experience *is* him. He defines who he is, establishes his self-identity, in terms of his accumulation of a unique set of experiences. So if you ask an adult who he is, he is likely to identify himself in terms of what his occupation is, where he has worked, where he has traveled, what his training and experience have equipped him to do, and what his achievements have been. An adult *is* what he has *done*.

Because an adult defines himself largely by his experience, he has a deep investment in its value. And so when he finds himself in a situation in which his experience is not being used, or its worth is minimized, it is not just his experience that is being rejected—he feels rejected as a person.

These differences in experience between children and adults have at least three consequences for learning: 1.) Adults have more to contribute to the learning of others; for most kinds of learning, they are themselves a rich resource for learning. 2.) Adults have a richer foundation of experience to which to relate new experiences (and new learnings tend to take on meaning as we are able to relate them to our past experience). 3.) Adults have acquired a larger number of fixed habits and patterns of thought, and therefore tend to be less open minded.

### *Technological Implications*

Several implications for the technology of andragogy flow from these differences in experience.

1. *Emphasis on experiential techniques.* Because adults are themselves richer resources for learning than is true of children, greater emphasis can be placed

on techniques that tap the experience of the adult learners, such as group discussion, the case method, the critical-incident process, simulation exercises, role playing, skill-practice exercises, field projects, action projects, laboratory methods, consultative supervision, demonstration, seminars, work conferences, counseling, group therapy, and community development. There is a distinct shift in emphasis in andragogy away from the transmittal techniques so prevalent in youth education—the lecture, assigned readings, and canned audio-visual presentation—toward the more participatory experiential techniques. Indeed, “participation” and “ego-involvement” are boldfaced words in the lexicon of the adult educator, with the assumption often being made that the more active the learner's role in the process, the more he is probably learning.

2. *Emphasis on practical application.* Skillful adult educators have always taken care to see that new concepts or broad generalizations were illustrated by life experiences drawn from the learners. But numerous recent studies on the transfer of learning and the maintenance of behavioral change indicate the desirability of going even farther, and actually building into the design of learning experiences provision for the learners to plan—and even rehearse—how they are going to apply their learnings in their day-to-day lives.

3. *Unfreezing and learning to learn from experience.* A growing andragogical practice is to build into the early phases of a course, workshop, conference, institute, or other sequential educational activity an “unfreezing” experience, in which the adults are helped to be able to look at themselves more objectively and free their minds from preconceptions. Many of the diagnostic exercises described in a later chapter help to serve this purpose, but the most effective technique of all is probably a sensitivity-training “microlab,” in which participants experience a short, intensive period of feedback on their behavior. For one of the almost universal initial needs of adults is to learn how to take responsibility for their own learning through self-directed inquiry, how to learn collaboratively with the help of colleagues rather than to compete with them, and especially, how to learn by analyzing one's own experience. Since this is the essence of the human-relations laboratory, it is coming to be used increasingly as an orientation activity in a long-run program of adult education.

### *Readiness to Learn*

It is well accepted in our culture now that children learn best those things that are necessary for them to know in order to advance from one phase of development to the next. These have been dubbed “developmental tasks” by developmental psychologists:

A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.<sup>4</sup>

Each of these developmental tasks produces a “readiness to learn” which at its peak presents a “teachable moment.” For example, parents now generally accept

<sup>4</sup> Robert J. Havighurst, *Developmental Tasks and Education* (New York: David McKay Co., 1961), p. 2. By permission.

the fact that they can't teach a child to walk until he has mastered the art of crawling, his leg muscles are strong enough, and he has become frustrated at not being able to stand up and walk the way everybody else does. At that point, and only then, is he able to learn to walk; for it has become *his* developmental task.

Recent research suggests that the same phenomenon is at work during the adult years. Adults, too, have their phases of growth and resulting developmental tasks, readinesses to learn, and teachable moments. But whereas the developmental tasks of youth tend to be the products primarily of physiological and mental maturation, those of the adult years are the products primarily of the evolution of social roles. Robert J. Havighurst, one of the pioneers in this area of research, divides the adult years into three phases—"early adulthood," "middle age," and "later maturity"—and identifies ten social roles of adulthood: worker, mate, parent, homemaker, son or daughter of aging parents, citizen, friend, organization member, religious affiliate, and user of leisure time. The requirements for performing each of these social roles change, according to Havighurst, as we move through the three phases of adult life, thereby setting up changing developmental tasks and, therefore, changing readiness to learn.

For example, in a person's role of worker, his first developmental task is to get a job. At that point he is ready to learn anything required to get a job, but he definitely isn't ready to study supervision. Having landed a job, he is faced with the task of mastering it so that he won't get fired from it; and at that point he is ready to learn the special skills it requires, the standards that are expected of him, and how to get along with his fellow workers. Having become secure in his basic job, his task becomes one of working up the occupational ladder. Now he becomes ready to learn to become a supervisor or executive. Finally, after reaching his ceiling, he faces the task of dissolving his role of worker—and is ready to learn about retirement or substitutes for work.

Havighurst illustrates the changes in developmental tasks during the three periods of adult life as follows:

#### *Early Adulthood (Ages 18 to 30)*

- Selecting a mate
- Learning to live with a marriage partner
- Starting a family
- Rearing children
- Managing a home
- Getting started in an occupation
- Taking on civic responsibility
- Finding a congenial social group

#### *Middle Age (Ages 30 to 55)*

- Achieving adult civic and social responsibility
- Establishing and maintaining an economic standard of living
- Assisting teen-age children to become responsible and happy adults
- Developing adult leisure-time activities
- Relating to one's spouse as a person
- Accepting and adjusting to the physiological changes of middle age
- Adjusting to aging parents

#### *Later Maturity (55 and over)*

- Adjusting to decreasing physical strength and health
- Adjusting to retirement and reduced income
- Adjusting to the death of a spouse
- Establishing an explicit affiliation with one's age group
- Meeting social and civic obligations
- Establishing satisfactory physical living arrangements<sup>5</sup>

As Havighurst concludes, "People do not launch themselves into adulthood with the momentum of their childhood and youth and simply coast along to old age. . . . Adulthood has its transition points and its crises. It is a *developmental period* in almost as complete a sense as childhood and adolescence are developmental periods."<sup>6</sup>

#### *Technological Implications*

At least two sets of implications for the technology of andragogy flow from this difference in readiness to learn:

1. *The timing of learnings.* If the teachable moment for a particular adult to acquire a given learning is to be captured, it is obvious that the sequence of the curriculum must be timed so as to be in step with his developmental tasks. This is the appropriate organizing principle for an adult-education program, rather than the logic of the subject matter or the needs of the sponsoring institution. For instance, an orientation program for new workers would not start with the history and philosophy of the corporation, but rather with real-life concerns of new workers: Where will I be working? With whom will I be working? What will be expected of me? How do people dress in this company? What is the time schedule? To whom can I go for help?

There have been some classic examples of the consequences of violating this organizing principle. One was the introduction of courses on supervision in trade schools, nursing schools, and other preservice vocational programs after World War II, when there was a great shortage of experienced supervisors. The courses were plagued with absenteeism, flunk-outs, and drop-outs—simply because it was not yet a developmental task of people who haven't become secure about doing a job themselves to learn how to supervise others in doing the job. Other examples of failure of programs resulting from violation of the readiness-to-learn principle are the several attempts by corporations and at least one national social agency to institute programs on "preparation for retirement" that are geared to people in their forties. Almost universally these programs have resulted in low enrollment, for the simple reason that people whose eyes are still set on going up the occupational ladder aren't ready to invest energy in studying how to get off the ladder.

