



balance



freedom



observation



fitting



nurturing



together



experience



acceptance



creative

Teaching with your Feet

Doing equals learning. Fun equals remembering.
Action equals focus. Creativity equals competence.
Experience equals knowledge. Love equals success.



active

Teaching with your Feet

**Doing equals learning. Fun equals remembering. Action equals focus.
Creativity equals competence. Experience equals knowledge. Love equals success.**

By Chariane Quille

Over the past few years I've written down some of my thoughts, feelings, opinions, experiences and tips on true education for children—in real-life ways. This short collection of writings does not cover specific methods of teaching scholastic subjects; just general ideas and insight for making times of teaching and learning with your children, life- and zest-filled—a true joy.

Though these are my unedited, roughly-typed, casual notes, may you feel a fresh breeze as you read these few simple words. May your courage soar, inspiring you to do things in the ways that will truly “bring up a child in the way [method] he should go” and have a great time while you are at it.

Cover art by: S.d.B. and Chariane Quille

**Train up a child in the way
he should go: and when he is
old, he will not depart from it.**

(Proverbs 22:6)

They Learn More...

Teaching, admonishing, instruction, correction, Bible lessons, and consequences all have their time and place in the training of children. But it helps us to keep the meekness, the love, the humility of spirit in all we do—as Jesus demonstrated when training His followers—when we remember:

- ❖ The children learn more about love from a warm embrace—than from a Bible lesson on “love one another”.
- ❖ The children learn more from a smile—than from a reminder to “stop grumbling; be cheerful and friendly.”
- ❖ The children learn more about beauty from examining a flower in the backyard—than from being instructed to think and speak on pleasant and positive topics.
- ❖ The children learn more about how to cope with stress and a difficult moment by a romp and laugh together—than from being told to, in effect, “grin and bear it”.
- ❖ The children learn more about respecting us, their parents, when I stop to look at them on their level and listen when they are talking to me—than from when I admonish them to mind my instructions.
- ❖ The children learn more about the true worth and value of things when I stop my clean-up and housework to help them when they call or wish for a moment of my focused

time—than from monitoring and stressing the importance of not being wasteful. People before things is the true order of value.

- ❖ The children learn more about obedience from watching me stop to pray and desire to make Godly decisions, and base my actions on His approval and ways—than from my disciplining them for being distracted in a child’s world and not responding to my requests immediately.
- ❖ The children learn more about completing a task, and working hard while given space and time, without being rushed, to silently watch a team of ants trying time and again to lift a large seed or crumb of bread—than from being told, “No play time, until you’ve completed your job.”
- ❖ The children learn more about God when watching the countless stars in the night sky appear, and talking to and hearing Him speak to them personally—than from admonitions to respect and obey Him, telling of His power, however eloquently portrayed.
- ❖ The children learn more about courage when observing me facing a major problem, yet choosing to carry on in spite of it—than from merely being told to “not be afraid, just do it, try something new” and encouraged to “face your fears”, and so forth.
- ❖ The children learn more about real life while living it along side of us, than in a supposed “perfect environment” for learning.

- ❖ The children learn more about not shirking work while watching me empty and clean the overflowing kitchen trash—than from the stories I read with the intent of emphasising that trait to build character in them.
- ❖ The children learn more about becoming a good man and father from a piggyback ride with their daddy—than from vague instructions to “be responsible”.
- ❖ The children learn more about generosity from watching me share my portion of dinner with the eager 1-year-old, who wants to share my dish, just for the fun of feeling big, and getting to sit on my lap—than when they are told “share your toys!”
- ❖ They learn more from watching me and “seeing it done” —than from all my choice words and perfectly planned classes.

And scholastically...

- ❖ The children will learn more about geography when viewing the valley and landscape bellow after hiking to the top of a hill with their dad, who then points out and names each mountain and river seen from that vantage point—then from a book lesson.
- ❖ They learn more about math while creating make-shift houses out of boxes and needing to calculate amounts, height, and width; or when creating things out of Lego—than doing a page of memorized sums.

