University of Phoenix®

PLA Life Experience Journal

3 Credit Experience Journal Template

Student Name: John Smith

Student IRN: Sample

Instructions:

Please select a pre-approved Journal topic from the website to which you have relevant knowledge and experience gained to sufficiently respond to each component of Kolb's model for each subtopic. To ensure that any journal selected will apply to your program, please reach out to PLAC@Phoenix.edu.

1. Each section of Kolb's model should be a minimum of 150 words.
2. Once the Journal, autobiography, and supporting documentation have been completed, please log into your student website to submit your Journal through PLA

Kolb's Model

The University uses Kolb's model to translate real world experience into academic knowledge. Below is a brief description of each of the four elements of Kolb's Model. Please make sure you write on each Kolb's Model section for all required subtopics:

- **Description of Concrete Experience:** Concrete experience represents your personal participation with the people, places, activities, and events of an experience. You should describe your involvement relative to the experience, demonstrating the opportunity for learning.
- **Reflections:** Reflections represent a student's thinking and processing relative to the experience
- **Generalizations, Principles and Theories:** Generalizations, Principles, and Theories are constructs that organize and guide academic learning. A typical college course is built around several such generalizations, principles, and/or theories.
- **Testing and Application:** Testing and Application represent situations in which the new learning can be used.

When completing your Life Experience Journal in the sections below, use the above descriptions of each of the four elements of Kolb's model as a guide for what should be included in your responses. These should be written in the first person, so these elements will translate the learning you've gained from your experiences into knowledge. Please ensure that your journal does not contain citations, quotes, or references to research completed outside of personal experiences.

EXPERIENCE JOURNAL TOPIC: Parenting

SUBTOPIC 1: Discuss the development of parenting skills

Description of Concrete Experience (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

The development of parenting skills for me has been a very rapid process. Before I became a father, life was much easier and now that I am a father of three and soon to be four little girls my wife and I have a huge responsibility as parents to raise our children correctly. I understand that eventually children are going to grow up and make their own choices just like I did, but it is also important to allow your children to do those things sometimes. I feel that if you tell your child no so many times that human instinct kicks in and the child wants to rebel and do the exact opposite of my decision. I went through a stage like this while I was growing up and now that I am a parent I feel like I understand that part of growing up and I want my children to be open with me; especially when they make mistakes or mess up. As a parent I want my children to be able to trust me and have enough faith in me to know what I teach them is for their benefit and not mine. I know it is hard to understand as a teenager, but as an adult looking back it is easy to see the silly mistakes that could easily have been avoided if children would have listened to their parent's advice.

Reflections (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

When I became a father, I had to think back to the things my parents taught me and hopefully the same concepts would help my children because at the time that is all I really knew. Unfortunately, there is not an instruction manual for parents and even if there was a manual, I can tell you by experience that every child is different and, in most situations, you experience brand new situations every day. When thinking back on the methods that I have used to raise my children so far, I have noticed some things that I would change or some areas where I could have made better decisions, but that is part of being a parent. There is no perfect parent, and I believe that a parent can try everything to help their children, but it is ultimately the choice of the children and their use of free agency. When reflecting on parenting skills a parent should remember that there is only so much he or she can do.

Generalizations, Principles and Theories (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

As a parent it is hard to teach your children to do their best and to be a good role model especially with the peer pressure all around them. Developing parental skills come with being a parent as long as you learn from your mistakes then you will be fine. In my experience parenting takes a whole lot of learning and guidance.

When I met my wife, she already had two daughters from a previous marriage and as I mentioned previously the third daughter is mine and my wife is pregnant with our fourth daughter. I personally call them my daughters because they call me dad and I have known them since the time they were 1 ½ and 3 years old and they rarely even see their biological father. The current ages of my children are 7, 5, & 3 years old and my wife will be having another baby in just about three months as well.

Testing and Application (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

I have found through my experience in parenting that parenting will never end until you run out of time on this earth. Truly understanding my children and what they really need is going to be the biggest test and application because they can easily tell me all of the things that they want in life, but as a parent I need to figure out what they honestly need; spiritually, emotionally, & physically. Even though my children have not hit their teenage years and have not year had hormonal experiences they are still plenty irritable from time to time, and it is up to me to help comfort them during these times of need. When I can gain the trust of my children life is much easier because my children listen to me and they know what I am telling them to do is going to be in their best interest. The real test is to understand how to read my children's behavior to see if they are listening to me or if they are pulling away from the situation.

