



National Newsletter

October 2009

Southern African Montessori Association

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Message from the President:

The theme of this month’s newsletter is intrinsic motivation. As Montessori teachers and trainers, we are often hard pressed to explain the essence of this. Our Montessori philosophy files have much to say about punishment and reward, independence, self motivation, normalisation and character building. Of course intrinsic motivation encompasses all of the above.

My search for a better understanding of intrinsic motivation led me on an interesting path of learning. There are some philosophers and psychologists who don’t believe that intrinsic motivation occurs – everything we do we do for some kind of external reward. I went back to my Montessori texts and was really interested to read the chapter from *The Secret of Childhood*, ‘The Two Different Kinds of Work’, where Maria Montessori speaks about the work of the child, and emphasising the joy it brings him. Children certainly have shown me the spiritual refreshment they get from their work.

As adults, our hobbies often give us the same joy and sense of self-fulfilment. Over time I have found that for many of us, Montessori is our hobby, and so we gain joy and feed our spirits through the work we do with the children entrusted to our care.

In the words of Maria Montessori, “Work is necessary; it can be nothing less than a passion; a person is happy in accomplishment.”

With all of the schools now in their final term for the year, I wish you all of the best during this busy time. Here’s hoping that your work and the work of the child during this time brings joy to all, and makes the task of getting through to the end of the year a happy one.

Heidi van Staden

Please note:

The document “Guidelines to the Rights and Responsibilities of Independent Schools” has been removed from the website until it has been updated. Please refer to the article on page 2: “NAISA Meeting Feedback” for information on this.

NAISA Meeting Feedback 19th October 2009

Submitted by Sam Streak

As the co-opted representative for SAMA, I attended the quarterly meeting of NAISA (National Alliance of Independent School Associations) of which SAMA is a member.

It is always positive to be part of a larger educational community and also to have input from a Montessori point of view. Many of the issues discussed at NAISA don't really affect most SAMA Members as they are often related to subsidy matters. However, participating in discussions and learning more about the Rights and Responsibilities of Independent Schools is essential to us being able to protect this Constitutional Right.

The main items discussed at the meeting (that would impact on SAMA member schools) included:

UMALUSI – a meeting will be held with NAISA representatives and Umalusi on Thursday 22nd October to resolve outstanding problems and issues. NAISA will ask that the process of provisional accreditation be suspended until such time as they have finalised and promulgated full accreditation criteria. NAISA members felt the constant roll over of the provisional accreditation process, as well as the shifting of goal posts, was unacceptable. Another issue that needs resolution is the acceptance of "foreign" curricula including Waldorf and Montessori. The NAISA team will report back to all members once the meeting has happened.

LURITS and SA SAMS information requirements – it appears that these are not compulsory for schools to complete, particularly where the provisional Department of Education has amended the required information. An example cited was that in some provinces, children's and teachers HIV status was requested, the sexual orientation of parents – which is a shocking violation of the Constitutional rights of learners, parents, teachers etc.

The NAISA task team who have worked with DoE officials to develop a document called The Rights and Responsibilities of Independent Schools reported that the draft of this document is now complete. It is to be put forward at the 2nd Bi-Annual Meeting with the DoE and PEDs for final approval. Once this final document is approved, all SAMA member schools will be given a copy of this to ensure their Rights and Responsibilities are clear.

The issue of forming a task team to look at Quality Assurance in all independent schools was raised. NAISA members were asked to nominate someone from their associations to sit on this task team who will look at a united Quality Assurance process that would allow for Whole School evaluation on a generic level and then look at accommodating specific things applicable to Faith based schools, Montessori schools, Waldorf schools etc. I see this as a wonderful way to tie in with SAMA's own Best practice process as well as allowing us to make a contribution to the greater Independent School sector.

Report backs from the various Provincial JLCs was interesting and disturbing – what some officials get up to in some provinces is appalling and it is absolutely vital that Independent schools work together to ensure their rights are protected. A JLC is a Joint Liaison Committee made up of representatives from Associations in each province who in turn represent their member schools at a Provincial Education Department level. In the Western Cape, Sally Hall is a member of their JLC and in the Eastern Cape, I am the SAMA representative. It would be wonderful for Montessori to have representation on every JLC in every province.

The issue of Grade R registration was raised again and there was no resolution. No one has been informed of whether it is still officially being rolled out in 2010, whether learners in Grade R must be registered, what the Norms and Standards are in terms of Grade R subsidies. None of the other Associations was aware of the ECD Stakeholders Forum that SAMA attended last year. I was asked to follow up with Marie-Louise Samuels about another meeting of the Stakeholders Forum (the last meeting was cancelled by the DoE and was not rescheduled). As soon as answers are forthcoming, I will post these on.

The issue of schools being closed for so long over the 2010 World Cup and concerns for children's safety (in terms of human trafficking) was raised. An organisation called STOP was highly recommended to do parent / learner and teacher education around this problem. You can find their website at www.stop.org.za – although the emphasis of the organisation is to stop child pornography, they are apparently also offering support with all related issues. There are definitely other similar organisations and schools are encouraged to do something about this.

Independent schools are not obliged to follow the school calendar of the Department of Education – as long as parents are not given less than what they would receive in a public school. In some provinces, schools are required to submit their calendars to their provincial department.

