

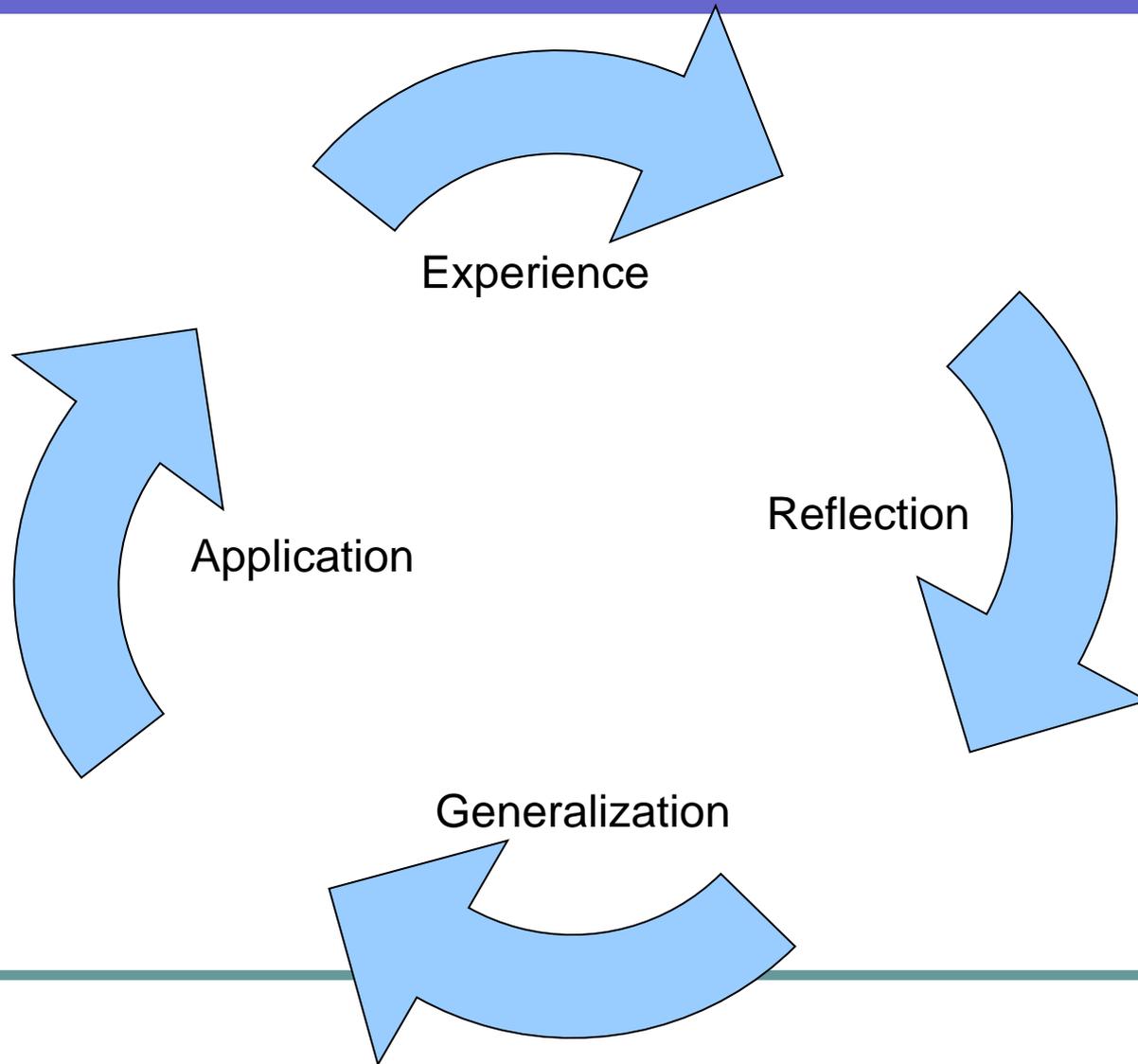
# A Frame of Adult Education

As it has evolved over many years

# Six Principles of Adult Education

1. Adult Learning Cycle
2. Relevance and Usefulness
3. Learning is enhanced by Collective Dialogue with others
4. ?
5. ?
6. ?

# 1. Adult Learning Cycle



**Experience**

Using the experiences learners have had already or providing them with an experience that furthers learning.

**What?**

**Reflection**

Discussing the experiences learners have had, or sharing observations & feelings about the activity provided. Exploring why they had the experience or reacted the way they did.

**So what?**

**Generalization**

Finding general trends or meaning in the experiences that learners have had or transforming reactions to new experiences into conclusions, concepts, theories.

**Now what?**

**Application**

Practicing new behaviours and/or strategizing applications in real-world situations.



# Processing experiences:

- Draw out and validate what people know from their own context
- Acknowledge multiple ways of knowing and learning
- Respect and celebrate diversity
- Ask challenging questions and uncover underlying assumptions
- Be open to the significance of emotional responses; and what lies behind them
- Encourage participants to articulate what they have learned and how it applies to real world.

