

## *Making My Anatomy Classes Fun and Meaningful*

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About a month ago I took a course with Global Learning Partners on Dialogue Education™. Going into the course, I thought the concept of educating through sharing an exchange of life experience would be invaluable to my work as a gerontologist. I facilitate education events for older adults who are peer leaders, so exploring the wisdom and insight they, as individuals, bring to the group is a key to successful engagement in their learning process. Conventional adult learning methods most often deliver information rather than building on what learners already know.

During the course I had to design a learning event connected to my work. I decided to explore a topic of universal interest but that is generally taught didactically via memorization: basic anatomy – muscles (click [here](#) to see my workshop and photos). One of the courses I facilitate is designed to prepare peer leaders to develop and instruct fitness classes for older adults. This specific content has, in my experience, been challenging to facilitate as many of these adults I work with tell me they have not participated in 'formal' education for many years and the expectation that they will be able to recite anatomical terms from memory is very intimidating.

I set out to use what I was learning through Dialogue Education™ to teach this content in a different and meaningful way. One of the things I knew innately about myself, but that was rarely accommodated until the course *Learning to Listen Learning to Teach*, was that the best method for me to integrate new information was kinesthetically. While I was teaching the workshop I was shocked to see how quickly others also learned the material this way: people really DO learn by doing! I also wanted to present the information in a format that promoted personal connection to the content: Everyone has experienced the complexities of anatomy through the movement of muscles in their daily activities. Hence, the warm-up activity.

I believe that the education events I will now facilitate, after completing this course with [Global Learning Partners](#) and the [Geriatric Education Cooperative](#), will be fundamentally improved through incorporating the simple yet powerfully inspiring learning principles of Dialogue Education.

*Links:*

The Puppet Strings Workshop:

[http://www.globalearning.com/voices/2009summer/files/The\\_Puppet\\_Strings\\_Workshop\\_Sheila\\_Schuehein.pdf](http://www.globalearning.com/voices/2009summer/files/The_Puppet_Strings_Workshop_Sheila_Schuehein.pdf)

Geriatric Education Cooperative: <http://www.alzheimergreybruce.com/node/26>



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