The Montessori Approach to Discipline

by Mary Conroy and Kitty Williams Bravo
Submitted by Noleen Clarke

This article was first published in Tomorrow's Child magazine

Upon visiting a Montessori classroom for the first time, one might wonder what magic spell has been cast upon these young children making them so calm and self directed. Another person might look at that same class and be confused by the children's independence, wondering where's the discipline, these children just do as they please. Visitors commonly issue such comments as, "I've heard Montessori is too free and chaotic" or "I've heard Montessori is too structured." It does not seem possible that these two extreme opposites can both be true. Montessori is, however, all in the eyes of the beholder. This method or philosophy of education varies in interpretation from school to school, teacher to teacher, and parent to parent. There are certainly some Montessori classrooms that are very rigid and adult controlled, and there are also classroom that are disorderly and anything goes. Montessori when done well, however, is a beautiful blend and perfect balance of freedom and structure. The best Montessori teachers or facilitators understand that maintaining the delicate balance is one of the most challenging and rewarding aspects of their job. It is on that foundation of freedom and structure that the child builds discipline.



Freedom is not a word that is traditionally associated with discipline. Parents are often concerned that the Montessori child's freedom to choose activities presupposes that discipline is something alien to our classrooms. Does freedom mean license to act as he or she chooses or does freedom of choice carry with it certain responsibilities in the classroom community? Are we, as some would claim, a place where children can do what they like or, as a young Montessori student once told a visitor, a place where children like what the do?

To have any meaningful discussion of these questions, it would seem that our first priority should be to define this thing called discipline. Montessori herself held that discipline is "not ...a fact but a way." True discipline comes more from within than without and is the result of steadily developing inner growth. Just as the very young child must first learn to stand before she can walk, she must develop an inward order through work before she is able to choose and carry out her own acts. Surprisingly enough, Montessori found that it was through the very liberty inherent in her classrooms that the children were given the means to reveal their inner or self-discipline. Independence did not diminish respect for authority but rather deepened it. One of the things that aroused her greatest interest was that order and discipline seemed to be so closely united that they resulted in freedom.

But, many people assume that discipline is something that is imposed from without by an authority figure who should be obeyed without question. Discipline in the Montessori environment is not something that is done to the child; nor is it a technique for controlling behavior. Our concern is with the development of the internal locus of control, which enables an individual to choose the right behavior because it is right for him or herself and right for the community.

*Choice and execution are the prerogatives
and conquests of a liberated soul.
-Maria Montessori-*

If discipline comes from within, then what is the job of the teacher? Inner discipline is something, which evolves. It is not something that is automatically present within the child and it can not be taught. The role of the teacher, then, is to be a model and a guide while supporting the child as he develops to the point where he is able to choose to accept and to follow the "rules" of the classroom community. This level of obedience is the point where true inner discipline has been reached. One knows this level of discipline has been reached when children are able to make appropriate behavioral choices even when we are not present.

Discipline presupposes a certain degree of obedience. Before the age of three a child is truly unable to obey unless what is asked of her happens to correspond with one of her vital urges. At this stage, her personality hasn't formed to the level where she is capable of making a choice to obey.

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It is this level which Montessori termed the first level of obedience. A toddler can obey, but not always. The second level of obedience is reached when the child is capable of understanding another person's wishes and can express them in her own behavior. When this second level of obedience is reached, most parents and teachers would think they had reached their goal. Most adults ask only that children obey. The goals of Montessori reach beyond this, however, to the third level which Montessori called "joyful obedience". At this stage the child has internalized obedience, or we might say, had developed self-discipline where he sees clearly the value of what is being offered to him by authority and rushes to obey. This is not blind obedience at all, but is a fully informed choice by a personality which has grown in freedom and developed to its fullest potential. This is what we want for our children. With this level of obedience or self-discipline comes a degree of self-respect in which a child cannot help but respect the rights and needs of others alongside her own. She is then able to learn and grow freely in the security of a community of respectful individuals.



This of course, is a wonderful philosophy, but can Montessori truly deliver these results? Montessori can only benefit children when it moves beyond philosophy and takes a practical application. This involves the careful preparation of the teacher and the classroom environment.

The teacher should be a specialist, trained in child development, as well as Montessori Philosophy and methodology for the age group with whom he or she will be working. Equally important, these adults will need to possess robust enthusiasm for learning, a deep respect for all life, kindness, and the patience of a saint.

The classroom should be beautiful, orderly, and so inviting that the child cannot resist exploring. It should be steeped with a sense of wonder. Within this environment the child will be free to explore, but with this freedom comes responsibility. One of the secrets to success in the Montessori classroom is freedom within the limits of very clear ground rules. Every school's ground rules will vary but the essence is generally the same. 1) Take care of all people and living things in our environment, and 2) Take care of all of the material things in our environment. If you think about it, every "do" or "don't" one could wish to implore fits in these two rules, or could be narrowed even further to this one simple rule, "be respectful of everyone and everything."



The rules are kept simple, yet they are explored in great detail. It should never be assumed that the child understands what it means to be kind or respectful. A great amount of time and energy must be focused on teaching lessons that demonstrate socially acceptable behavior. Children don't just automatically know how to be a friend, express anger, or how to solve problems. As a matter of fact, many adults are still learning how to cope with these issues. Yet, we often forget to teach children the everyday skills necessary for getting along with others. These special skills are taught with the Grace and

Courtesy lessons. These lessons are presented through demonstration and then practiced through role-playing, and modeled by teachers and older students. They are the foundation of the classroom, as they set a tone of respect and kindness. The child learns such important skills as, how to shake hands and greet a friend, how to properly interrupt someone who is busy, and how to tell someone to please move out of my way. The children love these lessons. They are always eager to take a turn playing the roles, and they are thrilled to know a better way to handle personal situations.

