# MA Adult Basic Education Teacher's License

## Module 3: Adult Development and Learning Theorists

**SABES Program Support PD Center**

Updated November 2020

**WORLD EDUCATION**

**SABES**

# Introduction

- The ***SABES Program Support PD Center*** has developed this resource to support MA practitioners who are seeking the state's **ABE Teacher's License**.

- As a License-seeker, you must demonstrate that you understand and apply the main ideas of at least one *adult development* and one *adult learning* theorist, which you demonstrate in writing as part of a portfolio submission.

- The theorists listed in this resource are *suggested*; however, if you feel strongly that ***(a)*** a development theory could also serve as a learning theory, or vice-versa, or ***(b)*** you would like to be allowed to use a theory not on this list, please contact luanne_teller@worlded.org with your request and rationale.

- Final decisions on these requests will be made by ACLS.

## Adult Development Theorists

1. Belenky, M.F.
2. Dirkx, J.M.
3. Erikson, E.H.
4. Gilligan, C.
5. Gould, R.
6. Tisdell, E.J.
7. Kegan, R.
8. Levinson, D.J.
9. McCluskey, H. Y.
10. Vygotsky, L.

## Suggested Theorists

## Adult Learning Theorists

1. Brockett, R.G.
2. Brookfield, S.
3. Davison and Strucker
4. Freire, P.
5. Gardner, H.'
6. Goleman, D.
7. Hase and Kenyon
8. Knowles, M.S.
9. Knox, A.
10. Krashen, S.
11. Mezirow, J.
12. Siemens and Downs

Let's begin exploring the list of suggested *adult development* theorists and theories.

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# 1. Mary Field Belenky

Wrote *Women's Ways of Knowing* (1986). Posited stages of knowing unique to women:

- *Silence*: Individual feels disconnected from knowledge (rare).

- *Received Knowledge:* Knowledge is a set of truths provided by others.

- *Subjective Knowledge:* Own thoughts, feelings, and experience qualify as knowledge.

- *Procedural Knowledge:* Knowledge can come from multiple sources.

- *Constructed Knowledge:* Knowledge is interrelated and mutable.

# 2. John M. Dirkx

## Transformative vs. Instrumental Learning

- Most educational approaches strive to teach adults to *adapt* to social structures and expectations (Instrumental).

- Purely Instrumental learning can constrict the powers and opportunities of learners to be more than adapters.

- Learners should make their own meaning through reflection, dialogue, critique, discernment, imagination, and action (Transformative).

- Classroom emphasis is on case studies, critiques, role plays, and application of new knowledge to one's own life.

