

Emergence, Curiosity, and Care in a Community of Practice on Access, Inclusion, and Place-Based Teaching and Learning

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Land acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather today and undertook much of this learning is the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of Syilx (Okanagan) Peoples, and we acknowledge the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) People upon whose land UBC Vancouver resides.





Community of Practice Structure

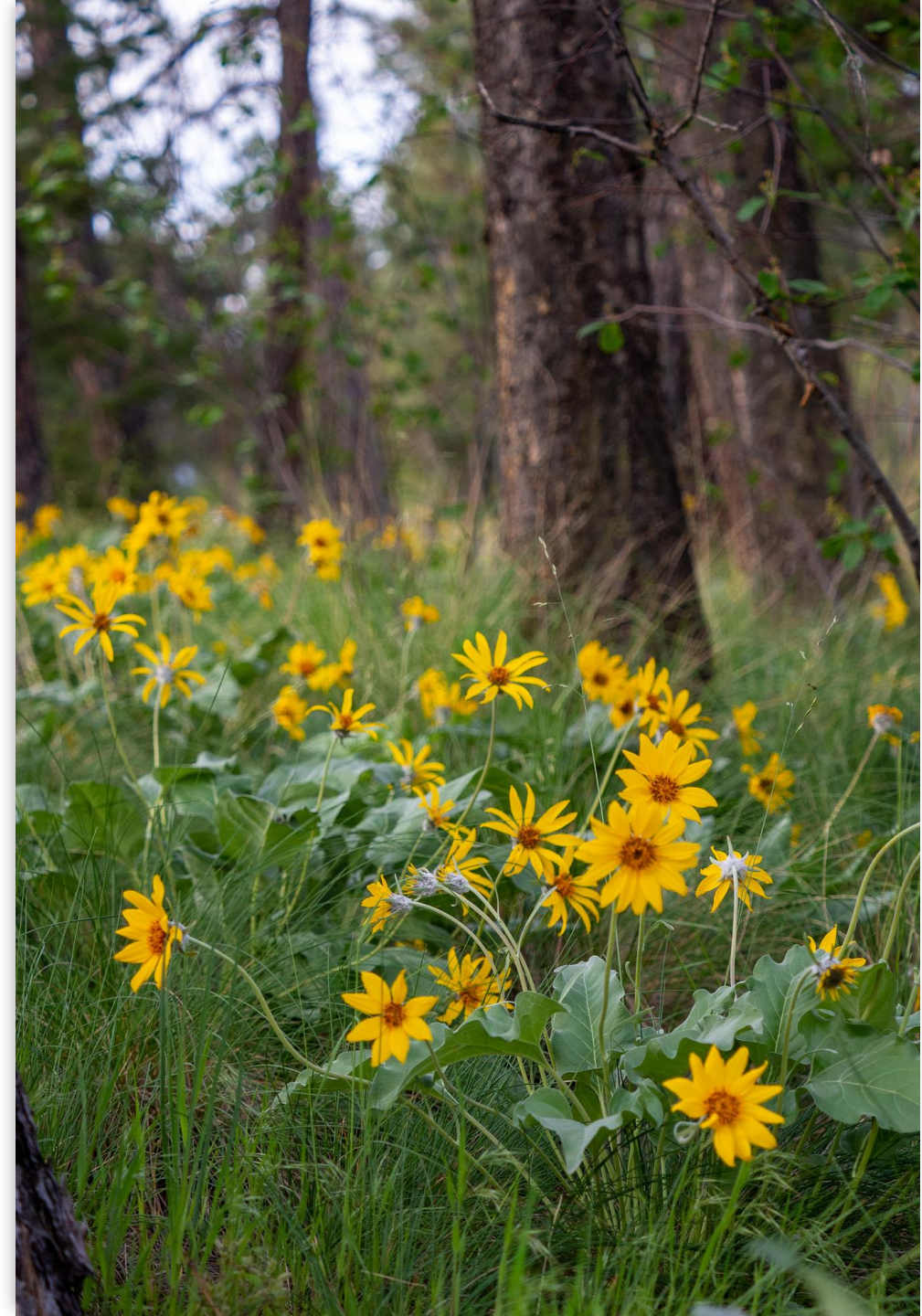
- **Why:** To create supportive space for reflection on access, inclusion and place-based pedagogies
 - **Emergent:** *To connect with others across disciplines, roles and campuses, allowing for broader discussions of the topic from different perspectives.*
 - **Emergent:** *explore perspectives and approaches with participants as learners, within a framework where core values of access and inclusion were the focus*
- **Who:** highly diverse group of teaching-focused UBC Community members.
 - *Tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty,*
 - *In-class teachers and staff in diverse support roles,*
 - *Membership from both campuses.*
- **How:** Through reciprocal observation and individual reflection (not assessment!)
 - *Teaching Squares were used (Haave, 2014) and members were invited into each other teaching spaces (classrooms and/ or virtual)*
 - *Engagement took place over two terms, alleviating stress about scheduling, and enabling relationship building.*
 - *The community used flexible, adaptive and consultive scheduling, and hybrid meetings, which valued all members' participation*

