



# The Montessori *Success* OBSERVER

Published by the International Montessori Society web: <http://imsmontessori.org> Tel. (301) 589-1127



Lee Havis and Felix Ulloa, vice-president elect of El Salvador - Maryland USA April 13, 2019

## IMS Network in Nigeria

*Evelyn Onyeka, Nigeria educator, has created a "Whatsapp" platform for hundreds of educators in her country to ask questions and learn about Montessori teaching and IMS technology.*

In 2018, **Evelyn Onyeka** began informing Nigerian educators about IMS and the work of *creating the 'new education'*. Besides her *Whatsapp* group platform, "new education – Nigeria," she has recently been conducting a series of meetings to bring this IMS vision more directly to interested persons. At the meeting, Evelyn uses the Danbury audio cd and study guide to demonstrate and explain how the IMS technology helps Montessori teaching with children. She also states that, "I show how to use IMS technology to control the environment, not the child, to bring about the child's true nature in a reliable, objective manner." In April, 2019, these meetings were conducted in the diverse locations of Asaba, Warri, and Owerri.

Evelyn is also an active participant in the 6,000+ member IMS facebook discussion group, "*Montessori Tools and Tips*." On this platform, she has posted many items about the IMS technology and her work in Nigeria for the "new education". A primary goal of her effort is to establish a sufficient basis of interest for scheduling an IMS workshop, "*Creating the New Education*", in Nigeria. At this workshop, Lee Havis, IMS founder and creator of the IMS technology, would present this unique knowledge. For further information, contact: Evelyn Onyeka, [onyekaeve14@gmail.com](mailto:onyekaeve14@gmail.com); phone: 234-086-413-7659; 234-802-382-0002.

## Character Teaching in Central America

By Lee Havis

The IMS "Character Teaching" (CT) project arose in 2000 as an innovative practical means for Montessori teaching with children to overcome cultural poverty in those regions of the world where this condition is most severe. The key goal is to overcome this condition by bringing about a fundamental shift in the character development of poor children, leading to a better and more successful society for all. In 2004, I sought funding to conduct this project through grants from the US Department of Labor for the purpose of eradicating child labor through education in various poor regions of the world.

Although none of my grant applications were approved, writing them encouraged my outreach to make some useful contacts and support for the CT project in a number of countries. Among the grant applications I wrote, was one for Central America to operate in the countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama.

In 2017, I renewed my interest in developing the CT project in Central America as a means to help solve the problem of illegal immigration from that region into the United States. At present, the United State government is spending over \$200 billion dollars of taxpayer funds each year to sustain some 25 million illegal aliens in the country, almost all coming from Central America. I reasoned that the United States government would now be more receptive to funding the CT project to resolve the cause of this problem, which is the condition of poverty in Central America.

I have focused my recent activity for the CT project on the country of El Salvador due to the especially large concentration of people from that country near the IMS office in Silver Spring, MD USA. Connecting with this local community, I have been able to participate in a series of broadcast interviews and panel show discussions on local Spanish language news media to highlight the CT project. In 2019, I was invited to attend an El Salvador community event in the local area,

where I met **Felix Ulloa**, vice president elect of that country. At that time, I briefly discussed the CT project with him, and he seemed genuinely interested.

My plan for operating the CT project in El Salvador is to obtain a letter of support from the newly elected president of that country, organize a local consultation board of responsible citizens in the country, and then obtain funding for an initial consultation visit, which would include a workshop training in the specific IMS technology and skills of "true natural" Montessori teaching. Hopefully, this initial visit will lead to funding a larger scale project operation through a grant from the United States government, as a means to help reduce the flood of people from that country seeking entry into the US under the guise of refugee status and "asylum".

I'm confident that once the CT project becomes operational somewhere in the world, it will demonstrate positive results, to then rapidly gain support for its operation in other countries where cultural poverty has been a long-term drain on peace, harmony, and successful economic opportunity. For more information on this project, visit the IMS website: <http://imsmontessori.org/montessori-character-teaching.htm>

## Montessori Tools and Tips

*Lee Havis answers questions raised by members of the Facebook discussion group, "Montessori Tools and Tips."*

### Observation Comes First

#### Problem:

There was a 15 mth old girl who came into our environment for the first time. The child is an only child. The mom is a new mom and did not let the child out of her sight for most of the session. (Either she was on the mom's lap or right next to her. ) This was the child's first experience out of the house as the mom was fearful of germs.

#### Scenario:

When the child was frustrated with her mom or got tired of an activity she would growl at her mom or bang her head on the table. When the girl growled and looked at the mom, the mom would laugh. When she banged her head, the mom would shout "no" or sing a song using the girl's name. What techniques would you use?