# 3. Erik Erikson

**Stages of a Man's Life**

1. *Infancy:* Birth to 18 Months - Trust that world is safe
2. *Early Childhood:* 18 Months to 3 Years - Build autonomy, develop skills
3. *Play Age:* 3 to 5 Years - Develop initiative, learn to copy and adapt
4. *School Age*: 6 to 12 Years - Build a sense of industry
5. *Adolescence:* 12 to 18 Years - Develop identity, function in roles
6. *Young Adulthood:* 18 to 35 - Achieve intimate relationships
7. *Middle Adulthood:* 35 to 55 or 65 - Care for others, perform meaningfully
8. *Late Adulthood:* 55 or 65 to Death - Share wisdom. accept limitations
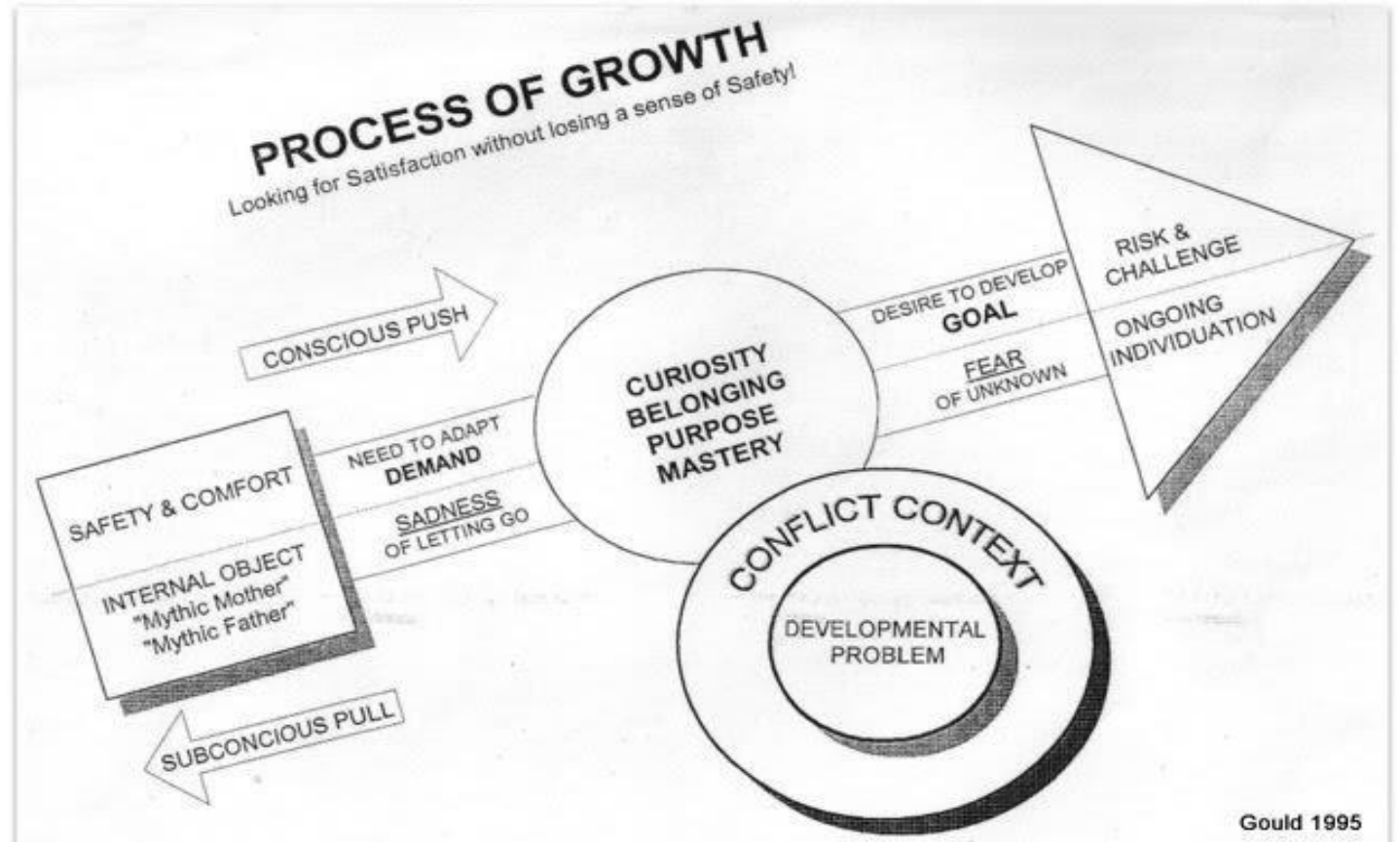
# 4. Carol Gilligan

**Famous for writing *A Different Voice* (1982).**

- Opposed Kohlberg's stages of moral development as too male-oriented.

- There are two kinds of moral voices—masculine and feminine.

- Masculine is more logical and individualistic.

- Feminine voice emphasizes protecting relationships and taking care of others.

- Optimal moral development is "androgynous"—a melding of the two voices.

# 5. Roger Gould

In his book *Transformations,* he describes adult development as a movement from the illusions of safety (childhood) to greater degrees of curiosity and risk taking.



PROCESS OF GROWTH
Looking for Satisfaction without losing a sense of Safety!