Another important consideration, is that children have the same range and depth of emotions as adults, but they don't have the maturity or experience to put these feelings in perspective. The goal of Grace and Courtesy lessons and conflict resolution techniques is to validate these feelings and give children the tools to successfully tackle them. Children learn what to do when someone is unkind or unfair and how to discuss conflicts when they occur. Teachers and children act as mediators, coaching children in conflict through a process of expressing their feelings and finding a way to fix their mistakes.

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In one such incident, a five-year-old acted as the peacemaker for two children engaged in an escalating disagreement. Parents have reported incidents in which children have encouraged peaceful negotiations between mom and dad, as well as settling problems with siblings and neighborhood friends.

She linked the hands of the angry children and rubbed their backs as she encouraged their negotiations. In time, with modeling and consistency, children become proficient at handling social difficulties. In fact, in addition to lessons, which teach social graces, there is a lot of emphasis placed on developing practical life skills. What we commonly refer to as misbehavior is often the side effect when children feel insecure, and disempowered. Children who are happily engaged in self-satisfying activities with a clear purpose experience a great sense of accomplishment and power. When the child can do things for herself, she will feel confident and in control. These everyday living skills such as pouring, scrubbing tables, dish washing, and polishing, also help the child learn to focus his attention and complete a task. These lessons require the child to follow an orderly step by step process, which will further develop both self discipline and logical thinking, thus laying a foundation for the more abstract academic activities offered within the other areas of the classroom.

The magical spell that enables the Montessori Child to become disciplined is his love for meaningful activity. When the environment provides consistency, nurturing adults and stimulating work, the child can go about his most important work, creating the adult he will become. Montessori offers him valuable tools for this great task: independence, order, coordination, cooperation and confidence.

Montessori, however, is only one component in the child's life. A child's home environment and parents' love are the most critical factors in his development. Unfortunately, our children are not born with an owner's manual. Parents generally rely on the wisdom of grandparents and doctors educators, as well as their own instincts to determine the right parenting style for their family. Parents should be able to find within their Montessori school, a family friendly environment that is ready to offer support. When schools and families develop a partnership there is greater opportunity for consistency and continuity.

How can parents bring this type of discipline home from the classroom? A democratic parenting style is recommended, rather than the authoritarian style with which most of us grew up. We learn to be obedient "or else." Discipline was imposed from without rather than allowed to grow from within. Threats, bribes or withdrawal of privileges were expected to make us comply with our parents' wishes. To be consistent with the "discipline" used in the classroom the parenting style at home should emphasize respect for the child's feelings, choices within acceptable limits, encouragement, conflict resolution, and natural and logical consequences for behavior.

There are many parenting courses, which encourage this style of parenting. Such courses as Redirecting Children's Behavior, Active Parenting, or STEP, dovetail the Montessori approach to discipline. These courses are based on theories of psychologists, Rudolf Dreikurs and Alfred Adler. Adler was a contemporary and a colleague of Dr. Montessori and they shared many ideas about children's behavior. Parenting courses and parent support networks are a wonderful way to create bridges between the classroom and family environments.

A child who is free to act not only seeks to gather sensible impressions from his environment but he also shows a love for exactitude in the carrying out of his actions.

-Maria Montessori-

Whether in the home or the classroom it is important to keep in mind the ultimate goal of discipline. Too often we discipline for the moment, hastily solving the present problem, but possibly creating future ones. Disciplining with the long-range goal means keeping in mind the independent adult you want your child to become.

The goal of the Montessori classroom whether it is a prepared environment for infants and toddlers, preschoolers, elementary, or secondary students, is first and foremost the development of skills necessary for a productive and fulfilling life. The best of the academic curriculums are useless if the child does not develop inner discipline, integrity, and respect for others and oneself. In today's world of moral degeneracy, these goals may seem out of reach, but they are more important than ever before. The young person who faces the world of tomorrow armed with self-confidence and self-discipline is far more likely to achieve success and happiness. They will be prepared to meet any challenges that the "real world" may present, and will hopefully bring to that world a bit of the peace and joy they experienced in the Montessori environment.

Intrinsic Motivation

When thinking about 'intrinsic motivation', I came up with so many of the Montessori 'key-words' that we use in our everyday descriptions of what Montessori is really about – self-discipline, freedom, reward and punishment and the non-interfering adult. I decided to look on the net and see what Montessori schools around the world had to say about intrinsic motivation and chose the following excerpts which I felt encompassed the essence of this key Montessori philosophy.

Heidi van Staden

Intrinsic motivation - www.montessorihouse.net

- Children want to learn; they do not have to be motivated by external forces. Punishments and rewards are not used.
- Through the prepared environment the child is free to select his/her chosen activity; therefore he learns what he/she wants to learn, at his/her own pace. This spontaneous activity encourages self-direction and self-reliance.
- Concentration develops if a child is self-motivated.



