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Contemplative Inquiry in Movement: Managing Writer's Block in Academic Writing

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This exploratory study stems from a meditation exercise in contemplative inquiry with trans-disciplinary researchers. A master's student with writers block was asked to perform body movements reflecting a thesis writing process over time. An interview with a phenomenological hermeneutic method was used to uncover the significance of the student's experience during the exercise, including bodily sensations, feelings, and thoughts. New embodied knowledge helped the student to enable identification and acceptance of both adverse and blocking information. By systematically using a "thinking in movement" approach after applying body movements, new self-confidence was generated in the writing process. The interpretation of the study is called the "Contemplation in Movement" (CIM), and is considered as a rite of passage. Due to the use of CIM as a rite of passage, the following processes occurred: acceptance, identification of emotions/inner space, body/mind expansion, body memories, bodily metaphors, and symbols. This study suggests that non-verbal ways of learning can be applied in research writing. The conclusion is that embodied knowledge after contemplative inquiry with body movements may be helpful both in student supervision and in the research writing process to move through obstacles in the academic writing process.

Keywords: *Academic writing, contemplative inquiry in movement, embodied knowledge, phenomenological-hermeneutic, procrastination, writer's block*

Writer's block is a common obstacle in student thesis writing (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown 1995), and procrastination tends to increase as students advance in their academic careers (Ferrari, 1991). Students' fear of not succeeding in their academic writing is an obstacle to progression in writing skills, and may be one of the reasons why some students abandon their education (Sinclair, 2005). Writer's block is sometimes described as a form of procrastination, and earlier research has focused on examining the intrinsic (e.g., boredom) and extrinsic task factors (e.g., penalties associated with failures to complete the task in time) of procrastination behaviors (Pittman, Tykocinski, Sandman-Keinan, & Matthews, 2008). Schraw, Wadkins, and Olafson (2007) suggested that fear of failure is a dominant theme in qualitative interviews among those who rate high in procrastination behaviors. Furthermore, Pierro et al. (2011) have pointed out that the mode of assessment (defined as the tendency to evaluate and compare) and the mode of locomotion (defined as the emphasis on movement), respectively, are essential in

regulation of human behavior, and specifically relevant in procrastination. Individuals rating high in the assessment orientation are characterized by tendencies to critically evaluate themselves and others, relate past and future actions to critical standards (Higgins, Kruglanski, & Pierro, 2003) and tend to end in self-criticism, stagnation, and eventually procrastination (Beck, Koons, & Milgrim, 2000). Additionally, individuals characterized as high in procrastination behaviors appear to have difficulty in self-regulating performance under time pressure, which leads to dilatory behavior (Ferrari, 2001), thus jeopardizing the fulfillment of primary task goals, such as proceeding with thesis writing.

In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), "procrastination attitudes" are discussed as reminiscent of experiential avoidance and fear (Hayes, Stroschal, & Wilson, 2012). Experiential avoidance and the associated cognitive entanglement are key features in psychological inflexibility, which are seen as major causes of psychological suffering, and thus are targeted in ACT in order to improve functioning and well-

being (Hayes, Stroschal, & Wilson, 2012). Psychological flexibility is learned and supported via various techniques encouraging presence in the moment and awareness of ongoing events, cognitive diffusion, acceptance, and commitment to values-based action. ACT has been shown to be successful in increasing functioning and well-being in many different conditions and situations (Hayes & Smith 2005; Hayes, Stroschal, & Wilson, 2012); therefore, it may be valuable to theoretically assess the method of ACT in regards to the aim of this study.

Discovering that self-assessment and self-criticism is so obstructive in the writing process could lead to compassion towards oneself, which might allow one to develop trust in one's abilities, while diminishing self-attacking and shame (Gilbert & Procter, 2006). Wohl, Pychyl, and Bennett (2008) showed that self-forgiveness for procrastination could reduce future procrastination by decreasing negative affect related to procrastination.

