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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

Travis N. Thurston

It's The Hope That Kills You

"Teaching is a radical act of hope. It is an assertion of faith in a better future, in an increasingly uncertain and fraught present. It is a commitment to that future even if we can't clearly discern its shape." -Kevin Gannon

On a lazy Wednesday evening in March 2020, I had just cracked open my new copy of *Radical Hope* (Gannon, 2020) and was highlighting this powerful passage when the report broke on the TV saying that a player for the Utah Jazz had tested positive for COVID-19. In preparing to write this introduction over a year after that night, I opened the book again to find the Gannon quote to include in this introduction. And while I love this quote, seeing that page again and thinking about that moment brought back a flood of emotions this past year has presented.

After underlining the three lines of text in bright, fluorescent yellow, the highlighter mark in my book detours and slowly meanders down two more lines on the page as if to represent the shock of the situation pulling me away. However, as eerie as the detour of my highlighter is to see all these months later, perhaps most interesting is that the highlighting stops on the word "believe" in the middle of a sentence two lines below. I don't know how long I left that highlighter pressed on the word "believe," but the fluorescent ink bleeds through several pages.

Seeing "believe" highlighted on that page reminds me of the "believe" sign that the fictional coach, Ted Lasso, tapes above the door of his office in the comedy series on Apple TV. The series is about an American college football coach who is hired as the manager of an English Premier League football club (which is actually soccer in the US). The show portrays the protagonist as an unsophisticated Midwesterner who is out of his depth as he attempts to coach a professional sport that he barely understands. Ted's endearing ability to find success by clinging to his hopeful, human-centered approaches (his unique methods range from secretly baking his boss her favorite treats to coaching his MVP on how to date someone he actually cares about) over counting wins and losses resonates with me. Despite the many barriers and conflicts that arise, his approach remains deeply rooted in demonstrating compassion, care, and respect for his colleagues at every level. There's something that we can learn from this in education.

In August of 2020, I had three of my four kids at home. One was engaging in online 7th grade middle school courses, one in a remote 5th grade elementary class, and one in a remote kindergarten (the youngest isn't in

school yet but loved any chance she had to "Zoom bomb" her brothers). It was clear that we were all struggling to keep our heads above water, but we were privileged enough to have what we needed to make it work. At one point my kindergartner, who absolutely loves his teacher, asked me, "Do teachers get teached how to teach?" His question made me smile, but it also reminds me that the reality in higher education is that a large majority of those who teach courses haven't had any formal teaching training. Even for those of us who have been formally trained, I'm the first to acknowledge that teaching is hard. For me, being a teacher is more than a profession because teaching, when done well, is a craft that requires ongoing reflection and improvement. Teaching is a journey that is nuanced and ever-changing, not because of distance, disruption, and distraction, but because teaching involves humans—humans who have lives outside of the brick and mortar (or digital) walls of the classroom, who are motivated at times, and who are distracted at times. However, it's the humanness that makes teaching so fulfilling. Connecting with our students, cultivating their interest in our disciplines, and helping them discover what sparks their curiosity is at the heart of what we do as teachers. Teaching is hard at the best of times, but when we are forced to change instructional approaches, modalities, and locations amid a global pandemic and social unrest, it's, well, incredibly difficult.

We Are All Teachers

I identify as a teacher although I don't technically have teaching in my title or my job description. I tend to use that term loosely to describe anyone who is committed to improving teaching and learning. Instructional designers are teachers. Librarians are teachers. Faculty members are teachers. Perhaps I take that perspective because my own professional pathway has led me to hold titles from high school teacher to visiting professor, from instructional designer to faculty developer and coach. Whether in a traditional teaching role or in an alt-ac (Kelly, Linder & Tobin, 2020) or academic adjacent position, there are countless individuals at every institution who care deeply about teaching and learning, and all of us are teachers. And as teachers, we all have a varying number of individuals who are in the role of student. As an instructional designer, I am often in the position where faculty members are my students, and I'm committed to teaching and reaching the students I have in that moment and in that context. One thing I love about the collaborative work of an instructional designer is that some days I get to have deep discussions about pedagogy and learning theory while reflecting on options for implementing meaningful learning activities for a particular group of students, and some days I get to take the time to sit down with another human, acknowledge the hardships and setbacks they're experiencing, and reaffirm that they don't have to do it alone. The work of teaching connects deeply to the work of resilient pedagogy because they both rely on relationship building and interactions between teachers and students.