And on the list could go.

An Educational Epiphany

After being a preschool educator for many years, and am now on the learning journey with my own home-grown team of young students, I have come to an epiphany of sorts:

Children will learn, with or without me—they are programmed to do so.

What exactly they learn may have a lot to do with the environment I create, and opportunities I make available to them. And it's true that to help them to fit into the society and culture and language of their native country, there are things they can and should be trained in, taught and gain experience in.

However, to assume or presume that they will remain witless, void of ideas, and mental blank sheets unless I add information to their brain's computer, shows ignorance and arrogance on my part. They have a craving to learning and will do so whether I fill it or not.

In observing their fascinating minds, hearing their clever thoughts, seeing their thought-through solutions, and discovering their unending desire to learn, to experience, to know—that strong vacuum they hold—I have come to a humbler knowledge: I am not their door to learning. Life, God, and their own inbuilt desire to learn will take care of that. But I can be an instrument to help bring to their attention, facts and bits of knowledge that they can benefit from. I can be a channel to bring into their young lives opportunities to hone skills that will be invaluable as they grow into young men and women. I can help provide them with the tools that will assist them as they begin to build their lives as adults.

Sure there are certain bits of information that they might not naturally encounter in life. To ensure they become familiar with such information I can play my part by telling them things, reading to them, showing them and introducing such things to them. However, my job isn't to make them smart—through proper care of them in all spheres of life, that comes naturally—but I am commissioned to equip them with the right tools to reach their life's goals.

Doing Means Learning

My 3-year-old son wants to express everything learned in books or on videos, through dress-up and acting it out. "I'm dressed up like gravity!" he said enthusiastically. He just needs to put it into effect to make it real.

The good thing is, that he takes it farther than just a concept on a page, or a picture on a screen, taken in lethargically. To him, doing is the real part. And it's true. It's the same way with all of us.

We can be told, we can read about things, we can watch or hear a motivational speaker. But until we put that concept into practice we won't really learn it and benefit from it.

We're living in a 3D world, remember?

My 4-year-old son asked me where to find something. I told him—in what I thought was a clear instruction—that it was in the second drawer. It was interesting to me to notice that he went to open the drawer second up from the bottom. At first I thought he just forgot what I'd said and was looking in any drawer, until it dawned on me the way his mind was working.

Of course! In real life you start from the bottom and work your way up—block towers, a stack of folded clothes, steps, rungs of a ladder. We're just accustomed to the English language and working on paper, top-to-bottom. Their blessed and beautiful minds still work in the real, 3D world!

Find Their Key

I taught many children with Glen Doman's method of sight reading—flashcards flashed from the time they were babies. But I noticed with my first child, he didn't seem to retain or learn things that way. It had to be more interactive and kinetic.

To teach a new word we did a project: the word “make” we rolled out and *made* with play dough. The word “answer” we glued speech bubbles of all colours on a page, and wrote it on each bubble.

Words were written with his finger and white glue, tracing my lettering on the paper, and then sand sprinkled on it. Magically when the covering of sand was tipped off, the word appeared on the card. We used toothpicks or Popsicle sticks to form words.

Later, when he caught on to phonetics, he was sailing. This is what clicked, and he sped on from there. I think trying new things and keeping reading fun with games helped to keep the interest, until he was ready and found his key to learning, and he could make steady progress from there.

* * *

The Playground is the School

The playground and park seemed to be the place my children could think the most clearly and were the most focused on having educational input—in-between playing and climbing.

We'd take breaks for learning, reading together, having a snack and looking at children's encyclopaedias, doing a workbook page or two. Their bodies and minds didn't have to be pulling in a different direction, crying out for exercise and fresh air, and all the things children need so desperately for basic growth and wellbeing. Instead they could have an "all you want" buffet feast, and welcomed the interesting breaks to take in some mind-and-heart food along the way.

