



The Montessori *Fear* OBSERVER

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Webinar The Technology of Scientific Education

8 1-hour weekly sessions

Practical tools for scientific observation
to bring about the child's true nature.

First session: June 26, 2021



Presenter:
Lee Havis, IMS executive director

3rd IMS Webinar Launch in June, 2021

On June 26, 2021, IMS begins its 3rd webinar on the subject of *technology of scientific education*. While the content remains essentially as the prior two webinars, the current series of eight sessions will incorporate much knowledge gained from this prior experience, as well as how to improve transmission through the unique remote virtual format.

The current webinar, for example, will be conducted on the WEBEX platform, which has a very high reputation for stability and quality of audio and video presentation. So, the current webinar will enjoy an improved quality of transmission over the platform used before.

Lee Havis, creator of the technology, will present the webinar, using the same basic topical format, which has been so effective in the past. However, the current presentation will benefit from his prior presentations, as well experience and insights he has been gaining from his daily work in completing a comprehensive text on the subject.

Lee says, "So much of the technology is developmental in nature, even though its essential elements remain the same. The question and answer interaction with "websters" during the first two webinars has helped me focus on aspects of the technology that need greater attention, such as removing the detrimental influence of the adult personality".

Each session is scheduled for 7:00 PM, ET (USA) on successive Saturdays. The presentation is conducted in English, although participation from any country is welcome. [Check your time zone for broadcast time in your local area.] To register, and for more information, go to IMS website, <https://imsmontessori.org/programs/webinar>.

A Beautiful Moment

By Donna Curtis (IMS '02), Director
Mustard Seed Montessori (Petaluma, CA)

Patient Waiting...I cannot extol this IMS technique enough! This particular COVID year especially tested my *Patient Waiting*—it took all nine months to experience this beautiful moment, a moment that will be etched in my memory for a very long time.

Billy was three years old when he joined *The Mustard Seed* last September. He was an extremely shy and cautious boy—hiding behind a chair to spy upon the class, not eating in class, learning how to separate from "G'ma" (Grandma who travels Billy to and from school). Maria Montessori wrote: "the child of three, when he first comes to school, is a fighter on the verge of being vanquished; he has already adopted a defensive attitude which masks his deeper nature...All that remains active is a superficial personality which exhausts itself in clumsy movements, vague ideas, and the effort to resist or avoid adult constraint." (*The Absorbent Mind*, p. 264). Maria Montessori said that children come to class beaten down; this was Billy, I couldn't even approach him!

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Mamaya Montessori in Uganda

The *Mamaya Montessori Nursery and Creche* was founded in September 2020 by a young couple, Mr. **Ahmed Salim** and Mrs. **Zahara Fatuma**. The initial impulse for this school demonstrates that sometimes a tragic experience can be the impetus for a good, positive result.

The idea of the Mamaya school began when Zahara arrived home one day to find her 18 month child crying in fear and confusion, helplessly tied with a rope on to the dining room table. The caretaker maid had apparently done this, along with stealing all of the furniture in the house as well.

After that distressful event, Zahara decided to dedicate herself to being both a good mother and teacher of all the young children of other parents who need quality, safe childcare while they engage in the vast world of work outside the home.

The Mamaya school recalls the word "Mamaya" (Mommy) which her young child was crying to her on that fateful day she found her tied with rope to the dining room table. With her dedication to bring good from the tragic event with her own young child, she plans for her mixed age group class programs at the Mamaya school to especially promote good human social relations as older children help the younger ones to gain a sense of responsibility.

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Children in "mystery bag" sensorial exercise at the Chapman Montessori School (Garden Grove, CA)



Fear

by Lee Havis

"Fear is another form of deviation which is thought to be natural in children."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 171

In today's world, "fear" is hardly recognized because it so common and therefore often confused as a normal state of being for all. So too, however, throughout history as well. For example, even though Dr. Montessori rejected the idea of fear as being normal to man's true nature, she was yet well aware of it as a persistent evil in society to overcome. In fact, in Europe in the 20th century, she was constantly surrounded by war and threat of violence during most of her life. Despite this, however, she somehow discovered that fear disappeared in the young child once "normalized" in her scientific environment committed to laws of nature.

State of Fear

"Anything that makes a child to come into contact with reality and to experience and understand his environment will help to free him from this distracting state of fear...one of the first fruits of our normalizing schools is the disappearance of these subconscious fears."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 171

In 1907, Dr. Montessori discovered that fear in the young child would disappear in the unique "normalizing" environment she created through scientific education. When she announced this discovery to the world, people were eager to find out exactly how this magical "normalization" actually came about.