SUBTOPIC 2: Discuss parental values and attitudes that accompany stages in the development of the child.

Description of Concrete Experience (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

I have found that parenting can bring out a lot of different emotions in a person some of these emotions are good and some of them are negative and at times hurtful. It is honestly a very hard commitment to raise and teach a child let alone four children. As a parent there are tons of things that go through my mind every day not only to teach my children but to make sure they live in a healthy and stable setting. Many parents, including myself, think about many big picture items including bills, food, sports, children, pets, and much more. We have a lot of responsibility as parents which brings out our true attitudes in life. Many times as a father I find myself stressed out about the bills and sometimes how I am going to continue and provide for my family. Often time's life as an adult becomes so overwhelming that I lose my temper and take out my frustrations on the kids without even realizing why I just blew up. My kids didn't do anything personal to me and it was my choice to bring them into this world and provide for each of their needs. As your children learn and grow it is very important to practice self-control because with each stage of life your children will remember certain things you taught them as a parent whether it is good or bad.

Reflections (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Looking back to the way I have chosen to raise my children so far, I am happy to say that I have very little regret as far as teaching my children right from wrong, manners, how to be a good person, and so on. I know that nobody is perfect by any means, but when I am around my children I sure try to be. I feel a huge responsibility lies upon my back and in order for my children to continue practicing good morals and values throughout their lives I need to personally do everything that I can to show by example what kind of person I want them to be. Parents would be very hypocritical if they said one thing to their children but never led by example or followed through on commitments.

Generalizations, Principles and Theories (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

One of my theories regarding parenting values and attitudes during the different stages of childhood growth is that no matter how hard things get with your children they can always be worse. Another theory is the personal knowledge that I have gained from my personal growth experience from an infant into an adult. I can personally relate to my children the older they get because of the things that I went through as a child as well. I understand that my children might not even recognize the changes that they are going through; however, as a parent I do understand what changes are occurring and I can be there to help assist my children through the hard times and also the good times. Another very important aspect of parenting is to set ground rules and other rules for your children to follow. As you and your children follow these rules you begin to show your children what it means to work hard, show respect, and at times discipline is also a part of this process. Even though my children have disliked me at times for saying no to some of their requests my children are able to forgive and forget very quickly because they understand that I am only looking out for their best interests. One of the last principles that I have tried to instill into my children is the benefits of hard

work. There is no substitution on this earth for hard work, even if children are born into a family with a good amount of money hard work is still a very necessary principle for children to learn in order to be successful later in life.

Testing and Application (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

While applying the principles and theories that I have just previously explained it primarily shows to my each of my children that I love them and that no matter what, even when times get hard, they can always trust in me as their father to support and encourage them. While testing many of these principles throughout the last couple of years it has come to my attention that the principles that have been most successful are the principles that I practice consistency with. Many times, parents can become inconsistent with the punishments or rewards that we give to our children. I believe that whether we know what we are doing or not the children realize this principle and that is why it is more than necessary to set rules and stick to them and as you do this order between parents and children will continue to grow and strengthen.

SUBTOPIC 3: Analyze methods of effective guidance.

Description of Concrete Experience (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Analyzing methods of effective guidance is a tough task for parents to accomplish because there are so many different ways to guide yourself and your kids through the parenting process. One important aspect of guidance as a parent is to realize that you never know everything. Children must work with the parents to help guide each other in the right direction whether it is for rewards or punishment the principles are the same. One method that I like to use is to take a moment before I react and breath. This allows me to think and analyze the situation before I react inappropriately and escalate a minor situation into a full catastrophe. I have the tendency to jump to conclusions before even listening to the entire story from my children because I am the dad, and I feel like I know what is best for this family. The most effective guidance for me is all the family support that my wife and children give to the entire family because as we guide each other day to day we also help one another grow stronger and succeed. One method that I personally would never use is to talk down to my children. This does nothing but hurt their self-esteem and creates negative feelings towards their parents.

