

Daily Meditation 08/30/2022

Maria Montessori and Thomas Berry, Birds of a Feather

Good morning.

I'm excited about today's meditation, bringing Maria Montessori and Thomas Berry together (my dog is participating here in the floor with her bone).

I think Maria Montessori was a true prophet and genius in the arena of education. And I have always been struck by how graduates of her programs, and teachers, like those of the Waldorf schools, simply seem to be people more home with their creativity, more at home with their presence in the world, and in the bigger world.

And that, of course, is what Maria Montessori is talking about here.

If the idea of universe be presented to the child in the right way, it will do more for him or her than just arouse his interest. You will create in that child admiration and wonder, a feeling loftier than any interest and more satisfying.

This certainly resonates with Rabbi Heschel's teachings about art as the way to wisdom. And it is a mystical way of seeing the world in terms of wonder and awe.

Now Thomas Berry also picks up on that same attitude of wonder. In fact, he equates it in today's meditation with a sense of the sacred itself. And further down the line in his writing, he says that we will not save the earth without a sense of the sacred.

So, wonder and awe, a sense of the sacred, wisdom, therefore, are so much needed in this time of climate change, and of moving out of the modern era, of patriarchal thinking, of secular thinking and materialistic thinking, and moving to a place in our human evolution as a species, where wisdom has a full throttle role in our education, and our quest for knowledge.

Wisdom includes the questions of "How should we survive? How should we learn to cooperate together?"

So, Montessori then also promises that this vision of the whole, which includes the stars and the earth, stones and life of all forms around us, that this is what brings things together in the human consciousness. And it begins way back in our childhood.

And so is it possible that, like Berry says, "ecology is functional cosmology"? Without a cosmology, we don't have ecology; we have what we're facing today: a crisis in our future, and that of so many other creatures we share this planet with. But with cosmology, with this openness to the universe, and awareness of all the gifts that it brings us, and how it has brought us this far...with this awareness, everything could change.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.