When I think about the work of teaching and these interactions, I like to picture a learning space that allows engagement with content and provides support for the humans in that space to engage in discourse and inquiry. I originally came across the term *architecture of engagement* in a piece by Riggs and Linder (2016)

who describe it as a frame for the design and facilitation that's required in successful online courses. The authors argue that teachers should intentional design learning environments (whether brick-and-mortar or digital spaces) that support learning, and then we have to inhabit those spaces and engage with our students. Like other terms in education, *architecture of engagement* is a borrowed term from another field actually describing the design of literal buildings. From the literature in that field Dotson (2013) argues that the design of space should "center human lives within meaningful contexts of engagement" (p. 140) and allow for "shared emotional connection among members develop[ing] from the frequency and quality of social interactions as well as experiencing shared events and feeling as if they and others are personally invested in the group" (p. 145). It's hard to believe he's describing a building, because it sounds like he's describing my ideal classroom community. Centering human lives around meaningful interaction is the work of teaching, and it's the work of resilient pedagogy. Our structures in education need to be designed and adapted by focusing on the humans who will inhabit them.

An architecture of engagement is only complete when individuals connect with each other in learning communities. It's essential that we are inviting all of our stakeholders into these structures and that they have an equitable voice. Each of us play a valuable role regardless of our context as teachers, and it takes community and collaboration to accomplish the work of resilient pedagogy. We hoped to model the value of our different contexts in compiling this collection. We started by bringing together a group of three editors who represented different identities and positionality; we collaborated as an instructional designer, a librarian, and a faculty member in compiling this open access volume. Our purpose wasn't to create a "new" definition of resilient pedagogy or to be the only perspective, but to allow authors to explore the emerging contexts and implications this past year has brought to the forefront of conversations in higher education. Many of the issues surrounding distance, disruption, and distraction in education weren't caused by the pandemic, but this past year has made us keenly aware of their existence and calls us to action to address them head on. As we reflectively and intentionally improve our own practice as this volume highlights, we will find that the heavy lifting of resilient pedagogy requires all of us. Not students only. Not professional staff only. Not faculty only. All of us. Together. As a team.

Finding Hope in Teaching: Resilient Pedagogy

Which brings me back to Ted Lasso. In the season finale, Ted becomes acquainted with an English cliché: "It's the hope that kills you." His team is facing relegation, and fans and players alike have decided not to believe their team can beat the best team in the league in their final game. The phrase isn't unique to this TV show, and in fact, it's used often by fans to describe that while they want their team to succeed, if they don't set their expectations too high, then they won't be disappointed when their team fails. After a traumatic year like we experienced in 2020, it might be easy to adopt that mindset. We mourned the loss of classes we hoped to teach; loss of connection with students, colleagues, and friends; loss of good health, or additional health

complications; loss of black lives; loss of income; loss of professional opportunities; loss of loved ones and community members; and perhaps a loss of hope. I have felt the sting of trauma this year, and at times, it has made me feel like maybe it really is the hope that kills you. I'm still processing it all, and I still don't know exactly how we will collectively process all the trauma and address the ongoing trauma that still exists, but we have to acknowledge that it's there and that it has impacted us all in varying degrees.

