

# Cracks: an experience of a contemplative space in health training

Frestas: uma experiência de espaço contemplativo na formação em Saúde  
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Grieta: una experiencia de espacio contemplativo en la formación en salud  
(resumen: p. 20)

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### Abstract

This study presents a cartography of the events experienced in a course during the pandemic, with health students and professionals, adapted for distance learning, using fundamentally the concepts of presence and experience. Involving creativity and meditation and using contemplative photography as a methodology, the activity aimed at presenting the potential of contemplative practices and the Narrative Circle in creating a space for welcoming and expanding perception, allowing the partakers to approach humanization in a experimental way. Through the participants' narratives, using images and words, we could witness the impacts and sufferings they experienced, as well as the perception of the potentialities of the gaps, in other words, the openings. Created or discovered, such gaps generated collective experiences of acceptance and affection, triggered by images, transforming the events into questions and creating meanings in such challenging days.

**Keywords:** Contemplative photography. Meditation. Health. Teaching. Pandemic.



## Introduction

This study aims at presenting, as narratives and images, an experience with contemplative photography, within the scope of the Laboratório do Olhar (LabOlhar), a course held during the pandemic focused on health students, and at tracing a cartographic route of some of the events experienced throughout this process.

The Contemplative Photography exercise (miksang, meditative photography or mindfulphoto) searches for the open, curious, non-judgmental state of mind. More than a photographic technique, it is a way of seeing, a direct visual experience, in which perception precedes concepts. Deriving from meditation, it seeks to observe reality without prejudice. For Karr and Wood, “it is a method to train eye and mind through careful observation and presence, seeking perception, clear vision, as opposed to concept. And record what you see, seeing yourself free from expectations”<sup>1</sup> (p. 179).

We can consider it as a exercise of mindfulness, a term that refers to various practices centered on meditation, which can be defined as “simplicity in itself [...] stopping and being present”<sup>2</sup> (p. 12). Its foundation is the *flash* of perception, the moment when the visual perception finds an image, establishing a connection with the present.

LabOlhar is a course, available biannually since 2015 in a public university in the state of São Paulo as an elective subject, composed of five meetings, and groups of ten to twenty students. The only lecture is held in the first meeting to present the concepts of contemplative photography and the procedures of the course. In the other meetings we hold discussions based on the photographs taken by the participants, and this is a moment of experimentation, therefore “laboratory”.

LabOlhar focuses on the concepts of contemplative photography and encourages their practice as an artistic and meditative activity. Their objective is not the result, but doing it, to explore the experience of presence through gazing, keeping an eye in the present, in order to record what is seen, free of expectations. Throughout the LabOlhar course, mindfulness exercises were also presented to enrich the meditative experience, connect us with the moment and with the attitude of being open to experiences<sup>2</sup> (p. 13).

An important stage in each meeting, starting from the second one, is the Narrative Circle. It is a circle discussion about issues aroused by the photos, not aiming at analyzing their quality, but at letting perceptions flow: what do I see, what affects me, what makes me think. The name “Circle” arises because everyone is free to speak and there is no hierarchy, so we can build a multiple and open narrative together. We repeat this, one photograph at a time, and all students participate.

Just looking at photographs, simply saying I like it/I don’t like it, would quickly exhaust the experience<sup>3</sup> (p. 34). We would need an opportunity to “argue” the moods, an aesthetic-reflective moment that seems essential to us, as a way of expanding the image, something that encompasses each individuality, but not reducing them.

Being able to express what the photo produces or provokes is essential. From this, we can develop, with the group, an open narrative and can also, for example, bring the unfolding topic closer to the participants’ lives. For this, we start from the Barthesian



concepts of *studium*, what you see in the picture, the description, and *punctum*, what touches you in the picture, what hurts you, even if that is apparently not the photographer's goal<sup>3</sup> (p. 46-51).

The objective of the course is to offer a space for humanized and welcoming discussions, in order to expand the experience of participants and present the topic of humanization in a more experiential, fluid and less technical way. Besides, we also presented contemplative photography as a resource for promoting quality of life and a practice that exercises mindfulness, whether for self-care, or as an artistic practice or component of professional activity

Subsequently, we will present a brief cartography of what the participants experienced in a class specifically crossed by the Covid-19 pandemic, in which the course, held in the second semester of 2020, was adapted for distance learning.

