Belief 1: I believe that the engagement level of adult learners increases when they see the relevance of the content to their current situation.

This belief was confirmed by J.M. Taylor in 2011 when it was found that content relevance to an adult's current needs serves to increase their level of engagement and participation. Additionally, Morrison (2013) states that "Learners are more likely to transfer the knowledge if they perceive that it can help them do their jobs."

Taylor, J. M. (2011). *Characteristics of effective online professional development: A case study analysis of an online professional development course offered via blackboard.* (Order No. 3501375, University of Pittsburgh). *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses,* 278. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/927754892?accountid=14541. (927754892).

Morrison, G.R., Ross, S. M., Kahlman H. K., Kemp, J. E., (2013) *Designing Effective Instruction,* Hoboken, NJ. John Wiley & sons, Inc.

Belief 2: I believe that teaching other learners helps adult learners master the material better than will passively listening to it or reading about it.

This belief was confirmed by K. Cercone (2008) in her article about the characteristics of adult learners. She stated that the instructor should "Plan the course environment to allow participants responsibility for leadership and group presentations."

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design, AACE Journal, 16(2), 156

Belief 3: I believe adult learners often have long-held beliefs of their own which they may need to unlearn.

Cercone also stated that adult learners "have a pre-existing learning history and will need support to work in the new learning centered paradigm." She also suggests that instructors of adult learners "Recognize that it is important to 'unlearn' old beliefs and allow learners time to work through conflict." This confirms my belief.

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design, AACE Journal, 16(2), 156

Belief 4: I believe adult learners need multiple opportunities to practice a new skill in a safe environment.

Driscoll (2005) stated that "Automaticity of basic skills is a desirable educational goal, and extensive practice is one of the ways to help achieve it." Further, she says that "When strategies are taught or discovered, learners must have ample opportunities to practice them, particularly in novel situations." It would appear that the old adage of "Practice makes perfect" holds true and my belief is confirmed.

Driscoll, M.P. (2005). *Psychology of Learning for Instruction,* Boston, MA. Pearson Education, Inc.

Belief 5: I believe adult learners need to feel free to ask questions about the content.

My belief was confirmed by Medsker (2001) as she described Knowles theories on andragogy. She explained that "Adult readiness to learn and teachable moments peak at those points where a learning opportunity is coordinated with a recognition of the need to know." Further, she suggests that instructors remember that "No questions are 'stupid'; all questions are 'opportunities' for learning."

Medsker, K.L. and Holdsworth, K. M, (2001) *Models and Strategies for Training Design,* Silver Spring, MD. International Society for Performance Improvement.

Belief 6: I believe adult learners need more time to assimilate new ideas.

This belief was confirmed in multiple sources. Cercone explained that instructors of adult learners "Ensure that students can move through the instruction at their own pace [and be allowed] ample time…to master the content." Additionally, Eisen (2005) states that "Although [older learners] may be slower at learning new things, with extra time, they usually succeed."

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design, AACE Journal, 16(2), 141

Eisen, M. (2005) Shifts in the landscape of learning: New challenges, new opportunities. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, (108), 17.

Belief 7: I believe adult learners need multiple sensory experiences such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic to learn new material well.

Cercone confirmed this belief as well when she stated that instructors of adult learners "Ensure that all learning styles are addressed by presenting material in multiple modes including text, graphics, audio and manipulatives."

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design, AACE Journal, 16(2), 141

Belief 8: I believe adult learners learn more efficiently when new material can be linked to prior knowledge.

This belief was confirmed by Morrison. She explained that "Learning is an active process in which the learner constructs meaningful relationships between the new knowledge presented in the instruction and his or her existing knowledge. A well-designed instructional strategy prompts or motivates the learner to actively make these connections between what he or she already knows and the new information."

Morrison, G.R., Ross, S. M., Kahlman H. K., Kemp, J. E., (2013) *Designing Effective Instruction,* Hoboken, NJ. John Wiley & sons, Inc.

Belief 9: I believe adult learners appreciate an instructor with a sound knowledge of the material, an approachable personality, and a sincere interest in their success as learners.

Morrison also confirmed the first part of this belief when she stated that "Adults respect an instructor who is fully knowledgeable about the subject and presents it effectively." Cercone confirmed second part when she explained that instructors of adult learners should "Understand that some adults may feel intimidated and that their egos are on the line when they risk trying something new or unique" and Medsker, referencing Knowles, confirmed the third part when she stated that "The adult educator's mission is to help individuals learn what is required for gratification of their needs at whatever level they are struggling."