Reflections (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Each and every one of my children has a very unique and different personality, and because of that each one of them needs to be treated differently. I do not mean to favor one child over the other, but I do mean that my children all learn in different ways. For instance, my oldest daughter is very smart, observant, and creative. She is on honor roll and has an endless supply of friends and when I ask her to do something, she will do it and I don't have to worry about checking to see if that task was completed. My second daughter on the other hand is also very beautiful and bright; however, she likes the attention of other people and likes to be the center of attention as well. When I ask this daughter to complete a task as simple as brushing her teeth, I have to remind her two or three times before she will even begin this task. Both of them live in the same house and under the same set of rules; however, personality plays a huge role in effective guidance methods.

Generalizations, Principles and Theories (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

One of the most important principles to utilize in my situation is to show patience in each of my children because even though they are all different in one way or another each of them are very special to me as their father and I only want the best for all of them. When guiding a child through their life I found is very complicated and important. No matter how hard I try to obtain my children's obedience they are still going to ultimately do what they want when a parent is not around to get them into trouble. My main job as a father is to guide them and teach them to the best of my ability. Each and every person has their agency to choose whether to do good or bad and this includes my children. There is an old saying that you can take a horse to the watering hole, but you can't force the horse to drink. I believe that this same concept also applies with children as well.

Testing and Application (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Methods of effective guidance come in all types of different ways and to be honest there is not an exact science to becoming a successful and happy parent. This comes over time with a great deal of trial and error; however, when you make a mistake as a parent it is almost a positive thing because you can learn from that mistake to prepare for all of your other children that might need the same type of guidance. As a parent you will fail and you will succeed, but it is very important to never give up. I personally feel that when you give up you are not only giving up on yourself, but also on your entire family as well. So when one of your methods doesn't work pick yourself up and try again. This is the way I have always been taught and this is the method that has produced the best results for me personally.

SUBTOPIC 4: Discuss the role of discipline; compare and contrast discipline with punishment.

Description of Concrete Experience (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Discipline is not one of my favorite duties as a parent; although, it is a necessary part of the role of a parent. As my children have learned there are just some things that they simply do not do. My children know not to disrespect their mother in any way because if they do this is one situation where I will give them a spanking. I personally am not a big fan of spanking as discipline and feel that spanking is more along the lines of punishment. In my opinion discipline is something that I teach to my children and something that my children will learn from in a nonphysical manner. An example of discipline for my children is if they don't get their homework done then they cannot play with their friends. This is not punishment because my children know that this is the rule. Punishment is much more difficult for me as a father. I hate watching my children cry, but I feel that if they don't learn a lesson from the actions that they have completed then they will not think twice before repeating that action. Punishment is not always a physical statement but can be something as simple as going to bed early. Physically beating children is not good for me as a parent or the child.

Reflections (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

I often times wonder if the things I choose to do to discipline and punish my children are effective. I personally believe they are and will often speak to my wife in regard to what we both feel is fair for our children; however, it is crucial that we stay consistent with all disciplines and punishments between both parents. As a parent I feel like discipline has produced better results for my children then punishment has because my kids tend to rebel when punishment takes place. On the other hand, when I sit my children down and explain why I am and disciplining each of them they in turn understand and try harder to correct their areas for improvement.

Generalizations, Principles and Theories (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Discipline could also be something as simple as saying please and thank you and really reflecting the mannerisms that my wife and I have taught our children. I feel that it is very crucial for my family to practice and show disciple. Two of my daughters are currently in school and if they do not practice good discipline then there are consequences that follow, not only at school, but when they return home as well. Punishment has not proven to be very effective in my previous experience with my children and my wife is also not a big fan either. Punishment is reserved in our house for times when it is really needed.

Testing and Application (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

When I was a child, my father used very physical forms of punishment on me and my siblings and I remember the feelings of hate and rebellion that I experienced and do not wish any of my children to respond in the same ways as I did. I want them to be able to turn to me if they make a mistake so together, we can fix it. I am not saying that there will not be discipline and punishment involved, but abuse will not be tolerated by me.

