**Integral Training**

**in the Pursuit of Forming Christ-like Leaders**

**Introduction**

Christ is perfect and holistic possessed with extraordinary knowledge, character, and skills, and thus the Christ-like leaders must possess *knowledge*, *character*, and *skills* if at all they want to transform the world. Integral Training is a whole person oriented training for the ministry because it meets these three important educational needs of learners with the aim to introduce holistic training in the place of traditional lecturing in the classroom.

Every organization has its objective, and the partakers of which are required to focus on accomplishing the laid down objective. In the same manner, MITS has its objective to form Christ-like leaders to transform the world glocally, and thus, the partakers of MITS to stick on to the objective. It is imperative that when we say we are a follower of Christ, our character and behaviors reflect Him and His call to us to the best of our abilities which includes our temperament. If we are in leadership, this is even more imperative! We demonstrate Character and integrity when we do what we say and act out what we believe. Our call is to do as we teach, to do as we say, and to act as we teach others to act. Integrity is of the utmost importance for the Christ-like leaders (1 Thess. 2: 10-12; 2 Peter 1-11).

During my twelve years of theological education, ten years as faculty, and four years as the Academic Dean, I have come across a number of outstanding theological teachers/professors and their curricula. They are effective though most of them follow only the pedagogical form of learning, which is a Child-based teacher-directed learning process. Is pedagogical method of learning sufficient for the adult learners? If not, what type of education will train the adult learners holistically?

**1. The Context of MITS:** MITS comprises of adult learners from various context. They differ from one to other especially in social, economic and cultural backdrops. Given below few of the characteristics of the adults to be able to come out with a training principle keeping in view of the MITS objective (Sarkar 2007, 63-64):

**1.1.1 Readiness:** The readiness principle is a simple one. Adults come to a learning situation with their own priorities and attitudes. They are ready to learn when they decide to open their minds and spirits to it. It is a focus of training on the learners’ need making the training session respond to the leaner’s question.

**1.1.2 Experience:** Treating adult learners as if they have little or no experience when they do, and thereby insulting them and losing them. An instructor must help them to contribute to their own and other person’s learning. And, he/she should be aware that some of their previous experience can create resistance to new knowledge. The more an instructor factors the experience of the learners into the design and delivery of the training, the more effective the learning outcomes.

**1.1.3 Autonomy:** When we enter the learning arena, particularly in formal classes, we often see a return to traditional, school-based, teacher-centered models of instruction. Training requires a dynamic climate for adult learners to grow and develop. Adult learners understand best if they take charge of their learning. The more they take charge, the greater the value they and their organization acquire. Adult learners like to participate actively and contribute toward their learning. They want to make their own decisions. They want to be treated as independent, capable people. They require respect even if they make mistake.

**1.1.4 Action:** the adult learners in the work setting participate in training to learn how to improve or alter their performance on the job. Their attention must be focused on immediate application of what they are supposed to learn. If they can’t see how they can put it into action as soon as they return to the job, their interest and learning decrease.

Keeping in view of the adult context, *androgogical* form of learning is highly required. *Pedagogy* is children based education where the teacher directs the learners whereas a*ndrogogy* is an adult based education where the teacher and learners involve together for learning process. This was generated by Malcolm Knowels, a leader in the field of education (Sarkar 2007, 63).

**2. Four Major Types of Training**

The four types of learning are receptive, directive, guided discovery, and exploratory. Various learning researchers and professionals use other classification systems and names. Given these four, which was employed by Ruth Clark in 1998, to be convenient and useful for training adults (Stolovitch 2002, 109-112):

**2.1 Receptive Training:** This type of training falls into the telling mode. The receptive type of training can have a limited role in introducing something new, presenting fascinating anecdotes, and building awareness and enthusiasm. The danger in using this type of training is that there is an expectation that learners will be able to convert what they hear and see into usable skills and knowledge.

**2.2 Directive Training:** This approach to training is just like the slogan “Follow me.” In this approach, you analyze the knowledge and skills required to lead learners from where they are to where you want them to be. This approach is well suited for learners who have little experience with the learning content, require support to build competence and confidence, and will later perform on the job in ways they learn in training.

**2.3 Guided Discovery:** In this type of training, control is shared between the learner and the trainer. In this, learners immediately plunge into cases, scenarios, or problems. They may require some initial input, but mostly they take the initiative. They seek and identify appropriate information and tools to proceed.

**2.4 Exploratory Training:** Here we build and organize a rich learning and informational environment for the learners and then truly get out of the way. The learners are in control. They know what is required and set out to search for whatever exists to resolve the issue and help them progress to the next level.

**2.5 Pulling the Four types of training together**: All of the types are different ways of approaching training. All of the types have a place in training, but the receptive approach is the most frequently used method and it should be the least often employed because it is just telling. Directive learning provides the trainer and the organization with the greatest control. The side effect is decreased learner’s initiative and more narrow, nearer transfer of training potential. Guided discovery is an excellent, balanced training approach for encouraging learner initiative under safe conditions. Exploratory learning is powerful for sophisticated, capable learners. It allows for greater individualization and personalization of learning. As to the adult based learning, the receptive type of learning to be used seldom, and focus more on the other three types of learning. Mix and match your approaches to fit the needs of both the learners and learning. Above all, keep the training active.