CONSCIOUS PUSH

SAFETY & COMFORT

NEED TO ADAPT
DEMAND

INTERNAL OBJECT
"Mythic Mother"
"Mythic Father"

SADNESS
OF LETTING GO

CURIOSITY
BELONGING
PURPOSE
MASTERY

DESIRE TO DEVELOP
GOAL

FEAR
OF UNKNOWN

RISK &
CHALLENGE

ONGOING
INDIVIDUATION

CONFLICT CONTEXT

DEVELOPMENTAL
PROBLEM

SUBCONCIOUS PULL

Gould 1995

# 6. Robert Kegan

**There are three general types of knowers/learners:**

1. **Instrumental:**
   - Teacher is sole source knowledge, judge of quality/progress of learning.
   - Learners should primarily depend on teacher for learning.
2. **Socializing:**
   - Fellow learners can also be sources of knowledge and approval.
   - There are benefits to learning from others, sharing knowledge with others.
3. **Self-Authoring:**
   - Learner can challenge, judge accuracy/quality of imparted knowledge.
   - Learner can also learn on his/her own.
   - Learning can continue outside the formal learning environment.

# 7. Daniel J. Levinson

**Sought to add more factors than Erikson's mostly psychological theory. Formulated the Stage-Crisis View of adult development in _Season's of a Man's Life_ (1978). Stages are:**

- **Pre-adulthood:** formative phase, moving from dependence to independence (up to age 22)
- **Early adulthood transition:** Increasing individuation during ages 17-22
- **Early adulthood:** Period of energy and satisfaction, up until age 45 (career, marriage, children)
- **Midlife transition:** Often a crisis period characterized by drastic changes (peaking at age 45)
- **Middle adulthood:** If crises are resolved, preparation begins for later years (46-59)
- **Late adulthood transition:** Loss of youth, declining powers must be faced (60-65)
- **Late adulthood:** Challenged to give up one's authority and power, movement toward greater selflessness if successful

# 8. Howard Y. McClusky

His *Theory of Margin* focuses on adults: The ratio of *Load* to *Power* = *Margin.*

*Margin* is the space needed to pursue learning freely. To increase power, reduce load.

**Load Factors**
- External: Life tasks, e.g. family, career, socio-economic status
- Internal: Self-concept, goals, personal expectations

**Power Factors**
- Physical: Strength, stamina, energy, health
- Social: Ability to relate to others
- Mental: Ability to think, reason
- Economic: Money, position, influence
- Skills: What the individual knows how to do

# 9. Elizabeth J. Tisdell

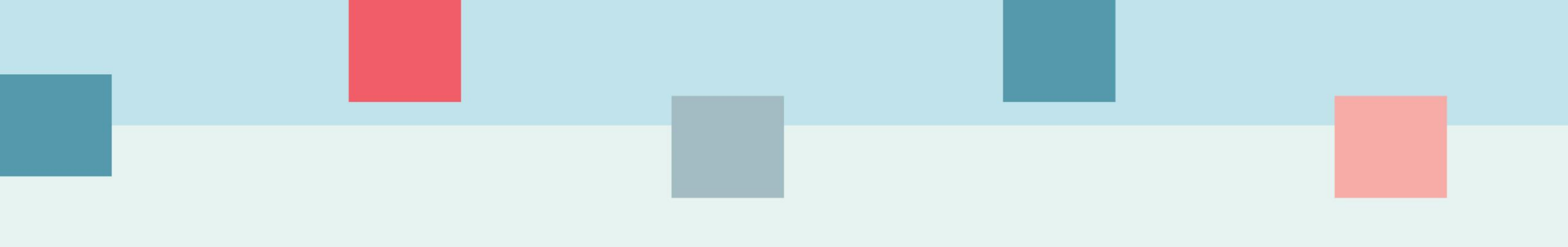**Wrote** *Exploring Spirituality and Culture in Adult and Higher Education* (2003)

- Include spiritual and cultural aspects of students in education
- Teachers and students must strive to be "authentic" rather than merely trained or constructed
- Classroom environment that allows for the exploration of:
  - The cognitive (through readings and discussion of ideas)
  - The affective and relational (through connection with other people and of ideas to life experience)
  - The symbolic (through art form—poetry, art, music, drama)
  - Readings that reflect the cultures of the members of the class and cultural pluralism in general

# 10. Lev Vygotsky

## Constructivism

- All real learning is social; people learn by doing real-life tasks, solving real-life problems
- Teacher is a planner, facilitator, scaffolder: must find student's "*zone of proximal development*," where the new is just beyond student's reach
- "...where speech and practical activity converge..." = meaning, schema, retention, transferable ability
- Learning is most effective when tied to prior knowledge/skills
- Learning environment should be free from judgment, fear (c.f., Krashen's "affective filter")

Now let's move on to exploring the list of suggested *adult learning* theorists and theories.

