



Journal of Contemplative & Holistic Education

Call for Submissions for a Special Issue

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Issue Title:

Contemplative Classrooms (K-12) for Wisdom and Peace: Theories, Curricula, Pedagogies, and Practices

Educational goals in many countries focus strongly on economic advancement, and skills development for the labor market has been an increasingly important part of educational programs in modern societies. However, it is essential to build schools that encourage students to love who they are with no need to feel superior or inferior, who can embrace everyone and each other, and who can touch others' hearts with love, empathy, and kindness, regardless of where they live or come from. This focus should be at the core rather than at the periphery of education so as to promote students' happiness and holistic growth. Students have greater resilience to overcome challenges when they are nurtured in environments where they can bring out more reflective, contemplative, and compassionate characteristics (Bang & Collet, 2021, Bang & Montgomery, 2012). These characteristics essentially describe *wise* human beings. We at JCHE see the cultivation of wise human beings as a very important educational aim. Thus, in this special issue, we call for submissions that address contemplative K – 12 classroom pedagogies and practices that can encourage and support students to become wise human beings. In particular, we, the special issue editors, are interested in learning about reflective, compassionate, contemplative, and holistic school programs that fulfill this goal.

What is Wisdom?

Part of the challenge in defining and using the term *wisdom* is cultural. For example, from a Western perspective, Weststrate and Gluck (2017) define wisdom as "...a body of experience-based knowledge about the fundamental issues of human life that is both broad and deep, and implicit and explicit. Wisdom manifests outwardly in the form of exceptional advice-giving, decision making, and problem-solving capacities" (p. 800). Similarly, Baltes and Staudinger (2000) identify wisdom as a knowledge-based system allowing moral judgment as well as technical judgment. However, from Eastern perspectives, wisdom includes not only cognitive but also affective, metacognitive, and motivational qualities, such as determination to be virtuous, compassionate, empathic, and of benefit to others (Bang, 2015; Bang & Montgomery, 2012). Wisdom in many forms has been a large part of educational goals in many ancient societies and indigenous cultures. However, wisdom has not been considered an important educational objective in contemporary societies, perhaps due to the complex and multi-dimensional functions of wisdom, but more likely due to competing educational demands within an increasingly knowledge-based economy. According to many studies (Ardelt, 2013; Bang & Collet, 2021; Bang & Montgomery, 2013), wisdom is more than simply cognitive functions (decision-making and problem-solving). It needs to go through a reflective, contemplative, and conscious process with a virtuous and healthy mind that is not disturbed by negative internal and

external matters (Bang, 2020). Wisdom also includes empathy, compassion, and other virtues that, with the right intention, benefit others (Bang, 2020). It also requires boundless patience and acceptance, and committed practice (Bang, 2020). Thus, it is timely to re-think the kinds of wisdom in education that can address these qualities. The editors of this special issue believe that contemplative education is a particularly important component of wisdom education.

What is Contemplative Education?

Contemplation cultivates wisdom (Bang, 2020). While contemplation is usually understood to be an act of deep thinking, according to Confucian understanding, contemplation is at the heart of ethical commitments to community life (Yu, 2007), which seek to benefit others and the community (Walsh, 2015). Contemplative Education (CE) centers around classroom activities that enhance not only deep, reflective thinking but also ethical dispositions based on the cultivation of heart qualities (affectivity). Roeser and Peck (2009) define Contemplative Education as “a set of practices that may foster particular forms of awareness in students, forms conducive to the conscious motivation and regulation of learning, and also to freedom and transcendence in life more generally” (p. 119). Chano (2012) emphasizes that CE includes “the experience of awareness, insight and compassion for oneself and others” through meditation and other practices (p. 106). To sum up, CE includes learning about inner selves, helping students to connect and observe their hearts, minds, emotions, and bodies to promote students’ awareness, insight, and perspectives (Black et al., 2009; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Jennings, 2008). CE had not been a typical part of the school curriculum in K-12 settings, though youth meditation programs have developed in countries such as England (Mindfulness in Schools Project), the USA (Mindful Schools and MindUP), Canada (Mindful Education), and India (The Alice Project) (Waters et al., 2015). Most programs on CE in K-12 school settings focus on mindfulness practices, including meditation programs (Zen, prayer, chanting, walking, sitting meditation, etc.) and yoga programs.

Research on Contemplative Education

Studies report the potential benefits of integrating contemplative practice into childhood education to foster development. For example, contemplative practices might increase self-regulation skills and emotional well-being, which might in turn promote cognitive function and learning (Butzer et al., 2015; Morgan & Abrahamson, 2016; Mettler et al., 2023; Shapiro et al., 2015), resilience (Zenner et al., 2014), build the ability to cope with stressors and childhood adverse exposers (Ortiz & Sibinga, 2017), endorse prosocial behaviors (Butzer et al., 2015), and help develop holistic and integrated human beings through psychological and social transformation (Kumar, 2013; Gunnlaugson et al., 2014, 2017, 2019). Further, integrating contemplative practice might help people to be happy, and pursue harmony and peace in their lives (Miller, 2014; Patel, 2023; Steel, 2014).

