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ABSTRACT

An evaluation model was designed to be a self-evaluation component to be used in conceptualizing and implementing personal and professional development plans. The personality dynamics model itself, beyond its theoretical bases, includes the following techniques to assist the individual in the self-evaluation process leading to plan development: journaling, shadowing, and spiritual guidance. These techniques can be supplemented by others more specific to a particular personality perspective. The second step in the self-evaluation process involves the use of these techniques and others in the development activities and supplementation of the activities with mentoring and coaching as the individual implements his or her plan. The model in its development form has four dimensions: (1) the overarching theoretical frame of reference; (2) the methods for working toward insight from this frame of reference; (3) the ways of interpreting that insight with a view to planning development; and (4) an approach to continuous evaluation of the development plan. Procedures for drawing from more than one personality theory are included in the evaluation model. (Contains 24 references.) (SLD)

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A PERSONALITY DYNAMICS MODEL
FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION COMPONENT
OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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A PERSONALITY DYNAMICS MODEL
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DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

This evaluation model was designed to serve as a self-evaluation component to be used in conceptualizing and implementing personal and professional development plans. The theoretical bases for self-evaluation are found in a variety of personality theories: psychoanalytic, inferiority/superiority, neurotic personalities, interpersonal perspectives, humanistic psychological perspectives, social-cognitive frameworks, needs and consequences, and other psychotherapeutic perspectives. Each of these perspectives (as well as others that might be identified as appropriate for the population/class membership) are studied with a view to understanding the underlying assumptions, the interface with individual personal and professional issues, and the potential of its concepts for planning and pursuing growth.

The evaluation model itself, beyond its theoretical bases, includes the following techniques to assist the individual in the self-evaluation process leading to plan development: journaling, shadowing, and spiritual guidance. (These techniques can be supplemented by others more specific to a particular personality perspective.) The second step in the self-evaluation process involves the use of these techniques and others in the development activities and supplementation of the activities with mentoring and coaching as the individual implements his/her plan. A final step involves the use of the initial self-evaluation procedures conducted to design the development experiences in a continuous evaluation of the growth activity.

The model in its development form has four dimensions: (a) the overarching theoretical frame of reference, (b) the methods for working toward insight from this frame of reference, (c) the ways of interpreting that insight with a view to planning development, and (d) an approach to continuous evaluation of the development plan. Procedures for drawing from more than one personality theory are included in the evaluation model.

A PERSONALITY DYNAMICS MODEL FOR THE SELF-EVALUATION COMPONENT OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Each year new teachers begin their first year of teaching motivated by expectations fostered and developed in college classes designed for teacher education. Whether young or old the new teachers are easy to spot. They arrive full of enthusiasm knowing that they will minister to the needs of individual students using the latest knowledge and educational philosophies. The new teachers spend days, sometimes weeks, before school begins preparing their classrooms, writing extensive lesson plans, arranging furniture, and designing bulletin boards. They are new professionals whose dreams of teaching are about to be realized. The sad statistic is that more than half of all new teachers will change professions within the first five years (Jennings, 1998).

Were these dreams inappropriate? Was their teacher preparation inadequate, ineffective? Are the challenges presented to teachers in the current society too overwhelming? Are teachers' responsibilities too burdensome? Does the continuous criticism of education in general dishearten these and other teachers? All of these questions, other questions, or none of these questions may be related to teachers being disenchanted with the role of teacher and seeking another means of earning a living. The research on teacher burnout and teachers' leaving the field is not clear. One theme that continues to appear, however, has to do with the crushing fatigue, the inescapable hopelessness of being able to get the job done. This fatigue, this hopelessness may well come from the intense amount of defensive energy teachers are having to expend simply to survive as people and professionals in the teaching situation. Teacher preparation programs prepare individuals in both academics and pedagogy, but little attention is given to a teacher's need to

continue to grow and develop as a person and the need to address those growth issues as a part of lifelong learning and development.

