



From the Head of School

Letting Go of Control

I used to love flying. I remember my mom telling a story about us being on a plane when I was only about 18 months old, and the plane hit turbulence. Other passengers were white with fear, while I yelled gleefully "wheeeeeeee" as we bounced along. As a child, I fantasized about living in airports. In my teens and twenties, I gallantly hopped on any plane that would take me to where I wanted to go without a second thought. As I grew and began to realize my own mortality, for many different reasons, I began to fear flying more and more. Each flight, I would grip the armrests tightly, nervously noticing every change in the engines purr or subtle change in altitude, willing the plane to stay in the air, as if willing it would make it be so. I would obsess the entire flight about what could happen, as if my thoughts could keep the uncontrollable at bay. One day, while talking to my friend, I joked about my fear, commenting casually, "it's not like I can actually keep the plane up in the air with my sheer will." It was only when she genuinely laughed at my ridiculousness, that I realized that all this time, I really had believed that I had that sort of control.

I find a great deal of comfort in control. Obviously, I think I can use will power to keep planes up and the people around me safe. The truth of the matter is, control is a fallacy. We think we have control over lots of things. We tell our children to eat their peas and when to go to bed. We provide them healthy choices and practice regular bedtimes routines. But, at the end of the night, they have complete control over what they put in their mouths and when they drift off to dreamland. We think that if we say the right words and act in the right way, people will behave the way we want them to. But we have no control over what they feel or how they choose to act.

Ever since I read an article by Dr. Judith Orloff on letting go of control, I have been practicing letting go. We don't have control over the world or the beings in it. This lack of control can feel so devastating, we cast it aside and tell ourselves that we do have control, over everything. We desperately search for explanations within the unexplainable, because to admit that sometimes bad things just happen is to admit our own lack of control over just about everything. In her article, Orloff suggests that not only should we accept our lack of control, but that we should embrace it. She urges us to surrender, to let go of the urge to control and just let life play out. "Because when you accept what *is* instead of focusing only on what you *want*, you'll feel happier and be more successful."

NOVEMBER 2014

Dates to Remember

- 11/4** Father's Night for Primary Classes
AM 5:30—6:30 pm
PM & XP 6:00-7:00 pm
- 11/10** NO SCHOOL
Veterans Day observed
- 11/11** Extended Primary Information Meeting
6-7 pm
- 11/15** Open House for Prospective Parents
10 :00 & 11:30 am
- 11/23** Grandparent's Day for Primary Classes
- 11/26 thru 11/28** Thanksgiving Break

Details for these events are included within the newsletter or on the attached calendar.

I am not suggesting that we should reject all limits and just let the world run rampant. Of course, we need to continue to share our values with our children and the world around us, by speaking our minds and imposing appropriate limits. We need to model behavior that we find fitting and guide our children as best we can. At the same time, it is important to remind ourselves that we cannot and should not control how our children feel or what they think. We need to embrace their individuality and accept them as they are. Control is about belief in our own rightness. Letting go means accepting that the world is full of different perspectives, all of which can be right, as conflicting as that can seem in the moment.

Because I know that Dr. Orlorff is correct, I have begun reminding myself to let go, to surrender to the moment. We are happier when we accept what is, when we ride along in the current rather than fighting impossibly against it. I have been practicing living in the moment. Each time I find myself rising up to control the uncontrollable, I remind myself to surrender. I take a deep breath, and I let go. I do this on the plane, every ten minutes or so. I remind myself that I cannot control whether the plane stays up in the air or not. So, rather than spending the whole time griping the armrests and willing the plane to stay the course, I remind myself that it is beyond my control. I lean back, relax and remind myself to be in the moment. I read my book or listen to music or play cards with my kids. I remind myself to surrender, and, surprisingly, that makes me happier.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Thursday, December 4th & Friday, December 5th

Please keep these dates open for the conference with your child's teacher. The schedule will be emailed the second week of November. Please remember that we set these two days aside for conferences so the teachers don't have to use additional personal time at lunch or after school to meet with you. Hours of preparation go into these thoughtful, detailed observations.



We would like to thank **A. Oxenreider** for the wine for the staff retreat and the yummy desserts; **M. Echeverri** for the fall bouquet for the studio; **P. Jackson** for the cork and book donations; **M. Kirkpatrick** for the tea for the staff; **H. & T. Burn** for the pumpkin muffins; **M. Gaddis** for the surprise Chai teas for the staff; **E. Kirkpatrick, M. Gaddis, E. McGee, and J. Sinclair** for the coffee and pastries for the staff; and **E. Stone** for the treat for the teachers. We appreciate your thoughtfulness!

You Are Not My Friend!

Emily Filippini, 440 AM and PM

If you are like most parents, you have had a child come home to inform you that a certain person (for purposes of this article, a fictitious person named 'Sammy') is not a friend of your son or daughter's. A stream of cruel and perhaps inappropriate images may run through your head. However, because we are the adults and because we "know better," we take a deep breath and do what?

When a situation like this takes place at school, the best thing to do is trust that a teacher helped navigate the situation and that resolution has taken place. Keep in mind that forgiveness is quicker and anger is shorter in children. When adults get involved, situations tend to become drawn out.

Children 3-6 are learning how to navigate social situations. They are turning unconscious play into conscious play. "You're not my friend," directed at a child could mean "I am really angry and I am going to say the nastiest thing I know." To another child it could mean "my Mom rushed me out of the house this morning and my sister yelled at me for no reason and I really wanted pancakes for breakfast, but instead I got dry cereal. I am mad at the world, and you happened to be the straw that broke the camel's back!"

Kids do get mad, frustrated and angry just like adults and they need us to role play and model healthy interactions.