2. *The grouping of learners.* The concept of developmental tasks provides some guidance regarding the grouping of learners. For some kinds of learnings homogeneous groups according to developmental task are more effective. For instance, in a program on child care, young parents would have quite a different

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 72-98.

<sup>6</sup> Robert J. Havighurst and Betty Orr, *Adult Education and Adult Needs* (Boston: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1956), p. 1.

set of interests from the parents of adolescent children. For other kinds of learnings, heterogeneous groups would clearly be preferable. For instance, in a program of human-relations training in which the objective is to help people learn to get along better with all kinds of people, it would be important for the groups to cut across occupational, age, status, sex, and perhaps other characteristics that make people different. In my own practice, I have adopted the policy of making provision in the design of any adult-learning activity for a variety of subgroups so as to give the students a flexibility of choice; and I find that they quickly discover colleagues with similar developmental tasks.

### *Orientation to Learning*

Adults enter into education with a different time perspective from children, which in turn produces a difference in the way they view learning. Children tend to have a perspective of postponed application on most of their learning. For example, most of what I learned in elementary school I learned in order to be able to get into high school; and most of what I learned there I learned to prepare me for college; and most of what I learned in college I hoped would prepare me for a happy and productive adult life. To a child, education is essentially a process of the accumulation of a reservoir of subject matter—knowledge and skills—that might be useful later in life. Children tend, therefore, to enter any educational activity in a *subject-centered* frame of mind.

Adults, on the other hand, tend to have a perspective of immediacy of application toward most of their learning. They engage in learning largely in response to pressures they feel from their current life situation. To adults, education is a process of improving their ability to deal with life problems they face now. They tend, therefore, to enter an educational activity in a *problem-centered* frame of mind.

### *Technological Implications*

Several implications for the technology of andragogy flow from this difference in orientation to learning.

1. *The orientation of adult educators.* Just as adults have a different orientation to learning from that of children, so it would seem to follow that a different orientation toward learning is required on the part of educators of adults from the orientation traditionally inculcated in educators of children. Where the youth educator can, perhaps appropriately, be primarily concerned with the logical development of subject matter and its articulation from grade to grade according to levels of complexity, the adult educator must be primarily attuned to the existential concerns of the individuals and institutions he serves and be able to develop learning experiences that will be articulated with these concerns. Andragogy calls for program builders and teachers who are person-centered, who don't teach subject matter but rather help persons learn.

2. *The organization of the curriculum.* The original basis of organization for the curriculum of youth education was the seven subjects—the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and quadrivium (arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy) of the medieval schools. Although the number of subjects has proliferated since the Middle Ages, the subject-matter concept of curricular or-

ganization still remains relatively intact. But with the emergence of the insights of andragogy the curriculum—which, incidentally, in adult education is increasingly referred to as “program”—of adult education is coming to look less and less like the curriculum of youth education.

Because adult learners tend to be problem-centered in their orientation to learning, the appropriate organizing principle for sequences of adult learning is *problem areas*, not *subjects*. For example, instead of offering courses on “Composition I” and “Composition II,” with the first focusing on grammar and the second on writing style, andragogical practice would put in their place “Writing Better Business Letters” and “Writing Short Stories.” In the adult courses, matters of grammar and style would be treated in the context of the practical concerns of the learners. Even the broad curricular categories used to describe what adults study have departed from the traditional categories of the academic disciplines. In the *Handbook for Adult Education*, for example, such labels were given to the “Program Areas” as “Education for Aging,” “Community Development,” “Human Relations and Leadership Training,” and “Liberal Adult Education.”

3. *The design of learning experiences.* The problem-orientation of the learners implies that the most appropriate starting point for every learning experience is the problems and concerns that the adults have on their minds as they enter. Whereas the opening session of a youth-education activity might be titled “What This Course Is All About,” in an adult-educational activity it would more appropriately be titled “What Are You Hoping To Get out of This Course?” Early in the session there would be a problem census or a diagnostic exercise through which the participants would identify the specific problems they want to be able to deal with more adequately. This is not to suggest that a good adult-learning experience ends with the problems the learners are aware of in the beginning, but that is where it starts. There may be other problems that the teacher or institution are expecting to be dealt with, and these are put into the picture along with the students' problems for negotiation between teacher and students.

## SOME ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT LEARNING AND TEACHING

The critical element in any adult-education program is, of course, what happens when a teacher comes face-to-face with a group of learners. As I see it, the andragogical approach to the learning-teaching transaction is premised on three additional assumptions about learning and teaching:

### 1. *Adults can learn.*

The central proposition on which the entire adult-education movement is based is that adults can learn. One of the great moments in the history of the movement occurred at the annual meeting of the American Association for Adult Education held in Cleveland in 1927, when Edward L. Thorndike reported for the first time his findings that the ability to learn declined only very slowly and

<sup>7</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles (ed.), *Handbook of Adult Education in the U.S.* (Washington, D.C.: Adult Education Association, 1960), p. viii.



very slightly after age twenty. Until that moment adult educators had based their whole work on blind faith, in direct opposition to the prevailing belief that "you can't teach an old dog new tricks." But now their faith had been vindicated; there was scientific proof that adults can learn.

Actually, Thorndike's early studies did seem to indicate a decline in learning capacity of about 1 percent per year after age twenty-five. But later studies, especially those of Thorndike's colleague Irving Lorge, revealed that what declined was the speed of learning, not intellectual power—and that even this decline was likely to be minimized by continued use of the intellect.

The research to date on adult learning indicates clearly that the basic ability to learn remains essentially unimpaired throughout the life span and that therefore, if individuals do not actually perform as well in learning situations as they could, the cause must be sought in such factors as the following:

—Adults who have been away from systematic education for some time may underestimate their ability to learn, and this lack of confidence may prevent them from applying themselves wholly.

—Methods of teaching have changed since most adults were in school, so that most of them have to go through a period of adjustment to strange new conditions.

—Various physiological changes occur in the process of aging, such as decline in visual acuity, reduction in speed of reaction, and lowering of energy levels, which operate as barriers to learning unless compensated for by such devices as louder sound, larger printing, and slower pace.

—Adults respond less readily to external sanctions for learning (such as grades) than to internal motivation.

## 2. *Learning is an Internal Process*

In our inherited folk wisdom there has been a tendency to look upon education as the transmittal of information, to see learning as an almost exclusively intellectual process consisting of the storing of accumulated facts in the filing drawers of the mind. The implicit assumption underlying this view of learning is that it is essentially an external process in the sense that what the student learns is determined primarily by outside forces, such as the excellence of the teacher's presentation, the quality of reading materials, and the effectiveness of school discipline. People holding this view even today insist that a teacher's qualifications be judged only by his mastery of his subject matter and clamor against his wasting time learning about the psychology of learning. For all practical purposes this view defines the function of the teacher as being to teach subject matter, not students.

A growing body of research into what really happens when learning takes place has put this traditional conception of learning in serious jeopardy. Although there is not yet agreement on the precise nature of the learning process (in fact there are many theories which seem to explain different parts of it), there is agreement that it is an internal process controlled by the learner and engaging his whole being—including intellectual, emotional, and physiological functions. Learning is described psychologically as a process of need-meeting and goal-striving by the learner. This is to say that an individual is motivated to engage

in learning to the extent that he feels a need to learn and perceives a personal goal that learning will help to achieve; and he will invest his energy in making use of available resources (including teachers and readings) to the extent that he perceives them as being relevant to his needs and goals.

