

January 19, 2017 (Journal #1)

The first time I ever meditated was last semester in Yoga class. I was actually quite nervous to meditate because of the cliché images seen in movies of monks with crazy hand mudras and chanting. And I wasn't really sure of the purpose of meditating. The instructor explained that meditation purified our aura and helped to cleans our chakras. The first time I ever sat to meditate in yoga class, I couldn't focus my mind on any one thing for more than a few seconds. Even as the instructor encouraged us to focus on our breath, I still felt my mind wandering and had a difficult time appreciating meditation.

By the next week when we meditated in class again, I had gotten better at letting my thoughts sort of drift away. I found it much easier to focus on my heartbeat rather than my breath which helped the thoughts dissolve away. I won't ever forget this particular meditation experience. As I was able to focus my mind more, I was able to sense the energy pulsing through my body. It was such a strong sensation that I felt like my entire body was swaying with each new pulse of energy. I remember feeling such a connection between my physical body and my energy body that I felt a bit empty as my eyes opened at the end of the meditation practice and that feeling disappeared.

January 24, 2017 (Journal #2)

I hope its okay to write about this experience since it is as much a yoga experience as it was a calming, aura cleansing, meditative experience. My husband bought me a month long pass to a local yoga studio. It's expensive, so I am trying to attend as often as possible to get my money's worth. Tonight I attended a class called "Chakra Yoga". Although it was called "yoga" it our practice focused lesson asana and was much more meditative. We set our intention (just as we do in meditation) and then spent the entire class drawing energy from the earth and the cosmos and directing it to our intention, our aches and pains in our physical body, and cleansing our chakras, and aura.

This was such a different type of yoga then what I am used to. I could feel the pulsing of energy like I usually do when I mediate, and my mind was actually pretty quiet and I was able to focus on my intention. At the end of class, the yoga instructor used tuning forks and aligned our chakras. I could feel the vibrations in my body each time she would hit the tuning fork. I get the chills even now as I write about it.

January 28, 2017 (Journal #3)

I can definitely tell that the meditation we do in this class is going to be very different from the meditation that I learned in yoga last semester. Although the meditation instructor is also a certified yoga instructor, her focus is less on the chakras and aura and energy body as I learned in yoga class last semester. This term our focus will be more on exercising our mind, our focus,

and being mindful and present. These feel like two very different ways to meditate. I'm trying to eliminate my biases and enjoy this new experience, but I am feeling a little bit disappointed.

Last semester, the yoga instructor touted the many benefits of meditation, specifically cleansing our aura, unblocking chakras, protecting ourselves from the negative energy of others, etc. Near the end of last semester, I was not in a good place, fighting depression and failing to manage various stressors in my life. During yoga class, we meditated and did some asanas to open our third eye. We then attempted to read the auras of our classmates. It was truly an amazing experience until my partner said she thought she was seeing my aura, but it was dark and black. I was deeply discouraged and knew I needed to cleanse my aura. I signed up for this meditation class with the hope that I would learn the tools necessary to cleanse my aura, unblock my chakras, etc. Without that focus on the energy body though, I'm afraid I won't get the results I am after.

February 7, 2017 (Journal #4)

My sister is a bit of a weird duck. She sees a naturalist doctor, she wears a labradorite necklace to keep her calm and focused, she feels the energy of loved ones who have passed away, she visits psychics, and she meditates. Honestly, as crazy as my sister is, she's everything I want to be. For many years she said she didn't need religion to be spiritual and have a relationship with her creator. I never knew what that meant until I became an adult and started to see the many faults with organized religion and began developing my own personal relationship with my creator. Whenever someone in the family is ill, mom will send out a message to us asking for prayers on behalf of ailing. My sister always responds that she'll mediate for them and send them energy. I love that so much!

Any way, I told my sister about my experience at Chakra Yoga, and invited her to join me for class tonight. She loved it so much and I was so very happy I could share this experience with her. She is much more practiced and experienced with her own mediation practice, so I asked her a lot of questions, wondering how she meditates, how she "sits". It was very interesting to hear about her own take on meditation. She's never taken a mediation class like me. She's never even taken a yoga class until tonight when I took her to chakra yoga. Maybe that's why I loved hearing what she had to say about her private mediation practice. She's not super structured, she doesn't have a specific place to sit, or even a specific room in her house in which she meditates. It is so different from what I have heard about meditation, but it really works for her.