Emphasis on Intrinsic Motivation - www.questschool.org

Montessori helps children learn how to learn. We operate from the understanding that intelligence, creativity and imagination can be found in every child. The true challenge of education is to keep the spark of human intelligence and curiosity alive. The teachers create captivating lessons and fascinating materials so that learning does not need to be forced. We help children to choose work wisely, to focus their attention, and to come into a setting ready to learn. Montessori students are given the time to reflect and play with ideas until they figure out how things fit together. They practice new skills until they are mastered. They are encouraged to do their own research, analyze what they have found, and come to their own conclusions. Montessori teaches students to think, not simply to memorize, feed back, and forget. This emphasis on inspiration and intrinsic motivation instills much greater self-discipline and a love of learning.

"Motivation as a general term can be extrinsic when children work due to pressure and/or rewards. The opposite, being intrinsic motivation is an internal, long lasting phenomena. Due to the educational approach, Montessori graduates are much more likely to show high levels of intrinsic motivation.

How does this come about?

- Uninterrupted concentration
- Opportunity to expand on their knowledge
- Choice, therefore the work is theirs
- Decision making opportunities
- Pleasure in what they do.

Intrinsic motivation builds the personality. It is a "characteristic" for life.

An intrinsically motivated person will do well in anything they set their mind too.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi explains this with his theory of FLOW. When people are in Flow, which is the deepest level of motivated concentration, they can achieve their highest goals! (<http://www.international-montessori.org>) He describes flow as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost." (www.brainchannels.com)

**"The greatest help you can give your children is freedom to go about their own work in their own way, for in this matter your child knows better than you."
The Child, Society and the World,
Chapter 1**

Character education should strive to develop students' intrinsic motivation. Montessori education specifically excludes practices of reward and punishment for the purpose of cultivating intrinsic motivation. Freedom is recognized as the foundation of intrinsic motivation. The child's motivations are in response to the natural laws of development. In Montessori education the child's choices are respected for guiding the child's pace of learning through spontaneous activities. "The prepared environment and the spiritually prepared teacher are external guides for reinforcing students' intrinsic motivation. The teacher's knowledge of the curriculum and awareness of the processes of human development enable her to prepare the environment, making accommodations and modifications for the individual learners. Montessori education holistically supports the development of intrinsic motivation." (www.jola-montessori.com)

Natural Freedom

by Wendy Ellyatt – Submitted by Heidi van Staden

For more than nine months the unborn child exists in a place of rhythmic harmony – a place where there is no separation and where at first even the heartbeat is a shared experience.

In this place the child is deeply connected to the natural world and knows itself only as part of the greater whole. The trauma of birth abruptly wrenches the child from this state of being into the world of people and cultures. Suddenly exposed to bright lights, noise and its body being handled, the young child is bombarded with sensory images and information. It is taken from its mother and knows the anguish of separation for the first time. The cord is cut. Welcome to the world! Later on the child is introduced to the concept of language and realises that words can be attached to objects and actions. The child's holistic, multidimensional perception of the world is then further defined as its tapestry of experiences is cut up into individual pieces and labelled.



From the moment we are born, therefore, we enter worlds dominated by cultural orders. Many thousands of years ago cultures existed that were still dynamically connected to nature and in which people recognised that they were guardians of the natural world. All the indigenous peoples saw themselves as belonging to a greater web of life and understood the immense importance of maintaining the balance of ecological systems. Children born into such cultures were exposed to a natural expectation of inclusion, harmony and community.

Learning was something that occurred as part of the natural process of daily living. The wisest members of the tribes were those that were entrusted with passing on the knowledge of the ancestors to the young so that understanding could be conveyed in the most empathetic way. Everything taught had deep meaning that they could then take into their everyday life. The world was seen as a place of magic where natural energies were recognised, celebrated and allowed to flow. The minds, bodies and souls of humans were part of the greater symphony of life.

Then things began to change. Instead of living with natural rhythms, humans began to see that they could create artificial environments and rule over nature. As civilisations began with the planting of crops, the domestication of animals and the introduction of money, so the introduction of written numbers and language was a further jump. Symbols could represent reality! Rules and strategies were increasingly written down. Laws were made, and learning that until that time had been predominantly holistic and oral, began to be based upon the transmission of written records.

In the 18th and 19th centuries a significant percentage of the world's population of children was, for the first time, removed from its dynamic day-to-day connection with family life and, instead, segregated by sex and age into schooling systems. Such systems relied almost totally on the transmission of written forms of what children should know. And as information was categorised into different areas, the schooling system taught subjects separated into different areas. Learning was no longer something that occurred via a web of interconnections or as a natural part of living, but became instead something dictated and measured only by rational understanding. Children themselves began to be measured against these very restrictive criteria. For the first time fear began to be a fundamental element of the learning process. Work was no longer seen as something joyful, part of who we are, something demonstrating our dynamic connection to the greater world, but instead something imposed from outside ourselves, with no intrinsic meaning. It even made us feel fearful, disconnected and bad about ourselves.

I would suggest, therefore, that it has become increasingly difficult for us to even know what true freedom is. All we know as adults is that many of us have a yearning for something more – a sense that something is missing. I think this is true – and that what is missing is OURSELVES. As adults, we have for years been schooled, trained and constrained to think in ways acceptable to our cultures.

Our very thought processes have been channelled into defined ruts that are immensely difficult for us to alter. We have moved our thinking from right brained holistic modes to predominantly left-brained modes reliant upon rational, linear processes. And, as adults, we provide the environments and enforce the forms of knowing that our children are permitted to experience.

