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What's So "Safe" About Safe Spaces in Higher Education?

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PLAN FOR TODAY

PART 1: Considering Our Learning Objectives and Potential Outcomes

PART 2: What kind of “safety” are we talking about?

PART 3: Brief history of safe + space, as educational metaphor

PART 4: Land Acknowledgements and Safe Welcomes as Invitation

PART 5: Discussion and Reflection

- Our obligations to others we welcome to a safe space
- Our [unintentional] implicit promises

Padlet w/ your hopes for this session and questions:



Learning Objectives and Potential Outcomes



Task [~7 min]:

1. Individually, or in a small breakout room group [3-4], review the Objectives and Questions found in the Padlet.
2. Add other questions that you feel are important.
3. Vote “Up” (thumbs up) the questions that most interest you and/or your group.

Those most “Up” voted will become the focus for our Discussion and Reflection in Part 4.

Learning Objectives and Potential Outcomes

ONGOING TASK and HONOURING YOUR WORK



1. During this session, you may develop a response to one of the Objectives or Questions.
2. *Please contribute by Adding a Comment with your thoughts.*
3. To allow for this to be a meaningful, longitudinal resource, I will add a comment, response, resource and examples, to each question before BC Campus posts the recording and Padlet link.

Learning Objectives and Potential Outcomes

PLAN FOR TODAY

PART 1: Considering Our Learning Objectives and Potential Outcomes

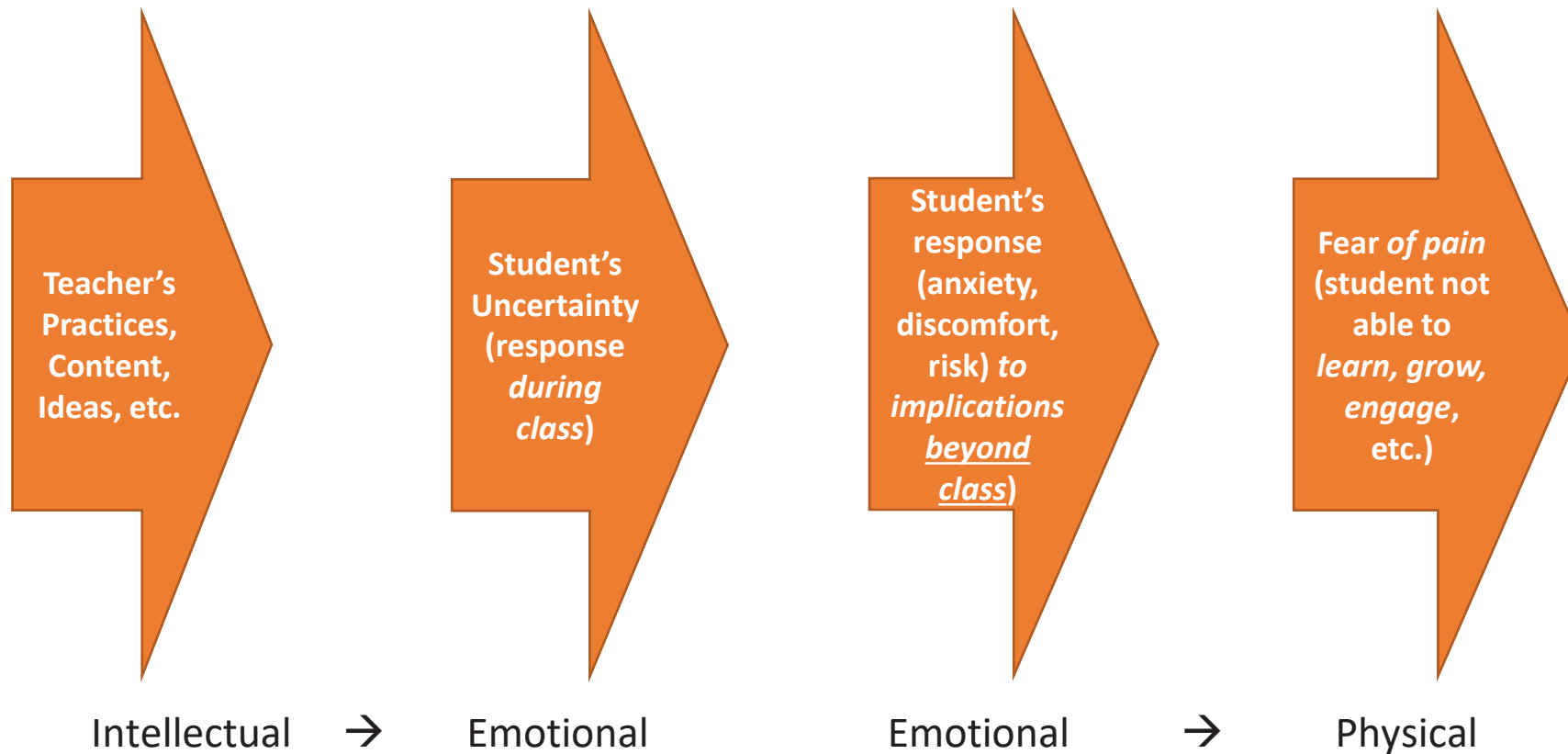
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What “kind” of safety?
Intellectual, Emotional, and Physical