* * *

Notes on Math and Teaching:

* If math feels like one big and constant test, then no wonder kids can't handle the stress and don't like it. Kids love to learn, and numbers are fun! —If they are able to use what is needed, for as long as is needed, to get the answers. Teaching, not testing, is the way. Testing can be disguised in so many ways. Learn to spot it, and eliminate it—when it's at a time for you to teach the children, not the other way around!

*Children's published workbooks and well-advertised programs aren't made the way they are, and in small print, because that's the best way for the children—but it's to save on money spent for printing/paper/toner/shipping costs by the publisher! As the children grow older, there will be plenty of opportunity to write smaller, and use workbooks, no need to rush it. Let's let them learn in real ways!

*Learn equals: do, see, hear, know, feel, experience! Working in a 2D (two dimensional) world, on a page, is foreign to new lives on this planet. They are made to know and see and think and learn in the full and real way: three-dimensionally. They have to be programmed, over time, to think “top to bottom—left to right—no depth”.

Teach them in the way we are made to learn and think. Our bright young ones will pick up on the other aspects of communication and expression—page work—in time. If we limit learning to that way from the start, we are stifling their fast progress. It would be like going to a foreign country, without a knowledge of the language, and being told we have to first learn to speak and understand and read the language before having a chance to sight-see, or getting to know the culture.

Let's be their translators. Kids can be far “above grade” if they are not held back by needing to read/write/work on a page from the start. Teachers teach—tell, read, show, demonstrate, explain, answer, create, provide opportunities and experiences. Children can demonstrate their knowledge on paper later on.

*It's been said that one reason math is so overly emphasised in schools (and natural learning, home-based learning, and parent-guided educators also feels the pressure in this area) is simply because it is so easy to test and get right (and see if it's wrong). If they are drenched in math studies, especially with difficult and confusing learning methods, yet know little about other countries, or their own; don't know many life skills, or people handling skills; don't know why they are here on Earth, nor much about their Creator; if they haven't learned how to properly communicate, and their health and joy are suffering due to the stress and strain and pressure of it all—that's not education and life preparation. Step back and get the right perspective again.

What are the most important tools to give them for the life they'll be leading? Sure they'll need to keep track of finances when married and managing their family's budget. But helping with the dishes; surviving on a camping trip; working through tough issues amicably with their spouse; having fun teaching their child a skill; fixing something in the house so they don't have to pay big bucks to a repair man for every little thing; keeping up with important papers and documents; learning to be on time for appointments; keeping their family happily together with a joyful purpose in life, are also very important things to know. Time is limited, and passing by the second. Keep the balance; keep the big picture in mind. Give them ample time to learn and become adept with the foundations needed for a well-built, happy life.

Ringling up Minuses

Problems I've noticed with young children's workbooks:

--It requires fine muscle skills for children who still need to work on their large muscle skills and coordination, making it a tiring, wearisome, strain on hands, mind, and eyes. Thus "school time" is equated with something difficult and unpleasant.

--There is no depth or real-life to it, thus forcing them to skip over the key factors in proper learning. Feeling, touching, experiencing, inventing, trying, observing, listening, and so forth, are better life-preparers and the best prep for future "education". Their mind can then recall the real things learned, making the information that is in print, and on paper, more relatable. Thus the saying is true: Experience is the best teacher.

--Most workbooks are printed back to back, thus any writing done on one side will show up through the page backwards as the child turns the page. This makes it harder than it already is, to learn the correct way letters and numbers go!

--A conglomeration of various levels of learning are often present in a single workbook. Perhaps the math book, or Pre-school learning page book, or 1st to 2nd Grade book made oh-so-colourfully for a young one might have a page on something they've mastered a year ago, and then all of a sudden have "fill in the sums" written in very small print, with almost no room for the child to write it—the book itself having never presented an opportunity to learn to form the numerals, nor even stating the art of addition sufficiently. If the child can do one page easily, yet feels confused and incompetent at doing another page, they can feel—or be made to feel—they are less than sharp witted for not being able to do something that is so-called "for their age" in a book. If they are instead taught one stone upon another, their skill builds, and it's fun too. Learning is fun. But not when something is splashed at you with little or no explanation or experience, or at least not in the way that you, as an individual need it for your style of brain.

