



The Montessori OBSERVER

Take Out Everything

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Elementary child at Montessori Harbor Mesa School in study of the human brain.

Montessori Harbor Mesa School in California

In 1970, **Guiliana De Frenza** founded the *Montessori Harbor Mesa School* in Costa Mesa, CA as the culmination of a life-long interest in education that began in her childhood while growing up in Taranto, Italy. She points to a specific incident that occurred while attending a Catholic School at the age of six. She says, "While seated in the first row of my Catholic School class, I witnessed my teacher inflicting a few slaps on the palms of one of my peers who did not properly answer her questions. I vividly remember telling myself when I saw that sight that 'I will become a teacher, a good teacher and not a mean and bad teacher like her!'"

Years later, as a young adult, Guiliana studied to receive a degree in the Montessori Method in 1957, which sparked an interest in education that has never left her. She says, "I taught in Taranto, Italy for a couple of years and then my destiny and love for my husband of sixty years now, brought me to Costa Mesa, California." Now, she feels very lucky to have been able to continue to dedicate herself to teaching children for many years. Now, she serves as the principal of her Montessori Harbor Mesa School.

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Reflections from the IMS Distance Learning Course

Two students completing the IMS distance learning course reflect on their experiences going through this series of 22 lessons to prepare for "true natural" Montessori teaching with children by using the unique IMS technology designed for this purpose.

By Patricia Brophy (Virginia)

My Montessori journey began as a conventionally trained teacher, searching to apply Montessori teaching from my own personal study of books and observing others in the field. Even with my newly acquired enlightened ideas, however, my egoic personality would "pop up" in my daily dealings with children. Facial expressions, voice, tones, impulsive interfering actions, and negative thoughts, impeded my process of implementing my new beliefs concerning the true nature of children. "How do I do it?", I would ask myself. "What model do I follow?" My search continued.

Then, lo and behold, I attended an IMS workshop conducted by **Lee Havis** and found a technology with specific techniques and protocols to control my adult personality as I worked with children. I realized that if I followed this technology, my personality could be controlled so as not to interfere with the natural development of children. Soon, I enrolled into the IMS distance learning course to continue my study.

The IMS course has definitely challenged and changed my conventional, pre-programmed beliefs of the true nature of children. Before taking the course, my dealings with children were guided by a core belief that children are born "bad", so I followed the idea that "sin needs to be punished" and "Spare the rod and spoil the child".

Now I see that children are born good, and that it is the negative influence of environment, including parents, society, culture, and the physical world that shapes their personality to diverge from true natural goodness. I can also see that the external world of surrounding conventional society is not all that exists, that there is another "inner" world that is the child's true self, which is guided by a perfect inner teacher of nature. Looking at children in this new way has taught me to honor and serve this inner teacher and allow it to emerge in outward form and action. And, if I make mistakes, I can use the technique IP (*Imagination-Previsioning*), for example, to quietly examine how to correct them and prevent myself from making them in the future.

Combining the use of all the various techniques and protocols has proven to create a calm, friendly harmoniously balanced

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By Maria Escobar (California)

In the IMS distance learning course, I have learned that observation is really what Montessori teaching is all about. Before taking this course, I never thought observation was a big part in working with children. So I would walk around asking questions, not knowing I was being a distraction for them. Most of the time I would think "control the child", and direct the children to do work that I wanted them to do. Now, I think *control the environment, not the child*, so that I am supervising children by standing quietly and scanning around the total environment from a position outside their activity area.

I also learned that Montessori teaching is not just standing and reporting facts, but rather seeing to the depth of truth, which is the emerging true nature of children. Now I know that Montessori teaching is a process of unfolding awareness which is more about correcting errors that we make. And I can effectively do this by a process of removing the obstacles to seeing the total completion of the children's true nature.

