

1. Welcome to an Emergent Pedagogy of Presence and Care: Addressing Affect in Information Literacy Instruction
2. My name is Liz Chenevey and I'm the Psychology Librarian at James Madison University in Virginia. There I serve as the liaison to our Psychology and Social Work programs. And if you'd like to chat more you can follow me on Twitter @gnomadlibrarian.
3. This is still very much a work in process and in practice and I am excited for further conversation in the Q&A and after.
4. I came to this idea of a pedagogy of presence and care from an interest in mindfulness, critical pedagogy, and facilitation practices. How could I as a librarian who mainly teaches one-shots, meaningfully incorporate these approaches into my work?
5. On top of simply my own interests, this work has also been informed, somewhat urgently, by the increasing mental health concerns of our students and our colleagues in academia. According to Lipson et al from 2007 to 2017 students seeking mental health support increased from 19 to 34%, with students of color being less likely to seek treatment and receive diagnoses for mental health disorders. And the last year has surely intensified these concerns with 63% of students claiming their emotional health is worse than before the pandemic. We still don't know the long term effects the pandemic will have on mental health (let alone physical health) and so these are concerns that are not going away quickly or quietly.
6. To incorporate these aspects into my practice, I found myself turning to work in LIS, psychology, and facilitation. And I started thinking more about feminist pedagogy, issues of care, and affective studies.
7. First, what do I mean when I say affect? When I discuss affect, I am speaking broadly of aspects of emotions, moods, motivations, and attitudes.
8. Two of the foundational works regarding affect in LIS scholarship are Constance Mellon's 1986 concept of Library Anxiety and Carol Kuhlthau's 1991 Information Search Process model.

Library anxiety is a feeling of inadequacy in research skills, especially compared to peers, that may prevent students from asking questions, for fear this inadequacy is made public. Since Mellon, many LIS scholars have expanded on her work, attempting to determine the cause of this anxiety and how library workers can mitigate it.

Kuhlthau's six stage Information Search Process model not only accounts for the cognitive or behavioral aspects of the search process, such as keyword

development, database searching, etc, but specified affective factors as well. At the start of the process, the researcher likely experiences doubt, anxiety, confusion, or overwhelm, moving towards optimism as they begin to select a topic. However, as they move more into the Exploration phase, feelings from the first stage may return as they attempt to make sense of the information they're finding. Eventually confidence returns as they work through the challenges of the exploration phase and feel a sense of relief upon completion of the search task. As an instruction librarian, opportunities for intervention often occur during the Initiation and Exploration phases, meaning I am often working with students who are feeling a variety of emotions, many of which are of a more negative affect.

9. More recent work that has influenced my thoughts and approach include work around care in the classroom, normalizing emotions to mitigate destructive effects of negative emotions like shame, and structural and systemic problems that influence the affective domain.

All of this work stems from the same place—our students are complex people, experiencing a wide range of emotions that influence their behaviors, both in and out of the learning environment. They have existing feelings about the library, library workers, our presence in their classroom, and the research process itself. And these feelings are then compounded by other experiences they are having in other classes, on campus, in their living situations, and in the community at large. So how might these emotions affect learning?

10. When we think of learning we often think of cognitive and behavioral domains—what are students learning and how are they demonstrating they have learned it? However, the affective domain is an important part of the learning process that impacts both cognition and learning behaviors.

For one, emotions can help or hinder when gaining attention. Our attention is often limited and our emotions provide a pull to what we focus on in a given moment, and what is taking the most emotional energy is likely where our attention is going. If information is more self-relevant, we are more likely to pay attention to it.

How and where we pay attention can also influence memory. Both working memory and long-term memory play a role in the learning process, and emotions can affect how memories function. Our working memory is often balancing multiple aspects at a time—this is what Cognitive Load Theory is based on. There is only so much at a time we can focus on and retain. However, working memory can be improved when there is emotional support. Similarly, emotions play a role in memory consolidation—which is what we want, we want long-term recall of information and skills.

Finally, our moods can have an effect on our motivation. Both positive and negative moods play a role here, with positive moods leading to more creativity

and knowledge organization while negative moods lead to a higher attention to detail and careful responses.

This is all to say, we are not necessarily trying to encourage all positive emotions in the classroom. But we should be cognizant of the role emotions can play and the emotional support our students need to thrive in the learning environment.

11. Our emotions as instructors too are important to consider in the classroom in how they affect our students.

Emotional Contagion is the idea that our emotions can spread to others. McAfee talks about this in her work on shame as the basis for library anxiety, sometimes library workers reflect a students' discomfort back on them, which exacerbates their feelings of discomfort with the library. We want to aim for a positive emotional contagion.

Affective Crossover is how this contagion can actually influence behavior. Our emotions, as the instructor, influence our behavior, which in turn can change the students value perceptions or feelings of control which then impacts learning.

There is evidence that first impressions are actually very important in creating lasting impressions, so having an understanding of our own emotions and their effects on behavior in the classroom is important. This is especially true in one-shot instruction or reference consultations, knowing what we know about library anxiety. These interactions can leave a lasting impression on a student which can influence their affective domains in regards to their confidence in their skills and how likely they are to seek help.

Having a better understanding of where both our students and ourselves are feeling in the classroom and how these emotions can affect learning is the first step in how we can enact pedagogical changes to provide support and cultivate more inclusive learning environments.

12. As I started to bring these affective understandings into my practice, I found myself needing a framework within which to enact pedagogical changes. The principles of Emergent Strategy, grounded in an ethic of care, became that framework.