The child is the spiritual builder of mankind, and obstacles to his free development are the stones in the wall by which the soul of man has become imprisoned. – Maria Montessori

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Natural systems have some distinct properties:

- _ Every part of the system is recognized as belonging to the greater whole
- _ The health of the Whole arises from the interactions and interdependence of the parts
- _ Natural systems are intrinsically dynamic – always in flow
- _ Their forms are never rigid structures but allow for expansion and growth
- _ They are self-organising
- _ They rely on integral feedback

In order to help children be truly free, therefore, we must first recognise that we have been denied freedom. I believe, just as Montessori did, that by freeing children we could change the world. They come to us full of joy and potential, each one unique. They come with extraordinary abilities – full of awareness, experiences, images, and longings, enriched with the knowledge of previous generations. They are rich in the need for connectivity and meaning and full of love for the world in which they find themselves. They are natural learners, instinctively seeking out new challenges and experiences that allow them to include and transform what has gone before. They have an expectation of belonging and contributing.

For me freedom is about being able to maintain that state. It is about not being forced into someone else's ideas about what should interest or excite me. It is about being allowed to flow wherever my natural energies take me and to feel richly connected to others and the larger magical world of experience.



Freedom does need structure in order to flow, for all natural systems rely on an inherent structure. The structure, however, must not be a box that confines us, but must, instead have a multidimensional, fluid geometry that allows each of us to move freely. When Montessori thought about the structure of her classrooms she did not see them as rows of desks over which authoritarian teachers presided, but rather free-flowing environments, where teachers are dynamic links between children and the materials. Importantly, she also recognised that order is a fundamental part of natural structures, and that children have an inner sense of order which manifests itself as a natural harmony and inner discipline.

How many Montessori schools can really profess to giving children true freedom? How many of us are pressured by cultural influences into emphasising the importance of certain elements of the environment significantly more than others – in particular that given to nine numerals and 26 letters? Such an emphasis literally changes the way in which the children's brains process information. We collude in shifting their patterning away from a holistic, all encompassing way of experiencing the world to a rational, linear, categorizing process. It can be likened to the difference between holding, stroking, smelling and empathising with the purring body of a tiny kitten and learning how to spell KITTEN. How many of us do not really trust children as natural learners and well-meaningly interfere to ensure that things are 'up-to-standard' and can be sent home 'to show mummy and daddy'. Each time we do this we participate in taking children away from all that they can be. We show them the culturally expected norms that they must adhere to. We show them that they must measure up to adult expectations. We tell them what a butterfly must look like on paper even if they themselves see a myriad of glowing shapes and colours that is infinitely more beautiful than anything that we could come up with.

Instead of helping other adults to understand that children are more than this, we co-operate with the systems that bind them.

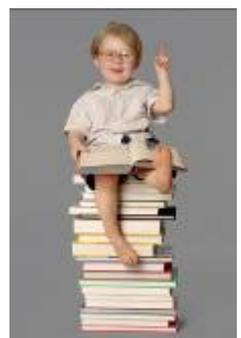
Natural freedom, therefore, should lead us to experience deep meaning, connection and purpose as constants in our lives. Unfortunately I fear that we see such qualities as sadly missing from the lives of so many in our now highly 'educated' societies, just as they were when Montessori was alive. We each of us have a choice as to whether or not we perpetuate systems that do not nurture us as the extraordinary beings that we are. And we must remember that the children may carry forever the consequences of these choices.

Wendy Ellyatt is a freelance writer and consultant, specialising in early years education.



We have seen children totally change as they acquire a love for things and as their sense of order, discipline and self-control develops within them as a manifestation of their total freedom. – Maria Montessori -

ELEMENTS OF INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND FREEDOM OF CHOICE



From: 101 Things Parents (*Directresses*) Can Do to Help Children

by Barbara Hacker

Listing all 101 'things to do' was just going to take up too much space, but do find the article on www.montessori.org. I have taken out some ideas that I thought could be useful for Directresses to incorporate in their spiritual preparation – points to ponder.... Thank you to Noleen Clarke for sourcing the article. Heidi van Staden

1. Read about Montessori education and philosophy and how it applies to your child.
3. Take the time to stand back and observe your child carefully and note the characteristics he/she is displaying.
7. Teach grace and courtesy in the home. Model it. Use courtesy with your child and help your child to demonstrate it.
16. Take walks together at the child's pace, pausing to notice things and talk about them.
24. Talk to your child clearly without talking down. Communicate with respect and give the child the gift of language, new words and expressions.
25. When talking to your child, physically get on his/her level, be still, and make eye contact.
34. Assist your child to be aware of his/her feelings, to have vocabulary for emotions and be able to express them.
36. Together, do things to help others. For example, take food to an invalid neighbour, contribute blankets to a homeless shelter, give toys to those who have none, etc.
37. Speak the language of the virtues. Talk about patience, cooperativeness, courage, ingenuity, cheerfulness, helpfulness, kindness, etc. and point out those virtues when you see them demonstrated.
48. Analyse any annoying behaviour of your child and teach from the positive. For example: door slamming -- teach how to close a door; running in the house -- teach how to walk; runny nose -- teach how to use a tissue.
55. Have a globe or atlas in the house, and whenever names of places come up locate them with the child.
61. Help children to maintain a calendar, becoming familiar with days and months, or counting down to special events. Talk about it regularly.
69. Talk about art, visit statue gardens, and make short visits to museums and look at a couple of pictures. Make it meaningful and enjoyable. Don't overdo.
73. Aid the child in absorbing a sense of beauty: expose him/her to flowers, woods, and natural materials, and avoid plastic.
80. Teach children how to be still and make "silence." Do it together. Children love to be in a meditative space if given the opportunity.
85. Refrain from offering material rewards or even excessive praise. Let the experience of accomplishment be its own reward.
86. Don't speak for your child to others. Give the space for the child to speak for himself/herself, and if he/she doesn't it's okay.
87. Apologise to your child when you've made a mistake.
88. Understand what Montessori meant by sensitive periods. Know when your child is in one and utilise it.
96. Share appropriate "news" from the newspaper: new dinosaur was discovered; a baby elephant born at the zoo; a child honoured for bravery; the weather forecast.

