

Postgraduate Award in Educational Studies (PAES)

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Mindful Attention and the Framing of Teacher Identity: agency in a performativity context

Introduction.

This autoethnographic research seeks to particularly examine whether mindful attention can frame teacher identity and agency in the performativity context of a secondary school. In doing so it will consider three sub-questions:

- What is the relationship between mindful attention and teacher identity?
- Can mindful attention facilitate agency in teacher identity?
- Can mindful attention as agency be deployed during critical incidents as they arise in the performativity context?

The intention of the central research question is to reflect upon the efficacy – or otherwise – of mindful attention when used in my role as a Lead Practitioner of English Literature at an Academy status Secondary School; a school judged by OFSTED as ‘Outstanding’ and described by its head teacher as being “driven by data”.

Autoethnography as a methodology.

The choice of autoethnography as a methodology is influenced by the nature of contemplative mindfulness as a practice. When practising mindfulness, I acquaint myself with the ‘Narrative of Me’ being played out in my mind; a narrative that has a central operational role in *‘working through the story of (my) own life’*, (Bochner, 2001) **1** as it unfolds in present moment awareness of the performativity context. In this respect mindful awareness complements autoethnography’s subjective *‘back-and-forth movement between experiencing and examining a vulnerable self and observing and revealing the broader context of that experience.’* (Ellis, 2007) **2** As a methodology it seems particularly suited to recording experiences of mindful attention in the school context; ones I retrospectively regard as – sometimes - epiphanic (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010); **3** thereby convincing me that *the*

questions most important to autoethnographers are: who reads our work, how are they affected by it, and how does it keep a conversation going? (Ibid) **4** Conversations initiated by empirical experience suit such a methodology, as *rather than a preoccupation with accuracy, the goal is to produce analytical, accessible texts that change us and the world we live in for the better.* (Ibid) **5** Critics of the autoethnographic approach argue that such subjectivity has its limitations; that personal narratives are akin to ‘stories’. , (Kelley, 2014) **6** However a counterargument is that ‘stories’ *deepen our understanding of the world* (Ellis, 2004; Reissman, 2008) **7**; and that even though there is a connecting influence between a philosophical perspective and how it informs the framing of research it is also the case, as Counsell’s theory of Interpretivism indicates, that *‘subjectivity is about meaning’*; that *you, the subject, cannot be left out (because) the object will not research itself.* Furthermore, there is a *‘linkage between subject and object ... particularly pertinent to teachers researching their own practice’.* Accordingly, it is possible to *design your research so as to maximise or minimise the emphasis on yourself as enquirer.* (Counsell, 2012) **8** My own experience of mindfulness practice tells me that its intention involves minimisation of the subjective self, due to its objectively recognising subjectivity’s emergence. Therefore the objection to autoethnography as being hindered by subjectivity is a false dichotomy; it is instead *‘a positive condition for enquiry’* whilst at the same time being the *‘primary object of study’* (Ibid) **9** This *‘positive condition for enquiry’* seeks to *systematically analyze personal experience in order to understand cultural experience* (Ellis, Adams, Bochner, 2011) **10** ; in this case the *‘cultural experience’* of performativity in the secondary context and how the practice of mindfulness has enabled me to encounter critical incidents in such a culture. The methodology of autoethnography is particularly suited to such an analysis as it *acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher’s influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don’t exist.* (Ibid) **11.**

In terms of data collection, I undertook the practise of completing daily reflective journals; recording voice memos; logging samples of mindfulness practice and filming my own practice in the school context. Each of these autoethnographic methods were undertaken with the intention of observing the self and reflecting upon that self as it encountered perceptions of critical incidents in the performativity context. In terms of defining critical incidents I was guided by Cunningham’s critical incident theory of *‘criticality (that) exists only in its perception as such by the individual experiencing it (and) contextualising it (as) an event in professional life that creates a significant disturbance of our understanding of important principles or of effective practice, and which following a period of focused reflection will be experienced as a turning point.’* (Cunningham, 2008) **12** After reflecting upon vignettes and narratives collected, I drafted blog postings as a means of evaluating my own use of mindful attention, whether it be during teaching, or experiencing a sense of agency during the school day. I found that, as the academic year commenced, I started blogging about critical incidents as a ‘turning point’ in the classroom context (this first post setting the tone, [The Teacher’s Time Out Card](#)) as well as upon my perception of experiencing restricted agency. This yielded the kernel

of an idea that in turn led to considering mindful attention as a frame for agency and identity.

What is the relationship between mindful attention and teacher identity?

I take my working definition of ‘mindful attention’ as “paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994) **13** with the intention of nurturing “greater awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present moment reality to promote a ‘powerful route for getting ourselves unstuck, back in touch with our own wisdom and vitality.’ (Ibid) **14**.

