

HAPPINESS IS CONTAGIOUS



REFLECTIONS

PARENTS & CHILDREN SUMMER CAMP

22-27 MAY 2022

KAAYA Learning Center, Tiwari,  
Dehradun



# INSPIRATION

## *The Words of Life*

Don't mistake your desire to talk for their readiness to listen.  
Far more important are the wordless truths they learn from you.  
If you take delight in the ordinary wonders of life,  
they will feel the depth of your pleasure and learn to experience joy.  
If you walk with them in the darkness of life's mysteries you will open the  
gate of understanding.  
They will learn to see in the darkness and not be afraid.

*- The Parent's Tao Te Ching*



# REFLECTIONS

## 1. Be Aware, Be Connected, Be Curious

Observe, notice, search for names, understand patterns of nature.

- Let's steal an opportunity, whenever we find a window, in our daily lives to observe nature, be the one with nature and with our children.
- Name them to know them. Everything has a name and when we name them, we take the first step in knowing them. It could be anything; trees (leaves, fruits, flower, bark), birds (sound, size, colour), insects, bugs, animals...
- Search for stories about elements of nature, their social lives, their connections with humans, cultural, historical significance.
- Observe and notice different patterns that exist in nature - simple flowers, their life cycle, season change, rain, clouds, colour of the sky at different time, presence of the Sun and the Moon.
- Track the days and to remember, create small rituals of watching moon whenever feasible.
- Celebrate Purnima (full moon) and Amavasya (new moon). Create our own family ritual to mark important days and nights of significance.





## **NATURE WALKS WITH OUR CHILDREN**

Go for a slow mindful walk.  
Show them every little thing that catches your eye.  
Notice every little thing that catches theirs.  
Don't look for lessons or seek to teach great things.  
Just notice.  
The lesson will teach itself.

- The Parent's Tao Te Ching

# REFLECTIONS

## 2. Experience the Joy of Creating Something together

Let's bring the true joy of creating something together; a piece of art from simple moments.

- Nothing nurtures a child like a parent who takes great pleasure from a simple activity, and is content with the present moment.
- Somehow, some way, let's show them something that makes us (parents) happy, something we truly enjoy to create on our own. And take the child along with us.
- Let's make art a part of our daily rhythm to create mindful moments with our children.
- Any form of art, which makes us happy. It could be anything that we truly enjoy; storytelling, sketching, painting, colouring, calligraphy, woodwork, singing, dancing.....
- Appreciate beauty of nature, the art of nature.
- Create own nature journal / emotions journal / sky journal...





## FIND A QUIET PLACE

It will be hard to create a quiet place where your children can find their souls.  
You must first quiet your own world and then approach theirs.  
They are accustomed to the barrage of noise and will complain loudly in its absence.  
But you can find a quiet way.

What can you do today?

A walk?

A book?

A simple game?

- *The Parent's Tao Te Ching*

# REFLECTIONS

## 3. Being with Children is like meditating

When we are with your children, let's be one with them.

Let every part of your body and mind relax. Allow all our expectations and anxieties to melt away so that we can see clearly and be present in the moment. Love them as they are in this very moment, without needing to change a thing.

- Let's take out sometime for self-care. Take time to meditate and reflect. Every action, which we take to care for ourselves, becomes a model for them to care for themselves.
- Express freely without shame and judgement. We are not aiming for perfection but are ready to repair and we are working on our own healing.
- Let's nourish them without possessing them, let's guide them without controlling them and lets help them without worrying.
- Be happy. Because our happiness is contagious, our children will learn the art of happiness from us.



# HAPPINESS IS CONTAGIOUS

Encourage your children's deepest joys,  
not their superficial desires.  
Praise their patience, not their ambition.  
Do not value the distractions and diversions  
that masquerade as success.  
They will learn to hear their own voice instead of the noise of the crowd.

- The Parent's Tao Te Ching





# A SHORT LIST OF REFERENCES

## Books/ Links/ Apps

### Books on Parenting

1. Zen & the Path of Mindful Parenting (by Clea Danaan)
2. Simplicity Parenting (by Kim John Pyne)
3. The Parent's Tao Te Ching (by William Martin)
4. Nurture Shock (by Ashley Merryman and Po Bronson)
5. Between Parent and Child (by Dr. Haim G. Ginott)

### Books on Trees/ Birds

1. Cities and Canopies (by Harini Nagendran)
2. The Hidden Life of Trees (by Peter Wohlleben)
3. The Book of Indian Birds (by Salim Ali)
4. 100 Indian Birds (by DK)
5. 100 Indian Trees (by DK) and others in the same series
6. Last Child in the Woods (by Richard Louv)
7. Birds in my Indian Garden (by Malcolm MacDonald)
8. Of Bird and Birdsongs (by M. Krishnan)

### Apps/ Links

1. For Tracking Time: <https://www.timeanddate.com>
2. For SkyWatching & Moon Phases  
SkyView App  
<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/learn/project/look-at-the-moon/>
3. For Bharat Tithi : <https://www.drikpanchang.com>
4. For Binoculars and Telescope: <https://tejraj.com>
5. For Birds: The CornellLab Merlin Bird App  
<https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home>
6. For Nature Journaling: <https://www.naturejournalingweek.com>
7. For Guided Meditation: Healthy Minds <https://centerhealthyminds.org>
8. For Children's Meditation:  
<https://annakaharris.com/mindfulness-for-children/>