Our experience regarding students' procrastination is that ordinary verbal supervision might not always be sufficient to help students overcome the fear of writing. It may hinder reflections upon and integration of information from the students' emotional body and mind that may be less accessible at a verbally bound intellectual level (Lorey et al., 2009), but which nevertheless is affecting behavior. Valuable information may be accessed through the body's sensations and signals—this has been termed *embodied* knowledge, and attention to this kind of knowledge may facilitate new insights (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999). Increasing access to and utilizing embodied knowledge in service of the attainment of valued goals is thus desirable. Bodily movements may be particularly useful in facilitating awareness and acceptance of non-verbal knowledge and personal events that have not yet been conceptualized, as well as getting away from the cognitive entanglement that one is stuck in. Acceptance of personal events may be supported by bodily movements, as bodily positions and movements can act as symbolic cues to memory and support the holding of information and experiences in conscious awareness (i.e., in working memory). In support of this, it has been shown that working memory performance can improve if bodily gestures are also utilized to aid in imprinting memories (Cartmill, Beilock, & Goldin-Meadow, 2012).

Similarly, the use of bodily movements may aid the conceptualization and integration processes of

an otherwise complex, chaotic, or disintegrated web of experiences. For example, children spontaneously use representational gesturing as an aid to finding the right verbal concepts when conceptualization load is high (Melinger & Kita, 2007). Research has suggested that when participants are asked to convey more complex information with competing representations, gesturing aids in the conceptual planning and packaging of information into a verbal description or message (Kits & Davies, 2009). Furthermore, children have shown improved conceptualization and understanding of information when conceptually-associated gesturing is encouraged in the context of mathematics learning. Such benefits of utilizing body movements in aiding cognitive processes make it highly attractive as an additional tool for cognitive flexibility in general, and also for handling cognitive and behavioral blockage specifically.

Contemplative exercises are used more and more in higher education in the USA (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010). Contemplative pedagogy is a young and growing approach in Western education which invites new possibilities for the emergence of creativity and promotes depth of understanding and a more personal relationship with course content (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010). As such, bodily movement in contemplative exercises may be utilized both for exploring personal events and accessing embodied knowledge, as well as for facilitating greater integration, experiential engagement, and acceptance via aiding memory and conceptualization processes (Anderson, 2001).

According to Zajonc (2008), the quintessence of contemplative inquiry is to deepen understanding of research questions and supervision processes and gain new insights on how to tackle a certain problem in the research process. Contemplative inquiry consists of the relaxation and scanning of the body, mind, and the emotions; this mode of inquiry is set by focusing on curiosity, openness, and humility, then shifting between focused attention on the topic of inquiry and open awareness. The exercise ends with journaling and consideration of how to integrate any insights from the contemplation into real life. The combination of contemplative exercises together with the pursuit of embodied knowledge has not yet been described in the literature.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to conduct an exploratory single case study with a student experiencing writer's block using the method

of contemplative inquiry described above, but with the integration of bodily movements, in order to incorporate embodied knowledge into the contemplative inquiry.

Method

This single case study investigated the effects of using a novel version of contemplative inquiry (CI): CI with bodily movement (CIM), performed with a student for the purpose of dealing with writer's block. CIM utilizes embodied knowledge via performing the meditation in movement, rather than in stillness.

A Masters student with writer's block was asked to perform CIM when reflecting on a thesis writing process. During three different occasions, each 90 minutes in duration, the student focused on key words and text units from the thesis so far written. Whilst focusing on the blocked text units, the student performed body movements and shifted focus repeatedly between focused attention and open awareness. On each occasion, the student repeated this pattern while performing bodily movements in an improvised manner. The student decided herself which text units were to be the focus of each occasion. The exercise ended with a period of integration of the insights from the CIM in the form of a body statue and journaling, in which a particular pose is momentarily held and then reflected on through journaling. The student was also allowed to use the CIM technique at home when experiencing writer's block.

An interview was conducted utilizing a phenomenological hermeneutic method (Bojner Horwitz, Theorell, & Anderberg, 2003; Lindseth & Norberg, 2004) at the end of the student's thesis writing and subsequent examination. The aim of the interview was for the researcher to uncover the significance of the student's experiences during the CIM exercise, which included the analysis and interpretation of the student's verbal descriptions of bodily sensations, feelings, and thoughts, and how these may have affected the student's writing process.

Procedure

The interview was tape-recorded and the student was invited to speak as freely as possible about her experiences of using a CIM during thesis writing. Questions were asked like: "*In what way could CI in movement be helpful when writing your texts?*" and "*Tell me about experiences when your texts were blocked?*" Comments like: "*What do you mean?*" and "*Can you develop that?*" were offered in order to prompt the student to

focus on the research question. The interviewer repeated words made by the student and asked for explanations if necessary. The student's gestures and emotional states during the interview were also considered. The interview lasted for 90 minutes.

