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Article Summary #1

Article: To Boldly Go Online: Empowering Elders to Connect Socially with Technology

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As technology within online formats has not been prevalent for more than twenty years, it can be astonishing to notice how our lives have changed since. All populations are affected by technology, but the people most in touch with the change tends to be the younger generations. The younger generation tends to openly discover new technology through education, work, and personal connection, but older generations are more hesitant and sometimes fearful to explore the possibilities that technology offers. Marie Jobling begins the transformation from fear of technology to connection within the elder population through a community campaign in San Francisco. Within this campaign, elders are able to overcome obstacles to access technology, receive purposeful tech training, and empower their lives through connection to others.

As many younger generations first encountered the possibilities of technology through computers in an educational setting, the older generations had little to no experience operating technological devices. Jobling conquers the obstacle of accessibility through the Community Living Campaign (CLC) which provides resources for purchasing computers, broadband connection, and personal training. In order to provide support to elders, CLC reached out through Tyze.com which is an online personal networking site focused on guidance for people with disabilities and their families. This connection fostered a community of elders.

With this connection, CLC began to offer trainings with one-on-one attention. The most important aspects of these trainings included patience, positivity, and asking the participants what they wanted to accomplish instead of having a set outline of what needed to be learned. When the participants learned skills they found necessary, much of the time was spent practicing specific skills rather than an overwhelming amount of content.

Through the use of technology training, the elder population found social connection amidst adverse conditions of being bound to their home and lacking visits from family due to distance. Jobling stresses the impact technology brings to elders through connection to friends, family, and activities. Within patience and practice, elders are able to facilitate relationships to maintain a healthy and happy mind.

My personal outlook about the subject of technology and elders is expanding through the necessity of empathy. I grew up in a very different digital world than older generations, yet I aim to provide connection within all levels of ability and age as I complete my Masters of Science in Educational Technology. I was interested in the use of technology among elders as I will guide and assist technological learning opportunites for a variety of people. Empathy is key when having patience for the diverse range of abilities that I will serve and work alongside.

This study is relevant to instructional technology as it provides an example of overcoming the obstacle of accessibility, teaching with patience and purpose, and empowers others to connect socially during an often isolated age. I will apply this information through the key aspects of inspiring and empower those I teach with the connection that technology brings. This may be integrating technology for student experiences in my classroom, assisting

a parents who wants to learn how to use a tech tool for their child's education, or mentoring a

colleague at a different level of technologic fluency.

References

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