



Dear friends,

Every once in a while I like to address questions sent in to me by readers. Though what these two mothers say is, on the surface, quite different, I think at essence, there are important similarities in terms of understanding parenting.

*I wonder if you've ever written a blog post or newsletter that deals with how to handle the situation of having an older child that still doesn't know "the whole story" about family/cultural traditions such as Santa Claus, the tooth fairy, the Easter hare, etc.? I have a 13-year-old who is on the autism spectrum and is socially/emotionally immature for his age, and he still doesn't know about the role that parents play in such traditions. I've decided I want to break the news to him when he turns 14 but I'm so worried that he will be crushed. How can I explain it in a way that is gentle and that won't damage the value and integrity of the traditions for him?*



Leah

*Thank you for this [newsletter], as it resonates so much and I feel we may have made that mistake of not letting my daughter remain unconscious of the lessons she brought. I also think, we may have treated her too "grown up". I am seeing that self centeredness in her and wondering how can we address that now? Is it too late? How can we reverse the damage that's been done. I've been on a big healing journey myself in the past year and so much is coming to light for me.*

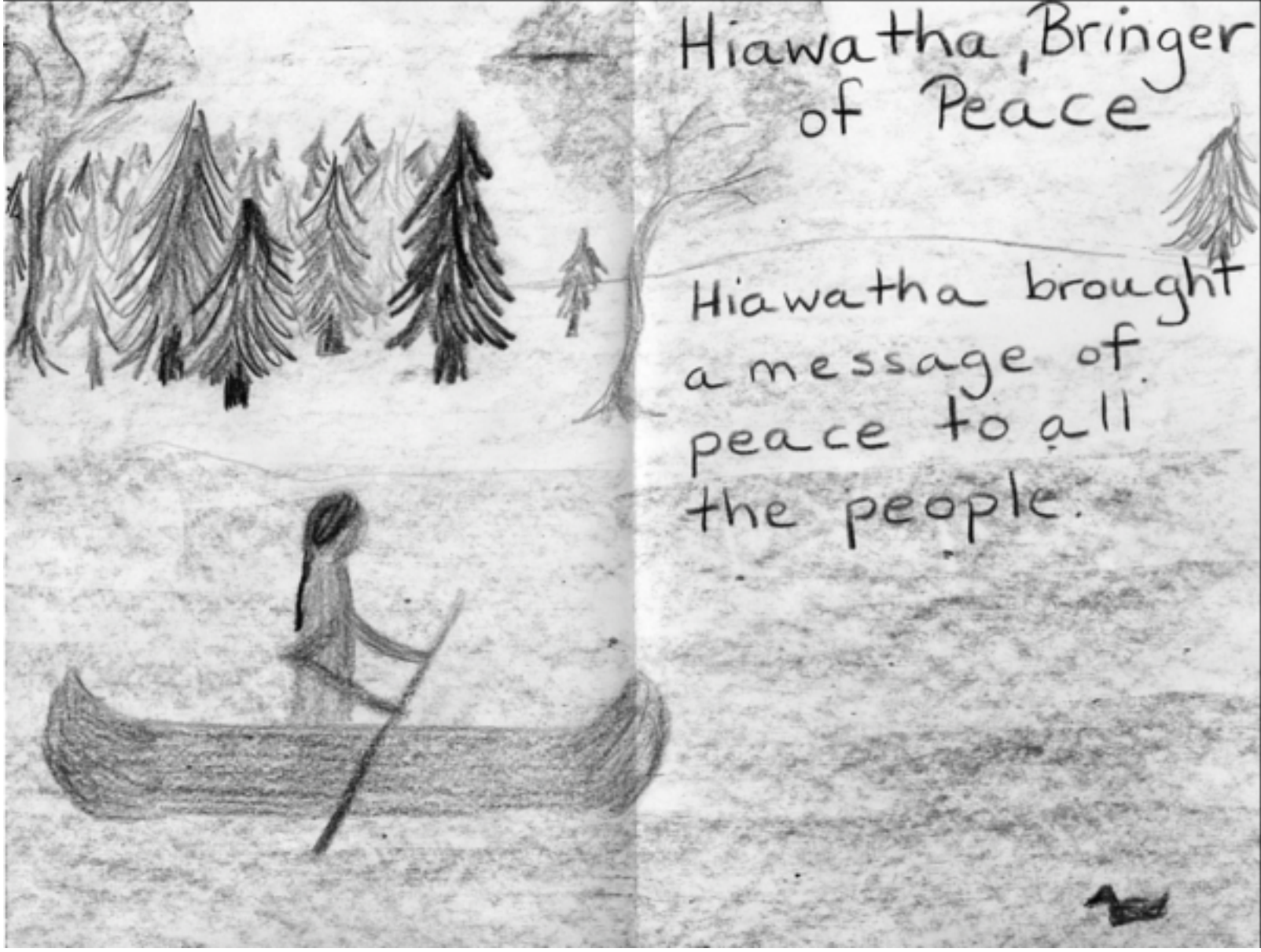
Thank you, AS

Before I respond, [here is a link to our newsletter archive](#) where you can find last month's Homeschool Journey newsletter and see what exactly it is that I said that these two women are referring to.

