



The Montessori OBSERVER

*Personality
Projections*

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Lee Havis in role-play drama to demonstrate technical skills of Montessori teaching at the IMS Creating the New Education workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia (November, 2010)

IMS New Education workshops in Asia

In November, 2010, IMS conducted its *creating the new education* workshop in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Jakarta, Indonesia. **Michelle Wong** (Malaysia) and **Ratna Januardi** (Indonesia) served as local coordinators. At each workshop, Lee Havis, IMS executive director, presented the specialized technology of scientific Montessori teaching.

The workshop presentation included images and video clips to highlight various aspects of the technology. Participants also engaged in exercises and demonstrations to learn the technology through their own active involvement. For example, role-play drama was used to demonstrate how the technology works to resolve various misbehavior and social conflicts among the children. All participants received a 40-page study guide to help them use the technology with children later in their own particular situations.

Attending the Malaysia workshop (November 20-21, 2010) were parents and educators from Nepal, China, Philippines, Thailand, and India, as well as from different parts of Malaysia. In Kuala Lumpur (KL), *Tasputra Perkim*, a special education center, had many of its staff and parents attending. After the workshop, Lee visited this center where **Elahe Norman**, center director, organized an interview for him with a TV journalist. On Christmas day, December 25, 2010, the interview was aired on Malaysian TV news.

While in Malaysia, Lee also conducted a seminar for students and faculty at the local SeGi University. In addition, he met with Montessori educators from China, Nepal, and the Philippines to discuss planning for IMS workshops in these countries for 2011.

The IMS workshop in Jakarta, Indonesia was held on the weekend of November 27-28, 2010. This workshop included the participation of nearly 100 educators and parents from throughout the country. At the Jakarta workshop, Lee described how to control the adult personality by using various exercises to sustain a non-judgmental, objective posture with children. He also demonstrated ways to overcome excessive dependency on adult authority, which is a common problem in all Asian cultures.

After the Jakarta workshop, Lee visited and consulted with staff and parents from several schools in the local area. During these visits, he emphasized the need to allow children more independence for self-directed learning.

Lee is now planning other IMS workshops in Asia for 2011. He is coordinating this planning with key personnel in each country to schedule the most suitable times and locations.

Technology field-testing complete *New Way Montessori School Closed*

On December 31, 2010, the *New Way Montessori School* (Meridian, ID) ceased operation after 4 years of serving as a laboratory for field-testing the IMS technology of Montessori teaching. Sponsored by the *Idaho Montessori Trust* (Lee Havis, Wendy Lieberman, co-trustees), the *New Way Montessori School* began operating in 2007 with Lee providing overall guidance, support, and financial management, and Wendy serving as on-site director and classroom teacher.

Between 2007-09, Lee visited the school quite often to conduct personal consultations to supervise classroom teaching and to study and refine Wendy's interaction with the children. He notes that, "During this time, the technology was fully field-tested by refining and validating its effective practical use with children."

In spring, 2010, the school began to show promise of self-sustaining economic viability and support in the local community.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col 3

Montessori Workshops

Technology of Montessori Teaching
in the Scientific Approach to Normal Being

Cebu, Philippines
June 11-12, 2011

Chongqing, China
June 18-19, 2011

Manila, Philippines
September 17-18, 2011

Jakarta, Indonesia
September 24-25, 2011

The IMS workshop is a two-day weekend learning experience, featuring Lee Havis, IMS executive director, presenting the unique 2003 technology of Montessori teaching. This technology is precise practical guidance for conducting the scientific approach that leads to true natural being in children.

To register and for further information, Contact: IMS, tel. 301-589-1127; havis@imsmontessori.org



PERSONALITY PROJECTIONS

by Lee Havis

"The startling blindness of adults, their insensitivity with regard to their offspring, is something that is deeply rooted and of long duration. An adult who loves children, but unconsciously condemns them, inflicts upon them a secret sorrow which is a mirror of his own mistakes."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.5

Montessori teaching must carefully control the adult personality by removing its detrimental projections on children. This is quite difficult, however, because these projections are so unconsciously built into our whole sense of truth and reality from childhood. At most, we see only their superficial appearances and effects, such as in the misbehavior of children.

