

Winter 2018

Palmer LifeWays

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www.palmerlifeways.org

Upcoming Events
Simplicity Parenting

Book Study Dates:

February 13 - 6pm

March 6 - 6pm

April 3 - 6pm

**No school for MSBSD
February 15-16, 2018
Birchtree does have
school!**

**No school for
Birchtree March 8-9,
2018**

**No school March 9,
2018 for MSBSD**

**Spring Break
No preschool
Care available
March 12-16, 2018**

Reverence

Reverence in our Modern World

By Lori Berrigan

In Waldorf Education, we talk about the 3 R's of early childhood. These are Rhythm, Routine, and Reverence. In our last newsletter, I covered the importance of Rhythm and Routine in the home. Today, I would like to discuss the meaning of Reverence and how to incorporate this into your child's life using Rhythms and Routines. You can find a copy of our last newsletter on our web page:

www.palmerlifeways.org.

Reverence is hard to define when it is not being used in religious terms. It is not respect, but incorporates respect. Respect is often externally motivated, coming from what you should do vs. authentic feelings about how you feel about a particular situation, person, place, or thing. Reverence comes from the inside. It is deep and sometimes spiritual. It allows you to see connections. Allows you to understand how you might fit into the big picture. When something is revered, it is also respected.

As always, when I research a topic, I realize it always comes back to us: the adult, the parent, the teacher. Are we worthy of imitation? Should our actions be revered? I realize this is a heavy ideal to bring forward, but this idea (that we must be worthy of imitation) is a pinnacle of Waldorf Education and training. As Rudolf Steiner states "You will not be good teachers if you focus only on what you do and not upon who you are".

So how do we teach or model Reverence in the home? In our schools?

I think the first step we all need to take is finding our own truth. Speak our own truth. We currently live in a society where we can find many differing ideas about child rearing, home-life, and education. Some of these are founded in child development. Some are not. Once we own our own truth, then we must walk the talk. If we want our children to have respect for the earth, themselves, their elders, their teachers, their "stuff", we too must do this in our own lives.

If we do not keep care of our own items, then we cannot expect our children to keep care of their items. If we talk about our family members, children's teachers, or caregivers with contempt, we cannot expect our children to meet them with respect. A child will do as we do, not as we say.

I encourage you to sit with your partner or other adults in your child's life and discuss your truths. What are the qualities you would like your child to have when they grow up? How can you imitate these qualities in your daily life? If you want your child to have respect for the earth, ask yourself "do we show respect for the earth? Do we garden, tend our flowers and vegetables?"

If you want your child to be thankful for the food they receive each day, ask yourself "are we thankful for the food on our tables, or do we sit in front of the television to eat?"

Toys

Toys from home have become an issue. We respectfully request all toys from home stay at home. One small cuddle toy for nap time is allowed.

Reminders

Preschool children please bring:

- Fruit each week
- Wednesday - Veggies for soup
- Fridays - pizza toppings

All children need to make sure they have the following in their cubbies:

- Extra clothes
- Rain Gear
- Winter Gear
- Warm Boots
- Hats
- Gloves

Other questions you may ask are :

Do we take moments of pause and gratitude so that our own child can learn to be thankful?

Do we respect our partner? How do we show this in front of our children?

Do we respect the choices we have made for our child in terms of their education?

How do we model this for our children? Are we respectful of their teacher's requests?

Lastly, I would also encourage you to really think about the media your child receives. Are the messages and images in line with your truth? How can you protect your young child? How can you work with your older child so they can navigate this new reality? If you have chosen Waldorf Education for your child and they often watch media, your teachers will be unable to reach your child in the same way they reach a child with limited media. Asking a child who has a lot of media images in their head to create their own image or imagination is almost impossible. Waldorf Education is slower. The stories, the daily rhythm, and breathe we try to create in the classrooms does not match that of media. The fast quality of media will influence your child more than the slow movement a Waldorf teacher creates in the classroom. The child will need to act out or draw the media images in order to process them – and this does take away from their own ability to enliven their own imagination.

If you would like to have further discussion about this topic, I encourage you to join us for our [Simplicity Parenting](#) book study. The next get together will be February 13th, 2018 at 6pm. We will be discussing Chapter 4 – Rhythm.