

W5 Portfolio Activity: Andragogy

The Theory of Andragogy

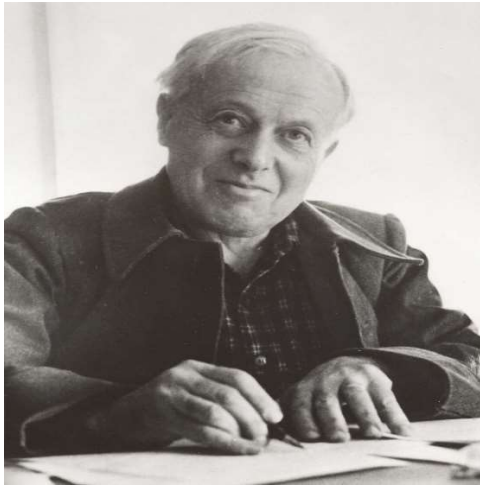


Andragogy refers to the methods and principles used in adult education. The term andragogy can be supposedly equivalent to the word pedagogy. The term andragogy in Greek means the man-leading in comparison to pedagogy, which in Greek means child-leading.



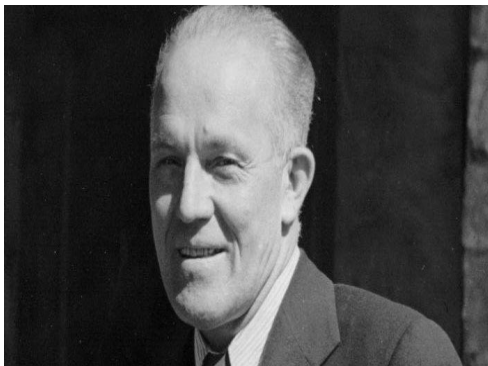
The term pedagogy has been used since the ancient Greek times while Alexander Kapp, a German educator (Born 1800-Died 1869, originally used the term andragogy in 1833. Kapp used Andragogy to describe elements of Plato's Education Theory. Kapp published in German "Die Andragogik oder Bildung im maennlichen Alter" translating to English as "Andragogy Education in the Man's Age". (Wikipedia-Contributors, 2021)

Famous Quote: "Education, self-reflection, and educating the character is the first value in human life".
(A-Z Quotes, 2021)



Andragogy was developed into 1921 into a theory of education by Eugen Rosenstock-Huussy (Born 1888-Died 1973). Rosenstock used the term to describe the special requirements of adult education. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020)

Famous Quote: "It is useless to teach those who do expect to be transformed." (A-Z Quotes, 2021)



In 1926, Eduard Lindeman (Born 1885-Died 1953) first introduced andragogy to English speakers emphasizing education through life, experiences, and the component of life-long learning. Eduard introduced many concepts of modern adult education in his book, *The Meaning of Adult Education*. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020)