Morrison, G.R., Ross, S. M., Kahlman H. K., Kemp, J. E., (2013) *Designing Effective Instruction,* Hoboken, NJ. John Wiley & sons, Inc.

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design, AACE Journal, 16(2), 156

Knowles, M.S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy.* Chicago: Follet Publishing Company as referenced by Medsker, K.L. and Holdsworth, K. M, (2001) *Models and Strategies for Training Design,* Silver Spring, MD. International Society for Performance Improvement.

Belief 10: I believe adult learners prefer to guide their own learning by voluntarily pursuing information about topics that interest them.

This belief was confirmed by Driscoll when she explained that "Students are not passive recipients of instruction that has been designed for them. Instead, they are actively involved in determining what their own needs are and how those needs can best be satisfied."

Driscoll, M.P. (2005). *Psychology of Learning for Instruction,* Boston, MA. Pearson Education, Inc.

Belief 11: I believe adult learners need feedback to help them monitor their success in learning new material.

Driscoll confirmed this belief as well. She referenced Keller (1987) and Clifford (1984) when she discussed "the importance of detailed, unambiguous feedback to students to maintain a task orientation and prompt appropriate attributions. A single score on a project or essay assignment, for example, provides little information to the student. The student, in turn, is likely to react with increased anxiety because no way has been provided to learn from his or her mistakes. A better approach would be for the instructor to conduct separate analyses and assign multiple scores for different aspects of the project or essay (e.g., organization, theme, use of resources, grammar, etc.). In this way, students can gain confidence from what they have done well and attribute poor performance to specific problems that can be corrected."

Keller, J. M. (1987a, October). Strategies for stimulating the motivation to learn. *Performance and Instruction Journal,* 1-7 and Clifford, M.M. (1984). Thoughts on a theory of constructive failure. *Educational Psychologist, 19,* 108-120 as referenced by Driscoll, M.P. (2005). *Psychology of Learning for Instruction,* Boston, MA. Pearson Education, Inc.

Belief 12: I believe that adult learners can focus their attention and energy better at certain times of the day, which may vary from individual to individual.

Dunn (1987) confirmed this belief when she described the results of a study which looked at learner performance when learners were taught at the times of day they preferred. She found that "Ninety-eight percent of students achieved higher scores when taught at the best time for them and did poorly when taught at the non-preferred time."

Dunn, K., Dunn, R., Primavera, L., Sinatra, R., and Virostko, J., (1987) A timely solution: Effects of chronobiology on achievement and behavior, *The Clearing House* 61(1), 5-8.

Belief 13: I believe that adult learners like the clarity that written agendas, syllabi, and rubrics provide.

Cercone confirmed this belief. She explains that "Adults…want to know what they are going to learn, how the learning will be conducted, and why it is important." She encouraged adult educators to "Use variety of graphics, images, and tables… graphic organizers, Venn diagrams, concept maps, and flowcharts."

Cercone, K. (2008). Characteristics of adult learners with implications for online learning design, AACE Journal, 16(2), 140

Belief 14: I believe adult learners need periodic breaks to help them stay focused.

This belief was confirmed by Jaber (2013) when the relationship between learning, forgetting, and rest breaks was examined. The results showed that "Lengths of breaks [should be] optimized such that enough fatigue is alleviated and not much experience is lost because of forgetting."

Jaber, M.Y. ; Givi, Z.S. ; Neumann, W.P. Incorporating human fatigue and recovery into the learning–forgetting process. *Applied Mathematical Modelling,* 2013, 37(12-13), 7287-7299.

Belief 15: I believe adult learners never get too old to learn new things.

Eisen discussed how "Medical advances are helping people live healthier lives as well as longer ones. Physical losses that once prevented older people from engaging in social and educational activities can now be ameliorated through improved hearing and vision aids, medication, and less invasive surgery. As for changes in intellectual capacity… most cognitive losses occur slowly enough to allow older persons to compensate for them gradually." Further she adds, "Thus the biggest deterrents to older adult learning may simply be the fast pace of most educational programming and people's own self-doubts born of outdated stereotypes such as 'Old dogs can't learn new tricks.'" This confirms my belief and gives me hope as I undertake this Master's program at my age!

Eisen, M. (2005) Shifts in the landscape of learning: New challenges, new opportunities. New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, (108), 17.