SUBTOPIC 5: Discuss constructive and destructive elements in parenting styles; identify at least three categories of parenting styles; include an overview of the parenting behaviors associated with each style and the results obtained from each.

Description of Concrete Experience (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

I feel that it is very hard to categorize different types of parenting; however, I would consider myself a very dependable parent who holds high expectations of my children's behavior and encourages them to hold high expectations for themselves and also other around them. I try to set rules and directions for my children that will help to influence them in the correct ways. Another very important aspect to me is to teach my children about cause and effect, decision making, and self-sufficiency. Raising my children to be successful, articulate, happy with themselves, and generous with others will always be very important to me.

Reflections (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

One of my most important jobs as a parent is to prepare my children for the future. They need to know how the real-world works and how to deal with hard situations that they will face daily. Although my children are at a young age it is still very important for them to learn how to be self-sufficient when needed. Growing up my parents did many things for me, but one thing that I learned was the value of hard work. I have taught my children since they can remember the importance and value of hard work. There is no substitute for hard work. At times it is much easier not to clean the yard, but when the weeds need to be pulls and the bushes need to be cut, I got outside and get it done. Those are the values that I am teaching my children.

Generalizations, Principles and Theories (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

There are several different styles of parenting that could be constructive and destructive in teaching your child the difference of right and wrong. The authoritarian style of parenting is characterized by high expectations of compliance and conformity to parental rules and directions. The problem with that style is that my parental rules and directions often change when a parent feels like changing them, so the children really don't know what to expect. My children could think that I am being unfair and threatening, and they live in a constant state of fear. It could also cause my children to rebel by leaving home at a young age and getting into sex, drugs, and violence. This could also be called a destructive parenting style that I would never use. I could also be a permissive parent where I am warm and loving but flawed by low expectations of my children. I could be afraid to make demands on my children just so they like me. I am not afraid to hurt my children's feelings and even though that is the last thing I would ever want for them sometimes it is a necessary part of parenting.

Testing and Application (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

I feel the best way to get through to my children is to use the authoritative parenting style. I want my children to have and hold high expectations of life. As a parent I found that it is my job to push them to that limit. It is my job to make sure that I influence them to have high expectations and guide them through it. They look at me as their role model whether they do right or wrong. My children come to me for opinions and with their questions it would be wrong to use destructive parenting styles and very selfish of me.

SUBTOPIC 6: Discuss the challenges to responsible and effective parenting presented by contemporary society.

Description of Concrete Experience (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

As a parent there are many challenges and responsibilities that are present on a daily basis. Society today is becoming more and more crude and vulgar; this makes my job as a parent ten times harder because of the things that my daughters are subjected to on a daily basis. These vulgar items could be found at school, on the streets, and even in our own home. As a father it is beyond critical to keep my home a place where we can go to get away from this type of behavior.

Reflections (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Most individuals want to fit in and feel like they belong and often times it doesn't matter what group of friends takes them in as long as they have someone to stand with at school, so you are not alone. I remember how hard this can be as a young child or teenager and as a father I have to teach my children that they are special for who they are and who they want to become. I try to teach each of my children the importance of self-worth and that nobody can take their agency away from them. They can choose to be whatever they want to be all it takes is dedication and lots of hard work.

Generalizations, Principles and Theories (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

As I teach my children to stand up for the things that they believe in and to stay focused on their studies in school. It is also important for me to allow them to make mistakes and learn from them. I personally have made many mistakes in my life; however, I feel that I have become a better person for the things that I have done to ensure that I don't make the same mistakes twice. This is part of the growing experience that is very tough and sometimes impossible to teach your children as a parent.

Testing and Application (approx. 150 words): Type in field below

Effective parenting in today's society is not an easy task and I find that every day it seems to become harder and harder. Society today does not care about our children. Many of the television shows that my children watch are very blunt and as a parent I want nothing more than to turn the television off, but if my children are never exposed to the society that we live in today then they will be traumatized as they go out into the real world and see firsthand what is happening all around them. I love my children more than anything and I would do everything in my power to protect them, but there comes a time when I have to allow them to grow up and make their own decisions. As they do this I hope and pray that they remember the principles that I have taught them and that they will make good decisions and educate themselves to become successful and happy.