CoP Experience: Relationships, Trust, Safety

We centred relationships and dialogue

Informed by ideas of: “**emergent strategy**”
as a theory of change (brown, 2017);
“**critical friendship**” as a practice
aligning with feminist care ethics in
academia (Sotiropoulou & Cranston,
2020)

Emergent and decentralized leadership and
facilitation presented us with **forms of
connection and action that we found
nourishing, hopeful, and impactful**





The concept of **emergent strategy**

- Centres quality of relationships and values relatively simple interactions in the process of transformation
- It is how we intentionally change in ways that grow our capacity to embody what we long for

"Species only survive if they learn to be community. Critical, deep and authentic connections [are] a thread that can be tugged for support and resilience"

Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds (adrienne marie brown)

The concept of critical friendship

Descriptions of critical friendship:

- "a trusted person who asks provocative questions"
- "a fresh pair of eyes"
- "a reflective partnership"

Educational literature on critical friendship

- Bambino (2002) suggests critical friend groups provide opportunities for colleagues to **challenge** both their peers' and their own work to **improve** their teaching practice
- Factors of effective critical friendship include "**trust**, shared **values** and purposes, **personal qualities**, communication and practical **action**" (Swaffield, 2005)



Teaching Squares: Observations and Sharing



We observed for the benefit of the observer, not the observee



We recognize that the experience was unique to each participant



The diversity in our group necessitated creativity in what, and how, we observed

Teaching Places and Spaces

Institutional work:

- Classrooms
- Campus-wide and institutional commitments
- Academic policies
- Deliberate strategy

Work that informs teaching:

- Curriculum design
- Disciplinary knowledge
- Facilitation strategies
- Knowledge of students
- Teaching and Learning services and resources
- Critical friendships
- Self-reflection

Expression of teaching in place:

- Learning space as content
- Content embedded in context
- Exploring positionalities
- Emergent inquiries
- Relationships

Place-based Approaches as Content and as Practice

Content

- Place as a term and concept in geography and the social sciences
- Examines connections between local and global, including how global changes are rooted and experienced at the local level (Yemini, Engel & Simon, 2023)
- Emphasizes the physical experience of learning *in place* (Yemini, Engel & Simon, 2023)
- Emphasis is on disciplinary practices and methodologies, as they relate to place

Practice

- Place as a socially constructed space
- Active learning in context: Students are, or create, the learning content
- Cultivating human connection
- Awareness of positionality
- Critical pedagogy, challenging settler colonialism
- Considering multiple worldviews
- Interdisciplinary

