



# IS ANYBODY OUT THERE?: CARE AND COMMUNITY IN REMOTE LEARNING CONTEXTS

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CARE AND COMMUNITY IN REMOTE TEACHING CONTEXTS

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

1

I LIVE AND WORK ON THE TK'EMLUPS TE  
SECWPEMC TERRITORY WITHIN THE UNCEDED  
TRADITIONAL LANDS OF SECWPEMCÚL'ECW  
(SECWPEMC NATION), WHERE LEARNING HAS  
TAKEN PLACE SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL.

I RECOGNIZE THE PRIVILEGE I EMBODY IN BEING FREE TO MOVE ABOUT THE TERRITORIES WE NOW  
CALL CANADA EVEN WHILE THE ORIGINAL PEOPLE TO STEWARD THESE LANDS CONTINUE TO AWAIT  
MEANINGFUL RECONCILIATION WITH THE SETTLER STATE.

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# WHEN I SAY “DIGITAL PEDAGOGY,” WHAT DO YOU THINK OF?

SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS IN THE CHAT.

# WHAT IS DIGITAL PEDAGOGY, ANYWAY?

“Digital Pedagogy is precisely not about using digital technologies for teaching and, rather, about approaching those tools from a **critical pedagogical perspective**. So, it is as much about **using digital tools thoughtfully** as it is about **deciding when not to use digital tools**, and about **paying attention to the impact of digital tools on learning**.”

- Hybrid Pedagogy

# BOOK RECOMMENDATION:

AN URGENCY OF TEACHERS: THE WORK OF CRITICAL DIGITAL PEDAGOGY

BY SEAN MICHAEL MORRIS AND JESSE STOMMEL

(AVAILABLE OA AT [CRITICALDIGITALPEDAGOGY.PRESSBOOKS.COM](https://criticaldigitalpedagogy.pressbooks.com))

CARE AND COMMUNITY IN REMOTE TEACHING CONTEXTS

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

5

## ... BUT ALSO ...

“All education—even that which is considered to lie outside of digital education [should take] account of the digital and non-digital, material and social, both in terms of the design of educational activities and in the practices that unfold in the doing of those activities. [...] **More than something about which we make simple decisions to use or not use, digital technology is something in which we are entangled in complex ways, and which is embedded in the wider culture.**”

Fawns, T (2019). Postdigital Education in Design and Practice. *Postdigital Science and Education* 1, 132–145. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-018-0021-8>

## THREE (OF THE) KEY CONCEPTS

- (1) knowing our learners
- (2) ethical responsibilities of faculty
- (3) establishing community

(I read all of these as opportunities to enact care.)

# KNOWING OUR LEARNERS

- Learners are not all having the same experience of your online class (this is true F2F, too!).
- Consider asking students to tell you:
  - How they connect to your class and what device they use.
  - What capacity they have for space/time to work.
  - What worries them about remote learning.
- But... don't ask if it won't shape your practice.



# ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY

- (I spent most of January thinking about our fiduciary responsibility over student data. Check out <http://digitaldetox.trubox.ca> if you want to read more.)
- We have legal obligations, under FIPPA, and moral obligations: the internet is forever! Beware of what you ask students to do in public, what data you collect and record, and where you store it.
  - For example, don't require students to have their cameras on if you're recording a session; don't ask students to present themselves publicly without an option for pseudonyms, etc.

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# COMMUNITY VS. ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT IS ABOUT DOING THE WORK, AND IT'S IMPORTANT. BUT TODAY WE'RE TALKING PRIMARILY ABOUT HOW TO BUILD A SENSE OF BELONGINGNESS AMONG YOUR STUDENTS.

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# WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES TO BUILD COMMUNITY?

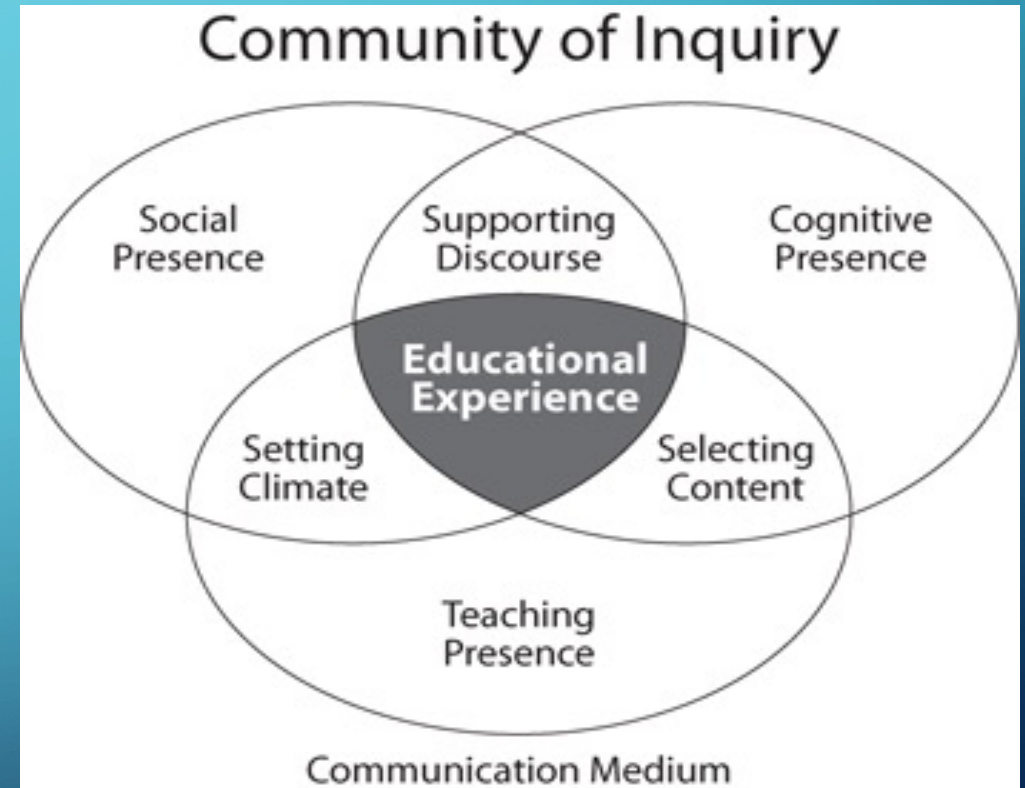
SHARE YOUR PRACTICES IN THE PUBLIC CHAT.

