

# EPCC Newsletter



## REFLECTIVE PRACTICE/ PRACTICE REFLECTION

BY DIONNE CLABAUGH, EDD

Have you heard about [Edutopia's 40 Reflection Questions](#)? I use them with students and in training for reflecting on learners' progress and process. These questions seem well-designed, flexible, and adaptable for many learning environments. This article introduces The 40 Reflection Questions, describes five reflection activities, and offers adaptations for virtual learning spaces. It's my hope that as you practice reflecting, you will reap the benefits of reflective practice!

The 40 Reflection Questions were developed for K-12 students to consider their approach, learning, and future opportunities after a project-based learning experience. These questions are also excellent for college student reflection on assignments and projects. I've also used these Questions for formative assessment in our adjunct faculty mentor program, to engage participants in reflective practice during conference presentations, and to increase self-awareness in professional development.

The 40 Reflection Questions are organized into four categories: backward looking (8 questions), inward looking (12 questions), outward looking (10 questions), and forward looking (10 questions). Here are some questions I use often.

- *Backward looking:* How much did you know about this subject before we started? What resources did you use while working on this piece?

- *Inward looking:* What were your goals for this piece of work? What does this piece reveal about you as a learner?
- *Outward looking:* If you were the teacher, what comments would you make about this work? In what ways did your work meet the standards for this assignment?
- *Forward looking:* What would you change if you had the chance to do this piece over again? What's one goal you would like to set for yourself next time?

Before engaging learners in these questions, I select then revise one or two questions from each category that are best suited to whatever we're reflecting on (project, activity, experience, assignment). Then I develop a reflection activity for the learners and their context, such as private journal, written reflection, small-group conversation, interactive games, and end-of-session prompts. Here are the brief activity descriptions.

**Private journal response:** I pre-select and revise three questions per category and provide them on a handout. Students select and answer one question from each category that is most relevant or most interesting to them.

**Written reflection assignment:** I select questions that will give me insight to learners' thinking or perceptions in order to better understand their learning experience. I provide one prompt per category and give

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Read about our workshops at this year's CAAEYC Virtual Conference on page 8.

## How can I get involved?

*We are honored that you have opened and perused our quarterly newsletter.*

We value your input and support for our peace education work that is so close to our hearts and minds. There are many ways that you can support our work with educators, families and communities across the country.

Here are a few ways you can get involved:

- Share your training or workshop experiences with others.
- Think about what you see on our website ([educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org](http://educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org)) that you might be interested in organizing for your community or sponsoring/funding or participating in yourself
- Tell others about the training opportunities we offer
- Refer others to our website
- Grant writing support, or leads
- Offer leads for training or speaking opportunities
- Offer leads for funding sources
- Offer leads for marketing our project

Please share this newsletter and refer others to our website, [educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org](http://educatorsforpeacefulclassroomsandcommunities.org). If you have any questions email us at [pambonzvo@gmail.com](mailto:pambonzvo@gmail.com).

Main image courtesy of Freepik.com.

Secondary image courtesy of caaeyc.org.

# “My Grandmother’s Hands”

By Resmaa Menakem

BY WILMA GOLD

EPCC began a book group last year. We started with White Fragility by Robin Diangelo. As educators we felt so strongly that we must educate ourselves to be “The change we want to see in the world,” that we decided to continue to read and study My Grandmother’s Hands by Resmaa Menakem.

First, studying with a group of educators who are people you respect, and trust was a life changing experience! We met weekly and assigned chapters to ourselves for each week. Knowing that I could ask any question of my colleagues and share my thoughts without judgement when talking about such an emotion loaded topic was a blessing!

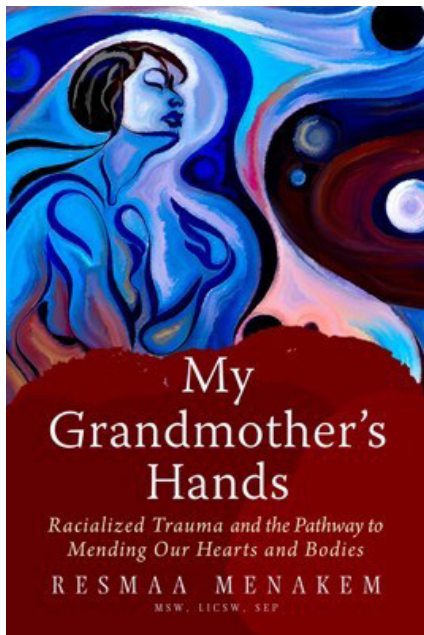
The author takes each reader on a journey of personal growth through his storytelling and exercises in each chapter. The book is divided into three parts, racism relating to people of color, relating to whites and to police.