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2. Brookfield, S.
3. Davison and Strucker
4. Freire, P.
5. Gardner, H.'
6. Goleman, D.
7. Hase and Kenyon
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# 1. R. G. Brockett

**Self-Directed Learning**

Primary responsibility for planning, carrying out, and evaluating a learning endeavor is assumed by the learner

- Student learns a great deal from the process of choosing and planning learning

- Personal Responsibility Orientation (PRO) model: individuals assume ownership of their thoughts and actions
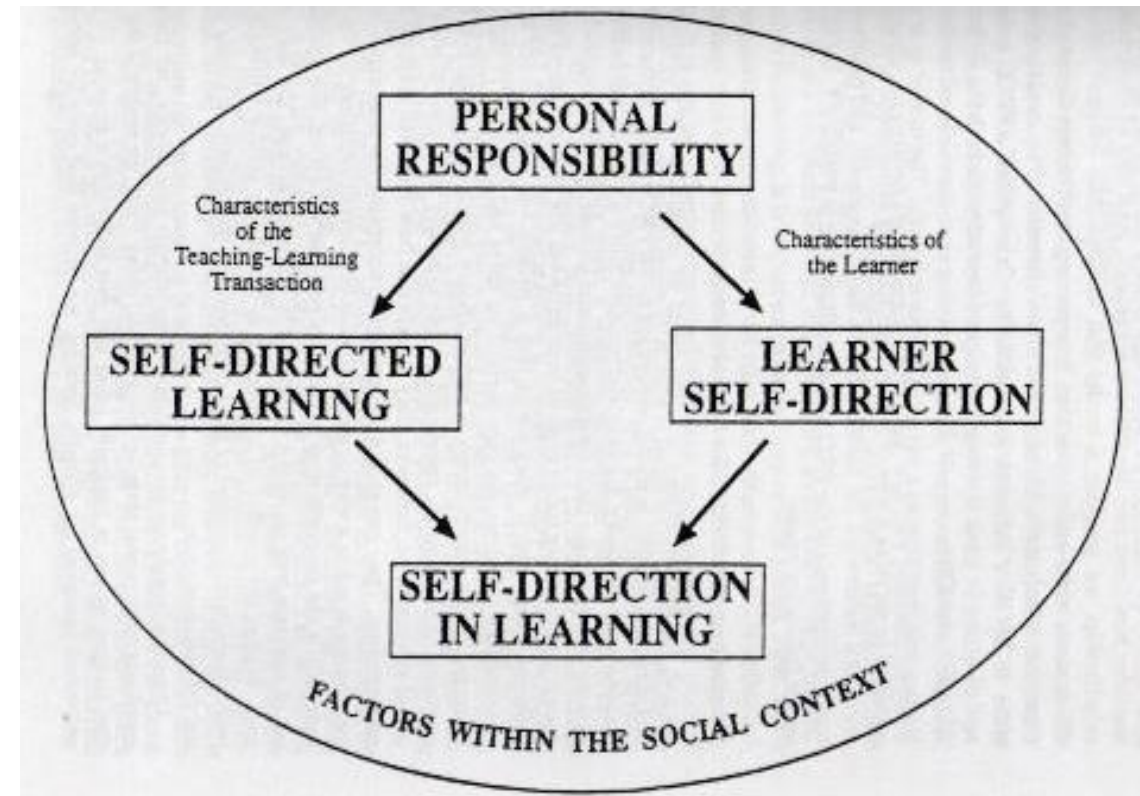
# 2. Stephen J. Brookfield

**The Critically Reflective Teacher**

*Four lenses for reflecting on practice:*

- **Autobiographical:** Review lessons, journals, student feedback to assess and strengthen practice

- **Self-Reflection**: Examine student journals, dialog with students, etc. to put yourself in their places

- **Peer Mentoring**: Ask colleagues to observe and critique your teaching.