Appearances and Effects

"...the adult...judges appearances and effects without worrying about the causes that produce them."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p.10

In adult society, projecting personality is the ordinary way we interact with each other. For example, a weak victim-type personality unconsciously chooses to interact with a strong, dominant type. In this way, both persons get to continue their past childhood struggling for power and control in the present moment situation. When conflicts arise, each person typically blames the other or else sees the cause in some vague external conditions of society.

Projecting personality on young children, however, has a much more serious and destructive effect. Since the young child has no defenses against these projections, he must simply reflect them back through misbehavior. The specific form and nature of this reflected projection depends on the adult's particular type of inner errors and unmet needs from the past.

Inner Errors

"The adult...finds himself embroiled in a labyrinth of problems...he does not know the cause of his wanderings, his errors, lie within himself."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.14

Personality projections are built on inner errors, such as pride, fear, and judgmental prejudice, which are then reflected back by the child's misbehavior. Even if we intellectually recognize the existence of these inner errors, they are so unconscious that we can only fully experience them through deep inner self-examination.

Most teachers don't have the time or interest to fully resolve these errors, because after a certain point, they are accepted as normal in the surrounding culture. Then, substituting yourself for the child becomes the common pattern to follow in conventional education.

Substituting Self

"Even though child and adult seem to have a deep understanding and affection for one another, they are ensnared in the same net...an adult with his useless assistance and hypnotic influence has substituted himself for a child and impeded his psychic growth."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.162

Adults ordinarily play out their past unresolved pain and unmet needs through children who act as their dolls or puppets in the drama. At a psychological level, this is substituting your own childhood needs and interests for those of the real child in the present moment. For example, if your childhood struggle was fear and dependency with parents, the child you supervise today will act out that same fear and dependency with you. Young children instinctively accept this puppet role in the drama because they are so strongly influenced by your powerful suggestion of truth and reality.

Suggestion

"The period of childhood when a child starts to become conscious of himself and his senses are in a creative state is particularly subject to suggestion. During this time, an adult can insinuate himself into a child and animate his will and mobility with his own."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.91

Children are naturally sensitive to adult suggestion, so that, for example, in blaming them for misbehavior, they acquire a self-image of being "bad," "inferior," or "unacceptable" in some way. Before the age of about six, they are especially sensitive to this type of adult suggestion due to their uniquely absorbent mind.

Absorbent Mind

"...a child less than six years of age has a 'mental form' different from that which develops after he has reached the age of six or seven...things absorbed during that unconscious period...are those which persist in such a stable manner that they are identified with the person."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.324

The young child's absorbent mind incorporates experiences from the environment directly into his whole basic way of being for life. So, if you repeatedly call a child "clumsy" for stumbling, he develops the self-image of being a "clumsy stumbler." Likewise, children acquire attitudes of guilt and blame whenever you punish, judge, or scold them for failing to meet your expectations. In the end, these experiences often bring about a deep and long-lasting dependency attachment to external adult authority.

Attachment

"...children...attach themselves to an older person who tends to substitute his own activity for theirs and they thus become extremely dependent upon him."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.161

Adults unconsciously project their own weakness and dependency on children by helping them too much in accomplishing their simple, everyday activities. In time, this unnecessary help leads children to develop an unhealthy attachment to adults who act in their place. Montessori teaching seeks to resolve this attachment by shifting your perception of the child from being weak and dependent, to one of being a completely unknown entity.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col 2

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Lee Havis, 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.

INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

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To subscribe to this list, send an email to - intmonsoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com, and then follow instructions to request placement on the list.