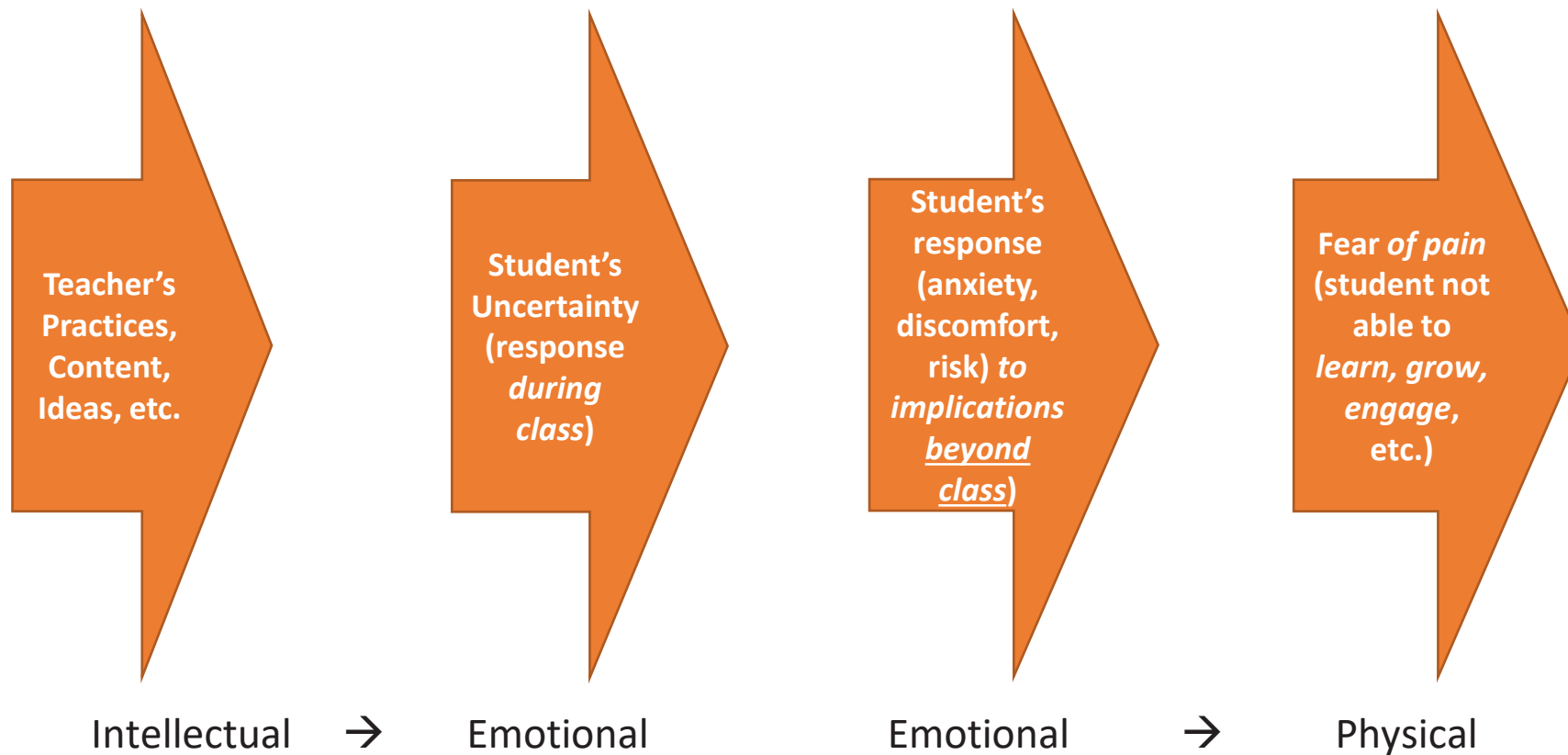
Based generally upon

- Ability (physical, emotional, cognitive)
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Language, Nationality, Indigeneity

Historically under- or un-represented identities

...you did not protect me during our class discussion early in the semester when several students were criticizing my opinion; you promised a safe space for all your students, but when I felt uncomfortable, under attack, and unsafe in our class, you did nothing (“Jo-Ann”, personal communication, July 2015).

My (un)safe student “Jo-Ann”



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Consider these common pronouncements:

Education and learning should be a safe space.

This class is a safe space.

Metaphorically speaking...what's the problem?

| | First Inheritance: Newtonian absolute | Second Inheritance: Leibnizian relational |
|-------------|--|--|
| Description | | |
| Safe Space | | |
| | | |

Metaphorically speaking...what's the problem (being imparted)?

| | First Inheritance: Newtonian absolute | Second Inheritance: Leibnizian relational |
|-------------|---|--|
| Description | Container, independent of objects within | |
| Safe Space | Rules or policies precede/independent of experiences within | |
| | | |

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Metaphorically speaking...what's the problem (being imparted)?

| | First Inheritance: Newtonian absolute | Second Inheritance: Leibnizian relational | Blended Inheritances (Understanding) |
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Metaphorically speaking...what's the problem (being imparted)?

| | First Inheritance: Newtonian absolute | Second Inheritance: Leibnizian relational | Blended Inheritances (Understanding) |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| Description | Container, independent of objects within | Constituted by relationships between objects | Formation <i>a priori</i> (idealized theory or notion) |
