PAPER DIALOGUE: LIFE ENRICHMENT DOMAIN: LEARNING SKILLS

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Abstract

The Faculty Guidebook (Pacific Crest, 4th ed., 2007) includes complete skill sets for cognitive, social, and affective domains. In the 1950's, Bloom and his associates published educational goal taxonomies for psychomotor as well as cognitive and affective domains. Arguably, an impediment to development of a coherent set of learning skills for the psychomotor domain by process educators has been the assumption that wellness skills should fit there--but don't. A fifth learning skills domain, Life Enrichment, is proposed as a solution to this problem and as an important new way to articulate personal development goals--including those related to health and wellness. During this paper session, an outline of the proposed domain will be presented followed by discussion, analysis, input, and assessment by participants in an informal exchange designed to further articulate the process hierarchy and skills clusters that should be included in this new domain.

Introduction

The life enrichment domain contains learning skills predominantly related to processes of creating, sustaining and enhancing a high-quality life. Learning processes in the life enrichment domain (Table 1) include a hierarchy of skills involving maintaining health and wellness, developing ones identity, creating a quality life style, connecting with a larger community, and integrating universal meaning. Like the other four domains (cognitive, social, affective, psychomotor) all of the life enrichment processes can be performed at five different levels of competency, as indicated in Table 2: Examples of Competency Levels of Two Life Enrichment skills. The Life Enrichment Domain introduces several skill clusters within each of the five main processes; these clusters include a critically analyzed sample of the main skill areas that are essential for supporting life-long development of each process. Each cluster, in turn, provides a critically analyzed set of concisely-defined and complementary learning skills that are most critical for each cluster within each process. Selective attention to and sequential development of skills associated with lower level processes most efficiently leads to mastery of skills associated with higher level processes. This paper lists, in first draft form, life enrichment domain learning skills that are important for the larger worldview of adult learners. This set of skills is important for establishing the proper motivational context for all adult learning and growth in higher education, work, and personal life.

Role of the Life Enrichment Domain

The life enrichment domain encompasses a wide variety of skills that are independent of context and disciplines in higher education but are essential for learner growth as academic and related knowledge is learned. In contrast to other domains of learning, the life enrichment domain addresses development that requires individuals to explore how to integrate their lives from the broadest perspective. This includes increasing awareness of how personal self-development depends on self-regulation of behaviors, emotions, and behaviors for the purpose of increasing wellness, identify and self-concept, life style, community

involvement, and spirituality in ways that will provide strong motivation for life-long growth in all learning domains. The classic conceptualization of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970) comes to mind, although his focus was on more general issues and did not explicate the skills for addressing the needs. However, Maslow did recognize the hierarchical nature of developmental skills needed for a quality life.

Some of the skills in the life enrichment domain have close parallels in other domains, e.g., self-management from the Affective Domain; however, none of the other four domains addresses the adult developmental learning skills that provide the main motivation for fully engaging all domains of learning throughout life. The organizational framework given in Table 1 is intended to support person-centered performance improvement in creating a meaning-filled and productive life.

A further rationale for a domain addressing life enrichment is a long-standing incongruity between health/wellness and the psychomotor domain, which remains incomplete and has not been published in the *Faculty Guidebook.* Past analysis of the psychomotor domain included an assumption that health and wellness skills should be incorporated there, even though these are outcomes that result only indirectly from maintaining physical skills. The present proposal for a fifth domain, life enrichment, reduces this dissonance by assuming the health and wellness skills belong at the lowest level of the broader set of skills related to overall adult development. The other four domains are assumed to play a supporting role for all life enrichment skills; the life enrichment skills must be independently developed and assure that a full life context is provided for all skills in ways that are meaningful and motivating. (See Leise, 2007: *Process Education as a Motivation and Self-Regulation System.*)

Life Enrichment Domain Processes

As illustrated in Table 1, five main processes comprise the life enrichment domain. These are sequenced according to their hypothesized (this paper presents a first draft) relative sequence in typical human development and are identified as: (1) maintaining health and wellness, (2) developing ones identity, (3) creating a quality life style, (4) connecting with a larger community, and (5) integrating universal meaning. Health and wellness are essential for continuous, life-long mental, emotional, and behavioral performance at a satisfying level of competency. Developing ones identity is a basis for actualizing the potential one has in personal accomplishments, including the roles one will be ready to play in the larger society. Creating a quality life style includes taking the risks and making the commitments that will result in sustainable and satisfying relationships and full enjoyment of a home and community situation. Connecting with a larger community includes involvement in ones community in ways that increase resources and advocacy for life quality of others unrelated to oneself, add to the vigor and creativity of the community, and sustain leadership of those who are effective in addressing issues beyond ones own control. Integrating universal meaning includes formulating and living a life philosophy experiencing a sense of awe about the universe and a spirituality that integrates all aspects of living a quality life.

Life Enrichment Domain Clusters

Clusters of learning skills are identified under each of the life enrichment domain processes. As many as five clusters support each process area. Each skill cluster contains up to a half-dozen unique, but closely related, learning skills. Skill clusters are given labels that communicate their role within each process area. In Table 1, skill clusters are arranged as the second level of the outline format; the specific skills are the third level; there is no special significance in the order in which the clusters or the learning skills within a

cluster appear in the table. Only the processes are assumed to have qualitative levels that distinguish them hierarchically.

