



Great Ideas in Teaching (GIT)

A Presentation on

The Impact of Contemplative Pedagogies on Student Well-Being and Learning

by

Moyedun Zannat Brinta

M.A. in English

Idaho State University

Technology's Double-Edged Sword: The Challenge to Student Well-Being

Technology offers new learning opportunities but introduces significant challenges.

- **Negative Effects of Digital Overload:** Increased stress, anxiety, and attention problems among students.
- **Specific Impacts:** Disrupted sleep, digital fatigue, decreased academic focus, and constant distraction from notifications. Research shows a notable increase in anxiety and depression among college students due to excessive use of technology and social media.
- **The Solution:** Contemplative pedagogies offer a powerful antidote to reclaim focus and cultivate inner resilience.

The Purpose and Core Practices of Contemplative Pedagogies

Purpose: To explore how contemplative pedagogies enhance student well-being and learning outcomes in the digital age.

Practices Examined: Mindfulness, reflective writing (reflection), and deep listening.

Aims:

1. Reduce stress, anxiety, and distraction.
2. Promote attention, empathy, and self-awareness.
3. Help students pause, reflect, and engage deeply with course materials.

Contemplation as a Fundamental Learning Modality

Contemplative practices are a fundamental shift in pedagogical approach, viewing learning as a holistic process involving the mind, body, and spirit.

Supporting Theories:

- **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR):** Practices like focused breathing and body scans reduce emotional reactivity and distracting thoughts.
- **Neuroplasticity:** Meditation can physically strengthen brain regions associated with attention, emotional regulation, and self-awareness, providing a biological basis for cognitive benefits.
- **Embodied Cognition:** Thinking is connected to the body; contemplative practices increase awareness of physical sensations and emotions, aiding the understanding of deeper concepts.

Implementation in the Digital Classroom

Integration should be done through small, consistent, and low-stakes activities.

- **Micro-Practices:** Short activities to transition from distraction to focus.

Examples: One-minute breathing exercise, a moment of silent reflection, or a bell-ringing to signal a shift in dialogue.

- **Embedded Activities:** Practices directly linked to course content.

Examples: Silent contemplation after reading a complex poem or a mindful observation before a lab experiment.

- **Reflective Assignments:** Structured assignments for deeper self-inquiry and metacognition.

Examples: Reflective journals to track attention patterns or guided meditation with a follow-up reflection.

Conclusion

Banning technology is not a solution. Contemplative pedagogies can be used to enhance student well-being in higher education because

- Contemplative pedagogies provide the internal resources students need to cope with a hyper-connected world.
- They improve student well-being and cultivate cognitive skills that technology can compromise.

Key Outcomes:

- Fostered self-awareness, increased attention in learning, and improved interpersonal skills.
- Contemplative pedagogies offer an effective strategy to enhance student well-being in contemporary higher education by addressing the negative effects of technology.

The image features a central white rectangular area with the text "Thank you" in a black serif font. This central area is flanked on both the left and right sides by vertical panels showing a close-up of green, elongated leaves, possibly from a plant like a lily or iris, with prominent veins and a slight curve. The overall composition is clean and symmetrical.

Thank you