Barbara Hacker is an Early Childhood Montessori Guide at the Post Oak School in Belleaire, Texas

Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Motivation

www.ferris.edu

Intrinsic Motivation

The following are traits of human nature:

- To be curious
- To be active
- To initiate thought and behaviour
- To make meaning from experience
- To be effective at what we value



Intrinsic motivation occurs when the learning activity and the learning environment elicit motivation in the student.

We do not motivate students but rather create, through our teaching, opportunities that can evoke motivation in students.

The following help to create intrinsic motivation:

- When the goals and rewards of the learning are meaningful to the learner
- When the learning is important to the student
- When the learning assists the learner in obtaining valued accomplishments
- When the learning assists the learners in integrating themselves with the world, with others, and promotes self-awareness

Extrinsic Motivation

"In the classroom, it is a way of doing things to children rather than working with them" KOHN.

This view of management disregards a child's ability to think and reason on their own, not allowing them the chance to develop self-determination or independent thinking.



Punishments or rewards are used to control the motivation of the students.

In situations where one person (the teacher) is clearly in power, extrinsic motivation has a greater opportunity to be effective. In situations where the students believe their perspectives are valid and their rights are equal to the person distributing the rewards or punishment, there is often the formation of "power-relationships" with a high probability of subversion, conflict, and/or resentment.



A COVENANT FOR SUSTAINING CHILDREN

A covenant written for children by Raffi – an internationally acclaimed songwriter and author whose ecology advocacy is a blend of his love for children and for the Earth:

We find these joys to be self evident:

That all children are created whole, endowed with innate intelligence, with dignity and wonder, worthy of respect.

The embodiment of life, liberty and happiness, children are original blessings, here to learn their own song. Every girl and boy is entitled to love, to dream and belong to a loving 'village'.

And to pursue a life of purpose.

We affirm our duty to nourish and nurture the young, to honour their caring ideals as the heart of being human.

To recognise the early years as the foundation of life, and to cherish the contribution of young children to human evolution.

We commit ourselves to peaceful ways and vow to keep from harm or neglect these, our most vulnerable citizens.

As guardians of their prosperity we honour the bountiful Earth whose diversity sustains us.

Thus we pledge our love for generations to come.

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Freedom

www.montessori.co.uk

Montessori saw freedom as the single most important factor in allowing children to develop as spontaneous, creative individuals.

She recognised that from the moment of birth children are constrained by social bonds that limit their natural activities. She saw the role of education as providing environments in which the children could be set free to follow their natural impulses - to be allowed to 'unfold' their unique selves.

She saw that free choice was a higher activity - linked to the child's innate spirituality and it was only by allowing the child free choice that its spirit would be free to expand and express itself to its full potential.

By freedom, however, Montessori did not suggest that the child should be free to do whatever he chooses, whenever he chooses.

She saw that the child was part of a larger society and therefore needed to develop consideration towards others.

She saw that the immaturity of the child rendered him extremely vulnerable to the actions and emotions of others. She recognised that the child relied on a sense of order within the environment and that by carefully preparing the environment adults could allow children to move freely, working with those objects that most attracted them.

She saw that the child had an innately loving and caring nature and that freedom from external pressures would allow this nature to be expressed.

The Montessori Freedom is, therefore initially a structured freedom, but one that then allows the child to connect to the true freedom of self-knowledge, self-respect and self-worth.

Freedom in a Montessori classroom

- ✚ Freedom of Movement
- ✚ Freedom of Choice
- ✚ Freedom of Speech
- ✚ Freedom to Concentrate
- ✚ Freedom to Love
- ✚ Freedom to Share
- ✚ Freedom to Explore
- ✚ Freedom to Take Time
- ✚ Freedom to Laugh
- ✚ Freedom from Competition
- ✚ Freedom from Danger
- ✚ Freedom from Pressure
- ✚ Freedom to Grow
- ✚ Freedom to Unfold
- ✚ Freedom to Be

We end off with these quotations:

"The liberty of the child should have as its limit the collective interest; as its form, what we universally consider good breeding ... We must, therefore, check in the child whatever offends or annoys others, or whatever tends towards indecorous or impolite acts. But for all the rest - every manifestation having a useful scope - whatever it may be, and under whatever form it expresses itself, must not only be permitted, but must be observed by the teacher."

The Montessori Method, Chapter 5

"The secret of the free development of the child consists in organising for him the means necessary for his internal nourishment ... it is in the satisfaction of this primitive impulse that the child's personality begins to organise itself and reveal its characteristics."

