

Ourselves

When we approach technology projects – either as an individual or part of a larger community – there are many things we need to take into account. There is one domain that has the potential to be overlooked in the grand scheme of things, but it is perhaps the most foundational essence of creation:

Who am I and how do I relate?

Our individuality makes its mark through our communities – friends, family, neighbors. How we envision ourselves within technology informs how we will approach not only the problem at hand, but the ways we navigate ourselves. We cannot build equitable systems by ourselves through nothing but isolation and grit.

By grounding ourselves within this time and space, we can build relationships outside of ourselves. Our continued growth – and our shifting place with our community – depends on the moments we take to reflect. We connect ourselves to something greater.

“ Do you already know that your existence — *who and how you are* — is in and of itself a contribution to the people and place around you? Not after or because you do some particular thing, but simply the miracle of your life. And that the people around you, and the place(s), have contributions as well? Do you understand that your quality of life and your survival are tied to how authentic and generous the connections are between you and the people and place you live with and in?

— adrienne maree brown

Who Am I?

- Objective: In this assignment, learners will

Create a summary document appraising the skills and values they bring to teaching

Identify potential barriers to becoming a successful instructor

Analyze their positionality in relation to teaching in an information setting

Reflection is a very useful learning process, though it is also one of the most difficult. For many of us, it feels like there simply isn't time to step back and think--about some incident at the workplace, where we want to be instead of where we are, how we got here, what steps we should take next. Chances are, you could make time, but you're not prioritizing it: reflection means not only looking at things that went well, but also things that perhaps could have gone differently and that can be very uncomfortable.

Well, welcome to the discomfort zone: you're going to be reflecting this quarter. Ultimately, the question you're going to be reflecting on is "who do I want to be as a teacher?" but we're going to take it in stages.

- What you bring also includes looking at your positionality: how do various aspects of your identity influence how you see, and as a teacher, how you shape your world? There's a good graphic overview of the concepts of intersectionality, positionality, and privilege here.
- You'll no doubt come up with some pinch points/barriers in your reflection, as well: what's keeping you from being who you want to be as a teacher? That could range from lack of opportunity to a list of specific skills you want to learn, to a more vague feeling of dread when you think about talking to a group of people. Identifying those challenges is important, as those challenges can become opportunities to learn, grow, and move forward.
- What you bring to teaching/instruction planning--skills, values, hopes
What is your positionality in terms of teaching? What parts of your identity influence your work?
Perceived obstacles to who you want to be as a teacher--and what opportunities you want to see in this course that can help remove those barriers
- Technology can feel exclusionary
- Personal skills
- We learn that factors beyond our control determine the quality of our lives—something as random as which skin, gender, sexuality, ability, nation, or belief system we are born into sets a path for survival and quality of life.
- there's no "right" answer here, as you each bring something different to this endeavor, and have varying goals.
- We learn to be quiet, polite, indirect, and submissive, not to disturb the status quo.
- In the United States specifically, though I see this most places I travel, we learn that we only have value if we can produce—only then do we earn food, home, health care, education.
- Who are you? Have you asked yourself recently? What is it that you do? Who do you do it for? What drives you?
- Curiosity
- intentional
- adaptation: a change in a plant or animal that makes it better able to live in a particular place or situation; the process of changing to fit some purpose or situation: the process of adapting intention: the thing that you plan to do or achieve: an aim or purpose
- Radical optimism

- Can you appreciate yourself, so that you can appreciate others and their own complex relationship with reality.
- Do you know where you are in your journey and have you taken time to appreciate the journey? Before you can see and appreciate someone else's progress, you must first acknowledge that you yourself have changed and embrace it.

What Am I Doing?

- Winner, L. (2004). "Technologies as forms of life." In Kaplan, D M. (Ed.) *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*. Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 103-113. [Winner - Technologies as forms of life.pdf](#)
- Running a server can take a wide array of technical and design skills, but it can also take curiosity and a compassion.
- We are each capable of so many things when given the time and space to work through understanding our relationship with something new. Something might seem scary until you try it out and realize the similarities to something you're already doing or already know.
- Thinking skills
- Critical thinking
- Logical thinking : if this then that. These are the core fundamentals of the way computers think.
- Basic understanding of how to use a computer and ideally install software.
- Know how to install a computer networking device, such as plug in a computer to a router.
- For any server hardware modifications, you might need to be able to change a graphics card or install a hard drive.
- Troubleshooting problems : how to systematically work through a problem to know which avenues you can explore to attempt a fix. If the Internet isn't working, is it on just one computer or is it every device? Are your neighbors Internet out?
- Modular thinking
- Systems thinking
- Designer
- Developer
- Administrator
- Steward
- Custodian
- What is the difference between a designer and developer? A developer works on the foundations that create something while designers look into the ways these foundations work as part of a system. Many people perform both roles, often without even realizing it. Baking vs decorating a cake.

