



Series 1. Episode 11

Turning *Little Stones* show notes
Listen to a conversation with Clare Iles
about her work with Little Artists

Episode 11

Adventures in Art
PART 2
with Clare Iles

Following from last week, we are pleased to continue our conversation with Clare. There was so much in that episode that we decided to separate it into 2 parts. Do listen again to Part 1 or catch-up if you missed it.

The role of the adult

Clare recognises that the carers who bring their children to the group are likely to be people who value creativity and wish to see their child(ren) expressing themselves creatively. Whether we are creative or not, most carers need a little encouragement from time to time...

Clare explains that her role is to set up the space. She provides no directions, notes, suggestions, or finished products for parents to use as crib sheets. She simply invites parents and carers to be 'present', helping their child if needed or answering their questions. Often, they are not needed and they can step back to simply observe and enjoy.

Clare advises parents and carers to allow their child to be the initiators, having their own ideas, following their own lines of enquiry, noticing their child's absorption and realising that the value is in the creative process, not any potential end product.

In schools and at nursery, Clare explains that it is challenging for practitioners and teachers, who want children to create a finished product (often for a display). The adult agenda is to have an end 'product'; the child's agenda should be the 'doing' - the process.

And as adults we might also need to release our inhibitions and allow our own 'locked inside' creativity to emerge!

Other ways to celebrate creativity 'in the moment'

In Northern Italy, a whole community in Reggio Emilia found ways to celebrate children's '100 languages' (or creativity), using audio, photographs, and story to capture the children's creative processes. Many of these tools are used by early years settings, but if we are honest, the over-riding adult motivation is still to have a finished product to display and celebrate.

Clare tries to document with photos; especially what she set up.

She also brings in inspiration from other exhibits in the gallery and encourages us to take children to galleries. Recently, Clare and her 7-year-old son went to the Tate Modern to take part in an evolving installation 'the Woodland Tribe'.

Coincidentally Caroline had also been to see the installation, an example of partnerships and creative projects taking place in 2021 across the UK. The Woodland Tribe aims to 'collaborate with art galleries to curate incredible, child-built installations.

(<https://www.woodlandtribe.org/galleries-exhibitions>)





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Most importantly, carers who are 'present' with their child(ren) as they follow their own creative lines of enquiry will notice new things, they will learn how to respond sensitively and assist where necessary.

More takeaways...

Clare advocates...

Having a space (in a school or nursery, this is ideally a room) which is a defined area for creativity. Somewhere we don't mind getting messy!

Resource the space with open-ended materials... small cartons, bottle tops, kitchen towel/wrapping paper tubes, off cuts of wood, loose parts, different paint media... (Clare's tip, "raid your recycling bins")



The benefits of creativity and learning to see what young children do with theirs is inspiring... and worth a bit of mess!

Further information, practical guidance and advice are available through

Turning Little Stones

Delving a little Deeper

See website for details.

Clare's Art Club sessions are available on

<https://firstsite.uk/your-visit/learning-activities/children-families/parent-toddler-art-club/>