***Spontaneous Activity in Education*, Chapter 3**



Intrinsic Motivation

by Kim Tracy (www.teachers.net)

"What am I getting out of this?" As educators we often hear our students questioning what it is they will get out of what we are trying to impart upon them. That questioning makes the educator more frustrated and angry that the student is not learning because we know that is what is best for him/her. We give and give and give, so is that not enough to appease the child, the parent or the administrator?

Skinner and other behaviour theorists have taught us to first identify the behaviour you are trying to change, then reward the positives and provide consequences for the negative behaviours. This might work for short term behaviour change but impairs higher order thinking skills and does not provide for long term changes.

Eric Jensen states, "Rewards create uncertainty in the mind of the learner." We begin to question if we are going to get the reward. "Okay, if I do this, will I get that reward? What happens if I don't get the reward? I received this reward last time so if I misbehave again then I can get the reward again if I turn that behaviour around. However, this time, I can hold out for a bigger reward." When does that cycle stop?

Celebrations of learning are needed in our schools and in our classrooms. Those celebrations are anything spontaneous that acknowledges an accomplishment. In my classroom, we have stickers, pizza parties, ice cream parties, free homework passes, and much more. However, students are not aware when those celebrations will take place. Even our end of grade testing that is mandated by the state is a Celebration of Learning. Students and teachers have worked for 180 days and it is time to celebrate their accomplishments. The celebration is the test. To hear 400 students going down the hallway singing Kool and The Gangs' "Celebration" song before End of Grade tests is enough to motivate any educator to work towards intrinsically motivating their students. To watch 400 students pumped up over being able to show the world everything they have learned with nothing else motivating them except for the chance to show off their knowledge is invigorating for an educator. The end result: No extrinsic motivators and exemplary scores on the tests. These students did not ask for a reward. Their reward was proving to everyone how much they learned during the year.

Geoffrey and Renate Caine stated that "rewards and punishments can be demotivating in the long-term, especially when others have control over the system." All school systems do is teach that it is okay to bribe students and parents in order for them to do behaviour that is expected by the system. What happens when the reward runs out or the bargaining stakes are raised? Parents are quick to learn how to work around the system and many times those characteristics are instilled in their children.

When using extrinsic motivators, educators might see immediate changes in behaviours but the long term problem is not solved. Changing states of behaviours is the first course of action when dealing with a defiant student. Bribing with candy or a drink, will not solve the problem that the child is not motivated to change his/her own behaviour when in that negative state.

Educators cannot control the extrinsic motivators that students receive from outside of school. However, educators are in full control of what goes on inside their classrooms when motivating students. Healthy brains are wired to learn. Motivation is innate. When educators provide a positive learning environment, students are eager to learn. The problem in later years that secondary educators are faced with in defiant students is that the students have been extrinsically motivated for so many years they feel that is the only way to learn; the teacher gives me something if I learn this. Jensen shares in his book *Super Teaching* the following study by Stanford Biologists:

Amoebae cultures were separated into three petri dishes. One was the control group, another received an abundance of food, light and heat, and the third was given just enough of those basic needs to survive while varying the amounts. Can you guess which one survived the longest? The third petri dish.

How does this study show educators how extrinsic and intrinsic motivators effect students? The third petri dish faced a challenge. Because of those challenges, those amoebae cultures were intrinsically motivated to find ways to survive. Our students must be given the opportunities to understand how they are intrinsically motivated. This must start in the elementary schools so that the secondary teachers do not have to teach students who expect extrinsic motivators.

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Educators have various options in intrinsically motivating students. While students need guidelines, they also need the flexibility of making choices. In the book *Future Force: Kids That Want To, Can, and Do!: A Teacher's Handbook* by Elaine McClanahan and Carolyn Wicks, shares how to make students stockholders in the classroom. By making them stockholders, students are intrinsically motivated to promote positive behaviours. They have choices of their rules and consequences. Expectations are agreed upon by everyone and the teacher acts as a facilitator of the knowledge that is retained by the students.

There are numerous other strategies to use to provoke intrinsic motivation. Educators must make the learning meaningful to the student. Using a variety of teaching/learning methods, engaging emotions and natural curiosity, providing high expectations, showing students how to manage their own states of learning and creating positive learning environments will spark intrinsic motivation. Gardner's eight intelligences explains the different ways a child learns. Using Gardner's theory can only enhance the classroom and will help reach those students that are often seen as unmotivated or non-learners.

Educators need to know the developmental growth of the child's brain and must stay up to date on the latest neurological findings. The research has changed dramatically over the last ten years and will continue to change in the new century. Neurologists are providing new outlooks on the education world. Opponents of Brain Compatible Learning often state that this is just another new fad or paradigm. Using strategies based on neurological research, can only help educators in understanding the changing demands that society has placed upon our students.

Educators will continue to provide safe, optimal learning environments by providing the opportunity for intrinsic motivation as opposed to extrinsic motivation. Manipulation has no place in our schools, and extrinsic motivation only promotes negative learning outcomes. Educators have great power and influence over their students. Teaching students at an early age how to obtain self gratification will provide a tool to be used for a lifetime

Book Corner

The Handbook for School Governors

Alan Clarke

ISBN: 978-0-620-43436-2

Published by MacMillan



The latest book from Alan Clarke - which is more suited to school owners - has a lot of valuable information regarding Quality Management, ideas for working with parents and staff and samples of policies, checklists etc.