The central dynamic of the learning process is thus perceived to be the experience of the learner, experience being defined as the interaction between an individual and his environment. The quality and amount of learning is therefore clearly influenced by the quality and amount of interaction between the learner and his environment and by the educative potency of the environment. The art of teaching is essentially the management of these two key variables in the learning process—environment and interaction—which together define the substance of the basic unit of learning, a "learning experience." The critical function of the teacher, therefore, is to create a rich environment from which students can extract learning and then to guide their interaction with it so as to maximize their learning from it.

The important implication for adult-education practice of the fact that learning is an internal process is that those methods and techniques which involve the individual most deeply in self-directed inquiry will produce the greatest learning. This principle of ego-involvement lies at the heart of the adult educator's art. In fact, the main thrust of modern adult-educational technology is in the direction of inventing techniques for involving adults in ever-deeper processes of self-diagnosis of their own needs for continued learning, in formulating their own objectives for learning, in sharing responsibility for designing and carrying out their learning activities, and in evaluating their progress toward their objectives. The truly artistic teacher of adults perceives the locus of responsibility for learning to be in the learner; he conscientiously suppresses his own compulsion to teach what he knows his students ought to learn in favor of helping his students learn for themselves what they want to learn. I have described this faith in the ability of the individual to learn for himself as the "theological foundation" of adult education, and I believe that without this faith a teacher of adults is more likely to hinder than to facilitate learning. This is not to suggest that the teacher has less responsibility in the learning-teaching transaction, but only that his responsibility lies less in giving ready-made answers to predetermined questions and more in being ingenious in finding better ways to help his students discover the important questions and the answers to them themselves.

One of the clearest statements of this insight about adult learning was made in 1926 by the great American pioneer adult-education theorist, Eduard C. Lindeman:

I am conceiving adult education in terms of a new technique for learning, a technique as essential to the college graduate as to the unlettered manual worker. It represents a process by which the adult learns to become aware of and to evaluate his experience. To do this he cannot begin by studying "subjects" in the hope that some day this information will be useful. On the contrary, he begins by giving attention to situations in which he finds himself, to problems which include obstacles to his self-fulfillment. Facts and information from the differentiated spheres of knowledge are used, not for the purpose of accumulation, but because of need in solving problems. In this process the teacher finds a new function. He is no longer the oracle who speaks from the platform of authority, but rather the guide, the pointer-out who also participates in learning in proportion to the vitality and rele-

vancy of his facts and experiences. In short, my conception of adult education is this: a cooperative venture in nonauthoritarian, informal learning, the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience; a quest of the mind which digs down to the roots of the preconceptions which formulate our conduct; a technique of learning for adults which makes education coterminous with life and hence elevates living itself to the level of adventurous experiment.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. *There Are Superior Conditions of Learning and Principles of Teaching*

It is becoming increasingly clear from the growing body of knowledge about the processes of adult learning that there are certain conditions of learning that are more conducive to growth and development than others. These superior conditions seem to be produced by practices in the learning-teaching transaction that adhere to certain superior principles of teaching as identified below:

#### CONDITIONS OF LEARNING

The learners feel a need to learn.

The learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences.

#### PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING

- 1.) The teacher exposes students to new possibilities for self-fulfillment.
- 2.) The teacher helps each student clarify his own aspirations for improved behavior.
- 3.) The teacher helps each student diagnose the gap between his aspiration and his present level of performance.
- 4.) The teacher helps the students identify the life problems they experience because of the gaps in their personal equipment.
- 5.) The teacher provides physical conditions that are comfortable (as to seating, smoking, temperature, ventilation, lighting, decoration) and conducive to interaction (preferably, no person sitting behind another person).
- 6.) The teacher accepts each student as a person of worth and respects his feelings and ideas.
- 7.) The teacher seeks to build relationships of mutual trust and helpfulness among the students by encouraging cooperative activities and refraining from inducing competitiveness and judgmentalness.
- 8.) The teacher exposes his own feelings and contributes his resources as a colearner in the spirit of mutual inquiry.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Gessner (ed.), *The Democratic Man: Selected Writings of Eduard C. Lindeman* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956), p. 160. By permission.

The learners perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals.

The learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore have a feeling of commitment toward it.

The learners participate actively in the learning process.

The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learners.

The learners have a sense of progress toward their goals.

9.) The teacher involves the students in a mutual process of formulating learning objectives in which the needs of the students, of the institution, of the teacher, of the subject matter, and of the society are taken into account.

10.) The teacher shares his thinking about options available in the designing of learning experiences and the selection of materials and methods and involves the students in deciding among these options jointly.

11.) The teacher helps the students to organize themselves (project groups, learning-teaching teams, independent study, etc.) to share responsibility in the process of mutual inquiry.

12.) The teacher helps the students exploit their own experiences as resources for learning through the use of such techniques as discussion, role playing, case method, etc.

13.) The teacher gears the presentation of his own resources to the levels of experience of his particular students.

14.) The teacher helps the students to apply new learnings to their experience, and thus to make the learnings more meaningful and integrated.

15.) The teacher involves the students in developing mutually acceptable criteria and methods for measuring progress toward the learning objectives.

16.) The teacher helps the students develop and apply procedures for self-evaluation according to these criteria.

### SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH EDUCATION

The differences between children and adults are not so much real differences, I believe, as differences in assumptions about them that are made in traditional pedagogy. Actually, in my observation (and retrospection), the child starts fairly early to see himself as being self-directing in broadening areas of his life; he starts accumulating experience that has increasing value for learning; he starts

preparing for social roles (such as through part-time jobs) and therefore experiencing adultlike readinensses to learn; and he encounters life problems for which he would like some learnings for immediate application. Therefore, many of the principles of andragogy have direct relevance to the education of children and youth.

The fact is that many of the new developments in the curricula of our elementary and secondary schools have some of the flavor of andragogy. The "new math," "new biology," and linguistics programs start with the concerns of the students and engage them in a process of largely self-directed discovery. Some of the products of today's schools who become adults in the 1970's and 1980's will, therefore, presumably be better equipped to continue a process of lifelong learning than are today's adults.

But these developments are quite piecemeal, and the practitioners have lagged far behind the curriculum theorists in helping students learn how to learn rather than just teaching them what they "ought" to know. What is required, if youth education is to produce adults who are capable of engaging in a lifelong process of continuing self-development, is a whole new set of assumptions about the purpose of youth education and a new technology to carry out that purpose. I can foresee that the result would be a more andragogical approach to the education of children and youth.

### THE ANDRAGOGICAL PROCESS OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

When the principles of andragogy are translated into a process for planning and operating educational programs, that process turns out to be quite different from the curriculum planning and teaching processes traditionally employed in youth education. The rest of this book is concerned with describing this process as it applies to the planning of comprehensive programs of adult education (Chapters 4 through 10) and to the management of specific learning experiences (Chapter 11).

As I see it, this andragogical process involves the following phases consistently in both levels of application:

1. The establishment of a climate conducive to adult learning.
2. The creation of an organizational structure for participative planning.
3. The diagnosis of needs for learning.
4. The formulation of directions of learning (objectives).
5. The development of a design of activities.
6. The operation of the activities.
7. The rediagnosis of needs for learning (evaluation).