It is hard to describe the details of the book in brief. The important thing that I want to share here is that through reading and discussing the contents of this book as well as practicing the exercises he provides has opened me up to understanding my experiences as a white woman and to not only heal but to support others, including my students in healing and working to prevent the pain of racism that we ALL are burdened with.

Following is the excellent information provided by the publisher, Central Recovery Press:

“In this groundbreaking book, therapist Resmaa Menakem examines the damage caused by racism in America from the perspective of trauma and body-centered psychology.

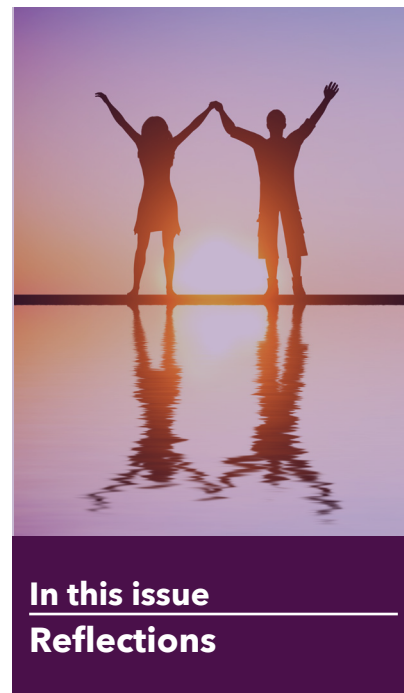
The body is where our instincts reside and where we fight, flee, or freeze, and it endures the trauma inflicted by the ills that plague society. Menakem argues this destruction



will continue until Americans learn to heal the generational anguish of white supremacy, which is deeply embedded in all our bodies. Our collective agony doesn't just affect African Americans. White Americans suffer their own secondary trauma as well. So do blue Americans—our police.

My Grandmother's Hands is a call to action for all of us to recognize that racism is not only about the head, but about the body, and introduces an alternative view of what we can do to grow beyond our entrenched racialized divide.

- Paves the way for a new, body-centered understanding of white supremacy—how it is literally in our blood and our nervous system.
- Offers a step-by-step healing process based on the latest neuroscience and somatic healing methods, in addition to incisive social commentary.”



## In this issue Reflections

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Join the workshops we'll be hosting!

“Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.”

- Mark Twain

### OUR ORGANIZATION

EDUCATORS FOR PEACEFUL  
CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES

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### FIND US ONLINE

[educatorsforpeacefulclassrooms  
andcommunities.org](http://educatorsforpeacefulclassrooms<br/>andcommunities.org)

Image courtesy of Freepik.com.

# Dear Olive Branch

BY OLIVE



## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Sooner or later, difficult conversations become necessary. As teachers, concerns about children will come to our attention usually through behavior. After we have observed and tried several strategies, we realize that talking to the family will be needed. How to have those conversations to bring about the best possible answers to help the child be successful and happy at school is the goal. Following are some guidelines as well as some success stories. Look for how some of the steps were used in the stories.

### STEPS THAT MAY HELP GUIDE THE PROCESS:

1. Develop clarity on your concern. Is your focus on a small annoying behavior or a bigger issue such as socialization?
2. Gather facts. For instance, is there a pattern for when the behavior occurs? Is the environment a factor?
3. Pre-think what you are going to say to the family or colleague. "Role play" words to use to bring up your concern. What words can you use to share your concern and express empathy?
4. Ask for help from the parent (or staff member) in resolving the situation. "Parents know their child best." What ideas might be proposed from the parent that could be used in the school setting?
5. Do your best to build a partnership. What can we do together to support the child's best development?

Below are some examples from readers who successfully navigated difficult conversations.

