**ABSTRACT**

Sociology professor Phoebe Godfrey and her former student Juan Pablo Yepes Tobón, engage in boundary‑crossing explorations of the relationship between the academy and spirituality — recognizing dialogue as intimate and animate, reflecting the character of spirituality. The purpose of education is posed as the cultivation of the students’ inner life. This entails nurturing intrinsic curiosity; encouraging cross‑disciplinary, spiritual/ontological consideration; holding space for students to explore their “authentic Self”; and thusly helping the students to discover their “gifts”, which arise innately from this spiritual cultivation and flourishing.

This stands in stark opposition to the realities of the modern academy, which has predominantly assumed the patterns of the capitalist context within which it is embedded. The modern academy serves to produce a workforce and echoes positivist notions of “objective knowing”. Accordingly, a hierarchical model is assumed, along with an orientation toward grinding intrinsic curiosity out of students from a young age and into higher education. This at once supplants tendencies for “disruption” with an inclination to please authority figures, while predisposing students to forgo autonomous and experiential exploration in exchange for “handed‑down” knowledge. Yet there is hope, as our dialogue illustrates, when students’ inner lives and spiritual autonomies are prioritized.