--Some professional programmes might work through the steps more systematically, and offer a fancy diploma when all grades have been done. But how do you teach 3D geometric shapes on a workbook page? I've seen it done. (The bored, wiggling child looks at yet another page that has to be done—and the teacher is trying to get it over with as soon as possible.) "This is a cylinder, in this picture here. That's what it looks like. Now take your pencil and ..." ! Let's let them learn for real, folks!!

--Requiring that children only learn at the level of the books that match their writing skills, makes them crawl in the learning experience. My boys at 4 and 5 years old enjoyed reading together Grade 3 level science books. We skip all the writing requirements. Their minds are fed at the level they really are at.

--Writing in books is often presented too small, and without writing guide lines. Almost as if the manufacturer was on a mandate to create a certain number of pages on a certain theme. What was produced showed little signs of having had actual experience with children at that age, it seems. Just little lines here and there to “write the words” on, that are too small to actually fit—and totally unnecessary for learning the actual material it’s trying to teach.

--If the children are going to be learning about bugs or flowers, that can be learned on location, with a side order of a colourful science book to show as well, while outdoors. If they are to learn about groups of things that go together, that should be learned with objects—not lists of words for a child still learning how to form a-b-c to write out, in miniscule size. If it’s learning about patterning and sequencing, that again should be done with items, or at least have the correct picture to merely circle, if one must be bound to 2D learning—not the difficult-to-draw picture drawn tiny, for the child to duplicate and draw in the correct small space.

I don't know about you, but at nearly 40 I still struggle to draw the perfect star shape, and have it look right. So to have a book page for 6 year olds requiring their "star-performance" drawing several of them at 1 centimetre in size, seems a bit un-thought through. And for all their struggle, hand aching, feeling despondent at their inadequacy, missing out on time they should be using for outdoor play, exercising and learning real things, what will that "star" finally drawn really help in the big picture of their life? I'm only ringing up minuses in my brain.

A Teacher's Euphoria

I glance across the yard at the children happily playing on the swing set and monkey bars, seemingly very eager in play and engaged. I'm holding in my hands a couple books, opened to the pages I want to read with them. Today we would be learning about Central America. I say nothing for a few seconds, pondering if now is the best time for focused learning.

They glance my way. Neither of us say a word. Spotting the books in my hand, they leap off the backyard playground equipment, and come running my way. We walk towards the tent pitched outdoors, and again without a word spoken, like an eager snowplough, the duplo is quickly push aside by them to make room for us to sit there together and read

what I obviously have prepared in my hands. After the reading and picture-studying of life in that area of the world, we proceed to create the flag they pick out as their favourite, out of coloured paper and pens. Bet you don't know what the flag of "Granada" is? They do—and so do I, now.

Such is a wonderful school time! Eager, loving to learn, fascinated students. They love to learn! Perhaps it helps that the joy of learning isn't "taught out of them". But we all know it's something fun, and is given in the most natural and enjoyable ways, and at the times of day that they are most ready for it.

Perhaps because it also doesn't come at the cost of their basic physical, emotional, and intellectual needs being met. Yes, "intellectual needs" can be starved while cramming facts into their stifled brains in unnatural and completely unnecessary ways—as well as making their growing bodies suffer that crave and need movement. Live, love, laugh and learn go together.

Teaching With Your Feet

I want my children to enjoy a well-rounded style of education. Though young, they look forward to and crave our times of learning and early education. It's often called "special time with mommy" or "learning activities" or "project time".

I've tried not to create a mental "ball and chain" weight that they have to wear each day of their childhood with the label "school" on it.

Knowing that learning, education and "school time" is going to be a part of their life for the next many years, I want it to be something enjoyed, like it should be, at least for as long as possible. Since discovering new things and learning is naturally very much enjoyed by children, when done in their "style", it doesn't really need to be drudgery. In fact the more it's enjoyed, the more the information will be retained and sought after.

