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Caption Statement #2

My second artifact is the final project in D506, Adult Education Planning and Development. I chose to include this artifact because it shows my first experience designing a workshop using Humanist principles. As I mentioned in my Framing Essay, I have an interest in the power of the mind in healing and the benefits of mindfulness. Therefore, when given carte blanche to plan and design a teaching module during the course, I chose to create an introduction to mindfulness workshop entitled "Do You Mind?" It was a real leap for me, having facilitated only Human Resources trainings previously.

I took this course my first semester, so my knowledge of teaching philosophies and instructional design was extremely limited. I knew enough to recognize that a Behaviorist model was not going to work for a mindfulness class, in which learning objectives are discouraged due to each person having unique needs. I wanted to design the class utilizing Humanist tenets, but my design was very rudimentary and clumsy.

Looking back, I had not even heard of the concept of social constructivism, in which learners create knowledge together and learn significantly from one another. Later in the program, I would come to value social constructivism as a vital component of adult learning and would have included more participant interaction activities in this workshop if I were to design it today. But even back then, part of me knew the module was missing something. When

reflecting on the class in my final paper, I wrote about the importance of ensuring that all voices are heard. In fact, one of the participants in the workshop commented that she wished there had been more time for discussion. I did allow for some conversation among students, but it was very limited and not presented at all in the vein of participants learning from each other's experiences.

Of course, my insecurities made their appearance. In my reflective section of the paper, I say that "I need to trust in myself more." The comment was made in reference to not including as many mindfulness exercises as I had originally planned, fearing participants would get bored. But in the evaluations, many wished the workshop had been longer.

What I carry forward from this artifact is a passion for sharing the benefits of mindfulness with audiences. I was also able to use a few of the hands-on mindfulness activities I researched for this workshop during my practicum work and beyond.

So relating this artifact to my theme, I'd say at this point in the master's program, the old dog is spying a ball in the corner of the room but isn't quite sure if a new trick is possible … but is definitely considering the prospect.

Artifact #2

Do You Mind?:

An Introduction to the Art of Mindfulness

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Abstract

My Final Project was the design and delivery of a business-oriented introduction to mindfulness module entitled, "Do You Mind?"

As I began reading the concepts of teaching mindfulness, I realized traditional program planning, with its focus on Behaviorist philosophy, was not going to fit the esoteric subject of mindfulness. Mind-body pursuits are much more in line with the Humanist philosophy of education, so I used Humanist principles to guide me in instructional design.

I utilized the Dick and Carey model for my program design. I had to pick and choose which concepts applied to my module, again based on my subject. I then utilized Gagné's Nine Events of Instruction to help me design the content. I focused on creating teaching intentions rather than learning objectives. Since mindfulness is such an individual endeavor, I had no specific learning expectations for the participants; I simply hoped they would take what was useful to them and apply it to their own lives.

I wanted to ensure the training included lots of class participation, so I chose games and exercises that would encourage their involvement, as well as appeal to different kinds of learners: visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

Although I experienced some logistical issues, which our textbook warned me to expect, my class went quite well. I was nervous, as this was the first time I had ever taught a mindfulness class, but the program was well received, and the project confirmed to me that I thoroughly enjoy the teaching process. If given the chance to teach the program again, which I certainly hope to do, I will change certain components, but in the end, I was happy with the results of my training.

Do You Mind?: An Introduction to the Art of Mindfulness

My final project was the design and delivery of an introduction to mindfulness module, intended for a business audience. I named the class, 'Do You Mind?' As I began reading about the concepts of teaching mindfulness, I found utilizing the planning model from our textbook, *Planning Programs for Adult Learners*, was going to be a little like putting a square peg into a round hole – the transcendent world of mindfulness does not fall so easily into the constraints of the Behaviorist model.

The Humanist philosophy seemed much more applicable to my project with its focus on the student, stressing the individuality of the student, striving for self-actualization, and the facilitator acting as guide, rather than a traditional instructor (Elias & Merriam, 2005). So my intent was to create a Humanist class, utilizing behavioral concepts when appropriate. Thus began my journey into the world of program planning and instructional design.

Content

I began my project by reviewing the Interactive Program Planning Model (Caffarella, 2002). Unfortunately, most of the components did not apply because I was not planning this program within an organizational or community environment. My purpose was to design and deliver this very rudimentary class to a pilot audience in the hopes it would be adopted by Boostcamp, a local training group that combines business training with yogic and mindfulness principles. But two of the components did apply to my module: Discerning the Context and Formulating Evaluation Plans (which I will address later).