### SPEECH PROBLEM

I was teaching a preschool class in Virginia, and I became concerned about the speech of one of the children. The child was not saying consonants. For instance, she would say, "I o u ore," when she meant "I go to the store." I asked her mom if I could talk with her one day after school. I told the mom that other children and parents were not understanding her daughter, and she was beginning to be frustrated. I told the mom that I knew she wanted her daughter's preschool experience to be a positive one.

I asked the mom what she noticed at home. Her daughter was the youngest of four children, and mom said that everyone seemed to be able to understand what her daughter said. I asked her to listen and ask the siblings what they noticed.

The next week the mom came to me and said that the family was filling in consonants and not even realizing it. Mom and I worked to have her daughter screened for speech. She was able to attend speech therapy at her neighborhood elementary school. (J.D.)

### CHILD WITH BODY ODOR PROBLEM

At the beginning of the year, during my first year of teaching in a parent cooperative program in Oregon, I had an unsettling puzzling experience. A likable popular girl in the class sometimes had an odd body odor - but not always. Because it wasn't an all-the-time problem - I hesitated to say anything to the parents. As the months went by, it became a problem for the child. On days when she had the odor - the other children began to avoid being close to her. As time went by her friends began to distance themselves from her even on days that she smelled okay.

My gut said I should tell the mother, but how do you tactfully tell a parent that their child has such a problem? And that it is causing her to have social problems with her peers. Finally, I ended up scheduling a conference with the mother. I rehearsed what I was going to say. I began by telling her that I observed the change from being sought after and included in play, to being excluded. I mentioned that sometimes she had a strong body odor, and that the other children reacted to it by distancing themselves.

The mother was devastated and wished that I had said something sooner. She proceeded to tell me that her daughter had bad night sweats. The family was used to her smell, and hadn't thought anything of it, and certainly didn't imagine that it would be a problem. The mother knew that the solution was for her daughter to have a morning bath, instead of having one before going to bed at night.

Once the bath routine was changed at home, the girl's social status returned to how it had been at the beginning of the year. She was a happy and included child again.

My takeaway was to, from then on, get up the courage to broach difficult conversations when I first saw a problem. (M.S.)

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## Olive's Next Topic: Adapting to Change

With the changes in the pandemic, more children are meeting -face-to-face in classrooms. What are your ideas, stories or questions for encouraging children to become friends and for developing a welcoming classroom community? If you would like to share your stories, ideas or questions, please email them to [marilynshelton@gmail.com](mailto:marilynshelton@gmail.com) with subject line OLIVE BRANCH SUBMISSION.

**CLICK TO SEND US YOUR QUESTION**

Word range: 150- 200 words | Submit by: May 15, 2021

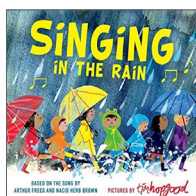
# 2021 Spring EPCC Children's Book List

COMPILED BY VERONICA HERNANDEZ



**A LITTLE BOOK ABOUT SPRING** by Leo Lionni.  
Ages 2-3 years.

Leo Lionni has written a descriptive and beautifully illustrated book on how Spring opens our senses to nature. A classroom favorite that inspires young children to venture out into Spring.



**SINGING IN THE RAIN** by Arthur Freed and Nacio Herb Brown, Pictures by Tim Hopgood.  
Ages 2-5 years.

Based on the song by Arthur Freed and Nacio Herb Brown, *Singing in the Rain*, reminds us to sing a little song while splashing into the Spring rains. This book will not only get children singing but adults as well.



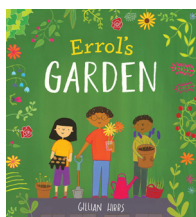
**BUSY SPRING: NATURE WAKES UP** by Sean Taylor & Alex Morss, Pictures by Cinyee Chiu.  
Ages 3-6 years.

A little girl and her sister Jasmine notice that their Dad put on his shirt that has holes in it. It can only mean one thing; Spring is here, and it is time to work in the garden. As they work, they noticed "The yard was bright..." and how "Everything smelled like wet earth and sunshine." A wonderfully written book about preparing for Spring and being with family.



