

Understanding the Meaning of Color
a guide to social emotional wellbeing

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Dedication

Angels on earth have no visible wings.

It is impossible for me to thank everyone who has supported me in the many versions of writing this book, you are in my heart forever, thank you all for being a huge part of my life. Ellen Brown, thank you for the insistence of putting my findings in a book a million years ago. Jason Wimbiscus, you put so much work into me and this book: and thank you for not ripping the semicolon off my computer. Fran Knight, you have always been my champion, words are just not enough to express my love and gratitude, BLUE, BLUE, BLUE ! Anna Bagozzi, you were with me in the beginning, in the middle and now the home stretch, you are much more than a moment, you are a life time. Rheannon Sicely, you gave me the push I needed, we are far from done with this journey. David Hans, you are the worlds best processor, thank you for all your help and patience.

To my beautiful children, Nichole, Nathan and Sarah, Jason and Clair, without your constant love and encouragement this book would have never happened. Thank you for choosing me to be your mom.

Ralph, my husband of a thousand years, I pray that I give you as much love, support and freedom to dream as you have given me.

Mom and Dad, You gave me all parts and pieces that created my meaningful life. I am grateful and love you for your part in shaping who I have become. I miss you both.

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Forward

Art had always been my escape as a child and later blossomed into a freelance illustrating career, I was good! So if someone told me thirty years ago that I would become a teacher, I would have rolled my eyes and laughed, I hated school! For some reason my dots refused to line up and I never understood what was being taught or why. I mastered staying under the radar. It wasn't until I had my own children and started volunteering in their classrooms that I discovered I had a talent for understanding the non-verbals, the awkward and so called misfits. I realized for the first time I was not alone in the whole not getting school thing. Instead I was now looking at myself as pretty cool and different, just like the kids I was working with, they had become my mirror. Their gifts of awareness kept calling me back to the classroom and I found myself more and more drawn to these strong personalities and spent years as their one-on-one paraprofessional.

In 2000, I saw an ad in our local newspaper for an arts teacher at a private therapeutic boarding school. I had no idea at that time what that really meant, I just knew I loved art and children and becoming a teacher was now a dream of mine. My extensive art portfolio and experience as a one on

one par educator for the at risk children helped me land the job. My new position was to teach art to a population of children that, for any of a number of reasons, were not faring well in the public school system. The issues these children were dealing with included learning differences, behavioral issues, addiction, tendencies toward self harm, and social anxiety.

These students, having had only negative experiences with art in the past, would often come to the art room hating art, and hating me because I was the art teacher. In order to change their perceptions about art, and what I truly cared about, I started a program where students could come to the art room and just play. I taught them how to wet the watercolor paper and then let the colors explode. It was a hit. No pressure, no thinking, just a place to create without judgment. Students began to ask to visit my class after a therapy session to do a watercolor. It wasn't long before I was analyzing and interpreting paintings by both students and colleagues and giving them assignments based on what I saw. All of the assignments were about reexamining their thoughts and perspectives about themselves and their relationships with others. The Intuitive art curriculum was born.

Introduction

Imagine...it's The first day of school and you are meeting your students for the first time. You start your day with excitement, hope and enthusiasm. Then sometime before lunch you have a student running around the room shooting rubber bands and paper clips. As you try and get a grip on what is happening another student stands between you and the projectiles wanting your full attention on the virtues of Sponge Bob Square Pants. To add to the chaos you hear crying. You manage to side step the intellectual Sponge Bob questions and the flying paper clips long enough to ask the student why she is crying. Her sullen reply, "I don't know".

What if you had just the right things to say or do that stops the disruption, empowers the student, builds relationships and creates, positive, long lasting changes? This book teaches educators therapists and parents what patterns to look for in artwork such as patterns of thought processing, frustrations, confusions and fears. Educators can keep file folders of the children's art work as a visual document of social-emotional growth and wellness.

For example these two painting are from the same child six months apart. She has a spinal disease that has kept her in the hospital with numerous surgeries. She wears a back brace, is home schooled and was extremely self deprecating. Her outwardly behaviors were defiance and destruction of property such as throwing sharp objects. After six months of redirection, guided conversation and intuitive art, her behaviors changed as did her colors.

Monitoring wellness with this method is accurate, quick, fun and inexpensive. This method is more than just an assessment tool for understanding communication styles and behaviors, it's a portal for becoming the authentic self. This entire method is experiential. The best way to understand and feel the power of this process is to do it first for yourself. I invite you now to begin your base painting

before exploring the meaning of the colors. By doing so you will have a better understanding of your own personality and how to bring this method to your students.