Discerning the context was interesting for me to explore. The pilot class consisted of four participants from different careers: two teachers, a translator, and an editor. Most of them had no

experience in mind-body pursuits, so this told me to design the class as basically as possible. Also, because the mindfulness concepts would be completely new to them, I expected humor as a way of deflecting their uneasiness; so I needed to be prepared to lead the jokesters back to the subject at hand. And more importantly, I had to willingly accept the diversions and also be open to changing the curriculum as needed based on students' needs.

I chose the Dick and Carey Model of design, also referred to as the Systems Approach Model ("Instructional Design Models and Methods," n. d.). I chose this approach because their system takes a:

systems view of instruction as opposed to viewing instruction as a sum of isolated parts. The model addresses instruction as an entire system, focusing on the interrelationship between context, content, learning and instruction ("Instructional Design Models and Methods," n. d.).

I focused on the steps which applied to my mindfulness module; due to the subject matter, some of the steps associated with a typical class based on Behaviorist principles did not apply. Shown below are the components which were applicable to my project.

Identifying an Instructional Goal. One of the definitions of goal in this context is the "attitude" a learner will be expected to adopt ("Instructional Design Models and Methods," n. d.). As I learned from reading *Teaching Mindfulness: A Practical Guide for Clinicians and Educators*, no student is ever "expected" to learn something specific, but rather students are given the opportunity to take information which they deem useful (McCown, Micozzi & Reibel, 2011). Therefore, I created my own Instructional Goal combining the two concepts: Participants

will be exposed to four concepts of mindfulness and will be encouraged to take away at least one application to apply in their daily lives, if they choose.

Write Performance Objectives. This component needed to be broadened, as performance objectives are not appropriate for a class teaching concepts such as mindfulness. McCown et al. (2011) describe the difference in the following way:

> These [teaching intentions] are different from learning objectives, in that they are meant to be held lightly by the teacher, rather than pressed upon the participants. In this way, the pedagogy of the emergent moment can reflect the integrity of the curriculum's metastructure, while the teacher remains open to outcome. The curriculum becomes a potential space in which contingent content can be co-created – teacher, participant and class are free to respond to the impulse and intention of the present moment (p. 142).

Develop Assessment Instruments. Although not directly applicable to my module, this tool did allow me to look at the "Purpose of Practice Items" ("Instructional Design Models and Methods," n. d.). I wanted my practice applications to be easy to follow, easy to perform and easy to transfer to real life. I would keep coming back to this phrase as I developed the content of curriculum -- to ensure that everything adhered to my 'easy' strategy.

Develop Instructional Strategy and **Develop and Select Instructional Materials** were my points of entry to Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction ("Gagné's Nine Events of Instruction," n. d.). And although these events developed by Robert Gagné were designed with a Behaviorist learning experience in mind, I felt I could adapt some of the strategies quite nicely to my Humanist class. Below are the Events which I felt were applicable to my training:

Gain attention of the students. According to Gagné, this premise works to "stimulate students with novelty, uncertainty and surprise" ("Gagné's Nine Events of Instruction," n. d.). I would gain the attendees' attention by introducing a game before any description of the module, teaching intentions or even introduction of participants. McCown et al. (2011) suggest mixing up the format in the following way:

> With little preamble, without group introductions, the teacher can begin with an experience – a contemplative practice, a game, a story – that provides opportunity for discovery and reflection. Participants must hold their questions of who's who and what's what in abeyance. They must live for a time with not knowing, which is still another opportunity for discovery and reflection (p. 166).

This would be a great way to get students' attention immediately and send the message that this class, just like the practice of mindfulness itself, may not be what they are expecting.

The game I chose was about time – participants stand, close their eyes and silently count to 60 seconds. When they think a minute has passed, they sit down. I track when they sit so I can share who was closest at the end. We then take a few minutes to discuss the concept of time and using time to our advantage in endeavors such as mindfulness ("Mindfulness Exercises," n. d.).

Stimulate Recall of Prior Learning. This step involves helping "students make sense of new information by relating it to something they already know or to something they already experienced" ("Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction," n. d.). This Event would need to be altered slightly. I decided participants would give one example of something or someone who really causes stress in their lives and also, if they choose, give a stress reduction technique used in the past.

Present the content. The curriculum I developed for the class follows:

1. Game

2. Introductions

3. Short physiology lesson on stress with visuals

4. Explanation of mindfulness

5. Mindfulness eating of a raisin

6. Conscious listening dyads

7. Body scan

8. Short mindfulness meditation

During my physiology lesson, I chose to show a picture of the brain, which would help visual learners ("Design for Adult Learning, Teaching and Learning Theory, Feedback", n. d.). I then used another visual, a snow globe, to show the amygdala, a part of the brain involved in the stress process) reacting to a stressful situation by shaking it hard ("How the Amygdala Affects Anxiety", n. d.). Letting the snow settle will be an effective visual tool as I introduce the concept of mindfulness and how it can settle the mind.

