

# The South African Journal of PHYSIOTHERAPY Die Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif FISIOTERAPIE



**FEBRUARY 1985**  
**VOLUME 41 NO. 1**

**EDITOR:** Miss L. M. Davids, B.Sc (Physiotherapy), B.A.Hons., Dip. Ed. Physio.  
**EDITORIAL BOARD:** Mrs. J. A. C. Gilder, B.Sc (Physiotherapy), Dip. Ed. Physio.  
Miss S. H. Irwin-Carruthers, Nat. Dip. Physio., Dip. Ed. Physio.  
Mrs. P. Versfeld, Nat. Dip. Physio.

## CONTENTS

Experiential Learning Theory and Individual Learning Styles — J. Meyer .....	5
Experiential Learning Applied to Undergraduate Training of Physiotherapy Students — A. M. Marais .....	8
Guidelines for Compiling a Teaching Module Based on the Experiential Learning Cycle — L. C. Crous .....	12
Die Kuns Verbonde aan Kliniese Evaluering van Studente — C. A. Eksteen .....	15
The Poor Image of Physiotherapy — Are You Contributing to the Problem or Helping with the Solution? — H. David .....	18
Report on the Telephone Response to National Back Week — L. Roux .....	21
Preliminary Report of the Clinical Use of the Magnetopulse PMF System — V. Atlas and P. McArthur .....	23
Diamond Jubilee Congress .....	20
Professional Advertisements .....	24
Book Reviews .....	25
News of Courses and Congresses .....	27
Obituary .....	28
Detailed Programme for Diamond Jubilee Congress .....	29

*Official organ of the South African Society of Physiotherapy.  
Published quarterly by the Publications Division of the Medical Association of South Africa on behalf of the SASP*

*All correspondence to be addressed to the Editor, SA Journal of Physiotherapy, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430*



## EDITORIAL

The major part of this issue is given over to an exposition of the application of the theory of **experiential learning** to the training of physiotherapy students. It is stated that the lecturer is expected to know the essential learning style of each student and to cater to this.

At present we have a shortage of physiotherapists. In order to overcome this we need to train more people. If the classes increase in size, how will it be possible to deal with each student on an individual basis? This might be the ideal, but in the future it will become less and less practical.

One writer states that the first year students want to be given all the facts which they then regard as the sum total of all they are expected to know. Using this theory, an attempt is being made to help the students to think for themselves.

At an institution for tertiary education this should not be necessary. It is assumed that any person entering such an institution should already be able to think for himself. He has made the individual choice to undertake a course of study and should thus have the intellectual ability and the emotional stability to cope with the situation. Otherwise he should not attend a university.

It is unfortunate that a university degree is regarded as a status symbol to be attained at any cost. And the cost is high. The taxpayer is subsidising every student by approximately a half to two thirds of the cost of any course. He has a right to expect that only suitable people are accepted as students. The universities should not be cluttered with people trying to improve their status in return for a minimum of application.

The lecturer in Physiotherapy is not there to teach the students how to think or what to think. The lecturer is a builder of bridges — the knowledge is there. If it is made available to the students in a logical form, they should be able to assimilate it without the lecturer being concerned

as to how they do this. If the student is unable to internalise knowledge and skills by himself, and reason things out for himself, then he has no right to be a student.

It is an appalling indictment of our schools that it is thought necessary to **teach** at a tertiary level. The lecturer should be able to present the subject in the way most suitable to the content. The student should then be able to extract the essence from this presentation and process it himself. How he does this should not be the concern of the lecturer.

Independent learning occurs when the student can adapt to the vagaries of any lecturer. The lecturer should not have to adapt his material to the individual student. Unless we have students of this calibre, we will never produce independent thinking and acting physiotherapists.

L. M. Davids

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1985

##### A. MEMBERS

All categories of members: **Enquiries:** Gen. Secretary, P.O. Box 47238 Parklands 2121.

##### B. NON-MEMBERS

Surface mail R17,50 p.a.

Airmail rates on request

**Enquiries:** Circulation Manager, S.A.S.P. Journal, Private Bag XI, Pinelands 7430.

##### C. SINGLE COPIES — R5,00

**Enquiries:** Circulation Manager, S.A.S.P. Journal, Private Bag XI, Pinelands 7430.

(The above amounts include tax)

### SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS SECRETARIES

**Lecturer's Group:** Ms L. Kraus, Physiotherapy Department, University of the O.F.S., P.O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300.

**Manipulative Therapists' Group:** Ms T. Macnair, P.O. Box 93059, Yeoville 2143 Johannesburg.

**National Hospital Group:** Ms P. Duke, Physiotherapy Department, Johannesburg Hospital, Private Bag X39, Johannesburg 2000.

