Draft 3: Theory of Human Development

EPSE 501: Seminar in Human Development, Learning and Culture

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Human development is a continuous process developed over a lifetime in which an individual grows and changes in three distinct yet interrelated developmental facets, including, but not limited to: cognitive, physical, and social-emotional. Development is complex, evolving, and unique to each individual because of genetic and environmental factors. Although genetics allow for many different possibilities of development, these possibilities can only be realized if the environmental mix allows the individual to fulfill his or her full potential. I believe that learning occurs individually and collaboratively, when developmentally appropriate for each individual.

Learners must be emotionally ready to receive information in order for learning to occur. My work with cooperative learning strategies supports social emotional learning, self-regulation, and motivation. Verbalization of learning by students in a social context leads to summary, clarification, and expansion, which reinforces and confirms understandings. Learners should be allowed social learning experiences that mix different cognitive levels to bring about new understanding. No matter the method of delivery of these experiences, the learner must find relevance to their current knowledge and experience level to accept new information and experiences and add them to their understanding of the world they live in. Self and co-regulation of learning experiences can help increase motivation to learn and continue learning. Development and learning are interrelated phenomena which determine personal achievement, emotional stability, social adeptness, cognitive aptitude, and physical mastery.

Educators understand that learning occurs through individual and collective experience. Educators utilize different strategies and tactics to ensure that the environment is conducive to learning. Educators tend to use those strategies which best connect to the learners in their classroom, that echos their personal teaching philosophy.