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Introduction

My name is Diana S, 27 years of age, a divorced mother of two, and a disabled Navy veteran. I was an addict but have been sober for seven years now and I'm also a self-recovered cutter. These were the reasons that I joined the military, that is, to obtain sobriety. However, I got injured on the job and had to shift my career from firefighting to doing administrative and training work. I also started to attend college after I incurred my injury as I wanted to expand my knowledge of administration. As a civilian, I chose to work in the HR field where I can apply most of the knowledge and experiences I gained from my administrative work in the Navy.

I would also like to note that I suffer from depression, anxiety, ADD, personality disorders, and Thoracic Outlet Syndrome. Most of these mental disabilities were caused by my previous addiction to substances as well as from the depression that I experienced because of my physical disability.

I believe that all of these difficulties have provided me with great learning experiences. Aside from the work experiences and knowledge that I gained from my stint with the Navy, I feel that all of my experiences have helped me become a better person, that is, someone who is stronger, perseverant, and who has a positive outlook in life.

Analysis

Mezirow's Transformative Learning theory supports my learning experience in that all of the challenges, struggles, and difficulties that I have experienced in my life have led to my transformation to the person I am today. Similarly, Daniel Levinson's Life Structure theory supports my learning

experience in that this experience was influenced by my physical and social environment, which included my work and my family. In particular, working for the Navy helped me become sober and helped me develop many job skills. At the same time, my children inspire me to become a better person, to stay strong despite the problems that come my way, and to continue to strive for a better future.

On the other hand, the specific parts of Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Theory, which support my learning experience, are stages 5 (Identity vs Role Confusion) and 6 (Intimacy vs Isolation). Stage 5 was when I got involved in substance abuse. This was caused by the confusion I felt at the time. On the other hand, Stage 6 was when I got married and had children and when I joined the military, at which times I gained the learning experiences I had. Similarly, Jane Loevinger's Ego Development theory supports my learning experience in that my impulsiveness during my younger years had led to my substance addiction, along with the other problems that came with it. However, as I grew older and became more mature, I rose to the higher level of conscious preoccupations where I learned to control myself, to make wise decisions, and to choose endeavors that would have a positive result in my life, especially with regards to my work, my education, and my children.

My Own Developmental Profile

I think that Mezirow's Transformative learning theory would best support my learning experience. In particular, the disorienting dilemma I experienced during my younger years led to my substance addiction, my mental disabilities, and the other problems that I had to contend with. However, as I grew older, I began to examine myself and to critically assess my

assumptions about myself and my life. I then realized how others have gone through the same things I was going through and how these had adverse effects on their lives. As a result, I began to explore options on how I could fix my life and get it back on track again. Upon evaluating my options, I formulated a plan of action for obtaining sobriety, and this was to join the military. It helped me not only to become sober but it also helped me gain many work experiences and job skills. Finally, now that I am back to being a civilian, I am able to reintegrate my learning experiences into the person I am now and use them in trying to successfully attain my new goal, which is to obtain a college degree.

With regards to the barriers, I can say that my main barriers are the situational barriers, such as my substance addiction, which was influenced by my social and physical environment at the time, and which led to the many problems I experienced later on. My mental and physical disabilities also serve as barriers as they somehow limit the things that I can do. As well, situations such as my divorce have led to other problems, which served as further barriers for me.

Finally, the anxieties and challenges that I face as an adult learner include my fear of being made to look foolish; my worries about how I can cope with juggling my responsibilities with my family, my job, and my studies; and considerations about my physical disability and mental challenges.