

Using Contemplative Methods to Facilitate Deeper Thinking Modes

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Screen reading and paper/print reading

- Attitudes
 - Memory and comprehension
 - Mental resources and cognitive processes
 - Deep thinking and analysis
 - Attention levels, distraction, multitasking
 - Perceptions, interpretation and understanding
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- Anne Mangen (Norway), Naomi Barron (US), Maryanne Wolf (US), and David Levy (US)

The reading room

- Concentration, focus, thinking are reading room products
- Distractions disrupt concentration and focus
- Center our user's work
- Distractions
 - External
 - Internal
 - Intrinsic

“In more than one instance, I have looked up from my research to see paintings of white men famous for committing heinous acts against indigenous communities, or racist artifacts displayed proudly as if devoid of the context in which they were produced.”

Farmer, Ashley. “Archiving While Black,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*. 22 July 2018. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Archiving-While-Black/243981>

Radical empathy in the reading room

- Radical empathy as a state of concern and care
- Caregivingness is a manifestation of radical empathy
- Shift toward care of user's contemplation (deep thinking) and understanding

“We need to build policies, procedures, services with these users in mind, but even more so, we need to shift our affective orientation in service to these users.”

Caswell, Michelle and Marika Cifor. “From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives,” *Archivaria* 81 (Spring 2016): page 38.

Shifting our orientation

- Reading room as a contemplative space
- Archivists exercise radical empathy and caregiving toward users' preparedness for research

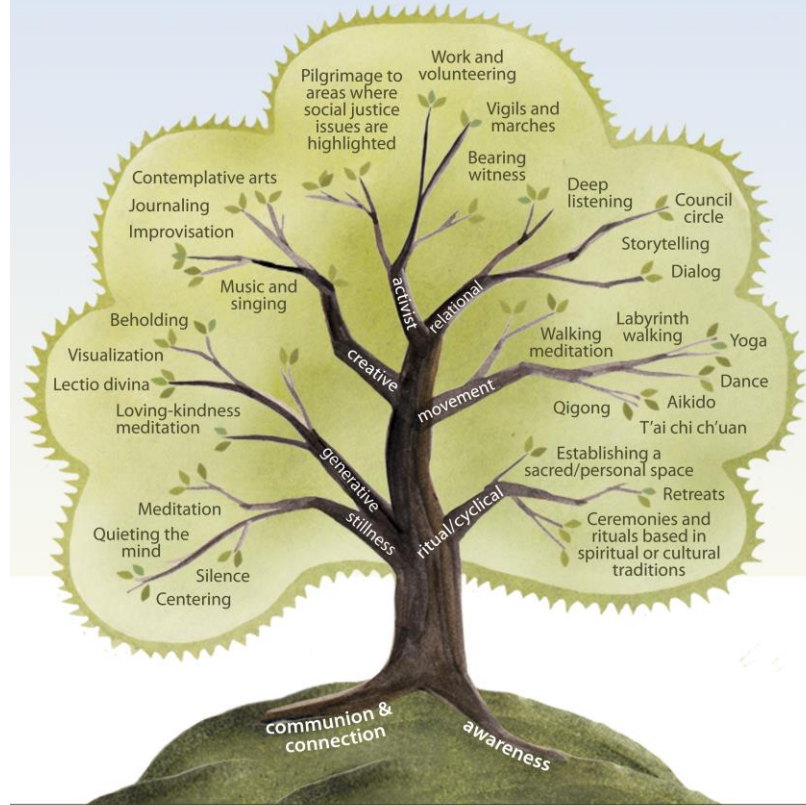
“we function more effectively and more healthfully online when we are more attentive, relaxed, and emotional balanced. This can also be stated in the negative: we operate less effectively and less healthfully when were are distracted, physically uncomfotable, and emotionally upset.”

Levy, David. *Mindful Tech: How to Bring Mindfulness to our Digital Lives*. Yale University Press: New Haven, 2016. page 3.

Radical acts in the reading room

- A radical act
 - adoption of a contemplative **ethos** for the reading room and a commitment to adding elements in making those spaces contemplative in nature.
- A radical shift
 - Center contemplation (deep thinking) and understanding
 - Reduction of or eliminate elements that are distracting or disruptive to concentration and focus
 - Introduce contemplative practices

The Tree of Contemplative Practices



Next steps

- Reading room as a contemplative space – center concentration and focus
- List of contemplative practices that can be used in the reading room
- Create a ***contemplative check-in***
- Understand Wolf's idea of a **biliterate brain**
- Create presentations for instructions session – focus on contemplative practices for research