



## January 2020 Newsletter

Dear Parents,

We trust that you all had a wonderful Holiday Season. We are so grateful for your generous gifts you bestowed on the teachers and we are now well rested for more adventures in the Kindergarten.

It was so nice to see all the children again and they surely all look a little bigger and older to us. We have started our mornings indoors for the Winter months, although it is very warm outside at the moment. But that might change one of these days again. We are now spending an equal amount of time indoors as well as outdoors and are eating our snacks inside again.

The children have been hearing the Story of Babushka and singing songs of her adventures. We also will start to do some role plays as well with this very sweet story. There might be some very healthy, gluten free, vegan star cookies involved as well! We will have to see.

The Elderberries will be meeting with Mr. Lee Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:35-9:35am and we ask that children arrive on time for this. It is also a good practice for First Grade when it is very important to not miss any main lesson time.

We will be starting to add the old playground to our morning walk as we are starting to plant some greens and some peas for this winter season. A traditional song game called "Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley grow will accompany our planting time this month. Children will also see the Puppet show "Good Friends" a story by Kundry Willwerth about a Rabbit and a carrot.

We are celebrating four Birthdays this month in the Kindergarten. Daniel, Wilder, Tiernan and Dakotah and are welcoming a new little girl named Stella to our Thursday and Friday class. Elina is going to be homeschooled. We will miss her very much and wish her all the best. Perhaps she will return sometime in the future.

Our next Parent Teacher Conferences are not until April, but Ms. Sigrid is always available for meeting time with you at 2:00pm if you have a need to check in and discuss anything with her that needs attention.



Warm wishes to a New Year and Decade,  
Ms. Sigrid and Ms. Katie

### **Re-enrollment Season**

You will be receiving an email from TADS addressing re-enrollment. The Board will be meeting this month to review our program offerings and update our tuition schedule. As in years past, we invite current families to have first right to the open positions. In that we currently have full enrollment, it will be important for families to let us know your plans for next year right away so that we know how many new students we can accept. If you are planning on returning next year, please re-enroll through TADS before February 16. Reach out if you have any questions about the process as Mr. Lee is happy to help.

As usual, we will be holding monthly open house events. Our next event is Saturday, January 25, at 10 am. Current families are encouraged to attend. There will be a puppet show, a parent-child activity and plenty of outdoor play. Invite your friends or bring them along. These are fun-filled events.

The school will also be holding a monthly first grade information meeting. These events will be held Thursday evening from 6 to 7:30. Please look into your network of friends and let anyone with a rising first grader that our new first grade will open in August. More detailed information to follow.

### **A Visit from Somer Serpe**

Some of you may remember Somer who visited last year to evaluate our school for our WECAN membership. Somer will be here Monday, February 17 and Tuesday, February 18 working as Ms. Katie's mentor for her teacher training work. You may know that Katie will finish her Waldorf training this summer.

On the 18<sup>th</sup>, Somer will be our guest speaker at our parent meeting. The meeting will begin at 6:30. As an experienced early childhood teacher, she has seen it all, and is here to help parents find reassuring ways of speaking to the children. She has also been asked to speak about anxiety in children, and how to soothe their worried souls. This will be an excellent opportunity for you to ask an expert your questions about the challenges of modern parenting.



## Equanimity

“Amid the storm of the world, in which our souls share...”

This is the beginning of a verse that our staff focused on in the fall. Indeed, it does seem now more than ever that the world is troubled, and troubling. The rise of anxiety in children is one tragic consequence of this turmoil. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of shielding your children from the media driven stories and images that swirl around us through the omnipresent “picture making machines.” Yet, we also know that these little ones with their powers of imitation seem to soak in the anxiety of our culture regardless of our sheltering efforts. On the one hand they were born into this modern age and their quest is to find their way to clean up the mess. On the other hand, it is no fun for parents to witness their sweet children experiencing anxiety.

I have seen many families deal with this over the years. There are soothing lavender baths every night. There are many children’s books that have been written to help navigate life’s challenging questions.

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/raise-a-reader-blog/7-touching-books-to-help-kids-understand-death-and-grief.html>

I have seen therapy work wonders for families.

There is one suggestion for parents that comes from the work of Rudolf Steiner. Steiner proposed a series of inner exercises that are known as the six-month exercises or the subsidiary exercises. The purpose of the work is to bring balance and harmony to inner experience. I have written about these exercises in a book on “Inner Fitness.”

I direct your attention to the 3<sup>rd</sup> exercise on “equanimity.” As a parent this is an essential skill and a positive step in modeling for the children a healthy adult perspective. Being able to stay centered when you are facing the worlds’ storms, being aware of your reactions, being aware of your fears, and moving ahead courageously is exactly what the anxious child benefits from seeing in the adult world around them.



“The Subsidiary Exercises are a ritual of inner fitness. The purpose of this inner work is to cultivate five attitudes or soul qualities. They are,

1. Control of one’s train of thought
2. Control of one’s will impulses
3. Composure in the face of joy and sorrow
4. Positivity in judging the world
5. Receptivity in one’s attitude toward life
6. A blending of the practice to your needs

...Month three is dedicated to the cultivation of equanimity. William Blake was writing about equanimity when he penned this poem,

Joy and woe are woven fine.  
A clothing for the soul divine.  
Under every grief and pine,  
Runs a thread of silken twine.

This is right it must be so.  
(The human being) is made for joy *and* woe.  
And when this we rightly know  
Safely through the world we go.”

Until the next newsletter, onward and upward!

Respectfully,

Mr. Lee