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Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

Bully-Victim Conflict

Resolving the bully-victim conflict is a common problem for many teachers. In the present *moment of peril*, the teacher is struggling with this conflict, confused and unsure about how to 'help' the 'victim' child stand up and speak out for himself. (See *Observer*, November, 2010)

"What to do?" in this situation is first a matter of assessing the priority level of concern for interaction, following the protocol *well-being of the total environment*. For example, if the conflict is a level 1 priority (physical violence), you must immediately approach to protect the 'victim' child. However, if the conflict is only non-physical in nature, such as loud shouting or crying, this is level 3 (fantasy), which you can most often resolve with light polishing techniques, such as *eye contact* and *patient waiting*.

For many, the bully-victim conflict is not really over, even after the two children separate, especially if the victim child is left crying and emotionally upset. This is now, however, a new scenario with the 'victim' child as 'hub,' and the primary detrimental influence being the adult personality.

In this new one-child scenario, you may still feel an intense need to help by offering direct physical comfort, consolation, or perhaps by giving some punishment or moral lecture to the 'bully' child. However, any of these actions will likely only create in the child an unwholesome dependency on you.

Following the *least amount* and *enhance independence* protocols, you must now restrain any urge to get too involved with this single 'victim' child. For example, stay at a distance from the child so that he can resolve the problem on his own, either by sitting quietly to compose himself, or by interacting with other children to resolve the matter in that way.

If the victim child approaches you for help or comfort, you can certainly give it generously, perhaps by using the techniques, *reflective language* and *questioning*. If necessary, you can even help the child more directly by moderating his verbal communication with the 'bully.'

Applying Montessori technology with self-restraint and balance gives both the bully and victim the best opportunity to resolve their differences in a fully self-directed normal manner. Eventually, they will then return to peaceful harmony in their social interaction with each other.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3

Personality Projections

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

Unknown Entity

"...all, or nearly all, see the child as he is commonly known only, not the child as he is, still an unknown entity."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Formation of Man*, p.60-61

Conventional teaching views misbehavior as part of the child's normal way of being, perhaps based on the idea of "original sin." By contrast, Montessori teaching sees children as perfect, self-directed beings. The cause of any misbehavior, therefore, is always some detrimental influence in the environment. The functional resolution of this misbehavior is then to *control the environment, not the child*.

Seeing the child as an unknown entity is hard because we ordinarily identify the child with its physical body or personality. In Montessori teaching, therefore, we must shift from this ordinary way of seeing, such as by imagining the child's brain full of cotton wadding. Now, when you feel blame and judgment towards a misbehaving child, you recognize this more as a projection of your own personality defects instead. Controlling these projections, however, requires a very special type of practical guidance.

Practical Guidance

"External facts, which can be fully observed, offer practical guidance which it is worthwhile to pursue."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p.52

Montessori teaching follows laws of nature, which are entirely too abstract on their own to serve as effective practical guidance. However, the IMS technology offers a functional equivalent to these laws, which will help you enormously in all your daily interactions with children.

The IMS technology is a set of tools that guides your scientific experiments to control the environment around each child. This practical guidance is vitally necessary for removing detrimental projections of your personality. For example, in a power struggle conflict, use the technique *patient waiting* to stop all your physical activity. In addition, apply the protocol *least amount of adult involvement* to keep your interactions as brief and objective as possible. Finally, use safe words, such as "Come over here. Let me show you something" instead of "No" or "Don't." Using these tools helps us watch ourselves more closely to remove even the most deeply hidden personality flaws and defects.

Watch Ourselves

"We have to watch ourselves most carefully. The real preparation for education is a study of oneself."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p.120

In Montessori teaching, we must examine ourselves at a very deep level to fully resolve the cause of our personality projections on children. For example, even if you can consciously avoid using negative language such as "No" and "Don't," you must still correct such subtle projections as a stern, unfriendly voice tone or angry facial expression. The technique *imagination-previsioning* (IP) helps us notice these hidden projections by visualizing the details of what we are doing in some problem scenario, and then previsioning a specific solution to later try out in the real-life situation.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

Technology Field-Testing

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

At that point, however, a serious dispute arose between Lee and Wendy concerning distribution of any excess revenue. This dispute also exposed a strong philosophical difference between them about Montessori teaching as well, which led to withdrawal of the school's IMS recognition and Wendy's termination as member of the IMS board.

