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You got transformative learning in my critical pedagogy!

Connecting two theoretical perspectives to inform our instructional identities & praxis

LOEX 2023

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Learning outcomes

Define...

critical librarianship, critical information literacy, transformative learning, and perspective transformation
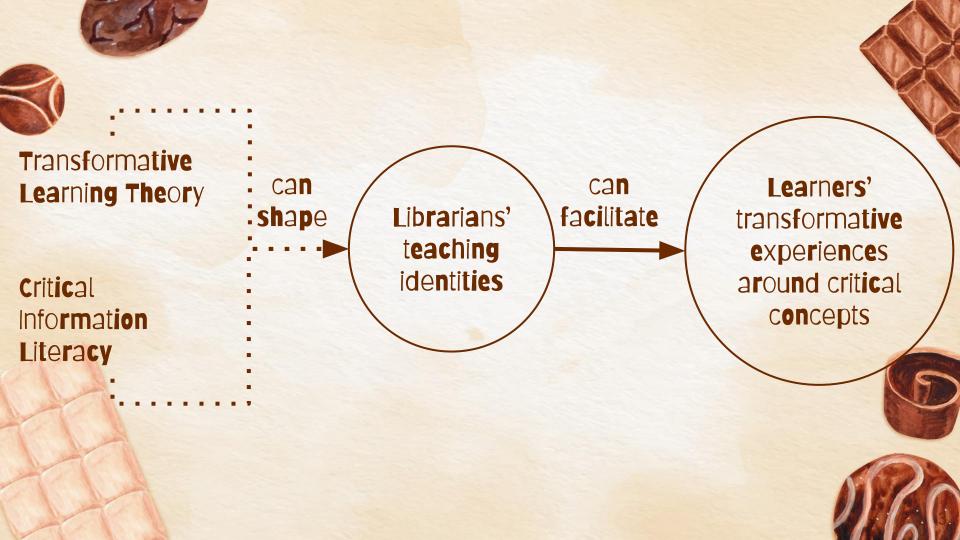
Explain...

how we can connect transformative learning theory to critical librarianship and critical information literacy in meaningful ways

Identify...

(at least) one concept you can integrate into your praxis with the goal of promoting transformative learning experiences
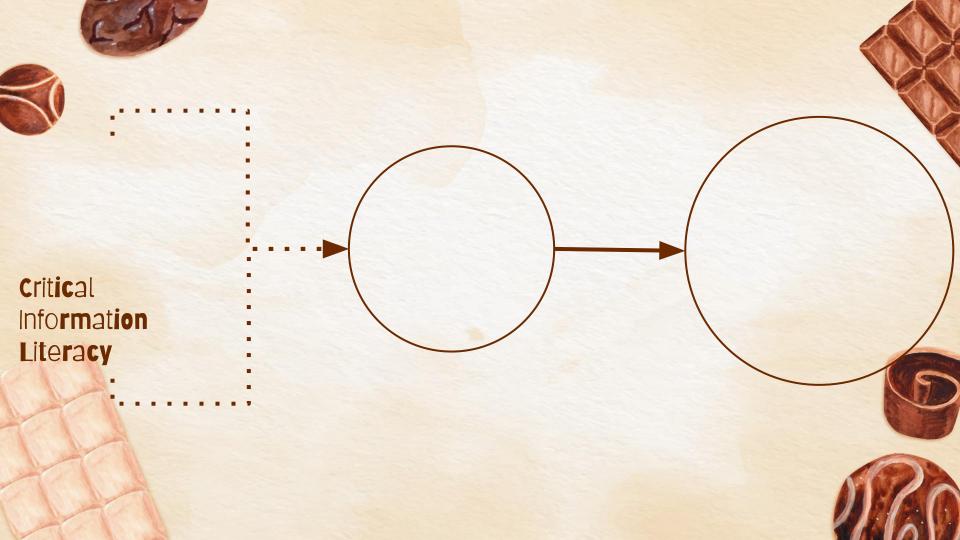
Transformative Learning Theory

Critical Information Literacy

can shape

Librarians' teaching identities

can facilitate

Learners' transformative experiences around critical concepts

Image from imgflip

Expectation

Reality

Image from IMDB

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Critical
Information
Literacy

