

Equanimity Web

Greetings, conscious beings. Over the past two months, you have gathered *a lot* of information about equanimity and we've had a lot of discussion about what it is and how to apply it. You watched a lot of videos and you sat and pretended to close your eyes and focus on your breathing several times a week and hopefully you made some notes and did some non-thinking along the way.

Now the time has come to put all of that information together.

To that end, you will be making a web – a big one – out of all of your notes and your experiences.

STEPS

□ Step One:

Look back over your notes.

If our Big Idea that will occupy the big center container in your web is Equanimity, what will your Subtopics be? What patterns do you notice in the material you explored?

There is no right number of Subtopics, but I am interested to see how you will organize all of these separate ideas into one cohesive whole. Again, look for the patterns in the information.

You don't need to limit yourself to things we explored this year in class—you may have other knowledge and/or past experience, and you may wish to do some independent exploration.

After reading and sifting and thinking (and not thinking), make a list of your potential sub-topics (and sub-sub-topics, if needed/desired).

□ Step Two:

Read the criteria carefully.

1. Organization

- Hierarchy of size: Big Ideas are big; Subtopics are medium; Important Details are small. Working in this way is purposeful: it helps your brain categorize and therefore hold on to the information.
- Important Details are clustered around the Subtopic they are most closely related to.
- Lines connect Important Details to their related Subtopics.
- Your web is easy to read and make sense of.

2. **Connections**

- Lines connect related Details to each other (or to other Subtopics) across the web.

This is where the juice is in this exercise. After you have constructed your web, spend just as much time looking for patterns in the information, across the web. Meaning is revealed through searching for and recognizing those patterns. Visualize those connections and patterns by drawing lines.

3. **Special Features**

- Different types of containers – circles, bubbles, rectangles, boxes, etc.
- Different strengths of lines for connections – thick lines for strong connections, thin or dotted lines for tangential (weaker) connections, etc.
- Color-coding
- Use of symbols and/or pictures to help express ideas and/or cut down on the number of words used
- Key/legend to explain your special features

How can some or all of these things help further categorize your information?

4. **Content**

- Fewest words to capture the information; enough words to capture the information – how do you find the balance (it may be different for each Detail)?
- Clarity of communication – are your ideas easy for you to read and digest?
- Thoroughness

Step Three:

Finalize your thinking about your Subtopics and what special features you will use.

Step Four:

Draft your web – a quick sketch (or sketches) in your comp book.

□ Step Five:

Reread the criteria – compare each aspect to your draft. Do you need to make any adjustments?

□ Step Six:

Make your final copy. Do so with equanimity. What is it like to approach this work from a place of calm, friendly, centeredness?

□ Step Seven:

Reread the criteria.

Have you covered all aspects of the criteria?

Have you done so to the best of your ability (without staying up late)?

Is there anything you want to adjust/add/change/tweak?

□ Step Eight:

Put your name on the back and hand it in.

□ Step Nine:

Exhale and do something nice for yourself.

The purpose of this exercise is metacognitive: by reworking and sorting the information in your head, rather than just regurgitating it or copying it down and changing a few words, you are creating hooks and latches from the information into your brain, increasing your ability to recall it in the future and deepening your conceptual understanding of the material. We are going beyond facts. Webs are also a powerful study aid: by practicing this now you are adding another strategy to your repertoire, which will hopefully come in handy in the future.

This will also provide you with feedback with which to apply to your web of research in your Brain Lapbook.

You have one week: get to work!

A Non-Exhaustive List of Sources

Bruce Lee

Lynda Barry

Dr. James Maskalyk

Leon Fleisher

Hubble Telescope

The Most Astonishing Fact about the Universe

Serena Williams

Rafael Nadal

Tennis in General

Wu Mei and Wing Chun

Jeff Warren

CEC

Meditation

Breathing Exercises

Ian McGilchrist (left and right hemispheres of brain)

Brené Brown

Most of these sources are posted on our class blog if you feel you want to review or explore further.