February 9, 2017 (Journal #5)

I tried something new tonight. I downloaded a guided meditation that came highly recommended. Since I always have such a difficult time keeping my mind focused during meditation, I thought it would be a good idea to have someone talking to me, prompting me to focus on specific things. It was truly an amazing experience. In focusing on the words of the guided meditation, I was able to let go of my thoughts and really fall into a deep trance-like

state of mind. I felt so relaxed. My mind felt sort of foggy like I was floating in the clouds. Even now, I'm still feeling a sort of euphoria from entering such a calm state of mind. Physically my body is energized even though my mind feels calm and at peace. I am definitely looking forward to trying out some other guided meditations!

February 15, 2017 (Journal #6)

I downloaded some new apps today to help with my meditation practice. A friend recommended binaural beats. After doing some research, I discovered that binaural beats quickly get the brain into the same state as years of meditation practice. When we calm our minds through meditation our minds calm to alpha and theta brain waves, but successful meditation can take years to master. Binaural beats can help your brain reach these meditative brain waves much quicker.

I'm not really sure what I was expecting, but these sounds are weird. If nothing else, they will block out any other sounds and be one less distraction for my mind to worry about while meditating. I'll try these binaural beats for a few days and see how it goes.

February 20, 2017 (Journal #7)

I have been using the binaural beats for a few days and they do seem to help my feel calm and relaxed much quicker. I was doing the lake mediation for Jon Kabat-Zinn's book and I had my headphones in my ear, listening to these binaural beats. Because the sounds in my headphones blocked out other sounds, and helped me enter the calming brainwave states of meditation, I didn't hear my son get out of bed. He came and sat next to me on the couch and it took several minutes for me to become aware of his presence. A few days later he asked me what I was doing and I told him I was mediating and listening to some sounds to help me fall asleep. He said it looked like my mind was melting out of my ears. Haha! I guess that means I was nice and relaxed.

February 22, 2017 (Journal #8)

The following journal entry is the book report for "Wherever You Go There You Are" by Jon Kabat-Zinn.

Question 1:

I moonlight as a college student, but my day job is a school teacher at a public high school. I'm fairly new at this job, having spent over a decade as a retail manager. In both, entirely unrelated fields, I have seen a commonality in human behavior. Everyone, myself included, is distracted, never fully present, never fully aware, never fully in the moment.

I have witnessed this distraction as the teenagers I employed at the store would send dozens of text messages while collecting carts outside, despite our strict no cell phones policy. The cashiers would never really listen to a guest's concerns asking them "Are you a member of our rewards program?" when the guest was still answering the "did you find everything okay" question. The same issues I saw at the grocery store appeared in my new teaching career.

Students are so focused on their vibrating phones updating them on the next move in their game, the next trending topic on twitter, or the newest snap from their bff that they forget to listen to the teacher, jot down some notes, and study for an important exam. And this isn't a problem with only students. I have sat through many a staff meeting where I witness adult professionals on their tablets playing solitaire, visiting with colleagues, and snoozing in the back row instead of actively listening to the updated school policy and data review

These are prime examples of what mindfulness is not. The author describes mindfulness as purposeful attention, being present in the moment, and an increased awareness and consciousness in our every day actions. Mindfulness is "a practical way to be more in touch with the fullness of your being through a systematic process of self-observation, self-inquiry, and mindful actions." In short, mindfulness is an effort to live in the moment by limiting distractions and appreciating each moment for what it has to offer. The result in this mindfulness is improved relationships with ourselves, our loved ones, and the world in general. As I mentioned, my own experiences with mindfulness have been non examples as I witness students and adults succumbing to distractions. I myself am also guilty of not living in the moment. It is easy to let ourselves be distracted with the entire world at our fingertips. I read an article recently about a student who was supposed to be writing a research paper for a class. She began her research with a google search that led to funny internet meme. She received a message from her friend telling her to check out the trending topic on twitter. Soon her research paper was buried under instant messaging apps, email, and multiple internet tabs, none of which got her any closer to researching her paper. With the entire internet at our command, it is easy to become distracted. Technology isn't solely to blame for our lack of mindfulness, though it certainly is a wicked contributor to our distractions.

