



Finding the Spark: Bringing Passion and Intentionality into the Planning Process

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Inspirational Quotes

“It’s necessary that we believe that the child is very intelligent, that the child is strong and beautiful and has very ambitious desires and requests. This is the image of the child that we need to hold.” –Loris Malaguzzi

“We should remember that there is no creativity in the child if there is no creativity in the adult: the competent and creative child exists if there is a competent and creative adult.” – Carlina Rinaldi, In Dialogue with Reggio Emilia

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” –Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”

“When we create something, we always create it first in a thought form. If we are basically positive in attitude, expecting and envisioning pleasure, satisfaction and happiness we will attract and create people, situations and events which confirm to our positive expectations.” – Shakti Gawain

“Instructions for living a life: Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.” – Mary Oliver

“What children learn does not follow as an automated result from what is taught, rather, it is in large part due to the children’s own doing, as a consequence of their activities and our resources.” –Loris Malaguzzi

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Triggering Sparks of Excitement

Listening

- Being totally present and open to seeing, hearing and feeling.

Observe Everyday Experiences

- Consistently observe the children to discover their passions, interests and questions.

Bringing Investigations to Life

- Creating opportunities for children to explore, to be part of the work that's happening, or to simply explore their own interests.

Document

- Photos
- Videos and/or Audio Recordings
- Drawings
- Children's words and dialogues

Climate

- What kind of classroom climate are you creating?
- Positive climate = Positive communication
- Fully commit to creating a positive climate.

Acknowledge and Validate

- How can we let children know we see their strengths, their beauty, their frustration?
- How can we let our colleagues know we appreciate the effort they are putting in?

Practice Mindfulness

- Creating daily rituals and practices that change the environment and build connections

Ignite Children's Curiosity and Wonder

- How am I igniting passion?
- How am I igniting curiosity and wonder?
- More Questions = New Sparks

Find the joy and magic in everyday moments!

Journal OF Provocations

•1) Prepare a provocation for your classroom.

Think about creating an experience/a space/ a provocation that will capture the interest of children in your group. It could be something they have shown interest in already or something that you are guessing would peak their interest because of what you know about a particular child, or about this age group in general.

•2) Write your thoughts as you anticipate the children discovering what you have prepared for them. Tell how you feel about what you have set up. Tell why you have chosen this provocation.

•3) Take notes on what you notice as children discover your provocation. Watch their reactions. What do the children do when they see what you had prepared? Were they interested? Take photos if possible.

•4) Consider what you will do next. Based on the children's reactions and activity what do you plan to do next? Explain your choices.

•5) Prepare the new provocation. Repeat the steps above.

The Dance

By Patricia Hunter McGrath

**For many years I looked out
and far away
Seeking but never finding
Somewhere between child and
adult
I forgot
I lost
I disconnected
From my heart, imagination,
and wonder
How could I teach if
I couldn't remember what I had
lost
But I couldn't stop searching
I looked out but I couldn't see
What lay at my feet
Waiting for me...
Waiting for us...
I heard but forgot to listen
Lost
Then one day
A new start
Images of light filled rooms
An abundance of expressive
materials
A room full of red poppies
Dancing children
Teachers who listened
A hundred languages to see
feel and hear**



**On that day I remembered
what I had lost
It was there all the time
So I learned to listen
Listen closely
To the children
The children knew
So we started again
They hadn't given up
And the dance began
Children and teacher
Through rooms full of color
Along rivers of clay
Over mountains of paper
To the moon and back
Into the secret worlds of insects,
flowers, birds and trees
To see the world again in the
palm of a child's hand
Now I can see
Deep and hidden within me
Wonder
Passion
Joy
Connectedness
All the time it was there
Hidden deep within me...
Hidden deep within you**

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Resources

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