We considered the cartography path here as a double movement of "accessing the common plane and also building a common and, at the same time, heterogeneous world."<sup>4</sup> (p. 264). In order to do so, we used photographs and texts produced by the students and the researcher.

Based on "the assumption that the act of knowing is the creator of reality"<sup>4</sup> (p. 264), we intend to present a concrete experience of building dialogues mediated by images and creation based on meditation.

In this process, some authors guided us. For example, Renato Ferracini<sup>5</sup>, who questions whether the experience, characterized by him as the encounter and presence, could be an act of "producing healthcare that does not only tangent physical, organic and well-lived health", but rather "through sharing collective poetic experiences [...]"<sup>5</sup> (p. 1); Susan Sontag<sup>6</sup>, for whom photography is an unlimited resource of experiences, capable of creating, more than representing reality; and, finally, Jorge Larrosa Bondía<sup>7</sup>, who states that "experience and the knowledge deriving from it allow us to appropriate our own life" (p. 27).

From the restlessness aroused by the authors, we were interested in perceiving above all the affection, what is touching, more than the learning, because, after all, "mapping is connecting affection that surprises us"<sup>8</sup> (p. 336).

The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the institution, under the opinion number 1.763.067.

## The Researcher

With university activities suspended due to the emergency decree caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, in March 2020, we had to deal with fear, concerns and uncertainties. Even as a meditation practitioner and considered a "calm" person, I felt the impact and anguish of postponing plans. It was necessary to face this sudden, involuntary and improvised confinement. Little by little I found ways to deal with the situation, just like so many people who, according to each context, socioeconomic conditions, and so many other factors, ended up having to reorganize their routines, adapt to new circumstances, demands, absences and discover what was possible. It was



necessary to weave new orders, especially at that initial moment, to be able to continue, between news of deaths and neglecting authorities.

The worries grew and the stress load never decreased. However, there was a certain pleasure in this new routine, provided by the same exercises that I practiced and proposed to the students.

## Cartography: the path of experience

The original and literal meaning of cartography refers to the elaboration of geographical charts, which are the expression and search to discover and understand the territories. Nevertheless, in Humanities, and especially in Education, cartography has acquired varied meanings. It may be considered a method of approaching experiences, or a research method that does not aim to find what was assumed, nor to confirm or refute expected results, but proposes to discover the experience of the path<sup>9</sup> (p. 668). It can also be defined as an open process of drawing up a common plan and connecting affections<sup>9</sup> (p. 671).

We intend to present, in our narratives, the potential of including research participants as active subjects, to “assert the protagonism of the object and its active inclusion in the process of knowledge production”<sup>4</sup> (p. 264).

Letting participants and the researcher tell and create together only makes sense, as research, if inserted within an open proposal: “when events are narrated and shared, characters, places, conversations, textures and images gain space in our lives”<sup>8</sup> (p. 335).

That is why we seek to map “with affection, opening our attention and our sensitivity to diverse and unpredictable crossings”<sup>4</sup> (p. 277). Thus, we seek the possibility of knowing the power of experiencing in an unarmed way, placing the research participant in a position of co-authorship in the reflection and problematization of the research process.

## Pandemic and disruption: a new group of students

When the pandemic began, two LabOlhar groups were starting classes, one in São Paulo and another one in Santos. Both the participants and I were expecting a lot from the course. I was especially looking forward to teaching to the Santos class, since it was going to be the first time I was going to teach that class there. I had already planned and foreseen all the steps for both the subject and the research linked to it. And now, what should I do? I was very stressed, and the feeling of having something unfairly taken from me was strong, especially regarding the Santos group. I missed the chance to go every 15 days to Santos, to have contact with these new students, with new realities. I had taught one class to this group, and the second class, which would take place on March 23, the photo walk, always a great experience, had been highly anticipated by me and the students. Without having had the opportunity to carry out the walk, I decided, not without frustration, to cancel this class.



