I chose to focus on Question #2: "What learning strategies motivate you?" While studying this week's materials on adult education methods, I naturally contemplated how presented concepts relate to my personal experience and reflected on what elements motivate me to action.

The adult learning theory of andragogy felt particularly relevant. I connected with Malcolm Knowles' six assumptions of adult learners, particularly the "orientation to learning" (Pappas, 2013). As an elementary school student, much of the content was "subject centered" – new topics were frequently presented with no effort to communicate real-life relevance. Teacher-directed transmission of information in connection with extrinsic motivators (good grades, social standing, adult approval) comprised much of the experience.

As an adult, in alignment with Knowles' assumption, I find myself inspired by "problem centered" learning, driven to engage when I grasp the direct application to my life. With a self-concept that I am an autonomous being, I position myself to take in learning experiences I find of intrinsic interest. A prime example for myself, and this cohort of students, is the choice to pursue a place in this graduate program. It can be assumed that we applied from a "problem-centered" stance, identifying that the knowledge and skills this program bestows would allow us to reach self-identified goals (e.g., creation of compelling educational content for our department, attaining a promotion at work, gaining the ability to independently create transformative products, etc.). The immediacy of application was apparent (Pappas, 2014).

As instructional designers, we are unified by an intention to craft experiences that inspire learners, transform perspectives, and motivate performance (Cohen, 2021). As Janet Finlay (2010) notes, the andragogic practices recommended by Knowles might simply be considered generally "good teaching practice." Application is meant to facilitate, rather than transmit, learning. With an awareness of the motivating power "problem centered" learning has in my life, I hope to consciously create such experiences for others, communicating application early and clearly.

References

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