Chapter 20
A Personal Perspective and Learning Experience on Living a Long, Healthy Life

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides various materials and described events the author has personally found helpful in threading together elements of adult and community health education and learning that have contributed to his vibrant health and length of life thus far at age 82. His understanding was that these writers cited did not focus on health. Rather, the author used the materials for helping him develop and maintain a long, healthy life. Many Bible passages are included because the author views them as the Word of God, which has helped him learn to live long and healthily. His beliefs, attitudes, values, and stages of life are all central to his perspective on health. Although he provides his personal story about learning to live long and healthy, he suggests that each reader consider developing and applying her/his own view of learning to live long and healthy.

INTRODUCTION

Health Education is a broad topic and has been on the horizon for a long time, reaching back into ancient times. However, in a curious way societies around the globe are becoming very aware of matters that have to do with health and the length of life which varies in different countries. In fact, life is hardly life if it not accompanied with health. Among other elements, the length of life appears to be somehow related to the kind of health that becomes available and is maintained by people within a particular location, society or community. The overall title of this book does not mention directly length of life, but in my estimation it is implied. Moreover, the book title includes health education especially with the adults and within the community, which in all probability encompasses education or learning from one’s earliest age even until the time one passes from this life – and this may or could naturally be labeled as life-long, life-wide, life-deep, and life-heights of learning in all dimensions. Since very few in this world live as hermits, most all of this health education [or
learning for the purpose of health] takes place in community, although some of it may be learned personally through self-directedness. The tools, trends and methodologies for helping all this learning and education regarding health to take place are myriad, multitude, and almost immeasurable. Thus, the scope of what any of the authors say in this topic will be as unique as each and all of us. As a consequence of this, my chapter will largely be an expression of my personal perspective on an experience of learning to and living a long, healthy life to the present and my looking toward this continuing into the future.

First, I present aspects of living related to age categories by Golden (1957), Hudson (1999), and Knowles (1980). Second, the work of Hudson (1999) and Kolb (1974) is presented. Hudson (1999) offers life related to human values and human systems, and Kolb (1974) identifies life in various aspects, and Lindenwood University (2014) engages learners in maintaining wellness. Third, is Knowles (1959, 1970, 1980) and Waitley (circa, 1988). Knowles (1959, 1970, 1980) clarifies movement of growth toward maturity, Waitley (circa, 1988) has a system for total winners in life. The fourth section is a discussion of Maslow (1970) and Goble ‘s (1971) ideas about seekers of self-actualization. The fifth section, gives a very personal portrait of the author’s long and healthy life, including: Coming into adult and community education; Biblical guidance with faith influence; the idea of andragogy using the author in numerous regards; and, research conducted by a colleague on the congruence between the author’s scholarship and practice. As a preface to the fifth section indicated above, the author clarifies that he is not asking others (the readers) to follow exactly what he has done, but, rather that if they choose, the readers develop and follow their own workable pathway of learning toward a long and healthy life for themselves.

ASPECTS OF LIFE ACCORDING TO VARIOUS AGE CATEGORIES

A living, Jewish Talmud (Golden, 1957) outlines the life of a person according to various age categories and things generally concentrated on during that time. At five years of age, one is to become involved with the study of the 39 books of the Old Testament Scriptures. At ten years of age, one is to become involved in the study of Mishnah, which is one of the major ancient Jewish texts. At thirteen years of age, one becomes subject to the commandments, and this would mean implementing and practicing them in daily living. At fifteen years of age, the study of Talmud, another ancient Jewish text. At eighteen years of age, marriage becomes a focal point in life. At twenty years of age, the pursuit of livelihood, that would include the support of a family and beginning to have children. At thirty years of age, the peak of strength becomes prominent. At forty years of age, wisdom will begin to coalesce. At fifty years of age, one reaches the point of being able to give counsel to others. At sixty years of age, old age begins creeping on. At seventy years of age, fullness of years becomes the order of the day. At eighty years of age, this becomes the blossoming of the age of ‘strength’. At ninety years of age, the body becomes bent. Finally, at one hundred years of age, one is as good as dead and gone completely out of the world. During each of these ages, learning is part of what happens in order for life to be of become in any way healthy.

According to this Talmud calculation, the author of this paper is in the age of ‘strength’, being 82 years of age. I am still working full time as a professor of Andragogy [the art and science of helping facilitate the learning of adults] at Lindenwood University, St. Charles, Missouri. Incidentally, my health continues at this age to be vibrant.
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