The Phenomenological-Hermeneutic Method

A phenomenological hermeneutic method (Bojner Horwitz, Theorell, & Anderberg, 2003; Lindseth & Norberg, 2004), inspired by the theory of interpretation presented by Paul Ricoeur (1976), was used in the study. The phenomenological-hermeneutic method is a qualitative method in which the researcher attempts to uncover the significance of the texts from the interview; in this case the focus of the textual analysis was the student's experienced thoughts and feelings concerning CIM and writer's block. The texts are processed in such a way as to attempt to capture the significance of the statements in the interview; the task was not only to understand how the student experienced the situation but also how the interviewer understood and interpreted the situation of the student. The interpretation of the student's experiences as represented by the interview text were affected by the study leader's (EBH) prior experience working with CIM. In a hermeneutic phenomenological method, the experience and education of the researcher is considered as an active influence on the interpretation of study participants' experiences (Kristensson & Ugglå, 1994; Ricoeur, 1976).

Analysis and Interpretation

The interview of the student was recorded on a cassette tape. The text from the interview was transcribed verbatim by the study leader (EBH). The phenomenological and hermeneutic analysis uncovered the meaning of the subject relationship between CIM and writer's block, as well as an understanding of the meaning of such a relationship in connection to the pre-existing literature.

The analysis started with a *naïve reading* (by the study leader—EBH) of the interview in order to capture a general comprehension of the experiences. The text from the naïve reading then served as an inspiration and a direction into the structural analyses. The results from the structural analyses (the complete interpretation) were then related to results from other researchers.

The stages of analysis of the interview were: 1) Naïve reading (consisting of several uncritical readings of the text as a whole); 2) Structural analyses (consisting of meaning units, condensed meaning units, sub-themes

and themes); and 3) Comprehensive understanding (consisting of the consideration and reflection on the pre-understanding of the researcher in relation to the research question).

Results

Naïve Reading

By carefully analyzing the whole interview, the researcher was able to make a short statement and

conclusion, here called a naïve reading. The complete picture of the naïve reading is presented in Table 1.

The Structural Analysis

The interview was read several times in order to distinguish different *meaning units* uncovered partly with respect to the research questions and partly with respect to the results of the naïve reading. A meaning unit could consist of a particular meaning or an assertion

Table 1. Results of the Naïve Reading

- Coming from an artistic background where words were not frequently used
- Facilitating a space for movements, **in which** one can tune in to an emotional bodily state and convey a message which previously lacked words
- One could put words to perceived bodily knowledge and thereby create comprehension on a non-verbal level
- A movement space opened up through the use of contemplation and **reflection**
- All previous bodily experiences were of great significant help in the physical **reflection**, since both movements and text were present
- Danced at home on my own, in order to cope with the writing process
- Without a physical **connection**, **further writing would have** been impossible
- The inner bodily anchoring was detrimental, it was at the crossroad between the inner and outer self that the essay child was created
- Everything becomes much easier when we use embodiment
- Like pottery making in which thoughts and ideas are transformed into materia, just like our body movements become shapes – a kind of materia
- Emotions are converted to images that become materia itself
- To be inside the movement **space creates** an expansion of everything
- If an emotion is taken through a physical level and up again (to a cognitive level), the essence is included, which makes the difference
- A **bodily-experienced** word becomes more comprehensive irrespectively **of whether** it is academic or artistic
- When the bodily world of experiences are included, it also becomes more exciting to listen
- **Writer's** block does not imply **a** lack of words only a blocked state of mind
- To expand within the inner self means facing your fear
- How do you make yourself understood when words are lacking?
- The fear of being stupid was the greatest concern – the **ones** with words are the **ones** with power
- To watch oneself on video is like building bridges between different conscious levels
- The primary goal was to open up for reflection in the movement space and to get access to bodily emotions and to express them
- What is the body telling us?
- A present state of mind in the physical body – especially in healthy parts – is to create acceptance
- The dancing movement helps to open up inner rooms and the conscious presence and movement became the bridge between the inner brain and the prefrontal brain.
- Emotion – thoughts and body are three dimensional
- When we get increased access to ourselves, we also get increased commitment and greater mental presence
- An agreement helped to open up the movement space and **increased self-confidence** – anyone can create self-confidence – to keep that feeling alive and not allow criticism to take over
- When appropriately used, the body is always a resource

from the interview. The content of each meaning unit was then condensed and organized into sub-themes, themes, and main themes. The results of these analytical and hermeneutic processes are called the *complete interpretation*, which is the main result of the study.

