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Vernon Williams

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, vwilliams1@unl.edu

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Personal-Emotional Development in ADAPT

Vernon G. Williams

From its inception theorists in the student development field have written about developing the whole student. As time passed, we became increasingly aware of the vastness of our ignorance regarding how to enhance that development. Beginning in the early sixties, this knowledge gap began to be filled. Theorists such as Keniston (1965), Astin (1969), Sanford (1966), Chickering (1969), Roy Heath (1958), and Douglas Heath (1968) contributed to this knowledge. Recently Perry (1970) has had a large influence on student development theory. Loevinger (1976) has produced a new work extending her theory significantly. That addition enhances the value of her theory for application to college student development.

Probably the most promising developmental theory for use with college students is not a new one. Although Jean Piaget's conceptualization of human development (1972) has been thought not to extend as far as late adolescence, Carol Tomlinson-Keasey has explored the theory's applicability to college students. Data are accumulating to suggest that the theory is indeed applicable in that age range (Lawson & Renner, 1974; Tomlinson-Keasey, 1972; Watson, 1968, Moshman, 1977). While Piaget's theory is not unique in this respect, it includes emotional and ethical implications, in addition to its main emphasis, intellectual development. William Perry's theory is helpful in extending Piaget's at the higher levels of emotional and chronological development. Perry discusses emotional commitment and openness to new experience in addition to the intellectual aspects of student's progress through their late adolescent years.

The ADAPT Program, as an application of some of Piaget's ideas, could not ignore the emotional and ethical realms. Indeed, far from trying to avoid these areas, ADAPT from the beginning addressed itself to the emotional side of the student's experience.

Before exploring this aspect of the project, we should note other efforts in this same direction. Clyde Parker at Minnesota has written widely about student development, largely based on Perry's developmental scheme (Widick, Knefelkamp, & Parker; 1975; Parker, 1975). Parker's students, Knefelkamp and Widick (Knefelkamp & Slepitz, 1976; Widick, 1975) have developed university courses, which, while drawn from other developmental theories, are based primarily on Perry's scheme. A group at the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay (Hartely, 1974) has developed a freshman program from Perry's ideas.

A number of formulations have been offered concerning integration of other aspects of students' development with the university's primary focus, expansion of the intellect (Brown, 1972, Grant, 1968, Miller and Prince, 1977). Of all the ideas offered thus far, one of the most promising is Brown's notion of the developmental transcript (Brown & Citrin, 1976). In this view the freshman would plan with an advisor a four year program of development in personal, career, and other areas in the same way the student plans a four year academic program. Knefelkamp, Widick and Parker's approach (1975) appears to involve use of instructional

techniques derived from developmental theory and expansion of the curriculum to encompass areas now considered non-academic.

In the present stage of the effort to integrate students' personal and academic development all new approaches should be welcomed and subjected to empirical trial. It is in this spirit that the approach to students' emotional development in the ADAPT program is described here. This approach is to be viewed as the beginning stage in a program, that, despite its accomplishments, still has far to go.

The General Overview

The general approach to student ethical-emotional development took the same form as was used for intellectual development in the academic courses. Some activity was planned initially to involve students in exploration of the topics to be pursued, then questions were posed and ideas were offered to challenge and aid students to organize and draw inferences from their exploration. Students were encouraged to apply what they had learned in an exercise.

The first exercise undertaken in the second year of the program will illustrate the process just described. Students were asked first to write a description of a learning experience they had encountered outside the formal educational setting and to identify experiential elements that had facilitated their learning. Students shared their perceptions of the learning facilitative elements with other members of small groups. Application to academic work was encouraged with the expectation that further exploration would take place later in the year.

In all exercises at least three elements were present: 1) active, concrete student exploration, 2) application beyond the classroom, and 3) peer interaction. In the first year the time for developmental exploration was relatively unstructured. The second year program was more highly structured, using exercises to be listed later in an effort to accomplish developmental goals.

The Integrated Approach

The approach to be presented here involves integration of emotional with academic development in the context of a complete educational program. While the program's objectives were designed primarily to support academic goals, they also stand alone as meaningful personal development goals. While a large portion of the approach is idiosyncratic to the initiative and personality of the person primarily concerned with students' personal-emotional development, some general principles can be asserted.

1. An academic program must be chosen which promises development of the whole student.

While ADAPT certainly was not established mainly for the purpose, several aspects of the program make it a hospitable environment for personal development. Among those aspects are the facts that students participate in the entire program together, the program dictates

interaction among students for academic reasons, and faculty are generally concerned with students' lives outside the classroom.

2. The program must be organized on the basis of a theory at least allowing for personal development.

Clearly the ADAPT Program provides a theory that actively encourages personal, as well as intellectual, development. By its very nature Piagetian theory also promises integration between the two areas.

3. The student development effort must support the academic program goals.

The goals of the ADAPT Program included facilitating student interaction, enhancing logical thought and establishing student-faculty relationships, all goals which lend themselves to support from student development specialists.

