



FAIRY TREE NEWS WINTER

JULY 2014
TERM 3, ISSUE 3

Welcome to this season’s winter-warming newsletter. A new term is before us and the winter fires are burning long during these coldest of winter days. This season, we have a wonder-field of inspiring articles, recipes, verse, and a lovely winter tale from Wallace the fairy unicorn. We also have a great interview with Sharon about indoor play ideas and the birthday spiral.

Fairy Exciting Websites to Inspire and Delight

This season’s newsletter features information from these helpful, clear, and inspiring sites:

www.lavendersbluehomeschool.com

www.hybridrastamama.com

www.themagicionion.com

Yandell’s new reading library is available, with a great selection of books to borrow on parenting, education, and craft subjects. We would greatly appreciate parents who are using the service to contribute a review for next season’s newsletter – please send to yandellnewsletter@gmail.com.

We hope you enjoy Fairy Tree News - Winter

Sh’ana and Natalie, mamas of Jardin and Saxon (4-year-old Kinder)

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COMMITTEE VACANCY

We have a vacancy for a 3YO Parent Liaison Officer for the rest of 2014. This role acts as a confidential liaison between the 3YO parent community and the committee and staff. You will need to be a 3YO program parent, and be available (for example, during drop-offs and pick-ups) for parents to discuss any queries or concerns with, as well as help to build the community socially.

We would love to hear from you, and greatly appreciate your help! If you can help us fill this role, please email the President, Jason Williams, at: yandellpresident@gmail.com.

We would like to thank Martine Sproule-Carroll, our former officer, for the work she has contributed to the committee in 2014, and wish her and her family all the best.

Yandell Parent Committee 2014

IMPORTANT DATES – WINTER

Monday 4 August, 7.00pm

Committee Meeting

Tuesday 5 August, 7.00-
8.15pm

'Happy Child, Happy Home' – free book talk by Briar Hill teacher and author Lou Harvey-Zahra, at Eltham Library. Lou will share parenting tips from her new Steiner-inspired book 'Happy Child, Happy Home: Conscious Parenting and Creative Discipline' (Floris Books). Come along to hear inspiring ideas to make family homes more harmonious, plus practical suggestions to make ordinary moments extraordinary, and transform behaviours in a positive manner.

WORDS FROM THE TEACHERS

4YO Kindergarten

Welcome back to Term 3. It's difficult to believe that we are already halfway through the year. I hope that everyone enjoyed the Winter Festival and had a wonderful holiday break. It was lovely to see the children so excited and to see our community come together and families share supper together.

Families, please make every effort to arrive at kinder by 9am so that the rhythm of the day can flow with ease for the rest of the day. If you or your child are having difficulties with getting ready in the mornings please feel free to discuss this with me as there may be strategies to support the morning rhythm.

Thanks, Sharon.

3YO Ring-a-Rosie

Welcome back to Term 3. At our first morning tea after the break there was so much noisy chatter and laughter. It was lovely to see how happy the children were to be back together again. They thoroughly enjoyed their first painting session, which we will be doing each Tuesday this term.

We can expect a lot of blustery, wet weather for a while yet, so beanies are a must for this term as well as hats and a complete set of clean clothes. Gumboots are great, because not only do they keep feet dry for mud and water play, but they are also quick and easy to put on. It can take a long time to help so many children with shoes and it can be frustrating for them to wait. The more they can be independent, the better!

Love, Mandy

A VERSE FOR WINTER

'Look Out, Look Out, Jack Frost is About'
(traditional nursery rhyme by Cecily E Pike):

*Look out, look out
Jack Frost is about
He's after our fingers and toes
And, all through the night
The gay little sprite
Is working where nobody knows*

*He'll climb a tree
So nimble is he
His silvery powder he'll shake
To windows he'll creep
And while we're asleep
Such wonderful pictures he'll make
Across the grass
He'll merrily pass
And change all its greenness to white
Then home he will go
And laugh, "Ho, ho, ho!
What fun I have had in the night!"*

THANKS TO OUR AUTUMN FAIR SPONSORS!

