

Transformative Practice Project

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The Transformative Practice brings focus to the ordinary in order to transform it into the extra-ordinary. It is designed to destabilize patterns and challenge even the most mundane of actions to awaken and ignite your creative potential. In an ongoing and evolving process, you will be charged with undertaking a rigorous investigation of daily routines and rituals, repetitive gestures and tics, etc. in order to introduce changes, challenges, extended elaborations – you may even go so far as to stage provocative interventions. This will out-of-class work designed to be an extension of the in-class work to help you cultivate and sustain an interactive, full-on body/mind engagement in your daily life.

As you evolve your TP, your actions will necessarily change given your current work/life interests and demands. The TP is intended to do more than simply raise awareness of habits; its real power comes in the cultivation of a thoughtful, risky, alive creative practice that is embedded in the ‘everyday’. This project is NOT a self-help (although it should prove helpful) or life style improvement (its aspirations are plucky creativity). It should remain flexible and responsive throughout the course of the semester, even at certain moments, providing the lead for your next step. Developing your TP will give you an indelible connection to what the potential is for sustaining a creative process over time.

In the syllabus you’ll see a weekly reminder for TP/Journal. The journal is an archive to track your experience. It may be a written journal, an audio journal, a drawing or other notational journal, photo or collage journal – or any combination that responds to your process of invention. I will periodically ask for excerpts that may or may not be shared with the class.

Examples for launching your TP:

Observe your morning rituals to locate habituated patterns. Do you make bed, jump in shower, eat breakfast, get dressed, then your brush teeth? Do you always perform a behavior in a certain way? Rearrange the order, reverse order, affect actions (shower sitting down, eat lying down, jump and brush).

Observe your moving and walking style or pathways: alter the way in which you move about your personal space: shifting your weight, affecting your sensory input (blindfold, wear gloves to force other parts of your body into touch response); change walking style in a physical way: heel first, dip or sway, etc., or by adding some external element to alter walking experience. Change your walking pathways: go the long way around something, change orientations, walk backwards, walk to a different part of campus everyday, walk without destination...

