Developing Critical, Expansive Awareness with Contemplative Arts-Based Qualitative Research

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July 13, 2017
Creativity as Inquiry Portals
The Tree of Contemplative Practices

- **Stillsness practices**
  - silence
  - centering
  - centering prayer
  - insight meditation
  - sitting meditation
  - quieting and clearing the mind

- **Activist practices**
  - work
  - pilgrimage (to sites where social justice issues are highlighted)
  - mindfulness practices (gathas)
  - vigils/marches
  - bearing witness

- **Generative practices**
  - prayer
  - tonglen
  - lectio divina
  - petitionary prayer
  - metta/loving-kindness meditation

- **Ritual/cyclical practices**
  - Shabbat/Sabbath
  - vision quest
  - sweatlodge
  - building an altar or sacred space
  - ceremonies/rituals based in a cultural or religious tradition

- **Movement practices**
  - martial arts
  - qi gong
  - t'ai chi chuan
  - Sufi dancing
  - yoga
  - walking meditation
  - contemplative movement
  - labyrinth walking

- **Creation process practices**
  - singing
  - chanting
  - contemplative music
  - contemplative art
  - brushwork
  - sand mandala

- **Relational practices**
  - dialogue
  - deep listening
  - storytelling
  - journaling
  - council circle

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The Tree of Contemplative Practices
Gloria Anzaldúa
Linda Tuhiwai Smith
Global South Scholars
De/colonizing Scholarship
Spirit Draining Fatigue

Islamophobia

Social Justice

Travel Ban

Homophobia

Refugee Crisis

Xenophobia

Reproductive Rights

Black Lives Matter

SIGN ME UP!
I enact the post-oppositional theorizing that I call for. I interrogate some of the diverse forms that binary-oppositional thought can take while resisting the (very strong) temptation to react oppositionally. I aspire to offer viable additions and alternatives to the oppositional forms of consciousness and politics that currently drive social-justice theorizing, activism, and academic disciplines. I develop nonoppositional theories and relational methods that insist on a realistic politics of hope and the possibility of planetary citizenship. (Keating, 2013, p. ii)
Our internal fragmentations—our intra-divisions, as it were—have their source at least partially in the oppositional energies (and the dichotomous thinking behind them) that the groups used to combat social oppression. We can’t turn off the negative energies once we remove ourselves from the battlefield. We take these energies with us, into our work, our homes, our minds, our bodies, our souls. They eat away at us, devouring us as we direct this oppositional thinking at one another and at ourselves. We fragment. We crumble. We deteriorate from within. And then we regroup. We begin again. And on to the next corrosive battle. (Keating, 2013, p. 9)
Cultivating awareness
Cultivating stillness
Relationship with self and other
Shadow work/literacies
Witness consciousness
Creativity as expansion
Transnational Identity
Hidden Curriculum
De/colonizing Work
Ethnodrama

Border Crossings
One step in and
one step out

Program Biography
Cirque du Silence
Acrobatics of a Transnational Female Academic

Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies published online 20 December 2012
What are the (im)possibilities of relationships we build?

How do we think expansively, creatively, imaginatively without being restricted about possibilities of freedom and agency?

What are our internal fragmentations that inform our ontoepistemologies?

What do we struggle to accept as ours?

What arises if we cultivate stillness in our inquiry?

What arises if we cultivate witness consciousness in our inquiry?

What if we give up our will to know?