

Dear Families,

Our Montessori practice as parentcators and educators of children is not another methodology. I say this fully knowing that most parents and teachers like to be given booklets of methodology to help them by providing simple suggestions of just what to do to get a child from here to there. But methodologies tend to keep us on the surface and never help us get to the real heart of the matter deep down things. The etymology of the term “methodology” tells us that its “logos” (truth) is in the “method” (scheme). As Montessorians we know that the “logos” is in the “living child” – it is the real child there before us that can reveal to us the true way to go to help that child develop more and more naturally.

It is for this reason that we must dedicate ourselves to observe carefully each child given us in a scientific manner marked with care. We need to discover the unique genius of each child for that child is worthy of our contemplation. Contemplation is not a habit of most of us busy people. As I have noted before, G.K. Chesterton the great observer of humankind wrote this little bit of wisdom which is well worth repeating:

***Children and grass, alas there is too much of them. If we could see but one blade of grass, we would think it as fair as the lily, and if we could see the first child, we would think it God himself come on earth.***

To help us with this responsibility to observe, I believe it is necessary to keep a journal in which we can record our daily “seeing” and subsequent reflections about the child. The word “journal” is derived from the French word for a daily note book or diary in which we privately write down our sincerest thoughts gleaned from our experiences. If we are to have any hope in following the natural genius of a child, we must discover the personal flame of his or her mind/heart/soul. To see such a flame of personal intentionality requires our honest commitment to be looking for it – and then when we have it revealed to us, we must celebrate it as the greatest of finds, for it reveals the fiery now of the child – and also the bright destiny of that child’s tomorrows. To help a child realize his or her profoundest talent is the most wonderful gift we can ever bestow. To do so is our most sacred duty.

Peace,

Paul