After reading the book "Wherever You Go There You Are" by Jon Kabat-Zinn, I have made a conscious effort limit my own distractions. For Christmas I got an apple watch which connects my phone to my body. As soon as I get a message, my wrist is buzzing to alert me of this newest distraction. I simply flick of my wrist and I can connect with the world, staying updated on the latest news updates, text messages, etc. Recently though, I have made an effort to quiet the notifications, turning my device to do not disturb or airplane mode during the day. If I am going to preach to my students the necessity of staying focused on the topic at hand, putting away cell phones, and being engaged in the material, I realized I needed to make an effort to limit my own distractions to be an example to them.

One advantage to the apple watch, however, is that it reminds me every 5 hours to take a minute to breathe. These notifications remind me to stop what I am doing, breathe, and live in the moment. Not only am I able to be an example to my students by limiting my own technological distractions, I have been more mindful, taking the time several times a day to just breathe, focusing on my breath, the sounds, and life that is happening around me. It isn't easy, life pulls in a hundred different directions, it seems. But surely, my own sanity is worth one whole minute a few times each day.

Question 2:

I first learned about meditation in a yoga class. The instructor taught us to combine meditation with visualization, though the visualization was focused on the yogic chakras and energy body.

I enjoyed reading about different visualization techniques in part 2 of the book. I was particularly fond of the Mountain Meditation visualization technique.

As I mediated with the mountain visualization, I felt very in tune with the earth. I felt grounded and I could feel the energy flowing from the earth and through my body. As I visualized my mountain and then brought the mountain to me using my mind's eye, I could feel my own strength in my body. I felt rooted to the earth, both in a physical sense, and through the energy that came from the earth. The mountain is firm, never changing. The surface of the mountain may change with the seasons, being covered with snow, or green with spring renewal. But the mountain itself remains steadfast and firm. As various thoughts would pop up through this particular sitting, I imagined them coming and going, just as the various seasons affecting the changes on the surface of the mountain. This visualization was easy to focus on and provided a way to process the thoughts that came up by portraying them within that visualization.

As I attempted the Lake Meditation, I found myself too distracted. Water is strong, and even steadfast in that it is always settling down, though the flexibility of water and the lake visualization allowed for easier distractibility. I found myself following my thoughts for a longer period of time before I could let them go. I observed them less and felt them more while practicing the lake visualization.

Question 3:

Karma can be described in many ways. In a way, Karma is like Newton's third law of motion for the metaphysical, spiritual, and emotional world. Newton's third law of motion states for each action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. A biblical passage cautions its readers that we reap what we sow, and even children are taught the golden rule to do unto others as you would have others do to you. Each of these is a classic example of Karma. Our actions beget consequences. If our actions are positive and helpful, the consequences of our actions will result in positivity. Conversely, if our actions are negative and selfish, the consequences will reflect that.

Although we talked about Karma in yoga class prior to meditation, I never really made the connection about how Karma can be influenced by meditation. Kabat-Zinn reminds us that the best way to change our Karma is actually not with good positive actions in the hopes of receive good positive consequences. Rather, the best way to influence Karma is through sitting in meditation. "When you sit, you are not allowing your impulses to translate into action." We sit and observe our impulses, we understand ourselves better, and a great deal of energy is burned off of these impulses simply by observing them.

Kabat-Zinn goes on to add, "At the same time, creative insights and creative impulses are no longer squeezed out so much by the more turbulent destructive ones." Not only is the energy of our negative impulses burned off through sitting, in sitting, our creative impulses are able to thrive due to the dwindling energy of the negative thoughts and impulses. To me, mindfulness affects our intentions, which has a stronger overall impact than changing our actions. Mindfulness makes us more aware. Without practicing mindfulness, we are ignorant and our karma is unlikely to ever change for the better.

February 28, 2017 (Journal #9)

The first time I ever meditated was in a yoga class. The instructor told us the purpose of mediation was to cleans auras, open and align chakras, and purify our energy. She said it was the quickest way to unblock chakras, to open our third eye, and to become enlightened. She described setting up an altar for meditation, explaining that our energy from our practice would be preserved in the space and held within the objects displayed on the altar, so we should always meditate in the same place. She encouraged we set up our altar so we could mediate facing north or east. I definitely value these early meditation experiences, though in hindsight, I understand that they set the bar for meditation extremely high. I was very intimidated to meditate because I didn't have a proper location for an east facing altar, nor did I have a lot of time in which I could guarantee my children would remain quiet and not intrude on my solitude.