*Cont'd. on Page 3, Col 3*



# Success

by Lee Havis

*"Blessed are the teachers who have brought their class to the stage where they can say, 'Whether I am present or not, the class carries on. The group has achieved independence.' To arrive at this mark of success, there is the path to follow for the teacher's development."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.88

In Montessori teaching, success is bringing about the reality of the child's true nature. While you can experience this reality in the eternal present moment, it also unfolds in time to ultimately appear in outward form as the "normalized" child, showing such qualities as spontaneous self-discipline, precocious intelligence, independence, peace, and harmony with all others in the environment. Achieving this success, however, requires determination, discipline, and knowledge to create the right normalizing conditions for this to occur, which is only possible by following laws of nature. The function of your Montessori teaching with the child is very different from the ordinary duty of adult teaching in conventional education.

## Duty of Adult

*"...the erroneous belief has persisted that it is the duty of the adult to fashion the child according to the pattern required by society."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Montessori Method*, p.106

In ordinary teaching, the adult's function is to deliver a prescribed academic curriculum, as well as instill habits, customs, and values of good social behavior with others. In this conventional education, you measure success by the child's good performance on academic tests and his compliance with good manners in society. This is the popular education of today in which children can only reach a limited, low level of moral development as compared to the level of success promised by Dr. Montessori's "new education".

## Education of Today

*"The education of today is humiliating. It produces an inferiority complex and artificially lowers the powers of man...It is an education based on man's lower powers, not his higher ones."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.21

Today's public education represses the child through arbitrary adult authority, projecting a form of political indoctrination which is imposed through the enforcement of compulsory schooling laws on all. In this system, the dominating reality is either the teacher's

personality or that of the surrounding conventional society. By contrast, Montessori teaching follows laws of nature that respects the ultimate authority of the "teacher within" the child himself.

Success in this "new education" is not measurable through academic tests, or even by the child's obedience and good behavior from the adult's point of view. Rather, success in Montessori teaching is a how effectively you are bringing about the reality of the child's true normal being in harmony with laws of nature. For this, success depends on your skill and speed in shaping the environment for the child's own free, self-directed learning.

## Shaping the Environment

*"A child slowly perfects his activities. An adult can assist in shaping the environment, but it is the child that perfects his own being."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Spont. Act. In Ed.*, p.87

Montessori teaching shapes (polishes) the environment for true normal being by engaging it in various way to remove detrimental influences and disorder from around each child. In this process, you are not just passively standing and watching, but rather you are mentally alert and at times, physically engaged in a very active manner, such as by presenting self-teaching materials designed for the child's self-learning in the environment. The functioning of such a "normalizing" environment was nowhere better demonstrated than in Dr. Montessori's first Children's House that she established for her scientific observation of children in a poor sector of Rome, Italy in 1907.

## First Children's House

*"The environment in which the first Children's House had their origin must have been extremely favorable, since the surprising results obtained during those first years have never again been equaled."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.37

In her first "Children's House," Dr. Montessori was able to observe children in such a manner that was ideal for their eventual true natural development. Later, she recognized that her success in this effort was due to such factors as the extreme poverty of the children, illiterate parents, and untrained teachers, which facilitated a type of pure scientific observation hard to duplicate in ordinary modern situations. So, later experiments never achieved the same success because the families served were less poor and the teachers trained in the profession through conventional higher education. However, the best of these modern teachers were unsuited for the humble, patient type of observation that is required for successful Montessori teaching.

## The Best Teachers

*In America, experiments never succeeded because they looked for the best teachers...with... prejudices so deeply rooted that they are incurable."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Ed. For a New World*, p.66-67

Sadly, Dr. Montessori did not know exactly how her first experiment led to the child's true nature. So, she was not able to teach others how to successfully duplicate it elsewhere in a conscious, intentional manner. And, even the best teachers of those she personally trained could only achieve partial and incomplete success with her approach. Rarely could they bring about and sustain the key quality of deep concentration in children, which was the key signal for the emergence of his true normal development.

*Cont'd. on Page 3, Col 2*

Look for the  
**September, 2019**  
**Observer**  
featuring  
*Instinct*

ISSN 0889-5643

## The Montessori Observer

Published by  
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY  
Tel. (301) 589-1127  
havis@imsmontessori.org

Worldwide Web:  
<http://imsmontessori.org>

Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed four times each year, in March, May, September and November, to IMS members throughout the world. The purpose is to provide news and information about the IMS work in Montessori education, and to extend awareness of Montessori teaching that brings about the child's true nature 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 IMS purpose is to support the scientific approach to true natural being throughout the world.