I am a mindfulness practitioner, having trained with the Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) and the Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice at Bangor University, with whom I attained a Teacher Training Level 1 in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), however my perception of Mindfulness Based Interventions (MBIs) in a secondary education context is that they serve as a kind of ‘sharpening of the saw’ of attentional capacity to facilitate academic attainment; somewhat akin, as Ergas states, *to threading wisdom traditions through the eye of the needle of quantitative science so that they fit the bill of an economic-secular public education ethos (which) inevitably yields reductionism.* (Ergas, 2015) **15** However, I am also persuaded, like Ergas, that *‘these practices are transforming the understanding of ‘education’ and the ‘educated person’ through the nexus in which contemplative practice, science and education intersect – attention.* (Ibid) **16**.

I reflected upon this ‘nexus’ by means of an attentional novelty; an exercise in empiricism that served to frame attention as a potential identity. Set by a seemingly exasperated Fyodor Dostoevsky, it involved trying *not* to think of a polar bear. (Dostoevsky, 1863) **17** Upon initial consideration of this thought suppression I was unassailably diverted to the afore-mentioned mental image – not just once; but time and again. Thus, I was offered an empirical sense of the mind’s propensity to return not only to the deliberateness of unwanted thoughts but – critically – to the non-deliberateness of just about any thought. This realisation guided me towards a critical awareness of the hold attentional capacity has over agency and identity: whether bidden, or unbidden, my thoughts assail; indeed, they seem to have the power and peremptoriness of propaganda. (Williams, Penman, 2011). **18** In the light of this experience I found myself reflecting upon how agency and teacher identity relate to James’s proposition that:

‘the faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention over and over again, is the very root of judgement, character, and will (and that) an education which should improve this faculty would be the education par excellence. But it is easier to define this ideal than to give practical directions for bringing it about’. (James, 1890) **19**

James’s injunction resonates for me as profoundly applicable to our current phase in secondary education; some 128 years after his pronouncement. Indeed, it seems to me to call for epistemic responsibility: that is, the seeking of *‘practical directions for bringing it (the managing of a wandering attention) about’*; particularly in the light of burgeoning evidence emanating from the science of Experience Dependent Neuroplasticity and the new science of Embodied Cognition. I am thus influenced to

write a post [–How mental states become neural traits–](#) reflecting upon research into “Stimulus-independent thought” (Killingsworth and Gilbert, 2010) **20** and how the actuality of mind-wandering fills up to 46.9 percent of our waking hours. (Killingsworth, 2011) **21** Whether the default be to a polar bear, a lesson plan, or any other form of mental miscellany, the conclusion is that “*a human mind is a wandering mind, and a wandering mind is an unhappy mind.*” **22** (Killingsworth and Gilbert, 2010) I interpret this data as epistemology grounded in neuroscientific ontology: that unbidden thoughts arrive courtesy of the brain’s midline regions, from the medial prefrontal cortex and the medial parietal cortex, collectively identified (Raichle, 2001) **23** as the “default mode network” (DMN); a domain for resting states of attention that default us to self-referential thoughts of worrying, rumination, recalling of past events, planning for future events, daydreaming, regrets, and so forth. This knowledge informs my perception of the epistemic ‘offer’ - available to teacher and learner alike; one neatly surmised in Harris’s axiomatic: “*Our minds are all we have. They are all we have ever had. And they are all we can offer others.*” **24**

With such evidence, and the articulation of its efficacy to hand, I found myself drawn to Mindfulness’s ‘offer’; that of being able to cultivate the skill of agency and identity through befriending the attentional assailant, with its ‘Narrative of Me’ acting as a self-referential server of mental disequilibrium. This 46.9 percent informs Ergas’s call for an ‘inner’ pedagogy and an ‘inner’ curriculum - one that needs to be examined as central to the operation of the mind -**25** as well as his call for a ‘reconstruction’ of education through mindful attention, with teachers as both ‘reflective’ and ‘contemplative’ practitioners: the ‘reflective’ being ‘*an agent of the content of thinking*’; the ‘contemplative’, ‘*an agent of what we attend to and how we attend to it.*’ **26** I found myself drawn to this proposed ‘reconstruction’ as applicable to teacher identity and therefore decided to use the methodology of ‘**Sampling Me By Surprise**’ (Ergas, 2017) **27** in order to get some empirical sense of Killingsworth and Gilbert’s research in a school context. Over the course of a day I set an alarm clock on my mobile to choose random times to trigger me to ask myself the following questions: *how am I feeling?* (with a scale between 0-10), *what am I doing?* (actual activity), *am I thinking about what I’m doing?* (with four options of response: *yes, thinking about what I’m doing; no, thinking a pleasant thought; no, thinking a neutral thought; no, thinking an unpleasant thought*).