I think the practice of "sitting at a desk" primarily, especially for Pre-schoolers to 2nd Grade or so (maybe more, I haven't gotten that far yet...) is counterproductive. The goal of raising children is to ensure proper care of body, mind, heart and spirit, and to give them the tools, training and skill-learning opportunities that they'll need and appreciate later in life as an adult.

Sitting for too much of the day, in a room of four walls, brings bad health, improper or incomplete spectrum of stimuli. It breeds behaviour problems from boredom and confinement and lack of refreshment in nature. And of course a negative association with education and "school".

Granted there are things that are more easily done at a desk or a flat surface, and it should be reserved for those activities. When you assess what needs to be taught to individual young children or a class of preschoolers, think beyond the "norm" or the "done way". Think "outside the box." Something that is generally "always done" whilst sitting, may have a hundred other ways that it can be taught, in a more active or fun style.

I can't make a statement across the board, but I've discovered that for teaching young children, and boys especially, the more active the learning methods, and the more time spent outdoors, the better. There are thousands of ways to make learning activities active and cut down on unnecessary sedentary time; and being out in nature and fresh air seems to sharpen the senses of my young ones and they learn better when outside, then in a stuffy room.

Perhaps they can focus better as there is natural, calm and enriching stimuli all around them, as well as opportunity for movement and play. They then don't have to struggle to make it happen with boisterous activity and poor behaviour indoors.

There are so many things that are or need to be done sitting or lying down. For example: taking a bath, nap, car ride, toilet (or potty), video, snack, colouring, books, toys time, toenail clipping, story reading, puzzles, night's sleep, some games, stroller ride to the park, cutting and pasting, play time, flashcards, painting, brushing teeth, meal times ... and on the list goes. So if you are an "Early childhood educator" like me, we need to find ways to create as much activity as possible with the rest of the day, and especially in their learning activities.

If your children are experiencing constipation, poor sleep, irritability, easily angered, lack of focus, inability to sit comfortably or calmly for meals, loud and wild behaviour, lack of cooperation, resistant to guidance, lethargic, easily getting sick, and many other symptoms, perhaps the following list will improve and change things drastically, as I have found.

- 1.) Double-up or triple-up the “seating required” activities, multitasking, to cut down the time spent. (For example educational videos/ reading/ flash cards/ story reading can be done while eating.)
- 2.) Have a 2 to 1 ratio: 2 active activities, to 1 sedentary. And no more than an hour of non-active activities at a time. (For example for every 10 minutes sitting, there should be 20 minutes of active time.)
- 3.) Plenty of water—a little cup of it every hour no less, and more fruit and veggies than anything else.
- 4.) If you are planning a learning activity, see how you can add action, movement and exercise to it. (For example, rather than showing pictures of animals only, act them out. Have him run to get a book from across the room to read, and then repeat to place back and choose another. Jump while learning to count. Do action songs to teach body parts. And so forth.)
- 5.) Outdoor and free movement play indoors should be no less than 4-5 hours a day. (For example 1 ½ hours in the morning, and 2 in the afternoon, ½ hour of indoor games as a family activity, and “running and jumping” breaks throughout the day, or before every meal or snack.

Whole-Being Education

Learning isn't just sitting and listening. I think the optimum involves a lot more than that. Their physical-mental-emotional-moral sides of life need to be cared for and developed in the right proportion and in balance. When things are off balance, problems occur (behaviour, health, resistance and conflict, lack of interest, emotional outbursts, and so forth.) To give a child a time of learning, and to have only attempted to stimulate their mind and fill it with what you'd consider "educational" is to do them a disservice, if the other parts of their "being" are being neglected and hurting as a result.

Here are 10 elements to try adding to balance your happy day:

1.) Learning activities should be just that: active and involve as much movement as possible. Enough physical exercise should be built into the day (4-5 hours a day of fun active times, both outdoors or indoors if need be.)