## IMS ADVISORY BOARD

Elizabeth Hainstock, Educator, Author  
John Bradshaw, Author, Public Speaker

## SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription to this Observer publication may be obtained by requesting IMS membership, which is open to all individuals for a \$30 annual fee. Associate schools, \$35 annual fee. IMS also recognizes Montessori schools committed to laws of nature. All members also receive a subscription to the Montessori News and other membership benefits.

## IMS ON THE INTERNET

An on-line IMS discussion group, "Montessori Tools and Tips" is available for anyone to join at no charge. To join this group discussion, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/montessoritool-sandtips/>

Copyright © IMS, 2019

## Moment of Peril

by Lee Havis

### Addressing Government Interference

The co-owner of this Montessori school is confronted by government interference that threatens the integrity of her Montessori teaching there. (See *Observer*, March, 2019). How can she successfully resolve this obstacle to the successful operation of her school?

**Analysis:** Since the main issue here concerns problems with her school's co-owner and agents of the government, the primary detrimental influence is the adult personality which she must recognize and remove. The essential means for doing this is through effective communication with these other adults to assure their support and cooperation for Montessori teaching.

**Practical Advice:** Since the other adults connected with her school lack knowledge or concern for the essential needs of a "true natural" Montessori environment, you must first inform them about these needs in a clear, effective manner. For example, explain the importance of a mixed age group of children, individualized instruction, and having teachers who are trained and skilled in "true natural" Montessori teaching.

Start by explaining to your co-owner what are the essential requirements for Montessori teaching, such as mixed age grouping and qualified personnel committed to following laws of nature. If the co-owner wants to appease and compromise with government agents who oppose this position, you must remain firm to insist on your position in the matter. For this, you must be prepared to walk away from the whole enterprise if your co-owner is not in agreement on these essential points.

With a strong mutual understanding and agreement on these points with your school co-owner, now approach the government licensing personnel to resolve the problem of government interference. Begin this process with the immediate licensing agent, using an objective, friendly tone to explain your situation in a clear, articulate manner. Restrain any urge to become loud, angry, harsh, combative, or argumentative. For example, calmly explain the basic requirements for your school's successful operation, and ask the government official to help by offering a suitable resolution to the impasse, such as some type of exception, exemption or waiver from the otherwise required objectionable restrictions.

If the licensing agent refuses to offer a suitable way of solving the problem, then ask for a personal meeting with the next higher official, and continue that way until you have either resolved the problem or exhausted all administrative remedies. At this point, seek out other means for outreach in the communication, such as public awareness through

*Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3*

## Success *Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3*

### Concentration

*"The great principle that brings success to the teacher is this: as soon as concentration has begun, act as if the child does not exist."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.255

With young children, the key event in Montessori teaching is a moment of profound concentration on some particular piece of work. This event Dr. Montessori called "normalization", because it was the first outward sign of the child's state of true normal being. Away from Dr. Montessori's direct personal supervision, however, this normalization rarely occurred and when it did was not stable and persistent due to various flaws and defects in the Montessori environment. So, while Montessori teaching did often yield some positive improvement in children, this was only temporary or partial, and then soon diminished or disappeared entirely when the child returned to conventional outward circumstances as before.

### Temporary Improvement

*"...when children, after being cured or improved, go back to live in conditions...which were the original causes of their deviations from normality, they lack the power or the opportunities needed to remain normalized and their improvement is purely temporary."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.205

Even the best Montessori teaching at school with children will ultimately fail to achieve deep, long-lasting results if the parents don't follow through with their child at home. Besides that, many parents remove their child before the age of six while his absorbent mind is still active and most dependent on the influence of the environment. More importantly, conventional Montessori teacher education provides only general, incomplete, or wholly inaccurate preparation for the type of pure scientific observation that is required to effectively follow laws of nature in actual practice with children.

Furthermore, otherwise well-meaning Montessori teachers lack a complete depth of understanding and preparation for this approach, and so are unable to fully communicate it to others. Many schools therefore operate under the influence and control of commercial interests or government built on the basis of personality or culture, instead of laws of nature. Typically, parents, teachers, and school owners involved all become satisfied with a calm, well-behaved class, which is the functional limit of today's conventional Montessori education.

### Calm Class

*"Now we see the class calm...Usually the teacher is satisfied...Many of the schools get no further than this."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.269

Complete success in Montessori teaching takes considerable time and patience to work through the various stages involved in

"polishing" the environment: (1) beginning conditions, (2) scanning and supervision, and then finally (3) concentration to signal the emergence of true natural development. Since the stage of scanning and supervision is often long and uneventful, many teachers lose faith and patience to continue Montessori teaching beyond this transitory stage 2 development.