Critical Information Literacy: Core Concepts for Our Purposes

- Focused on developing "critical consciousness about information" (Elmborg, 2006, p. 198)

- A way of thinking about information literacy that:
  - Rejects the idea that information is neutral or apolitical
  - Considers power dynamics present in information production and dissemination (Downey, 2016, p. 173)
  - Addresses social, political, economic, and cultural facets of academic research (Downey, 2016, p. 173)

- Praxis at the heart of critical information literacy – "reflection in action" (Jacobs, 2016, p. 5)

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Critical Information Literacy's Roots

Interrogating systems of power, privilege, and oppression ⟵ **Critical Theory**

Interrogating libraries' role in perpetuating systems of power, privilege, and oppression ⟵ **Critical Librarianship**

Interrogating how library instruction / teaching perpetuates systems of power, privilege, and oppression ⟵ **Critical Library Pedagogy**

Interrogating how systems of power, privilege, and oppression impact our information ecosystem and shape our information-seeking behavior ⟵ **Critical Information Literacy**
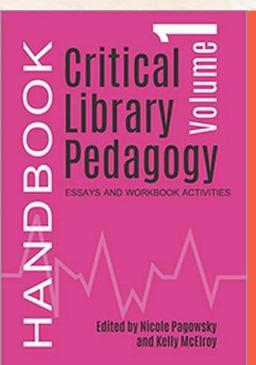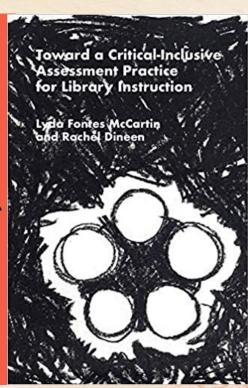
10

CRITICAL LIBRARY INSTRUCTION
Theories & Methods
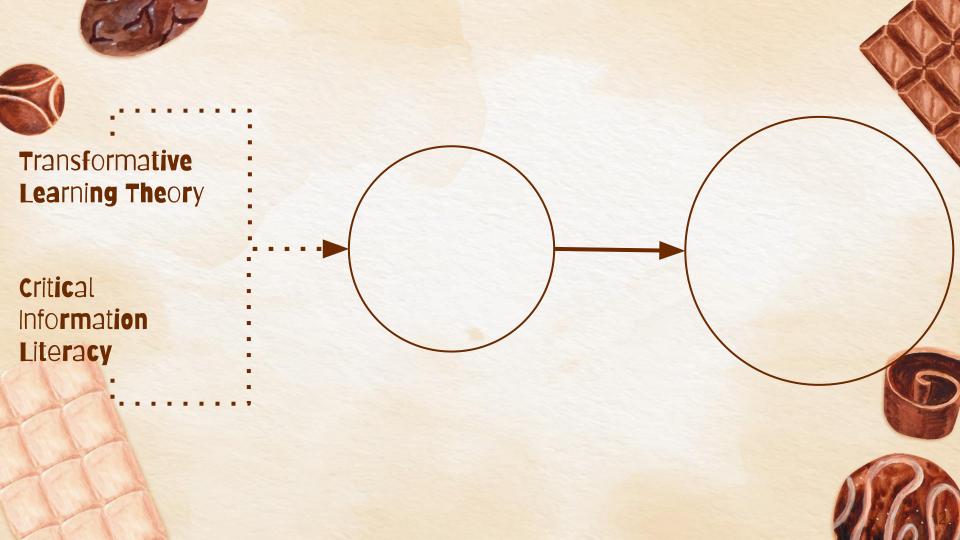
Edited by
Maria T. Accardi
Emily Drabinski
and Alana Kumbier

HANDBOOK Critical Library Pedagogy Volume 1
ESSAYS AND WORKBOOK ACTIVITIES
Edited by Nicole Pagowsky and Kelly McElroy

critical information literacy
foundations, inspiration, and ideas
ANNIE DOWNEY
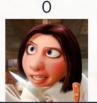
Toward a Critical-Inclusive Assessment Practice for Library Instruction
Lyda Fontes McCartin and Rachel Dineen