### FOR YOUR CONTINUING INQUIRY . . .

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PART II

*Organizing and Administering Comprehensive  
Programs of Adult Education*

## *Establishing an Organizational Climate and Structure*

### THE PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

#### *Creating an Educative Environment*

One of the misconceptions in our cultural heritage is the notion that organizations exist purely to get things done. This is only one of their purposes; it is their *work* purpose. But every organization is also a social system that serves as an instrumentality for helping people meet human needs and achieve human goals. In fact, this is the primary purpose for which people take part in organizations—to meet their needs and achieve their goals—and when an organization does not serve this purpose for them they tend to withdraw from it. So organizations also have a human purpose.

Adult education is a means available to organizations for furthering both purposes. Their work purpose is furthered to the extent that they use adult education to develop the competencies of their personnel to do the work required to accomplish the goals of the organizations. Their human purpose is furthered to the extent that they use adult education to help their personnel develop the competencies that will enable them to work up the ladder of Maslow's hierarchy of needs from survival through safety, affection, and esteem to self-actualization.

As if by some law of reciprocity, therefore, organization provides an environment for adult education. In the spirit of Marshall McLuhan's *The Medium Is the Massage*, the quality of learning that takes place in an organization is affected by the kind of organization it is. This is to say that an organization is not simply an instrumentality for providing organized learning activities to adults; it also provides an environment that either facilitates or inhibits learning.

For example, if a young executive is being taught in his corporation's management-development program to involve his subordinates in decision-making within his department, but his own superiors never involve him in making decisions, which management practice is he likely to adopt? Or if an adult church member is being taught to "love thy neighbor," but the total church life is characterized by discrimination, jealousy, and intolerance, which value is more likely to be learned? Or if an adult student in a course on "The Meaning of Democratic Behavior" is taught that the clearest point of differentiation between democracy and other forms of government is the citizen's sharing in the process of public

policy formulation, but the teacher has never given him a chance to share responsibility for conducting the course and the institution has never asked his advice on what courses should be offered, what is he likely to learn about the meaning of democracy?

No educational institution teaches just through its courses, workshops, and institutes; no corporation teaches just through its in-service education programs; and no voluntary organization teaches just through its meetings and study groups. They all teach by everything they do, and often they teach opposite lessons in their organizational operation from what they teach in their educational program.

This line of reasoning has led modern adult-education theorists to place increasing emphasis on the importance of building an educative environment in all institutions and organizations that undertake to help people learn. What are the characteristics of an educative environment? They are essentially the manifestations of the conditions of learning listed at the end of the last chapter. But they can probably be boiled down to four basic characteristics: 1.) respect for personality; 2.) participation in decision making; 3.) freedom of expression and availability of information; and 4.) mutuality of responsibility in defining goals, planning and conducting activities, and evaluating.

In effect, an educative environment—at least in a democratic culture—is one that exemplifies democratic values, that practices a democratic philosophy.

### *Practicing a Democratic Philosophy*

A democratic philosophy is characterized by a concern for the development of persons, a deep conviction as to the worth of every individual, and faith that people will make the right decisions for themselves if given the necessary information and support. It gives precedence to the growth of *people* over the accomplishment of *things* when these two values are in conflict. It emphasizes the release of human potential over the control of human behavior. In a truly democratic organization there is a spirit of mutual trust, an openness of communications, a general attitude of helpfulness and cooperation, and a willingness to accept responsibility, in contrast to paternalism, regimentation, restriction of information, suspicion, and enforced dependency on authority.

When applied to the organization of adult education, a democratic philosophy means that the learning activities will be based on the real needs and interests of the participants; that the policies will be determined by a group that is representative of all participants; and that there will be a maximum of participation by all members of the organization in sharing responsibility for making and carrying out decisions. The intimate relationship between democratic philosophy and adult education is eloquently expressed in these words of Eduard Lindeman:

One of the chief distinctions between conventional and adult education is to be found in the learning process itself. None but the humble become good teachers of adults. In an adult class the student's experience counts for as much as the teacher's knowledge. Both are exchangeable at par. Indeed, in some of the best adult classes it is sometimes difficult to discover who is learning most, the teacher or the students. This two-way learning is also reflected in the management of adult-education enterprises. Shared learning is duplicated by shared authority. In conventional education the pupils adapt themselves to the curriculum offered, but in adult education the pupils aid in formulating the curricula. . . . Under democratic conditions authority

is of the group. This is not an easy lesson to learn, but until it is learned democracy cannot succeed.<sup>1</sup>

### *Exemplifying Change and Growth*

I have a suspicion that for an organization to foster adult learning to the fullest possible degree it must go even farther than merely practicing a democratic philosophy, that it will really stimulate individual self-renewal to the extent that it consciously engages in continuous self-renewal for itself. Just as a teacher's most potent tool is the example of his own behavior, so I believe an organization's most effective instrument of influence is its own behavior.

This proposition is based on the premise that an organization tends to serve as a role model for those it influences. So if its purpose is to encourage its personnel, members, or constituents to engage in a process of continuous change and growth, it is likely to succeed to the extent that it models the role of organizational change and growth. This proposition suggests, therefore, that an organization must be innovative as well as democratic if it is to provide an environment conducive to learning. EXHIBIT 4 provides some illustrative characteristics that seem to distinguish innovative from static organizations, as I interpret the insights from recent research on this fascinating subject. The right-hand column might well serve as a beginning check list of desirable organizational goals in the dimensions of structure, atmosphere, management philosophy, decision making, and communication.

## THE ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING OF ADULT EDUCATION

Very few of the adult-education enterprises in this country are independent organizations. There are a small number of citizen-supported adult-education centers, proprietary schools, adult-education councils, educational television stations, and voluntary associations that were founded exclusively for the education of adults and that are autonomous. But most adult education takes place in settings that were established for purposes other than the education of adults—such as the education of children and youth, the production of goods, or the provision of services other than educational. Consequently, the adult-education enterprise is usually a part of and subordinate to some larger enterprise.

And this fact of life presents special problems to adult educators in developing organizational structures that are congruent with principles of andragogy. If their institutional setting is a public school, general policies are made by a school committee or board of education; administrative policies are made by a superintendent; and academic policies are made by a faculty—most of whom are oriented to the education of children. If the setting is a university, similar functions are performed by a board of trustees, president, and faculty whose orientation is youth education. If the setting is industry, these functions are usually performed by a board of directors and a chief executive whose orientation is primarily toward work productivity. If the setting is a government agency, a labor union, a library, a museum, a religious institution, a social agency, or a voluntary organization, the policy-making machinery is likely to be managed by people

<sup>1</sup> Robert Gessner, *op. cit.*, p. 166. By permission.