The similarity here is the key concept in Waldorf (anthroposophical) child development of 'the right thing at the right time.' So the 13 year old has not yet awoken to the full story of the Easter Bunny (or hare) and so on and, on the other hand, we have a child that has perhaps been woken from her 'Dream Time' consciousness too early. The older child is a bit old to be asleep and the younger child (who the mother told me is 8 ½) is just ripe for gentle steps toward awakening but perhaps has taken those steps too early.

The first thing to know is that healing is of course always possible. There are definite optimal times in child development for certain things to happen—thus the phrase 'the right thing at the right time.' But...we are human beings and a unique trait of human beings is our ability to heal not just physically, but spiritually.

For the younger child, immersion in the story curriculum of Christopherus could be immensely healing. She is second grade age and that features the stories of good and evil, impulses awakening in her soul and to her consciousness. These are the stories of saints and heroes and tricksters, stories from cultures across the world that speak to a universal need in every human being, in every child, to grapple with good and evil. What is key here is that stories speak to the soul whereas conversation and adult modes of dealing with good and evil pull a child out of his rightful stage of consciousness and spoil his ability to take these soul pictures deep into himself. Told or read, such stories could be a healing balm. The trick is to never never tell the moral, never ask searching questions, and never discuss the rights and wrongs of, for instance, Anansi. Rather let those stories sink in and work on a soul level in one's child. Leave it open and do not trespass on your child's inner processes.



Such an approach combined with no social media or screens of any sort at all can work wonders. Social media is the nemesis of childhood, totally destructive to the innocence and sense of wonder which are the bedrocks of every child's developmental needs. Unstructured play without adult agendas and artistic work without any questions (so no 'what is that you're drawing'—let the child tell you but only if she wants to) – are also helpful.

Regarding the older child, he is a seventh grader, I assume. In our seventh grade astronomy materials I make a big point of connecting the myths and legends of many cultures, stories Christopherus children will have had since earliest years, with what is seen in the sky. In the Student Text I, for instance, talk about how the cluster of stars we call the Pleiades are seen as female in cultures across the globe. Similarly, the constellation we call Orion is also seen as a Hunter in many cultures (I also address the related picture of the Drinking Gourd).

This can open up a conversation between you and your son regarding how truth lives on many levels. The Pleiades are female. Orion is a Hunter. But the Pleiades and Orion are also stars, cold bodies in the Heavens.

What is seen and understood is seen and understood by human beings. The spiritual Truth cannot exist without the participation of human beings. And because we are spiritual beings, because spiritual perception exists somewhere in the meeting of science and art in our souls, then the Truth is both that the stars are stars AND the stars are representations of spiritual Truths.

Similarly, Santa is not literally a bearded fellow who is literally all over the world on one night in December. But the Truth of Santa Claus is that a loving, giving, kind and gentle figure brings joy to children all over the world. And parents are involved in this.

It always makes me so sad when people say 'I'm not going to lie to my children by saying there is a Tooth Fairy.' But it is a lie to one's children if one does not acknowledge the spiritual significance of the change of teeth, of the wondrous working of the body meeting karma as the child sheds his physical inheritance from his parents. Such an amazing moment can live in the picture of a Fairy, a magical Being who takes that tooth when the child is asleep (eg in the spiritual worlds) and replaces it with a coin or a crystal. Again, parents are involved.

One can say to a child if one is caught or in the case of Leah's boy 'I have always been involved when Santa (Easter hare, Tooth Fairy etc) comes. Part of being your Mother (or Father) is being part of the wonders of your childhood. And Santa (et al) is a part of that.'

Wondering if anyone would like to add to this and share their experience? I can't guarantee I print every submission I get but I would be thrilled to include some in the next Homeschool Journey newsletter.

And you two moms (Leah and AS) are most welcome to also chime in!

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Til May,  
Blessings on your homeschool journey,  
Donna