With the class of São Paulo (SP), in turn, which had already had two classes, including the photographic walk, I decided to move on. Yet, since there was no official statement from the university about resuming the classes, which lasted for months, I told the students that I would continue informally with the subject, and whoever wanted could wait for the official return of academic activities.

Approximately half of the undergraduate students and all of the graduate students agreed to continue. This was a very pleasant activity. It served as a way to continue meditating, and the exercises to stay in the present and open our eyes had a de-stressing effect, being good practices for the students and for me.

While carrying out the proposed activities, such as walking around the house discovering the effects and beauties of light (figure 11), moments of calm and mindfulness arose, moments of pause in the worries of those days, which made it possible for us, through visual discoveries, to become stronger.

The classes officially resumed in July, in distance learning format. With the group from São Paulo, I resumed the activities for the students who chose to wait for the return. For the Santos group, I started the process again, scheduling, advertising and enrolling a new class.

This time, the course was planned for distance learning, with each lesson planned based on the previous improvised experience. About half of the students who were in the canceled class enrolled to this one, but there were also new interested students.

The course would have six classes and I chose to do them every two weeks to extend our meetings, which started in August and went on until November. During this period, most of the participants were already somewhat adapted to the quarantine routine or restrictions, and many were health workers and lived closely with the consequences of the pandemic.

There were 20 participants in this group. Composed only of women, all students in the health area, and most of them already working, the discussions often addressed the difficulties of those days, such as confinement and loneliness, fear, difficulties in working or caring for children, and financial problems.

The students and I noticed how the exercises and discussions helped us to get through this difficult period. Knowing that other people were going through similar difficulties made the days less lonely. Even more important was to share solutions, doubts, anxieties and thoughts, and to realize how art approached reality making it easier to embrace, and this made the moment of the class much awaited.

We felt that the course went quickly and left an opening.

## The power of the gaps

Later, reflecting on the students' photographs and texts, we realized that the course somewhat functioned as a breach of light in the darkness, as if it were an opening, albeit temporary and brief, in these very distressing moments of the pandemic. The



word gap appeared as an expression for this openness that allowed us to remember that there is something else outside this darkness.

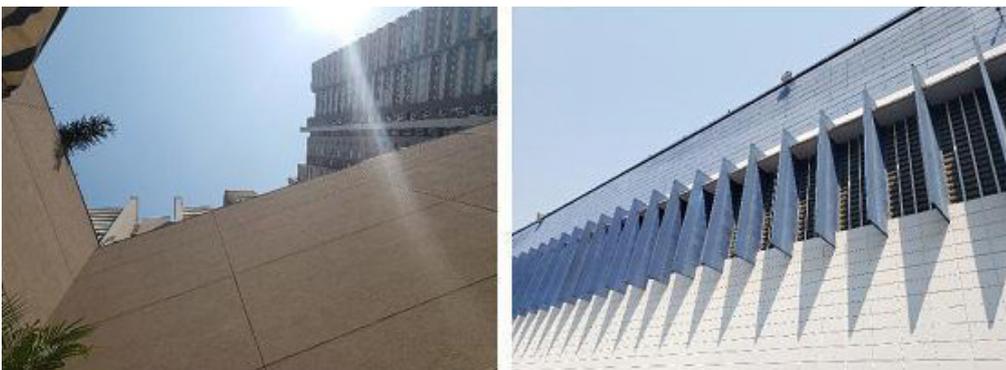
Let's now explore these gaps. Below, we will present photographs and excerpts of the participants' reports, prepared at the end of the subject, followed only by their first names to preserve their identities.

### A creative window



**Figure 1.** Juliana's photo.

And in one of the moments looking around, paying attention, I noticed a caterpillar's trace on the leaf that I nicknamed "The Virgo Caterpillar" because it seemed to have organized the way it ate the leaf. I thought it was beautiful and took a picture. (Juliana)



**Figure 2.** Fabiana's photo.

The performed exercises were creative windows that calmed me down. (Fabiana)

Many of the proposed exercises consisted of walking around the house, or another possible place, and observing everything that presented itself to the eyes, without looking for anything specific, just exercising discovery. This practice mainly aims at exercising perception, since it asks for more patience to happen. Contemplative photography proposes looking and taking pictures without expectations, training eye and mind “through careful observation and presence, seeking perception and clear vision, as opposed to concept.”<sup>1</sup> (p. 179). We imagine that it can also have a de-stressing or calming effect, because by focusing our gaze on what is present, we can temporarily forget worries, anxieties and memories, suspend judgment, and this provides relief to the mind.