**3. Training to Form Christ-like Leaders**

**3.1 Assessing Yourself and Your Training Organization:** It is appropriate for a trainer to assess himself/herself as well as his/her organization in two ways: (1) where the trainer currently is and where he/she wants to be (2) where he/she believes his/her organization is and ought to be. After being assessed both the trainer and his/her organization, he/she probably found a number of gaps between current and desired states. To close these gaps, trainer and training organization require thoughtful planning, resources, and effort. If the trainer’s perceptions are radically different from those of the training organization, then he/she will have to add to his/her list of necessities strong willpower, commitment, allies, and political astuteness (Stolovitch 2005, 6-8).

Before fixing anyone else or the training team/group/department, the trainer should begin by clarifying his/her own goals. He/she should build his/her own transforming strengths. As he/she proceeds, he/she will find a lot to do and learn from it. He/she will create a critical mass of like- minded people to help change from telling to valuable training (Stolovitch 2005, 10-11).

**3.2 Integration for More Appropriate Education:** Individuals, families, society, religion, culture, and several other areas of life are interconnected together into integrated whole. An integrated approach to learning seeks to take learning from the perspective of an integrated whole, linking together various components or subjects humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, music, and art into one whole. It is learning that breaks down subject-matter borders, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas, projects and themes of study. Importantly, it is holistic (Gnanakan 2007, 71). Today, it is possible for people of all ages to know everything about anything at anytime. It is no longer possible to a large extent to control what one must know or must not know. But the Bible College still thinks it can. Therefore it continues to dish out knowledge, using methods of hundred years ago and does it in fragmented bits attaching sacredness to some and profanity to others. Therefore a theological student today finds the curriculum a painful process of learning irrelevant knowledge with a more irrelevant methodology (Raj 2007, 97). Even ATA encourages its member institutions to develop an integral curriculum, which can form a trainee holistically shaping academically, ministerially, and personally (Raj 2007,104-105).

**3.2.1 Integrated Training is Holistic in Nature:** the whole person training address the entire person. This training focuses on who the person is (Body,soul, spirit) and imparts training to address the three important dimensions of a trainee namely **knowing, Doing, and Being**. A curriculum developed based on Integrated Training focuses on the learner, and incorporates intentionally learning activities to develop the understanding, skills and qualities, which are needed for a missionary in the mission field. Integrated training is an activity based teaching and learning process and guides the learners to go through various learning activities to get holistic training in these three areas of development. The three areas of formation knowing (understanding), acquiring skills and character formation are often described metaphorically as affecting **the head, the hands, and the hearts** of the learners as described in the following point (Robert 2006).

**3.2.2 The Three Domains of Learning:** In these three areas of learning, knowledge is acquired in the class room, skill is acquired in the mission field and the character formation takes place in Christian community (Kohls 1995, 94-96).

**3.2.2.1 Knowledge:** knowing is related to the head. Institutionalized training gives importance to imparting knowledge to the learners. The knowledge is primarily related with biblical and theological understanding.

**3.2.2.2 Skills:** Skills are related to the hands. There are three areas of skill development in missiology. They are inter-cultural adaptation, ministry skills and practical skills. Acquiring these three skills are more important in missionary training than getting just an academic degree.

**3.2.2.3 Character:** Character is related with lifestyle of a person, which is denoted by the word ‘Being.’ This is the most important element in all three areas of formation for a missionary or a pastor. Character impacts the community more than what knowledge and skill can do in the ministry.

**3.2.3 Hierarchy of Learning Skills:** Kohls coined a hierarchy of learning as discussed below (1995, 54):

**3.2.3.1 Knowledge:** Recall of factual data in part or in whole: terminologies, facts & figures, classification into categories, sequences, criteria, methodologies universals, abstractions, principles, generalizations, and theories.

**3.2.3.2 Comprehension:** Lowest Level of Understanding: The person is able to demonstrate he/she knows what is being communicated by paraphrasing, interpreting, extrapolating for consequences, corollaries conclusion or effects.

**3.2.3.3 Application:** Ability to turn abstractions into particular and concrete examples whether working with ideas, rules, theories, or generalized methods, and the ability to predict the effect of changes in component factors.

**3.2.3.4 Analysis:** Ability to break down communication into its constituent elements, taking into account the relative importance of each part, whether the material is elicit, thus recognizing unstated assumptions, relationships, and organizing principles.

**3.2.3.5 Synthesis:** The putting together of elements to form a coherent whole where none existed previously, whether a written document or a plan of operation, and the ability to formulate hypothesis and generalizations of new organized materials.

**3.2.3.6 Evaluation:** Making qualitative and quantitative judgments about the value of methods and materials for specified purposes, applying a uniform standard with accuracy, consistency, and objectivity.

**Conclusion**

The ultimate goal of the Integral Training is to motivate the trainees to grow in the likeness of Christ, increase in the effectiveness to serve Him and live for Him. So, Integral Training gives emphasis in the curriculum to organize spiritual activities and programs that will produce spiritual life development as well.

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