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INTRODUCTION

Observation is the main motto of Montessori education. The ability to observe is what guides us around children and supports the developmental needs of the children. It is based on our perceptions and we need to keep the prepared environment ready

As adults in Montessori, we must be good observers, be it at home or school, we need to be both detached and involved at the same time, we need to be conscious of what is happening around us and yet let the children work freely, without obstructing their work.

WHAT IS OBSERVATION?

It is the ability to notice important details; appreciate and know what we notice, looking for differences, details etc. Observing skills uses all four senses to recognize, perceive and analyze. We have to concentrate and be mindful, we have to be present and be aware of our surroundings.

Observation requires individual preparation; we must follow certain rules during observation, otherwise we might not be able to observe clearly. We need to practice this ability.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE PREPARED?

Prepare all our senses:

We need to concentrate on how we perceive things and we need to know and understand information that comes to us through our senses. We need to look out and recognize, we must know what we see, what we smell, what we hear and it helps us to be aware/ know of all things around us, Montessori also spoke about sixth sense, and our instinct. If we love our self, we can feel who the children are what they are doing and we also notice things that are right or not right. To be an observer we must be able to recognize and perceive them

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as we receive them. To use all our senses, not to block out any information. We need to use them to touch things, to manipulate, since we are so dependent on technology nowadays. We have stopped using many of our senses effectively.

Interest in what we are watching:

Bird watching and cloud watching are examples and people waiting for hours, together to watch them, they do this only because they are interested, we need to have patience to be a good observer, and we have to be unobtrusive.

We have to take notes and record what we observe, and recordings must be factual.

Interest and patience:

Interest is a taste of some of the things that we do. We can do certain things only if we are interested in doing it, interest also can help the observer to be patient and we have to wait for something to happen. Without patience, we cannot see everything, what may or may not have happened, only if we observe we can find it, if there is interest, there is no boredom, and if there's no boredom, there is no tiredness. An uninterested person cannot sit for hours together, we become tired. It gives inner power to become and expect everything, practice and exercise is required.

Applying ourselves to something, requires a lot of training, so basically we are following and entering the path of becoming a leader, and we are leading ourselves to become a scientist, just like Maria Montessori.

Recognizing and perceiving

Knowing the details of what we notice is very important. For example we cannot see what a scientist sees through the microscope. It doesn't come without knowledge and we must be prepared mentally to allow our senses to recognize and perceive.

Being unobtrusive

As teachers we are observing and working at the same time, so sitting for a long time, being silent, and emotionless is difficult and challenging. There

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might be a bit of distraction. Every moment and the eye movement, is sometimes distracting for the child, we must remain as silent as possible, move as little as possible, we need practice and sense to do this. It's not just being motionless physically, but we also have to practice immobility of the soul that is we need to be peaceful and calm on the inside, we have to stop thinking about others, even if something is funny in the child, we shouldn't smile, we must not emote, we have to suppress our emotions and expressions because if we react, they also react, and we must observe what they do.

Sometimes when a visitor comes home, the environment becomes different and the child behaves in a different way; it is slightly shocking for us.

So, as a visitor we also need to include the children in the observing environment. If we stare at somebody, it disturbs the child as he is very sensitive to that. To look without looking is important; watch and observe without showing any interest, as in the child should not be conscious that he's being watched.

Being Objective

We must note down whatever we observe, we must be able to think objectively and note down things factually. We should use right words and rather than using what the child is simply doing. We need to use factual words/objective words. It's important to write as many things and not miss out anything, or it is difficult to analyze what was what was done before; otherwise we tend to make assumptions.

The child in the environment has a role, we should be a good observer so that we can offer help appropriately on time. Most people parent or teacher, we teach or interfere, if we are a good observer, we can understand the child's behavior and actions, and we can see what the child is observing. It is not an easy role for adults.

To conclude, the greatest role is the role of the observer, because it guides the action of the adult, helps all of us be child centric, and focus on his needs. Being a good observer also helps us with the prepared environment, we have good knowledge to create motivation and maintain that environment.

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We also have a Montessori eye and the urge and need in us to keep the environment clean, and make sure that the children are putting away their things after using them, we can never walk past a messy place, we need it to be clean immediately, we should have an eye to observe not only the children but also the environment. All this brings order, beauty and completeness, and to practice observation as a student, we have a lot of time, as a teacher we need to do things simultaneously, that is observe and teach, so we must sharpen our senses, and to be able to see to train our self is why we do the observation exercises.