Exhibit 4  
SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF STATIC VS. INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

DIMENSIONS	CHARACTERISTICS	
	Static Organizations	Innovative Organizations
<u>Structure</u>	Rigid--much energy given to maintaining permanent departments, committees; reverence for tradition, constitution & by-laws. Hierarchical--adherence to chain of command. Roles defined narrowly. Property-bound.	Flexible--much use of temporary task forces; easy shifting of departmental lines; readiness to change constitution, depart from tradition. Multiple linkages based on functional collaboration. Roles defined broadly. Property-mobile.
<u>Atmosphere</u>	Task-centered, impersonal. Cold, formal, reserved. Suspicious.	People-centered, caring. Warm, informal, intimate. Trusting.
<u>Management</u> <u>Philosophy</u> <u>and</u> <u>Attitudes</u>	Function of management is to control personnel through coercive power. Cautious--low risk-taking. Attitude toward errors: to be avoided. Emphasis on personnel selection. Self-sufficiency--closed system regarding sharing resources. Emphasis on conserving resources. Low tolerance for ambiguity.	Function of management is to release the energy of personnel; power is used supportively. Experimental--high risk-taking. Attitude toward errors: to be learned from. Emphasis on personnel development. Interdependency--open system regarding sharing resources. Emphasis on developing and using resources. High tolerance for ambiguity.
<u>Decision-making</u> <u>and</u> <u>Policy-making</u>	High participation at top, low at bottom. Clear distinction between policy-making and policy-execution. Decision-making by legal mechanisms. Decisions treated as final.	Relevant participation by all those affected. Collaborative policy-making and policy-execution. Decision-making by problem-solving. Decisions treated as hypotheses to be tested.
<u>Communication</u>	Restricted flow--constipated. One-way--downward. Feelings repressed or hidden.	Open flow--easy access. Multidirectional--up, down, sideways. Feelings expressed.

who do not have a primary orientation to the education of adults. Only in religious institutions and some social agencies, such as the YMCA, has there been a tradition of participant involvement in policy making that comes close to the requirements of andragogy. But even in these institutions, there is often a strong flavor of doing things *for* people that conflicts with the andragogical principle of mutual self-direction.

So the adult educator is confronted with a choice of strategies for achieving an environment that is conducive to adult learning: 1.) He can seek to change the larger organization so that its philosophy and practice will be more congruent with andragogical concepts; 2.) he can develop a semi-independent structure for the adult-education operation within the larger structure; or 3.) he can negotiate gradual modifications in policy (for example, as regards certification of teachers) and areas of freedom to experiment with organizational mechanisms (such as advisory councils) that would enable the adult-educational operation to develop a subenvironment within but not abrasive to the total organizational environment. My observation is that the adult-educational administrators, especially in schools, colleges, and industry, who have succeeded in developing the best educative environments, have started with the third strategy and then found that many of the changes they made in the adult-education program were picked up and adopted by the larger organization—which is, in effect, the intended result of the first strategy.

### PROVIDING A POLICY BASE

One of the visible trends in institutions of all sorts in recent years has been the increasing delineation of the adult educational function. For example:

In industry—

At first, the educational function was merely a secondary aspect of the line operations—an extra duty of the master craftsmen, foremen, supervisors, department heads, and executives. Then as personnel management became differentiated as a function, responsibility for training tended to become subsumed under it. Later there was a tendency for departments of training, personnel development, or employees' education to become separated out as independent units responsible to top management.<sup>2</sup>

In universities—

In spite of opposition at times from other departments, extension divisions or evening colleges were established in an increasing number of universities to coordinate all work with adults by these institutions.<sup>3</sup>

In health and welfare agencies—

In the earlier HANDBOOKS (1934, 1936, 1948) only one agency (the YMCA) was identified as having an officer specifically responsible for adult education; but in 1960 almost every agency specified an office carrying a title such as "Director

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles, *The Adult Education Movement in the United States* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1962), p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

of Public Education," "Director, Health Education Department," "National Training Director," or "Director, Adult Program Services Department."<sup>4</sup>

In public schools—

It is not known how many full-time directors of adult education (or evening schools) had been appointed by city or county school systems by the end of World War I, but . . . in 1961 the National Association of Public School Adult Educators estimated that there existed about 500 full-time city directors of adult education and about 3,500 part-time directors or supervisors.<sup>5</sup>

It is clear to anyone who has observed this evolutionary phenomenon over the years that as institutions recognized the unique requirements of serving the educational needs of adults by establishing differentiated administrative units for this purpose, the volume and quality of these services rose dramatically. On the other hand, in those institutions in which the adult-educational function has remained as a secondary responsibility attached to other functions, the programs are almost universally marginal and ineffective.

My observation of adult-education programs in all kinds of institutions across the country supports the generalization that there is a direct correlation between the strength of a program (as measured by size, vitality, quality of output, and support from the system) and its status in the policy-making structure. Thus, the strongest public-school programs are found in those systems in which the adult-education unit is parallel with elementary and secondary, and its chief executive officer is an associate superintendent; the strongest programs in industry are in those firms in which the employee-development function is parallel to personnel, production, sales, and other equivalent functions, and the chief executive officer is a vice-president; and the strongest programs in universities are in those institutions in which adult-education unit is parallel to academic affairs, student personnel, and equivalent functions, and the chief executive officer is a vice-president for continuing education. The increased power and prestige that come with high organizational status do not in themselves entirely account for the improvement in performance, I believe; the more important consideration is that with autonomy and status the adult-education unit is able to concentrate on processes uniquely effective for the education of adults. And it is better able to attract specialists in andragogy to manage the program.

#### *Criteria for a Policy Statement*

Even with relatively autonomous administrative status, however, the adult-education unit is likely to be unable to come up to its full potential for service unless it is undergirded by a firm statement of institutional policy. From an analysis of policy statements from a variety of institutions I have arrived at the conclusion that those in which adult education is the strongest applied such criteria as the following:

1. The part that adult education is uniquely to have in contributing to the accomplishment of the institution's mission is described clearly and with conviction.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.141-142.

2. A philosophical commitment to the absolute value of human growth and development and individual self-fulfillment is explicitly stated.

3. The specific purposes (in terms of individual and organizational outcomes) for which the adult-education program is established are described, but with latitude for the dynamic exploration of new possibilities for service.

4. The nature of the commitment of resources (in terms of priority order in relation to other purposes) of the policy makers to the furtherance of the adult-educational purposes is made clear, and is substantial.

5. The relationship of the adult-education component with other components of the institution is specified, preferably with emphasis on their processes of collaboration rather than on their divisions of authority and responsibility.

6. The target populations to be served by the program are specified.

7. Any limitations placed by the policy makers on the authorized scope of activities are clearly stated.

8. Any special conditions governing the employment, training, supervision, and compensation of personnel for the adult-education unit are stated.

9. Any special provisions for financial management and budgetary practices are specified.

10. The authorized bases of relationship with other institutions (such as in regard to services to be given or received, cosponsorship, financial arrangements, and sharing of facilities) are made clear.

#### *Examples of Policy Statements*

Several examples of policy statements for adult-education units in different types of institutions are given in EXHIBITS 5 (a corporation), 6 (a university), and 7 (a government agency), in Appendix B.

## BUILDING A COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

### *Types of Committees*

Since most adult-education programs are attached to institutions or are aspects of organizations that also serve other purposes, there is usually a general policy-making board that has overall responsibility for the operation of the total agency. For example, in the case of a public school it is the school committee or board of education; in a university it is the trustees; in a church it is some equivalent by any of a number of names; in most social agencies and voluntary organizations it is a board of directors. These boards usually make the original decision to create an adult-education program and usually retain ultimate jurisdiction over its operation.

In many instances, especially in schools and universities, these general policy boards also attempt to maintain direct policy control over the adult-education program, delegating authority only to employed staff. This practice is likely to have several negative consequences. It often results in poor representation of the unique clientele served by the adult-education program, since the general board has to be representative of a broader clientele. It often results in overly rigid policy structures, since the general board cannot take time away from broad in-



stitutional problems to give attention to the day-to-day policy adjustments that make for vitality in an adult-education program. And it is bound to result in a low degree of ego-involvement on the part of the participants of the adult-education program in the organizational life of the institution.

Higher-quality programs seem consistently to have resulted in those institutions in which the general board has created a committee structure with specific delegations of responsibility and authority for overseeing the operation of the adult-education program. In a social agency or voluntary organization there is usually a program committee or an adult-education committee with broad authority to establish operating policies within the framework of institutional policies. In a school system or university the more usual form is a citizen's advisory committee with more limited recommendatory authority. In a corporation or government agency the typical structure is an in-service-education committee, with the delegated authority being fairly specifically spelled out.