| Safe Space | Rules or policies precede/independent of experiences within | Infinite relational possibilities for experiences | Established through policy instead of practice |
| Educational Implication | Institutional guarantee based upon exclusion or prohibition | Teachers and students continually adapt to changes | Differing expectations for institution, teacher, and students |

Metaphorically speaking...what's the problem (being imparted)?

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**ACTIVITY: Land
Acknowledgement**

**EXPLAIN Philosophy,
Strategy, Intent**

**CONFESSIONAL
Narrative**

**RECOGNITION of
multiple positionalities**

Land Acknowledgements as practices
of safe space

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We are gathered today, virtually, in many places. I am currently standing on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish, which includes the Stó:lō, Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), sə'liwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), and x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) peoples.

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Need for deeper
reflection on
“unceded”

Who am I, because of
where I am?

Self to territorial rights
holders;
Self to Students

Land Acknowledgements as practices of safe space

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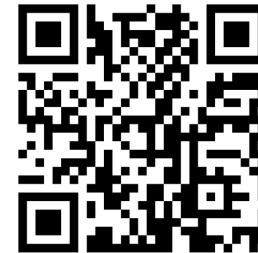
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Upcoming FLO Events

- Next FLO Friday on Sep 20 – Towards Trauma-Aware Teaching
- FLO MicroCourse: Decolonizing pedagogies: Reframing the ways we teach (Week of Sep 23)
- FLO Friday: Neurodiversity in PSE – Supporting Students
- FLO Panel on Oct 22: Faculty Wellbeing
- FLO MicroCourse: Video design and creation (week of Oct 7)