- **Scholarly Literature:** Study published educational literature; become expert and present to others

# 3. Rosalind Davidson & John Strucker

## Reading Comprehension Study (ARCS)

Established adult reader's need for mastery of four basic components of reading:

- **Alphabetics:** Ability to sound out words

- **Fluency:** Ability to read connected text with appropriate rhythm and intonation

- **Vocabulary:** Acquisition of important print-based (Tier II) words, e.g. *analyze, refine, coordinate*

- **Comprehension:** Mastery of reading strategies such as re-reading, visualizing, predicting, etc.

Helped create the Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) professional development initiative.
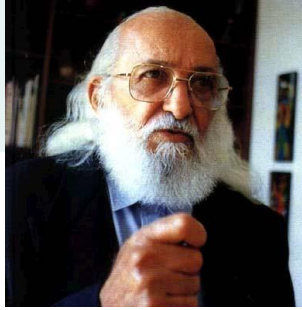
# 3. Paolo Freire

**Social Justice**

- Students are not empty vessels; they bring knowledge and skills to the learning process.

- Education should be shaped by learners' needs.

- Teachers are facilitators, not dispensers of knowledge.

- Formal education systems are often instruments of oppression.

- Education should lead to personal empowerment, even social action.

# 4. Howard Gardner

**Multiple Intelligences**: "*Are you smart*?" vs. "*How are you smart*?"

1. Verbal/Linguistic
2. Logical/Mathematical
3. Visual/Spatial
4. Bodily/Kinesthetic
5. Naturalistic
6. Musical
7. Interpersonal
8. Intrapersonal
9. Existential (not fully accepted)

# 5. Daniel Goleman

**Five Components of Emotional Intelligence**

- **Emotional self-awareness:** Knowing what one is feeling at any given time and understanding the impact those moods have on others

- **Self-regulation:** Controlling or redirecting one's emotions; anticipating consequences before acting on impulse

- **Motivation:** Utilizing emotional factors to achieve goals, enjoy the learning process and persevere in the face of obstacles

- **Empathy:** Sensing the emotions of others

- **Social skills:** Managing relationships, inspiring others and inducing desired responses from them

# 6. Stewart Hase & Chris Kenyon
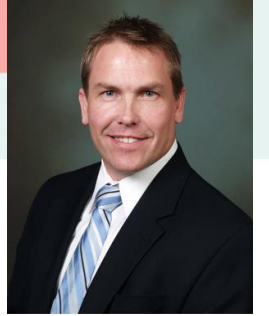
**Heutagogy**

- Builds on Knowles's andragogy but argues for evolution to even more self-determination by learners

- Knowing *how to learn* is as or more important than teaching only discipline-based knowledge and skills

- "*It is the learner*…who determines what and how learning should take place."

- Modern workplace, information age, demand that individuals be highly self-determining

# 7. Malcolm Knowles

**Andragogy**

Adult learners are distinct from child learners:

- They have an independent self-concept, can direct own learning

- They have life experiences to incorporate in the learning process

- Needs are directly related to changing social roles

- The immediacy of life problems motivates learning

- They are compelled to learn more by inner forces than external requirements
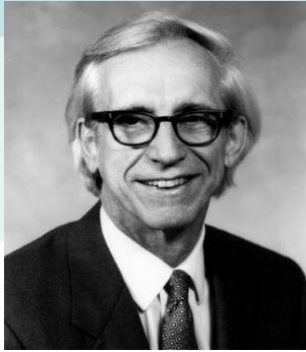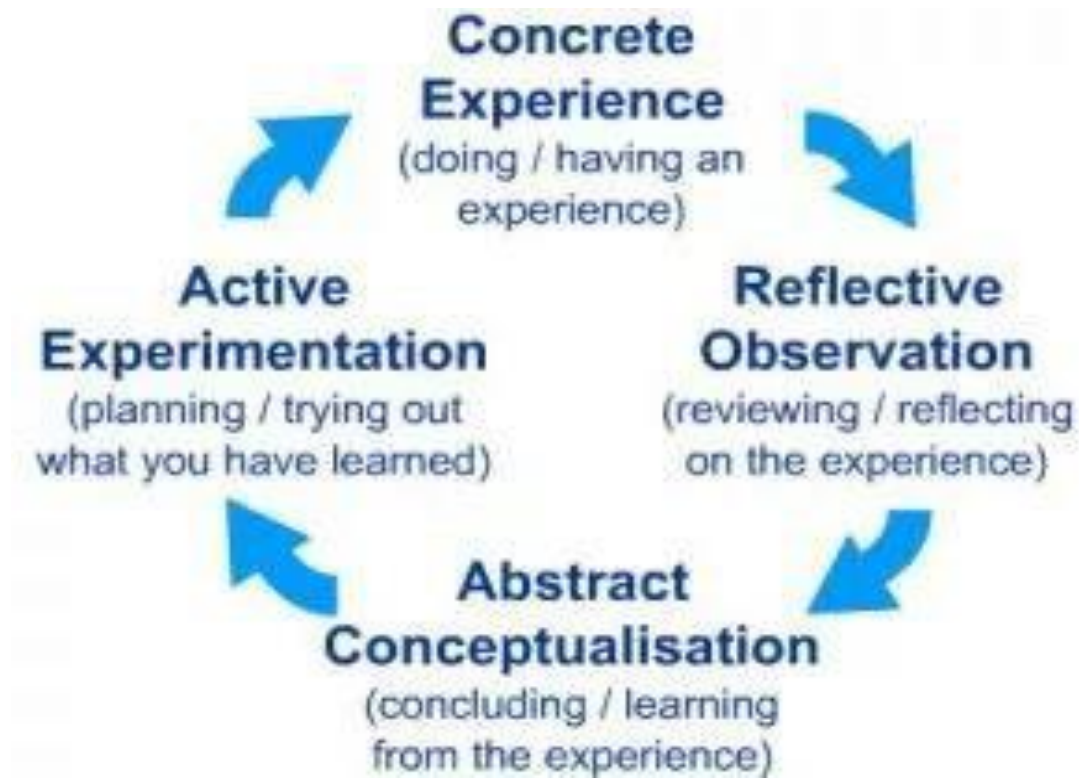
# 8. Alan B. Knox

**Proficiency Theory**

- Adults' learning needs arise from life situations and interpersonal communications

- Social expectations motivate and empower adults

- Learning settings should have a participatory and collaborative element

- Adults meet as equals in small groups ("learning co-operative") – opportunity for inter-learning

- Teacher or anyone else can facilitate

# 9. D. A. Kolb

**Experiential**

**Learning**

Four stage

learning cycle



Concrete Experience (doing / having an experience)

Reflective Observation (reviewing / reflecting on the experience)

Abstract Conceptualisation (concluding / learning from the experience)

Active Experimentation (planning / trying out what you have learned)

# 9. D. A. Kolb, continued

## Learning Styles

- *Diverging* (feeling and watching): Prefer watching to doing

- *Assimilating* (watching and thinking): Prefer ideas and concepts

- *Converging* (doing and thinking): Prefer finding solutions

- *Accommodating* (doing and feeling): Prefer hands-on and social

*\*\*One's learning styles often determine one's interests\*\**

# 10. Stephen Krashen

## Second Language Acquisition Theories

- Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drills.

- Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are mainly concerned with the messages they are conveying and understanding.

- The best methods are therefore those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear.

- Higher anxiety situations create an "affective filter" that prevents the learner from easily listening and speaking.

# 11. Jack Mezirow

**Transformational**

- *Transmissional* (teacher dispensed knowledge) vs. *Transactional* (student learns thru inquiry, action, critical thinking, reflection)

- Education should encourage self-criticism, re-assessment of prior knowledge, received views

- Develop inclusive, discriminating, integrative viewpoints

- Reflection validates, refines, deepens knowledge

- Process often triggered by a "disorienting experience"

# 12. Siemens & Downes

**Connectivism**

- Internet has changed the learning environment and the range of opportunities to learn

- Much learning can happen across peer networks that take place online

- Teacher guides students to information and answers key questions as needed

- Students are also encouraged to seek out information on their own online

- Free online courses and "communities of learning" are evolving venues for learning

# Moving Forward with SABES

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# Thank You!

For more information or support, please contact the Program Support PD Center Director Luanne Teller: [Luanne_teller@worlded.org](mailto:Luanne_teller@worlded.org).