2.) The right diet affects the quality of life so very much. Poor balance in diet, or unhealthy foods take away from "think-ability", through feeling lethargic, or experiencing discomfort, foggy brain, or feeling on a "sugar high" and unable to settle down or focus.

3.) Frequent and enough water keeps the body and mind working well. Bodies not working well equals discomfort and distraction.

4.) Fresh air and natural light (for health and alertness and proper eye care).

5.) Enough sleep (I don't wake my children. They sleep when tired and wake when rested. They keep pretty much the same body clock time each day, and enjoy going to sleep with a pleasant bedtime story—as well as enjoy great health!)

6.) Mental captivation. Their minds are always going and wanting stimulation. To captivate and inspire their mind is to corral their whole being. Poor behaviour and constant opportunities for correction of behaviour are often from unchallenged and unchanneled minds. (*Audios of quality content can be listen to while having indoor play, books can be read to them while they eat or use the bathroom, games can be played while riding in the car, guessing games and discussions are great while having snack, etc.*)

7.) Taking time to talk about feelings, thoughts, difficult times, childish hurts. Pray, encourage, share stories and so forth. Get to know them and demonstrate your love and care for the real them, the person inside. Show you are not just going through the motions of physical and educational care, or are only concerned about things, but in them as a person.

8.) Basic skill-learning takes time. You have to bake that into your time plan. Take time as you go throughout the day, to teach them how to wash their hands properly, how to know the difference between the right and left shoe, how to shut a door quietly. Teaching them the important foundation skills is as important--or more so at a young age--than the other “educational” things you want them to learn. Allow leeway for these things, rather than just rushing along with a tight schedule and getting impatient about these care needs.

9.) Character/moral development and learning. The earlier in the day they have time to pray, to be reminded of God’s love for them, read a Bible or character-enriching story, the better. Their heart-and-spirit side of them is a real thing, and has real needs. If their heart is satisfied, they’ll make the right choices more easily throughout the day—choices to be kind and thoughtful, choices to obey, choices to do constructive activities, and so forth.

10.) Fun and laughter! It’s been said that happy children are well-behaved children. (It’s about the same for adults. We all want to be happy. When individuals are not, they try to get happy using just about any means they can!) It’s fun to learn. It’s a joy to be together. We can laugh about some mistakes or messes! Try taking situations less seriously. Say things with a smile. Make it an important part of your day to do something they really enjoy.

If I HAD to Run a School

This morning I woke with a thought. Knowing now what I do about the superior method of parent-guided education, and taking into account all I am continuing to learn about the needs of growing young ones, if for some reason I was compelled to be a teacher of a large group of young children--and if I could set up a classroom or school just as I wish--I would:

--Divide the students into 5 smaller groups, and have assistant teachers with me (young people, or their older brothers and sisters)

--Divide the large room into four sections, plus a play area outside for active play

And it would have:

One table and chair set up, for 4-5 students at a time, where I would sit and do the focus lessons of the day, using both manipulative, materials, and some worksheets.

A reading corner set with carpet and bean bags, good natural and other lighting. Head phones for audio books, and other books to read.

A long counter area for several students to stand at and work on projects, changing it each day: puzzles, coordination exercises, art, crafts and skills, and so forth.

A visual media corner, with headphones, to show short shows on educational themes, nature documentaries, language enhancement, character building visuals, and so forth.

The outdoor play area could also have a covered zone, so on rainy days the play can continue. Active games would be played with my assistants, and free play in the area as well.

A toilet in the back of the room to be used freely by the children, one at a time, as needed, no permission necessary.

Drinking water and hugs given at the start and finish of the learning HOUR. It would last for an hour at a time, or hour and a half. The teams rotating in each area for 15-20 minutes at a time. Each part of their brain and body being used and stimulated in this enriching multi-method learning experience.

Group active games and play engaged in for learning, for laughter and interaction and friendship would also be included, when the right times called for it—at the beginning, or the middle or the end, or on some days for whole time—such as to let them learn and experience drama, music, dancing, dress-up, culture and country learning, and so forth.