Here are examples from a single day:

Sample no	How am I feeling? (0-10)	What am I doing?	
			1. yes, thinking about what I'm doing; 2. no, thinking a pleasant thought; 3. no, thinking a neutral thought; 4. no, thinking an unpleasant thought
1	4	Walking corridor at school	3 Ruminating on feeling bodily discomfort.
2	5	Analysing data	4. Ruminating on work overload; especially request from SLT to attend meeting that is not scheduled as directed time.
3	3	Lesson planning	4. Thinking about how unhygienic the toilets are in this school.
4	5	Marking	4. Ruminating upon why a parent wants an appt. with me for parents' eve.
5	5	Walking corridor to classroom	4. Arising: annoyance with myself for not inspiring others in mindfulness.

My own sample seems to support the evaluation that “*the ability to think about what is not happening is a cognitive achievement that comes at an emotional cost*”; (Killingsworth and Gilbert, 2010) **28** and of how my ‘internal narrator’ (the ‘Narrative of Me’) emerges during the school day to infiltrate agency and identity. There’s a certain mental relief in knowing this: I am, after all, not just talking to myself! It is, rather, the DMN playing its role in directing attention. There is agency here, as well an emerging identity; one, perhaps, to be placed alongside subject matter, didactical and pedagogical expert (Beijaard*, Verloop, Vermunt, 2000) **29**; the distinction being that those identities are constructs of the ‘mind-making process’ of education (Eisner, 1993), **30** whereas my emerging sense of identity is being formed by *attending to* the inner narrative of the mind as it encounters performativity’s own ‘mind-making’ identity. I now found myself drawn to Ergas’s appropriation of a statement from James; one that serves to anchor my own awareness of this newly emerging identity:

‘for the moment what we attend to is reality’. **31**

Upon reflection I find that trying to untangle myself from this ‘reality’ is as futile as trying to flee one’s shadow. The fact is, I can’t escape what I pay attention to. *It will affect my identity as a teacher.* This realisation leads to a reflective post – [You are what you pay attention to](#) - as well as the emergence of another question:

Can mindful attention facilitate agency in teacher identity?

My experience of mindful attention thus far is to cultivate agency through training my mind to attend to my thoughts by, in effect, reversing the desire to suppress them. For instance, in the case of the polar bear, I have learned to cultivate *attending to* a detached simulation: observing the arctic mammal saunter to the nearest available ice floe, rather than berate myself for being the unwilling recipient of its image (Robertson, 2012) **32** This involves cultivating the skilful use of a mindful heuristic, whereby I *recognise* the thought for what it is; *allow* its presence to establish itself; *investigate* its effect on mental and bodily reactivity; then *notice* the thought as a phenomena that will dissipate. I find, as a matter of critical experience, as well as agency, that this applies particularly to negative emotions that arise for me, both inside and outside the classroom. I also find that I am becoming more aware of my own ruminative ‘resting’ states. They start early: at the breakfast table, with internal fulminations over ‘performativity’ issues; the ‘chewing over’ of lesson plans; concerns with student behaviour, to name a few. All these are projected on to the screen of the eagerly receptive ruminative mind; indeed, I find myself working assiduously on each screen’s script. (Jennings, 2015) **33** However, I am also finding that mindful attention is mentoring me in how to recognise the emergence of such discord. The potential for such agency in framing teacher identity is further elucidated by Olson’s reference to the efficacy of the ‘*disconfirming experience*’: a ‘*reconciliation process*’ enabling ‘*large shifts in perception*’; **34**. This is actualised in the mindfulness practice of RAIN, whereby agency is cultivated through being able to:

- R = RECOGNISE when a strong emotion is present.
- A = ALLOW, ACKNOWLEDGE, or ACCEPT that it's there.
- I = INVESTIGATE the bodily sensations as the emotions and thoughts build up.
- N = NOTICE, NAME and NON-IDENTIFY with whatever it is that is arising.

Here I experience agency and identity as framed by a ‘disconfirming’ responsive state, rather than defaulting to a ‘confirming’ reactive one. In this regard RAIN embodies Frankl’s attributed statement that *between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.* **35**

For me this offers a contemplative counterbalance to performativity; one that, as it develops as a practice, further illuminates for me performativity’s “*discrepancy monitor*”: a process that continually monitors and evaluates the self and the current situation against a model or standard – an idea of what is desired, required, expected, or feared. (Segal, Williams, Teasdale, 2013). **36** I now gain a clearer awareness of how performativity culture fuels what the authors refer to as the “*Driven-Doing*” mode, based on the “*have to*”, “*must*”, “*should*”, “*ought*”, or “*need to*” **37** demands of performativity culture, which I perceive as incursions upon agency and identity. I reflect upon this in a blog post – [How’s your mind holding up?](#) – as well as noting individual incidents of criticality that I perceive as evidence of the effects of the “*Driven-Doing*” mode. **38** Such noticing is informed by my growing awareness of mindful attention as a frame of embodied cognition whereby “discrepancy monitoring” is, as Lakoff states, neurobiologically primed:

most thought is unconscious. Prior to consciousness, sense input has been shown in experiments to be unconsciously changed to fit pre-existing fixed neural structures before consciousness. That is, what we consciously “see”, “hear”, or “feel” may be not what was shown, sounded, or touched, but rather what optimally fits your prior understandings. (Lakoff, 2015) **39**