# THE GOOD NEWS IS...

- ... a lot of what you're already doing will translate to the online environment.
- What we're going to talk about today is how to foster the same care and community online as you are so experienced with in your classroom.
- But first, a teeny-tiny bit of theory. Just a little.

# COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY APPROACH

- Learning occurs best at the intersection of:
  - social presence (do we identify with the community);
  - teaching presence; and
  - cognitive presence (is the content meaningful).
- By this model, the content is only one-third of the learning experience.



Garrison, et al. (2000) "Critical Inquiry in a Text-Based Environment: Computer Conferencing in Higher Education." *The Internet and Higher Education* 2(2-3): 87-105. Tuesday, June 30, 2020

“BUT IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT SUSTAINING A CLASSROOM COMMUNITY IS AN ESSENTIAL ACT DURING A TIME OF CRISIS. IT IS IN CRISIS THAT WE MOST IMMEDIATELY FRONT WITH OUR HUMAN CAPACITY TO INTERVENE, TO GRASP OUR AGENCY—TO BE LEARNERS. WHEN WE ARE FACED WITH FEELING THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO, WE CAN ASK: WHAT HAS BEEN DONE, WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE... WHICH LEADS US TO ASK WHAT CAN I DO, AND WHAT WILL I DO?”

- SEAN MICHAEL MORRIS, “FOSTERING CARE AND COMMUNITY AT A DISTANCE”

[https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/ethemes/conference/fostering-care-and-community-at-a-distance.pdf?sfvrsn=93aacc81\\_10](https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/ethemes/conference/fostering-care-and-community-at-a-distance.pdf?sfvrsn=93aacc81_10)

# TRAUMA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY

- What it is:

- An acknowledgement that learning is negatively impacted by emotional trauma; and
- An awareness of the current stressors impacting students.

- What it encourages:

- Predictability, consistency, and connectedness.

- What it is **not**:

- Mental health care or counselling;
- An invitation for confession or disclosure; or
- One-size fits all.

Davidson, S., & Northwest, E. (2017). Trauma-informed practices for postsecondary education: A guide. *Education Northwest*.

# DEVELOPING A SENSE OF BELONGING IN ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING

FIVE-HOUR COURSE FROM THE OPEN UNIVERSITY.

[HTTPS://WWW.OPEN.EDU/OPENLEARNCREATE/COURSE/VIEW.PHP?ID=4183](https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/view.php?id=4183)



# TECH-FREE STRATEGIES TO ESTABLISH BELONGING

- Introduce yourself, and be as personal as you feel comfortable being.
- Use students names when responding to posts, comments, and emails.
- Connect students with each other whenever possible, and encourage cross-class connections when you see them emerge.
- Establish a communication policy (email, forums) that you are comfortable with and stick with it.
- Make space in lectures, office hours, and forum posts to talk about things that aren't coursework.

# BE PRESENT AND BE YOU

- Weekly video blogs that you record “live.”
- Audio / video feedback tools.
- Videoconferencing for optional office hours, but also for one-on-one essay or project conferences.
- If you have a professional / public facing social media (eg. Twitter), consider sharing it.

# MAKE ROOM FOR CONNECTIONS

- Set up spaces for students to connect and chat.
  - Consider providing an open videoconferencing space available so students can use it without your presence.
  - Set up a discussion board called something like “Breaktime Chat” where students can freely engage each other as they would in class (pet photos always get huge response).
- In these spaces, *participate* but do not *moderate* (unless something egregious happens).

# GROUP WORK CAN CONNECT STUDENTS

- Use groups to create more intimate discussion spaces where students can get to know each other.
  - Set some forums so students have spaces where they only read/react to group members.
  - Once established, this space can also be used for peer review, group assignments, and reflective practice.
- (I know students tell us they hate group work. But what they really hate is **badly designed** group work. Rubrics, group expectations, and accountability can help.)
- Allow students to have agency over their collaboration – they don't necessarily have to use our tools for everything.



**REMEMBER:**

CARE IS NOT THE OPPOSITE OF RIGOUR.

CARE AND COMMUNITY IN REMOTE TEACHING CONTEXTS

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

21



# WHILE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT CARE...

- How can you build care into the design of your course?
- Do your classroom policies reflect our current moment? It's not a matter of “easing up,” but one of reflecting the reality of this moment back to students.
  - For example, medical excuse notes are not an appropriate ask.
  - Consider building extensions, flexibility, and reflection on process into the assignment design.
  - Likewise, reflect care back to yourself: what does this course look like if **you** become ill, or have to care for someone who is?

# LET'S CONNECT.

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