

Michelle Jackson

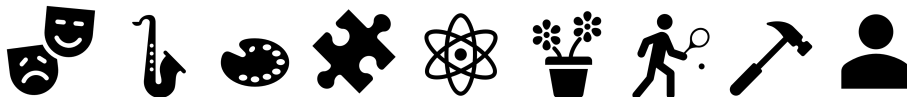
Family Growth and Development.

Plymouth State University

21 October 2020



“As we lose ourselves in the service of others, we discover our own lives and our own happiness.” - Dieter F. Uchtdorf.



My educational philosophy is to allow each of my clients to explore their divine sense of curiosity individually. At the same time, I work alongside them to support all the growing aspects surrounding their physical, intellectual, social, and moral development. As a facilitator of differentiated instruction, my universal objective is to provide all my clients with enough time to explore their utmost personal interests and ensure that they can all participate in various cooperative learning activities.

My mission is to create a strong community where my clients can help develop their unique care plans and individualized goals. I want all my students to feel like they are always equally valued. I believe four essential elements are needed to create this sense of community. (1) Establish a clear set of mutually agreed rules, routines, and behavior expectations with my residents when I start working with them. (2) Creating a personalized community environment that reflects my client's cultural backgrounds, interests, and accomplishments. (4) Communicating with each of my clients every week to track their goal progress and encouraging individual growth. (5) Hosting several monthly workshops focused on key topics relating to the resident's goals and interests.

I will incorporate each of the different learning styles in my daily practice by integrating hands-on learning activities, cooperative learning, critical thinking into my educational workshops. My utmost desire is to use my integrated curriculum to help my clients become productive and engaged members of our expanding society by providing them with the necessary tools, support systems, and resources.

We live in an ever-changing world full of new technological, scientific, and educational advancements that heavily impact our lives. I built my custom program based on two well-known human development theorists. Throughout this paper, I will discuss how the critical elements in their theories relate to my personal views on my work and how I plan to incorporate them into my job. I plan to use the whole person approach, which focuses on integrating all aspects surrounding each client's physical, intellectual, social, and moral development.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow's motivational human hierarchy of needs theory serves as the concrete foundation of my program's goals and intent. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, he splits a pyramid into five chronological stages: psychological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization. Within each step, he provides several examples of different aspects that directly fall under each category. For instance, under the psychological conditions, he listed these life-sustaining elements necessary for maintaining this stage: air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, and sleep.

Maslow later defines his five stages into two unique levels: primary/deficiency and growth/self-fulfillment needs. Deficiency needs occur from the external deprivation of essential needs like food or water. They are used to help motivate people when their current needs are unmet (McLeod, *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, 2016). However, growth needs arise from the internal desire to grow as an individual. Maslow firmly believed that everyone could move up the hierarchy toward a level of self-actualization. Still, he thought it impossible to do so before you complete the lower basic needs (McLeod, *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, 2016).

Maslow's essential point behind this theory is that people are always motivated to achieve desirable individual needs, but our most basic requirement is to survive. According to Maslow, survival is the driving force that motivates our behavior. Once that level is fulfilled, the next

level motivates us (McLeod, *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, 2016). A few underlying factors to my custom program stem from my firm belief that they first need to have all their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual needs met for humans to learn. For example, a student who is in a constant state of fear will find it hard to put their initial insecurity past them to focus on completing a class assignment. Therefore, I will use the whole child approach in my practice since it focuses on all aspects of an individual's life.

Another crucial piece to Maslow's motivational theory lies in his profound belief that every human being is divinely unique. People can take various directions when trying to achieve self-actualization. For instance, some people achieve self-actualization through creating works of art or literature, for others through sport, in the classroom, or within a corporate setting (McLeod, *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, 2016). When working with my clients, I think it's crucial to use various educational methods in my workshops to discover their strengths and weaknesses. They can later use these intellectual abilities to help them find out their destined pathway to achieve self-actualization.