I am now starting to understand performativity as a frame that influences an embodied ‘prior understanding’, activated within ‘fixed neural structures before consciousness’. For me there is epistemic opportunity here: the agency of knowing that mindful attention can re-frame the fixed neural structure activated by the ‘discrepancy monitor’ of performativity culture. Such agency comes from recognising the embodied cognition of ‘prior understanding’. I therefore decided to research further and found confirmation *that we still think about the relative intelligence of body and mind in an archaic and inaccurate way (but) the idea that bodies are dumb vehicles and our minds are smart drivers is old hat.*(Claxton, 2017) **40**

Claxton says we need to know about this because, quite simply, ‘*it matters a lot*’; and that ‘*when we study the brain to look for the networks controlling cognition, we find that all of (them) are linked in one way or another to sensory systems, motor systems and /or motivational systems.* (Ibid)**41** The Behavioural Neuroscientist, Stephen W. Porges, delineates further: there is at work a ‘*neurobiological narrative*’, mobilised autonomically by ‘*educational strategies ... targeted toward ... corticocentric orientation in which there is a top-down bias emphasising mental processes...that minimise... the bottom-up feeling from our body* (Porges, 2017) **42** thus causing ‘*chronic evaluations that trigger feelings of danger and threat* (that can be) *as disruptive to health as political unrest, fiscal crisis, or war.* **43**

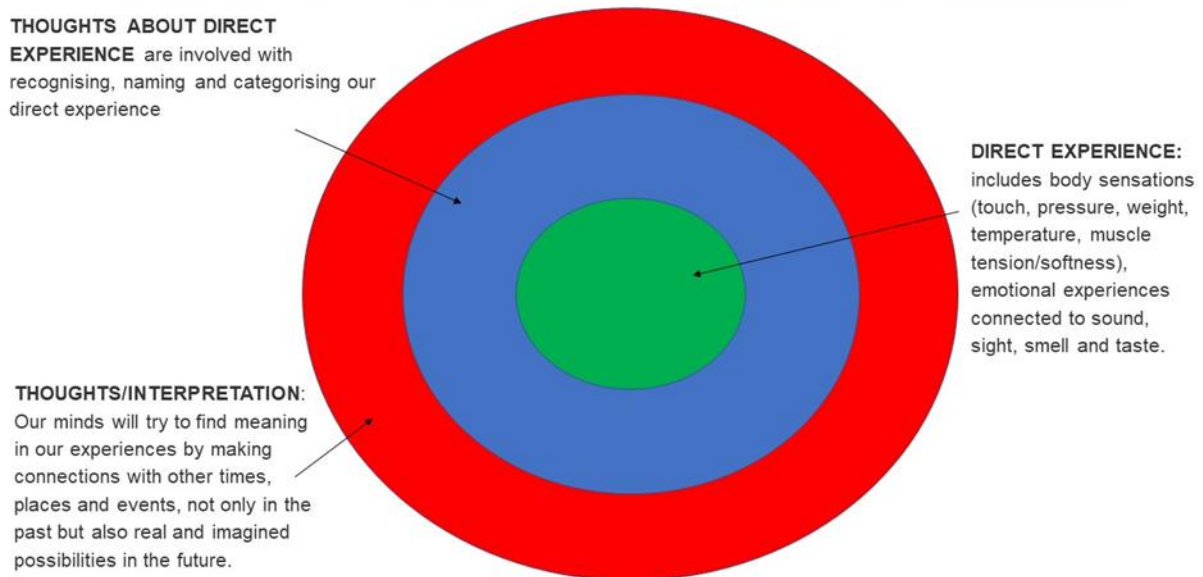
This is a significant discovery for me: performativity as a facilitator of ‘*chronic evaluations*’; ones that arise from a neurobiological ‘*prior understanding*’; an understanding that perpetuates the Cartesian frame of “I think, therefore I am” as it - in the chronic evaluations of performativity - overrides neurophysiological and neuroanatomical empiricism; which I am now starting to believe should be expressed in a more neuroscientifically grounded way; for instance: “*I feel, then think, therefore I am.*” Claxton calls this override a ‘*Cartesian mistake*’; a mistake I now start to perceive as an incursion upon my agency and identity. This awareness now serves to frame my perception of the performativity context, as every day I find myself encountering the ‘*Cartesian mistake*’: in the evaluative models of subject specifications; the assessment and Inspectorate criteria, with their unquestioning ‘*prior understandings*’ of what cognitive ‘*progress*’ entails, utterly devoid (it seems to me) of any awareness of the undergirding ‘*neurobiological narrative*’. I reflect upon this – [Know your neurobiological narrative](#) - and begin to take particular interest in Porges’s reference to his own identity as an academic being affected by ‘*evaluative models*’ which, ‘*when chronic, shift physiological state to support defense*’. I learn that by ‘*defense*’ Porges means the shutting down of a ‘*coherent nervous system*’ that helps us to encounter degrees of safety and danger. Here then is a reframing of performativity’s canonical ‘*intervention*’; correcting the Cartesian mistake. It’s this shift to an awareness of embodied cognition that now undergirds agency and identity. I reflect upon how I carry this beyond the performativity context: [Rumination beyond the school gates](#). This emerging awareness of the neurobiological