Yandell sends a heartfelt thanks to these people and businesses, who generously donated their goods and services for our Silent Auction:

Alternative Technology Association (Olivia, Nathan's mother, 3YO)

Aspire Pilates

Balance Gymnastics

Billa Dreaming

Bunnings, Eltham

Cloudberry Crafts

Eco Toys

Edes & Bibi, Montmorency

Gemma Mathieson (Tess' mother, 4YO)

Greensborough Plaza

Heidi Honey, Hurstbridge

Jodie J Hairstylist, Montmorency

Lou Harvey-Zahra

Mahlani Anastasiou (Anais' mother, 4YO)

Marleyne & John Bond (Wilf's grandparents, 4YO)

Mary O'Neill (Wilf's grandmother, 4YO)

Melbourne Craniosacral Therapy

Mountain View Organics

Organic Angels

Pro-Health, Eltham (Lisa, Manny's mother, 3YO)

Random House Australia

River of Plenty Healing Centre

Rustic Sourdough Bakery, Greensborough

Ryan Young Design

Seasol (Angela Almirall)

Sentient Being, Eltham

Sharon Hatton (Marlee's mother, 4YO)

The Friendship Tree

The Yellow Dance Spot

Tina Bruce (Eartha's mother, 4YO)

Universal Village

Watermarc, Greensborough

Wild Timor coffee

Winterwood Toys, Warranwood

Woolarium

Woolybutt Knitting

Yolande Perreau (Louis' mother, 3YO).



THE DOMESTIC GODDESS' WINTER RECIPE –

ORANGE WINTER FESTIVAL CAKE

Cake ingredients

250gm butter

250gm castor sugar

4 eggs

½ tbsp. grated orange zest

250gm self-raising flour

100ml freshly squeezed orange juice

Topping ingredients

½ cup orange juice

¼ cup caster sugar

Instructions

1. Pre-heat oven to 170°C.
2. Grease and line 22cm cake tin.
3. Cream butter and sugar well until it is pale and thick. This will take a while.
4. Add eggs one at a time, beating well.
5. Add zest and flour and beat well.
6. Slowly add orange juice until incorporated.
7. Pour batter into prepared tin and bake for 45 mins (or until cooked).
8. Cool in tin.
9. Heat orange juice and caster sugar in saucepan.
10. Make holes in cake with a skewer, and pour liquid slowly over cake.

INTERVIEW WITH SHARON

By Sh'ana

At the end of last term, I went into kinder to leave a note for Wallace the unicorn and the fairy folk. While I was there, I had a chat with Sharon about a whole lot of wonderful winter play ideas and to talk about the beautiful birthday celebration we share at Yandell.

One of the things I personally loved was the idea of collecting a few things that we don't normally play with, and putting them in a winter day basket that just comes out on rainy indoor days. There's nothing like something that hasn't been seen in a while - or ever before - to spark the imagination and engage little ones.

Sharon spoke about many great ideas that she has used with her own children, and many ideas that the children are familiar with through kinder that I'm sure they will enjoy introducing us to.

SOME MAGICAL WINTER'S DAY PLAY IDEAS

Wax – A rich and sensory way for the children to work with their fine motor skills.

Beeswax also teaches us patience, requires focus and will, and can be very enjoyable if you approach it with joy and wonder.

You can purchase single strips and boxes of wax locally from Winterwood:
www.winterwoodtoys.com



Tips for working with beeswax

1. Start by cutting a small piece from a few colours and give your child one small warm piece of wax at a time. You may want to work with one colour at a time or a few.
2. You can pre-warm the wax by setting it in a warm spot (like in front of a heater or in direct sunlight) or putting it in a plastic snaplock bag and letting it sit in a bowl of hot water. You can keep the wax warm in your armpit or bra. The children know to warm the wax under their arms. (Part of the idea in working with wax is for it to be a little firm so that the children actually have to work with it in their hands to make it pliable.)

3. You may like to tell a story while your child holds a piece of wax in her hands. See what shapes naturally arise as you tell the story.



4. When you're done, return the wax to the shape of small discs about the size of a dollar coin – if you want, this will make it easier to warm up and work with next time. (Balls take longer to warm up because they have less surface area).

Decorating candles with wax

Put away a few beeswax candles for decorating with coloured wax on rainy days. This is a great gift idea, or you can make one for each season for your dinner table or nature table.

The wax used for candle decoration is finer and has different colours than the modelling beeswax; but you can roll out and use the modelling wax.



You can purchase beautiful beeswax candles from Heidi Honey (who have a stall at St Andrews Market).

Work with small pieces of wax, warm in your hands and press against the candle to create your image.

The magical transforming basket of fabric

There are many worlds found in a basket of fabric.