Transformative
Learning Theory

Critical
Information
Literacy
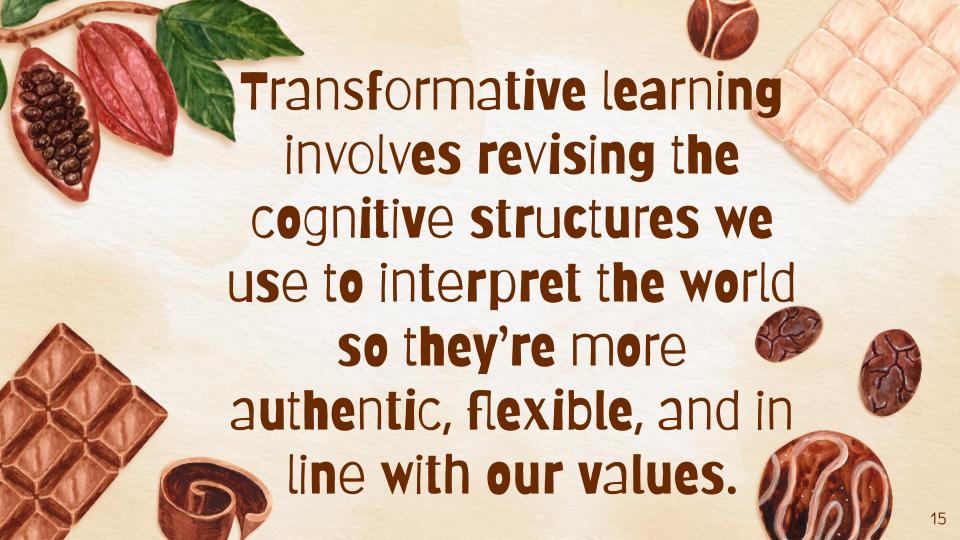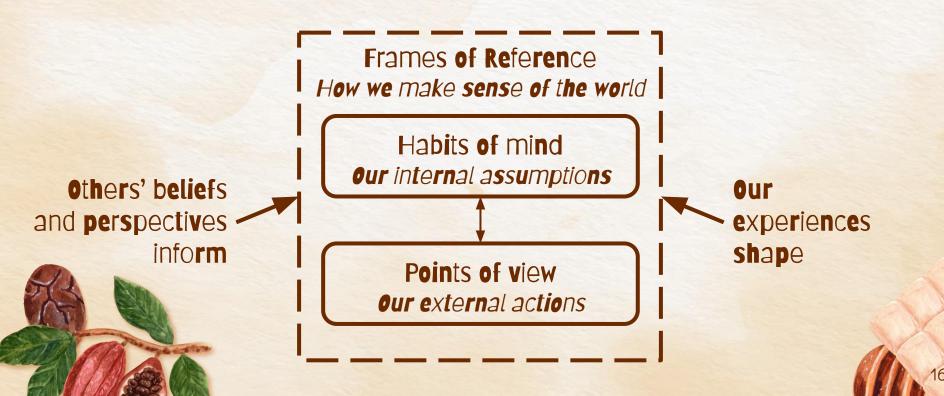
Transformative Learning: Core Concepts

- Introduced by Jack Mezirow in the 1970s

- As adults, we have unchecked / un-evaluated ways of thinking about ourselves and the world
  - Family environments
  - Cultural, social, religious communities

- When we encounter events that challenge our ways of thinking, we may:
  - ignore / dismiss them (more common), or
  - try to make sense of our beliefs, attitudes, and experiences in light of these events (more difficult – and meaningful!)

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Transformative learning involves revising the cognitive structures we use to interpret the world so they're more authentic, flexible, and in line with our values.

How Mezirow defines these cognitive structures:

Frames of Reference
How we make sense of the world

Habits of mind
Our internal assumptions

Points of view
Our external actions

Others' beliefs and perspectives inform

Our experiences shape

When we transform, we...

reconsider our habits of mind

revise our points of view

reconstruct our frames of reference

more flexible and authentic perspectives

which allows us to...

which leads us to...

which means we have...

This process is perspective transformation!