Just as the general board of an organization has too many responsibilities to be able to give the full attention required for the operation of an adult-education program, so an adult-education committee usually finds that it can be more effective if it delegates some of its responsibilities to subcommittees. Some of the subcommittees frequently found in the structures of effective adult-education programs are the following:

**Budget and Finance**

Program

Leadership Selection and Training

Physical Facilities and Equipment

Special Events

Promotion and Public Relations

Library, Visual Aids, and Curriculum Materials

Social Affairs and Entertainment

Counseling and Registration

Another device that has proved especially useful in large institutions is a substructure of specific program-area committees. Under this system a separate advisory committee is established for each program area—such as academic subjects, business subjects, arts and crafts, community service, literacy education, health education, home and family-life education, public-affairs education, science education, and the like. These subcommittees are delegated responsibility for assessing needs for new offerings in their respective subject areas, recruiting resources specialists, and in other ways helping to maintain high-quality learning. A good case can be made for populating these program subcommittees with representatives of the program participants, faculty members, subject specialists, and—where relevant—practitioners from the community. The chairmen of the subcommittees might well make up the overall program committee.

I cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of this kind of organizational structure in adult education. I have observed many adult-education programs across the country in schools, corporations, government agencies, universities, and social agencies, and the one characteristic that most clearly differentiates the weak programs from the strong programs is that the strong programs almost always have representative committee structures with a high delegation of authority to operate the programs, while the weak programs almost never do.

Of special utility in large adult-education programs is a modification of the familiar student council found in high schools and colleges. It might be called a participants' council or a program-advisory council. This device has been developed to the highest degree at Chicago's Central YMCA, where it works as follows: Toward the end of each program year each activity unit (class or special-interest club) selects one person, through a process that combines volunteering and electing, to serve on the council for the succeeding year. At the first meeting of each new council, which is usually held in May, the members do three things: 1.) They evaluate the program of the past year and make suggestions for improvements and additions for the following year; 2.) they organize themselves into subcommittees of the types listed above; and 3.) they nominate a small delegation of representatives to serve on the directing committee of the agency. In September members of the council are recruited to help the staff in the registration process, to serve as hosts and hostesses to greet new students and make them feel at home, to arrange exhibits interpreting the scope and content of the various activities of the program, to serve refreshments, and in other ways to enrich the educative environment. Each member of the council is then assigned to serve as the student host in one of the informal courses (for which he gets his tuition free), in which capacity he introduces the students to one another, makes administrative announcements, takes care of administrative details (such as collecting registration cards, taking attendance, etc.), and generally assists the instructor. It has been the experience of this agency that such a council adds a great deal to the informal atmosphere for which the institution is well known in Chicago, that it greatly relieves the staff load in regard to certain administrative details, and that it gives the students a sense of direct participation in the management of their own affairs.

### *Functions of a Committee*

Committees can be used for a variety of purposes, ranging from merely giving advisory opinions to the administrator or policy boards to taking full responsibility for operating policies under delegation from the board. In general, the more responsibility a committee is given, the more responsible it will be, the more deeply its members will become involved, and the more congruent the organization will be with principles of andragogy. Committees that are only asked for advice that can be accepted or rejected usually are not motivated to invest much energy in the welfare of the enterprise.

Among the functions that can be performed effectively by committees are the following:

1. Helping in the development of plans for surveys of the needs and interests of organizational members or the total community and perhaps sharing in the specific tasks involved in executing these plans;
2. Identifying current community and societal problems with which an adult-education program should be concerned;
3. Helping in the establishment of priorities among the various needs, interests, and problems;
4. Establishing policies governing the operation of the adult-education program within the limits of their delegated authority;

5. Formulating short-run and long-run goals or directions of movement for the program, subject to review by the policy board;
6. Interpreting the past achievements and future needs of the program to the policy board and exerting more potent influence on policy makers than is usually available to staff;
7. Contributing fresh and creative ideas to program planning.
8. Serving as talent scouts for new instructors, leaders, and resource people;
- ✓9. Providing linkages with target populations, institutions, and community agencies;
- ✓10. Lending volunteer help in registering students, conducting orientation sessions, checking physical facilities, and other administrative services during crisis periods;
- ✓11. Helping in the periodic evaluation of the total program;
- ✓12. Helping in the interpretation of the adult education program to the general public.

If a committee is to be effective, however, it is crucial that its purpose, functions, and authority be clearly understood by everyone concerned. A written job description (or commission) should be approved by the appointing body and given to committee members as they are appointed. Exhibit 8 illustrates a commission to a committee to which has been delegated a high degree of operating responsibility.

### *Composition of a Committee*

Most membership organizations, such as church groups, men's and women's organizations, labor unions, and business firms, constitute their committees entirely from the membership of the organization. Committee members may be appointed by the president of the organization or by the chairman of the committee, or they may be elected by ballot, preferably for limited terms of office. In any case, the committee will be most effective if it includes representatives of the various points of view, special interests, and friendship circles (or cliques) within the membership. Members of any organization tend to accept and support programs to the extent that they perceive their special interests to have been adequately represented in the planning of them.

Institutional committees, on the other hand, such as those found in the schools, social agencies, and governmental organizations, usually attempt to include representation from a broad scope of community interests. In general, it is wise for such committees to include the following three types of representation:

1. The various points of view and interests within the participating membership of the organization itself;
2. The points of view, interests, geographic location, and types of experience in the community at large that are significant in relation to a particular program or institution (such as business, labor, racial and nationality groups, churches, etc.);
3. Experts with specialized skills or knowledge that are needed in pro-

### Exhibit 8

#### COMMISSION TO THE ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE XYZ COMMUNITY CENTER

- I. *Purpose.* The Adult Education Committee is created as a standing committee of the Board of Directors with responsibility to the Board for the development and operation of a program of services and activities, such as informal classes, clubs, forums, institutes, exhibits, and publications, for the adult residents of XYZ.
- II. *Functions.* The Adult Education Committee is responsible to the Board for the establishment of policies governing the adult education program, and for reviewing and evaluating the execution of those policies. Through its chairman it will report at each regular meeting of the Board concerning the work for which it is responsible.

- III. *Membership.* The Adult Education Committee shall consist of a chairman who is a member of the Board of Directors and who is appointed by the chairman of the Board, and not more than twenty-five other members, to be appointed by the chairman of the Adult Education Committee in consultation with the staff. In general, members of the Committee will be drawn from such representative groups, fields of experience, and points of view as the following:

Participants in the program	Racial and nationality groups
Public relations	International affairs
Libraries and museums	Science
Psychology and medicine	Audio-visual aids
Civic organizations	Press and radio
Industrial training	Religious institutions
Business and industry	Law
Labor	Literature
The arts	Recreation
Education	Government
Social service	Service clubs

- IV. *Staff Relationships and Functions.* The Director of Adult Education is responsible for the execution of policies and the administration of the Adult Education Department. He exercises direct supervision over other employed and volunteer members of the staff, which is responsible for the following functions, within the policies established by the Committee and subject to review by it:

The establishment and supervision of class and group programs  
 Budgeting and financial control  
 Employment, training, supervision, and discharge of instructors and leaders  
 Planning and execution of promotion campaigns  
 Office management and administrative procedures  
 Staff work for the Committee

*Note:*

Exhibits which do not appear in numerical sequence will be found in the appendices

gram planning (such as librarians, physicians, artists, scientists, audio-visual experts, professional educators, public-relations specialists, etc.).