## 2. Relevance and Usefulness

Adults learn best when they see:

- learning as particularly relevant for their lives
- learning immediately useful.
- the application of new knowledge, skills and attitudes directly to their lives.

### 3. Learning is Enhanced by Collective Dialogue

- Share experiences and learn from each other.
- Work collaboratively in teams and engage in dialogue with others
- The facilitator learns from the participants as much as the participants learn from the facilitator.

- ..... pause .....

# Six Principles of Adult Education

1. ?
2. ?
3. ?
4. Transformation in Self and Society
5. Liberating vs Oppressive Education
6. Adult Education with Concrete Change

# 4. Transformation in Self and Society

- Consider we may need to make some changes in ourselves to make changes in society
- Appreciate our own knowledge and the experience we have
- Be self-critical of what we know; and value intuition and different ways of knowing
- Recognize we are socialized to think and do certain things and we may need to overcome these habits of the mind
- Recognize our individual journey towards wholeness and wisdom and how this can support social change
- Make meaning from own experience and recover critical voice in regards to socialized trends
- **“Be the change you want to see in the world”**

- ..... pause .....

# Six Principles of Adult Education

1. Adult Learning Cycle
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- 5. Liberating vs Oppressive Education**
6. Adult Education with Concrete Change

# 5. Liberating vs Oppressive

- There is no neutral education.
- Liberating or oppressive education?
- Oppressive: works to mould people to fit in to society the way it is, where there are many disparities of power.
- Liberating: respectful, creates a safe environment
- Liberating: Starts from peoples' experience of the world
- Liberating: works to transform the world to be more just, inclusive and sustainable (emancipatory education).



# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

Asks is education neutral?

*“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.”*

*Paulo Freire*

# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

- Involves the creation of new knowledge
- Leads to understanding of “why” the experience was this way
- Is done in dialogue (with others)
- Leads to *new* action



# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

## **Liberating education:**

- it involves the active participation of disadvantaged people
- the content or subject matter is the real-life situation common people experience, as they define it for themselves
- it aims to empower disadvantaged people to transform social structures which maintain unequal social opportunities

***“We desire above all that men and women will discover and develop their own capacities for creation.”***

**(Coady, 1939)**

- ..... pause .....

# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

- Remember it is just one philosophy!

## Others:

- Behaviorist – change behavior
- Cognitivist – internal mental processes
- Humanist – fulfill potential
- Social/Situational – interaction, learn in relationship

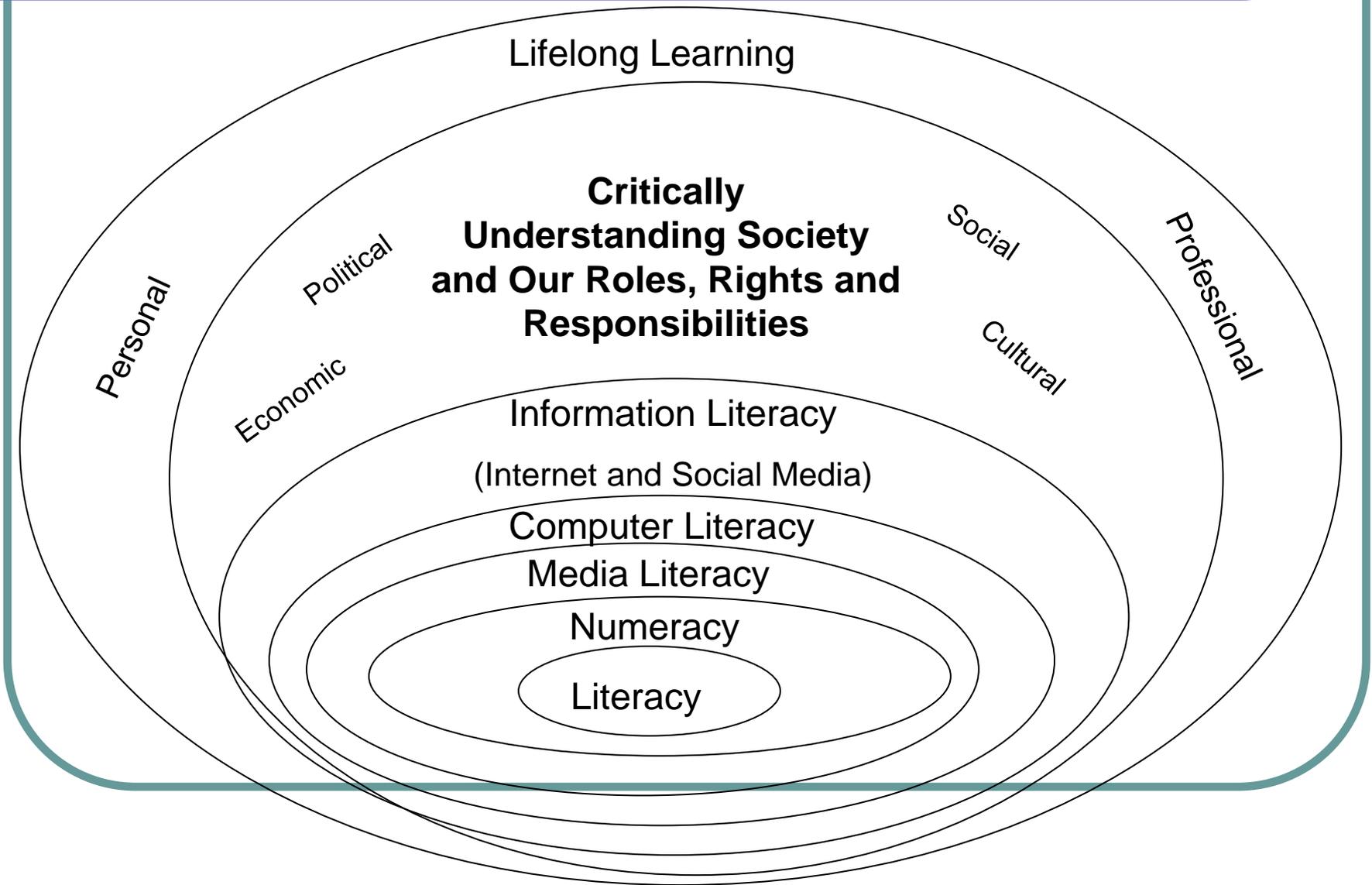
# 6. Adult Education with Concrete Change