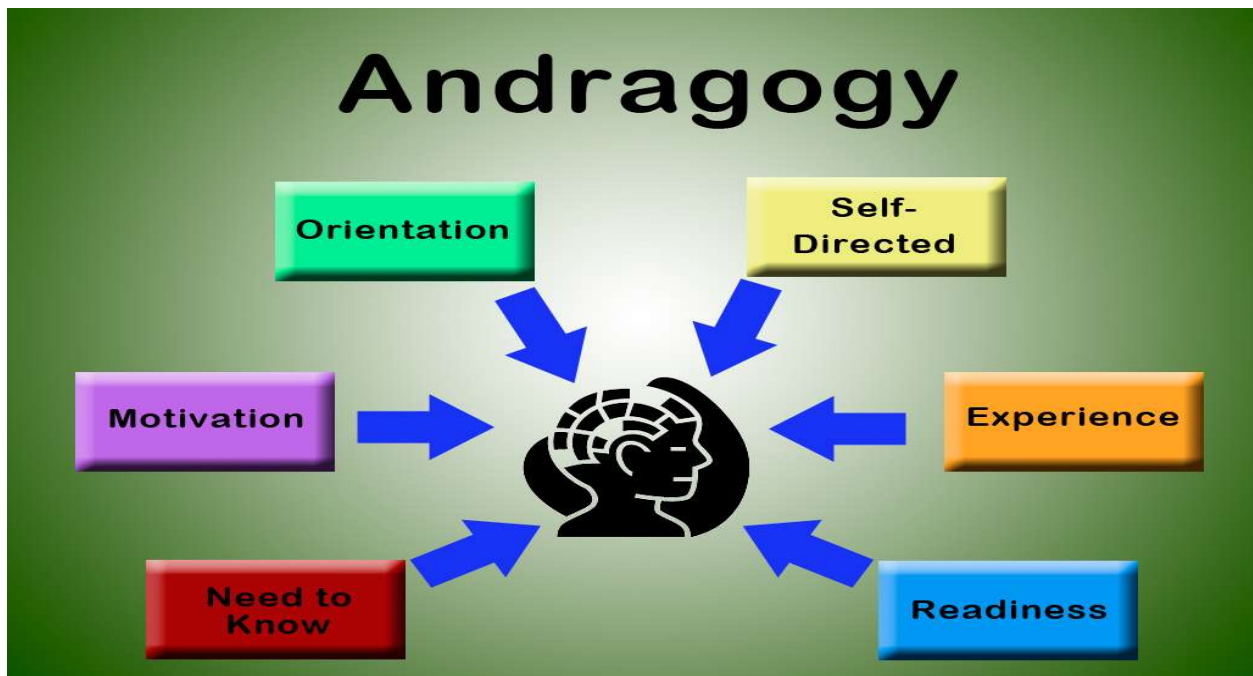
Famous Quote: "Adult education is a co-operative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience; a quest of the mind which digs down to the roots of the preconceptions which formulate our conduct; a technique of learning for adults which makes education coterminous with life, and hence elevates living itself to the level of an experiment."
(A-Z Quotes, 2021)