It would be a mistake, however, to form a committee purely on the basis of representation. Care must be taken to select individuals who not only represent something, but who will be effective, and personal qualities must be kept in mind in selecting committee members:

1. Interest in the program and its objectives;
2. Willingness to serve;
3. Competence or educability for the work of the committee;
4. Availability for the work, in terms of time, health, strength, and convenience of location;
5. Ability to work with other members of the committee;
6. Position of influence with significant elements of the community.

### SOME GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMITTEE OPERATION

Getting committees to work effectively is dependent not only upon their having clear responsibilities and authority and having the right people on them, but also upon their having proper leadership. Probably the most vital element in proper leadership is the underlying attitude of the leader—and through him, of the group—toward the locus of responsibility. When a leader feels that he, personally, is responsible for the success of the committee, that in effect it is *his* committee, the inevitable result is to reduce the feeling of responsibility of the other members of the group. A good group leader will consistently throw back to the group all responsibilities which properly belong to the group as a whole. He will avoid making decisions that are theirs to make, or doing their thinking for them. Those committees that have developed a high sense of group responsibility—of feeling that it is *our* committee, not *his* (the chairman's) committee, or even *their* (the institution's) committee—are likely to be the most productive.

Several guiding principles apply specifically to committee operation:

1. A committee should understand clearly what it is to do and what its powers are. It isn't enough that it be given a written commission stating its objectives, functions, and authority, but at least once each year it should review and test the meaning of such a commission in open discussion.
2. The committee should concern itself with real problems. It should not be put in the position of merely giving rubber-stamp approval to policies that have already been put into effect.
3. The agenda for each meeting should be based on problems and concerns the committee members consider important. An agenda that is developed from a problem census of the members of the committee will receive more responsible consideration than one that is prepared in advance by the chairman or staff member. (The problems that are of concern to the chairman and the staff will, of course, be included in the problem census.)
4. The outcome of the committee's work should be continually interpreted to it. Activity leaders may be invited to committee meetings to describe outstanding achievements, exhibits may be arranged, and reports may be presented. It is

important for the committee to have visual evidence of the significance of its work.

5. Committee members should be given firsthand experiences with the program, by appearing at ceremonial events, inspecting activities, serving as resource people in programs, and otherwise taking an active part.

6. The administrative work involved in efficient committee operation should be handled smoothly. Notices of meetings should be sent well in advance, materials of value in preparing for discussion should be distributed in time to be read, minutes of meetings should be duplicated and distributed, and appropriate action should be taken and reported on decisions made by the committee.

7. The committee should evaluate its work periodically by appropriate procedures as suggested in Chapter 9.

8. Responsibilities accepted by committee members should be clear, specific, and definite. Provision should be made by the committee for some method of following up on committee assignments, preferably by one of their own number rather than by the staff.

### PROVIDING STAFF SERVICES

There is such a diversity of management patterns in the wide range of institutions that are in the business of adult education that it is hazardous to become too prescriptive about a model staff structure. But the principles of andragogy suggest some guidelines that may help to strengthen the quality of administrative services in the adult-education units of institutions of all sorts:

1. *Differentiation of role.* The increasing insight that the adult education process is different from other organizational processes requires that the personnel managing these processes be perceived as performing specialized roles which require specialized training. The time is past when any good teacher or principal has the equipment necessary to manage a public-school adult-education program, or any good professor or dean can administer a university division of continuing education, or any good personnel man can direct a training program in industry. These positions are no longer merely administrative jobs just like other administrative jobs; they are professional roles which require specialized professional attitudes and competencies. This is not to say that people already in these positions cannot acquire these attitudes and competencies; they can, through self-study and participation in graduate programs in adult education in some thirty universities. But this is likely to happen to the extent that the organizational structure acknowledges the professional nature of the role and provides for career development in it.

2. *Job description.* The unique nature of the adult-education process requires a more complex job description for the adult-education staff than is required by most other organizational positions. For one thing, if the talents of a well-trained adult educator are to be used optimally by an organization, he must function both as a line officer—managing the adult-education activities for which he is directly responsible—and as a staff officer—influencing policies that affect the educative quality of the total organizational environment and providing consultative and training services to all personnel in the organization regarding their

part in the educative process. For another thing, the very fluid nature of adult interests and needs dictates that a staff which has responsibility for keeping programs in tune with changing needs and interests have a degree of freedom to change plans quickly greater than is required in most other staff operations. The practice of requiring detailed program projections two years in advance has caused adult-education programs in some organizations to become irrelevant quickly. Job descriptions for adult-education staffs, therefore, tend to be broader, more general, more complicated, and more flexible than those for their organizational counterparts.

3. *Criteria for selection.* I frequently make an observation about my graduate students at the Boston University School of Education that I think has something to say about the peculiar character of andragogy and has some implications for criteria of selection of personnel for adult-education positions. My observation is that the people who are attracted to the graduate program in adult education tend to be different from those attracted to other departments, such as secondary-school teaching or the principalship or the superintendency. They tend to be less conformist, less inhibited, more adventuresome, more sensitive, and more active in community causes on the whole. They have a generalized attitude of experimentalism about themselves and their work, and take pride in the fact that they are pioneers in a new field. They tend to be impatient with the rituals and constraints of bureaucracy and to have a high tolerance for ambiguity. A person with a deep need for certainty, prescribed direction, and order often finds it difficult to tolerate the degree of personal flexibility that seems to be required to be an effective adult educator.

It is my observation that the administrators of the really effective adult-education programs in institutions of all sorts across the country stand out as being different from the general run of administrative personnel, too. These observations lead me to hypothesize that, owing to the unique requirements of the andragogical process, the effective adult-education administrator possesses these characteristics:

1. He has a genuine respect for the intrinsic capacity of adults to be self-directing.
2. He derives his greatest satisfactions as an administrator and educator from accomplishment through others.
3. He values the experience of others as a resource for accomplishing both work and learning by himself and others.
4. He is willing to take risks that are involved in experimenting with new ideas and new approaches, and views failures as things to be learned from rather than to be defensive about.
5. He has a deep commitment to and skill in the involvement of people in organizational and educational processes.
6. He is able to establish warm, empathic relationships with people of all sorts; he is able to see the world through their eyes; he is a good listener.
7. He has a deep faith in the potency of educational processes for contributing to the solution of organizational and societal problems.
8. He engages in a process of continuing education for himself.

### SUMMARY

An excellent summary for this chapter is provided by a statement developed by Allen S. Ellsworth for a publication of the National Council of YMCAs, *How to Organize Adult Program*. Although placed in the context of adult education in a particular agency, the YMCA, it has general applicability. It is reproduced in EXHIBIT 9.

## Exhibit 9

## TEN STEPS IN DEVELOPING ADULT PROGRAM IN A YMCA

First: This YMCA is committed to carrying on adult program.

A person, or persons, understands and has convictions regarding the objectives and needs of adult program. A process is started for considering these objectives and needs. Initial discussions may take place in committee meetings, staff meetings, informally at membership campaign sessions, or even at board meetings. Interest and commitment for developing work in the adult program field gain prominence and the board of directors takes action, committing the Association to real effort in this program area.

Second: A staff person is delegated to take responsibility for adult program.

A staff person is delegated to carry the responsibility for adult program. It is desirable that this be a full time professional assignment in each Association. In situations where only a portion of a staff member's time can be assigned to adult program, it is desirable that this proportion of time be specifically designated and carefully protected for this purpose. It is the responsibility of the designated staff person to provide professional leadership and to serve as the staff secretary for the adult program committee.