Simple Knot Doll

Children love making dolls or sitting quietly while you make them a baby to cuddle.

These dolls are great for storytelling.

You will need:

- One piece of fabric (Silk is beautiful to work with; but I also find working with a soft flannel makes for a warm cosy hugging doll. A rectangle works well. The size of your doll will depend on the size of fabric.)
- Cotton thread
- Small ball of wool stuffing for the head
- Scissors

Method

1. First, you need to break off a piece of wool and roll it into a ball in your hands. This wool ball will be the dolls head.
2. Fold the fabric to find the centre.
3. Put the wool ball into the centre of the fabric.
4. Cover the wool ball with the fabric to form the dolls head.
5. Tie cotton thread around the fabric to secure the head.
6. Knot two corners of the fabric for the hands. You can use a needle and a thread and make a few stitches to keep the thread in its position if you like.
7. Play and cuddle.

Making Cubbyhouses

Collect up a few sheets or fabric from your magic fabric basket with a few cushions and - voila! - you have innumerable inside cubby spaces. Fabric simply placed over the table always makes for a cosy winter play space and hours of fun.



Basket of books

A good basket of books that you have had put away for a while is a great treat. If you have made a snug cubby under the table or in a corner somewhere, it's great to snuggle inside and share a story. Children love the quiet time as well to just look at some beautiful picture books.

Storytelling

Setting up a space and collecting some things from your play area is a great way for you and the kids to retell a family favourite, or make up your own story and play it out.

Making some dolls with fabric or objects with wax or nature objects that you have collected can be incorporated, and all the fun of the day can be created into a story.

Not only is this fun for the kids; but it's a lot of fun for you as well.

I have found some really interesting storytelling resources. Here are some:

- 'Storytelling with Children' by Nancy Mellon
- 'Healing Stories for Challenging Behaviour' by Susan Perrow
- 'Juniper Tree Puppets' - an amazing resource from Suzanne Down – story collections, a free newsletter with stories, and puppetry workshops
- 'Fairy tales in Waldorf education – The wonder of Childhood' website with Christine Natale:
<http://thewonderofchildhood.com/2011/02/fairy-tales-with-christine-natale/>

Cooking and baking

Chopping, squeezing, kneading, blending ... a mountain of fun making food and lots of joy in sharing it. Try preparing warm bread and soup, cakes and cookies.

An absolutely beautiful little cookbook that I have come across is: 'A Collection of Recipes from Shepherd Valley Waldorf School' - www.shepherdvalley.org/Cookbook.pdf . It is well worth looking at.

Making pompoms

This winter, the children have been making pompoms for their pompom tree. It's a great ongoing craft idea. Sharon and the children dye the wool using natural dyes of turmeric for yellow, purple carrots for purple, beetroot for pink, and onion skin to achieve a beige colour.

You will need:

- Cardboard (e.g. from an old box)
- Wool, in any colours you like
- Scissors.

Instructions:

1. Cut 2 donut-shaped discs out of the cardboard and put them together.
2. Wind your wool around the discs from the centre to the outer edge.
3. Keep going around and around until you've covered the disc surface entirely. The process is easier if you're working with a shorter length of wool (the children can measure two arms' length), as a smaller balled-up amount is easier to wind around the disc.
4. If you run out of wool, simply grab some more, tie the ends together, and continue where you left off.



5. Now you will need to cut the wool in between the cardboard, at the outer edge of the disc. Only snip a bit at a time, holding it together with your other hand, until you have cut all the way around.
6. Now, get your ball of wool and cut off a piece about 30cm long. Use that to tie off the pompom by pulling the string between the two cardboard discs and then tightening it around the centre. Tie your pompom up tightly.
7. Now you can slide the two discs off.
8. Fluff up your pom pom so it's nice and round.

Voila! A gorgeous, wool pompom.

Nature's Treasure Hunting

When it's not raining too hard, go for an adventure outdoors. If you take a basket or bag you can collect up stones, sticks, leaves and seeds. Later you can make them into patterns or use them in imaginary play.

We hope these ideas for indoor play inspire you and maybe add some joy to your rainy winter days. You can find lots of great materials for craft locally at the Winterwood Store in Warranwood.

Finger Play for Winter Fairies

By Mrs M of www.shiningstarschool.com

What do I see under the moonlight?
Why, it is winter fairies in the winter night!
How many are there? Let me count!