**RAINBOW STEW** by Cathryn Falwell.  
Ages 3-6 years.

In this story, one grandfather knows exactly what to do on a rainy Spring day, "Let's go and find some color for my famous Rainbow Stew." Follow along as a group of children and their grandfather harvest vegetables for a delicious Rainbow Stew on a rainy Spring day.



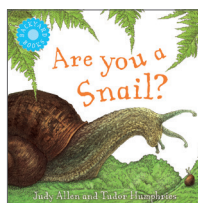
**ERROL'S GARDEN** by Gillian Hibbs.  
Ages 3-7 years.

A little boy named Errol has always dreamed of having a garden and attempts to plant in all kinds of things. One day while going up the elevator in his apartment building, he notices a roof. What a perfect place for a garden! Errol brings along his plan, some friends with plants and gets to work on his urban garden.



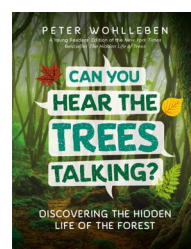
**HELLO SPRING!** by Shelly Rotner.  
Ages 4-8 years.

Shelley Rotner has taken nature-based photographs and has turned them into this beautifully written book, that shows the many colors of Spring. A perfect book to read while sitting under a tree or by an open window on a lovely Spring day.



**ARE YOU A SNAIL?** by Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries.  
Ages 5-8 years.

In this book, a little snail discovers what a snail can do and the many challenges it can face in the world. In the spirit of Chris Lamm, an EPCC member and activist, we hope this gives you a new perspective on snails and maybe lend a hand when you see one sliming by.



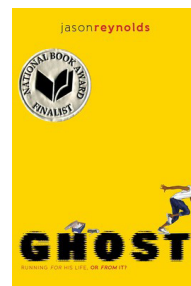
**CAN YOU HEAR THE TREES TALKING?** DISCOVERING THE HIDDEN LIFE OF THE FOREST by Peter Wohlleben.  
Ages 8-12 years.

Author of the book, *Hidden Life of Trees*, Peter Wohlleben brings you the book, *Can you Hear the Trees Talking?* This thoughtfully written book answers questions that young readers may have been wondering about. Such as do trees have grandparents? How do trees breath, and Can trees talk? This book will leave with new knowledge about trees and a smile.



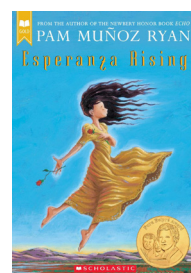
**GRANTED** by John David Anderson.  
Ages 5-9 years.

Angelina is starting at a new school where no one looks like her. She wonders what are some special traits that she could bring to the classroom that will help her fit in. In this beautifully written book by Jacqueline Woodson, we are reminded that our voices are powerful, and "there will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you, until the day you begin."



**GHOST** by Jason Reynolds.  
Ages 9-17 years.

Being part of the Junior Olympic track team has always been a dream of Ghost. Unfortunately, there are three other boys, all from quite different backgrounds and personalities, than Ghost, that must work together to make the team. Ghost and the three other boys have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but themselves as well.



**ESPERANZA RISING** by Pam Munoz Ryan.  
Ages 10-16 years.

Esperanza once lived a privileged life in Mexico. Her days were filled with fancy dresses, and a beautiful home filled with love. One tragic day, her father dies, and Esperanza and her mother are forced to flee to California where they settle in a Mexican farm labor camp. Now Esperanza must learn to work through this new world, and she finds hope among change.

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# Reflective Practice: Practice Reflection

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students a few days to respond as thoughtfully as possible.

**Conversation starter:** I created an electronic “deck” of these 40 questions, and then reword selected questions in each category to fit whatever we are reflecting on. I ensure there are more cards than students and print one question per card. I divide the learners into conversation groups of 3 to 5 persons, each person selects a card, then they answer their question in their group.

**Interactive Game:** With permanent ink, I wrote the numbers 1 through 40 on a soft vinyl-covered ball that is tossed from person to person in a circle. I review the questions, reword them to fit the project or experience to reflect on, then print a copy of these questions. A person tosses the ball to someone, and the number covered by the catcher’s left index finger (or whichever the group decides) answers the corresponding question.