narrative leads me towards further research: for instance, on how interoceptive awareness is the sense of the entire condition of the inner body, including temperature, pain and itch (Mahler, 2015); **44** how the insula is the interoception centre of the brain that can be strengthened through meditation practice; how somatic markers are emotional signals, consciously experienced (Hartelius., 2015) **45**; that feelings are mental experiences of body states. (Damasio.,Carvalho., 2013) **46**; that increasing my heart rate variability can make me more resilient to stress and be deployed as a building block of willpower reserve. (McGonigal, 2013). **47** With this knowledge – and experience of mindful attention -there is agency. However, the question now arises:

Can mindful attention as agency be deployed during critical incidents as they arise in the performativity context?

My emerging empirical sense of mindful attention, and its relationship to embodied cognition, are starting to serve as a frame for agency and identity**48**; specifically, by deploying a threefold attentional skill set: *concentration power, sensory clarity, and equanimity working together*. (Young, 2017) **49** Young (somewhat ironically, considering our context) recommends a kind of mindful performativity; one of *‘tracking the components of the mind’* as critical incidents arise, with sensory experience of the incident being the *‘spiritual perfection of the moment’*. Young admits the seeming audaciousness of this claim, however as a practitioner I recognise its ‘disconfirming’ efficacy as a frame. Aligned to this is my own Mindfulness teacher’s heuristic - *‘Layers of Experiencing’* – that I find is enabling me to keep the steady core of direct experience ‘anchored’ rather than defaulting *‘to the conceptual outer rings of thoughts about meanings and associations’* that may trigger rumination, or disequilibrium, in response to critical incidents. **50**

This diagram shows how we receive and tend to respond to experience. The centre is where incoming sensations directly affect our physical body and our emotions. This is the stable core that we return to in mindfulness practice when we need to reconnect and pay attention to what is happening in the moment.



I'm finding that I can consciously bring these cultivated skills into my sense of agency and identity upon arrival at work; for instance, I start practicing formal meditation as a means of attuning myself to the embodied cognition I know will be required for the teaching day ahead.

I record the process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vo5ms-QQVZc>

Mindful attention is now providing me with a sense of agency when encountering critical incidents related to the demands of the performativity frame: demands I believe need to be challenged; ones that prior to my mindfulness practice I would have acquiesced to, possibly due to unacknowledged autonomic toll: [Can I say “no?”](#) However, I'm *still* finding that my mindfulness practice is struggling, due perhaps to the default to conceptualisation and rumination as the 'autonomic shifts' of the 'evaluative model' take their toll during the day. I reflect upon this struggle with my practice – [Bring Mr Duffy back into the body!](#) - but realise that with increased practice (Hanson, 2014) **52** I can actually start to *anticipate* difficult emotions *prior* to encountering potentially critical incidents. This involves bringing awareness to bodily sensations I anticipate will accompany emotions when they arise, then applying RAIN to *the buds of these qualities*. (Young, 2017) **53** I reflect upon this – [Anticipating difficult emotions](#) - and start to keep 'track' of a range of qualities of sensation that trigger rumination and anxiety: sensations I had *never* been aware of before, but now start to understand as somatic markers that are incursions upon agency. Yes, I think, this is Young's *concentration power, sensory clarity, and equanimity working together*.

Emails Re: deadlines, data submission	Solar plexus
Planning	Tingling in wrists
The need to eat when feeling anxious	Loosening of jaw/salivation/ tingling in abdomen area
A challenging arising with a student	Heat in cheekbones/heat in chest area

I am also feeling the benefits in my teaching as I start to bring an awareness to what I experience as 'co-regulation' (Porges, 2017); **54** enabling me to attune to what I feel are the learning needs of the student as they arise by anchoring myself to the attentional slipstream between student and teacher as we experience the process of being co-learners together – [Little girl lost](#). I am now starting to experience mindful attention shifting from 'a priori theory' to 'grounded theory'; (Lincoln and Guba, 1985): **55** the neurobiological narrative establishing its agency as an attentional anchoring for identity.