Chapter 1

Base Painting

You will need, watercolor paper, watercolor paints, painters tape, brushes and cups of clean water. Tape the watercolor paper down to a piece of card board or to the desk if it can withstand water. Using fresh clean water, have the students get their watercolor paper really wet. While the paper is soaking in the water, the paints need to be activated by adding a little drop of water on to each color. The painting instructions are simple, just play, have fun, notice how the paint explodes on the paper, do not to worry about creating a picture of any kind, it about the color and the movement.

The base painting is the beginning road map to understanding individual processing and communication styles. There will be a ton of information in the base painting, so breaking it down into categories makes it easier to understand. There are certain traits that we are born with that most likely won't change for example, how you process and make decisions. There are emotional processors and analytical processors and those who have both. However, our stress, fears, and frustrations can change daily depending on circumstances. I find it to be extremely important as an educator and parent to know how information is received by others. Being an emotional processor myself I have to be thoughtful when communicating to an analytical processor. If I miss the mark by not speaking their language, they may not be able to follow my direction or understand why the information is important. It can be a very frustrating relationship. The better you know yourself the easier is to help others. Once you have your own base painting finished, read though the colors, take notes and lets begin a whole new level of awareness.

Chapter 2

RED

self

When interpreting a painting, red is the first color that should be examined as it represents the person who created the painting. It is about self. When red shows up in a painting it tends to address certain questions about physical, emotional and spiritual growth. Look at red's position, depth of color, value, amount, or absence as a guide to ask questions necessary for further questions and discovery. Consider, for instance, the following shades of red.

This shade of red speaks to our physical self. When questions or concerns come up about body image or physical health, this shade of red will appear. This shade is often used in paintings by children and young adults who have not yet begun to explore their core values or belief system. It will also appear in the work of adults who are not taking good care of themselves or continually put themselves last.

This magenta color appears when a person intends to work on their inner, spiritual self. A shift from

the use of red to the use of magenta typically occurs when an individual has begun to shift focus to their own inner wellbeing.

Pink is a shade of red that represents innocence. It is common for young girls to love pink until they grow up and then they hate it and refuse to wear it. It is equally interesting that many older people return to wearing pink as symbol of innocence and a desire for less responsibility.

Depth and value of red: The use of particularly dark red tones generally indicates that a person is very present in his or her life situation. The use of faint and washed out red tones tend to indicate shyness or an individual who has not yet found his or her own voice. Alternatively, those employing faint reds may not be interested in their day to day tasks. Paintings that are speckled with many red areas, some of them being vibrant in color and others being faint, are common. This is indicative of someone who is exceptionally busy, but is not cognitively and emotionally present and does not care about everything they do. Another common scenario is people who will start a painting with red but will then cover it over with the other colors until the red can no longer be seen. This is a person who does not feel heard or valued.

In addition to shade, the position of red on a painting and the frequency of the use of red is important in that such factors indicate where and how a person views his or her place in the world.

For example.

Side: When red is on the side of the paper, it indicates that the painter operates from the sidelines of life in a passive, observational manner. For many subjects, the periphery is a safe place from which to learn. These individuals will be the type of person who needs to observe others doing an activity or task before attempting it themselves.

Top: If the red areas are on the top of the paper, the painter is going to view their world much like a bird does with an ability to see the big picture. Such people may have a need to take care of others. Although this is a wonderful trait, it is crucial that this type of personality learns the value of taking care of their self as well.

Bottom: Red on the bottom of the paper indicates a more solid and grounded approach to life. This type of personality may feel the need to control situations involving themselves and others. They need to be taught to be tolerant of other types of personalities and to not judge themselves so harshly.

Center: Red in the center indicates a personality that is comfortable being the center of attention and being heard. Children who centralize red in their painting often love being the center of attention and can also be disruptive in class. This type of personality needs to be

encouraged to find a cause or purpose and to use their gifts for positive attention and social action.

A pattern of using red: A pattern of paintings with red as a dominant, repeating color often indicates a person is focusing on the self and possibly lacks consideration for others. If this is a new pattern for someone who has been a primary caregiver in their life or profession, it could indicate that it's time for a person to care for his or her self. This is common with many adults whose children go off to college or who change careers and cannot understand their new love for red.

Lack of red: There are several reasons red may or may not show up in a painting, the first being that

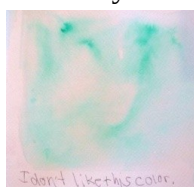
the person is in a good place and has no current issues with the self. On the other hand, if red is never used in a person's work or is not liked, the question, "What is it about yourself you're uncomfortable with?" should be asked. "What is it about you that you don't want to know or deal with?"

Side bar: I was running a five week self worth and mentoring program for a fourth and fifth grade class and their teacher. One student, a young boy, painted only in red for four weeks straight. No matter what guided question was asked, the paintings would be red. Sometimes he would add a little black pen but mostly it was all red. His behavior in the classroom matched his pattern of redness in his paintings. He would place himself between me and anyone I was talking to and just begin to talk over us. He always grabbed his supplies first, pushing his way to the front of the line thus upsetting his peers. You could tell he had no real friends. During my last

week teaching, in order to broaden the student's awareness of the feelings of others, I made him my assistant and he was required to help the class by getting supplies and then cleaning up afterwards. Before long, the student's behavior began to change; he was having real conversation with his peers and was giving instead of taking.