## INNOVATIONS FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING

- The written reflections can be posted only to the meeting host/instructor in the chat box, then when the meeting is over the chat box content can be read and/or saved by the host then reviewed to inform upcoming learning sessions.
- Conversation starters can be sent to each questioner in turn, using phone texting or other instant-messaging tools for break-out room conversations. A group message can be sent to all chat rooms letting learners know when the next questioner’s turn starts.
- To select a number with an element of chance during the Interactive game, the zoom host can prepare then share their screen using a [wheel spinner app](#). For each turn, a person “spins” to see their number and question.

Are you inspired to reflect on your practice? Do you find [Edutopia’s 40 Reflection Questions](#) interesting? Might any of these ideas seem intriguing? Perhaps you are motivated to create opportunities for yourself and others to practice reflection in multiple ways? Whatever you decide to do, I invite you to reach out to me to share your experiences or open a conversation about practicing reflective practice!

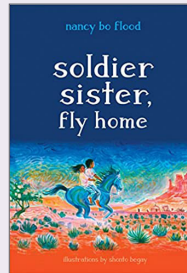


SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES  
WITH DIONNE!

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# 2021 Spring EPCC Children's Book List

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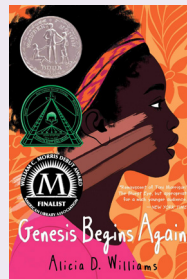
**SOLDER SISTER, FLY HOME** by Nancy Bo Flood.  
Ages 9-17 years.

Tess is a thirteen-years-old, who is trying to navigate her Navajo culture, from her mom’s side, and her father’s white culture. As she travels to school Monday through Friday, from the reservation to her school out in Flagstaff, she is reminded of the dreams, and plans she has made with her big sister Gaby. One day Gaby announces that she will be enlisting to join the fight in the Iraq War. How will she keep her plans going? How will she process this change?



**BROWN GIRL DREAMING**  
by Jacqueline Woodson  
Ages 11-17 years.

Winner of the National Book Award, Newberry Honor Award and the Coretta Scott King award, Jacqueline Woodson shares a personal memoir, that takes us on a journey through the 1960s and 1970s. Living in South Carolina and New York, during the remains of the Jim Crow era, she expresses her thoughts through beautiful words and poems.



**GENESIS BEGINS AGAIN** by Alicia D. Williams.  
Ages 12-17 years.

Genesis Begins Again, is the story about a young girl named Genesis who sees herself, her home life, and her family as “problems.” Feeling alone and hopeless, Genesis decides that she is going to make changes As she travels this road, she finds a new outlook on life and finds herself. A wonderful book for a young reader.



SEE EVEN MORE BOOKS  
ON OUR WEBSITE!

<https://bit.ly/3m4bn8q>

*Icons courtesy of The Noun Project.*

“Our language is the  
reflection of ourselves.”

- Cesar Chavez

# A Single Father's Pandemic Experience

BY MARIA ISABEL MICHEA

## ENGLISH

Children's lives have changed from one day to the next. They stopped going to school, playing in the park, visiting their family and friends. The world inside the houses also changed. Now that they can go out to the park, the landscape of masks, gloves and distances is not what they left. And the children are not the same either. They go out with caution, if not fear, of contagion because they have learned that physical contact can be dangerous. They have been told that displays of affection in the form of hugs and kisses are no longer appropriate, in fact they are even rejected and forbidden. Social distancing has become the standard way of behaving. This has multiple consequences at the psychological and immunological level such as: increased stress, sleep disturbances, weakening of the immune system, and clinical depression. Another problem is that wearing masks deprives us all of an essential part of non-verbal communication. The impact is greater in the youngest, those for whom verbal language is still developing and who rely on communication by facial expressions.

What happens when someone close to us, such as a parent of a preschooler is detected with coronavirus and is a single parent. We can feel and empathize with the predicament in which the parent finds themselves. What follows captures the experience of one of these parents.

## IN HIS WORDS

Not knowing if I was shaking from the fever or from the news that had just reached my phone, I realized that I had to act quickly. As my four-year-old daughter vied for my attention, I wrote several emails and text messages that included the words "I just tested positive for Covid-19." One of my biggest fears in those early moments was that I had infected teachers, classmates, or friends without realizing it. The other overriding fear, albeit premature, was that I would need additional medical attention outside of our home. What would happen to my daughter? What would happen to her if I was no longer here?

