

Weekly Notes
October 30, 2015

Dear parents and friends of LFS,

There has been much discussion in the country about mindfulness. Mindfulness is basically the ability to be in the present, or more technically, it is a “moment-to-moment awareness of one's experience without judgment.” Mindfulness is being promoted by businesses, by schools and by the health community because of its many benefits including stress reduction, the boosting of one's working memory, the increase in focus and cognitive flexibility, the decrease in one's emotional reactivity, the greater satisfaction one can find in one's relationships, greater self-awareness, and enhanced intuition.

There are several disciplines and practices which can cultivate mindfulness, such as yoga, tai chi and qigong, but most of the literature focuses on mindfulness that is developed through mindfulness meditation — those self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness.

Meeting for worship, which LFS has been holding weekly since its founding in 1902, is another way that one can cultivate mindfulness. On Wednesday, we had our first worship-sharing of the year with our various multi-age worship-sharing groups. We read the following quotation from Irene McHenry, plus a set of queries, to our groups.

"MFW is a listening time. Imagine you are in the woods somewhere with animals such as deer and rabbits nearby. Get your body still enough so that a deer or rabbit would walk by and not even know you are there. As you begin to still yourself, listen for the sounds around you and the silence of the woods? Can you hear traffic? Wind? Now listen to your own breathing and notice how it is going in and out. Once you get very still you can hear a lot of things you would not normally hear. In a silent meeting you might be able to hear messages within you that you would not normally hear."

In my worship-sharing group, one fourth grader responded to the query “How do I listen? How do I become a better listener?” by saying that a key to being a better listener is to actually believe in the other person who is speaking. A Kindergartener, in response to the query “What do you call God?” said that “God is what you love. God is love.”

We hope that as many parents who are able will be able to join us this coming Sunday for Meeting for Worship, to which Lansdowne Meeting has invited all of our parents. After Meeting, there will a special talk, called a Meeting for Learning, by our School Committee member, Joan Broadfield. The name of her talk is “Getting to the Heart of the Quaker Way.”

Today was a very special day because we welcomed alumnus Leon McKenzie, and his wife, Joleen, as they presented an enlarged facsimile of the check to the school, representing scholarships to three of our students. We are so grateful to the McKenzie's

generosity to the school. It was especially gratifying to hear Leon say how important his time at LFS was in his entire education, and this is the reason he is so generous with the school. Thank you so much Leon and Joleen!

Have a great weekend.

Sincerely,
John