

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING IN HEALTHCARE

**Richard Hovey^{1*}, Steven Jordan², Christophe Bedos¹, Charo Rodriguez³,
Nareg Apelian¹**

1* Corresponding author: Faculty of Dentistry, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
richard.hovey@mcgill.ca

2 Faculty of Education, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

3 Department of Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Among possible adult learning theories, transformative learning emerged in the 1990's with the aim to provide learners an educational experience consistent with the purpose of changing perspectives. Transformational learning theory provides the opportunity to learn, confront, engage and reflect on the possibility of learning through changes in perspective and to explore new meanings, roles, relationships and actions contained within it.

Perspective transformation is, therefore, not only intended to create ownership of new knowledge, but its re-integration into new or re-configured ways of everyday living. The readiness to apply new knowledge is triggered by confronting an event, or mode of thought, that moves individuals from experiencing knowledge as a series of facts disconnected from their meaning and context into a relevant context, or one that has a different significance for the learner. New understanding requires that learners assess the meanings behind words, the coherence, truth and appropriateness of what is being communicated as well as the truthfulness, credibility and authenticity of the presenter. Unlike focusing only on instrumental learning in which logical problem solving and inquiry dominate, transformative learning entails the use of metaphor, analogies and reflective dialogue so that learners revise their interpretations of knowledge. In these ways transformative

learning might help healthcare providers to change their frame of reference and perceptions to accommodate new and different ways of learning and engaging within a multidisciplinary clinical team. ■