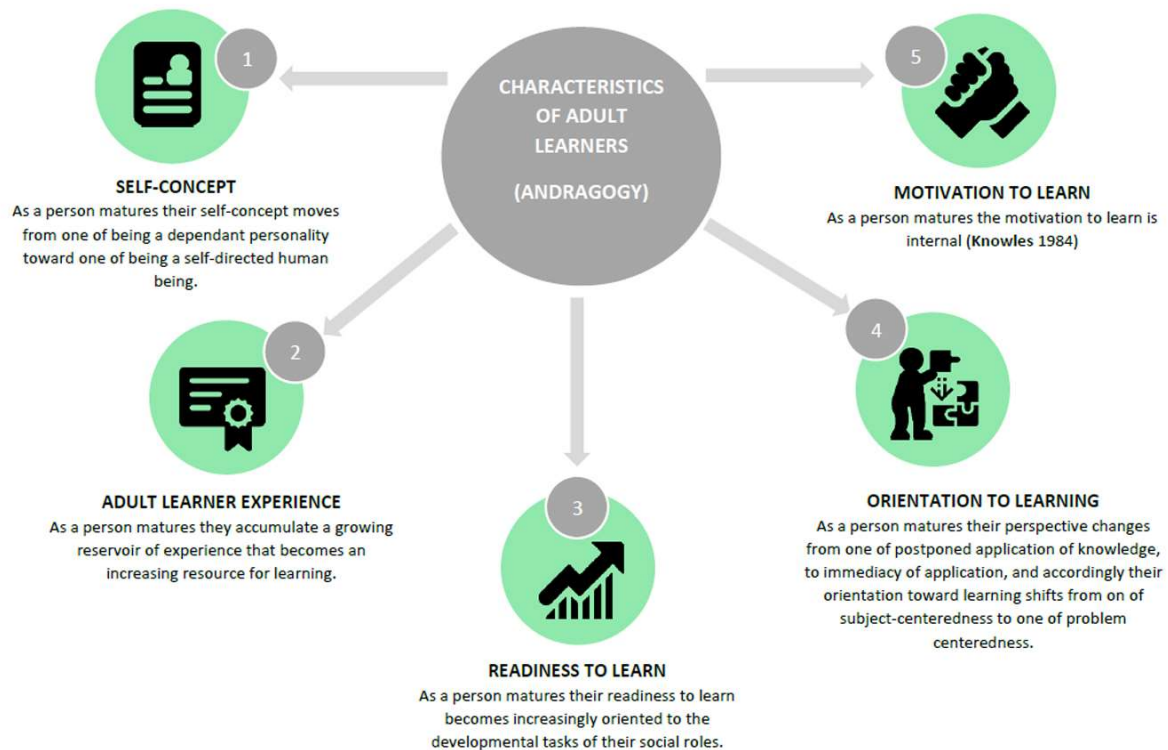


Later, andragogy became extremely popular in the U.S. by the American educator Malcom Knowles (Born 1913-Died 1997) through his theory of adult education. Knowles asserted that the term andragogy, should be distinguished from the more commonly used term pedagogy. In 1967, Malcom Knowles made the use of the term andragogy to explain the theory of adult education. According to Knowles, andragogy is the art and science of adult learning, thus andragogy refers to any form of adult learning. Malcom published over 230 articles and books including *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Andragogy vs. Pedagogy*. Andragologists are those who both practice and specialize in the field of andragogy. Andragologists have received a doctoral degree from an accredited university in Education (EdD) or a Philosophy (PhD) and have focused their dissertation utilizing andragogy as a principal component of their theoretical framework. (Infed.Org, 2021)

Famous Quote: “We will learn no matter what! Learning is as natural as rest or play. With or without books, inspiring trainers, or classrooms, we will manage to learn. Educators can, however, make a difference in what people learn and how well they learn it. If we know why we are learning and if the reason fits our needs as we perceive them, we will learn quickly and deeply.” (A-Z Quotes, 2021)

Malcom Knowles 5 Assumptions of Adult Learners





Shown above are two graphics that introduce the assumptions. In 1980, Malcom Knowles made 4 assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners (andragogy) that are different from the assumptions about child learners (pedagogy). In 1984, Knowles added a 5th assumption. An overview of the 5 assumptions is as follows:

1. Self-Concept-As a person matures his/her self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directed human being.
2. Adult Learner Experience-As a person matures, he/she accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.
3. Readiness to Learn-As a person matures his/her readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his/her social roles.
4. Orientation to Learning-As a person matures his/her time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his/her orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject-centeredness to one of problem centeredness.
5. Motivation to Learn-As a person matures the motivation to learn is internal.

The Importance of the Five Assumptions in applying the Andragogy Learning Theory

Based on Malcom Knowles own observations, Knowles developed a set of five assumptions that enveloped and serve as a guide to his own concept of andragogy. Knowles opinion was that the best educational experiences were cooperative, guided interaction between the teacher and the learner, and the learner with many available resources. During these experiences, the teacher helps guide the learner so he or she can develop their own potential. Andragogy is (1) an intricate approach to adult

education, (2) a science and art of teaching adults how to learn (3) an approach which recognizes and correlates the notion of self-concept with an adult learner's approach to learning (4) with maturity comes a person inclination to become a more independent and (5) self-directed human being in a realm of learning in andragogy. Adults respond to a modified type of teaching which shows or entails that adult learners take responsibility for their learning process. Hence, teachers must structure their methods to foster a learning environment in which adult learners can set goals and evaluate their progress. Also, in andragogy adult learners link new knowledge to their wide range of experience. Prior experience serves as a valuable resource in the classroom, the learners in andragogy exhibit eagerness to learn and to further develop in all respects with innate motivation. (Kurt, 2020)

Strengths of Andragogy

1. Andragogy lays out the characteristics of adult learners to consider when designing instruction. Adult learning theory helps the instructor to understand their students and to design more meaningful learning experiences for them. An in-depth review of andragogy shows that Malcom Knowles' intentions were to put learners first, to strive to help them meet their needs, and to encourage educators to always be available to guide learners to success.
2. Andragogy represents an attempt to understand the difference between adult and childhood learners. Malcom Knowles believed adults normally did not pursue learning just for the sake of learning, but because they needed to immediately apply what they were learning to life situations. Knowles believed that learning experiences should be structured around life situations versus subject matter, and that learners desire to be aware of the relevance of what they learn in relation to their life tasks or goals.
3. An instructor using andragogical principles focuses more on being a facilitator of learning rather than a transmitter of knowledge and an evaluator. When adults teach and learn together, they find themselves engaged in a challenging, passionate, and creative activity. Learners indicate a preference for Andragogical teaching styles by instructors. They indicated that they appreciated that instructors worked to create learning environments where they could speak up and challenge ideas in addition to discussing their own experiences and ideas. (Usman, 2020)

