



The Montessori OBSERVER

Cosmic
Education

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Book Review

...Because you can!

Modern Thought Theories

Publ. 2012 CreateSpace, North Charleston, SC

By Ulrike

Montessori teaching isn't the only type of scientific study of human life. In fact, there are a number of modern thought theories that closely parallel Montessori's unique science of the human spirit, which Ulrike points out in her recent book on the subject "...Because you can!"

Although Ulrike is best known for her work in the music and movie business, her present book is based on 30 years of metaphysical study and teaching in her personal life. In it, she aims to help readers achieve greater peace, happiness, and health through the idea of "mind over matter." Ulrike substantiates her own knowledge and experience in the field with the insights of many other leading thinkers as well. Readers will therefore appreciate the depth of her research as well as her easy-to-understand practical guidance and advice.

Ulrike's basic idea is that reality is all mental functioning, so that what you think is the cause and cure of everything that happens in your life. In her book, she offers many practical suggestions for resolving all forms of suffering by changing your thoughts to become more positive and success-oriented towards life.

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Participants in the IMS 'Creating the New Education' workshop in Lynchburg, Virginia (July 28-29, 2012)

IMS Workshop in Lynchburg, Virginia

On July 28-29, 2012, Lee Havis conducted the IMS workshop "Creating the New Education" in Lynchburg, VA. Attending were educators and teachers from the Lynchburg, VA area, as well as from elsewhere in Virginia, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, and New Jersey. The workshop presented the unique IMS technology of Montessori teaching in a lively, interactive manner to show its practical use to control the environment, not the child.

Lee says that, "This latest IMS workshop is especially important for developing the 'new education' in the United States since this is the first one held here since 2009. I'm hopeful that this renewed positive interest in true natural Montessori teaching will lead to many more similar training events in the USA."

Robin Boling, director of the local IMS recognized *Blue Ridge Montessori School* coordinated local participation for the Lynchburg workshop. Her primary aim was for her teachers to learn to use the IMS technology with children at her school. Before and after the workshop, Lee therefore consulted directly with her teachers while supervising children in the classroom. He said, "This direct consultation is very useful for learning because you can see exactly how the technology works in practice with children. I was very impressed by the significant progress made by the teachers over the short time I was there."

The workshop itself focused especially on controlling verbal expression, such as using safe words instead of "No" and "Don't" while resolving misbehavior. Lee said, "These safe words are excellent for avoiding reactive negative language with children. In addition, however, the techniques *reflective language* and *questioning* are important to use as well to avoid other verbal problems, such as excessive, distracting language, that so often disturbs your effective talking with children."

Messages to IMS

August 2012
Virginia Beach, VA

Dear Mr. Lee Havis:

Thank you for your technology of Montessori teaching workshop this past weekend (Lynchburg, VA, July 28-29, 2012). The protocols, techniques, safe words, and lesson presentations contributed to growth in my understanding of myself and influenced my goals for the next school year... I recognize the enormity and completeness of this technology which you researched, experimented, observed, and presented to us. I feel blessed, focused, rejuvenated, hopeful....

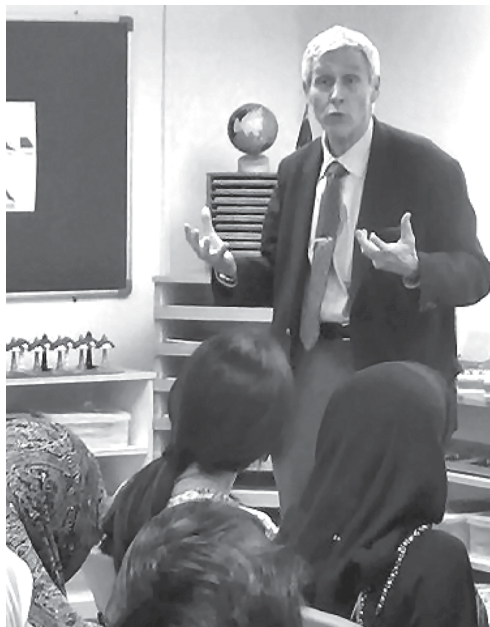
Thank you,
June Postal

June, 2012
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Dear Lee,

Thank you for a very good and enlightening weekend (Malaysia workshop, June 9-10, 2012). The 'Creating the New Education' workshop is empowering teachers to rise to a more conscious level.