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Child engaged in geography study using the continent map at Montessori Harbor Mesa School



Take Out Everything

by Lee Havis

"A child must carry out his work by himself and he must bring it to completion."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.55

The IMS technology includes a number of protocols that are specifically designed to guide your actions while presenting work to children. One of these, *take out everything*, applies when you are presenting work having many different pieces, to assure that you remove them all from the shelf before conducting your demonstration. The essential purpose of this protocol is to support the child's vital natural urge to complete each task he undertakes in an intelligent, self-directed manner.

Vital Urge

"There is a vital urge to completion of action, and if the cycle of this urge is broken, it shows in deviation from normality and lack of purpose."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Ed. For a New World*, p.57

The young child's vital natural urge draws him to complete each task to achieve some intelligent end result. When there are various items in the task, you must therefore have all of these together for the child to get a clear impression of the whole of what is involved with that work.

In math and language work, the whole point is learning letters and numbers to associate them meaningfully together with their corresponding words, sounds, or calculations. Presenting the concept of beginning reading, therefore, take out the entire set of 26 letters of the English alphabet, even though you demonstrate just a few in your actual demonstration. Here, the main point of your presentation is to show that letters make sounds, and sounds together make words. Knowing this, the child can understand the basic point of the work, and pursue it later on his own in a disciplined, intelligent manner.

Discipline

"Allow the whole to function together and there is discipline, but otherwise there is not."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *To Ed. The Human Potential*, p.13

The young child naturally develops discipline by concentrating his attention on some task to achieve a pre-determined goal. So, for this, the child must know the overall goal from the presentation you conduct. If your presentation is incomplete or partial, with some items missing, the child will not have full knowledge to take an interest to apply himself later with discipline to that work.

However, when all the pieces are present in your demonstration, the child can see and understand the whole order of what is involved and how to proceed on his own.

Order

"...order...is a kind of inner sense that distinguishes the relationship between objects rather than the objects themselves."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.55

The young child naturally loves to work with physical objects when he can see its whole purpose and goal. So, when certain parts are missing or the instruction is incomplete, the child will not see the basic order that will most interest him to work with the materials on his own. When you take out everything, however, the child can fully see the order in the concept you are presenting, and is therefore motivated to learn more about that work from his own independent, self-directed activity.

Independence

"If teaching is to be effective with young children, it must assist them to advance on the way to independence."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.57

The IMS technology includes the protocol *enhance independence* to support each child's ability to solve problems and achieve success on his own. The *take out everything* protocol also helps with this developing independence since it assures the child will have sufficient knowledge of the work you present to continue with it on his own after your initial demonstration. Then, the child will not be held back by the teacher's continual interrupting and teaching.

Interrupting and Teaching

"Too many teachers are inclined to be continually interrupting and teaching...The teacher considers that she must lead him from the easy to the difficult...whereas the child may go from the difficult to the easy and makes great strides."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.240

Conventional teaching relies on constant adult instruction, because the curriculum is given only one piece of subject matter at a time. With this approach, the child has no opportunity to follow his own interest in the subject matter itself. By contrast, Montessori teaching helps children learn on their own in a self-directed manner. When your presentations give understanding of the whole concept, rather than just a part, the child can intelligently concentrate on the work for a long time, without any adult interrupting and teaching. Demonstrating materials in this concise, yet complete manner allows you to safely withdraw from the environment as soon as you have presented the basic idea of the work.

Withdraw from Environment

"A teacher, after she has shown the sensorial stimuli to the children and taught them their use, should seek to withdraw herself from the environment."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.97-98

Following the *take out everything* protocol doesn't mean that you actually demonstrate each and every item of the particular work. So, for example, in beginning reading, while you bring out the full set of letters, you only show a few of these, such as "c", "u" and "p" to make the word "cup" or "up". Then you withdraw from the environment to allow the child to continue on his own to experiment further as he will.

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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

Re-engaging Interest

When 2 ½ year old Chad loses interest in the book you are reading to him, he wanders away to get involved with other things in the environment. (See *Observer, September, 2017*). You would like to re-engage Chad in the book activity, but how do you do this without violating his individual liberty?