After reading the book "Wherever You Go There You Are" by Jon Kabat-Zinn, I recognize how silly I was for avoiding meditation. Mediation doesn't have to be so intense and structured as it was initially explained. Mediation is about being mindful of your surroundings, your body, the environment, and the experiences. Mediation is more about simply turning the volume down on the busy day to day stressors so we don't get so caught up in life that we forget to actually experience it. It's still hard for me to always stay still and focused, but I'll get better because I'm not so intimidated to "sit" as I was before.

March 3, 2017 (Journal #10)

I met with my family today and my sister gave me my belated birthday present! She's going to turn me into a hippie just like her, and I'm so excited. After attending chakra yoga together, we have both been very open with each other sharing our experiences, our beliefs, and we have grown as individuals and as sisters. She bought me some stones, similar to the ones she has. She has her labradorite necklace and a moonstone among other stones which carry a certain energy. These keep her calm, focused, energized, and help her get through her day. She got me my own labradorite, tigers eye, and amethyst stones. Each has their own purpose, and she gave me lots of ideas on how I can use the energy in these stones for daily challenges. So I happy I have a hippie, weird duck sister to share these experiences with!

March 10, 2017 (Journal #11)

I saw my own funeral recently. In all of the guided meditations that I have done, I have not yet experienced my own funeral. It was an interesting, very telling experience. In our visualizations, we were told that someone was at our funeral, and their presence surprised us. I visualized an estranged friend. At the end of class, the instructor explained whoever we visualized was likely someone with whom we had unfinished business. This bit of info struck me to the core. This unfinished business was my own doing, and I felt a sudden urgency to resolve our problems and reconcile our differences.

I reached out to my friend and our interaction was short but pleasant. After some time, we re-connected on the phone, catching up on all things good and bad since our last parting. I

apologized for the role I played in our unhappy parting. We exchanged apologies and forgiveness and all was made well. We no longer speak, having parted due to irreconcilable differences. But this parting is no longer painful and full of angst. There is no longer unfinished business. I'm very grateful for having visualized my own funeral so I could move on from this experience.

March 20, 2017 (Journal #12)

My colleagues know about my meditation and yoga practice, and while some think I am quite weird, others are curious and want to know more. One colleague is nearing completion of her yoga instructor certification. We have talked a great deal about starting a yoga/mediation club at school to help teach our students healthy ways to deal with stress and anxiety.

Another colleague, and a very good friend is struggling with a lot of emotions due to some very challenging drama in her personal life. She came to me for advice and I encouraged her to meditate. I let her borrow my "Wherever You Go There You Are" book and told her the specific sections of the book that would help her the very most. I am by no means a professional meditator, but I am happy that I haven't shied away from sharing my meditation experiences with others so when this friend needed something to help her get through the tough times, she knew I had tools I could share that would help her out. I only hope she finds mediation as helpful as I have.

March 22, 2017 (Journal #13)

The following journal entry is the "Loving Kindness" exercise.

Exercise 1:

What arose in your mind as you sent metta to yourself? Describe any images or feelings that arose during this phase of the meditation.

As is common in the Western culture, I lack a love for myself. I am confident in my abilities and I recognize my talents and even appreciate my intelligence. But that doesn't translate to a love for myself. I did not find it difficult to send metta to myself, although I experienced some intense feelings for the first time that I can remember. I felt like there was a light inside me that was growing brighter the more I wished happiness and love and health and safety for myself. I felt an inner peace and confidence and strength that is hard to describe. It just felt like a ball of energy and light in my soul was ignited. It was such an enjoyable feeling, that I stayed in this stage of the metta meditation for quite some time.

Exercise 2:

Imagine yourself sitting in the center of a circle, surrounded by the most loving people you know or have heard of. All of them are sending metta to you. What is your experience of this visualization?

I am quite comfortable with being the center of attention as it is a regular part of my job. Although, my students are rarely sending metta, and instead are laughing at me for my silly jokes, glaring daggers at me for the homework I just assigned, or silently pleading with me to not call on them to answer the question I just asked. This whole self love and sending metta to myself is still a relatively new concept, that the idea of sitting in the center of a circle and being the recipient of metta from the most kind and loving people I know is rather difficult to wrap my head around. Why is it that I can handle being the center of negative attention, yet the idea of being the center of lovingkindness is so difficult to accept?