In this special issue, “Contemplative Classrooms (K-12) for Wisdom and Peace: Theories, Curricula, Pedagogies, and Practices,” we invite experts in the field to capture the realities, challenges, practices, and possibilities of K-12 CE classrooms from global as well as indigenous views, especially those that promote wisdom and peace.

Themes and questions for the special issue that we invite our contributors to consider include:

CE in contemporary education systems: Challenges, opportunities, and possibilities

- What are the realities and challenges in practicing CE in your education system?
- What are some opportunities and possibilities of CE in mainstream education?
- What are some opportunities and possibilities to include indigenous wisdom traditions in mainstream education?

CE pedagogies: Classroom activities and benefits for students, teachers, and schools

- What are classroom activities that can enhance consciousness, metacognition, empathy, compassion, and/or prosocial actions in CE and other curricular?
- How does CE benefit students in obtaining wisdom and peace?
- How can indigenous traditions impact wisdom and peace-building, and how can CE benefit from this?
- How might CE provide solutions for contemporary educational issues in school such as school bullying and violence, mental health problems among children and adolescents, internet addiction, and/or attention issues (ADHD), etc.?
- How does CE affect other curricula? Can CE co-exist with other curricula? How can educators see opportunities in working with rather than resisting CE?

More broadly, we welcome submissions that focus on:

1. Contemplative pedagogical frameworks and approaches that center the integration of the learner's mind, body, and heart.
2. Pedagogical and practice-oriented approaches for contemplative classrooms to promote students' wisdom and inner and social peace.
3. Examination of diverse contemplative, spiritual, holistic education traditions, and practices for cultivating holistic well-being and wisdom.
4. Theories of and practical approaches to somatic, cognitive, reflective, contemplative, emotional, intuitive, creative, relational, ecological, ethical, motivational, and spiritual aspects of learning.
5. Innovative pedagogies for inner growth and development such as meditation, mindfulness, qigong, tai chi, yoga, embodiment practices, Indigenous and land-based pedagogies, cultural rituals and ceremonies, music, dance and movement, storytelling, videography, the visual arts, and reflective writing (e.g., diaries, journals, essays, and poetry).
6. The intersections amongst contemplative inquiry, indigenous education, ecological education, and social justice activism with the aims of equity, compassion, wisdom, and peace.

Within the scope and aims of the journal, we embrace a range of submissions focused on contemplative classroom actions. The submission format is diverse, as we pursue both traditional (peer-reviewed academic research articles and reviews) as well as non-traditional or alternative formats, such as arts-based and multimedia essays, interviews with practitioners and spiritual teachers, and reviews of educational practices and events. We also welcome submissions in video and audio files that capture community voices, practitioner arts, and fieldnotes-based reflections

(see below for details).

Submission Types

Peer reviewed section

1. Research articles (APA style; approx. 4,000-6,000 words excluding references)
2. Reflective essays (approx. 1,500-3,000 words)
3. Arts-based essays (including video, sound-based, and multimodal components)

Editorial reviewed section

1. Interviews with practitioners, spiritual teachers, students and youth, among others
2. Voices and perspectives from community groups, organizers, activists, K-12 educators and practitioners (approx. 1,500-3,000 words)
3. Field notes (observational, experiential and practitioner-based commentaries; written, visual and audio formats accommodated)
4. Holistic education products and resources including exhibitions, graphic novels, children's books, websites, etc. (format: video or PDF file with captured photos). Please submit a short, written description, approximately 250 words that highlights the work, connection to literature, and some references if available for information sharing with our audience. Submit it in the "Abstract" section if you have a video format. Otherwise, include the information in the introduction section.
5. Video and audio/sound-based submissions including performative inquiries (dance, drama, music, etc.) (Video format: 3GP, ASX, AVI, F4V, FLV, MKV, MOV, MP4, MPG/MPEG, WMV; Audio format: AAC, AC3, AIF/AIFF, FLAC, M4A, MP3, WAV, WMA). Please submit a short, written description, approximately 250 words that highlights the work, connection to literature, and some references if available for information sharing with our audience in the "Abstract" section.
6. Creative Expressions (Creative works, projects, etc.)

Important Due Dates:

- **Abstract Submission:** January 15th 2025 (250-word abstracts). Submit your abstract via [submit article](#).
- Acceptance email: February 15th
- **Full manuscript/project submission:** May 15th
- First review: July 15th
- **Revision:** August 30th
- Second revision if needed: September 30th
- **Publication:** October-December 2025

Special Issue Editors:

Hyeyoung Bang, Bowling Green State University (hbang@bgsu.edu)

Jing Lin, University of Maryland, College Park (jinglin@umd.edu)

Heesoon Bai, Simon Fraser University (hbai@sfu.ca)

Deepa Srikantaiah, University of Maryland, College Park (dsrikant@umd.edu)

Charles Scott, Simon Fraser University (charles_scott@sfu.ca)

Denise McHugh University of Maryland, College Park (dmchugh@umd.edu)

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