The idea for having conscious listening dyads came from the Conscious Communication training I attended, presented by Martie Adler, my interviewee for our class project. The inclusion of a small group activity reflects the Humanist stance, which views "communication among individuals as a vehicle for interpersonal growth" (Elias & Merriam, 2005, p. 144). For two minutes, one person speaks and the other just listens – no speaking. Then they switch roles for the next two minutes. We then come back together as a group and talk about the difficulty of being in the moment to listen consciously.

I chose to include a body-scan exercise because somatic learning is "one that recognizes the body as a source of knowledge" (Baumgartner, Caffarella & Merriam, 2007, p. 198).

Provide learning guidance. For this instruction Event, I will simply explain as well as I can and answer questions without judgement since each participant's performance will be different.

Elicit performance (practice). For this Event, I will ask students to share their reactions to the exercises, hoping to elicit critical thinking. This will be vitally important as their reactions and thoughts about the material will be the true learning of the module.

Enhance retention. Since my teaching intention is to provide simple mindfulness ideas to incorporate into everyday life, my goal is to provide several examples of mindfulness and suggest they try a concept from the training at home.

Now that the curriculum was designed, I returned to Dick and Carey's model to **Design and Conduct Sumative Evaluation** for my class ("Instructional Design Models and Methods," n. d.). I needed the evaluation tool to measure objectives established in my project proposal. I chose a Likert scale from the state of Iowa, which I revised slightly to meet my needs ("Training Evaluation Form," n. d.). The evaluation is shown later in this paper.

Process

My original location for the module was in a serene setting within the Bloomington Convention Center – I was planning to borrow reserved time from the owner of Boostcamp. Unfortunately, this location did not work out due to scheduling conflicts. My second choice was to present the class in the Boostcamp owner's office; this also did not happen. So with the time constraints of the project, my only available choice was to offer the class from my home. As

Caffarella (2002) explains, "those doing the program coordination may also need to address unexpected last-minute changes" (Preparing for a Conference section, para. 2).

My next job was to transform my family room into a mindfulness haven. I utilized a white noise machine my husband and I use to sleep. I then found a meditation station on Pandora, so I would have a soundtrack for the evening. I found there are so many details to track when presenting a class, including ensuring my iPad and iPhone were both on "Do Not Disturb" since I needed both for my presentation, but obviously did not want them making their usual noises during the session.

So the participants arrived at my home, and we spent about 30 minutes relaxing and talking before the class started. I was surprised by how nervous I was. I've done a fair amount of presentations at work and Human Resources trainings on benefits and new hire orientation. But this was the first training I had ever conducted unrelated to HR, and my mind got caught up in that idea a little too much. If students ever needed a completely relaxed instructor, it would be for a mindfulness class!

Part of my anxiety came from not having my script memorized as much as I had wanted. Unfortunately, my dog ran away the day of the class, so I spent a good part of the morning wrangling her back in the house. Although I had been doing presentation preparation for the past few days, my intention had been to really hone my skills the day of the program. Needless to say, Cokie, my Sharpei-Shepard mix, had different plans.

My intention when I originally planned the event for the Convention Center was to have a PowerPoint presentation, which would be my visual notecards, but circumstances required me to make last-minute adjustments.

My concern before the module had been the participants using humor to deflect any uncomfortableness with this new subject, but I was pleasantly surprised to find only two students attempted jokes at the start, but as we moved deeper into the program, all behaved (for lack of a better word) quite well.

The participants seemed to enjoy the mindful eating of the raisins. They especially enjoyed the conscious listening – as mentioned earlier, this was a later addition to my curriculum, and I am so glad I made the decision to include it. The exercise led to a productive discussion of what it means to listen mindfully and how hard it can be to actually do in real life.

We then moved to the body scan. This is when I started the meditative music – it set the mood perfectly. I talked about the concept of the observer – how there is the body, the mind and the observer, an entity that can move its attention between the body and the mind. I asked them to take the observer role and follow my words as we moved from body part to body part.

As the body scan ended, I moved them straight into mindfulness meditation. I asked them to concentrate on their breath and to remove thoughts that entered their mind by using a blackboard eraser or by putting their thoughts on a boat and letting them float away. My biggest quandary during the meditation was how long to make the exercise. I wanted it long enough to promote deep relaxation and a true mindful experience, but I did not want the participants getting bored and distracting others or pretending to still be engaged, while secretly planning their grocery lists.

