

It Takes Two Wings to Fly: Contemplative Pedagogy and Dialogue as Requisites for Transformative Learning

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Dialogue

In dialogue, students can:

- Articulate their own method of meaning-making
- Discern differences and commonalities to resolve conflict
- Define action students can take in coalition with each other⁶

Dialogue triggers transformative learning by giving students the opportunity to³:

- Learn different perspectives
- Critically assess assumptions
- Be confronted with different worldviews⁵
- Increase awareness & need for validation of own assumptions⁶



Transformative Learning

"A deep structural shift in basic premises of thought, feelings and actions"^{1,2}

First phases in transformative learning are:

1. Disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with guilt and shame
3. Critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition that discontent is shared

Critique on this learning theory points out that the transformative learning process is mainly approached in a cognitive, rational way even though the learning can involve emotional and affectionate elements⁴.

Contemplative Pedagogy

A pedagogy that enables and enhances introspection and contemplation⁷

Contemplative pedagogy can enable the student to go through the stages of transformative learning by enabling:

- Empathy
- Self-compassion
- Emotion regulation
- Sense of shared humanity
- Let go of belief structures³

This way of knowing can complement the mainly rational used to describe transformative learning.⁸

References

¹ Kitchenham, A. (2008). ² Mezirow, J. (2003). ³ Mezirow, J. (1990). ⁴ Kucukaydin & Cranton (2012).. ⁵ Brookfield, S. D. (2005). ⁶ Gurin, P., Dey, E., & Hurtado, S. (2002). ⁷ Barbezat, D P. & Bush, M. (2014) ⁸ Hart, t. (2004). For full references, see handout.