In considering all that we've lost, I've also been wrestling with what resilient pedagogy is and what it is not. Resilient pedagogy isn't a silver bullet, and it's not a cure for the trauma, but I do think it centers on believing in a brighter future. It's been helpful for me to remember that teaching is not only an act of radical hope, but it's also an act of care. As bell hooks (2003) so eloquently puts it, "When teachers teach with love, combining care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust, we are often able to enter the classroom and go straight to the heart of the matter, which is knowing what to do on any given day to create the best climate for learning" (p. 134). For me, that means that the work of resilient pedagogy makes us vulnerable to heartbreak and disappointment because we know we can create a better future for our students one interaction at a time and that we will fail along the way. It means that we recognize the inequities that exist in our current structures and that we not only work to adapt and transform those structures but continue to visualize how that architecture will need to take shape and be molded moving forward. It means that resilient pedagogy is "less like a peak that one summits, and rather, the ongoing struggle of setbacks and brief vistas while traversing the mountain ridge" (Thurston, 2020, p. 167). In other words, the work of resilient pedagogy is messy, iterative, and continuously reflective by emphasizing process over product.

To tie this all together, as Ted Lasso speaks to his team before their final match of the season, he tells them that he really doesn't like the phrase "it's the hope that kills you" because he believes in hope. He believes in the people around him, and he believes that they will succeed if they believe in each other. It can seem a bit cliché, but he goes on to challenge the English phrase with his own colloquialism, "I think it's the *lack* of hope that comes to get you." That phrase captures my view of resilient pedagogy. We have to acknowledge the inequities, the struggles, and our own failings to provide a frame for us to see where we can continue to improve. But we can't stop at simply acknowledging the issues before us, we have to take action. That is the work of resilient pedagogy, and I hope this collection not only frames areas where we should focus on improvement but also provides helpful strategies to support the work that lies ahead. I have to believe that, regardless of the role that I play in teaching and learning, resilient pedagogy is a radical act of hope and care. And I believe that resilient pedagogy is meaningful because it's a commitment to supporting students, to supporting teachers, and to supporting each other one small step at a time as we engage in this work together.

Structure of the Volume

Resilient Pedagogy is structured with two main sections: one driven by theory and foundations, and one driven by reflection and practice. Each chapter in this collection offers a glimpse into practical and actionable

approaches that each of us can adopt, adapt, or combine with our current practice to continually improve what we do as teachers. The authors of each chapter speak as teachers in their own context whether their role is a faculty member, a faculty developer, a student, an administrator, or some combination of multiple roles. I hope this volume is received as the beginning of an ongoing dialogue not as an ending point, and that the different perspectives throughout the collection speak to you like they have spoken to me.

Lindsay Masland lays the foundation for the collection in Chapter 1 by exploring how Self-Determination Theory (SDT) can provide a frame for engaging our students with resilient course design. Considering the relationship between teacher choices, student motivation, student engagement, and student learning success, teachers are called to support student needs regardless of modality. Masland shares how she applied the principles from SDT and embedded them in her syllabus or other aspects of her course including graphic weekly schedules, content menus, and tiered assessments with tiered feedback plans. The chapter concludes with Masland addressing the realities of disruption and calling us to action in the work of resilient pedagogy.

In Chapter 2, Beth Buyserie, Rachel Bryson, and Rachel Quistberg expand on the concept of disruption by asking if we can change the negative connotations often associated with the term and frame it as a productive opportunity to intentionally equitize education. By arguing that resilient pedagogy requires action and critical reflection, the authors frame a critical approach to disruption and challenge existing structures and question traditional, inequitable applications of teaching across disciplines. The authors present an approach for continual refinement through a cyclical process of five actions: question, seek, pause, reflect, and revise. They conclude that productive disruptions must be grounded in equity and that resilient pedagogy isn't a box that we check but a process that we must continually undertake.

David S. Noffs and Kristina Wilson in Chapter 3 introduce the concept of optimal online learning (OOL) and compare it to the emergency remote teaching that became prevalent in the "Great Onlining of 2020." The authors discuss several concepts that contribute to OOL including learner-centered teaching, community building, and meaningful self-reflection, among other ideas. The authors argue that an overdependence on synchronous webcam lectures replicates a banking model of education, and they offer a number of learner-centered approaches aligned with adult education strategies that serve to optimize courses. The authors conclude that the resilient strategies of OOL have the potential to support the underrepresented students who are most in need of the engagement inherent in these approaches.