Dr. Montessori's later research revealed that the young child has a unique "absorbent mind" that spontaneously incorporates the conditions of his surrounding environment intimately into his whole being. So, the key to end the child's ordinary state of fear is to create the right environment, which would then become fully fixed in the child's basic personality by about age six.

Based on this knowledge, Dr. Montessori then sought to train teachers to create her unique environment widely around the world. In this way, she aimed to end the unconscious reaction of fear which occurred under the widespread hostile, repressive conditions of conventional teaching.

Unconscious Reaction

"A child's unconscious reaction to malice and thoughtlessness of adults finds expression in...excessive fear, since he cannot grasp with his reason the cause of his depression."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 151

Sadly, Dr. Montessori soon encountered many practical obstacles in her efforts to train teachers to widely employ her approach. For example, many teachers were themselves suffering from an unconscious reaction to fear and abuse in their own childhood past, which they then unconsciously projected on children in the present time situation. There was also another serious issue as well. Since Dr. Montessori understood scientific education only in a vague, general way, surrounded by "mist and clouds", practitioners she trained were unable to fully resolve their various irrational fears and mistakes when on their own with children.

Irrational Fears

"Irrational fears also have causes traceable to this early period."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 182

Although Dr. Montessori could often bring about successful results in programs she personally supervised, many schools and educators had little direct contact with her, due to limits of travel and communication in those days. So, when irrational fears, doubts, and misunderstanding arose in practice, teachers simply reverted to the old familiar habits and style of personality or culture. And in these compromised conditions, children didn't fully normalize, but rather adopted the same patterns of impotency, fear, and apathy that were common and expected in their surrounding conventional society.

Impotency

"...if an adult persuades a child that his impotency lies within himself,...he sinks into a state of apathy and fear."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 170

Since schools and educators could not effectively create the right conditions for scientific education, children didn't fully normalize, but instead submitted to the arbitrary control of adult authority. This then led to the child's fear, impotency, and apathy which eventually became outwardly visible as excessive attachment to the child's immediate supervising teacher.

Excessive Attachment

"...a state of fear...shows itself sometimes in excessive attachment to people from whom the child cannot be separated..."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 84

After Dr. Montessori's death in 1952, practitioners became ever more controlled by conventional forces of personality and culture. And, from this perspective, the child was seen as in-

herently weak and dependent, commonly showing an outward display of excessive attachment to the supervising adult. Unable to express his urge and instincts for normal self-directed activity, the child then reacted by escaping into a world of fantasy, which many teachers thought of as good and normal.

Flight into Fantasy

"A flight into play or a world of fantasy...represents a subconscious defense of the ego which flees from suffering or danger and hides behind a mask."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 157

In today's climate of "Covid" virus fear, children wearing masks is now common everywhere, not just in circumstances of make-believe play or Halloween. And since this mask-wearing has become so institutionalized

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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.

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Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

Food Disorder

When 3 year old Brian throws food on the floor, insisting on his favorite macaroni and cheese, what is the mother to do? (See *Observer*, March, 2021)

Analysis: Brian, the hub child is surrounded by disorder in the physical object (food on the floor). While there are no “other children” involved in this scenario, the mother’s “adult personality” is also detrimental here. And since Brian has started a dialogue with the mother, the challenge is for her to deal with this, such as to reply in some way.

Practical Advice: Usually, the “physical objects” (food on the floor) would ordinarily be the primary detrimental influence. However, in this situation, Brian is focused on talking to the mother, and he is not disordering the food now in the present moment. Therefore, applying the *present moment* protocol, the “adult personality” is now the logical first obstacle to address.

If you comment about the food on the floor, that is likely to violate the protocol *no negative attention to misbehavior*, since Brian is not actively disordering the food on the floor at that moment, and his intense anger about the food is a signal not to mention it at this time. So, focus instead on interacting with Brian to control your adult personality, such as by applying the technique *patient waiting* and the protocol *eye contact before talking*. That means, wait until Brian is looking at you before you say anything.

While *patient waiting*, look to see if Brian makes any move away from the table to try to get food from the refrigerator on his own, or otherwise attempts to further disorder the food elsewhere on the table. If he does, put your hand on the refrigerator, or other food items, applying the *distraction* technique to get his attention, and then a *clear direction* to return to the dinner table.