One (*finger up*) for the Frost Fairy freezing the dew

Two (*fingers up*) for the Wee Blue Fairy, oh so cute

Three (*fingers up*) for the Mossy Elf, wrapped in wool

Four (*fingers up*) for Snowflake who never gets cold

Five (*fingers up*) for Brother Wind who blows and blows
(*put five fingers up to face and blow through....*)

One fairy runs away, two fairies fly (*one finger runs, other hand shows 2 fairies flying*)

And all the others....say good bye! (*wave hands then open and shut goodbye*)



THE BIRTHDAY SPIRAL – A STEINER CELEBRATION

By Sh'ana

The Birthday spiral is one of my most favourite Steiner celebrations. I spoke with Sharon, who explained how this beautiful birthday celebration unfolds within the kinder. We acknowledge that different families have many different ways of celebrating birthdays, and this is just one way.

Yandell celebrates each child's birthday on their birthday or a day close to it. The celebration begins with some children making a birthday story in the centre of the round carpet during play. Birthday cake making is under way in the kitchen. Each child has the opportunity to add a birthday wish to the cake mix.

Your little one is invited to choose several special wooden objects that fit into a birthday ring. At Yandell, this is a beautiful flower, and upon each petal a candle or little symbol is placed.

"Birthday rings come from a German tradition and are popular among Steiner families as a way of adding some reverence and a special tradition to children's birthdays. Essentially, it is just a circle of wood, usually cut into four pieces, with holes for candles and decorations. You can add a new decoration and/or candle each year. The decorations can speak to something special from that child's life that year, a memory. Or they can reflect the child's loves and interests and personality."



Source: <http://sarahs-serendipity.blogspot.com.au/2012/05/tutorial-how-to-make-waldorf-birthday.html>

Everyone is invited to come and sit in circle, and mum or dad arrives.

The lights go out, and a quiet, still space is created.

The birthday child then chooses two helpers from amongst their friends. The birthday child has a beautiful cape and crown placed on her head. Both of the helpers are also given a small crown to wear and sit each side of the birthday child.

At the opening of the circle, the two helpers take each other's arms to make an arch for the birthday child and Sharon to walk through singing a birthday verse. Sharon and the child weave their way through the circle until they return to their place.

After the circle walk, Sharon tells the 'Rainbow Bridge' story (also known as the 'Little Angel's Birthday'). This little story is a fabulous tale of the child's journey earth side, and is spoken only once a year at the child's birthday. The 'Rainbow Bridge' story has many, many versions and is something that you can easily customise to fit your child's unique story. It is a beautiful way to remember the birth of your son or daughter, and to create a precious tale that your child will look forward to hearing each year on his or her birthday. (Two wonderful versions of this story can be found at www.hybridrastamama.com).

After the story, the child's parent reflects briefly on each year of their child's life, from birth to that year. It might be a quality that the child expressed, or a significant event.

The circle then sings Happy Birthday and the candles are blown out.

Sharon presents the child with a beautiful birthday card and reads the birthday verse within.

THE BIRTHDAY SPIRAL (CONT.)

A table is set beautifully for morning tea, and everyone moves to the table. The birthday child sits beside Sharon at the table and helps serve morning tea, which is the birthday cake made that morning in the kitchen, filled with birthday wishes from the children and teachers. The child blows out their birthday candle and the birthday feast begins. Parents stay for birthday cake and share in the birthday joy.

This birthday transition at kindergarten in the early years is very significant. It not only recognises the celebration of life; but is the first real stage of independence. Kindergarten is something - a place, a way of being - that belongs to the child. From here, they share their world with their families. It is often the child's first year/s away from family. They are growing 'big-little', and this celebration is a beautiful way for our souls to transition with our children.

You may like to recite this little poem the night before your child's birthday as you are tucking them into bed, to honour the last night that the child will be that age. It is easy to remember and something so special to do to honour the child.

*When I have said my evening prayer
And my clothes are folded on the chair
And mother switches off the light,
I'll still be ___ years old tonight.*

*But from the very break of day
Before the children rise and play
Before the darkness turns to gold
Tomorrow, I'll be ___ years old.*

*___ kisses when I wake
___ candles on my cake.*

WINTER NATURE TABLE

By Natalie

In midwinter, nature pares down and there are many opportunities to observe the usually hidden structures of trees and bushes.