Thus, if you get enchanted or “find beautiful” the simple path of a caterpillar and take a picture of it, realize that there is an open creative window, and that this calms you down, it will be the beginning of the discovery of contemplation.

### What exists



**Figure 3.** Ana's photo.

In my perception, the lack of clear guidelines from the moments that were supposed to bring them demonstrated an aspect as lethal as the virus. [...] Huge frustration befell me. [...] The validation of how much we can learn and teach in this movement of affective exchanges, the observation of the environment and what affects us without the frantic concern of making some citation or bibliographic reference is what is most precious about this experience. Our perceptions, experiences, feelings and desires exist. They exist in a place that the Academia denies and even rejects most of the time. (Ana)

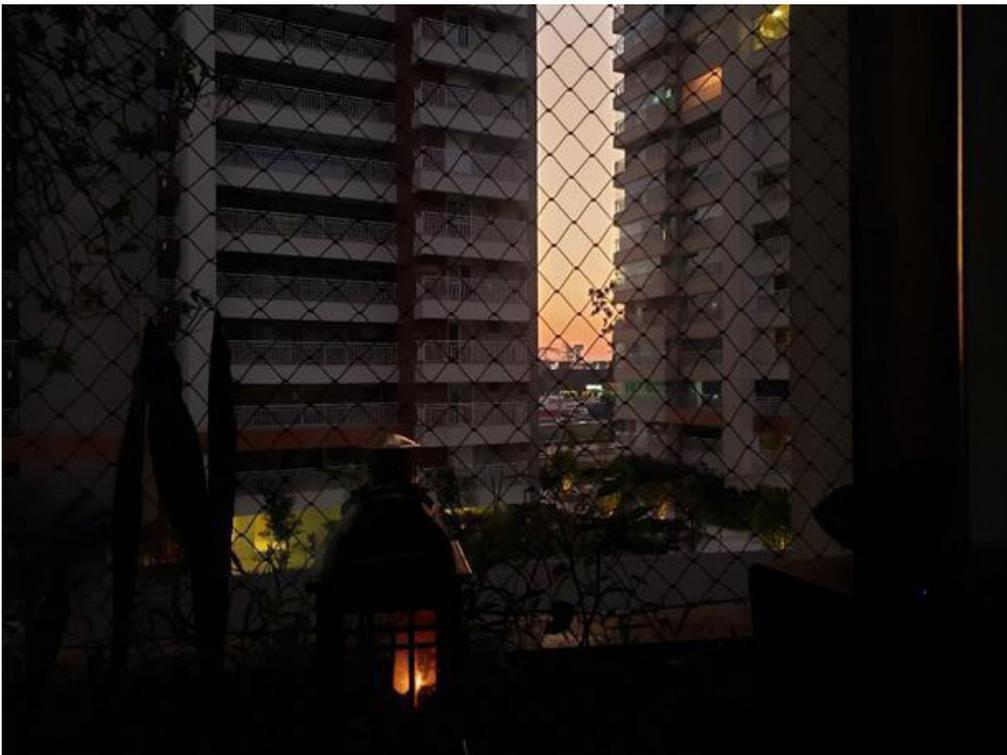


Figure 4. Fabiana's photo.

And in the face of the chaos of ideas, guidelines and work, there I was, a SUS [Brazilian National Health System] worker, in the area of epidemiological surveillance [but] with the expectation of breathing fresh air, another scenario perhaps more imaginative than difficult situations that I had been experiencing daily for 6 months, even if only for 2 hours every 15 days, [...] I signed up as an elective and started. (Fabiana)

The days are long, intense and tiring; discouragement, fear, uncertainties are present, but gratitude strengthens and the subject has contributed significantly to my grateful side, in the discovery of new gazes, in the possibility of greater perception. (Patricia)

Many students were healthcare workers, directly involved with the pandemic, and their routines were constant topics of conversation, leading to very intense moments. The frustration with the present difficulties and with the disinvestment in reality