However, if he is not further disordering the food, or moving around to get something on his own, wait for eye contact and start by applying *reflective language*, saying “You would like macaroni and cheese tonight for dinner?” And, if he confirms that is correct, apply the *confirm accuracy, clarify and expand* protocol by saying something like this: “Macaroni and cheese is good healthy food, and we’ll schedule that again for dinner another time real soon. However, tonight our meal is roast beef and mixed green salad (now mostly on the floor, of course)”.

After clarifying the present moment situation, continue *patient waiting*, to listen for Brian’s next comment. For example, if he repeats or makes further demands for his “favorite food”, apply the technique *repetition*, and just say what you said before. At all times, remain firm and calm. Don’t even mention the food on the floor, unless Brian brings up the subject. For example, if Brian does agree to the meal menu for that evening (which is on the floor), offer now a *clear direction* such as, “OK. First, let’s clean up

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Fear *Cont’d. from Page 2, Col. 3*

as official government policy, the sense of fear and domination has grown ever stronger beyond the control or power of the individual child to change in any way.

As many parents and teachers also promote this mask-wearing routine as well, the sense of fear seems to be an even more normal and necessary part of a child’s everyday life. Reacting to this condition, the child therefore naturally seeks the refuge of fantasy play, which is the only way he can express his normal urge for power that is denied him in ordinary reality. And, once fixed in the child’s personality, this fantasy later becomes a hidden drama of fear and escape in the adult personality as well.

Hidden Drama

“An inner wall is built up which closes the spirit and conceals it as a defense against the world. Behind these multiple barriers a hidden drama is unfolded.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Secret of Childhood, p. 160

The young child typically plays out his fantasy escape with dolls and toys to symbolize details of his particular struggle for self-expression and power. And, if the cause of this escape is not resolved in early childhood, it continues later as a hidden drama in the adult. As adults, however, parents and teachers unconsciously act out this drama with real-live children, instead of dolls and toys. Resolving these complex adaptations in the adult personality is therefore vital for successful scientific teaching in the present time situation with children.

Resolving Complex Adaptations

“...To assist an adult we must help him untangle a skein of complex adaptations that have been made over a long period of time.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Secret of Childhood, p. 110

Dr. Montessori and other early pioneers in scientific education recognized the need to control and correct the inner flaws and defects of teachers to prevent this evil from unconsciously projecting on to children. And despite the present advanced understanding and technology for scientific education today, the problem of resolving these complex adaptations still remains a major obstacle to overcome.

The IMS “individual” framework of scientific teaching today, however, does indeed simplify the process of controlling the adult personality since it views the child as an unknown spiritual being instead of as a physical body or personality. Here, the child is actually the “hub” of a cluster of energy, known as a “scenario”. And, surrounding this “hub” child, the child’s environment consists of three components: adult personality, physical objects, and other children. Scientific teaching then uses the specialized technology to conduct experiments to remove the disorder of these three components, which then allows the child’s true nature to freely emerge of itself.

Removing the disorder of the “adult personality” still remains the most difficult part of this process, however, in view of its highly defensive, abstract nature. Many teachers, therefore, simply reject the whole approach of scientific education for fear of making a mistake that might expose some unknown, inner flaw or pain from the past.

Making a Mistake

“...the fear of making ‘a mistake’, the sense of groping in the dark, of having to bear the consequences of an error we are not certain to recognize, makes us run behind another person like a dog on a chain.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Spont. Act. In Ed., p. 182

While making mistakes is a necessary part of any experimental approach, committing them in scientific education with children can be highly personal and painful. So, the ordinary urge is to avoid making any mistakes by just sticking with the well-worn habits of conventional teaching which is so widely accepted in society. By contrast, scientific teaching requires a more courageous, mature approach to face and destroy the evil of these habits so they don’t unconsciously project on children.

Destroy Evil

“Do not fear to destroy evil; it is only good that we must fear to destroy.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Absorbent Mind, p. 244-45

The voice of Dr. Montessori still echoes today to urge educators to actively oppose and reject the cowardly path of tyranny, fear, and repression with children. Instead, she directs practitioners to observe the child to free him for his own self-directed true natural activity instead. Happily, the IMS framework and technology of scientific education provides simple, practical means to do this by destroying the evil of your unconscious personality projections on children.

For example, the technique *patient waiting* has you stand still and quiet whenever you feel the urge to react in a hostile or punitive manner. And in verbal interaction, the protocol *eye contact before talking* prompts you to get the child’s attention before you speak. Besides that, the technique *imagination-previsioning* (IP) is also available when all else fails. With this IP technique, you analyze and correct problems that are too hard to address in the immediate problem situation itself.