During this scanning and supervision period, you must exercise great patience and self-discipline to root out and correct even the smallest flaws and defects in the environment which to the ordinary person would seem insignificant, such as saying "good job" to interrupt a child's delicate moment of concentration. Real success requires constant control and removal of these flaws to protect the present moment from negative outside influences that would prevent the child from gaining his full independence and freedom in the environment.

*Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1*

## Montessori Tools and Tips

*Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3*

### Answer:

The situation here is MORE than correcting or consulting with the Mom, which might be your first reaction. The problem is that mom is a "foreigner" in the Montessori environment, and unprepared to benefit from any instruction you could give her in the present moment situation. So, rather than instruct the mom at that time, start with OBSERVATION.

Tell the mom to sit in a corner, say and do NOTHING. [If the child crawls over, just tell the mom to let the child do whatever she chooses – that YOU are going to show the child what to do, while the mom's job being just to silently OBSERVE.] Tell the mom: Be completely neutral. Say and do nothing. This will remove or at least greatly reduce the mom's detrimental presence, so you can then SHOW her the actual use of IMS technology, such as the techniques, *eye contact*, *distraction*, and *cooperative touching*. With the child, use the protocol *basis of interest* to get physical objects into her hands for basic manipulation.

Later, when the child is asleep in nap at home, talk to the mom about what she observed by watching you. Even if she noticed only a little, compliment and encourage her for even a slight step towards awareness and understanding of what you were doing. This will be the starting point for the mom to practice more conscious Montessori teaching the next time you are together. However, continue the passive "observation" exercise when you are together again until she understands more about what you are doing. **Observation comes first.**

# OBSERVER

The Montessori



## Success *Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 1*

### Protect the Present

*"We serve the future by protecting the present. The more fully the needs of one period are met, the greater will be the success of the next."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.195

In 2003, a novel, new technology of Montessori teaching emerged to provide precise guidance for scientific observation that was never possible before. In this IMS technology, the protocol *present moment* prompts you to focus on each new moment in time, rather than on any thoughts or feelings of blame or regret about the past, as well as any worry or fear of the future.

Following the *present moment* protocol, notice especially your OWN details of behavior, to severely limit your movement and talking to closely approximate the perfect order of nature. Observing this way, you become increasingly aware of the small outward details of the child's behavior, to interpret them correctly so you can effectively respond by acting properly in the environment from one moment to the next.

### Interpret Correctly

*"If one can interpret correctly the behavior of the child, the problem of humanity will have been solved."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
From *Voice of Dr. Montessori*, 5 Dec. 41, J

Montessori teaching calls you to observe with the purpose of becoming ultimately aware of the child's perfect true nature in the present moment of time. So, if the child's outward behavior doesn't reflect that perfect harmony now, continue observing to see what is at cause in the environment through a pure type of observation to recognize the complete present moment reality.

Using the IMS technology greatly helps this type of scientific observation by allowing you to successfully conduct various experiments that will effectively *control the environment, not the child*. For example, when you observe a child's misbehavior, correctly interpret this as a reflection of some detrimental influence in the child's environment which you must notice and remove. The IMS technology provides protocols and techniques to do this in a precise, scientific manner that anyone can learn and apply with practice. As you do, you will come to experience the ultimate success of discovering the child's true nature in any situation you encounter. And, ultimately, you will realize the outer form of this reality in the emergence of the normalized child as well.

## Moment of Peril

*Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3*

broadcast news and social media. In addition, contact any supportive third party organizations, such as the International Montessori Society (IMS).

IMS, for example, is an effective voice to support its recognized schools to resolve their problems of government interference. In the end, working with other supportive adults in this way will ultimately bring a successful result, even though the outcome may be different or more difficult than you had originally hoped or imagined.

When problems of government interference reach a high level of intensity and conflict, remember that any good, unconventional idea, such as a new education project, is bound to involve serious resistance at the beginning, when, like a baby, it is most weak and vulnerable to attack. So, at this weakest point in a school's operation, when you feel most alone, reach out to others who share your position in the matter, and who are likely to be in a stronger position than you to provide the support you need for a successful ultimate result.

### Taking over a Class

Just hired, your new teaching assignment is to take over a class of 3-6 year old children from a teacher who was just fired for incompetence. Although the prior teacher held a famous Montessori credential, you have heard that her behavior was so controlling and manipulative that the children had developed a hostile, negative, pattern of misbehavior and disorder. And, the parents had complained about her for a long period of time as well. You now have only two days to prepare before you walk into the classroom on Monday morning. What to do? *Answer in Observer, September, 2019.*



Evelyn Onyeka (center) with teachers attending one of her workshops to introduce IMS technology in Nigeria