



DAY 1 DISCOVERY ASSIGNMENT: JOURNALING READING

WHY JOURNAL?

Writing or journaling is a key tool in adult education. As early as 1965, psychologist Ira Progoff and his colleagues began seeing the value of personal journals in enhancing growth and learning. Progoff believed what he called an “intensive journal process” could “draw each person’s life toward wholeness and its own tempo...It systematically evokes and strengthens the inner capacities of persons by working from a non-medical vantage point and proceeding without analytic or diagnostic categories” (Progoff, 1975, P. 9)

Journaling in its various forms is a means for recording personal thoughts, daily experiences, and evolving insights. The process often evokes conversations with self, another person, or even an upcoming situation. Add the advantage available in most journaling formats of being able to review or reread earlier reflections and a progressive clarification of insights is possible.

In adult education, this learning method is a tool to aid learners in terms of personal growth, synthesis, and/or reflection of new information that is acquired. Learners are encouraged to use journaling as a means to assist in obtaining the maximum amount of interaction, knowledge, and personal growth from reading or other learning experiences.

There is also the potential for journaling to promote critical self-reflection where dilemmas, contradictions, and evolving world views are questioned or challenged. Learning something that is new or different and then reflecting on what that means for a current or expected professional position can be an important outcome.

A variety of journaling types and formats have been developed over the years. A literature search produces a plethora of types, descriptions, and examples. Each has advantages and disadvantages, but all are effective in helping record information important to one’s efforts.

For EIW, we utilize learning journals. A learning journal is typically a handwritten notebook or pad of paper as a means for recording thoughts, reflections, feelings, personal opinions, and even hopes or fears during an educational experience. However, it is important to note that certain professions use recording devices, voice recognition software and/or a computer keyboard. The point is to find a method that feels comfortable and enhances frequent writing.

Benefits

There are a number of potential benefits in maintaining some type of journal, diary, or log. Enhanced intellectual growth and development is achievable by most, especially as more experience with the writing or recording procedure is gained.

Journaling can help integrate life experiences with learning endeavors, allow for a **freedom of expression** that may be inhibited in a group setting, **stimulate mental development**, enhance breakthroughs in terms of insights, and even plant seeds in terms of future study or research.

Another outcome, and one that is not always expected, is an enhanced ability at **self-discovery** and listening to **intuition**. Learning to trust that inner voice and interpret new thoughts or even dreams can **increase self-confidence**.

Problem resolution is often achieved by writing down and imagining options and outcomes. Often an epiphany will emerge that might not have been possible with some other problem solving technique.



Emotional Intelligence
AT WORK

There is considerable evidence that journaling can improve various aspects of **personal health**. Journaling for therapy enhances psychological healing and growth. Most, if asked today, would welcome a readily available and no-cost option to release pent-up emotions, counter anger or frustration, and overcome or reduce the stress typical in today's busy work world and lifestyle.

It is important to emphasize the value of journaling in helping adult learners increase their ability to reflect critically on what they are studying or learning. The resulting outcomes range from values clarification, finding meaning in what is being examined, and wholeness as a professional through critical judgments, enhancing not only the professional but also the profession.

The goal is to journal daily, make it easy, write whatever feels right and use your journal however you see fit.

Source: <http://www-distance.syr.edu/journal1.html>