Results of the structural analyses consist of six themes. Each theme from the result is exemplified by excerpts from the interview presented within quotation marks.

1. Emotional and psychological obstacles to writing.

“Coming from an artistic background, where the focus has not been on the written word”

“I had plenty of fear of my ability to write”

“There was difficult to find words although I could access them through my body”

“If I believe in fear and in my doubts, it leads to a problem, sort of an obstacle which leads to a self criticism destroyer. I will instead believe in my body emotions”

The student starts an identification process after CIM in which different cognitive, emotional, and bodily obstacles to writing were clarified. Background factors, in this case an artistic-oriented and non-academic background, and the fear of not managing the writing process and an inability to find the appropriate words, created obstacles for the student’s writing process. By identifying these obstacles through CIM, the student’s bodily knowledge was made visible, which opened up new avenues of comprehension for the writing process.

2. Gaining new self-confidence through a sense of body confidence

“I could handle the fear by verbalizing bodily knowledge”

“One can create a self confidence, which I did not have concerning my writing”

“If I believe in the body sensation and can keep that feeling alive, I will manage”

“I look upon my body as a resource”

Words from the student’s bodily knowledge are easier to verbalize than creating a text. Making use of the bodily expressions and words from movement creates a new self-confidence. A new meeting takes place between the

student’s inner body and self-confidence and it is thanks to the newly acquired bodily perception through CIM. The vitalization and belief in the bodily emotion is connected to the students self-esteem. The student’s body movements trigger and start the process of managing the writing process.

3. Body/mind expansion—meeting with and hosting of the fear (of being insufficient)

“The existence expands the space within”

“The lived and experienced word becomes more affluent—it is not only concerning an artistic text but also an academic”

The student’s bodily expansion of an experience makes the words more comprehensible. But what is the meaning of bodily expansion? To the student the body/mind expansion is of the space within the body, that is, the facing of fears that reside within the body, in spaces that can be otherwise ignored, such as deep within the chest cavity or the gut region.

“Expansion the space involves facing with fear”

“Facing fear opens bodily knowledge”

To leave the past behind is to expand. It is about daring to expand, and for that rites of passages are needed (see point 6 below). Existence in CIM expands the space within, which releases the student’s feeling of an inability to write.

“The one who possesses words has the power”

“Being excluded because having knowledge on a different level”

One can have knowledge on different levels and learn to accept these values equally. CIM grants appreciation for how the use of bodily expansion allows access to new lines of thinking, in which acceptance of “all there is” may occur. CIM brings the body forth into acceptance of emotional content and allows the writer to proceed with writing.

4. Taking advantage of lived body experience and knowledge from previous (artistic) body (work) memory

“Great support with physical reflection where both movement and text were included”

“In the meeting point between my body material and my movements the thesis child was born”

“In order to understand (how to write)—there is a need for contact with my body’s experiences of emotions”

The student is supported by CIM since both text and movement are included. The words are conceived in the meeting between movement memory and body memory. The writing itself becomes more easily accomplished from the starting point of the movement memory. In bodily memory there is a resource to treasure. Bodily movement encounters bodily memories in a way that is more enriching compared to a body scan performed in a sitting position. Contemplative movement becomes a bridge to new knowledge and experience, which benefit the writing process. Understanding comes through the body and the movement itself has its own memory. Comprehension then comes through the body’s experience of itself and its own movement, releasing embodied memories and knowledge, which were before outside of the gaze of awareness.

“Emotions has to be transformed into a picture and the picture needs to materialize”

“Inner pictures are emotions”

Emotions may be experienced as inner images or scenes which may be transformed into the materialized body; through this transformation new knowledge is acquired. *Emotion—images—material* becomes a new path to knowledge. The student used a metaphor from pottery making to illustrate this point.

“Our agreement, our communication—which I opened up because I had a bodily experience”

Awareness of bodily experience may help to improve communication and the willingness and ability to finish the writing project. Kinesthetic memory is accessed through CIM; memories of the student’s bodily movement can make a beneficial contribution to the writing process. Just like the body, the movement itself has its own memory.

5. Facilitating acceptance of identified thoughts and emotions

“Could experience shame in my movements”

“Could coexist with the shame in my movements”

“Tried to find the change from the anger”

Through acceptance of emotions, the student uses feelings as a source of power to change her approach to the writing process. The student had focused the most on her anger and shame, which was preventing the writing process from moving forward.