He produced his final painting for the class primarily in green. The red was still present (it was faint and painted first) but the green on top indicated that care and empathy for others had become a primary concern for the student. Although the text, "I do not like this color," at the bottom of his painting, suggested that the student was not yet comfortable with his emerging compassion, the shift away from "self only" could not be ignored.



Chapter 3

Blue

Emotions/Intuition/ Empathy

Blue is an indicator of emotional depth and how thoughts are processed as well as being an indicator for how we use and trust our intuition. A person who predominantly paints in blue often thinks and processes information emotionally, using feelings and intuition as their primary decision making tool. Because there are so many emotions and layers of emotions, ranging from excited and playful to sad or

confused, I look at the color first, then intensity and amount of the blue, and finally how blue is placed on the paper.

Turquoise is an indicator of playfulness and excitement. It can feel immature at times. Turquoise often shows up in the paintings of people who are typically very serious in nature as a reminder to play.

Light blue is an indicator of innocence and lack of knowledge. This color is frequently used by those who have not yet explored their purpose and who live more on the surface of life. This is a common color used by children.

This darker color blue represents a deeper feeling for the care for the world. It can feel like a responsibility to fix or do something. Young children who use this color as a pattern should be monitored as they may feel depressed or overwhelmed with feelings of responsibility.

Payne's gray/blue is an indicator of a very worldly and serious emotional individual. There is a level of fear and urgency in this emotion. This type of personality is very intuitive and empathetic and feels the world's pain. This type of personality often needs to learn to bring their emotions back to a size they can manage and ask, "What was I born to do and how can I help?" Failure to do this may result in the individual feeling overwhelmed and hopeless and they may attempt to retreat from life with drugs, alcohol, even video games.

Indigo illuminates the highest form of connection between emotion and intuition. When this color appears, this personality understands their higher purpose and accepts their role and their emotions. They feel right with the world.

Position: The position of the blue on the canvas is a key indicator for how well one contains their emotions and how often they use or trust their intuition. If the blue is everywhere in a flowing movement thought out their entire paper that indicates that their emotions are doing the same thing. This type of personality needs to learn how to breathe and slow the emotional process down before acting or saying anything. When they learn this tool, they are much better able to communicate, allowing them to feel less frustrated or embarrassed. These personalities

are warm and passionate humanitarians who need to understand that these wild emotions are really a gift of inner and universal knowledge.

Areas of blue painted in sections or pockets, indicate a personality who has, for the most part, control over their emotions and are in tune with their intuition, However the splattering of blue indicates an explosive emotional personality, responding and reacting to life sporadically.

Depth and value of blue: A person's use of deep, dark blues tends to indicate that the person experiences intense worldly or serious emotions. If it is clear in color, they tend to listen and trust their

intuition. If the color is faint, washed out, or hidden under other colors, it could be a sign of repressed emotions or embarrassment. This type of personality also has a difficult time trusting or following their intuition.

A pattern of using primarily blue:

People who primarily use blue in their work are emotional thinkers and processors. People who paint with a lot of blue have a tendency to first respond to situations emotionally and intuitively. The fact finding for these individuals comes second or perhaps not at all. The more blue a person uses in their art, the more likely they are to feel their way through life and make choices and decisions based on emotion as opposed to logic. People who incorporate a great deal of blue

into their work may assert that they don't need facts and logic, instead choosing to follow their intuition. Understanding this key piece of information is one of the best tools for communicating with others, especially with young children or nonverbal communicators. The language of a "Blue" person can sound very abstract and contradictory and their processing methods can seem very messy and unorganized. They also tend to communicate with missing words and information, leaving others to feel confused and or frustrated.

People of this nature need to be taught how to use these gifts or they may end up feeling embarrassed about their un-containable feelings and emotion. They could potentially spend so much time and energy hiding their feelings that they never get to explore or enjoy the important universal knowledge they have within.

Lack of blue: Lack of blue in a person's painting may indicate that the individual is embarrassed about their emotions and has learned to suppress and hide them. This suppression may result in an inability of the person to acknowledge his or her intuition. All humans are intuitive beings, so the danger of shutting off emotions and intuitions results in feelings of isolation.