To become an affective teaching professional one has a responsibility to strive for self awareness. The idea of personal growth and self understanding for teaching professionals is not a new one. Socrates is credited with the directive, "Know thyself." The pursuit of self understanding takes a lifetime commitment toward a goal that will be in continuous flux and whose end is determined by the choices made and experiences encountered along the way. This journey is most certainly never ending, an elusive goal that may never truly be attained. Socrates's edict signifies a responsibility to self and others to acquire self knowledge and understanding of motives. When Abel (1976) adapted Socrates's words and stated, "Create thyself" he encouraged a feeling of empowerment with this dictum. The "self" is a creative construction project that is never complete or finished (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994). As humans with free choice to grow and change, there is intrinsic enjoyment derived from experiencing personal enhancement created as one "becomes" the best one can be, personally and professionally.

How one begins is always the question. The personality theories of the past and present all engender some element of truth with which we can all identify. The humanness of multifaceted beings is apparent in all theories man creates. An awareness of many personality development theories is helpful. Psychologist such as : Freud, Adler, Erikson, Jung, Horney, Rogers, Maslow, Rotter, Mischel, Bandura, Skinner, and Murray not only have increased the knowledge of stumbling blocks that may impinge one's pursuit of self but also provide resources that may be employed toward personal growth, self awareness, insight, and development (Allen, 1997). We are social creatures who can create harmony through self examination or discord because of unanswered questions and hidden internal conflicts. Jersild (1955) stated that,

A teacher cannot make much headway in understanding others or in helping others to understand themselves unless he is endeavoring to understand himself. If he is not engaged in the endeavor, he will continue to see those whom he teaches through the bias and distortions of his own unrecognized needs, fears, desires, anxieties, hostile impulses, and so on. (p.13)

Jersild (1955) identified from his empirical studies with teachers, that the most pressing concern facing teachers was the need to find personal meaning in their work. The search for meaning is basically the search for self (Harris, 1974; Jersild, 1955).

Murray (1968) suggested that the way to develop good teaching professionals is to provide new curriculum experiences which cause self-growth. Murray's research contended that a particular personality type, someone possessing many of the attributes of Maslow's self-actualized individual, to be most successful with students (Murray, 1968). Farmer (1980) presented the case that the degree of self-actualization is positively related to teacher success and that "teacher educators should seek to discover ways whereby future teachers and in-service teachers may be helped to become more self-actualizing" (p.236). McClain (1970) attempted to enhance self-actualization and promote psychologically healthy teachers by using a program of self-study. Students who participated in self-study reported feeling more comfortable with themselves and better able to cope with their life problems (McClain, 1970).

Henjum (1983) advocated the selection of teachers by the degree of self-actualization each exhibited. He identified the personality traits of enthusiasm, emotional stability, self-assuredness, venturesomeness, participation, strength of will power, and low frustration levels as those traits related to teaching effectiveness. "Our society desperately needs the self-actualized teachers who are mature and developed and whose basic needs are met. These qualitative characteristics reflect

their readiness to effectively carry out the demanding activities inherent in the teaching profession.” (p.55) The development of meaning that comes from self- awareness and self-actualization may be addressed within the teaching curriculum of university programs.

The second most pressing concern identified by Jersild (1955) was the teachers’ need to relieve anxieties that they credited to stresses indicative of the teaching profession. In this direction, Myers, Kennedy and Cruickshank (1979) investigated the effectiveness of teachers in dealing with problems. These problems were those identified as unfulfilled goals that result in teacher anxiety and stress. This study compared teacher personality variables with the types of problems experienced by an individual teacher. Problems cited dealt with teachers’ relations with parents, control of student behavior and student performance. Although this research did identify eight possible relationships between teacher personality and problem profiles, the authors cautioned generalization of the results because of methodology, including small sample size and artifacts (Myers, Kennedy, & Cruickshank, 1979).

As teaching professionals are being held accountable for many variables they perceive to be beyond their control, teaching skills and teacher efficacy begin to suffer (Reeve, 1996; Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990) . Teaching skills suffer under stress, causing teachers to deal in a “get by” manner. The impact of teachers’ experiences in schools and its effect on personality and the development of efficacy were investigated by Hebert (1981) who found that the student teaching experience did change student teachers in “what he termed” a positive direction. The impact of student teaching experience on pre- service teachers’ efficacy seemed to have shifted from an external to an internal locus of control. More often, than not, teacher efficacy may be ever changing as it takes time to develop, is situation specific and may not carry over into all aspects of the teacher’s life (Dembo, 1994; Hebert, Lee, & Williamson, 1998). These issues have

raised questions regarding the preparation of good teachers and the psychological situations into which they will later enter as professionals (Gold, 1999; Lehman, 1981; Radford, Cashion, & Larchford, 1993).