Using all these various techniques and protocols keeps you aligned with laws of nature, which is the sure path to bring about the new humanity that Dr. Montessori envisioned would come from her discovery of the child’s true nature in 1907.

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OBSERVER
The Montessori



A Beautiful Moment *Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 2*

Then there was Johnny whose big brother had been at *The Mustard Seed* over a year so Johnny segued right in, normalizing without a hitch. It took Billy and Johnny nine months to finally harmonize in a beautiful moment. It happened over the lunch table.

Billy had still not eaten lunch in class after all these months and each day I hoped would be the day Billy would eat his lunch in class. I had to purposefully choose everyday to observe without interrupting concentration, not to engage my personality with Billy's psychic block, to continue each minute with non-judgmental *Eye Contact* and very light *Clear Direction*. When other children chose to eat, my patience was greatly tested and I had to very consciously apply *Least Amount of Adult Involvement* and use *Pre-Visioning*. I discovered the path to unlocking Billy's psychic block only through IMS technology.

Only a week ago, Johnny was hungry so he dashed off to wash his hands and set his place at one of the larger tables. I was at my distant point of observation when the beautiful moment unfolded before my eyes! Johnny looked for Billy and pointed to his lunch set at the table and said, "Billy, I have my lunch set up with lots of room for you too! Do you want to eat with me?" Surprisingly Billy perked up with alertness and said, "Yes!" I stood stock still and although I wanted to jump and shout praises I stoically practiced *Patient Waiting* without cracking a smile. Billy put his lunchbox on the table and looking at Johnny he realized he had forgotten his placemat, napkin, and cup of water. He set up the best he could for his first attempt at lunch and did fairly well. The two boys chatted and chatted happily.

The moment extended into a solid hour or more as Billy and Johnny now moved as one spirit to do the clean-up. They joyfully washed Johnny's plate so many times that I lost count. When they poured out the dirty dishwater it spilled all over the floor. I waited for the *Eye Contact* and their request for help. All they needed were towels that I quietly gave them. Now came floor drying! Another epic adventure leading to the driest floor to ever hit the Mustard Seed! This went on to drying the wash basin and finally the table washing. The table was exceptionally clean with all the repetition involved. Billy and Johnny proceeded to clean all the crumbs from the floor and to put their lunchboxes away. They had used up 1 1/2 hour of class time! It was time to go home!

The day was done and I witnessed one of the most beautiful moments in my teaching career.

Messages to IMS

May 28, 2021

To IMS:

I greatly respect and appreciate Lee Havis's interpretation of Dr. Montessori's philosophy and methodology. His seminar helped clarify anything that may have been lost or misconstrued in the numerous translations of her work.

Personally, one of the most valuable lessons in this seminar was learning how to consciously observe children. Mr. Havis shared techniques and offered opportunities for us, his students, to observe by separating from ourselves, from our adult selves, so that we could begin to see through the eyes, hearts, and minds of the children we are guiding.

It is evident that Mr. Havis both lives and breathes the philosophy of Dr. Montessori, and has the highest regard for young students, and Montessori teachers everywhere!

I highly recommend Lee Havis's seminars for Montessorians and laypeople alike.

Linda Turrisi, IMS webster, 2021
Allentown, PA

Moment of Peril

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 1

this food on the floor". Once Brian has cleaned up the mess on the floor, then offer whatever food is available on that night's menu (NOT macaroni and cheese).

Splashing like Pigs

Walking along the street after a hard rain, your three-year old children, Walter and Gina, jump into a nearby mud puddle and begin splashing around wildly. And before you can intervene, they lay down in the puddle, and start rolling around, playing like they are pigs. What to do? *Answer in Observer, September, 2021*

Fear

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

New Humanity

"Amid the shadows of doubt and fear that hang heavily over the human race, we can now catch a glimpse of the light that will dissipate them, because... A new humanity for a new world is already being born!"

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Education and Peace, p.65

Even while World War II was looming in Europe in the 1930's, Dr. Montessori envisioned the ultimate victory of truth and love emerging from the dark evil and fear that was so threatening the world during that time. She saw the child's true nature as the essential key to a new humanity that would ultimately end the age-old dominance of fear, evil and ignorance in the world.

Now, with the benefit of a new understanding and technology for scientific education, Dr. Montessori's vision of a new normal humanity is more tangible and near at hand than ever before. However, even so, making this vision a visible reality begins with your decision to apply this knowledge with children in your own particular situation. If you do, however, you will see in your own experience how the child's fear and evil naturally disappear, leaving in its place, the child's true nature of peace, love and harmony emerging just as Dr. Montessori discovered and described so many years ago.