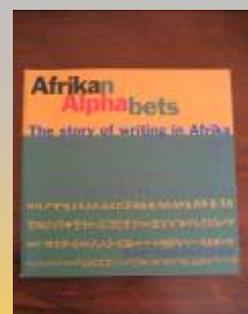
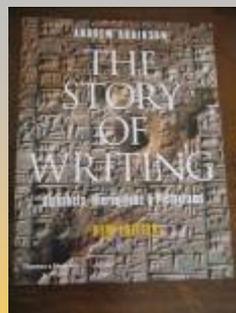
The following two books proved very useful for students in later 6-9 and 9-12 when researching the Timeline of Writing for the Great Lesson on the Story of Writing.

The Story of Writing

Andrew Robinson

ISBN: 978-0-500-28660-9

Published by Thames & Hudson



Afrikan Alphabets - The Story of Writing in Afrika

Saki Mafundikwa

ISBN: 978-0-9772827-6-0

Published by Mark Batty Publisher

Regional Meetings Update

I would like to thank all SAMA members for attending the regional meetings in the respective regions and for making an effort to contribute to the success of them. These meetings have been well attended and we have received positive feedback from members. Kindly send us some feedback/photos that we can feature in our Newsletter.

Update of meetings to be held next term!

- **Gauteng North:** Village Montessori School
Regional Meeting: 21 November 2009
- **Gauteng South:** Little Star Montessori School
Regional Meeting: 7 November 2009
- **KZN:** Wonderkids
Regional Meeting: 7 November 2009
- **Eastern Cape:** Greenwood School
Regional Meeting: 14 November 2009
- **Western Cape:** Auburn House
Regional Meeting: 21 November 2009

Just a friendly reminder to RSVP for these meetings!

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then is not an act, but a habit."

Aristotle

Regards
Ina Smith

To keep alive that enthusiasm is the secret of real guidance, and it will not prove a difficult task, provided that the attitude towards the child's acts be that of respect, calm, and waiting, and provided that he be left free in his movements and experiences.

- Maria Montessori -

The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination.

- Maria Montessori -

**Focus for November 2009 issue:
Our end of year functions and concerts –
members' feedback and ideas for future
Deadline for submissions: 20 November 09**

All articles are contributed by SAMA members. We would love to hear from our readers. Please send interesting snippets, valuable insights and amusing anecdotes to share with others and help make this newsletter an exciting and interesting one. If you feel you would like to contribute, please send to Deirdré via:

admin@samontessori.org.za

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Somerset Montessori in Somerset West has a vacancy for a **3 - 6 Montessori Directress** from 7 January 2010. Maturity and minimum of 5 years experience essential. Established school, beautiful surroundings and competitive salary. Please send CV or enquiries to smontessori@kingsley.co.za.

Centurion Montessori School in Gauteng has a vacancy for a **3 - 6 Montessori Directress** and for a **6-9 Montessori Directress** for January 2010 (or still currently studying the course) Please e-mail: zinita@centurionmontessori.co.za or call Zinita: 012 653-4177 or 083 453 1115

The Kat River Valley Montessori School in Fort Beaufort is looking for a qualified/nearly qualified **3-6 Directress** to start in January 2010. Please fax your CV to 046-6451442 or e-mail to M. Venter at montessorischool@live.co.za. Closing date 15 November 2009

Edcon Montessori are looking for a **baby class assistant** and a **toddler class assistant** for our expanding school. Please contact Madeline on 072 447 6048 or at edconmontessori@edcon.co.za

Knysna Montessori School is seeking qualified Directresses for our **(3-6), (6-9) and (9-12)** environments. Interested applicants to e-mail C.V.'s to: tbeyleveld@gmail.com

High Hopes Montessori in **Centurion** requires a qualified **3-6 directress** in January 2010. Maturity and experience essential. Call **012 654 5588** or e-mail highhopes@telkomsa.net

New Beginnings Montessori Pre-School in **Paarl** is looking for an **Assistant** for one of the 3 - 6 environments to join our team in January 2010. Newly qualified candidate or in second year of study. For enquires contact Sophie on 084 522 2956 or newbeginnings@lantic.net

My Montessori School Vredendal is looking for an Afrikaans speaking qualified Montessori **Directress** for classes **18mth – 3 years**, and **3 – 6 years**. Contact Elizna as soon as possible at 0844008044 or email skool@vredendalmontessori.co.za or

We are a Montessori School in the **North Durban** area and we are looking for a special teacher to teach our nursery class in 2010. You would have to be patient, kind and very enthusiastic. If you are interested please give me a call - **Nicky on 0724447277**

Available SAMA Products:

- **The SAMA Recommended Curriculum** – an integration of A Montessori Recommended Curriculum with the Revised National Curriculum Statement. For queries and to order, contact the SAMA office. The curriculum is printed and bound, and is available to paid up SAMA Institutional Members for R250.00 and to all other categories of membership for R1000.
- **SAMA Policies and Procedures CDs** – a comprehensive compilation of government laws, acts, and policies on CD 1 and examples from various Montessori schools and resources to use in school management on CD 2, at R50.00 each. These prices are for school members only. All other categories of membership may purchase the CDs for R500 per set.
- **SAMA Parents Handbook** – a full colour, beautiful publication, useful to parents as an introduction to Montessori Education. This booklet covers basic Montessori philosophy and is the ideal starting point for parent education. These handbooks are available to SAMA School Members only at R25 per copy. For orders of 30 or more, additional postage will be added.

For more details contact: admin@samontessori.org.za

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