Limitations of Andragogy

1. Critics of Andragogy argue that all adults cannot be accounted for as andragogy would suggest. It is important to remember that every learner is unique. Learners come from diverse backgrounds and widely different experiences and may not share the same values or lifestyles.
2. It seems unfair to assume that children are not able to be self-directed learners, just as the opposite may be true about adults. Andragogy does not consider many adults who are not self-directed learners or youths who are. However, in many circumstances adults learn differently than children. The shift in education today towards constructivist methods imply boundaries between adult and youth learning are not so easily defined.
3. Andragogy may have contributed to our understanding of adults as learners. However, it has done little to expand or clarify our understanding of the process of learning, nor has it achieved the status of a theory of adults learning. Malcom Knowles concept of andragogy is a beginning attempt to try to build a theory of adult learning by laying out the characteristics of adult learners. There is no one adult learning theory that will successfully apply to all learning

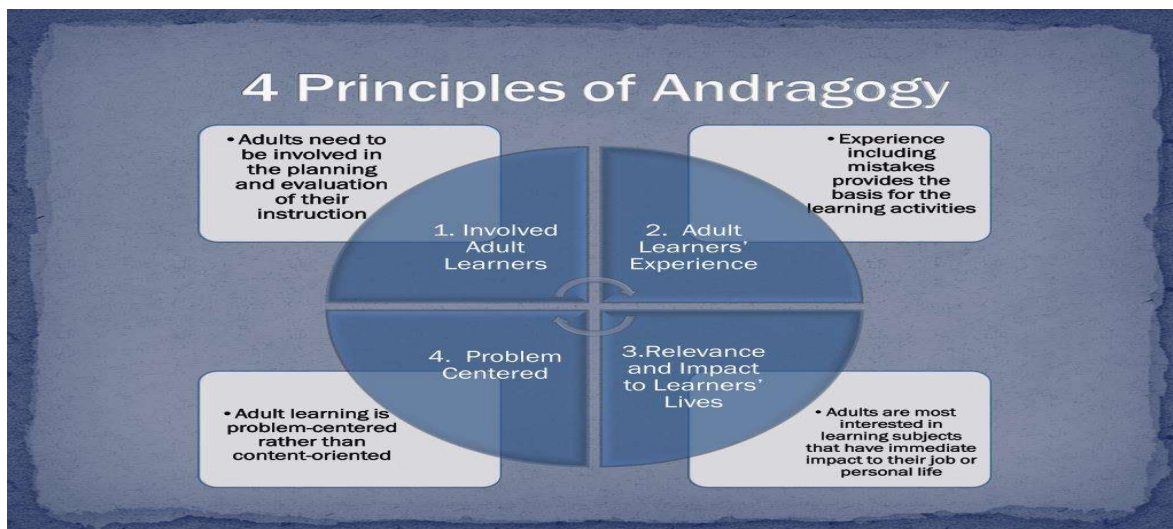
environments. Some critics argue that Andragogy lacks the fundamental characteristics of a science because of the limited empirical evidence. Even Knowles concluded that Andragogy is less a theory of adult learning, but more of a model of assumptions about learning or a conceptual framework that serves as a basis for an emergent theory. By indicating that it is a conceptual framework suggests that there are weaknesses with the model and indicate that it has not academically been viewed as a theory of adult learning. Other critics argue the absence of a testable model for Andragogy suggests the need for a measurable instrument. As a result, intensive investigations cannot be conducted to prove Andragogy is the catalyst for adult learning. (McGrath, 2009)

Implications of Andragogy for instructional Design

In 1984, Malcom Knowles suggested 4 principles that are applied to adult learning:

1. Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
2. Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.
3. Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.
4. Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented.

