

How Do Adults Learn?

Encourage adults to engage in missions by finding their personal niche. If you have agreed to help equip adults for missions involvement, knowing how adults learn is important. Many books have been published on this subject. The success of involvement in your missions group may well depend on how well you understand different learning styles. Remember the following parameters as you offer missions discipleship to adults.

Adults become involved in groups for specific reasons:

- The purpose is clear—Don't cloud your group gatherings with long business sessions or other seemingly unnecessary topics. Limit the number of meetings to only what is necessary. Focus on missions. Provide variety, as adults do not all learn the same way. Include sight, sound, taste, touch, and experience.
- The individual's input is valued—Some adults learn best through their participation. When they have ownership in a group, they support it.
- Personal needs for acceptance, belonging, and fellowship are met—Construct your group functions and events with the participants' needs in mind. When adults are able to apply concepts to their lives, they are more apt to learn more.
- They believe in the cause of the group—For this reason, be clear about the value of missions discipleship and involvement. The cause of Christ is unmatched by any other effort anyone could make. Help adults grow spiritually as they participate in ministry to others and share Christ.

Consider these ways adults learn:

- As they identify with specific situations or problems
- Through hands-on experiences
- When they become aware of needs
- When they work together
- When allowed to make decisions
- By examining their values and feelings
- When the content relates to life situations
- As several senses are involved
- When given several choices for involvement
- If given a reason for listening or taking action
- When they are challenged