**Obstetric Association:** Mrs L. Hack, 519 Lukas Street, Lukasrand, Pretoria 0181.

**Private Practitioners Association:** Mrs O. Ison, 6 Maytime Centre, Lyngarth Road, Kloof 3600.

*Fisioterapie, Februarie 1985, deel 41, no 1*

**SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY**  
P.O. Box 47238, Parklands, Johannesburg 2121  
Telephone 646-5098

#### President

MRS. K. M. LEVY

#### Honorary Life President

PROF. J. J. CRAIG

#### Honorary Vice-Presidents

PROF. E. G. M. BOES

PROF. J. N. DE KLERK

LT. GEN. N. J. NIEUWOUTD

PROF. G. J. PISTORIUS

PROF. P. V. TOBIAS

#### Honorary Life Vice-Presidents

MISS LOIS DYER

MISS JEAN BLAIR

MR. A. ROTHBERG

#### Chairman

MRS. A. MATHIAS

#### Immediate Past Chairman

MRS. K. M. LEVY

#### Vice-Chairman

MISS S. H. IRWIN-CARRUTHERS

PROF. J. C. BEENHAKKER

**General Secretary:** Miss E. M. Botting, P.O. Box 47238, Parklands, Johannesburg 2121.

**General Treasurer:** Mrs. B. J. Victor

**Journal Editor:** Miss L. M. Davids, c/o Publications Division, MASA, Private Bag XI, Pinelands, 7430.

**National Executive Committee:** Miss P. Bowerbank, Mrs. F. Glauber, Mrs. L. Hack, Mrs. I. Marren, Mrs. J. Morton, Miss E. Smith.

**Appointments Information Secretary:** Miss P. Blake, South African Society of Physiotherapy, P.O. Box 47238, Parklands, Johannesburg 2121

#### BRANCH SECRETARIES

**Border:** Mrs. P. Morar, P.O. Box 1419, East London 5200.

**Eastern Province:** Mrs. M. J. L. Butler, 6 Jutland Crescent, Park Drive, Port Elizabeth 6001.

**Goldfields:** Mrs. M. L. Bagley, P.O. Box 1515, Welkom 9460.

**Natal Coastal:** Mrs. E. H. L. Burnett, P.O. Box 4543, Durban 4000.

**Natal Midlands:** Mrs. J. Gush, 25 Fettes Road, Pietermaritzburg 3201.

**Northern Cape:** Mrs. E. D. Olivier, 10 Vermaas Ave., Linde, Kimberley 8301.

**Northern Transvaal:** Mrs. I. Nowosenetz, P.O. Box 27804, Sunnyside, Pretoria 0132.

**S.O.F.S.:** Mrs. T. van Rooijen, 20 van der Linde Ave., Fichardt Park, Bloemfontein 9322.

**Southern Transvaal:** Mrs. H. M. Joughin, 14 Kerry Road, Parkview, Johannesburg 2193.

**Western Province:** Miss P. S. Dunn, Woodlyn Cottage, Balair Lane, Constantia 7800.

This article has been printed in order to give the reader an understanding of the theory underlying the other articles published. It is a summary of LEARNING STYLE INVENTORY TECHNICAL MANUAL by D. A. Kolb. All references will be found in this work.

# Experiential Learning Theory and Individual Learning Styles

J. MEYER

## SUMMARY

This article describes how experience forms the basis of the learning process. The learning process takes place in a cycle with four different stages.

As a result of people's hereditary characteristics and demands of the immediate environment, they give preference to certain abilities when they have to make a decision or act in a certain situation. This results in each person developing a characteristic learning style.

A short description of the characteristic abilities of each learning style is given.

Experiential learning theory provides a model of a learning process that is consistent with the structure of human cognition and the stages of human growth and development. It conceptualizes the learning process in such a way that differences in individual learning styles and corresponding learning environments can be identified. The learning model is a dialectic one, founded on the Jungian (Jung 1923) concept of styles or types, which states that fulfilment in adult development is accomplished by higher level integration and expression of nondominant modes of dealing with the world.

The theory is called **experiential learning** for two reasons. The first is historical, linking it to its intellectual origins in the social psychology of Kurt Lewin in the 1940's and the sensitivity training and laboratory education work of the 1950's and 1960's. The second reason is to emphasize the important role that experience plays in the learning process, an emphasis that differentiates this approach from other cognitive theories of the learning process. The core of the model is a simple description of the learning cycle of how experience is

Summary by J. MEYER, B.A. Hons. M.A. (Counselling Psychology)

Counselling psychologist: Student counselling service, U.O.F.S.

## OPSOMMING

In hierdie artikel word beskryf hoe ervaring die basis van die leerproses vorm. Die leerproses word beskryf as 'n siklus met vier duidelik onderskeibare stadia.

Op grond van oorerflike en omgewingsfaktore ontwikkel elke persoon voorkeur aan spesifieke eienskappe soos beskryf in die ervaringsleer-siklus wanneer hulle in 'n sekere situasie besluite moet neem. Die toepassing van hierdie kenmerkende eienskappe lei daartoe dat elke persoon 'n dominante leerstyl ontwikkel.

'n Kort beskrywing van die kenmerke van elke leerstyl word ook gegee.

translated into concepts which in turn are used as guides in the choice of new experiences.

Learning is conceived as a four stage cycle. Immediate concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection. These observations are assimilated into a *theory* from which new implications for action can be deduced. These implications or hypotheses then serve as guides in acting to create new experiences.

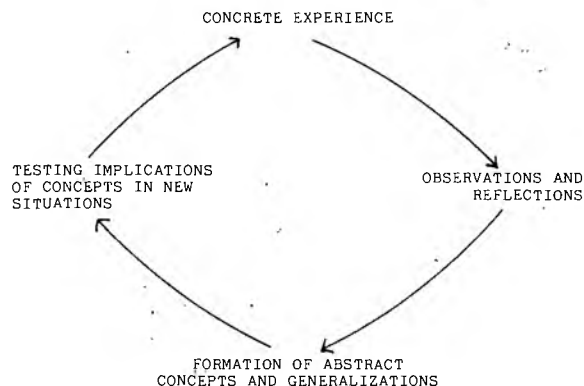


Fig. 1. The experiential learning model.