Emergent Strategy is a concept developed by adrienne maree brown, a writer, pleasure activist, sci-fi/Octavia Butler scholar, facilitator, speaker, and doula. I found her 2016 book of the same name at a time in which I was doing a lot of community organizing as well as finding my identity as an instructor. I began to see aspects of emergence everywhere and started to imagine how I could incorporate it into my teaching.

13. What is Emergent Strategy? It is based on the concept of emergence, “the way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of simple interactions.” Examples of this are most often seen in nature and ecology, for example, the design of a fractal, the synchronized way in which birds flock together, or how a simple dandelion seed can proliferate into a field of hard to uproot plants. Emergent Strategy then is how to be in relationship with one another to create change in our systems through simple interactions. “Emergent Strategy is how we intentionally change in ways that grow our capacity to embody the just and liberated worlds we long for.”
14. There are nine principles of emergent strategy that can be used to guide us in this work. These principles are as follows:
 - Small is good, small is all (the large is a reflection of the small)
 - Change is constant (be like water)
 - There is always enough time for the right work
15. There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it.
 - Never a failure, always a lesson
 - Trust the people (if you trust the people they become trustworthy)
16. Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass
 - Less prep, more presence
 - What you pay attention to grows
17. In my own pedagogy I have been intentionally aiming to incorporate these principles into a practice of presence and care that focuses on small acts to address students’ affective needs in the hopes of cultivating connections and creating change.
18. What does this look like?

These are not all of the ways emergent strategy can show up in our pedagogy as a tool to support our students (and ourselves). But these are some of the ways I have incorporated these principles into my practice.

Developing affective outcomes. Writing cognitive and behavioral goals is commonplace for many instructors; they are relatively easy to measure. Affective outcomes are much harder, as these deal with emotions and other intrinsic qualities and they often overlap with the other types of outcomes. However, I have found that even though they are difficult to measure, they are the most important in my process and align with principles of Focus on Critical Connections and Less Prep, more presence.

These outcomes can be as simple as “students will feel confident going into their research project or reaching out to a librarian.” A main goal of mine in instruction sessions is to create a connection with the students, in the hopes that they feel

supported and comfortable reaching out in the future. These outcomes provide me space to be flexible, present, and focus on these critical connections.

Normalizing emotions. This relates back to McAfee's work on shame and the effort library workers must put in to normalize students' feelings of discomfort, shame, and anxiety, in an effort to disrupt the harmful effects of those feelings. This process of normalization depends on the principles of Small is good, small is all and Trust the people.

When we allow our students the opportunity in a session to share their feelings around research, we provide them an outlet for those feelings and the opportunity to see that they aren't alone. I do this in two ways, both of which are simple and don't take much time. I often disclose my own discomforts and anxiety around research or ask their professor or GA to reflect on their emotions around research. I also start every lesson, regardless of academic level, with an anonymous padlet in which students can share "how they feel when they are asked to do research." Sometimes they choose gifs, other times they use words. This way, they have a safe and anonymous outlet and can see everyone else's responses and we can have an authentic discussion that stems from this place of connection. I also often provide referral resources to mental health services on campus to continue to destigmatize mental health help seeking should they need it.

Let students lead. Some of my best instruction sessions have been the ones in which I throw my entire lesson plan out the window because the students expressed they needed something I or their professor had not anticipated. Once in a class I was visiting for a second time when the professor was away, I had planned to discuss source evaluation and synthesis for use on their research posters. The students lamented that they had no idea how to even make a poster and didn't understand why they were doing this. I quickly changed gears, addressed their needs and still wove in strategies for evaluation and synthesis, alongside the technical components.

In this example I was guided by the principles of "Find the conversation that only these people can have" and "There is always enough time for the right work."

I find that for this to best work, at least in the moment, the previous two approaches of affective outcomes and normalizing emotions have to come first. In the example I just shared, I had already started to address students' affective needs in the first session which led them to trusting me and make their needs known. However, I have also started doing this in one-shots either as pre-work, soliciting questions based on an activity (which I encourage the professor not to grade), or soliciting anonymous questions on a padlet. I also encourage students to set goals for the session or for their project. They do not need to share these with me, but are welcome to.

Finally, reflection. Guided by the principles of “Change is constant” and “Never a failure, always a lesson,” reflection is important both for the students, from a metacognitive perspective, but also for me as the instructor to refine my practice.

I encourage students to do reflections as they go through the session. What is working, what is not, how can you adjust your approach? These are typically just verbal prompts but occasionally they are codified on a worksheet. At the end of the session, students reflect anonymously on both the content of the session and on their affective domain. How are they now feeling? Are they more likely to see a librarian? They do these reflections on a padlet, so while they are reflecting on their own, they can again see where their peers are, which can help normalize anything they may still be or are newly feeling at the end of the session. I too reflect following the session—how was I feeling? What surprised me? How did I practice care? Where could I be more present?

All of this work is grounded in the principle of “What you pay attention to grows.” Our students’ emotional health matters and this work matters. It is worthy of attention.

19. These are just four ways principles of emergent strategy can inform a pedagogy of presence and care. And all of these approaches stem from a single goal—to cultivate a connection with my students. As demonstrated earlier, so much of our affect is determined by social connections. Creating authentic relationships with our students is just one small way we can support their emotional health and wellbeing, that may lead to larger changes.
20. As I come to a close I want to make space for you to share your thoughts. If you have ideas of how you can practice a pedagogy of presence and care, please share them on the padlet linked here.
21. Thank you!