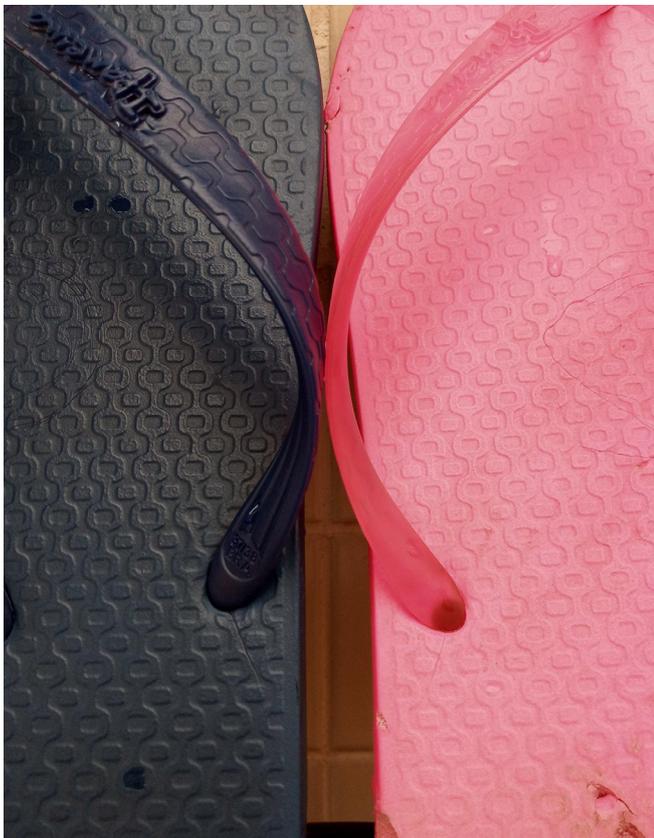
on the part of the public power was clear. In many moments, it was almost a taboo to speak directly about work, deaths, suffering, but others noticed and understood the unsaid. In this context, we can realize the importance of a place that welcomes “perceptions, experiences, feelings and desires” (Ana), which after all constitute everyone.

We experience feelings and looks of the other through what Ferracini *et al.*<sup>10</sup> defined as a “radically collective presence” (p. 117), something that can break chronological time, opening a fissure, and, why not, a gap for welcoming, for example. This effect is intensified by the collective opening of bodies, in our case through looks and feelings. Still for these authors, this presence, as an opening, increases the quality of the encounter by “expanding the power to affect and be affected”<sup>10</sup> (p. 117).

These gaps allowed the students to feel that they could breathe fresh air, find at the same time a way out and let in new experiences. In the pictures, we see the gaps between the buildings letting a little light and sky through, as if the gaze sought a way out of the madness of a slaughtering routine, while letting in light for their own feelings, resulting in sensations of relief and gratitude amid so many negative feelings.

We noticed that the participants, even when they left home to work or do other chores, still felt confined, either by fear, worries or masks. However, in our meetings, this fear gradually lost space, and by opening ourselves, we created a place of presence and welcome.

### Revealing the simple and the ordinary



**Figure 5.** Yasmin’s photo.

Outside the class, exercises in observing colors, perspectives, textures and other rich details, make me realize the beauty of Sardinha's tail, realize the color of the slippers and stop to appreciate and admire, in simplicity, without pretending to be simple in fact, or complex. (Yasmin)



**Figure 6.** Andrea's photo.

I was able to observe layers of the city, colors of the places where I pass through, the things in my work and how we can enjoy moments of simplicity. (Andrea)

The exercise of observing the ordinary allows us to broaden our gaze and simultaneously reduce expectations and anxieties, exercising the ability of being enchanted by the moment. "The exercises of contemplative photography aim to bring simplicity back into our lives through the slowing of the gaze"<sup>1</sup> (p. 127). It is a way of, at least momentarily, leaving the complexity of problems and restrictions and realizing the beauty of the simple, discovering new layers in the ordinary, and thus enjoying everyday life.