Analysis: The teacher's problem is seeing her book reading activity as the only proper activity in this situation. Since Chad's interest shifts elsewhere in the process, you must adjust your behavior accordingly by following the protocols *basis of interest* and *present moment*.

Practical Advice: Following the *present moment* protocol, first notice that Chad's prior interest has now shifted to something else. So, you must stop reading and see what he is looking at and touching at that time instead.

For example, suppose Chad goes over to touch and look in the fish bowl. If this seems improper or dangerous in some way, approach using the technique *proximity*. However, following the *basis of interest* protocol, don't interact with him unless and until there is a 'green light', either by him (1) asking for your help, or (2) looking at you while touching the fish bowl.

If he touches something that might be harmful in some way, however, interrupt that with the technique *distraction* by touching the bowl to get his attention. Then, use *cooperative touching* to guide his hands to explore it in a more gentle, safe manner.

If Chad shifts to more disorderly handling activity, use a heavier interaction by using the *clear direction* technique, safe word, "Take my hand" to lead him back to re-engage his original interest in the book you were reading to him before.

Now, with the reading book activity, shift your presentation to allow Chad to participate more actively, such as by turning the pages, or by answering questions as you point to something in the pictures. Listen to what he says, and watch what he looks at, so if he makes a comment about a picture, follow this interest by using the verbal techniques, *reflective language* or *questioning*.

Finally, recognize that a 2 ½ year old has a strong vital urge for following his own inner guidance of nature. So, don't insist on Chad following your plan of the book reading activity, but rather look for and follow his real interest as it comes out from one moment to the next. In this way, your actions will be in harmony with Chad's own true natural development during the time you have together.

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The protocol *least amount of adult involvement* also teaches you to withdraw from the child as soon as possible as well. So, after presenting the main point of the work, leave the child to continue on his own by using a "safe word" question such as "Would you like to do it now?" At this point, the child will continue with the work or, if not, put it away and come back to it later, according to individual interest.

Interest

"The teacher must be able to choose an object suitable for a particular child and place it before him in such a way that he understands it and takes a keen interest in it."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.151

The protocol *basis of interest* also teaches you to limit your lesson presentations by showing work to a child ONLY when he invites you to do this in some clear obvious way. And, since a child may change his interest after you start your presentation, follow also the *present-moment* protocol to change what you are doing to meet each new situation as it emerges. Ultimately, applying the full set of twenty protocols in a flexible, intelligent manner keeps your actions in close harmony with the complete integrity of eternal natural laws.

Natural Laws

"When the child begins to show interest, the teacher must not interrupt because this interest...corresponds with natural laws..."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p.255

The protocols of IMS technology serve as the functional equivalent of natural laws of the universe. So, using them together will eventually bring the child to

Reflections on IMS Course

By Maria Escobar

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After taking this course, I began seeing all my defects and bad habits, which I have learned to resolve by distinguishing my personality projections from the hub child in question. For this, I can now use specific self-awareness exercises, for example, looking away from the misbehavior to a meaningless object, feel the space around that object, and then hold that feeling as I return my attention to the misbehavior situation at hand. In this way, I am can see my mistakes clearly enough to identify and remove them. Now, I see my mistakes as detrimental influences of my personality, which I can remove in a scientific way by using the IMS technology.

Wow! I'm so glad for how much I have learned. I'm so happy. Every day I'm practicing everything I have learned. Thank you.

a state of deep concentration which signals the key event of *normalization*. At that point, the child enters the state of true normal being, showing such outward qualities as spontaneous self-discipline, independence, peace, and harmony with others.

The *take out everything* protocol helps especially with young children who are uniquely sensitive to order in the physical environment. After the age of six, however, the child loses this intense sensitivity to physical objects, to learn now more abstractly through a type of cosmic education.

Cosmic Education

"...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

At the elementary (6-12) level, the child's formed mental order is now oriented to learning through abstract reasoning, group activity, and imagination. Nevertheless, he still needs to learn in a "cosmic" manner that gives primary attention to the whole concept of the work.