Conclusion

I undertook this auto-ethnographic inquiry with the intention of particularly examining the central question of whether mindful attention can frame agency and

identity in a performativity context. My findings are guided by the three sub-questions referred to, leading me to conclude:

- that mindful attention has framed for me an insight into a potential alignment of identities: that of the reflective and contemplative practitioner (see Ergas, ref 21);
- that my sense of agency in such teacher identity has been facilitated by using mindful attention as a frame (for example, through practising the heuristic of RAIN, as well as other informal and formal practices), and that such agency has been deepened by an awareness of how embodied cognition – the neurobiological narrative – plays an empirical role in undergirding such agency.
- that by deploying a threefold attentional skill set - *concentration power, sensory clarity, and equanimity working together*. (Young, 2017) - mindful attention as agency can be deployed during critical incidents as they arise in the performativity context

Upon reflecting on my reasons for wanting to undertake this autoethnographic research I find myself returning to the words of the Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield, who refers to the availability of a *'middle way': the discovery of ease everywhere: in meditation, in the marketplace, wherever we are* (Kornfield, 2008) and that mindful attention offers agency and identity due to its cultivation of *"complete non-referential ease."* **56** In doing so I uncovered a further agency: that I can transcend performativity in its current phase and *make an inward decision to live "divided no more"*. (Palmer, 1998) Palmer calls this 'the Rosa Parks decision' because in deciding to stay at the front of the bus Parks represents *'the deep inwardness of an integrity that tells us we must do something.'* **57**. This analogy unfolds as criticality – Cunningham's 'turning point' (see ref 7) -: that there are teachers who have *stopped blaming institutional conditions* (and have) *stopped conspiring with those conditions as well. Instead they act in ways that honour their own commitment to the importance of teaching.* **58** If I am truly honest with myself I need to acknowledge that *the immediate problem is me and the silent conspiracy I have had with the institution, (and) the conspiracy that allowed that institution to rule my life.* **59** I now find myself concluding that mindful attention is a front of bus thing; a frame for agency and identity: facilitative - in its own intimate way - of a unique and personal form of pedagogical activism.

Notes

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3. Ellis, Carolyn; Adams, Tony E. & Bochner, Arthur P. (2010). Autoethnography: An Overview [40 paragraphs]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12(1), Art. 10, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101108>
 4. Ibid
 5. Ibid
 6. Kelley, A. (2014). Layers of consciousness: An autoethnographic study of the comprehensive exam process. International Journal of Doctoral Studies, 9, 347-360. Retrieved from <http://ijds.org/Volume9/IJDSv9p347-360Kelley0588.pdf> (p.349).
 7. Ibid, (p. 349) quoted from Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography* (Vol. 13). Rowman Altamira. And Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage.
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 9. Ibid (p 312)
 10. Ellis, Carolyn; Adams, Tony E. & Bochner, Arthur P. (2010). Autoethnography: An Overview [40 paragraphs]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12(1), Art. 10, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101108>
 11. Ibid
 12. Cunningham, B. *Exploring Professionalism*. (Bedford Way Papers, UCL IOE Press, 2008) *Critical Incidents in professional life and learning*, 164-167.
 13. Kabat-Zinn, J. *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation for Everyday Life*. Piaktus. (p. 4)
 14. Ibid. (p. 5.
 15. Ergas, O. *The Deeper Teachings of Mindfulness-Based 'Interventions' as a Reconstruction of 'Education'*. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 49, No2, 2015, (p. 207).
 16. Ibid. (p. 207)
 17. Doestoevsky, F. *'Winter Notes on Summer Impressions, 1863*. (ref: <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2011/10/unwanted-thoughts.aspx>)
 18. Williams, M. Penman, D. *Mindfulness: a practical guide to Finding Peace In A Frantic World*. (Piaktus, 2011) 11. For me, this was one of the first breakthroughs with mindfulness meditation, as it *'teaches you to recognise memories and damaging thoughts as they arise. It reminds you that they are memories. They are like propaganda, they are not real. They are not you. You can learn to observe negative thoughts as they arise, let them stay a while and then simply watch them evaporate before your eyes. And when this occurs, an extraordinary thing can happen: a profound sense of happiness and peace fills the void.*
 19. James, W. *The Principles of Psychology*, 1890. <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/Principles/prin11.htm>
 20. Killingsworth, M. A., Gilbert, D.T, *A Wandering Mind is an Unhappy Mind* (2010)

[http://www.danielgilbert.com/KILLINGSWORTH%20&%20GILBERT%20\(2010\).pdf](http://www.danielgilbert.com/KILLINGSWORTH%20&%20GILBERT%20(2010).pdf)