4. The development specialist must be heavily involved in the academic program.

Instructors in the ADAPT Program invited the psychologist to visit classes, consulted him about individual students, classroom situations, and even general questions of student development.

5. At least some aspects of the effort to help students develop personally and emotionally can best be taught in a rather straightforward fashion.

Elements of self-concept development, group dynamics, inter-personal interaction, career development, and application of logic to personal experience were taught in a classroom setting.

Some readers undoubtedly will object that these principles are not empirically based and, in fact, are rather arbitrarily drawn. In response to this assertion I would submit that these principles apply to the approach I am describing here. Others may derive different principles. I believe that the current state of the art calls for a variety of differences of principles. These several sets can then be tried so that the differences in consequences, if any, can be observed.

Some facets of the personal-emotional development efforts do not lend themselves to the formation of principles. These facets will be described on the assumption that others can learn from them, even though they cannot be formulated into principles. Education is, of necessity, an art and a science. The sooner we learn to accept this division, the sooner we shall learn to use the two parts effectively.

The person primarily concerned with the ADAPT students' personal-emotional development was involved from the beginning in planning both the program and its planning. His major concern in the evaluation, quite naturally, was with the instruments to be used in assessing personal and emotional aspects of the students' development. He did much of the interview portion of the first-year evaluation.

The personal development specialist was available for consultation with individual students, those referred by faculty as well as those coming on their own initiative. He also visited classrooms and consulted with faculty about his observations. He consulted with faculty also concerning a group of students who seemed unable or unwilling to participate as fully as their peers in the classes. Ultimately the psychologist organized a group within the anthropology class to work with these students.

Additionally the developmentalist offered structured educational experiences in both years of the program thus far to help students explore career possibilities. In one of the two years he also presented the other topics and organized the other experiences described below which were designed both to facilitate personal development and to support intellectual program goals. Each of the two sets of objectives represented below represents one part of a two part goals. The third column displays an exemplary exercise used to accomplish each of the two-part goals.

Intellectual Objective	Personal Development Objective	Exercise
1. Logical thinking	Applying logic in personal life	Describing and analyzing a non-school learning experience
2. Learning how to learn	Becoming sensitive to ways one learns best	Abstracting from a learning experience in the student's personal life ways the student learned
3. Learning to interact effectively with fellow students and faculty in joint educational ventures	Enhancing interpersonal effectiveness via group dynamics	Participating in a group project and attempting to apply group dynamics principles to it
4. Gaining self confidence to increase openness	Developing self esteem	Participating in several exercises designed to teach transactional analysis
5. Preparing self for future learning	Developing independence in learning	Exploring classes taught in traditional fashion

Conclusions

Several things were learned from these efforts. The next version of the ADAPT Program will reveal whether or not this learning can be applied effectively. The hypotheses to be explored in the next trial of ADAPT may be stated here.

1. Students resisted participating in structured self-initiated exploration in career areas, yet when they organized their exploration as they wished, they remained highly anxious about career plans. The hypothesis to be explored next is that as students commit themselves in advance to specified exploratory activities, they will gain more confidence in career choices than occurred this year.

2. Students felt that they gained little from group dynamics experiences and that, while transactional analysis exercises were fun, they seemed not to lead anywhere. An effort will be made to explore these facets of personal learning directly in the context of the Programs academic courses.

3. Students in the second version of the program appeared to recognize virtually no need to develop their personal approaches to learning. The limited attempt in this direction the first year seemed the most highly effective of any personal development endeavor. The next trial will consist of any effort to personalize what students can most profitably learn about individual learning styles.

The general conclusions one may draw from student development efforts in ADAPT are potentially manifold. Three seem most important.

- First, the value of working within a developmental theory can hardly be overemphasized. When (inevitably) one's endeavor is not as successful as it might be, the theory provides guidance concerning modifications in approach. If one wishes to learn as much as (s)he can from her/his enterprise, whether it be teaching or student development, (s)he must have a sounder basis on which to introduce changes than hunch or intuition.

- Second, basing a decision to introduce new elements into one's approach to student development on an empirical evaluation of one's efforts seems exceedingly fruitful. While the present evaluation was empirical only in a very broad sense (as distinguished from the narrower one practiced by most present-day social science), observation, student reaction and even some "data collection" played a part in the conclusions drawn. An even more helpful evaluation can be based explicitly on the developmental program's objectives (as was done here in a loose sense).

- Finally, the integration of the personal-emotional development effort with that of the intellectual-academic was of inestimable worth. It seemed to this observer that his participation permitted incomparably closer relationships with students than does the traditional role of a counselor in higher education, and with few of the disadvantages often thought to be associated with the more integrated role. If possible, even fuller integration of the two parts of the developmental approach is desirable.

Future theoretical development in the area can profitably focus on the question of whether differences among a Piagetian and other formulations (Kohlberg, Perry, etc.) can be reflected in outcomes of developmental programs using each of the three theoretical approaches. Employing outcome measures in the areas of ethical/moral, emotional, and personal, as well as intellectual development should enable investigators to determine more accurately whether the different theoretical emphases result in different patterns of student response.

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