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RE – 410

Free Play Response Assignment

**The Sources – Disappearing**

Eversince 2010 I have spent my summers up in Wawa, Ontario as a camp counselor. The camp is called Agree (aye-gree) Outpost Camp, where approximately ten staff and thirty-five campers spend six weeks together in close quarters with no running water, and no electricity. The camp is completely off the grid and we as a community “disappear” into our own worlds, connecting with other and especially ourselves. We wake up each morning, gaze out into our lake from atop a hill, and start our day “alert and alive”, we “forget time and place, and who we are” (Nachmanovitch, 52); we can close our eyes, take in deep breaths, exhale, and feel one with the wind and nature. We disappear. We can sit in the “family room” and read a book if we please, what we do at the camp is up to us and completely unorthodox to any other summer camp. We eat when were hungry, and sleep when were tired. As the weeks progress we disappear more and more, in a good way though. We find ourselves and a natural high kicks in as meditation and relaxation comes easier and easier. Falling asleep at night isn’t a chore as your our minds have been so preoccupied throughout the day with mindless activities.

 I feel like I can connect “disappearing” to the dancing class that we took at Dance Zone a few weeks back. Stated in the book, the Sufis refer to the word *sama*, which means dancing yourself into ecstasy (Nachmanovitch, 52); My brain was so occupied and entertained by the new dancing styles that I was practically brought into a different state of mind; I was in the truest form of myself while disappearing in the different dances that we performed.

**The Work – The Power of Mistakes**

Mistakes give us the ability to look at something in a different way, and/or completely change our course of action on how we want to attempt the certain task again. They can be a bad thing, but also a beneficial to us as well. The power of mistake can hurt you individually, and can also stronger you as a person; which is what happened with me. During the creation process of my art piece in this class I hit some roadblocks. I was given a canvas to work with and completely destroyed it with messy hands and wrong matched up lines. I had to go to the store, purchase a new canvas, learn from my mistakes on the previous one, and create what I needed to fulfill my goal for the project. It was a frustrating process due to the running around and more time spent on it that I wanted but all in all me making the mistake that I did encouraged me to take my time and put more effort into the new canvas. I learned from my mistakes and applied myself in a different way because of that.

 I am going to refer to Dance Zone again in this section due to it being relevant to this section. This day of class was especially frustrating for me due to my lack of dance skills, as well as the speed the dances were being thought to us. I made mistake after mistake when dancing and was never on beat. I did however keep on smiling and pushed all mistakes aside. I persevered and kept dancing, even though I knew I was making an astronomical number of mistakes. In the words of Miles Davis, Do not fear mistakes, there are none. Just keep on dancing!

**Obstacles and Openings – Patience**

This sections main focus talks about how there is patience in both life and the arts, and while reading this section, a few different things came to mind. Those being me learning how to swing a golf club, and me learning to play the trumpet. Both of these activities were started around 5th grade and have stuck with me to present day. I remember back in the day going to the driving range with my dad and having him teach me what he knows about golf; he’s always been a solid golfer and learning from him was appropriate. We would get bucket after bucket of golf balls and spend hours at the range tweaking, and manipulating my swing so I could get the dang ball in the hole. Now golf is a sport of patients, not only while playing it, but learning it as well. Becoming a good golfer doesn’t come overnight, you have to make mistakes, learn from them, all while being relaxed and patient. I spent years working with my dad getting me ready for high school golf. Looking back at this time, I had a lack of patience and wish I would have had more of it as a child. I think my personality overtook my patience, as I just wanted to hit, hit, hit, instead of listening and waiting for the right swing to come to me. Stated in the book, “some people can be more productive, while under pressure” (Nachmanovitch, 148); I agree with this fully, but you have to be patient. If patient, and put under pressure, you are more likely to succeed due to being in a state of relaxation. You can “disappear” and fully immerse yourself in what you’re doing in order to be the best at it. Being patient is hard sometimes, but when you are, you are more likely to succeed and do great things. On a side note, I can now beat my dad in a round of golf.

**The Fruits – Art for Life’s Sake**

To be honest, the last four sub sections of Free Play were the most difficult for me to comprehend. However, from what I read, this is what I took from it. This section hit on the main point that the world is changing before us, and that our future is unknown at this time. It states in the book that art is going to be needed by our future generations. Not just art though, a “whole series of adaptive, creative, and evolutionary jumps” (Nachmanovitch, 182). We as an upcoming generation can make breakthroughs and change the way we look and act in our lives. I see this class, leisure through the ages, a chance for us as the “future generation” to make a difference with our ability to be creative and different with the arts, dance, and writing. We are not only creating art, dance, or writings; we are doing it to benefit ourselves and the people around us. Not for arts sake, for life’s sake. There is a purpose to our madness and it’s to work together to better us and our knowledge in the field.