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https://www.ted.com/talks/matt_killingsworth_want_to_be_happier_stay_in_the_moment (2011)
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24. Harris, S. *Waking Up: Searching for spirituality without religion*. (Black Swan, 2014) 2.
25. Ergas, O. *Reconstructing 'Education' through Mindful Attention: Positioning the Mind at the Center of Curriculum and Pedagogy*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p. 305-306. Ergas states: *the mind needs to be positioned at the center (sic) of our 'curriculum' and 'pedagogy' by balancing our meta-pedagogy. We need to become as interested in how the mind shapes itself deliberately and non-deliberately based on engaging the inner curriculum, just as much as we are interested in how 'society' shapes the mind based on the 'social curriculum'. In practice this means embracing a meta-pedagogical turn, which implies the incorporation of practices that engage students directly with with active attention.*
26. Ibid, p. 296.
27. Ibid, p. 204.
28. Killingsworth, M. A., Gilbert, D.T, *A Wandering Mind is an Unhappy Mind* (2010, p. 932)
[http://www.danielgilbert.com/KILLINGSWORTH%20&%20GILBERT%20\(2010\).pdf](http://www.danielgilbert.com/KILLINGSWORTH%20&%20GILBERT%20(2010).pdf)
29. Douwe Beijaard*, Nico Verloop, Jan D. Vermunt *Teaching and Teacher Education* 16 (2000) 749-764 *Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: an exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective*
30. Taken from Ergas, O., *Reconstructing 'Education' through Mindful Attention: Positioning the Mind at the Center of Curriculum and Pedagogy*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), Ergas writes: "Education," as curriculum theorist Eliot Eisner claimed "is a mind-making process" (1993, p.5). *The meaning of this statement is that there are various ways of making meaning based on our experience and 'education' is no less than an initiation into a worldview the specifies and habituates those ways. Ergas's use of parentheses for the word 'education' is deliberate: missing from our diagnostics is the peculiar possibility: that the problem of education might be 'education'. We might have gotten stuck in how we understand 'education' as it relates to all those practices that we associate with it. That's why the word 'education' is going to appear in parentheses...just like many other terms like 'society', 'curriculum', 'pedagogy' that we have come to consider as if they are independent of the mind that perceives and constructs them.'* Page 1.
31. Ibid, p. 28.
32. Here we have the practice of 'Detached Mindfulness'; an approach I came across in D. Robertson's *Build Your Resilience: How to survive and thrive in*

- any situation.* (Hodder Education, 2012), 194-5. Based on a mindfulness-based approach for the treatment of clinical anxiety and depression called Metacognitive Therapy (MCT) (Wells, 2009). Robertson explains: *Wells' concept of 'Detached Mindfulness' has some similarities to other mindfulness and acceptance-based strategies, although there is greater emphasis on eliminating any kind of engagement with thoughts whatsoever and just doing nothing' in response to them, allowing them to come and go, and eventually fade naturally from awareness.*
33. Jennings, P.A, *Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and Prosperity in the Classroom.* (Norton, 2015) 60. Jennings writes: *We all have a database of stored emotional memories that influence the way we think, feel, and behave. Experiences associated with strong negative emotions create patterns of neural networks in the brain that are stored in the memory. Ekman (2007a) calls these influential emotional memories "scripts", or conditioned responses.*
 34. Olson, K. *The Invisible Classroom: Relationships, Neuroscience & Mindfulness in School.* (Norton, 2014) p.6.
 35. There is no citation for this quotation. I assumed it was contained in Frankl's '*Man's Search for Meaning*' however I couldn't find it. It is a statement widely used in Mindfulness pedagogy as a means of conceptualising practices such as RAIN.
See: <https://quoteinvestigator.com/2018/02/18/response/>
 36. Segal, Z, Williams M, Teasdale J, *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression.* (Guildford Press, 2013). p. 66.
 37. Ibid, p.71.
 38. One example being when I overhear a teacher say to a colleague: *I feel really hungry. I always feel really hungry when I'm stressed.* Innocuous as this statement might seem it leads me to reflect upon how agency and identity is being cultivated to undergird pedagogy: marking books; using formative assessment to inform lesson planning, and so forth. I feel that I am witnessing a default to habitual patterns of dealing with anxiety by seemingly accepting habitual reactions as part of identity, thus mobilising a positivity loop that will most likely reinforce anxiety when another stressful situation in the school context arises. I later reflect upon witnessing how my colleague's resentment built up into berating students and colleagues, who, it seemed to me, were conceived as agents to a *felt* sense of arising disequilibrium.
 39. Lakoff, G. *How Brains Think: The Embodiment Hypothesis.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuUnMCq-ARQ&t=199s> (2015)
 40. Claxton, G. *Intelligence in the Flesh: Why your mind needs your body much more than it thinks.* (Yale, 2015). p. 2.
 41. Ibid, 165.
 42. Porges, S.W. *The Pocket Guide to The Polyvagal Theory: The Transformative Power of Feeling Safe.* (W.W. Norton & Company, 2017), 33-34.
 43. Ibid, 45.
 44. Mahler, K. *Interoception: The Eighth Sensory System.* (AAPC Publishing, 2015). p. 2. Mahler writes: *The term interoception was first coined in the early 1900s by an English Nobel-Prize-winning physician, Sir Charles*

Sherrington...who used the term to refer to feelings we get from our internal organs.