## The Radical Approach

- Understand ourselves and the world in new ways
- new Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes
- Plus concrete change in material circumstances and society itself!
- A transformation of self; and the systems and structures of the world for a just and sustainable future.



# What is Adult Education?



# What is Adult Education?

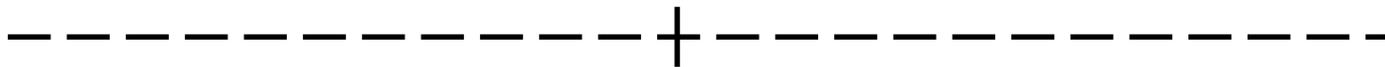
...and the critical question is ...

**Is the purpose of adult education:**

**To help  
people  
fit into  
society?**

**OR**

**To create  
the society  
people  
want?**



# Adult Education

- Multiple ways of knowing and learning
- You and your context become the content of the program
- A process and a methodology of facilitating learning
- A philosophy underlying our work together

# Learning for Social Change

## Examples:

- Antigonish Movement, Canada and ...
- Friere's work with literacy, Brazil
- Highlander Center, USA
- Anti-Apartheid Struggle, South Africa
- Chipko Movement, India
- Landless Movement, Brazil
- Factory Movement, Argentina
- Movement for Community Radio, Ghana and ...

- Good luck!



- ..... pause .....

- **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

## Formal Knowledge and Popular Knowledge

- Assuming that only "experts" have knowledge can be very oppressive.
- People may let experts think for them.
- People may accept expert opinions uncritically!

*However, to assume that only disadvantaged people understand reality is equally false and can inhibit development.*



# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

**Every adult man and woman has valuable knowledge, simply because it is impossible to live in the world without learning from life experience.**



# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

## Why Local/Indigenous Knowledge?

***Promoting and respecting indigenous knowledge is often political, as it is in resistance to processes of assimilation and globalization.***

Knowledge about:

- the social and ecological systems,
- traditions,
- ways of living with nature,
- forms of organizing and decision-making
- How is it learned?
  - Usually transmitted across generations through an oral tradition.
  - Stories, dreams, myths, ceremonies and metaphors important.
  - Based on the experience of many generations living interdependently with their local environment.

# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

## True emancipatory adult education:

- the struggle to create *new* understandings and actions based on the dialogue between the understandings and wisdom gained from formal training and knowledge and those drawn from popular wisdom and lived experience.

***The purpose is to transform society and all individual members, advantaged and disadvantaged.***

# Liberating (Emancipatory) Education

- **Liberating Education:**
- “ (Liberating) education . . . takes as its starting point a commitment to the grassroots sectors and the need for an approach to education that works effectively for the needs and aspirations of the poor and marginal.” (Marshall, 1990, p. 3).

# Radical Community Change

- Radical community change is based on an understanding of radical, liberating, emancipatory education.

# Skills for Radical Community Change

- **Confidence**

*-question, and act for change*

- **Critical Consciousness**

*-the dynamic between critical thought and critical action; a desire and ability to act collectively in relation to the context of power*

- **Collectivity**

*- group identifies issues and develops initiatives, alliances and movements*

*- relationships built on respect, trust, mutuality, reciprocity, dignity, compassion and cooperation*

# Radical Community Change

- “is committed to the role of community development in achieving transformative change for social and environmental justice, and develops analysis and practice which moves beyond local symptoms to the structural causes of oppression”

(Margaret Ledwith, 2005, p. xv)

# Praxis – action and reflection

(learning in action)

## MST – Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, Brazil

- 1.5 million; 2000 settlements
- Skills to build housing, run agricultural cooperative
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes about cooperative forms of living and governance; collective decision making
- Learning embedded in the actual practice of the movement itself

(Holst, 2009)