1 ½ hours of outdoor play and exercise and nature exploration outside of any classroom setting both in the morning and the afternoon. Time sitting and/ or learning, matched minute for minute for active play and movement, and time to just “be” out in nature settings.

The learning hour repeated later on in the day, after outdoor time, and meals, and toy play.

Now that's what I'd call learning time... if children HAD to be bunched together, as a group, with only peers their own age to socializes with and copy, and without their parents to be their guides, friends, role models, and bond with.

Or perhaps the outdoor play, and other hours of the day (in a perfect world) they can be with their family... and the learning hours are the only 2-3 hours they have in that "classroom set up". If it was made in this way, I can see it being enriching, under the circumstances. Dreams....

A Voice...

--A Parent's impassioned thoughts to the well-meaning concerned, on the choice to provide their children with Parent Guided Education

The goal of proper training of children isn't merely to give them a good start in life, to stock them with experiences and skills that enable them to survive life and all the hard knocks it will provide, nor even to assist them on the road to a successful and enjoyable life. But the primary goal of raising children should be to enable them to be a benefit to society, to be contributors in the world. And unless things change, and this becomes the first and foremost goal of the parents in the world today—and not only parents and caretakers, but toy manufacturers, film makers, curriculum and textbook creators, and everyone that contributes to shaping their young lives—things will only continue to deteriorate.

If us parents, who bear the weight and brunt of the life-decisions of our children, are crippled through pressures, opinions, media, well-meaning friends and loved ones to go against what our heart, mind and conscience tells us is best for the young ones in our care, and we are compelled to surrender to options that lessen the quality of life for them, then in the world of tomorrow—when they are the leading work force, and we are too old to stop their influence—we'll reap the sad and sorry fruits of those decisions.

We must not be cajoled into less-than optimum options for training our children, that cause their love for life to die, their creativity to vanish, their empathy for mankind to be buried, a joy for learning diminished, their senses and conscience calloused, their hopes and dreams silenced, and their devotion to just causes worn away.

If we are seriously concerned about our future, the wellbeing of our loved ones, and the preserving of the planet, we must raise solution finders, and initiative takers. Continuing to train, raise and educate young ones in the same way things have “always been done” will continue to reap the same results: a world torn up with sadness, hurt, pollution, crime and loss of vigour for life. And things will only get worse. To only do the accepted, will bring about the expected.

Being able to cope with varied situations and personalities, demonstrating grace and self-control, knowledgeable about the world, competent in unexpected circumstances, possessing positive self-esteem, good people handling skills, keeping one's cool when others have lost theirs, having confidence and determination in the face of opposition, treating people of all walks of life with respect and dignity, having good communication skills, the ability to relate to people of varied ages, temperaments, religions and statuses, holding leadership

qualities, the ability to give the needs of others priority, undaunted in pursuing one's dream of bettering the world, simply because it is the noble and honourable thing to do—and finding satisfaction in doing so. This—and more—is what being “socialized” in the best way means to me.

Look at the youth of today. Look at even the supposed successful grownups. The lack of hope, and aching hearts, pain and loneliness are dimming what little real life is left. Things are deteriorating by the day. If we keep doing things the same way, year after year, we can expect to reap the same sad results.

I am committed to using every means, resource, programme, book, experience, training course, team and tool that has a positive effect to give my children not only the best start in life, but that enables them to positively live out their life, provides them with the propulsion to live out their dreams, and cultivates determination to pursue what is for the betterment of the world at large.

Today, basing their training from my home is what provides the best quality of life. Tomorrow the tools I use may be different. “Home schooling” does not stifle in any way, it propels! It propels them to reach their goals in record time, equips them to tackle the challenges of their day, sets them free to reach for new and better horizons than have ever been reached. And, should they choose, to change things for the better.

With my blood, sweat, tears, heart and life will I endeavour to pave a solid pathway for my children to begin their own journey on. They deserve the best. I will give no less.