

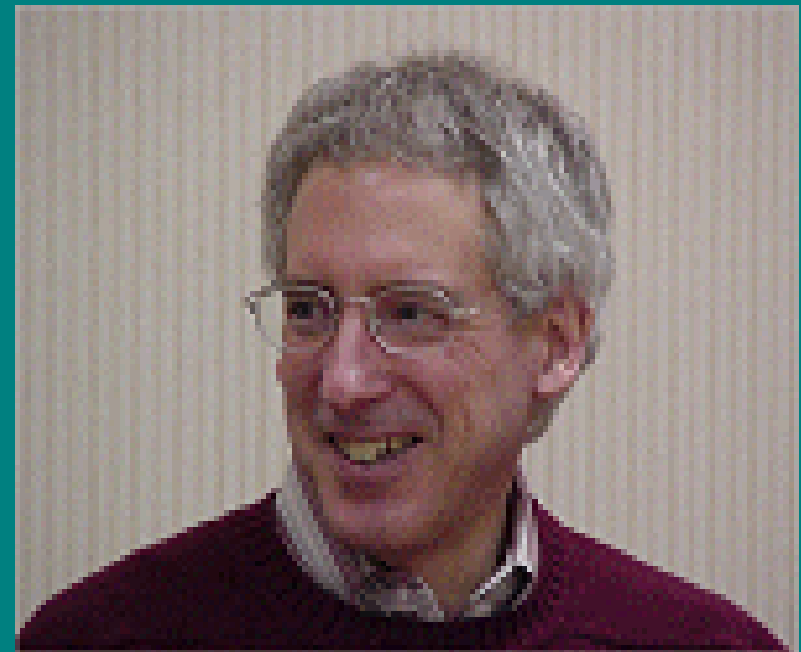


Major Researchers in SDL

Malcolm Knowles Award Winner

Allen Tough
Professor Emeritus
University of Toronto

Ph.D. University of Chicago 1965





Major Contributions to SDL Research and Practice

- Researched how adults learn and how many learning projects they complete per year
- Created an interview protocol to determine the number and substance of learning projects an adult learner undertakes
- Found that 70% of all learning is planned, implemented and evaluated by the learners themselves
- Provided 13 key stepped decision points that learners make when choosing what, where and how to learn



Major Contributions to SDL (Continued)

- Documented that adults are self-directed learners who develop plans for changing themselves and their environment.
- Innovated methods and materials for helping adults choose their learning projects and resources.
- Suggested additional research on helping people identify needs and setting goals.
- Suggested more study on incidental learning.



Most Important Publications

Tough, A. & Donaghy, R.C. (2006, February). *Studying self-directed learning: The personal story of Allen Tough*. Paper presented at the 20th International Self-Directed Learning Symposium, Cocoa Beach, FL.

Tough, A. (1999, February) *Reflections on the study of adult learning*. Paper presented at the 3rd New Approaches to Lifelong Learning (NALL) Conference, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada.

Tough, A. (1989). Self-directed learning: Concepts and practice. In C. J. Titmus (Ed.), *Lifelong learning for adults: An international handbook*. (pp. 256-260). Oxford: Pergamon.

Tough, A. (1982). *Intentional changes: A fresh approach to helping people change*. Chicago: Follett.



Publications Continued.....

Tough, A. (1981). *Learning without a teacher*. (2nd ed.). Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Tough, A. (1980, February). *What is the role of self-directed learning in adult education?* Paper presented to the invitational seminar "Linking Research to Practice in Adult Education" sponsored by the California Adult competency Education Project, San Diego.

Tough, A. (1979). *The adult's learning projects: A fresh approach to theory and practice in adult learning*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Tough, A. (1979, November). *The neglected 70% of adult learning*. Paper presented at the International Convention of the Religious Education Association of the United States and Canada, Toronto.

Tough, A. (1968). *Why adults learn*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education .



Awards and Recognitions

- Malcolm Knowles Memorial Self-Directed Learning Award Recipient, 2006
- Chosen as one of the eight most prominent researchers on SDL in Donaghy's interviews, 2003
- Selected as one of "the most prolific and preeminent adult education researchers in North America" in a study of the field's "most successful researchers" by M. Baskett and R. Garrison, 1987
- *The Adult's Learning Projects* was chosen as one of the "ten classical books of adult education" in a survey conducted by Paul Ilsley, 1983
- Certificate for Meritorious Service to the Field of Adult Education, Adult Education Association of the USA, 1980.
- Youngest of "the most prominent contributors to adult education" in a survey of members of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education, 1979
- Allen Tough was one of the six "most often used" authors (and the youngest) in a survey of members of the Adult Education Association of the USA, 1978



Memorable Quotes

“The part of my work that’s been most recognized is this interview schedule for studying the four kinds of learning projects to document the amount of learning that is self-directed.... We found that 70% of learning was the individual planning their own learning....Self-directed learning is not a lonely thing. It’s not an isolated thing but very social thing. It involves a lot of interaction with others.” (Interview with Donaghy, 2003)

“Intentional changes are fascinating and important. Men and women bring about Remarkable changes in themselves and their lives.” (*Intentional changes*, pp. 1)

“We do the same with our learners in a classroom. We set all the objectives, we tell them exactly how to learn, and the more I listened to adults talk about their own power and their own skill and confidence at learning, the more I began to question my teaching approach. Why was I making these choices for students? And of course, I shifted toward being more learner centered and letting learners make a lot of their own choices.”
(*The Iceberg of Informal Adult Learning*, pp.6)

“Adult learning projects and intentional changes are two concepts with different starting point. In the former we looked at all learning projects that an individual did in a year and the number of hours spent at them. In *Intentional Changes*, we looked at the largest most important change that individual had made in their lives in the past two years.”
(Interview with Donaghy, 2003)