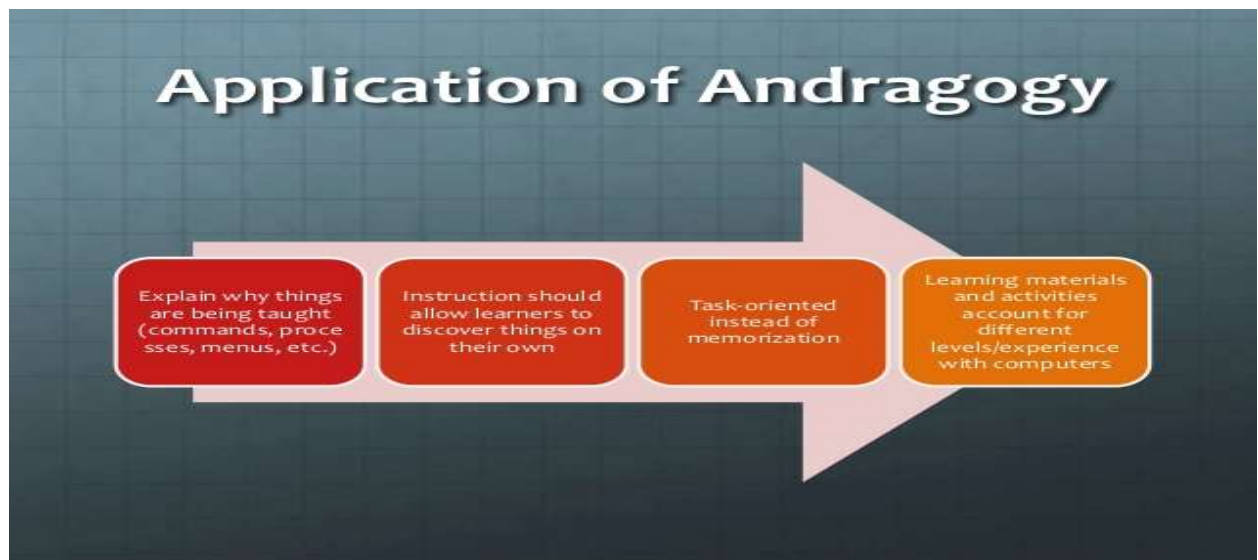
Below is a graphic that represents the 4 principles:



Even though Andragogy has limitations many educators are of the opinion that Andragogy is the most learner centered of all patterns of adult education programs. Often adults have a specific need for the information they are learning in that the instruction pertains to their role within their life, and they want to feel like they oversee their own learning. The opportunities to learn come not just from the course materials but also from the learning. Adults bring an abundance of experiences and knowledge to the learning environment that can be shared freely and timely. Many adults enter learning environments with an agenda and require instruction that acknowledges their specific needs. Online learning is an exceptional way to address these needs. The future of adult learning research may be based on theories such as Andragogy, though the theory was developed over 20

years ago in traditional classroom environments. The online learning environment did not exist over 20 years ago, and yet the universal nature of the Andragogy theory enables educators to consider it in designing online instructional design. Many adults want to take advantage of online learning environments, mostly due to their busy schedules and the online format's convenience. Instructors must be aware of what adults want and need. Learning theories and models, such as Andragogy, are important for instructors to understand when working with adults in online learning environments. Malcom Knowles's Andragogical assumptions need to be used to guide the online course educator to understand the realities of adult learners, and to foster a collaborative online environment.

Andragogy aims to look at how learning can be made more attractive for adult students. The graphic below is an application of Andragogy. (Blondy, 2007)



Malcom Knowles provided the example below of applying Andragogy Principles to the design of personal computer learning:

1. There is a need to explain the reasons specific things are being taught (e.g., certain commands, functions, operations, etc.).
2. Instruction should be task-oriented instead of memorization-learning activities should be in the context of common tasks to be performed by the others.
3. Instruction should consider the wide range of different backgrounds of learners; learning materials and activities should allow different levels/types of previous experience with computers.
4. Since adults are self-directed, instruction should allow learners to discover things and knowledge for themselves without depending on people. Learners will be provided guidance and help when mistakes are made. (Cercone, 2008)

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