My daughter and I had been careful. We took this pandemic seriously. We wore masks, avoided crowds, and washed and sanitized our hands so often they were raw. It did not matter. I could have picked it up anywhere, including waiting for the preschool day to end. It did not matter.

What mattered was my daughter. She had already been forced to adapt to changes at her preschool and had missed nearly a year of play dates, extracurricular classes, field trips, travel, and predictability. This pandemic had already stolen a lot from all children. All I could focus on was her. I am a single father who lost both parents due to illness when I was 16 years old. I understood all too well that that kind of immeasurable loss can affect the trajectory of a human being's life.

## ESPAÑOL

La vida de los niños ha cambiado de un día para otro. Dejaron de ir a la escuela, jugar en el parque, visitar a familiares y amigos. La vida dentro de sus hogares también cambió. Ahora que pueden salir a los parques, el paisaje de máscaras, guantes que se ven a la distancia no es lo que ellos dejaron antes de la pandemia. Los niños tampoco son iguales. Salen con precaución, con miedo al contagio, porque han aprendido que el contacto físico puede ser peligroso. Se

les ha dicho que las demostraciones de afecto en forma de abrazos y besos ya no son apropiadas, de hecho incluso son rechazadas y prohibidas. El distanciamiento social se ha convertido en la forma habitual de comportarse. Esto tiene múltiples consecuencias a nivel psicológico e inmunológico como: aumento del estrés, alteraciones del sueño, debilitamiento del sistema inmunológico y depresión clínica. Otro problema es que el uso de máscaras nos priva a todos de una parte esencial de la comunicación no verbal. El impacto es mayor en los más jóvenes, aquellos para quienes el lenguaje verbal aún se está desarrollando y quienes confían en la comunicación mediante expresiones faciales.

¿Qué sucede cuando alguien cercano a nosotros, como un padre de un niño en edad preescolar, es detectado con coronavirus y es un padre soltero? Podemos sentir y empatizar con la situación en la que se encuentran los padres. Lo que sigue captura la experiencia de uno de estos padres.

## EN SUS PALABRAS

Sin saber si estaba temblando por la fiebre o por la noticia que acababa de llegar a mi teléfono, me di cuenta de que tenía que actuar con rapidez. Mientras mi hija de cuatro años competía por mi atención, escribí varios correos electrónicos y mensajes de texto que incluían las palabras "Acabo de dar positivo por Covid-19". Uno de mis mayores temores en esos primeros momentos era que había infectado a profesores, compañeros de clase o amigos sin darme cuenta. El otro temor predominante, aunque prematuro, era que necesitaría atención médica adicional fuera de nuestra casa. ¿Qué le pasaría a mi hija? ¿Qué le pasaría a ella si yo ya no estuviera aquí?

Mi hija y yo habíamos tenido cuidado. Nosotras nos habíamos tomado en serio esta pandemia usando máscaras, evitando multitudes, lavándonos y desinfectando las manos con tanta frecuencia, que estaban en carne viva. Daba igual el averiguar donde se pudo haber contagiado, hubiera sido en cualquier lugar, incluso esperando a mi hija que terminara su jornada en el preescolar.

Lo que importaba era mi hija. Ya se había visto obligada a adaptarse a los cambios en su preescolar, perdido casi un año de reuniones con sus amigos para poder jugar, clases extracurriculares, excursiones, viajes y lo que teníamos previsto para realizar juntas. Esta pandemia ya les había robado mucho a todos los niños. Toda mi atención estaba centrada en ella. Soy un padre soltero que perdió a ambos padres debido a una enfermedad cuando tenía 16 años. Entiendo muy bien que ese tipo de pérdida inconmensurable puede afectar la trayectoria de la vida de un ser humano.

Los primeros siete días fueron horas tras horas de televisión, alimentado por la fiebre, desde una posición mayormente boca abajo, viendo a mi hija jugar. Fue una experiencia solitaria, aterradora y triste. No salimos de la casa durante 14 días. Doy gracias a Dios por los buenos amigos y la preocupación por la entrega de alimentos.