Two different learning skills from the life enrichment domain are analyzed in Table 2: (a) managing health challenges and (b) supporting effective leadership. These two examples illustrate how specific skills can be demonstrated at very low levels (without conscious effort) on a continuum through transformative use of the skill. Monitoring learning skill proficiency along a common developmental continuum can be an effective motivator for learners as well as a useful guide for facilitating educators and mentors.

Table 1 is presently in a state of initial development but some clusters have been identified for each process and specific skills are listed for a couple of the clusters. These will undergo significant analysis if the validity of the life enrichment skills domain can be validated from multiple perspectives to be independent of the other domains and to have potential usefulness for process education in general.

Table 1: Life Enrichment Skills Domain (Notes)

1.   Maintaining Health and Wellness
a.   Establishing a healthy diet
b.   Maintaining normal weight
c.   Physical fitness
d.   Addressing stressors healthily
e.   Managing health challenges
·   Recognizing medical issues—making reasonable judgments about treatment of illness or injury
·   Assessing personal reactions—appraising ones physical, emotional, and cognitive reactions
·   Gathering objective information—expanding professional diagnosis with quality knowledge resources
·   Making behavioral changes—adjusting realistically to support treatment
·   Monitoring change—gathering data about physical, emotional, social, and cognitive reactions
·   Collaborating with professionals—taking recommendations seriously while remaining open to alternatives
2.   Developing ones identity
a.   Expanding self-concept
b.   Increasing self-esteem
c.   Establishing self-regulation (correlated with affective skills)
d.   Developing Motivational Control
3.   Creating a quality life style
a.   Risking commitment
b.   Play and Recreation
c.   Extrinsic life goals (Deci & Ryan, 2008)
d.   Stress management and Self care
e.   Energization (Deci & Ryan, 2008)

4.	**Connecting with a larger community**
a.	Joining organizations to effect change consistent with values
b.	Supporting effective leadership (Riggio, 2008)

- · Recognizing quality leading—finding evidence that a leader demonstrates balanced performance
- · Valuing a leader's vision—seeing a creative but realistic approach to a substantive goal-in-view
- · Persuading others to value a leader—making balanced arguments in discussions with potential followers
- · Challenging a leader—helping a leader avoid "groupthink" by asking for consideration of a diversity of perspectives
- · Collaborating with a leader—taking on roles that will actualize a shared vision

5.	**Integrating universal meaning**
a.	Temperance
b.	Mindfulness (Deci & Ryan, 2008)
c.	Self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2008
d.	Autonomous motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008)
e.	Intrinsic life goals (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Burton et al., 2006)
f.	Mentoring

Table 2: Examples of Competency Levels for Two Life Enrichment Skills

Level of Competency	Description of Individual Response	Examples: (a) Making behavioral changes (for managing health challenges) (b) Recognizing quality leading (to support effective leadership)
Level 5 **Transformative use**	Skill is expanded and integrated with other skills for creative, productive application in novel contexts; inspires others to emulate use	(a) Supports others with similar challenges, e.g., by involvement in a diabetes self-help group. (b) Engages others in reasoned debate about the qualities of multiple leaders in historical context as a source of reflective analysis.
Level 4 **Self-reflective use**	Effective use of skill by learner; skill can be self-improved and adapted to unfamiliar contexts with occasional advice from a mentor	(a) Plans a positive life style that is consistent with maximizing treatment outcomes. (b) Reflects on leadership qualities needed to influence valued change for a community.
Level 3 **Consistent performance**	Skill used routinely and effectively in multiple contexts through learner self-direction; not able to advance without external coaching	(a) Assertively manages or avoids influences that reduce behavior inconsistent with medical advice. (b) Assesses leaders on the basis of multiple criteria regardless of personal agenda.
Level 2 **Conscious use**	Skill used knowingly, possibly proactively, by learner, but skill needs to be constantly challenged by a mentor	(a) Inconsistently follows medical advice due to continued susceptible to past habits and influences, e.g., eating foods friends prefer. (b) Assesses leaders in terms of consistency with personal preferences or needs.
Level 1 **Non-conscious use**	Use of skill initiated by a prompt or influence external to the learner; unintended use of skill	(a) Passively accepts "fate" or feel overwhelming anxiety or depression, e.g., in reaction to a diagnosis of diabetes. (b) Emotionally accepts or rejects a leader without assessment.

Concluding Thoughts

Educators need to understand the hierarchy of processes and skills within the life enrichment domain so they can facilitate learner motivation to buy in and engage in reflective, self-assessed learning to maximize their academic progress while also enhancing their personal growth and development. Having this new domain available will afford educators many new skill distinctions to work on with learners who find academics boring or unimportant for their interest and value orientations. Most of the skills will be more useful for advising and mentoring processes than for inclusion in course objectives and activities. However, as students reach the upper-level work in their majors, career and life style issues become increasingly important to integrate as part of preparation for the job market. As with the other process education skills domains (cognitive, social, affective, and psychomotor—undeveloped), the life enrichment domain offers opportunities for integrated growth of complex performance capabilities and the development of a creative and wise way of living.

References

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Biography

Cy Leise: Professor of Psychology and Human Services, Bellevue University, Bellevue, NE 68005
Cy is the academic supervisor for graduate-level interns in the Master's of Human Services programs and teaches research, program evaluation, and career counseling courses. His Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Measurements was from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Although also a licensed clinical psychologist, his main professional interests have been in higher education, including authoring or co-authoring many modules in the Pacific Crest *Faculty Guidebook*, and *Process Learning Activities for Introduction to Psychology* (2006). Cy currently is the president of the Academy of Process Educators. (cy.leise@bellevue.edu)