How Do I Navigate?

- [SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach](#) (2014) (p. 10-11 "Six Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach")
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, (1), Article 1.
<https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/18630>
- Arellano Douglas, Veronica. (2020). ["Moving from Critical Assessment to Assessment as Care."](#) *Communications in Information Literacy*, 14 (1), 46-65. [UW Catalog](#)
- Less on point. More on purpose.
- How do I handle change, especially emergent change?
- We learn to disrespect Indigenous and direct ties to land.
- What you pay attention to grows. emergent strategy
- We learn to compete with each other in a scarcity-based economy that denies and destroys the abundant world we actually live in.
- We learn to deny our longings and our skills, and to do work that occupies our hours without inspiring our greatness.
- Perhaps the most egregious thing we are taught is that we should just be really good at what's already possible, to leave the impossible alone.
- Growth mindset. We will make mistakes but that is how we learn.
- Transformation doesn't happen in a linear way, at least not one we can always track. It happens in cycles, convergences, explosions. If we release the framework of failure, we can realize that we are in iterative cycles, and we can keep asking ourselves—how do I learn from this?
- A fractal is a never-ending pattern. Fractals are infinitely complex patterns that are self-similar across different scales. They are created by repeating a simple process over and over in an ongoing feedback loop. Emergent strategy
- Never a failure, always a lesson.*° emergency strategy
- Change is constant. (Be like water). Emergent strategy
- It's okay to try again from scratch
- Assessing your limits and knowing when to step away. this may be frustrating and you may be discouraged, but we can always approach again later
- We learn as children to swallow our tears and any other inconvenient emotions, and as adults that translates into working through red flags, value differences, pain, and exhaustion.
- We learn that tests and deadlines are the reasons to take action. This puts those with good short-term memories and a positive response to pressure in leadership positions, leading to urgency-based thinking, regardless of the circumstance.
- We learn that the natural world is to be manicured, controlled, or pillaged to support our consumerist lives. Even the natural lives of our bodies get medicated, pathologized, shaved or improved upon with cosmetic adjustments.
- Do you let yourself be yourself, or is that something just below the mask you share with the world?

How Do I Communicate?

- It troubleshooting for users
- Communicating needs
- Transparency and accountability
- Ant societies function through individual ants acting collectively in accord with simple, local information to carry on all of their survival activities. Every ant relies on the work of others in producing their own work. Cooperative work. Collective. Sustainability. Emergent strategy
- Decentralization: the dispersion or distribution of functions or powers, the delegation of power.
- Interdependence is mutual dependence between things. If you study biology, you'll discover that there is a great deal of interdependence between plants and animals. "Inter-" means "between," so interdependence is dependence between things, the quality or condition of being interdependent, or mutually reliant, on each other.
- Starlings. The synchronized movement patterns of a starling flock is also known as a murmuration. Guided by simple rules, starling murmurations can react to their environment as a group without a central leader orchestrating their choices; in any instant, any part of the flock can transform the movement of the whole flock. Collective leadership/partnership. Adaptability.
- Similarly, we learn our organizations are only as successful as our fundraising results, whether the community impact is powerful or not.
- We learn to bond through gossip, venting, and destroying, rather than cultivating solutions together.
- We learn to manipulate each other and sell things to each other, rather than learning to collaborate and evolve together.
- How to design an information query
- Getting support on a forum or within a community
- How to ask questions
- There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have.*® Find it. Emergent strategy
- Trust the People. (If you trust the people, they become trustworthy) .* Emergent strategy
- This is a space where everyone deserves to have their voices and needs heard. Open source software is intended to get a democratic space
- Your choices affect your community and your ecosystem
- Empathy
- Healing
- Building trust
- Ask for and receive what you need
- Love may seem silly. But it is the root of compassion and care. It leads to passion for what we do and strive to support those we care for. While this is leveraged in the creation of technology, it is

- Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass—build the resilience by building the relationships. Emergent strategy

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