Perspective Transformation Phases

Disorienting dilemma → Self-examination → Critically assess assumptions → Recognize shared experiences

Explore options → Develop a plan of action → Acquire knowledge & skills → Try out new roles
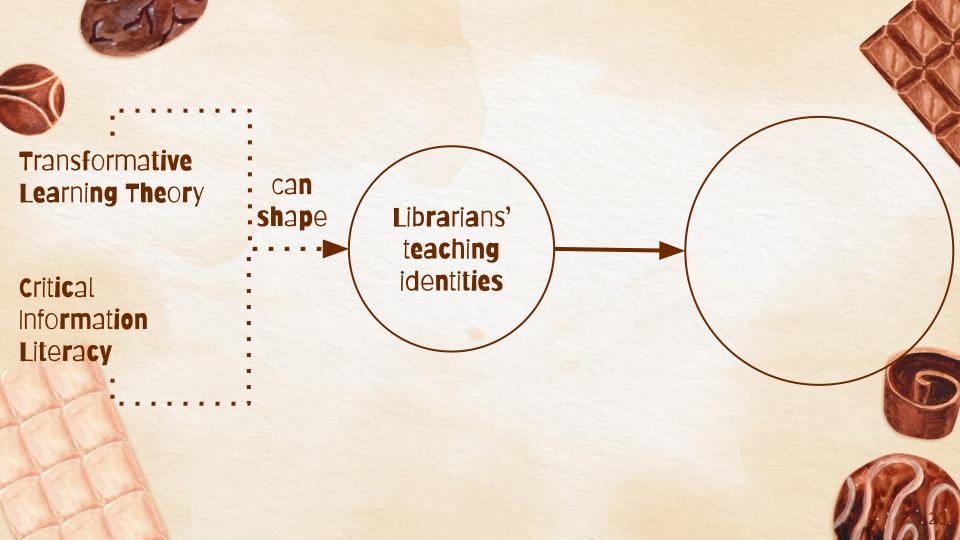
Develop competence & confidence → Reintegrate with changed practices & perspectives

How we might think about these two ideas in relationship to each other:

Transformative learning theory

Critical information literacy

Transformative Learning Theory

Critical Information Literacy

can shape

Librarians' teaching identities

When it comes to my teaching identity...

Mentimeter

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I'm a newbie to this concept!   I've thought a bit about it.   I'm an expert on the topic!   Not only am I an expert, but I can help others!

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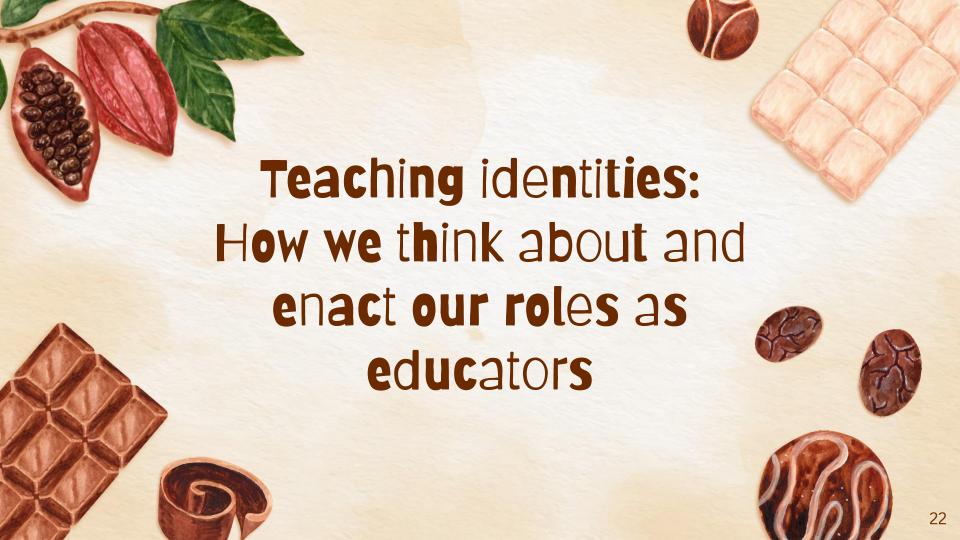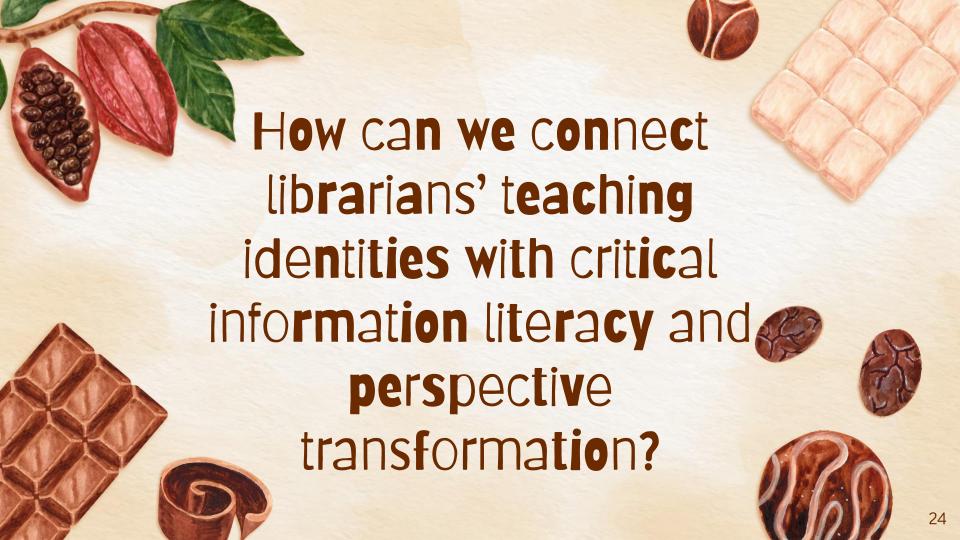
Teaching identities: How we think about and enact our roles as educators