Thinking from Practices

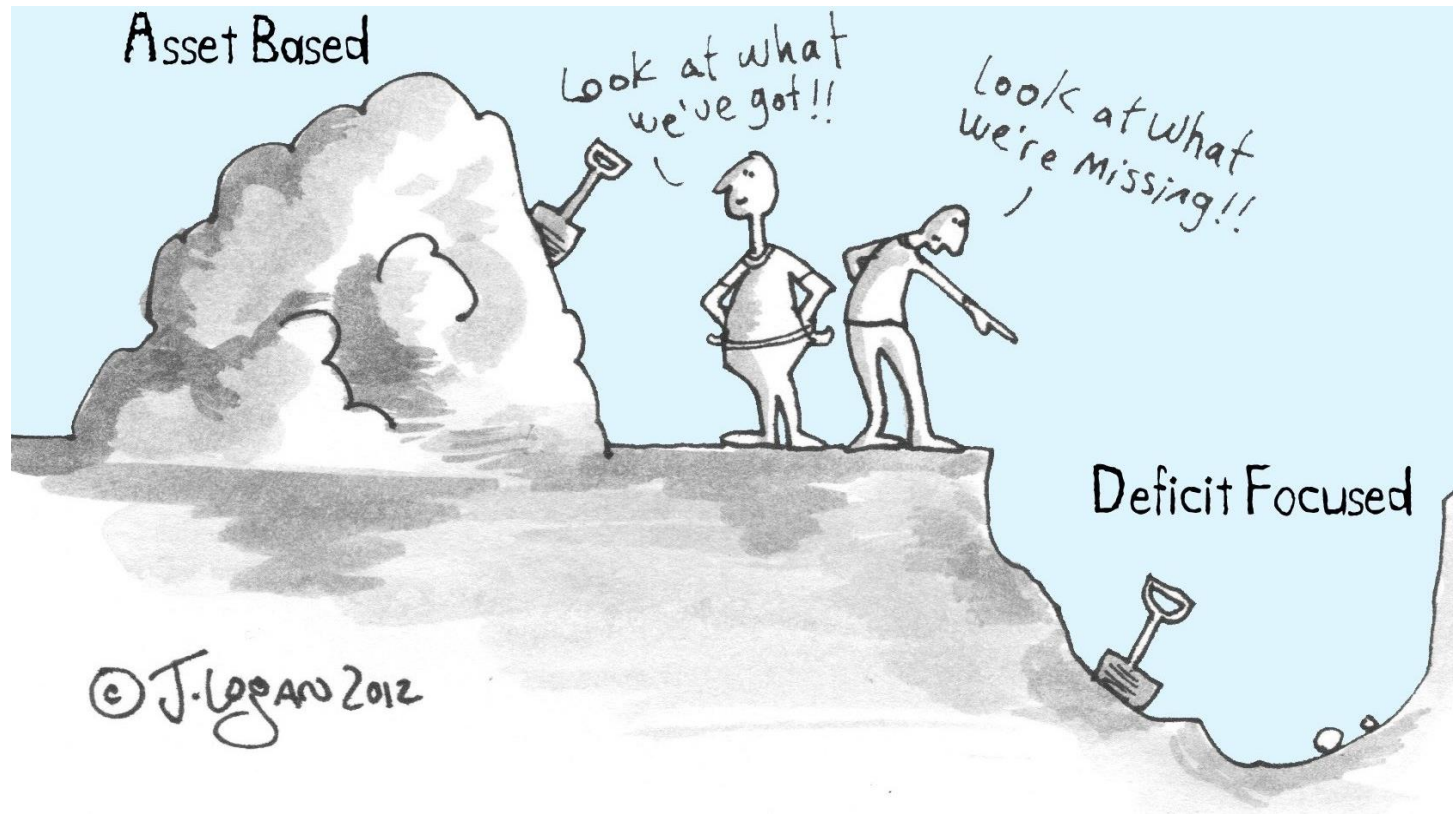


Meeting Format

Learning by doing, learning by observing, and learning in dialogue are the professional development pedagogies we hope are enacting and making space for through this community of practice.

- Centering **practice** in this community of practice – is a place-based approach!
 - Teaching practices are situated and embedded in **contexts** and **places**
- Putting *more* and **different** practices on the table
 - Adding **richness** and **lived experience** of a variety of teaching practices

Thinking from Practices



“We are socialized to see what is wrong, missing, off, to tear down the ideas of others and uplift our own. To a certain degree, our entire future may depend on learning to listen, listen without assumptions or defenses.”

- adrienne marie brown

Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds

Acknowledgements

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References

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