“There is always some part of the body where you could create healthy presence—when it comes to difficult emotions”

“To create acceptance over once situation in general is important”

The student was aided by certain body parts and movements in the acceptance of difficult emotional expressions. Acceptance is fostered through the body movements encouraged in CIM. Acceptance of the student’s thoughts and emotions is crucial to this technique. Accepting the knowledge provided through the body’s expressions aides the student in moving forward in the writing process. The acceptance of difficult emotions is a way to change the current state of awareness so that negative emotions are no longer preventing the student from writing, and CIM helps to create this acceptance.

6. Bodily rites of passages through symbols and metaphors from different dance movements

“The supervision opened up a movement space”

“Meeting with my own body material became a story which made things clear to me”

“The prior thing for me was to open up a movement space and reach the feeling inside of the body, the story from the body”

The supervision with CIM opened up a link to the student’s “movement space.” The inner “movement space” becomes a symbol of “the story from the body” and a starting point for the student’s writing.

“Dancing at home to get it through the body”

“To leave a strict format and enter a free space—breathing and bring back the true meaning from the heart”

The dance becomes a rite of passage for the student’s writing and the free space allows meaning to be accessed from the heart (which is itself a symbol of meaning). The process of contemplation becomes a rite of passage for the student’s writing process.

“Emotions, thoughts, body; there I have three components—which gives me more parts of myself which can participate in the process of reflection”

“If I only get words from a PowerPoint presentation—I need to spend time afterwards in order to make the message comprehensible”

By using emotions, thoughts, and the body to gain access to the process of reflection reminds the student of the learning-by-doing process. Through movement the student makes the context comprehensible. Movement makes it understandable. Just like a PowerPoint presentation, a physical transfer is required to make the context comprehensible.

“To leave the past and expand—a passage of rites is needed”

“CI in movement became a safety belt which helped me stay in presence”

A rite of passage is required to be able to expand. *A lack of rites of passage* means an inability to expand, which implies a deadlock. *Writer's block* occurs in the absence of a rite of passage between emotion, the body, and thinking. A lack of a passage of rites creates a writer's block. The student's CIM freed her writer's block.

Complete Interpretation

In the final step, the complete interpretation, the text is considered as a whole again. This includes the results from the naïve reading, the research questions, the whole structural analyses and the pre-understanding of the researcher. The complete interpretation of this study is called the *Contemplation in movement as rites of passage (writes of passages!)*.

By systematically using a “thinking in movement” approach after applying contemplative body movements, new insights are gained that the student can use in order to proceed with developing the writing project.

Due to the use of CIM as a rite of passage, the following processes occur: acceptance, identification of emotions/inner space, body/mind expansion, body memories, bodily metaphors, and symbols. The supervision gives the student access to the use of the rites of passage in order to dissolve the obstacles in the writing process. Writer's block is dissolved through the rites of passage of CIM.

Discussion

In what way can a student who is trapped in writer's block proceed with and also enrich the writing process

with contemplation and embodied knowledge? This was our focus when we designed this single case study, and the general conclusion is that embodied knowledge tapped via Contemplative Inquiry in Movement (CIM) was very helpful for the student to finish the thesis writing process. CIM is here considered as a rite of passage, in which insights are stimulated, involving different bodily processes encouraged through movement, which aid in unlocking the block of writing. A rite of passage has been described as a ritual event that marks the transition from one status to another, such as between childhood and full inclusion into a tribe, but also between other transitional milestones in an individual's life (van Gennep, 1909/1960). As discussed in another study (Landsman-Dijkstra, Van Wijck, & Groothoff, 2006), greater access to embodied knowledge/information can enable identification and acceptance of both adverse emotions that block the writing process (e.g., self-handicapping assessments, fears, and shame) as well as empowering feelings and information (e.g., strengths, motivation, and self-confidence), resulting in an increased ability to proceed in acting towards valued goals. Awareness of one's own embodied tendencies towards assessment, harsh self criticism, and shame, which can lead to writer's block, could be reached by literally allowing the body come into locomotion, which also can be a means of getting out of physical, emotional, and intellectual “stasis” (Pierro, Giacomantonio, Pica, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2011).

Based on the results of this study, we concluded that there is a meeting between “movement memory” and body memory, and that the student was aided in acceptance of thoughts and emotions through the awareness and movement of certain body parts, which provided tangible benefits to the thesis writing process. Awareness of emotions and explicitly identifying them is an important part of unlocking the block; Kerr, Josyula, and Littenberg (2011) called this kind of awareness “the observing attitude.” The student in this study utilized the observing mind and made embodied memories available through body movements in the practice of CIM.