Exercise 3:

Describe the process you underwent in finding a benefactor to whom to send metta.

I simply thought of the person who loves me unconditionally, supports me in all of my endeavors, and would do anything to see me be happy. This person is also a loved one, but was chosen as a benefactor simply for the amount of time and love and energy this individual invests in me and my happiness.

Exercise 4:

Describe how you went about finding a neutral person to use in your metta practice.

I thought of all of the nameless people in my life. I interact with many people every day. Most of them are students or parents or colleagues or my own family and loved ones. But I almost always have at least one interaction with someone whose name I haven't yet learned. It isn't to say they aren't important, it simply means I haven't learned their name and made them important in my own life. Specifically for this exercise, I chose the nameless individual who helped me with my parking pass. This person deals with difficult people (I know because he dealt with me two weeks ago when I was being very difficult) and could certainly benefit from metta.

Exercise 5:

Describe the easiest and most difficult parts of this practice.

The most difficult part for me was choosing just one individual for my good friend or loved one to send metta to. How could I ever choose between my two children and husband? Not to mention expanding that circle to sisters and friends and grandparents, etc. I suppose the solution is simply to practice metta meditation more often so each of my friends and loved ones can be the focus of lovingkindness.

The whole meditation was actually quite easy for me. I appreciated having a specific structure for my sitting, and it really felt great to send and receive metta from myself and to focus my love and energy on others. It was such a positive experience for me.

Exercise 6:

What was your experience of working with a difficult person? Did you include yourself with that person when sending metta?

My sister has been estranged for a year. I still love her and am sad about the divide between us. Despite my efforts to reach out, little progress has been made in repairing our relationship. Because I love my sister so much, it was easy to make her the focus of lovingkindness, so I did not need to include myself when sending metta to her.

Exercise 7:

Describe your experience of moving from the finite (yourself, the benefactor, and so on) to the infinite (all beings everywhere).

In each of the previous stages of the meditation, there was a name or at least a face that I could focus on sending metta to. But as I moved from the finite to the infinite, it was rather difficult to just send metta without a specific recipient. So this was the time when I switched from “you” to “we” and included myself in sending metta. “All beings everywhere” is so broad. I visualized the entire planet, the people across the world, the bugs on the ground, and the plants that support life.

Exercise 8:

Describe your experience in working with pairs of opposites or complementary sets (men/women, rich/poor, and so on). Did you encounter resistance? Fear? Curiosity?

I focused more on complementary sets rather than pairs of opposites. I broke up “all beings everywhere” to be humans, animals, plants, bugs, and spirits. In my mind, this was a complementary yet complete set that helped me to focus and visualize the recipient of my metta.

March 29, 2017 (Journal #14)

Something really awful happened at the school where I teach. A student at our school committed suicide. I taught her only once as I subbed for another teacher, but she was very memorable. Later, when we’d see each other in the halls, we’d greet each other politely. She was the teacher’s aide for my colleague whose room neighbors mine, so I saw this young woman on a very regular basis. We interacted a few times and I helped her with her work during after school tutoring on a few occasions. It was a huge surprise to us all that she would take her own life. My colleague was understandably upset. We often grow quite close to our aides and my colleague was certainly feeling some intense emotions.

The following day, my colleague moved all of her desks to the sides of the room and had the students sit on the floor. She had a heart to heart with each of her classes, and she asked me to come over during my prep hour and meditate with the students. She wanted to teach them a way they could feel peace, work through emotions, and feel connected to one another.

It was an amazing experience. I talked to them a bit first, about different ways they can use mediation in their lives. I explained how to sit comfortably and how to place their hands. (It was very interesting to see them all shift their posture as I explained we should “sit with dignity”.) I encouraged them to focus on their breath. As I guided them through a short meditation, I told them to envision each thought or emotion that came up was sealed in a balloon so they could watch it float away. The emotion in the room was palpable and I envisioned the entire room filled with balloons floating to the ceiling and escaping the room. We only sat for maybe 5 minutes, but in that time, the students were more calm and focused and present than they had ever been.

Mediation is such a wonderful tool and I hope I can eventually help more kids at my school with yoga and meditation.

