

Revering our Children, Protecting their Childhood

(A “Soap Box Speech” delivered to UUCWI on 12/30/07 by Adam Fawcett)

I am grateful to you all for this opportunity to speak today on behalf of children, to progressive-thinking and consciousness-seeking adults. I will bring to you in very condensed form, a provocative and impassioned plea to more effectively Love and serve the children of today, and therefore serve the human future. I will call us to this higher love and service through increased understanding and bold action in two particular areas;

The first is a seemingly radical but extremely sane call for greatly limiting Television viewing and screen time that our children are exposed to.

The second, related area is a call for the transformation of the education that we provide for our children toward Whole-Child Education, which I will describe and begin to define shortly.

These changes that I call for are indeed radical, and I do not imagine that they will be instituted on any kind of wide scale overnight, for what is accepted as Normal in our society is often far from what is healthy, and what is healthy is often held at the fringe of mainstream society for years or decades. The time for the earnest advancement of these two proven healthy changes is urgently upon us now, and it falls to those of us on the leading progressive edge of social reform to initiate the shift, through our choices, our actions, and our conversations.

The urgent edge that I bring to these calls comes from the radical premise that Humanity, the human family, is delicately poised at the edge of a quantum leap in human consciousness. Many are paving the way for this leap, a few have already made it, and the children of today will be called upon to complete this transformation for the sake of the Whole.

And while so much depends upon us making this leap, such as the healing of the earth, the survival of many species, including perhaps our own, there is no guarantee that we will succeed; for there are all manner of forces and circumstances, seemingly arrayed against this flowering of consciousness that is our natural destiny.

Now, the children, God bless them as they bless us, coming to us so alive and shining, fresh from the world of the Spirit , naturally imbued and unconsciously overflowing with Sage-like qualities like:

- ❖ innocence,
- ❖ imagination,
- ❖ care for humans, animals and the natural world,
- ❖ curiosity and a love of learning,
- ❖ trust in people and the goodness of the world

We can intuit from our hearts, and it has been shown from experience, that if these shining little beings of light are met from birth with reverence and wisdom, and provided with a Whole-Child education, that is, an education that sees the human as a being of body, of soul, and of spirit, an artistic approach or Pedagogy that is based on an understanding of how the Spirit incarnates and the human soul unfolds through each precious stage of childhood, and through the whole of a human life, then these wonderful innocent qualities that every child arrives with will develop into the Higher Human qualities that are so desperately needed in the world today. Qualities like

- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Creative Imagination
- ❖ Moral and Ethical clarity
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Love of Goodness, Beauty , and Truth
- ❖ Self-Confidence and courage
- ❖ Social Skills and the ability to get along with each other

These are the skills and qualities of the bodhisattva, of the cultural creative, of those who have made the leap.

Unfortunately, our children are not, in the main, met with such reverence, protection, and wisdom. Over 90% of the education provided today is of a “transmissional” type that basically downloads data into the child’s brain, and asks them to regurgitate it with ever

more machine-correctable consistency on ever more lifeless bubble sheets. It is only through the vigilance of the involved parents, the strength and innate wisdom of the children themselves, and the grace, tireless efforts, and love of the good teachers that still inhabit the long-broken and sinking ship of our public education system, that children are still able to get something of a worthwhile experience out of what today passes for education.

We see our children from before they can walk, plopped down in front of a TV, a luminous screen that atrophies their imaginations, increases their chances of fearful and aggressive behavior, and with frighteningly effective techniques, turns them slowly into lifetime consumers and seekers after happiness-through-having-stuff. The research is plentiful on the damaging effects, and yet the viewing hours per day for children is at a record high and climbing. (see my references online)

I have seen for myself, and am seeing it more and more...

When a child is protected through their formative years from the assault of television and media, when they are parented and educated in a Whole-Child way, via Waldorf or Montessori or Reggio Emilia or some less well-known but authentic Whole-Child pedagogy, a healing occurs and a greater wholeness results, not just in the individual, but in the family from which they come, and in the schools and workplaces and societies that they become part of. They emerge as free human beings, able to, out of themselves impart meaning and direction to their lives. They are a gift to the world.

A Blessing For Children

On this day, we pray for tender compassion on all the little ones, whose new souls, so fresh from the light, shine in our midst with a darling adorable brightness.

May we honor our children deeply, learn from them truly, respecting the deep wisdom they carry. Make us wise in our nurturing of them, generous in our loving, unending in our compassion, expansive with our wisdom, kind with our

intelligence, and graceful with our hearts. Let us give to them and receive from them, and let it be known among us that they are neither our projects nor our possessions, but messengers of light, illuminations of love.

Daphne Rose Kingman

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