

*We started the module with the thought from Kurt Lewin that there is nothing as practical as a good theory. Reflecting back on the learning theories module I have to agree. In my professional practice I had come to rely on my experience of what aspects of training had worked in previous training interventions when deciding on how to plan future interventions. That would suggest that if it didn't work in the past then it wouldn't work in the future. Through this module I now realise that there were particular reasons as to why my training didn't go according to plan.*

*The first theory that we encountered was behaviourism. The behaviourist ideas of Pavlov and Skinner did not appeal to me as they appeared outdated. It was difficult for me to perceive how their ideas that behaviour is affected by the external environment and learning does not come about as a result of any internal processes would work in a modern day training environment. The progression to cognitivism and the work of Marton and Säljö who identified that learners try to understand material by linking it to already known concepts was a theory that I felt I had applied in my practise, it was realistic. Reflecting back to this stage in the module I was enlightened but not excited. Then I encountered constructivism. Listening to Harvard professor Eric Mazur I found that I was fascinated by his ideas on why his students did not understand what he was teaching them. Vygotsky's thought's on how learning is brought about through the zone of proximal development and social interaction allowed me to reflect on past experiences and what changes I would make to improve them. I decided to write my learning theories paper on how the use of social constructivism could be applied to assessment. Sharing ideas and resources with my fellow students and clarifying points that I was unsure of at a coffee break demonstrated social constructivism at work. Constructivism and social constructivism provided me with answers to questions and ideas for future training. It's an area that I want to continue to explore as the Msc progresses. However my preference for the theory and how it can help my practice could lead to an overdose in all things constructivist. I realise that I need to consider that there may be times when a behaviourist or cognitivist approach may be more effective, indeed it may be a blend of all theories that is required.*

*I mentioned earlier that past experience guided future practice; a good theory along with past experience will guide my future practice.*