I decided shorter was better, but two people commented on their evaluations they would have liked the session to be longer. I was very happy that several of the participants commented that the voice I used during the meditative exercises was very calming and helped them relax. I

believe these compliments were, in part, due to my consistently using gerunds, rather than imperative verbs – 'breathing in deeply' vs. 'breathe in deeply' – in my instructions to participants. The gerunds gave my language the feeling of our being participants together in the mindfulness journey (McCown et al., 2011).

We talked after the meditation about how hard it is to keep the mind from wandering. I told them that just like piano, mindfulness improves with practice. We talked about how starting just a few minutes a day can make a difference.

I ended the session by asking them to complete evaluation forms. As mentioned above, I used a Lickert scale with response choices from 1-5: Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The evaluations are attached, but below are the highlights:

QUESTION	AVE. SCORE
Participation and interaction were encouraged.	4.75
The topics covered were relevant to me.	4.5
The content was organized and easy to follow.	5
This training will be useful in my work/life.	4.5
The trainer was knowledgeable about the topic.	4.75
The trainer was well prepared.	5
The teaching intentions were met.	5
The time allotted for the training was sufficient.	4.5

The meeting room/facilities were adequate/comfortable.   5

The participants told me afterwards they very much enjoyed the module. The fact they wanted it to be longer told me it was well received. However, the evaluations gave me areas for improvement. I was a little disheartened by the scores for the questions concerning relevance and usefulness to their lives. I was hoping by the end of the session that all would see how the simple concepts presented could have a positive effect on their lives. In future sessions, I will work even harder to show relevance to real-life activities.

The response to the question about the trainer's expertise was also a little disappointing to me, although the participant who gave me a 4 in this category mentioned my nerves at the beginning, so I can definitely learn from that. Plus, part of me did not feel unauthentic because I was definitely not mindful at all in the days leading up to the presentation – I was constantly thinking about all I had to prepare for the module. I was honest during the class about this subject, telling the participants I needed to adhere to the old adage, "Physician, heal thyself."

I was very surprised one of the attendees (per evaluation form) did not feel there was enough class participation and interaction. I did my best to include everyone and asked thoughtful questions to engage conversation. But perception is reality, so this is another skill on which I will work to improve in future trainings.

I also wish I had included more breathing exercises, especially now that I know the participants wanted the program to be longer. Teaching some simple breathing techniques would have been another tool the participants could use, any place, any time.

Reflection

I met two of the three learning objectives I had established for my project:

- Score of 3.5 or higher on questions related to program planning and design on evaluation forms.
- Score of 3.5 or higher on questions related to the skill of the trainer on evaluation forms.

The third objective: "Teach the Module on an Ongoing Basis" has not yet been met. This is because Boostcamp, the training organization for which I designed this module, is still in its infancy stage and has just signed its first contract. I hope this module can be part of the offerings to the client, but that has yet to be determined. However, one of the attendees of my class is a teacher in the Brown County school system. She is going to talk to an administrator about the idea of having my teach the "Do You Mind?" module to teachers, with the hopes of their introducing it to students before or after state-mandated testing.

Apart from my objectives, I learned that although the curriculum seems to be the most important component of training programs, the devil is in the details. I was amazed at how much time all the logistics demanded. I also learned contingency plans need to be developed during the planning process. My training experience in the work world has always been in traditional organizations with IT departments and dedicated training rooms. Having to do everything myself was quite an introduction to the real world and all the problems that can affect your plans. I was hoping Boostcamp would be up and running by the time my class needed to be conducted, but new businesses take longer to incubate than I had planned. In the future, I will develop contingencies at the outset regarding logistics so I'm not left in a quandary at the last minute.

From a teaching perspective, I learned that an intense effort needs to be made to ensure that all learners' voices are heard. I thought I had done that successfully, but since one of my attendees did not feel that way completely, I need to remember bell hooks' belief "that each student have a voice" (Merriam, 1994, p. 204).

Probably the most important lesson I learned was to listen to my intuition. In my previous training experience, the material in a given module has been mostly supplied to me, such as benefit briefings or new hire orientations. Given the chance to create my own curriculum, I needed to trust in myself more. My original intention was to make my training longer with more exercises, but I started doubting myself and jumping to the conclusion that attendees would get bored or overwhelmed with too much information. My attendees' thoughts and comments clearly showed that my original instinct was correct. It's a lesson that will stay with me as I earn my degree and start my new career.

Conclusion

I learned so much from this project. Planning and designing a class from scratch can appear to be an overwhelming undertaking. But by breaking the project down into daily tasks and by focusing on the literature from the class and my own research, I was able to create a training module that was enjoyable and well received. As I mentioned above, teaching the class verified that this master's program was the right decision for me. I really enjoy teaching and feel I have something positive to offer students. Everything I learned from this project will help me so much as I continue in the master's program and work after earning my degree.

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