Academic Librarians' Teaching Identities

- First – as a facet of our professional identities (Walter, 2008)

- Since then:
  - How they can evolve over time in beliefs and practices (Baer, 2021)
  - How they develop through engagement in SoTL (Hays & Studebaker, 2019)
  - In connection to assessment practices (Detmering, McClellan, & Willenborg, 2019)
  - How different factors influence librarians' perspective transformation in their teaching identities (Nichols Hess, 2018, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b)

How can we connect librarians' teaching identities with critical information literacy and perspective transformation?
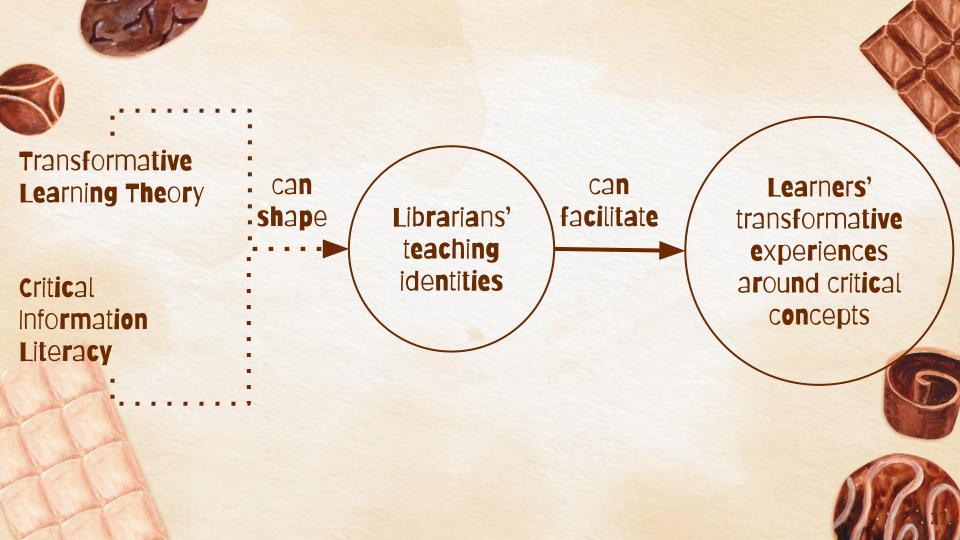
Do you...

