



The Montessori
OBSERVER

New Humanity

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***Street Teaching
in the Philippines***

In May, 2003, the Society submitted a proposal to the United States government, to provide educational teaching for poor working children in the Philippines. Entitled *Street Teaching in the Philippines*, the project would train and equip local personnel to conduct Montessori teaching with poor street children, to help eliminate the worst effects of abusive child labor in that country through education.

The US government data suggests that there are over 200 million poor working children throughout the world, many of whom are abandoned to sleep and work in the streets. The United States government is seeking to combat this problem through various international agencies and other country governments that wish

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Participants in the Vancouver, BC, Canada Workshop — April 26-27, 2003

Montessori Workshops in Canada and New York

The Society's "Creating the New Education" workshop is a two-day experiential learning event designed to improve Montessori teaching skills through inner preparation. Conducted by Lee Havis, IMS executive director, the two workshops reported here are the most recent of over 100 such events which were first offered in 1986

Vancouver, BC, Canada

April 26-27, 2003

This first IMS Vancouver workshop included the participation of parents, teachers and other educators from throughout the local area, and from the nearby states of Washington and California. **Lea Young**, local Vancouver teacher, initiated and supported the planning and organization for this event.

The workshop discussion ranged widely over many specific techniques of Montessori teaching, including a detailed examination of "eye contact", "proximity", "distraction" and "reflective language". Havis emphasized the importance of the teacher remaining in a stationary location, outside the activity area of the children — to employ these techniques without expressing unwanted detrimental influences of the adult personality.

The participants showed significant interest in techniques to resolve social disorder among children by using such techniques as "reflective language" and "questioning". Havis noted "we have to be sure not to take sides in such social conflicts. As long as there is no physical violence, it's usually best to allow children to resolve their differences entirely on their own — even if the process may involve some considerable anger, emotional distress or

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New Paltz, NY

May 17-18, 2003

Nikki Garret sponsored this workshop in conjunction with the formation of her new *Maria's Garden Montessori School*, located on the campus of the *Discovery Institute* (New Paltz, NY). Parents and educators attended from the local area, as well as from the nearby states of New Hampshire and New Jersey.

The workshop discussion emphasized the importance of maintaining a slow and objective manner with children — to more likely remember to use the workshop techniques in some moment of stress or frustration. Havis stated "we are not so likely to use the precise and exacting workshop techniques when we most need them when we are faced with some vexing or violent misbehavior. Therefore, if we stop our words or actions long enough to think about what we are about to do at such times, we will more likely use common sense and reasoning to choose the most suitable course of action in the moment of peril."

Before the workshop, Havis met with parents of the new *Maria's Garden School*, to provide a brief introduction to the basic technology of Montessori teaching. He also consulted with school personnel about classroom design and use of materials.

**Montessori
Workshops**

*Learn Montessori Teaching Skills
Inner Preparation for Montessori teaching*

Newark, NJ

June 7-8, 2003

Karachi, Pakistan

August 9-10, 2003

Rapid City, SD

September 6-7, 2003

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October 4-5, 2003

Albuquerque, NM

October 18-19, 2003

Stroudsburg, PA

November 1-2, 2003

Miami, FL

November 15-16, 2003

*For full cost and registration details,
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Spring, MD 20910. Tel. (301) 589-1127.*

New Humanity

by Lee Haviv

"This is the hope we have — a hope in a new humanity that will come from this new education..."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Reconstruction in Education*, p14

Dr. Montessori's new education with children can certainly lead to a whole new humanity in the world — a logical extension of her 1907 discovery of the child's true normal being in complete peace, harmony and order with others. Once Montessori recognized that children would normalize in her unique environment, she envisioned that these normalized children would become adults to transform all mankind. She saw this new humanity capable of making justice and love a genuine reality in the world.

Justice and Love

"...society can be based on principles of justice and love...an aspiration whose fulfillment lies far in the future."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace* p. xi

Dr. Montessori's new humanity would certainly set in motion true justice and love among men — to confront, resolve and overcome the massive ignorance, immorality, violence and indifference to human misery that is the dominant reality of this present age. However, many persistent and well-established obstacles in modern society oppose this hopeful vision of the future. We certainly cannot rely on today's vanquished and immature humanity to overcome the many complex deeply woven social obstacles that have become so well developed and accepted over years of human civilization.

Vanquished Humanity

"Humanity itself is vanquished and enslaved...miserable and degraded people proclaim their own sovereignty."

Dr. Maria Montessori
From *Formation of Man*, p.12-13

Mankind is plagued by many fundamental social problems that we tend to hide behind a mask of prejudice, denial and illusion. As a vanquished and limited humanity, we struggle with family disintegration, war, terrorism and the threat of weapons of mass destruction — seeking solutions within the limited context of erroneous ideas and conventional thinking from the past. We tend to reinforce and dramatize these detrimental social conditions in our everyday civil life and interaction with others.