Regards,
Avonne Che



Lee Havis, explains use of IMS technology at seminar conducted in conjunction with the Montessori Association of Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, June, 2012)



Cosmic Education

by Lee Havis

"...all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity...This plan of cosmic education...is received with joy by the child who has been prepared for it in the Montessori school."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *To Ed. the Hum. Pot.*, p.8-10

By about six years of age, children no longer have the remarkable absorbent mind that allows them to effortlessly acquire knowledge and normalize just by concentrating on physical objects. Instead, older children develop with a formed personality and fixed sense of reality so that learning is achieved more through the mental faculties of imagination and rational thinking.

With elementary (6-12) children, Montessori teaching responds to this new mentality by presenting the environment in a more abstract "cosmic" manner than before. In 1935, this idea of cosmic education was first explained in England as the total interrelated functioning of the whole. Dr. Montessori therefore eagerly incorporated this cosmic education into her approach to the elementary child.

The Elementary Child

"From seven to twelve years, the child needs to enlarge his field of action...The passage to the second level of education is the passage from the sensorial, material level to the abstract."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *From Child. to Adolescence*, p. 3-5

The elementary child is primarily interested in the purpose and function of things, rather than just their physical form and feel. Interest is now in ideas, the "why" and "how" of things, rather than their "what" and "where" as before. Montessori elementary teaching therefore offers a means for children to conduct a more abstract exploration of the environment by correlating its various facts and objects with each other.

Correlation

"Everything is interrelated, and beginning with a detail, one arrives at the whole by correlation."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *From Child. To Adol.* p. 46

Entering the second (6-12) plane of development, children begin exercising new faculties of imagination and reasoning which were not fully present before. These faculties develop naturally by correlating things in the environment to ultimately arrive at a complete understanding of how they all work together.

For example, knowing that bees make honey leads the child to question why and

how this occurs. This knowledge is then correlated with other facts, such as the bee's work to pollinate flowers and provide food for human and animal consumption. Cosmic education draws out these correlations for children to deepen and expand their understanding of how all these things benefit the total functioning of all.

The technique *questioning*, using words like "why" and "how," is the primary means for cultivating this type of cosmic analysis of the environment. In this way, Montessori teaching encourages children to exercise their right use of imagination for self-directed research into many diverse areas of the environment.

Right Use of Imagination

"The world is acquired psychologically by means of the imagination. Reality is studied in detail, then the whole is imagined. The detail is able to grow in the imagination, and so total knowledge is attained."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *From Child. To Adol.* p. 34

Cosmic education always begins with interest in one particular nugget of truth or detail in the physical environment. From there, the child's imagination leads him to explore a much wider field of knowledge on the subject. For example, a child's initial interest in planting a seed logically leads to imagining how the seed grows to become a plant that produces new seeds in the continuing cycle of life. Beyond that, the child's right use of imagination can also lead him to study how plants and seeds provide food and shelter for many types of animal and human life as well. This whole learning process, however, always begins with the child showing some specific interest in the environment.

Interest

"If the idea of the universe be presented to the child in the right way, it will do more for him than just arouse his interest... it will create in him admiration and wonder...and his interest spreads to all, for all are linked and have their place in the universe."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Montessori Method*, p.106

Elementary children instinctively interest themselves in many diverse aspects of the environment. Since this exploration easily becomes chaotic and unproductive, Montessori teaching must limit it to manageable portions of time and activity such as by setting up schedules and daily planning logs, when necessary.

Following the *basis of interest* protocol, you must also limit your own lesson presentations to what children invite by their specific green light signals. With elementary children, this signal is usually a specific verbal request, such as "How does this work?" or "What's this for?"

For example, if a child shows interest in a particular bird, use the cosmic approach to offer a

nomenclature type lesson that identifies the bird by distinguishing it from others. In this lesson, you might also show how birds are classified based on their particular form and function. Typically, these key subject matter lessons open up much larger areas of study and are offered to a whole group of interested children to make it a valuable social experience as well. The children's further interests might then lead to collective study about the bird's habitat and life-style patterns, or perhaps to the classification scheme of the entire plant and animal kingdoms.