- Critically assess your own teaching practices and instructional assumptions?
- Engage in self-reflection?
- Think about the broader systems and structures that influence your teaching practices?
- Use critical assessment and reflection to change how you think about instructional interactions?
- Take changed mindsets about teaching and put them into practice?
- Try to change the systems and structures that impact your teaching practices / learning environments?

How we might think about these three ideas in relationship to each other:

Teaching identities

Transformative
Learning Theory

Critical
Information
Literacy

can
shape

Librarians'
teaching
identities

can
facilitate

Learners'
transformative
experiences
around critical
concepts

Wearing the title, or moniker, of a transformative educator... means asking yourself, **Am I willing to transform in the process of helping my students transform**?
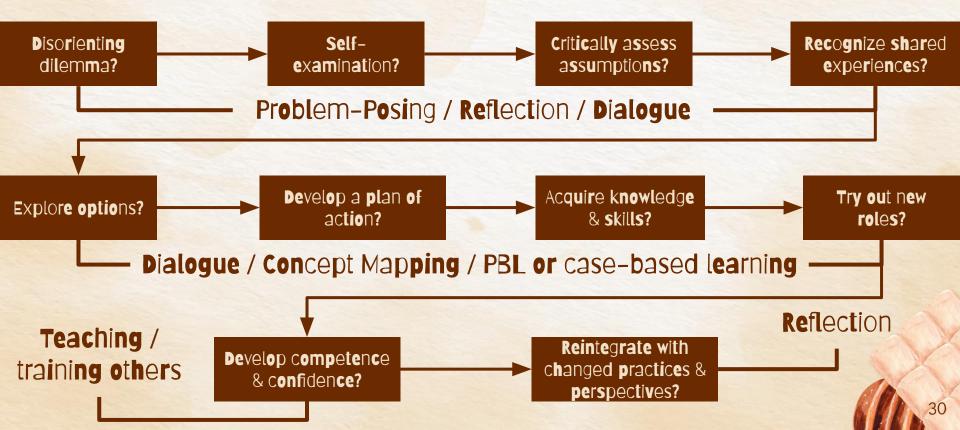
This means taking the position that **without developing a deeper awareness of our own frames of reference and how they shape practice, there is little likelihood that we can foster change in others**.

emphasis added

—**Edwar**d W. **T**aylor (2008, **p. 13**)

By transforming our teaching identities, we can more effectively facilitate transformative learning experiences for others.

Strategies to Use Critical Concepts and Facilitate Transformative Learning:

| Disorienting dilemma? | → | Self-examination? | → | Critically assess assumptions? | → | Recognize shared experiences? |

Problem-Posing / Reflection / Dialogue

| Explore options? | → | Develop a plan of action? | → | Acquire knowledge & skills? | → | Try out new roles? |