Civic Life

"Society at present does not adequately prepare man for civic life...Human beings are brought up to regard themselves as isolated individuals who must satisfy their immediate needs by competing with other individuals."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p. xi

Throughout history, we have divided and isolated ourselves from each other, achieving progress only through violent conflict and conquest. Although modern technology has brought us greater opportunities for worldwide unity and communication than ever before, we still hold on to and act out old patterns of self-destructive fear, competition and struggle in our customary civic life in society. The modern world has added new and greater threats of global terror and social disharmony, as public leaders increasingly take on the parental role of authority and control over children, to control and guide their care and development according to the erroneous assumptions of a dysfunctional and traditional culture and way of life.

Public Leaders

"...public leaders...come to represent surrogate teachers and fathers, figures upon whom the child was forced to look as perfect and infallible."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p 19

While nature looks to parents to support the normal growth and development of children, public leaders have now largely supplanted this natural role of parents through various forms of governmental control and influence in education. Compulsory schooling and repressive government regulations tend to seriously erode and deny parents the opportunity for any genuine alternative committed to laws of nature. If we hope to see Dr. Montessori's new humanity in the world, then we must free ourselves from these detrimental adult influences, and focus our attention and service to the child as father of the man to come.

Father of the Man

"The child should be regarded as the father of the man, the father capable of creating a better humanity."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p. 87

Montessori teaching seeks to follow the child — to serve this unknown entity as the father of the man of the future. This work requires us to create a nurturing environment of love around the child by committing ourselves to such fundamental principles as (1) *Observation*, (2) *Individual Liberty* and (3) *Preparation of the Environment*. These three basic Montessori

principles can effectively guide our actions with children, to cultivate the psychic roots of our future generation.

Psychic Roots

"Society must recognize the importance of the child as the builder of humanity and come to have a profound appreciation of the psychic roots determining whether the mature adult will seek positive or negative goals."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p 38

The young child forms its fundamental psychology for life through an intimate adaptation with its environment during the sensitive period of early childhood. How we prepare this environment will accordingly either nurture these psychic roots for a positive future, or limit such growth to the negative patterns of today's repressive

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Lee Haviv, Executive Director

The *Montessori Observer* is mailed four times each year, in March, May, September and November, to Society members throughout the world. The purpose is to provide news and information about the Society's work in Montessori education, and to extend awareness of Montessori principles throughout the world.

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The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, USA. The Society's purpose is to support the effective application of Montessori principles throughout the world.

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Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

Disengaging Fantasy

Struggling to disengage Sally from fantasy, the teacher here has achieved only limited success with such techniques as "proximity", "eye contact" and "questioning". (See *Observer*, March 2003). However, she must not allow her frustration with these efforts to cause her to abandon Sally. Rather, the teacher must persist with further Montessori teaching techniques, to continue this process of helping Sally return to a normal attachment to reality.

In the present *moment of peril*, the teacher may repeat her current techniques, as well as apply others, such as "distraction"—to approach Sally in her fantasy situation with a phrase such as "come over here, I have something to show you". Then, the teacher may point to some object or offer a brief lesson presentation on some work of possible interest to Sally.

If Sally says "no" to such an invitation, the teacher may then ask "what would you like to do?" ("questioning"). If Sally mentions a desire to continue the make-belief fantasy, the teacher may then offer more questioning with a word such as "why?" or a phrase such as "what do you like about that?" As long as this questioning is non-judgmental, calm and objective, Sally will not likely respond with excessive emotional distress or anger, and will accordingly become more interested in reality.

If Sally walks away, the teacher may slowly follow her to employ more "proximity", "eye contact" or "questioning" techniques as before. As the teacher continues this Montessori teaching to control the detrimental influence of her personality, she will find that Sally will eventually return to a more normal, calm and orderly attachment to reality — and proceed to real work in the environment.

Nap Time Wandering

Three-year-old Lucy shows agitation at nap time and a tendency to wander off her cot around the room to disturb and disrupt others. She tends to avoid the teacher's gentle guidance and invitation to lie down on her cot to remain still and quiet for a while. When the teacher guides Lucy to lie down on the cot, she tends to wiggle for a while, and then get up and wander around the room again. What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, September 2003

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and dysfunctional social order. The education of children therefore critically affects the essential progress and development of all mankind.

Education

"The education that will lead the way to a new humanity has one end alone: leading the individual and society to a higher stage of development."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Education and Peace*, p. 66

The young child has an absorbent mind that wholly integrates the child with its environment. Within the adult-centered context of conventional education, the child will therefore develop a limited and restrictive mental formation. By contrast, Montessori education frees the child to follow a perfect guidance within itself — assisting this *inner teacher* by meeting the child's spiritual needs for unconditional love and acceptance in the environment.

Spiritual Needs

"It is not enough to ensure for the child food, clothing and shelter; on the satisfaction of his more spiritual needs the progress of humanity depends — the creation indeed of a stronger and better humanity."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *To Ed. the Hum. Potential*, p. 120

During early childhood, the child's spirit normally grows to trust and love others in an environment that is committed to natural laws of life. Montessori teaching meets such spiritual needs by helping the child to freely engage with materials that are designed for self-directed independent learning activity. Such a normalizing environment requires a spiritually consecrated teacher to closely collaborate with nature in all its mysterious ways of unfolding the great cosmic plan of creation.