Your nature table could include items like pine cones, gumnuts, feathers and old birds' nests blown down to the ground. We have recently found yellow cockatoo feathers, glossy black crow feathers, and lovely stripy brown owl feathers, all of which we have displayed in a small vase.

One beautiful idea is to combine found rocks and pebbles of different shapes and textures with your own crystals.

Perhaps you live in, or will visit a rural area and might collect some sheep wool from a fence. Curl this into a cosy nest and pop in a tiny figure or a gumnut.

Lighting a beeswax tealight will remind you of the endurance of life and light even in darkest winter.

GABRIEL TALKS 2014

The Gabriel Talks are a series of free public talks based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, presented by the Gabriel Centre. Parents of young children, early childhood educators and anyone interested in child development are warmly invited to attend.

When:

Monday 11 August, 7.30pm – Rob Gordon presents: ‘Communicating with children and teenagers’.

Monday 25 August, 7.30pm – Lou Harvey-Zahra presents: ‘Happy Child, Happy Home: Conscious Parenting and Creative Discipline’.

Where:

Kew Library
Phyllis Hore Room
Corner Civic Drive & Cotham Road, Kew.

For more information, or to book, contact Tiffany at the Gabriel Centre on T: 9876 1092

AN ENCOUNTER WITH WALLACE THE UNICORN

By Sh’ana

You may remember Wallace the unicorn from the last newsletter.

I had wanted to talk to him for some while, and left notes all around for him; but I haven’t seen him for ages until...

One day at the end of last term, I was taking the compost up to the compost bin at kinder, when I bumped into Wallace. I mean I literally bumped into him! He was flying from a low tree branch about the height of my face, not looking where he was going and – bang! splat! – straight into my face he crashed!

Thank goodness, he was only the size of a little fairy and it didn’t really damage my face; but poor Wallace went spinning out of control and fell to the ground. (You know, he has never really got used to flying!!)

I dropped to my knees and picked him gently off the ground in the palm of my hand. He looked like he was sound asleep. I took him straight to the guinea pig house and laid him down in the straw.

I didn’t know what to do next. Then I heard the sounds of wings at my ear. A beautiful fairy landed on my shoulder and whispered in my ear (she was actually shouting but you know fairies have very little voices),

“Hello Sh’ana, my name is Henrietta the Healing Fairy, can you help me wake up poor Wallace?”

“Of course I will” I replied, and she went on to tell me that I should kiss Wallace gently on his head, and then sing along with her as loud as I could. So I leant down into the smelly hay where he lay and kissed his head. Just as I did that, the fairy started singing, and I sang along. It was a lovely song, in fairy language I think. I couldn’t understand all the words; but it went a bit like this:

*Aahahahahahaha la la la come now my healing star,
Ahahahahaha shine your light on me from afar
Ahahahahahahahahah and wake me from this sleeeeeeeep
Ahahahahahahahah alalalalalalalala
Wallace come back to me
Aaaaahahahahahaha-*

Just as we were singing the last *ahahaha*, Wallace opened his eyes and stood up on all fours and started to sing along!

“ALALALALALALA” he sang, in a loud and mighty voice (Wallace, I found out, loves to sing).

“Oh Wallace,” I said, “I’m so glad you’re ok. You flew straight into me, and I was terribly worried.”

The guinea pigs gathered around and the fairy flew down and rubbed his back and neck. Wallace was very excited to see me, and said that he probably crashed because he was watching all the children at the monkey bars instead of looking where he was going.

Henrietta the Healing Fairy then said that she thought that she should take Wallace home and get a cold pack for the big bump on his head.

I understood that he really had to go, and was a little sad to have to say goodbye to them, but Wallace promised to send me a, very funny story he said that he saw happen a long, long time ago.

I arranged to pick up the story from Yandell on the first day back after the holidays (because writing is very hard for a unicorn to do, as you can imagine, he has no hands! so he has to write it with magic, and that takes a long time.) When I went in this morning, there it was rolled up, dry, inside the guinea pig cage. And here it is:

Once upon a time there was a boy named Nikki who lived with his grandmother. On cold winter days, they would sit by the fire and warm their hands just so.

Outside, the world was covered with snow, beautiful glittering snow all around on the ground, in the trees, and on the rooftops. The whole world was white with snow. And Nikki told his grandmother, “I would like some mittens as white as the snow.”

His grandmother laughed and told him that he was sure to lose a mitten if it were the same colour as the snow! But Nikki said “Please, Grandmother, please make me mittens as white as the shimmering snow!”

