

# What is Contemplative Education and what are some ways to introduce it into higher education in Mexico?

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“When teaching, three important paths must be taken—intellectual, emotional and spiritual—and none can be ignored. Reduce teaching to intellect, and it becomes a cold abstraction; reduce it to emotions, and it becomes narcissistic; reduce it to the spiritual, and it loses its anchor to the world. Intellect, emotion, and spirit depend on one another for wholeness. They are interwoven in the human self and in education (at its best).”  
(Palmer, 1998, p. 4)



In other words, intellect, emotions and spirit are essential elements in the process of becoming the best teacher, student and human being one can be. It is not just about the content of the subject and the teaching methods or strategies, but also about the people with whom we are working and the academic components. This philosophy of education supports the notion that teaching and learning is a never-ending process of transforming human potential into human performance. How can it be done? What means might be used to reach this final goal?

Meaningful teaching and learning implies being truly present and engaged with people and with the subject. In order to be present here and now one has to concentrate and be as focused and relaxed as possible in any context, at any time. To accomplish this, one has to cultivate mindfulness, a term that has been defined by various authors.

An enlightening definition is provided by Elizabeth Winder who states that “Mindfulness, being present in the moment and being aware of one’s physical and mental experience in the moment, is a core concept in much of eastern philosophy... Mindfulness training develops conscious awareness and focused attention. This enables us to become more aware of our behaviour and interaction, and to respond skillfully to events in our lives and to past patterns of behaviour.”