Más de un mes después, estoy muy agradecido de haber dado negativo en la prueba del virus, que mi hija haya vuelto a la escuela, que mi energía esté comenzando a regresar, aunque lentamente, y que pudimos compartir algunos momentos maravillosos jugando a medida que nos íbamos mejorando. Estoy agradecido de haber tenido la suerte de recuperarnos en casa. Le digo a mi hija todo el tiempo: "Podemos hacer cosas difíciles". Y esta es una de las cosas difíciles que podemos anotar en nuestra lista.

## EDUCATION

# Planting the Seeds for Change

BY SONIA SEMANA

At a recent Pedagogical Institute of Los Angeles (PILA), PILAglobal Board meeting, founder of the Congo Peace School, Amani Matabaro, described the impact of the partnership between the Nest (an engaging and beautiful space where young children learn, grow and heal) and the Congo Peace School on the children of Mumoshu.

*"Your support is creating a huge impact. The children's future will be bright. I am seeing in them the new leaders who are going to change Congo, and why not Africa."*

Amani describes the Nest school in the Congo, as a place where children are free, a place where they are able to be curious, to ask questions, and think critically. Hearing Amani describe this type of environment where children feel respected and seen, is why we must advocate for a more relational approach to education. All children deserve to be respected and seen.

If education is a vehicle of change, then education needs to be transformative, and we must humanize the learning experience for all children. Every child should have the basic human right to feel free. Amani went on to share optimism for the future. *"If we have started this 20 years ago.. maybe there would be no genocide...We are planting the seeds of peace."*

The Congo Peace School is rooted in the teachings of Martin Luther King, social change through peaceful actions. The partnership between the Peace School and PILAglobal is ongoing with hopes of creating more places to help children feel safe, appreciated and seen.

Hearing Amani's story about the impact PILAglobal had in the life of so many children and how education was changing life in the Congo was truly moving. It made me think how important one small change can create such a revolution. This pedagogical change of humanizing education and including peace education is critical. We need a revolution of human compassion. Amani's story was emotional. I don't think I can ever forget it.

If, through a humanized educational experience, we are able to save people's lives, then I am ready to roll up my sleeves and "plant the seeds of peace."

Go to [www.pilaglobal.org](http://www.pilaglobal.org) to learn more about the organization and their great work.

## ADVICE

# Dear Olive Branch

*continued from page 3*

## FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS PROBLEM

I was called into the Head Start classroom as a behavior specialist to observe a child who would start shaking and crying every time the teacher or the aide suggested that he was not following the directions given to him. I spent some time in this classroom that day, as I like to gather what information I can about the situation. This little guy was about four years old, very curious and fairly active, and it was odd that he was reacting so strongly to being told that he needed to follow directions. It wasn't long before the child needed to be reminded to stay in line to get a drink of water, and he indeed was brought to tears, and started shaking as if something bad were going to happen to him.

It just so happened that I had worked as a home visitor the year before, and I knew the child's family. I was fairly surprised over the child's behavior. I had spent a lot of time working with this child, as well as both his father and mother during the previous year. I made an appointment with the father to go and talk to him about what I was seeing. I had been thinking about what I was going to say to the father. I decided the best route was to start with asking how life was going with the family. I thought a direct route would be most effective, so I then explained exactly what I had seen at school. Next, I asked the father how the child was corrected at home. The father then told me a story about how his father beat him severely over the least little thing when he was a child, and that was what he was doing to his boy. The father was upset, and I listened. He hadn't meant to scare the child, nor hurt him. The father really did not know what to do to help the child control his behavior. The child had gotten a year older from when I had last

seen him, and apparently was trying to be more independent. He didn't always know what would upset his father. After hearing the story, my guess was that the father did not know how hard he was hitting the child, since he had been severely abused when he was little.

Then I steered the conversation into a discussion of some strategies he could use when his child did something that he did not like. The father started to understand that the models he knew from growing up were not appropriate. I suggested that since the father would just lose his composure when his son was misbehaving, that the father could give himself a "calm down time," and leave the situation until he got himself under control. The father told me that he would never hit his son again and would try other methods, which we had brainstormed and discussed together. When his son did something he didn't like, after he calmed down, he would explain to his son what he wanted him to do. I thanked the father for the conversation, and let the father know that I would check back in with him in a couple of weeks.