In Chapter 4, Rebecca M. Quintana, Jacob Fortman, and James DeVaney highlight the suboptimal conditions of emergency remote teaching addressed in Chapter 3 and then synthesize definitions and perspectives on resilience from various disciplines to identify three guiding principles: designing for extensibility, designing for flexibility, and designing for redundancy. These principles provide the basis for what the authors introduce as the Resilient Design for Learning (RDL) framework which advances foundational concepts from universal design for learning aligned with systems thinking and other foundational concepts. The authors also draw insights from their "Resilient Teaching Through Times of

Crisis and Change MOOC" to provide actionable steps for teachers to consider in their own courses. In conclusion, the authors posit a vision for resilient teaching for the future of higher education.

Briana Bowen expands on the vision for the future of disruptions in Chapter 5 to consider how we can build more resilient university communities. Bowen provides a practical toolkit for teachers to consider the 4R resilience modeling framework with a unique perspective from the intelligence community. Each section includes self-assessment questions for us to consider each of the 4 areas: resistance, recovery, retention, and resurgence. Drawing on anticipatory intelligence, Bowen concludes that we as humans struggle to appreciate threats to disruption until they become a reality for us and encourages us to be proactive in resilience building.

Chapter 6 by Christina Fabrey and Heather Keith conceptualizes Resilient and Flexible Teaching (RAFT) as imagery for navigating rough waters in basic survival. The authors explore flexibility in teaching from reaching students across modalities with methods ranging from HyFlex to ungrading approaches, both of which also allow teachers to meet students where they are. The authors also explore how transparency in assignment design can help students be successful, and they include tips like avoiding proctoring software to surveil students which can cause harm and break trust with students. Fabrey and Keith conclude their chapter by emphasizing empathy and contemplative practices that put student wellness at the forefront of our work as teachers.

In Chapter 7, Steve Hawks addresses the pedagogical innovations required to continue efforts of global engagement during worldwide disruptions. Hawks defines the purpose of global engagement, in part, as creating connections and removing barriers for students in an increasingly connected digital world. COVID-19 brought international travel and study abroad programs to an abrupt halt, removing opportunities for faculty engagement and participatory approaches across cultures and borders. Hawks explores transformative strategies to further the work of global engagement, including virtual study abroad and domestic study away, and argues that these options can allow students who are typically left out of global engagement programs due to system inequities to access the full benefits and enhanced outcomes in a connected world that will undoubtedly face disruptions in the future.

Section One of the collection concludes in Chapter 8 with authors Kosta Popovic, Eric Reyes, Jen O'Connor, Kay C Dee, and Ella L. Ingram addressing adaptable courses. The authors define four core principles for adaptable courses: detailed planning, communicating strategically, scheduling regular interactions, and embracing alternative assessments. The authors further detail the offering of their Creating Adaptable Courses training at their institution and how they intentionally designed not only the content but the community building and support aspects of their training to align with their institutional culture. They conclude their chapter by sharing both the benefits and the challenges from their experience and by providing specific examples of reactions from faculty who participated in the event. These reactions provide insight for others adopting the core principles or supporting other teachers in engaging in similar training.

Section Two opens with Christopher Phillips and Jared S Colton in Chapter 9 addressing a new normal for inclusive online learning with consideration for the disproportionate impacts on students of color and students with disabilities. The authors point to the principles from universal design for learning that when we create usable and accessible content, it benefits all students not just those with disabilities. Phillips and Colton define their use of the terms accessibility, usability, and inclusive design and posit that our course design should be proactive rather than reactive when disabilities are disclosed. Specifically, the authors explore two distinct accessibility practices that can have overarching benefits to all students: providing closed captions for instructional videos, and converting PDF content to HTML content. They provide insight for tools, resources, and support in making our teaching more resilient to change and becoming better prepared to consider the diverse needs of our students.