Montessori teaching refers to "cosmic education" with elementary children as the total interrelated functioning of the whole. Before the age of six, this same cosmic approach applies by presenting work with physical objects in the context of the one whole concept involved. So, in presenting materials, be sure there is nothing missing in the objects of that work which would detract from the overall understanding of the whole concept of that work.

Nothing Missing

"The didactic material must be always...in good repair; with nothing missing...and is complete and ready to use."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Ed. For a New World*, p.87

At the primary (2-6) level, Montessori teaching offers the overriding order in each exercise by displaying it on the shelf with nothing missing of all its various related parts. You must also take out everything in each exercise to maintain its complete order in your presentation as well. In this way, the child senses the basic organization of the various elements as they all function together in complete harmony with the whole.

Organization

"...The child creates and seeks for things organized in themselves...and devotes himself to this work with the greatest intensity until he has completed it."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Spon. Act. In Ed.*, p.109

Montessori teaching organizes the physical environment for young children to closely approximate the complete order of nature. This orderly organization of physical objects is important for the young child because his mind

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will spontaneously absorb this order into himself, to thereby ultimately return to his true natural state of being.

Applying the *take out everything* protocol therefore helps this process by sustaining the integrity of the vital organization of nature you are creating in the physical environment. And so, the child's true nature will emerge through your Montessori teaching that controls the environment, not the child.

Recognizing Montessori Schools

IMS recognizes Montessori schools that follow laws of nature, rather than "personality" or "culture". If your school is committed to this type of "true natural" Montessori teaching, instead of the conventional type, IMS welcomes you to apply to join the IMS family of recognized schools around the world.

For IMS, the child is a spiritual being beyond all differences of personality or culture. So, this IMS recognition is available for qualified schools in every corner of the world.

IMS recognized schools receive a signed certificate of recognition and are listed on the IMS website, with all pertinent contact information. The fee for recognition is \$10 per enrolled child, up to a maximum of \$700 per year. Discounts are available for schools that are active in IMS training.

Apply on-line at the IMS website, <http://imsmontessori.org>, or contact IMS directly in USA for details and personal assistance at 301-589-1127.



Child engaged in math work at the Montessori Harbor Mesa School in Costa Mesa, California

Reflections on IMS Course

By Patrical Brophy

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environment that allows children to unfold their true natural development. These tools of IMS technology help the adult to control his personality, which is a cultural collective consciousness of centuries of fears and erroneous perceptions about the child. Using the technology, you can keep from projecting these defects on the child's psyche. As we employ these tools, children come to operate from the natural direction of their own inner wisdom.

I see in my daily work with the children how the Montessori environment not only provides a place for the child's true nature to fully develop, but it is also a space of restoration for the soul of the child and adult as well. As we are co-laborers and co-creators with the child, the true work of creating this "new education" in the world takes place within our souls.

Moment of Peril

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RESTAURANT MISBEHAVIOR

As mother of 3 year old Frank, your main problem is handling his disruptive misbehavior in a public restaurant. Waiting for food to be served, for example, Frank leaves his seat to wander around and loudly disturb the other patrons. When the food is served, he stands or climbs on his seat, playing with and mishandling his food, and then leaving his place to bother other customers. When you call him back, he resists with loud screaming, laughing, and then finally a disruptive tantrum when you interact to restore order. What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, March, 2018

Montessori Harbor Mesa School

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The school has a both a primary (2-6) and elementary (6-12) program, providing learning opportunities from practical life exercises, to music, arts and crafts and even the performing arts. Guiliana is especially proud of her teachers for their loving, caring, and soft spoken manner in support of the children's natural development, both socially and academically.

Guiliana also points to the unfolding of her student body from one generation to the next. She says, "It's very gratifying to enroll children whose parents are alumni of our school from many years ago. These parents are inspired by the loving and happy memories of their years at our school. How very different from what I remember and witnessed as a little girl!"

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