Teaching with Intention: Space for Reflection and Adaptability

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The modern world is defined by noise and distraction. We are bombarded by stuff, advertisements, and mobile slot machines we keep in our pockets. It is rare to find the peace and boredom that previous generations had the luxury of experiencing. The moments of solitude that allowed for the gestation and birthing of intellectual ideas away from the glowing screens of modernity. Part of the conceptual framework of minimalism is to drive a strong sense of fulfilment and balance. Human beings need moments of quiet solitude and boredom to reflect carefully on the notions of intellectual and cognitive frameworks.

A Quiet Room Alone

Space is necessary for truly reflective thinking and genuine discourse between learners and facilitators. The busyness of the modern hustle culture often urges people to pursue more, do more, be more. But the quality of output can suffer as the space for growth and contemplation is lacking within the structure of an activity or class. Knowledge and skills acquisition also requires a careful reflection of the content and processes that are central to a degree.

Minimalist Principle: Create space.

Application: Don't pack every minute of class time; allow time for reflection, discussion, and feedback.

Result: Encourages critical thinking and provides flexibility if something takes longer than expected.

Space and silence are integral to the flow of well-managed learning environments. The sense of momentary boredom allows the brain time to process effectively cognitive inputs. It allows for learners to enter public discourse, reflecting on the information and concepts presented to them. This phase of the learning process is important as it allows for the formulation of ideas and the dissection of the given information.

Blaise Pascal: "All men's miseries derive from not being able to sit in a quiet room alone."

The still and quiet of space within a class allows for critical thinking to take place within the mind of both learner and facilitator. Our aim as facilitators (assuming we adhere to the Socratic method) is to encourage the use of critical thinking faculties within the minds of our learners. The growing challenges to the job market posed by economic forces and an economy transitioning to the fourth industrial revolution (namely driven by Artificial Intelligence) means that the learners we train today must be equipped to think critically and adapt to the challenges of tomorrow.

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