Chapter 10 begins with Jenae Cohn advocating for the development and use of online tool kits to support and orient students to techniques, tools, and resources available to build academic skills like reading, note-taking, and researching. Cohn provides specific examples of the type of content and resources that can be included in toolkits for digital literacy and nods specifically to the need for students to develop critical literacy skills necessary for the future, like identifying reliable sources online. In conclusion, Cohn recommends consulting with others in the campus community, from librarians to instructional designers, that can support these efforts and supporting our students.

In Chapter 11, Elizabeth Winter, Michele Clark, and Chris Burns build on supporting student skills in our classrooms as they describe Team-Based Learning (TBL) with the hallmarks of active learning, application of knowledge, and social engagement with a small group. Specifically, the authors frame the need for appropriately formed and managed teams, learner accountability, team assignments, and timely feedback to support students in individual and collective ways in a course. These elements build to the three phases of TBL that can be implemented in an iterative cycle to help students develop important skills that can be used across disciplines and in the workplace.

Rebecca Campbell and Kevin Kelly, authors of Chapter 12, build on concepts from the previous chapter to introduce Virtual Homework Sprints (VHS) which allow students to gather virtually and accomplish academic work, similar to work sprints in the tech industry. Campbell and Kelly offer structured formats to conduct a VHS session and then share their reflections with specific insights on their own implementations of the practice. The authors also connect VHS to other educational practices like pedagogies of care, providing a sense of belonging, and supporting self-regulated learning. Campbell and Kelly posit that VHS offers opportunities to maximize student-faculty interactions, foster student accountability, and increase student participation in equitable and flexible ways.

In Chapter 13, Miriam Moore addresses online discussions by challenging us to "think outside the PPR (prompt, post, reply) box." Moore explains that she wanted her students to engage in dialogue in the online discussion forums, so rather than asking "known-answer" questions, she prompted the students with

multiple entry points into the conversation, offering both lower-level tasks and higher-order engagement opportunities. She also considered her own instructor presence by intentionally engaging students with guiding questions that allowed the learners to broaden their dialogue. Moore concludes her chapter with specific examples of an implementation in a first-year writing course and gives recommendations for other courses as well.

Chapter 14 with Jessica Rivera-Mueller and Kresten Erickson highlights the value of student partnerships and co-designing curricula. In this chapter, the authors engage in a reflective dialogue, discussing their creation of a discussion assignment and how they structured their partnership to co-teach a literature course for pre-service teachers. Their reflection balances their struggles and successes of their partnership with the added complexities resulting from a change in course format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rivera-Mueller and Erickson provide recommendations for others who are considering being part of a student partnership and discuss how to navigate the uncertainty of roles and expectations when collaborating.

Concluding the collection, Chapter 15 details a partnership between students, staff, and faculty between the authors Maggie Debelius, Susannah McGowan, Aiyanna Maciel, Clare Reid, and Alexa Eason. The authors detail a shift in their planned Students as Partners initiative to include student voices in their summer institute with Eason providing a reflection of the student panel which was the highlight of the event. Maciel also reflects that students continued to play a key role as they participated remotely in other summer events to support faculty. The authors conclude their chapter by recognizing that bringing students to the table as partners in teaching wasn't a revolutionary process but an evolutionary one that emerged in a time of critical need. In this final chapter of the collection, Reid pragmatically reminds us that "things are different now."

Conclusion

Resilient Pedagogy: Practical Teaching Strategies to Overcome Distance, Disruption, and Distraction offers the first comprehensive collection on resilient pedagogy framed in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the social justice movements that have swept the globe. As a collection, Resilient Pedagogy is a multi-disciplinary and multi-perspective response to actions taken in different classrooms, across different institution types, and from individuals in different instructional roles. Regardless of your own position or role as a teacher, we invite you to take the concepts, strategies, and ideas presented in this volume and find ways to apply them to your own context. We also encourage you to share them widely with others. Consider connecting with us on Twitter (@ResiPed) and use #ResilientPedagogy as you share insights and build upon this collection. My hope in compiling these chapters is that we can move forward by engaging in the work of resilient pedagogy together.

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