Cruickshank (1989) became an advocate of reflective teaching in the preparation of student teachers. The ability to recognize a problem through reflection brings liberating realizations about self and others. Using self-evaluation through reflection, one becomes aware that how one perceives and interprets information is dependent on past experience (Cruickshank, 1987; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Reflection into one's life may not always be a simple or pleasant task. The prospect of identifying and facing problems may seem daunting for those studying to become teaching professionals, "When we face ourselves, we face memories of our own triumphs and humiliations, of our cowardice and bravery, our breakthroughs and breakdowns, our betrayals as well as our fidelity." (Ayers, 1993, p.5)

In addition to these studies directly related to the emotional needs of the preservice professional is the theory of emotional intelligence (EQ). The theory of emotional intelligence is divided into 5 components that call on individuals to be (a) self aware (b) emotionally literate (c) empathetic (d) determine goals with a balance of reason and emotion, and (e) manage relationships; (Finegan, 1998; Goleman, 1995; Reissman, 1999; Salovey & Sluyter, 1997). Self-awareness takes the number one position in the EQ continuum. The over riding component of self-awareness and its importance must be considered when curriculum for professionals is being designed.

A method of self-assessment of problems would be more in line with contemporary theories of teacher self-understanding and growth for wholeness. In an attempt to better prepare teachers, Palmer (1998) suggested that educators must ask more in-depth questions of

themselves; instead of the usual what, how, and why questions. “What” questions ask what subjects one will teach. “How” questions ask the methods and techniques one will use to accomplish the job. “Why” questions ask for what purpose or to what ends one teaches.

The questions professionals are challenged to ask, and those questions with liberating potential, are the “who” questions. Who is the “self” who teaches? How does the quality of selfhood form or deform the way one relates to students, subjects, colleagues and one’s world? How can educational institutions sustain and deepen the selfhood from which good teaching comes? Palmer’s main contention is that good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher (Palmer, 1998).

The research describes an overlapping of findings for teachers to consider in their quest to be both personally successful and personally fulfilled. Whether individuals are self-actualized, have high efficacy, maintain an internal locus of control, are self reflective, or have high emotional intelligence, the success of a teaching professional depends on the ability to see the self. The course, program, or plan herein projected was designed for several reasons. The driving force behind the plan is the need to address teachers’ personal and professional strengths and weaknesses with a view to enhancing strengths and overcoming weaknesses.

A wide variety of approaches to classroom management and discipline are available ranging from the application of operant conditioning to approaches which focus on students’ saving face and becoming self-disciplined. Many varied and different teaching and assessment strategies are available to teachers, and their preparation programs are designed to help them be “good managers and disciplinarians,” “good and inventive teachers,” and “fair and appropriate evaluators not only of their students’ progress but also of their own teaching. NO attention is given in preparation programs to helping teachers develop insight and skills that will help them

cope with their day-to-day stresses or to deal with the teaching situation as it affects them personally.

The overarching purpose of this suggested experience is (a) to help teachers develop insight into a variety of ways to examine their own needs and purposes in teaching as in life and (b) to facilitate the development of strategies such as reflective thinking, self-examination, and optimism that can advance general personal and professional growth.

The experience will begin with an examination of a variety of personality models, a wide range of tests and inventories which can be used to help individuals identify and understand their needs and set priorities, and a wealth of literature both research and theoretical which can advance this issue of personal development. Two especially influential books on personal development have been widely read over the last few years—M. Scott Peck's The Road Less Traveled and Alice Miller's The Drama of the Gifted Child and the Search for the True Self. Both of these books address the critical issue of self-examination and self-development. Peck's books have been widely popular in the general culture and cycles on and off best-seller lists. Miller's book had been more popular with the psychotherapeutic community but also generally popular. Each of these books presented an important take on the notion of self-development. Peck's basic notion is that personal development and spiritual development are essentially the same road, and that an individual must become self-evaluative and disciplined in order to travel the road. Miller's book focuses on the dilemma of a child who grows up in a family of one or more psychologically needy people and winds up becoming the parent to the parent and does not develop a true sense of self. These essential ideas—self-evaluation, discipline, and a search for the true self—are central to the notion of growing and becoming a functional, fulfilled, and effective human being.