So his grandmother agreed, and she gathered her balls of white yarn and her needles, and soon she had made him the mittens.

Nikki whooped with joy when they were finished and he quickly dressed in his coat and hat, his warm boots and his soft and beautiful new white mittens and he ran outside to play.

It was a crisp clear day and the sun sparkled on the snow. Nikki ran and jumped, and made snowballs to throw against the trees. He walked along the top of the stone walls, and jumped into the soft snow, and then he ran up hills and rolled back down.

He started to climb a tree but it was too difficult with his mittens on so he tucked them into a pocket. And what do you suppose? One of those mittens fell down into the snow! Nikki didn’t notice and he went right on running and playing and shouting all the wonderful afternoon.

Pretty soon a cold little mouse came up to the mitten. She was curious, so she burrowed inside the mitten and found it to be cosy and warm.

Then a possum scampered by and thought that the mitten looked like a nice place to nest, so he cosied inside as well.

Next a wombat trundled along and decided that she could use a rest in that warm mitten.

A fox trotted up to the mitten and sniffed it. He decided it must be warm inside so he stuffed himself in, and by now the mitten was becoming quite stretched out!

Now a very cold kangaroo bounced by and though she was big and the mitten was crowded, she did not want to be the only one left out in the cold. So she turned her tail and scootched herself into that mitten!

An echidna scurried by and squeaked in surprise to see a white mitten all stretched out with a mouse, a possum, a wombat, a fox and a kangaroo all snuggled together inside! She wanted to try it too so she jumped onto the kangaroo. Those little echidna spikes made the kangaroo yell “Ahhh....Ahh!!!” The kangaroo jumped! And all the animals went tumbling out into the soft snow, and the mitten went flying up into the air!

Nikki had finished playing and was looking everywhere for his mitten when much to his surprise he saw it flying through the air! Nikki caught his mitten with a "Whoop!" and ran back inside to warm up by the fire.

He showed his mittens to his grandmother. "See, Grandma, I have both my mittens!" And grandmother laughed and laughed, for one mitten was the size of Nikki's hand, but the other mitten was the size of Nikki!

(This story, 'The Mitten', is an Australian adaptation of a Ukranian folktale.)

AWE AND WONDER

When I came upon this article 'Awe and Wonder', written by Kelly Ehrman from the Lavenders blue home-school website (www.lavendersbluehomeschool.com), I found it so simple and true I had to share it. I hope you enjoy.

"Early childhood can be a magical time if we preserve this feeling! When children delight in discovering and experiencing they are developing a capacity for learning.

The first key to preserving awe and wonder is to allow for silence. Let there be some breathing space in your day when your preschooler has a chance to just experience and be in her body. Let there be plenty of room for her own imagination to roll.

The second key is to leave many questions open-ended. Your child is full of curiosity and will ask plenty of questions. But he also has many amazingly wonderful ideas! It is such a gift to allow him to feel the possibilities. When you respond to questions with "I wonder..." or even "Hmmm..." you leave room for your child to come up with a response himself. It may be a fantastical answer to his own question and that is just perfect at this age.

The third key is to respond to questions with imaginative pictures or stories. Preschoolers are in a very dreamy state of consciousness. Their minds are more pictorial than ours and less verbal. They respond best to explanations

that speak to their imaginative picture-thinking.

For example, if your young child asks why it rains she isn't asking for a factual explanation of how the water cycle works. She is asking for a description that makes sense to her. That might be something as simple as, "When the clouds become very heavy with water they burst and down comes the rain!" Or she might enjoy a little story such as, "When Mother Earth is thirsty she calls up to Grandmother Rain Cloud, 'I'm thirsty and the plants need water to drink!' So Grandmother Rain Cloud wakes up all her Rain Fairy children with her loud trumpet call and the little Rain Fairies fly cheerfully about sprinkling buckets of water down on Mother Earth. Mother Earth drinks up all that water and lets the plants drink from it too. Then, when the sun comes out, those happy plants stretch up and smile!"

Closely related to awe and wonder are the feelings of reverence and gratitude. These are all cultivated in so many ways in the Waldorf curriculum as we tell stories, develop a relationship to nature, sing, say blessings at meals, celebrate festivals, and more. Attention to the emotional and spiritual development of the person is a big part of what sets Waldorf apart and makes it a truly holistic method."