

Mindfulness and the Role of Contemplative Pedagogy

Presented by Renee Hosang-Alleyne and Dr.
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Thursday, February 4th 11:00–11:45am

What are the objectives?

- Our main objective is to present suggestions that could be valuable to our students, faculty and administrators, that will promote successful outcomes.
- We will explore the roles of mindfulness and contemplative pedagogy, as well as provide tips for how to provide these methods for students and faculty.
- We will also discuss potential activities, and solicit practices that may assist your institution's administrators.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness refers to the process of intentionally bringing one's attention, in a nonjudgmental manner, to the internal and external experiences that exist in the present moment. This may include awareness of sensations, thoughts, bodily states, consciousness, and the environment, while simultaneously encouraging openness, curiosity, and acceptance. (Edenfield & Saeed 2012). [Citation: An update on mindfulness meditation as a self-help treatment for anxiety and depression.](#)



A Balancing Act

In 2015, psychologist and art therapist Dr. Cathy Malchiodi cited multiple studies confirming that being creative can increase positive emotions, lessen depressive symptoms, reduce stress, decrease anxiety, and even improve immune system functioning (Malchiodi 2015). [Citation: Creativity as a Wellness Practice](#)

Creativity



Anxiety



What Is Contemplative Pedagogy?

These are practices to which “human beings across cultures and time, have found to concentrate, broaden, deepen conscious awareness as the gateway to cultivating their full potential and leading more meaningful and fulfilling lives” (Ergas, 2019). Citation: A Contemplative Turn In Education

It requires that mindfulness is “positioned as a means for personal and social transformation” (Sellman & Buttarazzi, 2019). Citation: Adding Lemon Juice to Poison

Mindfulness Activity

Mindfulness Activity

For this activity a large group of birds has descended on a popular tree (Art by Amanda Jones). Select one bird, give it a name, and place it where you feel it is most appropriate. At the conclusion of this activity we will share our bird's names, and why they chose their corresponding branch.



Link to [Bird Party!](#)

Our Students

Reading – Assign fewer texts, read the texts more intentionally and contemplatively can foster students entering texts in deep and transformative ways. Reading aloud can highlight different aspects of a text

Discussions – engage in active listening, where students are listening to difficult conversations or thoughts that they consider meaningless

Writing – Use a few moments of reflection/contemplation before, during and after writing to clarify and refine thoughts.

Reference: [Ideas from Montclair State University](#); [Ideas from Columbia University](#)

Our Faculty

Curriculum

Creating the space:

1. Make clear that all practices are **voluntary**
2. Students are to participate only if comfortable and prepared
3. Suggest that students do free writing or silent reflection
4. The syllabus should include the above demarcations
5. Practices range from 2 to 10 minutes

Contemplative group or paired work

1. Remind students that personal revelations are to remain confidential and not discussed outside of class
2. Remind students to remain sensitive, supportive and instructive when invited to give feedback

Exercises

1. Deep Reading
2. Deep Listening
3. Contemplative Writing
4. Discussions

For administrators

Leadership Opportunities

- What would contemplative leadership look like at your institution?
- Begin or continue the conversation with an awareness that everyone is coming from their own lived experience





The Buddha Board



Mindfulness Therapy Cards



Zen Gardens

Mindfulness Products

Questions?

Further Resources

- Websites:

- <https://www.contemplativemind.org/practices>
- <https://stillpoint.appstate.edu/resources/examples-contemplative-practices-higher-education>
- <https://www.montclair.edu/faculty-advancement/current-development-programs/contemplative-pedagogy-program/contemplative-practice-examples/>

- Articles

- [An update on mindfulness meditation as self-help treatment for anxiety and depression.](#)
- [Contemplative Practices-A Strategy To Improve Health and Reduce Disparities](#)
- [Classical Physics and Human Embodiment: The Role of Contemplative Practice in Integrating Formal Theory and Personal Experience in the Undergraduate Physics Curriculum](#)
- [Contemplative WAC: Testing a Mindfulness-based Reflective Writing Assignment Across Courses](#)
- [Creativity as a Wellness Practice](#)
- [Democratizing Engineering Education Through Contemplative and Mindfulness Practices](#)
- [Contemplative Education: How Contemplative Practices Can Support and Improve Education](#)
- [Contemplative Leadership in Organizations](#)
- [Contemplative Leadership: The Possibilities for the Ethics of Leadership Theory and Practice](#)

Special Thanks

To participants of SCHEV – Faculty Learning Community on Contemplative Pedagogy

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