



The Homeschool Journey Newsletter

Christopherus Homeschool Resources
Waldorf-inspired Parenting and Education

Greetings Dear Homeschoolers!

How incredibly fortunate that so many of you are already homeschooling—my heart goes out to those parents around the world who have found themselves reluctant homeschoolers. For homeschooling is certainly not for everyone.



But perhaps that is the point of this strange unprecedented time—we each have to learn to be flexible, to not be attached, and to flow with what is happening. Not easy of course if one loses one's job and one's life is completely upended...yet while it is relatively easy to do one's inner work when life is going smoothly, it is when one is thrown a curve ball that such presence of mind and equanimity of feeling is needed.

None of us knows what the future may hold and while predictions are never easy or particularly satisfying, at this time they are almost impossible to make. What exactly is this corona virus and where did it come from? What is its trajectory? What are the social and political consequences of our 'leaders' basically shooting in the dark whilst making enormous changes that effect us all? What will be the effect on children of being acclimated to masks and used to being afraid of those around them? And the economy—how ridiculous when people say it is as bad as the Great Depression—it is much worse! For the way out of the Great Depression was through heavy industry—steelworks, munitions, coalmines and so on as this country sold armaments to others and armed itself.... modern drone warfare requires rather a different approach and one that is quietly continuing (and intensifying) as the rest of the economy staggers. There is no way that a similar path will be found out of the present economic collapse—which of course is so much more complicated also because of globalism which was only just beginning in the 30s and 40s. What will the future look like?

Anthroposophy offers a picture of the human being's universal needs and development. While each person is a unique individual with all their faults and promise, there is a universal spiritual experience that binds us all together. By holding onto what is most precious in the Waldorf curriculum, by gifting our children the stories of all peoples—as we very purposefully do throughout the Christopherus curriculum—we prepare the ground for our children to eventually consciously see that all people are indeed, in their very individuality, One. This great paradox of being both utterly unique and utterly connected is the great mystery of being human and is what can sustain us as we grapple with the injustices of our shared human path. May we always remember that it is Love which will find the way through pain.

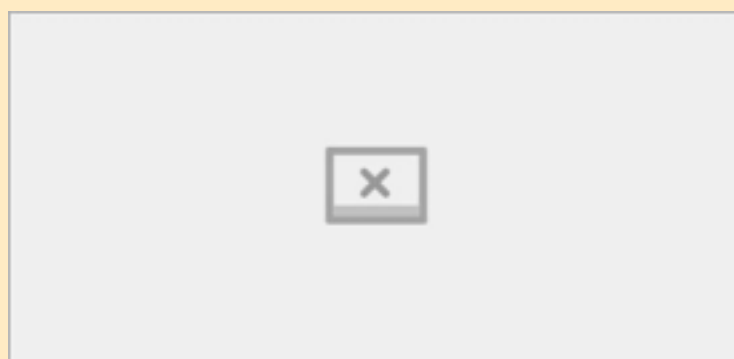


The Positive Side of Lockdown

Who would have thought that I'd be writing about the positive side of lockdown!!? Goodness me—I am surprised at myself! But I cannot deny that during these past weeks and months I have had so many conversations with homeschoolers and with young adults in particular about the fact that, although they certainly are unhappy with many aspects of the 'new normal', they are grateful for the opportunity to slow down and to take stock of what is important. [Read on for more....](#)

Homeschooling in Extraordinary Times

It seems like another lifetime ago that I wrote and recorded the following, [Homeschooling in Extraordinary Times](#)—that was way back in the vaccination crackdown days of last spring (a mere rehearsal, perhaps, for things to come). Many of you might find this useful as you contemplate your role as a homeschooling parent.



How about another rant from me about the grave problems of computers and children? I have just recorded a video called [No Computers for Children](#) (to the point, eh?) I save my most scathing remarks for the phenomena of remote learning in Waldorf schools. Conventional education going online—it makes a certain sense from the perspective of conventional education. But Waldorf? Words fail me. I feel betrayed—my entire life has been molded and formed by Waldorf education—first as a child in a Waldorf school from kindergarten through high school; as a parent-educator; as a Waldorf teacher and youth workers; as a homeschooler schooling my own children and then creating Christopherus.... I personally feel aggrieved and I have had so many emails from parents who feel completely let down, who have created family lives to honor their child's needs, based on the deeply therapeutic understanding of the human being as embraced by Waldorf education only to have the schools abruptly switch over to zoom-based programs. More than one family has shared with me how when they challenged their school about this they were made to feel wrong, ridiculed, told they needed to understand 'modern Waldorf' and so on.

The basis of this talk is that there is absolutely no pedagogical reason or justification for computer use by children. None. There may be practical adult reasons for this—but that is an entirely different kettle of fish than somehow twisting and distorting Waldorf education to try to make it OK that children are being instructed via computer and this is called 'Waldorf.'

I get that teachers are losing their jobs... but they also risk losing them as more and more parents who choose Waldorf not because it is a nice prep school but because the anthroposophical vision of human development resonate with them leave the schools in disappointment. They carefully chose the school, changed their lifestyles and then this comes! There always have been issues at Waldorf schools-- that's just life—but this, precisely because computer use is harmful to children, is a step too far.

I have known Waldorf schools whose income is based on early childhood programs—taking tiny children—toddlers, even babies—and providing care, something that is, at best a questionable practice in terms of child development. I get that that is necessary for some parents. But because I also ran a nursery for 3 year olds (back in the late 80s) I saw that I was thus contributing to the picture normalizing that school is best for tiny children, something I have always worked against. A foundational principle to Christopherus is that home is the best place for young children (see our [Early Years section](#) on our website). And now, with computer use, we have it again—not only has AWSNA given the OK to computer-use programs in their schools from 5th grade on, we now have zoom classes. The latter would not, I believe, have happened if the former hadn't been deemed acceptable. In just the same manner, if 3 year olds had not been accepted into kindergarten classes, programs for tinies would not have opened. It's all about normalization.

So I am sick to death of participating in the erosion of the healthy anthroposophical basis of Waldorf education—I am drawing a line in the sand. That line is called No Computer Use for Children.

Free Talks

Christopherus continues to minimize screen-use by adults—we now only sell our publications hard copy. I basically feel fine about this but every once in a while I have a little twinge mainly because of the pleas I get every week from homeschoolers outside the USA—between customs dues, pandemic limitations to shipping and the enormous amount it costs to ship abroad, there are many who cannot buy our Christopherus publications.

So...as a little nod toward that, I will begin to record free talks on facebook again (some of our [free talks on the Christopherus website](#) were harvested from FB talks I did a few years ago). I do have to be careful with what I say in these talks as FB is getting more and more enthusiastic as self-elected censor, but I think we will manage. I hate to encourage anyone onto FB but maybe just to hear the talks? My hope would be to have some chat after each—things have changed on FB since I last used it to record talks so this 'chat' might be written—thus limited—but we will see. [Here is the link to our group.](#)

Newsletter Archive

We are getting so many new subscribers to this newsletter each month! Hello! Welcome new friends! We now have a difficult-to-find archive of past newsletters on our website. We will endeavor to make it a bit easier to find.... [but for now, here it is](#) .

Some folks find that having a planner helps them enormously with the mountainous task of homeschooling their children. Our Christopherus partner, Amy McGehee-Lee has produced [yet another lovely planner for your use](#).

Blessings on your homeschool journey,
til August,
Donna