Consecrated Teacher

"A teacher must be consecrated to bettering humanity..."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Child in the Family*, p. 33

Montessori teaching to "control the environment, not the child" provides the right psychic conditions for the child to come into complete harmony and peace with others through self-directed work and concentration on physical objects. Only a spiritually consecrated teacher can control the detrimental tendencies of her personality in the environment through inner preparation, to overcome the ordinary tendencies to either abandon the child to fantasy play or repress its spirit through negative, judgmental interference and manipulation. The normalized children that will arise from this committed environment will then show their true natural qualities in the form of a hopeful new society of true peace, love and harmony.

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BOOK REVIEW

Joy of Success

10 Essential Skills for Getting the Success You Want

by Susan Ford Collins, 2003

Review by Lee Haviv

The *Joy of Success* offers the reader over twenty years of extensive research into how and why people succeed — the essential life-work of Susan Ford Collins. She has consolidated numerous interviews and experiences with successful people in many diverse fields into a very useful success technology. Her publication here distills this technology into 10 precise and thoughtful skills that powerfully communicate breakthrough insight in a way that allows the reader to readily apply such skills in everyday life.

Applied to Montessori teaching, her 10 skills can help develop successful action in many ways. While we may all achieve success in small ways in our own immediate circumstances with children, Ford challenges us to realize our wider ambitions for the *new education* in society.

Montessori educators particularly need a practical success technology, to overcome century-old prejudices and misconceptions about the child and education in society. In the midst of such massive, persistent obstacles, we must learn to focus our imagination and communication on the vision of the *normalized* child. Ford's 10 skills can help the reader accomplish this focus, to work against the constant tendency to retreat back into the safe, comfortable negative conditioning of past patterns from childhood.

We all need help to take committed action for success — especially in Montessori teaching where our primary goal is to accomplish the emergence of the normalized child. The *Joy of Success* can significantly contribute to these efforts that are so vital in the work of creating Dr. Montessori's new education in the world.

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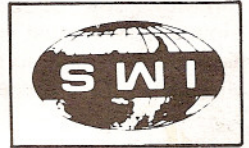
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New Society

"...a new society is already coming into being. A new humanity for a new world is already being born."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Education and Peace*, p. 65

In 1907, Dr. Montessori discovered in the normalized child a new human possibility for peace, order and harmony in society. She saw that these normalized children were already bringing into existence a new adult society as well. However, we need great courage and perseverance to realize this great promise of hope and possibility for the future.

Courage and Perseverance

"through long experimentation we have now arrived at much elimination of error, and the possession of a key which can unlock for children the gates of a healthy and happy education. On our courage and perseverance in its use depends the future of humanity."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *To Ed. the Hum. Potential*, p. 118

Although Dr. Montessori and others expressed great courage and perseverance in their efforts to follow the child over many years, this new education was not completed with Montessori's death in 1952. So, we must continue today this process of creating her new education, by overcoming the division, prejudice and compromise that have grown up around Montessori and that can so distract us away from its central experience of the child's true normalized nature. Beyond an initial grasp of this central Montessori idea or seeing some temporary change or momentary success with children, we must steadily think and work on the higher plane of infinite and eternal laws of nature, to realize Dr. Montessori's long-term purpose and vision for a new and better humanity in the world.



Participants at New Paltz workshop engage in practical exercise to demonstrate lesson presentation protocols with Pink Tower.

May 17-18, 2003 — New Paltz, NY

Vancouver, BC, Canada

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rude language. When we do intervene, we must be careful to use only objective, neutral reflective language and questioning".

After the workshop, Havis visited several nearby schools to consult with teaching staff in the use of workshop techniques with children in the classroom. He noted the good efforts being made to practice these various skills, and expressed his hope that workshop participants would continue this type of *inner preparation* at another workshop in the area in the near future.

STREET TEACHING

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to help resolve this problem through education.

The Society's street teaching approach, first developed for the towns along the US-Mexico border, aims to provide *street teachers* who will give brief daily lesson presentations with poor working children where they congregate in the streets. **Lee Havis**, IMS executive director, said "the street will be our classroom, with each teacher equipped with a set of simple learning materials that will provide a range of options for various interesting exercises in reading, writing and math for children of different ages."

The project will employ an "exchange of value" concept to assure the child's interest and active participation. Havis said "the 'exchange of value' concept requires each child to give up a small amount of its time for a brief learning experience, and in exchange to receive a small sum of money at the completion of each session. The teacher will record the transaction in a journal, and will be paid for such services on a commission basis for each session provided. The 'time-money' exchange is vital to create the right condition of integrity and mutual respect in the transaction — to dignify the relationship and build character, trust and accountability in the child."

Havis indicated the Society will seek to offer its proposal as widely as possible throughout the world. He said "I hope to present this same basic project to Mexican government officials in the near future, and submit proposal for its operation in other countries as well. I believe that many countries may respond positively to this type of educational approach to resolve the problems of abusive child labor."