## Distances and proximities



**Figure 7.** Evelyn's photo.

It was the first subject that I was going to take during the pandemic period and in 2020. [...] at first it distanced itself from the topic of the research project, but it called for the other areas of my life: yoga, meditation and health. (Evelyn)

The space of the LabOlhar, which at first could be distant from the research of some participants, also offered a connection of the academic environment with other spaces of life. Some of them were resuming their classes in this course, and, at the same time that they “went out” to class, they were still at home.

By talking and hearing about this duality, it triggered reflections on the dilemma between preference and obligation. This was noticed as an impactful experience, bringing an extra level of perception of our own singular and concrete existence. As Larrosa Bondía pointed out, “experience and the knowledge that derives from it are what allows us to appropriate our own life.”<sup>7</sup> (p. 27). Thus, other ways of relating distances and proximity emerged, in academic and personal life.

## Being together



**Figure 8.** Fabiana's photo.

I define as a freshness to my soul and mind, have taken this course. (Fabiana)



**Figure 9.** Evelyn's photo.



When I noticed I had been looking at that image for a while, breathing naturally, I felt a serenity. I remembered the exercise and recorded it. [...] In class, the others' view about the image was interesting, each one connected with a detail. (Evelyn)

[...] each meeting was a mix of learning, joy, pleasure and challenge. (Juliana)

How can welcoming express itself? What shows that we were really together and that it was a good experience?

If in each meeting there was “learning, joy, pleasure and challenge”, we can say that it is a powerful learning space. Participating in the course brought to Fabiana a feeling of “freshness for my soul and mind”, which came together with an image of the breadth of the night, suggesting, in addition to welcoming, an openness. This same image, when shared in class, allowed us to see how others connected to different details, providing opportunities for listening and mutual attention.

Thus, the reception was made in finding, listening, perceiving and valuing the gaze, the narrative and the presence, and contemplating together. For Manning<sup>11</sup> (p. 279), “contemplation – just like intuition and its counterpart, sympathy – activates the differential of the event”, and from this we build a contemplative space in common, an opening for sympathy and learning.

### Presence and connection to the moment

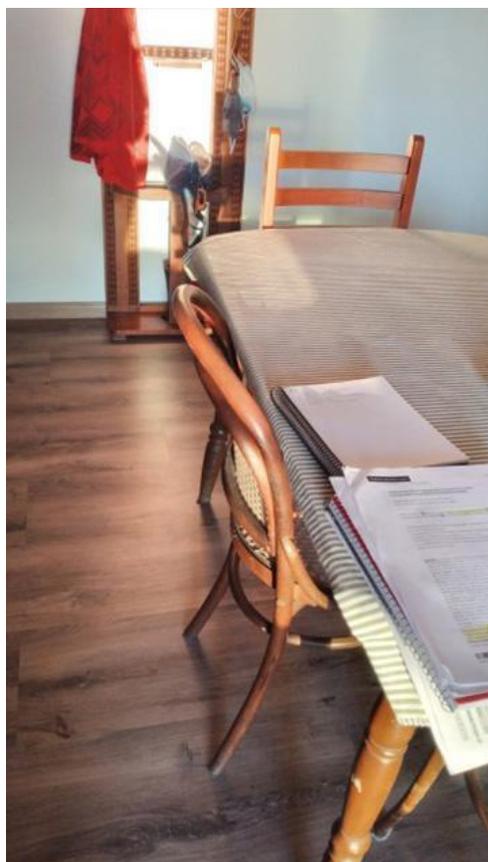


Figure 10. Rita's photo.



Stimulating attention to the gaze activated the whole body. ... the perceptions of all the novelties of the surroundings surfaced with great intensity. Every corner, every object, everything comes to sight with a lot of power. (Rita)

What remains is the will to continue and follow in the dynamics that allow us to contemplate more the small subtleties of life, connecting us more powerfully to the present moment. It is a learning that comes out of academia and will continue in my life. (Juliane)



**Figure 11.** Photograph of principal researcher and first author.



I did the same exercises that I proposed to the participants, such as walking around the House observing the light. For me, they were important moments to deal with pressure and anxiety. (Principal researcher and first author)

The gaps appeared inside the house, in the photographs, in the narratives, and especially in the eyes of the students. If “every corner, every object, everything comes to sight with a lot of power” (Rita), it is because there was, first of all, a pause, a connection with the moment. The gaps were there, but to notice them it was necessary, as the student herself said, “to admire more the small subtleties of life, connecting us to the present moment in a more powerful way” (Juliane).