45. Hartelius, G., *Body Maps of Attention: Phenomenal Markers for Two Varieties of Mindfulness*. Springer Science+Business Media New York 2015
46. Carvalho, G.B., Damasio, A. *The nature of feelings: evolutionary and neurobiological origins*. Nature Reviews Neuroscience. Volume 14, pages 143-152. The nature of feelings: evolutionary and neurobiological origins.
47. McGonigal, K. *The Willpower Instinct: How Self-Control Works, Why it Matters and What You Can Do to Get More of It*. (Avery Publishing Group 2013). 20.
48. Due to the constraints of word count I decided to insert the following as a note. But to me it is an important one. Embodied cognition now serves to frame mindful attention, offering the teacher the choice of what I call ‘*rather thans*’, so as to differentiate between the reactive and the responsive state. They are: paying attention with conscious choice *rather than* living on, or defaulting to the “automatic pilot” of Driven-Doing mode; relating to experience through directly sensing it *rather than* through thoughts; bringing oneself fully into the present moment *rather than* dwelling in the past or future; approaching unpleasant experience with kindness, curiosity and compassion *rather than* trying to avoid, escape, or get rid of the unpleasant experience; allowing things to be just as they are *rather than* needing things to be different to what they are; seeing thoughts as mental events that may or may not correspond to reality *rather than* seeing thoughts as true and real; taking care of oneself with kindness and compassion *rather than* treating oneself harshly and unkindly. (Segal, Williams, Teasdale, 2013). Segal, Z. Williams M, Teasdale J, *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression*. (Guildford Press, 2013). p.89.
49. Young. S, *The Science of Enlightenment: How Meditation Works*. (Sounds True, 2016) p. 21.
50. Silverton. S, *The Mindfulness Breakthrough: The Revolutionary Approach to Dealing with Stress, Anxiety and Depression*. (Watkins Publishing Limited, 2012). p.19.
51. Ibid, p. 19 Illustration of ‘Layers of Experiencing’ taken from *The Mindfulness Breakthrough: The Revolutionary Approach to Dealing with Stress, Anxiety and Depression*. (Watkins Publishing Limited, 2012).
52. Hanson writes that research on Experience Dependent Neuroplasticity shows that ‘*intense, prolonged, or repeated mental/neural activity – especially if it is conscious – will leave an enduring imprint on neural structure, like a surging current reshaping a riverbed. As they say in neuroscience: Neurons that fire together wire together*. Quoted from Hanson, R. *Hardwiring Happiness: The practical science of reshaping your brain – and your life*.. Rider, 2013. p. 10.
53. Young. S, *Break Through Difficult Emotions: How to Transform Painful Feelings with Mindfulness Meditation*. (Sounds True Audiobook, 2006), 24:13 to 25:35.
54. The term ‘*co-regulation*’ is taken from Stephen W. Porges as described in the glossary to ‘*The Pocket Guide to The Polyvagal Theory: The Transformative*

- Power of Feeling Safe.* (Norton, 2017) 9. Porges writes: ‘*Within Polyvagal Theory co-regulation involves the mutual regulation of physiological state between individuals*’. I accept that in my teaching this state is not ‘mutual’ however the intention is to attempt, on the teacher’s part, to mindfully attune to a physiological state in response to the physiological needs of the student. For example, using a relaxing and calming tone of voice and therein being attentive to the impact of vocalisations, facial expressions, and gestures.
55. Lincoln and Guba (1985: 39-43), quoted from, Cohen. L, Manion. L, Morrison. K, *Research Methods in Education*. (RoutledgeFalmer. 2000), p. 138.
56. Kornfield. J, *The Wise Heart: Buddhist Psychology for the West*. (Rider, 2008), Kornfield writes: *Learning to rest in the middle way requires a trust in life itself. It is like learning to swim. I remember first taking swimming lessons when I was seven years old. I was a skinny, shivering boy flailing around, trying to stay afloat in a cold pool. But one morning there came a magical moment lying on my back when I was held by the teacher and then released. I realized that the water would hold me, that I could float. I began to trust. Trusting in the middle way, there is an ease and grace, a cellular knowing that we, too, can float in the ever-changing ocean of life which has always held us. Buddhist teaching invites us to discover this ease everywhere: in meditation, in the marketplace, wherever we are. In the middle way, we come to rest in the reality of the present, where all the opposites exist. T.S. Eliot calls this the “still point of the turning world, neither from nor towards, neither arrest nor movement, neither flesh nor fleshless.” The sage Shantideva calls the middle way “complete non-referential ease.” The Perfect Wisdom Text describes it as “realization of suchness beyond attainment of good or bad, ever present with all things, as both the path and the goal.”*
<https://jackkornfield.com/finding-the-middle-way/>
57. Palmer. J, Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life*. (Jossey-Bass, 1998) p.168.
58. Ibid, p. 169
59. Ibid, p. 170