Third: The board of directors commissions a standing adult program committee.

The adult program committee is commissioned by the board of directors and is thereby responsible to the board for the development, supervision, and evaluation of all adult program conducted by the Association. This committee is concerned primarily with the objectives, policies, and long range developmental plans for adult program. It is composed of a select group of persons who possess a total-Association and community-wide viewpoint, interest, and background. Several of the members of the committee will be adult program participants who are representative of the age segments involved. The committee chairman is an active member of the board and regularly informs the board of the progress and problems of the Association's adult program. The committee meets regularly each month with its agenda prepared in advance. It maintains a complete permanent record of its work.

Fourth: The adult program committee develops a written policy.

The adult program policy is a blueprint that lays out the plan for accomplishing agreed upon purposes, goals, and objectives. It is drawn up in harmony with the general principles of the YMCA in which and through which it will operate. The policy gives added assurance that people, individually and in groups, have an opportunity to experience a full measure of satisfaction and a sense of achievement through membership in the YMCA.

The policy states the aims and purposes of the adult program and identifies definite objectives. Fields of services are defined; the groups and individuals to be involved are specified. Definite indication is given as to the activity areas to be included in program and the bases for determining priority among them. The policy specifies what organization of committees, councils, clubs, and leadership is needed. It designates how to operate the program most efficiently, to utilize best program techniques, and to insure continuity of performance. It determines the probable cost of the program and how the needed financing will be provided and administered. Finally, the policy provides an adequate plan and procedure for evaluating all phases of the adult program.

The relationship between laymen and secretaries in developing a policy are: "Policy Formulation" is the task of both laymen and professionals. In this they cooperate, each bringing his special insight, experience, and skill to bear on the problems involved.

"Policy Adoption" is the responsibility of laymen alone. This derives from their legal status and their relationship to the community. Their action establishes policies.

"Policy Execution" is the responsibility of secretaries and laymen. An alert professional secretary will involve laymen as fully as possible in carrying out policy. Usually the secretary will be ultimately responsible to the lay groups in seeing that policies are carried out. Steps in developing a written policy are:

1. The adult program committee reviews the sample adult program committee policy found in the manual, "Standards of Adult Program in the YMCA."
2. The adult program committee authorizes the secretary to collect current written policies from other Associations.
3. The adult program committee authorizes the secretary to put in written form the present unwritten practices pertaining to adult program that are currently followed.
4. A laymen with the help of the secretary presents these written policy statements to the adult program committee for full discussion.
5. The adult program committee, using these written policy statements as a guide, outlines its own written policy as best it can in light of experience and knowledge available. Individual committee members may then be asked to accept specific work assignments in editing certain sections of the policy in accordance with committee discussion.
6. The adult program committee takes official action, accepting the policy and recommending its official adoption by the board of directors.
7. The chairman of the adult program committee presents the accepted policy to the board of directors for its official ratification.
8. The secretary distributes copies of the official policy to committee members, staff members, adult program participants, and others who are to be guided by it and who will share in seeing that it is carried out.

Fifth: Adult program priorities are determined.

The adult program committee decides, on the basis of knowledge it has of needs and interests of adults, the types and priorities of groups and activities to be inaugurated. Other factors, such as availability of leadership and readiness of individuals to participate, will also govern these decisions. Establishment of priorities permits the concentration of effort at those points where the need is currently greatest and the probabilities of fruitful results are most promising. This procedure makes possible concentrated effort on a new group or activity until such time as that group or activity is firmly enough established to require only limited supervision from the staff person responsible for adult program, who can then concentrate on the development of other facets of program.

Sixth: Program is developed in one or more of the following categories.

1. Public affairs: discussion groups, forums, radio workshops, etc.
2. Informal education, an informal adult education school with courses in prescribed subjects.
3. Social recreation: weekly dances, square dances, folk music; weekend camp; etc.
4. Hobby groups: in such activities as hiking, photography, music, drama-tics, etc.
5. Purposeful fellowship groups: for young adults - co-ed clubs, Y Phalanx, Y Gradale; for other adults - Y's Men's Club, Married Couples Clubs, Golden Age Club, etc.
6. Counseling: personal and group counseling experiences to deal with personal adjustment, vocations, education, marriage, etc.
7. Religious emphasis: vesper programs at Christmas, Easter, during Lent; religious films, inter-faith discussions, etc.

Seventh: Organized groups are affiliated with others in the national movement.

All Y Phalanx, Y Gradale, and Y's Men's Clubs are officially chartered in their own national organization. All young adult program groups that meet certain minimal standards are registered annually in the "National Association of Young Adult Clubs" through the Area or State office. Minimal standards are as follows:

1. A written statement of purpose and a set of operating plans consistent with YMCA purpose.
2. A complete set of officers and a YMCA advisor.
3. A definite club membership basis and membership roster.
4. A schedule of meetings which is regularly observed.
5. All members in good standing in the group, in accordance with local YMCA membership policy.
6. Written plans for accomplishing the purposes of the group, emphasis on service projects.

7. Adherence to other requirements set by local, Area/State Young Adult Councils.
8. An official name which indicates the club's YMCA affiliation.

In addition to registering, members of local young adult groups participate in Area/State and national Young Adult Councils and Assemblies. Members of other adult groups participate in Area Councils, State Conventions, square dance jamborees, and other inter-Association events. The affiliation with other adult groups creates an increasing awareness of the significance of the YMCA as a national and world-wide movement of which the group is a living part. The resulting contacts with ideas, people, and programs, and help from other groups give vitality and meaning to membership in the group and in the YMCA. Affiliation thus leads a group to become part of something greater than the group itself.

**Eighth: An adult program council is commissioned.**

The adult program committee commissions an adult program council to be responsible for coordinating and conducting adult program of the Association, according to the adult policy. This council is composed of the ranking officers of the various adult groups. The chairman of the council, by virtue of his office, is a member of the adult program committee. He regularly informs the committee about the progress and problems of cooperative program projects. The council pools its efforts and resources to conduct joint endeavors in which all groups participate together for their mutual benefit and that of the Association. Through the teamwork of the council and the groups it represents, new adult program is developed. The council affords each YMCA adult member, who is participating in organized adult program, an opportunity to have a representative share in determining and conducting his Association's adult program.

**Ninth: Adult program is evaluated periodically.**

Plans are established for the periodic (at least once a year) evaluation of the total adult program. Each individual club or activity unit uses the "Club Achievement Rating Chart" or the "Evaluation Schedule - Exhibit D" found in the manual, "Standards of Adult Program in the YMCA."

Appraisal of the over-all adult program operation is made through use of the device entitled, "How Are We Doing - Exhibit C" in the manual "Standards of Adult Program in the YMCA" or through use of the "Self-Appraisal Device for Adult Program," furnished by the Program Office of the National Board of YMCAs.

Results of individual club and activity unit appraisal, as well as results of over-all adult program appraisal, receive the careful consideration of the adult program committee in determining plans and priorities for future work.

**Tenth: Adult program is coordinated in the total Association planning.**

The Association annually develops a written statement of its total projected program for a year in advance, as a method for determining the completeness and balance of its program services and in making staff and finance assignments.

Annually the Association holds a retreat of its committee men, leaders, and staff to report annual progress of program and to adopt projected plans. Members of the adult program committee and adult program clubs and activity groups participate in this annual program. Finally, the report of the total annual program as projected is endorsed by the board of directors.

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