In December, 2010, these differences finally led to the school's closure, which was formalized in a written release and settlement agreement between Wendy and Lee. The agreement specifies that Wendy resigns as trustee of the Idaho Montessori Trust and that she will not use the New Way school name and logo in any other school she might seek to operate in the future.

Looking back, Lee sees the school's major success as having fully tested and validated the IMS technology. In addition, he noted Wendy's great progress in developing Montessori teaching skills from 2007 to 2009.

Lee also noted his own successful learning during this time, even while dealing with the most problematic conflicts concerning the school's closure. He stated, for example, "I now see more clearly just how hard it is to try to operate a Montessori school without support and accountability from others. A one-person school easily degenerates into a personality-driven philosophy, which will no longer support true

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3

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Personality Projections

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 2

There are also other useful self-awareness exercises to employ, such as by briefly looking away from a problem situation to observe some meaningless object in a completely non-judgemental manner. Observing the object in this way, become aware of the space around the object. Then, holding that feeling of non-judgemental awareness, return your attention to the problem situation at hand so you can deal with it in a more relaxed, objective manner. With regular practice, these various self-awareness exercises will help you develop a quiet and passive manner with children, which is especially important at times of stress and frustration.

Quiet and Passive

"The teacher must be quiet and passive, waiting patiently and almost withdrawing herself from the scene, so as to efface her own personality..."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Montessori Method*, p.173

In Montessori teaching, you can't always be quiet and passive. For example, in dealing with violent misbehavior, you must actively engage with children to protect them from physical harm. More often, however, a quiet and passive manner is best for controlling your personality.

The IMS Montessori technology helps you maintain this quiet, passive manner by offering very light polishing techniques, such as *eye contact*, *patient waiting*, and *proximity*. Using these techniques helps keep you away from children while they are working through their problems in an independent, self-directed manner. Ultimately, your ideal way of functioning with children is in the spiritual field where both you and the child are together in complete peace and harmony with laws of nature.

Spiritual Field

"...the relationship between child and teacher is in the spiritual field...the master whom the teacher serves is the child's spirit."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.281

Montessori teaching is spiritual, as well as scientific, since it aims to bring about the truth of perfect peace, harmony and order in the present moment. Using the IMS technology keeps you on this path of following laws of nature in a sure and certain manner. In time, you will more consciously experience being in the spiritual field, where personality defects and projections naturally disappear on their own without any conscious effort at all. Then, children are free to fully materialize their own true normal nature in the world.

Montessori on YouTube

IMS Montessori is offered on **YouTube** at the channel "leehavis1." Here, you will find a range of video presentations about true natural Montessori teaching. For example, there are several video interviews with Lee Havis, discussing how Montessori teaching brings about the child's true nature. In addition, there is one video describing his own personal background experience and one that discusses the IMS-sponsored *Character Teaching* project. Other videos show Lee interacting with children; such as giving a number matching lesson presentation, and demonstrating the technique *cooperative touching* with a special needs child.

More video uploads are planned for the future. Anyone can subscribe to the IMS channel at no cost, or access the videos individually as you wish at <http://www.youtube.com>

Moment of Peril

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 1

Grabbing and Sharing

The teacher notices several children quite often grabbing objects from each other in a hostile and callous manner. Other children are now imitating this rude, disruptive behavior, so that grabbing among the children is becoming a serious problem. Sometimes, this conflict results in outright physical violence. Although the teacher tells the children to share and patiently wait for their turn, they don't pay attention, but continue to fight for the various objects involved. What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, May, 2011

Technology Field-tested

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

natural development in children. That's why IMS recognition criteria for Montessori schools includes accountability to others as one of its significant elements."

Looking ahead, Lee hopes to use what he has learned from this experience in the operation of other schools, such as those he plans for the *Character Teaching* (CT) project in Ecuador and Nepal. He says, "While I still believe in broad participation and consensus decision-making among the principals, there must also be some effective means to remove and replace those who betray or violate their commitment to the organization's purpose. And, this removal must not prevent the organization from continuing its mission through other new leadership, if necessary."