April 2, 2017 (Journal #15)

I ran a half marathon yesterday. My first one. I spent hours making sure my play list was perfect. I studied the course map and I knew the times when I would be the most tired, predicted my time for when I would encounter the steepest hills, and added my most energizing songs to that time frame. I was so ready for my run!

And then right around mile 1.5, I pull out my phone that is playing my music (the battery is already at 68%, so I remind myself to turn off wifi and other battery draining features). I snap a picture of the beautiful foggy scenery and just like that, my phone dies. I desperately fumble, trying to get it to turn back on, but nothing is working. I swear I just barely saw the battery percent in the 60s and suddenly it's drained after taking one picture? At mile 1.5?! Oh! I said so many swear words. So so so many swearwords! After another half mile, I try again and the phone still won't turn on. Finally I take the headphones from my ears, tuck the phone safely into my pocket and just keep going.

I started to notice things. I noticed my breathing. I pay attention to my breathing when I run, but only to time it with my steps which are timed to my music. Without my music, I was able to really focus on my breath. I decided to be present and live in the moment. The truth is I would never have such an amazing experience to be running a half marathon in the snow and fog in southern Utah. I started to be grateful that my phone died. Without my music to distract me, I was able to hear the sound of my feet on the pavement, the crackle of a nearby fire, the scurrying of a squirrel. I felt the snowflakes fall on my face, felt each breath filling my body with energy, and even felt the stiffness creeping into my tired feet.

I was grateful for my experiences with mindfulness and mediation because I felt like they helped me survive the remaining 11.6 miles of my race without my training music to keep me going.

April 12, 2017 (Journal #16)

Wow! I'm in love. With Yoga Nidra. The class tonight was really incredible. Our instructor spent a good 20 minutes or so talking about his experiences, yoga nidra, and opening it up for class feedback on their own experiences with yoga nidra. I was very grateful for the time he took to explain what we were getting ourselves into since we were going to "yoga" but it was in place of "meditation".

Honestly, I was hooked before we even began. As soon as he explained that one hour of yoga nidra was the equivalent of a four hour nap, I knew I would enjoy the class. And I did. I felt really relaxed. I didn't fall asleep, but I fell into that weird sort of in between state of consciousness and unconsciousness. The most valuable thing to me was when the instructor guided us to form a sanctuary. It was amazing how real it felt, the smell of the fire, the crackling of the embers, the chirping of the birds and the wind in the trees. But it was after class, when the instructor asked for class feedback again that I had an epiphany. A classmate commented on how much she loves her sanctuary and how easy it is to go to her sanctuary, yet she forgets to go there and feel that peace when life gets busy and stressful and she needs it the most. I am grateful for her comments and I hope I can remember to go to my own sanctuary when I need it the most.

I felt both completely relaxed and yet when it was all over, I felt reenergized. I would love to try this during the middle of the day when I'm feeling the most tired. Not only does my mind feel more focused, I feel calm and energetic. It really is an incredible feeling. I feel sad that I live so far away from this yoga studio, because I think I would like to go there just for yoga nidra.

April 30, 2017 (Journal #17)

Although I have already met the 16 entry requirement for the meditation journal, it feels unfinished without this final entry. I have thoroughly enjoyed this class. I have learned so many different ways to meditate and I have grown a lot in my own personal practice. I find I sit the best after I have done some yoga, and knowing this, it sometimes prevents me from meditating simply because I haven't made time for yoga beforehand. Even though I don't sit as long or as often as I would like, I meditate on my own regularly, and I fully intend to continue to practice, and hope to even be more consistent this summer.

My biggest take away from this class was LovingKindness Meditation. Metta Meditation was life changing for me. I have learned to love myself, and in doing so, I can send metta to all those around me. I also truly loved Yoga Nidra, and hope to have more opportunities to practice yoga nidra.

My initial desire for taking this class was to cleans my aura and purify my chakras so I could be a better yoga student in preparation for earning my certification to teach. But now that its over, I am walking away with something greater. Before I wanted to become a yoga instructor so I

could bring yoga to the students at my school. But now, I want to bring them meditation as well as yoga. Meditation doesn't have to be a spiritual experience, and I know that today's youth could greatly benefit from stilling their minds, being mindful and present, and connecting to the world around them. I am so grateful for this class and all I have learned.