Dialogue / Concept Mapping / PBL or case-based learning

Reflection

Teaching / training others

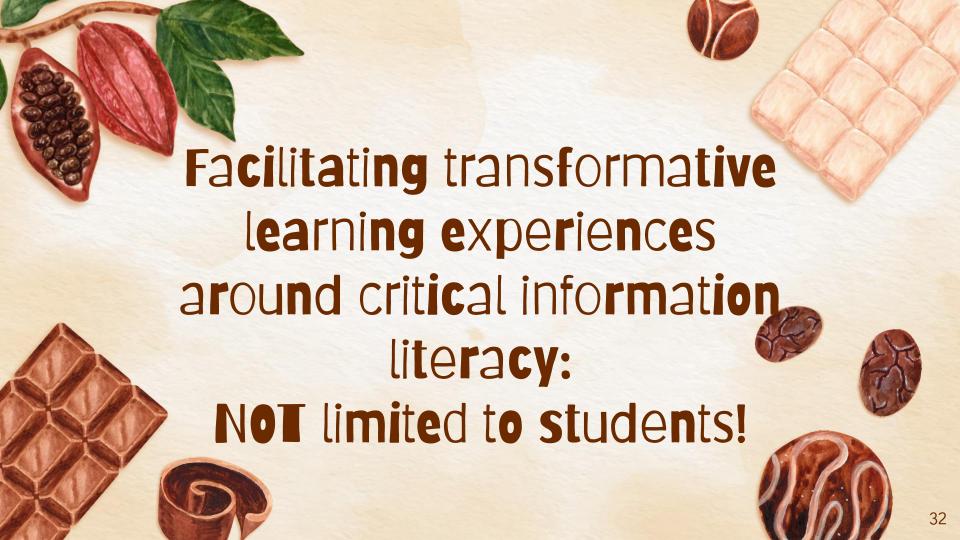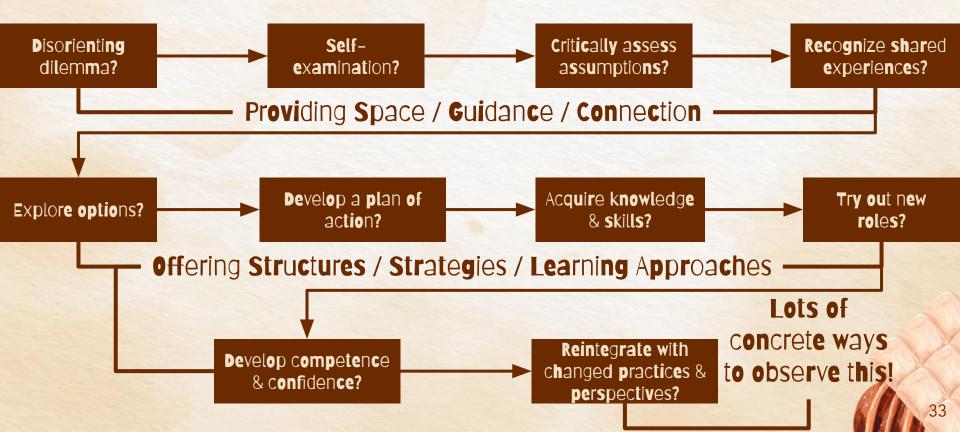| Develop competence & confidence? | → | Reintegrate with changed practices & perspectives? |

Five Minutes to Reflect & Respond:

Talk with someone, write down your thoughts, or add ideas to Padlet:

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- What critical information literacy concepts do learners find most disorienting? How can we help them deal with that disorientation?

- How do you facilitate learning interactions where students can push past self-examination and onto meaningfully connect with others?

- What strategies can we use to help learners gain skills, knowledge, competence, and confidence to make sense of critical information literacy ideas in their own learning?

- What evidence would demonstrate learners' "reintegration" with changed practices and perspectives about critical information literacy concepts?

**Facilitating transformative learning experiences around critical information literacy:
NOT limited to students!**

Using Train-the-Teacher to Integrate CIL & Perspective Transformation:

```
Disorienting      →  Self-          →  Critically assess  →  Recognize shared
dilemma?             examination?      assumptions?          experiences?
```

Providing Space / Guidance / Connection

```
Explore options?  →  Develop a plan of  →  Acquire knowledge  →  Try out new
                     action?               & skills?             roles?
```

Offering Structures / Strategies / Learning Approaches

```
Develop competence  →  Reintegrate with
& confidence?          changed practices &
                       perspectives?
```

Lots of concrete ways to observe this!

Five Minutes to Reflect & Respond:

Talk with someone, write down your thoughts, or add ideas to Padlet:

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- What critical information literacy concepts could disciplinary faculty find disorienting? How can you connect with them around this disorientation?

- Does the idea of training-the-teacher in critical information literacy prompt a disorienting dilemma for you? Why or why not?

- What strategies can we use to help disciplinary faculty gain skills, knowledge, competence, and confidence to meaningfully integrate critical information literacy ideas in their instruction?

- What would demonstrate faculty's "reintegration" with changed practices and perspectives around critical information literacy?

Wrapping Up: Have we...

Defined...

critical librarianship, critical information literacy, transformative learning, and perspective transformation?

Explained...

how we can connect transformative learning theory to critical librarianship and critical information literacy in meaningful ways?

Identified...

(at least) one concept you can integrate into your praxis with the goal of promoting transformative learning experiences?

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Go to **www.menti.com** and use the code **7751 1879**

Mentimeter

What piques your interest about transformative learning experiences and critical information literacy?

Consider where you might go from here - teaching identity-wise, or with learners / faculty.

×

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Press ENTER to show answers

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Questions & Discussion

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Thank you!