Starting with the psychoanalytic tradition, there is much insight to be gained that can be

useful in this quest. Freud's basic ideas, while hotly criticized and debunked by many including his followers, bring a very important idea to this process. The basic purpose of psychoanalysis is to raise to a level of conscious thought those things that motivate and/or control us from an unconscious source. That kind of awareness brings incredible power and control to an individual. Whether one is supportive or derisive of Freud's notion of infantile sexuality, the kinds of awareness developed by psychoanalytic techniques can be most freeing.

From Carl Jung's perspective, defensive energy is the most costly of all kinds of drains on an individual. When teachers are faced with difficult situations in the teaching/learning setting, the first energy to come to the teacher's rescue is defensive. When one is not in control, when one is not sure what the "real" problem is, when one is perplexed by the personal dynamics, . . . one is given to defend, to take care of one's self. If major portions of one's energy are given over to being defensive, clear problem solving is inhibited, and often situations escalate rather than reach positive conclusions.

Freud's approach to getting at the unconscious motivation, Jung's personality typology which illuminate the ways in which one's world view and functions to act on the world shape personality, Adler's focus on parent-child and social relationships, and Horney's examination of the neurosis producing elements of society in general and specifically parent-child relationships hold great potential for self-evaluation leading to self-awareness and personal strength. Ranging from the formality of psychoanalysis to the less formal self-analysis promoted by Horney, each of these frames of reference hold promise. One of Horney's goals for self-analysis is the development of trust, confidence, and respect for individual uniqueness.

Another psychoanalytic voice, Erik Erikson, has much to offer in this quest for self-awareness. His focus on psychosocial crises which occur throughout life are tremendously helpful

in understanding how personality development might become fixated to delayed. He proposes eight psychosocial crises ranging from the trust v. mistrust crisis in infancy to his most well know crisis, identity in adolescence. The power of early experience is clearly central to his ideas, but he believes that one can go back and rework unhealthily resolved crises. If one is lacking in initiative, there are ways to address that issue in one's personality—giving hope for growth and development.

The contributions of the humanistic psychologists to the development of “self” are extremely important. Carl Rogers proposed that all of us have a generalized actualizing tendency, that is we all have the need to become the best that we can be or “self-actualized.” Abraham Maslow used the notion of self-actualization as the centerpiece of his humanistic psychology. The hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow suggests—at least in a global fashion, that an individual is not moved by growth needs unless the basic or deficiency needs are met.

All people experience these deficiency needs—even teachers. Therefore, an understanding of the level of one's deficiency needs is essential to be motivated to be one's best. Furthermore, characteristics of a person who is or is becoming self-actualized include some elements important to being a successful teacher and/or human being: spontaneity (teachable moment), a forceful will and relative independence of the environment (personal strength and independence), creativeness (expert v. novice teacher, flexible person), and continued freshness of appreciation (accidences of one's self and others).

A differing perspective is presented by Rotter and Mischel who focus on the dynamic interplay between external and internal factors of personality. Issues such as locus of control, expectancies, values of outcomes, and self-regulatory plans are central to their notions of understanding the forces on one and learning to control those forces in a social-cognitive manner.

Albert Bandura's work on developing awareness and self-regulated behavior is a further exploration of this general notion.

Other perspectives as disparate as George Kelly's personal construct theory and Skinner's operant conditioning will be examined for insight in this self-development process. Presenting the entire spectrum of theorists from behavioristic to cognitive will allow preservice teachers the opportunity to make practical application of those theories to self- understanding.

The way one will teach, perceive classroom interactions and the degree to which one will derive meaning from the teaching profession will be directly affected by the degree to which an individual develops insight. It is the authors' hope that this model will help preservice teachers use a variety of methods to examine their own needs and purposes in teaching, thus facilitating the development of strategies that can encourage personal and professional growth.

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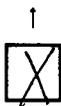
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