Since I am a mandated reporter, I did not know if I would need to follow up with a report to the appropriate authorities. I had heard what the father said he did, but I had not actually seen what had happened, nor had I seen bruises on the child. I trusted the man's word that he would not hit the child ever again.

I checked back in with the school in about two weeks. The child had calmed down, and was mostly following directions, without any incidents of crying or shaking. It does take some time to learn what is expected in a classroom.

(D.S.)



Icon courtesy of The Noun Project.

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*NOTE: We chose "Dear Olive Branch" as the title for this column for several reasons - foremost as a sign of peace. Also olives come in many colors, sizes, tastes, uses - a sign of diversity just as there are many types of questions and those who send the questions. We hope "Olive's" responses will help you, the reader - if you have a question for Olive send it to our email address. When Olive isn't available to answer questions, members of EPPC and/or P.E.A.C.E. will step up to help.*

# Alumni Corner

## DYNAMIC SPEAKING WEBINARS

The Alumni Group gave a series of webinars on February and March on Dynamic Presentation Skills. Those webinars were open only to alumni, but soon they will be available as paid training sessions for any interested parties. The units are designed to stand alone or be taken together for maximum effect. Spread the word to your colleagues about this great series!

- **Spice it Up: Being a Dynamic Presenter**
- **Staying Cool, Calm and Collected: How to work with High Emotions and Handle Objections While Facilitating a Meeting or Workshop**
- **Creating an Engaging Presentation**
- **Digital Presentation Skills and Marketing**

## QUARTERLY ALUMNI MEETING

**TUESDAY, APRIL 27TH, 7:00PM-8:00PM VIA ZOOM**

The Alumni Committee will be having its second Quarterly Meeting on Tuesday, April 27th, 7-8 PM. We will check in to see how people are doing with going back to school and talk about working on social issues through the use of literature, stories, persona dolls and puppets. We will be asking Alumni what their interests are as far as more Webinars. All people who have taken Our EPCC Level 1 and 2 Trainings are invited. You can contact Gaby Litsky: glitsky@aol.com if you have any questions.



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE QUARTERLY ALUMNI MEETING

Click to contact Gaby Litsky | [glitsky@aol.com](mailto:glitsky@aol.com)

## REFLECTIONS

### Creativity in a Box

BY GABY LITSKY

Whenever it was a rainy day, my mom had her box of treasures she brought out. It was a red Hills brothers coffee tin and it was full. Full of buttons. Red and green, yellow and blue. Sparkly and plain, big and small. Hours off in a small red tin box.

I lined them up, sorted the colors and counted them. I sorted the size and shapes and put sets together. I made stars and flowers from them or lined them up in rows and squares, circles and ovals. When I got older, mom showed me how to sew them on fabric scraps. She also let me cut the buttons off of torn or worn shirts, old dresses, pants and jackets.

It was my job to teach my younger brother not to put them in his mouth and later on we played checkers with various colors, red versus black, yellow versus purple. Sometimes I traded them with friends. Some were sparkly or rhinestone and they were more valuable, of course. They were my treasures, my friends and my entertainment. I still keep a box, just for fun and can't pass up the opportunity to look through buttons at antique stores and quilt fairs.

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Icon courtesy of The Noun Project.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION FOR BOTH CHILDREN AND ADULTS IN THE CLASSROOM

**Presenters:** Joyce A. Daniels, Wilma Gold **Date:** Saturday, April 24, 4:00-5:30pm

Respecting the many aspects of diversity has been an integral part of early education for over thirty years. Using the latest version of "Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves" by Louise Derman Sparks, Julie Olsen Edwards with Catherine Goins, we will present the anti-bias goals of Identity, Diversity, Recognizing Injustice, and Activism for both children and adults. We will also discuss what is missing when we don't include anti-bias education in the classroom. And, finally, we'll look at anti-bias materials in both physical and psychological environments.

### LOOKING AT OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE THROUGH THE EYES OF A CREATIVE/ARTISTIC PROCESS

**Presenters:** Veronica Hernandez, Maria Isabel Michea, Gaby Litsky **Date:** Sunday, April 25, 3:00pm-4:30pm

The focus is discussing how artists see the world, time and creativity process aligned with Reggio and Constructionist theory, and what that can look like in the classroom using photos, videos, music and hands on practice. Questions and Answers at the end.