These gaps allowed the presence of objects and other people, opening passages, making it possible to enter and leave the place of comfort. As Giannachi speculated<sup>12</sup>, “presence is the operation through which the subject witnesses himself as another and then recycles this ‘other’ so that it becomes part of oneself” (p. 60). Thus, the gaze itself was a gap that promoted a deep connection with oneself and with the present so that more reality and presence could pass.

### Looking through the gaps

The concept of a gap is essential in photography. The camera itself basically works through a slit, the shutter, a kind of curtain that opens for a brief moment, allowing light to pass through and thus form the image on the film, in the case of analog photography, or on the sensor, in the case of digital photography. But also in the creative sense photography seeks, among other objectives, to find something present, however not noticed, as if it proposed to open a breach and unlock perception.

In the narratives and images presented, contemplation appears as a creative window, which calms, allows to manifest affections and bring the “perceptions, experiences, feelings and desires” (Ana) to a group conversation, which was perceived mainly as welcoming. But if the participants’ narratives valued welcoming, we can assume that they find, in general, non-welcoming places. Here we propose to overcome this barrier through art, meditation and conversation. We know that the “ways of knowing of the humanities and the arts [...] help us appreciate paradox, tolerate uncertainty, and keep many contradictory interpretations of stories in mind at the same time”<sup>13</sup> (p. 407). Therefore, photography and the conversations generated allowed us to pass through this barrier before even being perceived.

These passages, once discovered or created, appear sometimes as an exit, a relief from the overwhelming routine, sometimes as a possibility of entry, either for the light, for creativity and for the other. It is as if we alternate in the roles of photographer and photographed, or author and receiver.

But if these gaps were manifested mainly through images, these could be understood as a mere representation of something, when in fact they are potent precisely because they are experiences in themselves. We were not, at the time of discussing the images, focused on representations, but creating an authentic moment, after all, as Sontag said<sup>6</sup>:



[...] the strength of the photographic image originates in the fact that they are material realities in their own right, information-rich deposits left in the wake of the thing that issued them, a vigorous means of backfiring, in this case reality — of turning it into shadows. (p. 172)

*Creating this reality, when taking pictures or discussing images, led us to perceive the beauty contained in the simple, discover new layers in the ordinary and enjoy the moment, even the most ordinary one. This can not only be a temporary outlet, a pause in the complexity of problems, limitations and sufferings, but also a possibility to connect different instances of life, which at first seem separate, such as academic and personal life.*

By exposing ourselves to the experience of each other's lives and perceptions, we create meaning in such difficult days. But if experience is something that happens to us, for this it takes an interruption, a slowing down of rhythm, a pause to see, to hear, to feel. As Evelyn said: "when I caught myself thinking, I had been looking at that image for a while, breathing naturally, I felt a serenity".

Bondía proposed "thinking about education from the experience/sense pair"<sup>7</sup> (p. 19), and not in the accumulation of information. Having the experience, the author explains, requires passivity, being territory for events, giving up control and leaving the protagonism. He states: it "requires stopping to think, stopping to look, stopping to listen, [...] suspend judgment, suspend will, suspend automatism of action, cultivate attentiveness and delicacy"<sup>7</sup> (p. 24). For this, it is necessary to divide the space and value the narrative and the others' gaze.

The desire to be with others and share the gaze was an intense exercise of presence, where photographs, narratives and discussions provoked and were able to express a possible experience in such complex times.

## Final considerations in the light of collective affections

Contemplative photography presents a possibility to practice the "knowing how to see without thinking" of Pessoa's poem, exercising perception through contemplation. The LabOlhar, with its contemplative practices and the narrative circle, was perceived as a welcoming and stimulating space for the expansion of the gaze. It was also considered a space for contemplation and connection with the "small subtleties of life" and a learning that overflows in everyday life, giving rise to other modes of sensitivity and subjectivation processes.