The phrase “could experience shame in my movements” seemed to be a key finding of this study; Gilbert and Procter (2006) described shame as a core phenomenon in several negative states. By accepting the emotions and cognitions which are unraveled and “defused” by the CIM, the writer's block is unlocked and the writing process could be resumed (Pierro, Giacomantonio, Pica, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2011). The

gaining of a new self-confidence through body confidence has also previously been explained, by way of patients' interpretations of video recordings of their own body movements (Bojner Horwitz, Theorell, & Anderberg, 2004; Bojner Horwitz, 2004). The rites of passage that occur through CIM foster the observing attitude and video interpretation can easily be used as a complement to the journaling practice suggested in CIM.

The findings in this case study build on earlier work in transformational pedagogy which states that transformative learning only occurs when changes in one's font of knowledge, sense of self, and motivation take place, moving one beyond the current (and often habitualized) context (Kegan, 1994). As seen in CIM, a rite of passage may help to visualize and enact a new physical, emotional, and intellectual context.

In this study, the student went beyond her current context through bodily expansion and acceptance of emotions and thoughts through bodily contemplation, opening a new reflective space in which a novel context could be experienced. Researchers and practitioners do not often stray from their narrow fields, and as a result, their students often don't benefit from cross-functionality and cross-curricular thinking and activities that could offer potential integration of many ways of knowing and understanding (Kegan, 1994). CIM may help to expand the experiences of, and flexibility of, both body and mind, as seen in this study. Therefore, within future contemplative and transformational pedagogy, combinations of, for example, Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT) and body movements/dance may prove to be interesting and novel research approaches within cross-curricular learning programs.

Furthermore, this study suggests that CIM practices may be useful as a tool in the student supervision process, and an optional compliment to verbally-bound supervision. However, it is key, as seen in these results, that the student together with the supervisor create a safe place/situation so that the student will be able to discover and accept the (often difficult) emotions and thoughts arising from the body/movement practice.

Anderson (2001) has described a similar practice of retrieving embodied knowledge in the writing process in her work on *embodied writing*. Anderson explained embodied writing as a form of writing which involves all senses and bodily experiences into the writing process. Writers attune not only to inner movements from the body but also to outer stimuli, which trigger a transformation

that can nourish the individual's presence in the world. The act of embodied writing portrays experiences from the lived body in general, but has not been presented as a result from lived body movements specifically, as seen in this study. One has to invite the life and experience of the body into all of the phenomena of existence (Bullington, 1999).

Another useful area of research to consider in the context of this study is the current work done on mindfulness and meditation. First, mindfulness and meditation practices have been shown to increase cognitive flexibility (Moore & Malinowski, 2009). Second, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR; first introduced by Kabat-Zinn, 2005) is a popular training in which practitioners learn to use the observing attitude, which allows reflection instead of immediate emotional reaction (Kerr et al., 2011). In academic work, scholars have a strong tendency towards working while in assessment mode, forgoing reflective awareness (Langer, 1997). As seen in this qualitative interview, locomotion helped the student to gain access to the kinesthetic memory from her movements, which provided a form of embodied knowledge that might have been missed if reflective awareness had not been open to it. Cognition is embodied; bodily experiences contribute to thoughts, and the brain is not the sole source of these cognitions, as philosophers (e.g., Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1992; Borghi & Cimatti, 2010) and neuroscientists (e.g., Damasio, 1999) have clarified. The human mind is in many ways determined by the human body.

Contemplative knowing (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010) is of key value in approaching both new and old ideas in the human sciences. Instead of dividing the world in order to study it, contemplative knowing begins by considering the world, and all of its phenomena, as interconnected. The processes of analysis and contemplation begin within the body, and not just within a disembodied mind. By exploring mood and how it relates to thoughts and actions (Kabat-Zinn, 2005), and by connecting emotions to our inner movement space, giving the intellect a moment to remain silent, kinesthetic memory may be recognized and integrated. In CIM, the inner movement space is moved by outer bodily movements.

This study suggests that the power of non-verbal ways of knowing and learning can be applied in the academic writing process. In the future, the facilitation of unlocking embodied cognition could be used in

student education in parallel with the development of a contemplative pedagogy, as a complement to traditional student academic supervision.

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