Howard Gardner is a famous Professor at Harvard who developed multiple intelligence theory. Gardner's approach is based on his belief that everyone is born with different learning abilities that make them remember, perform, and understand things differently (Lane, Gardner's *Multiple Intelligences*). He determined that all humans could comprehend and learn from language, math, spatial representation, music, other individuals, and an interpretation of ourselves (Lane, Gardner's *Multiple Intelligences*). Ultimately, this discovery led him to believe that our educational system should start, including various teaching styles, instead of just using linguistic approaches to teach. He thought it would promote multiple learning types, which would give students a more diverse learning environment. I strongly agree with Gardner's

multiple intelligence theory. I plan to incorporate various activities that help my clients discover their cognitive strengths and weaknesses in my practice.

Each month, I plan on putting on educational workshops, where I incorporate the different learning styles. I think that by doing so, it will help my clients participate in hands-on activities, which help them learn more about subjects in a diverse, unique environment. As a result, they will become more enthused about learning, which will make them more motivated to achieve self-actualization. Another program that builds on this idea is STEM, and currently, there is a STEM task force in New Hampshire that was introduced by our state senator Maggie Hassan. STEM is a curriculum focused on educating students in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (Hom, 2014). STEM courses are designed to promote student learning and encourage creativity. These courses are offered in numerous ways, which gives the ability to choose which method is best for them specifically.

Today, many New Hampshire educators incorporate STEM in their lesson plans because it's proven to increase student participation and knowledge. STEM courses differ from regular classes because they are taught in a variety of different ways. At my job, I plan on having open-ended STEM projects since available for my residents. When they complete the tasks, I will merely serve as a facilitator of learning, and I will let them all work at their own pace. Open-ended learning promotes individuality and creativity, which I think are needed to be successful in life.

Another influential person that helped me further develop my program's philosophy is sociologist Parker J. Palmer. In his latest book, *The Courage to Teach*, he mentions that everyone looks at the world through different analytical lenses, which causes us to see things in uniform ways. As humans, we see things how we want to see them, whether they are black or white or

wrong and right. We place everything into small groups and categories that prevent us from seeing the whole picture. However, to discover our truths, we need to look at other people's viewpoints and try to respectfully listen to them while trying to understand where they are coming from before placing our personal views above theirs. It's essential to focus on creating unique plans and goals focused on their diverse needs in my field.

Another essential piece of my philosophy that I took away from Palmer's book was that people learn best when taught by someone who teaches information that directly relates to their lives and is interesting for them. I can do this by getting to know my client's interests and creating a care plan that includes these interests while at the same time helping them reach their goals. The sole purpose of social work is to help people become better learners and achieve their goals, and what better way to promote learning than to increase participation by personalizing learning.

To conclude, my program is centered around supporting all aspects surrounding individual growth and development. Moreover, I based my program on Maslow's motivational hierarchy of needs, Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, and Parker J. Palmer's ideas in his *The Courage to Teach* book. I desire to create a safe, nurturing environment that helps my clients reach their basic needs in my future career. Once these needs are met, I will focus on discovering what interests and then use their interests to motivate them to learn. Also, I plan on using STEM to promote my client's learning and encourage creativity.

## References

1. BIOGRAPHY OF HOWARD GARDNER. (2016, October 14). Retrieved January 20, 2017, from [https://howardgardner.com/biography/Center for Courage & Renewal](https://howardgardner.com/biography/Center%20for%20Courage%20&%20Renewal), Parker J. Palmer, 2017, [www.couragerenewal.org/parker/](http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/).
2. *Governor's Task Force Report on K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education*(pp. 1-53, Rep.). (, 2016). NH: Margaret Wood Hassan
3. Hom, E. J. (2014, February 11). What is STEM Education? Retrieved April 15, 2017, from <http://www.livescience.com/43296-what-is-stem-education.html>
4. Lane, C. (n.d.). Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Retrieved January 20, 2017, from <http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html>
5. McLeod. *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, Saul McLeod, February 04, 2016, [www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html).
6. Multiple Intelligences In The Classroom. (2011, September 15). Retrieved January 22, 2017, from <http://www.context.org/iclib/ic27/campbell/>
7. Palmer, Parker J. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*.
8. Ryan, Kevin, et al. *Those Who Can, Teach*. Cengage Learning, 2016. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math: Education for Global Leadership. (n.d.), from <https://www.ed.gov/Stem>
9. Vital, M. (2017, January 01). 9 Types Of Intelligence - Infographic. Retrieved January 22, 2017, from <http://fundersandfounders.com/9-types-of-intelligence/#naturalist>