



**Mayes, C. (2019). *Developing the whole student: New horizons for holistic education*. Rowman and Littlefield.**

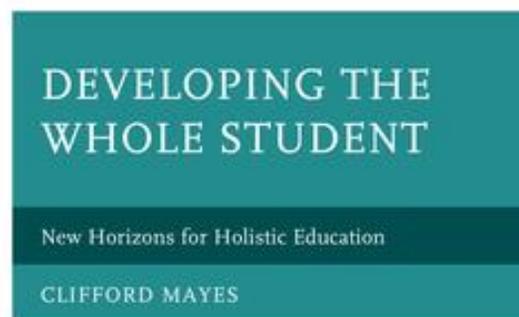
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Clifford Mayes' latest offering is a meticulously detailed and in-depth critical examination of existing curricular models, and a proposal for a more comprehensive and effective model. This new, holarchic taxonomy presented in *Developing the Whole Student* builds on and extends existing holistic models of education. Mayes' Integrative - rather than Integral, as proposed by Wilber - Curriculum Theory, is driven by a vision of teaching and learning that respects and incorporates multiple stages in the educational, emotional, and spiritual development of all learners. While some holistic models unwittingly reproduce some of the inequities they set out to avoid, one of the strengths of this approach is how it is founded on a desire to truly nurture all involved in the teaching and learning journey.

Using the image of concentric circles, Mayes proposes seven domains. From inner to outer circle, these domains are organismic, emotional, empirical-procedural, legal-procedural, phenomenological, immanent, and ontological. Compared to other curricular models, one distinguishing feature is that each



domain is both sovereign and interwoven with the other domains. This innovative conceptualization of how we might understand, organize, and navigate curricular theory represents in Mayes' view - and his argument is convincing - an improvement on hierarchic and linear models, which tend to posit certain knowledge, knowers, or ways of knowing as superior to others.

Mayes offers a fair and reasoned criticism of existing models of education that are restrictive, impersonal, overly concerned with monetization, and based on the idea of students as 'human capital.' The importance sometimes placed on standardized test scores, for example, can lead to devastating consequences for some learners. Mayes does not dwell on all that is wrong or misguided in some contemporary views of education, but, rather, elaborates in a lively and enthusiastic tone his own vision for the future. Not surprisingly, given that Mayes is an educational psychologist, the founder of 'archetypal pedagogy: there are copious references to works of psychology and education, but also sociology, philosophy, and the arts. At times, the weaving together of the network of citations is dazzling. The author acknowledges his particular indebtedness to Jung and to Wilber. The vocabulary is rich and enjoyable, and occasional moments of light-heartedness or humour are much appreciated.

The study is divided into three parts: the first is on Integrative Theory, the second on theory, practice and issues, and the third is somewhat different, as I will describe later. Mayes covers a number of key concepts in the first two parts, some of which may be less familiar to readers not well versed in psychological terms. An important notion in Mayes' study, drawing on Kant and pertinent to the phenomenological domain, is that the mathetic and the poetic (or what we sometimes call right-brain and left-brain activities) shape every human thought (p. 120). Images and concept are deeply interwoven,

and, as Mayes explains, the image comes before the thought, hence its power. The mathetic, concerned as it is with logic, precision, and delimitation, can sometimes prevent educators or curriculum designers from fully understanding the multiple interconnections between the domains Mayes describes. Recognizing this, and allowing the poetic to be a fundamental part of curricular design, may lead, in practice, to curricular models that are more sensitive to diverse expressions and evaluations of learning, and to a broader understanding and valuing of different kinds of intelligence.

Mayes provides an engaging explanation of how some people can stop or remain stuck in the legal-procedural domain, and never graduate or get their passport to the next domain. This is a significant impasse as it occurs at the birthplace of holistic and integrative thinking. It falls to teachers to help students move beyond this impasse, from cognition to metacognition or thinking about thinking. Another domain I found particularly compelling was the seventh, outermost, domain. This ontological domain allows Eastern and Western spiritual traditions to peacefully co-exist, and to inform each other. It also acknowledges and honours the deeply spiritual aspects of teaching and learning. As a yoga instructor and practitioner, I appreciated the mention of yoga as an alternative modality to address psychological problems (p. 47) and of the yogic inclusion of consciousness (p. 148). It strikes me that yoga is a practice that, being physical, emotional, and spiritual, is in line with various (perhaps all) domains in this holarchic model, and it can have a positive and profound impact on learners at various stages on their educational journeys.

In the fifth chapter, exploring the growth and consolidation of the ego, Mayes relates a student's complex experience of coming to terms with a concept she was learning about and being tested on. She took the all-important leap from cognition to

metacognition. Here, Mayes refers to Integrative Diagnostics, a scholarly and therapeutic resource that allows us to go beyond standard approaches to education and therapy (p. 86). It requires teachers to delve more deeply into the complex and ever evolving cognitive processes of their students, while recognizing that each student brings his or her own repertoire of experience to the learning process. Personal experiences and their emotional impact, for example, can profoundly influence a student's learning about a particular topic. The unpacking and application of Integrative Diagnostics is one potential research area for other scholars.

The third part of the book is a reflection by Dr. Martin Kokol on the trajectory of his teaching career. Kokol's pedagogical and research interests include the philosophy of education and social studies teaching, spiritual intelligence, and curriculum development. While I would have somehow preferred the last word to come from Mayes, and while this chapter may have worked equally well as a supplemental piece, it does contain some interesting and thought-provoking insights into the life, the motivations, and the evolving career of a teacher. For example, referring to the work of Parker Palmer, Kokol writes that we do not teach what we know, but rather who we are. Teachers can enhance their impact on student learning by sharing their own life journeys, their trials and tribulations, as well as the joys and successes. Though Kokol does use integrative terms, I was not convinced this chapter closely demonstrates the kind of theoretical approach that Mayes proposes in the first two parts.

Notably absent, I would suggest, is any mention of Indigenous ways of knowing and spirituality. It seems to me there are several points in this study that claim to propose an inclusive model based on concentric circles and interconnectivity where useful parallels

could have been drawn. Perhaps that will form and inform future studies for other scholars. Still, it is hard not to be impressed by this deep dive into curricular theory and the factors that motivate curricular design and educational goals, resurfacing with an ambitious proposal for the future. Though not necessarily the first choice of book for a teacher looking for immediately accessible strategies to implement into his or her teaching, this study represents a challenging and complex analysis of the theoretical underpinnings of contemporary education. It is, most definitely, a book worth reading. The content is undeniably relevant in the contemporary educational environment and against the backdrop of the global pandemic, a time when many programs are being stifled or cut and teachers are being laid off. Mayes' proposed revisioning offers some much-needed hope and optimism for anyone dedicated to the field of education.

The Integrative Curriculum that Mayes expounds brings countless new possibilities and ideas for educational scholars and practitioners to grapple with: new terms, revised approaches to teaching, and a more open understanding of intelligence itself. This passionate and compassionate study requires a careful and close reading, with full attention given to the many nuances and subtleties of the thesis, which, itself, gradually unfolds and ripples out into its fullest expression. *Developing the Whole Student* unquestionably provides pedagogical food for thought. It will be interesting to see how teachers put this theory into practice in the future. Mayes openly invites and encourages more research into curriculum theory and into pedagogical practice. He would like educational theorists and practitioners to strive, I believe, for models of education that truly serve, challenge and nurture learners on all levels. That noble goal is, to me, the ultimate strength of this ground-breaking study.

## About the Reviewer

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