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THE CHILD HAS HIS OWN METHOD OF WORK

In previous chapters we have come to realize that there is no necessary antithesis between giving the child freedom to develop spontaneously and giving him culture. In fact approached from the right angle, we find that these two problems can be fused into one and solved by a common means; that if we follow this particular path, we can actually make use of culture as a means to development. But for the teacher this is not an easy path to follow: there are many dangers and pitfalls by the way. To travel along it successfully we need to know, not only the general direction to be taken, but also require a special guidance to help us negotiate difficult stretches and doubtful turnings.

Montessori has revealed to us that the child has his own natural method of working, which is not the one we would have expected, nor the one we should have chosen for him ourselves.

We might say that the general direction to be taken is to follow the great principle of placing the child as our centre and starting point rather than the subjects to be taught. But it is when we come to consider the details that there is great danger that we may take the wrong turning. As a help towards recognizing the true path, and walking along it in comfort and security we shall review in this chapter a number of secondary principles or rules of great practical

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- importance . Before coming to grips with these let us first of all summarize the main characteristics of the child's spontaneous method of learning , as he has revealed it to us.
1. He chooses spontaneously amongst the means offered to him in the prepared environment .
 2. He moves in obedience to a motor power within ("The Motor-Ego ") , which makes him attach himself to a material . This material provides him with a sensorial-motor activity . (the point of contact) .
 3. His mental activity is directly related to an inner psychi sensitiveness , which governs his choice of work at each epoch of development . (Sensitive Periods and the Inner Guide)
 4. The aim of his work is not learning as such , but an unconscious response to a need of his inner life . It is the need to organize , developé , enlarge and enrich his intelligence . ("He works to grow not know ")
 5. He perseveres in his work , repeating exercises , or the same kind of exercise , again and again ("The second stage ")
 6. His work is often crowned by moments of spontaneous mental enlargement . ("Montessori Explosions ")
 7. He works for the most part (in the second stage) on his own , isolated from his companions by his work (The Little Hermit) . Nevertheless ..
 - 8) He has need of a special environment , and of one who guides his activities in it , acting as link between him and the many activities in that environment . (This is the Directress or the encourager" , the guardian angel " who " will enrich the shrinking poverty of one who is beginning life ")

this omnipresent knowledge flying from teacher to children and from children to teacher , as when a jubilant child comes rushing to impart some new discovery to the teacher . Again knowledge flies from the materials to the children ; knowledge flled , too , from child to child , circulating continually by a sort of mental osmosis .