Placing each separate fact into its larger organizational framework is like capturing objects in a spider's web to store up knowledge that can be used later in other research

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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

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

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Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

Home Schooling

In this *moment of peril*, the teacher is unsure how to address parents at her school who want to conduct Montessori teaching at home with their children. (See *Observer*, May, 2012). She is concerned that they only want to present the materials for academic achievement instead of for Montessori teaching as intended.

First, the teacher needs to see the parents' interest as a potential positive contribution to the children, because, done well, this home teaching will clearly aid and reinforce your own efforts at school. However, you still must guide parents to help them avoid the typical tendency towards conventional teaching.

Fortunately, the IMS technology is available to help your instruction. Begin by showing parents just a few of the key techniques, such as *eye contact*, *patient waiting*, and *proximity*. Also, give careful attention to several key protocols, such as *well-being of the total environment* and *least amount of adult involvement*. The protocols *enhance independence* and *don't interrupt concentration* are also especially important to follow in any home-based teaching situation. Using just these few initial pointers, parents should be able to soon begin effective experimenting with the technology on their own.

IMS also offers other resources for learning the technology, such as the Danbury audio cd and study guide. Inform the parents about these as well, and invite them to observe your own Montessori teaching in the classroom at school.

If possible, visit and observe the parents at home so you can make suitable suggestions to adapt the physical space and design for Montessori teaching. For materials, a number of useful 'low-tech' resources are readily available on the internet for free or very low cost, such as:

<http://www.montessoriprintshop.com/>
<http://www.montessoriforeveryone.com/>

Ultimately, however, parents must learn the technology by regularly practicing it with their children at home. In this way, they will soon be having positive experiences that lead to good habits as they repeat them regularly each day. Finally, parents will come to a clear understanding of Montessori teaching as they make the technology a part of their automatic way of being with children all the time. Helping parents in this process, therefore, leads them to become close collaborators with your own efforts at school. Then, you will all be working together quite well on behalf of the children's true normal development.

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activities. Dr. Montessori devised a series of myths or cosmic tales to bring attention to this larger knowledge of the whole.

Cosmic Fairy Tales

"To interest the children in the universe, we must...usefully call to our aid some myths or fairy tales...as symbolic truths of nature."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *To Ed. the Hum. Pot.*, p.19

Dr. Montessori recommended giving certain great lessons in the beginning of any group of elementary children. One of these cosmic tales, "God Who Has No Hands," is a symbolic impression of how the whole cosmos might have first come into existence from the nothingness of empty space. The story goes that into this void of emptiness, a great explosion of light and heat occurred that expanded and cooled to become particles of matter to finally form the whole vast array of countless stars and planets we see today.

Other similar tales help children imagine the solar system, formation of the earth, the beginning of life on earth, development of man, early civilizations and the evolution of written language. Typically, these great lessons set the stage for children to conduct wide-ranging research into different cultural subjects that make up the typical organization of all academic study.

Cultural Subjects

"Subjects must be presented so as to touch the imagination of the child, and make him enthusiastic, and thus add fuel to the burning fire that has been lit."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *From Child. to Adol.*, p.34

Once children gain a sense of the whole, they can more easily navigate around the diverse subjects of academic study with skill and intelligence. By correlating one specific detail with another, they organize information into various areas, such as History, Geography, Chemistry, Biology and Social Sciences. Now, their individual research projects easily move from one subject to the other as they follow each topic and thread of interest to its final completion. In time, children come to question and interest themselves in their own cosmic task in life as well.

Cosmic Task

"Man too, like all beings, has two purposes, conscious and unconscious. He is conscious of his own intellectual and physical needs...but has yet to become conscious of his far deeper responsibilities to a cosmic task, his collaboration with others in work for his environment."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *To Ed. The Hum Pot.* p. 46

Cosmic education views each person as having a special role in the evolving process of life — a cosmic task established at conception by nature according to one's unique time, place, and group in relation to others. At a personal level,

children naturally discover this cosmic task as they work together and resolve differences among themselves in the social group. This social learning is therefore important to their normal development during the elementary period. Later, in the third plane (12-18) of development, adolescents go beyond this cosmic education to prepare for the final stage of full adult functioning in society.