Contemplating and being together made up this space of reception, presence and weaving joint narratives, making it possible to build moments of circulation of affections. For Ferracini<sup>5</sup>, the collective presence arises through a specific proposal, an intensification from the opening of bodies. This intensification, in our online meetings was produced from photography, but not only, because meditation, conversation and other practices were part of this whole process.

We exposed ourselves to the experience, we contemplated, we let something happen to us and touch us, and at the same time we narrated these events. When events are



shared, the living space expands<sup>8</sup>, because places, images and ideas enter our world and challenge us.

The LabOlhar was a bet on the joint affections, on the collective presence, triggered by the image as a producer of experiences by itself. This bet proved to be fruitful. One of its effects was contributing to live and face difficult and chaotic days. The Narrative Circle, as a game “of being and doing together, of worrying and concerning myself and the other at the same time”<sup>14</sup> (p. 9) was possible based on the simplicity of the community, on the primordial relationship of trust, to be “present, alive, and in a certain way, joyful”<sup>14</sup> (p. 9), awakened or enhanced by being and caring together.

The reports were permeated, directly or indirectly, by the theme of humanization as practice, as something that happened, not a theory. This appears in the perception of the course as a space of discoveries, expansions, welcomes, exercise of autonomy, encounter of pleasure within a tiring and stressful daily life, possibility of approximation between research and other areas of life, possibility of appreciating simple things, finding new scenarios and new looks on reality. So it was possible to exercise creativity and find calm.

Obviously, the experience presented here has limitations, such as the fact that it is an elective subject and has only pre-arranged students from the same institution, and because it is a limited audience. It is not possible to know if this affective and collective construction will be sustained in the long term, and how it would be with other student profiles. Nonetheless, its effect in having helped to live and go through these days, sometimes so difficult and challenging, is already a concrete result, recorded in the photographs and in the moments of sharing.

In times of darkness, the gaps allowed the light of experience to pass through and create senses, contemplation activated the event and made it possible to experience the presence with the other. The power of the gaps was to create collective affections and give meanings to continue.

### Authors' contribution

All authors actively participated in all stages of preparing the manuscript.

### Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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## Resumo

O artigo apresenta uma cartografia dos acontecimentos vivenciados em um curso durante a pandemia com estudantes e profissionais da área da Saúde, adaptado para o ensino a distância e tomando fundamentalmente os conceitos de presença e experiência. Envolvendo criatividade e meditação e tendo como metodologia a fotografia contemplativa, a atividade objetivou apresentar a potência das práticas contemplativas e do Círculo Narrativo na criação de um espaço de acolhimento e de ampliação da percepção, permitindo que o tema da humanização seja abordado experiencialmente. Por meio das narrativas dos participantes e por meio de imagens e palavras, apresentam-se os impactos e sofrimentos vividos, bem como a percepção das potencialidades das frestas, ou seja, das aberturas. Tais frestas, criadas ou descobertas, geraram experiências coletivas de acolhimento e afetos disparados pela imagem, permitindo que os acontecimentos se tornassem interpelativos e criassem sentidos em dias tão difíceis.

**Palavras-chave:** Fotografia contemplativa. Meditação. Saúde. Ensino. Pandemia.

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## Resumen

El artículo presenta una cartografía de los acontecimientos vivido en un curso durante la pandemia con estudiantes y profesionales del área de la salud, adaptado para la enseñanza a distancia, tomando fundamentalmente los conceptos de presencia y experiencia. Envolviendo creatividad y meditación y teniendo como metodología la fotografía contemplativa, el objetivo de la actividad fue presentar la potencia de las prácticas contemplativas y del Círculo Narrativo en la creación de un espacio de acogida y de ampliación de la percepción, permitiendo que el tema de humanización se aborde experimentalmente. Por medio de las narrativas de los participantes, utilizando imágenes y palabras, se presentan los impactos y sufrimientos vividos, así como la percepción de las potencialidades de las grietas, es decir, de las aberturas. Tales grietas, creadas o descubiertas, generaron experiencias colectivas de acogida y afectos, disparados por la imagen, permitiendo que los acontecimientos pasasen a ser interpelativos y creasen sentidos en días tan difíciles.

**Palabras clave:** Fotografía contemplativa. Meditación. Salud. Enseñanza. Pandemia.