When a child spews "you are not invited to my birthday party" or other choice phrases, it provides us an opportunity to teach. We respond -- "Wow. You sound angry. What's going on?"

By identifying their feelings, it helps children put a name to the emotion. Over time and with endless practice children move into "I am feeling so angry" and depart from using these hurtful phrases.

Inquiring into the situation gives children a voice to take the first step in figuring out their own issues without solving it for them. Many times by simply listening to what took place, the issue loses its momentum and dissolves. However if this isn't the case, by gathering information, you can take the next step. Each situation is different, but by modeling "feeling" statements, "It made me feel angry when you ran away instead of coming when I called your name." Reflective listening, "I hear that you are frustrated because you need to go to your brother's soccer game" and by modeling empathy, a soft tone and kindness, resolution typically takes place.

If, after trying these steps, no resolution is met, space is always a great option. Sometimes we all need time before revisiting a topic.

Social dynamics can be tricky at all ages. Not everyone is included in everything and that can be okay. It is real life.

So, the next time you hear a choice phrase come out of your child or your child's friend, get excited! This is your teaching moment. Friends have disagreements and get angry. Help your child learn to navigate his/her way through it. This early understanding of social situations will only help your child navigate social communities.

"You are not invited to my birthday party!"

Extended Primary Informational Meeting

Tuesday, November 11th 6:00 - 7:00 pm



If you are interested in learning more about the Extended Primary Program at Children's Garden you are welcome to attend this meeting. Bekke and Vida will discuss all of the details, benefits, and expectations of the program. Please rsvp to xp@cqmontessori.com if you plan to attend.



Grandparent's and Special Friend's Day

Tuesday, November 25th

DROP IN BETWEEN 8:15 - 11:15 am or 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Grandparents' Day provides an opportunity for the children in the **Primary (3-6) classes** to proudly share their school with their grandparents, a special aunt or uncle, or another special guest. It is an informal occasion where the visitors will have a chance to work with the children in the classrooms as well as the art studio. Parents are welcome to come if your child does not have a special guest (not to imply that parents aren't special) - this event is always well-attended and we don't want anyone to feel left out. If your child's grandparents or special friends are not able to attend, we encourage you to schedule a visit when they are available.



OPEN HOUSE

This is the time of year when prospective families visit the school and begin the application process. Please remind your friends and family who are interested in applying to Children's Garden to schedule to attend our first Open House on **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15th @ 10:30 or 11:00 am**. There will be another Open House in January. The deadline for new applicants for the fall of 2014 is February 15th. They can go to the Admissions page of our website and sign up to attend.

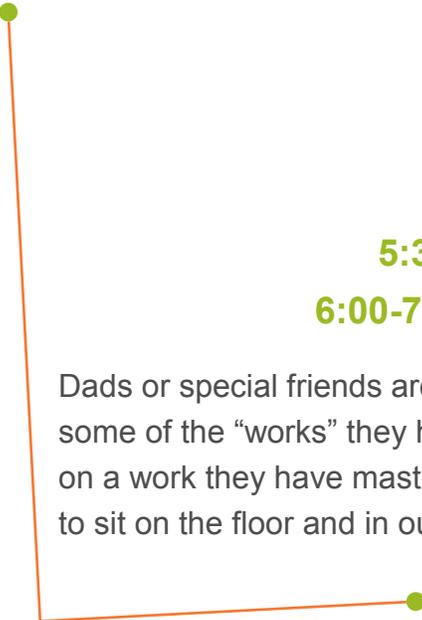
Father's Night

Tuesday, November 4th

5:30-6:30 pm - Primary Morning Classes

6:00-7:00 pm - Afternoon Primary & XP Classes

Dads or special friends are invited to join your children in their classrooms to try your hand on some of the "works" they have told you about. The children delight in giving an adult a lesson on a work they have mastered! There is also opportunity for a studio experience. Be prepared to sit on the floor and in our child-size chairs.



Auction News

Dear CGMS Families,

While last Friday brought tragic news to our community, it was inspiring to see our families, friends and staff gather together in support of our school at the annual auction. We are grateful to everyone who helped make the auction a success and are excited to report that the event raised more than \$95,000!

Your generous support and contributions will enable Children's Garden to:

- create outside spaces where children can practice wood working, care for the flora and develop their gross motor skills
- organize inside spaces so teachers truly can find activities at their fingertips
- invite experts in to share their knowledge
- fund staff workshops

We could not have done this without the time and talent of so many of the incredible parents within our community. THANK YOUs go out to: Nora Abrams, Janelle and Buck Blessing, Brooke and Jon-Erik Borgen, Stacy and Chris Bouc, Lauren Brownstein, Brooke and Bill Brown, Jenna Burstein, Julie Dorkin, Jocelyn and John Ege, Kelly and John Eisinger, Angela and Daniel Feiner, Megan Gaddis, Troy Guard, Melissa and Armand Hatzidakis, Jenny and Eric Holtze, Elizabeth and Ryan Kirkpatrick, Ashley and Peyton Manning, Emily and Ryan McGee, Deb and Marty Newburger, Griffen and Ryan O'Shaughnessy, Courtney Ringham, Jen and Dan Rohan, Amanda Shane, Jaala Sheldon, Lori and Adam Sherry, Josephine Sinclair, Susie Sutherland, Genevieve and Ryan Tedder, Britt and Jason Urband, Kara and Eric Vinton, Ashley and Tony Walker, Katie and John Wickliff, and Audrey and Bob Williams. And of course, we thank our gracious hosts, Alexis and McAndrew Rudisill, for sharing their beautiful home.

Warm regards,
Cameron Burn, Alexis Rudisill, and Rebecca Vandiver