Beyond Cosmic Education

"...put the adolescent on the road to achieving economic independence. We might call it a 'school of experience in the elements of social life'...this would result in a 'valorization' of his personality."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *From Child. to Adol.*, p.64

By about age 12, children leave the relatively calm stable learning of elementary childhood, to enter the new, unstable period of puberty. During this 12-15 age range, adolescents show less interest in academic study, preferring instead some type of vigorous outdoor activity close to nature. They become like "earth-children" (Erdkinder). Now, Montessori teaching must go beyond cosmic education, to offer adolescents different, non-academic activity, such as caring for animals and planting gardens.

In the 12-18 period, adolescents also show great interest in gaining economic independence and confidence to overcome the challenges of living in their particular culture and society. Typically, a farm-school environment is ideal for this, especially if the children have some means to produce and sell products and services in the surrounding community. In this environment, they also come to realize a wider duty in life to evolve the cosmos through their own personal creative actions with others.

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Book Review

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Ulrike's journey in metaphysics began many years ago as a student of the work of **William Walter** (1869-1941). An early American spiritual healer, Walter became popular for his great success in this area, which he developed into a formalized methodology. In some ways, Walter's life closely parallels that of Maria Montessori, although they probably didn't know each other at the time. Nevertheless, they both shared a deep interest in observing human life from a scientific perspective. Both also recognized the ultimate authority of fundamental laws of nature.

Walter's interest in this "science of life," however, was not directed to children and education but rather to bringing about the cure of various physical illnesses and disease. As a young man, Walter discovered how to cure his own serious medical condition through the power of thought and imagination alone. In 1905, he began to

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OBSERVER
The Montessori



Cosmic Education

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Evolve the Cosmos

*"The world was not created for us to enjoy,
but we are created in order to evolve the cosmos."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Ed. For a New World* p.27

In a nurturing secondary Montessori environment, adolescents acquire a strong character, self-confidence and inner poise to face the many unknown perils presented by ordinary life in adult society. As young adults, they are then normally prepared to embrace these challenges, not just as a means for personal physical survival or momentary pleasure, but rather as a duty to evolve the cosmos through their responsible personal and collective action with others. Man's hope for true peace and order ultimately depends on this type of higher plane of mature human functioning with each other.

Hope for Peace

"Our hope for peace in the future lies not in the formal knowledge that the adult can pass on to the child, but in the normal development of the new man."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind* p.253

Montessori teaching itself serves a vital cosmic task by helping children materialize their true normal being in outward form. In the present moment, we serve this purpose by following laws of nature with children to create the right conditions for their true normal development. The new emerging children then become our hope of future peace and order in adult society as well.

Montessori teaching functions as an intimate collaboration with nature. In this task, the child's duty is to materialize his true natural spirit, and ours is to "spiritualize" matter by removing impediments in the child's environment. Using cosmic education with elementary children is therefore an important part of this whole evolving process of creating a new humanity in the world.



Lee in role-play drama showing use of technology to resolve "separation" with parent at the IMS workshop in Brunei Darussalam (June 2-3, 2012)

Moment of Peril

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Two year old whining

The teacher has one two-year old child who seems to be constantly whining for something. Although she has agreed to allow him his pacifier from home, he still mopes around the room or clings to the door in a pitiful state of insecurity and fear. When he does interact with the environment, it is mostly to handle objects at the shelf or take them out briefly and discard them on the floor. What do to?

Answer in *Observer*, November, 2012

Book Review

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systematically organize his knowledge to teach others the approach he called "Eschatology – the Walter Method," which is still taught and practiced today.

Walter began his work as a practitioner of Christian Science. However, he says his approach isn't "faith" healing as much as "understanding" healing through the right use of thoughts and imagination. In this sense, Ulrike's publication follows that same path of "understanding" how to focus thought and imagination to bring about favorable changes to your reality.

Ulrike's writing also ties in with other modern thought theories, such as the "Humanetics" of **Richard Wetherill** (19060-1989) and "Psych-cybernetics" of **Maxwell Maltz** ((1899-1975), both of which rely on using the power of thought and imagination to intentionally create reality. In Montessori teaching, these same principles apply as well, especially in using the IMS technology to bring about the reality of the child's true nature.

In a complex world with so many different personalities and cultures, it is remarkable that the truth, in all its forms, can be reduced to such a simple idea as creating your own reality. Nevertheless, Ulrike makes a strong case for this personal creative power and the ultimate truth of perfect goodness and order that is within us all. In Montessori teaching, we also need to find this same inner perfection as we seek to bring about its outward form of true natural being in children.