Insert side bar story: I was working with a boy of eighteen who never used blue. In our two months of daily art journaling blue was not to be seen. The assignments were deep and personal and I read many passages from my favorite spiritual authors. I would ask specific questions to

be explored and painted and the entire class would respond with a sea of blue, except for this one young man. The next day I asked him if he would try an experiment and only paint in blue tones. He seemed intrigued and agreed. Half way through class he left my room to sit outside on the porch steps. As I sat down beside him, I noticed he was crying. In our conversation he talked about his past and what life was like being a part of gang. Showing any emotion was a sign of weakness and was potentially dangerous. He needed to appear cold and uncaring and in complete control. The next few assignments for this young man concentrated on using only shades of blue. He found himself loving the

color and became a master in verbalizing his feelings through his art work and his words. He no longer felt trapped, alone or unheard and enjoyed his newfound ability to express sadness or excitement .It felt liberating and safe for him.

Chapter 4

Orange

Analytical Processing

A person who predominantly paints in orange often thinks and processes analytically, using facts and logic as their primary decision making tool. When a person of an “orange nature” makes a decision, they are more likely to make a list of the pros and cons and spend time with that list deliberating over the best choice. Their processing skills look very organized and linear and they have learned to trust facts over feelings. Even if a person is not completely orange in nature, orange will show up in their painting when they have been thinking or deliberating on an issue. When interpreting orange it is important to look for, juxtaposition with all other colors while looking for, equal parts of blue and orange, depth of color, and clarity.

Juxtaposition: The color or colors that are next to orange in a painting are clues to what thoughts have been given energy. For example, if orange is touching or next to red, it is likely that the painter is thinking about some aspect of his or her physical or spiritual self. If there are many areas, or splatters of orange in a painting, it indicates that the painter’s brain is in constant motion with many different thoughts.

Depth of color and clarity:

The deeper more intense the color orange, the deeper, more intense the thoughts of the painter. If the orange is vibrant, clean, and not mixed with other colors, it indicates a painter who is feels very confident in their thoughts and decisions.

Orange and Blue: Because both orange and blue are indicators of thought processing, many people possess the ability to think both emotionally/intuitively and analytically. When considering a person’s use of orange and blue, first determine which color is dominant by seeing which color was painted first, then consider the clarity of each of the two colors. If they are bright and vibrant touching but not mixing, then that person has learned how to use both processing styles well. However, it is more common for people who use both orange and blue to feel in conflict with themselves. This conflict shows itself when the two colors meet to create a gray or brown murky area. Many find themselves asking the question: should I follow my heart or my head? Often, this conflict can keep people from moving forward or making any decisions. It can be very debilitating, accompanied by worries about making the wrong choice. This type of personality needs to learn that the head and heart are saying the

same thing, but they are speaking different languages and that they need to find the commonality between the two in order to make a decision.

I find that having this understanding of the blue and orange personalities is one of the most useful communication tools to have. It takes a lot of work and awareness for these opposites to communicate. As a teacher, if you are more of an orange processor, you could lose the attention of half of your students due a lack of communication and vice versa.

Orange that is murky, due to the mixing of many other colors, is a sign of confusion or frustration. Murky orange painting indicates confusion while the other colors in the painting can be clues to pinpointing where that confusion is coming from such as conflicts in thinking and feeling (orange and blue) or lack of energy in ones life (orange and purple). The types of personalities that paint in patterns of murky- orange, typically process information slowly and differently than most. They have a very hard time learning and paying attention and may present themselves as having learning disabilities. It is common to see young children who are experiencing trauma to paint in this manner. These children need acceptance, unconditional love and tons of conversation.

A Pattern of using primarily Orange: It is very uncommon to have an individual who only uses orange. By nature, we are intuitive and emotional beings. A pattern of using primarily or only orange may indicate a person who feels very isolated and alone.

A Lack of Orange: If an individual finds that he or she does not like or use orange, it is likely they use a lot of blue. Such individuals follow their emotions and intuition and find factual, analytical thinking to be tedious. However, orange teaches us that facts are important as well. Young children who exclusively use blue in their work will need to be taught to use facts and

analytical thinking for such tasks as time management, following and giving directions, and relaying the details of life's many situations. Having a blue personality paint in orange when teaching these skills helps them to make the shift from a strictly emotional thinker to thinkers who employ a balance of logic and emotion.

Side bar story: I was working with a very young mother and her three children. Each child had a different father and they moved several times a year. The three-year-old girl had taken to biting other children and although this is a fairly common in a nonverbal communicator, she bit other children in the face. All of the young girls' paintings started the same way; with orange, and then all the other colors went on top of the orange until it became a brown and gray mass of confusion. This young girl, even though she could not verbalize it yet, needed order, consistency, facts and a linear life. She was very confused, fearful and frustrated. The mother's paintings, in contrast, typically started with a very dark red spot in the middle of the paper, surrounded by a sea of light, baby blue, indicating that her

focus was on herself, with playful and immature emotions. Blue can make orange CRAZY! Although this mother/daughter relationship was a drastic example of blue and orange personalities, it's not uncommon. This mother chose to continue on her life path of being more concerned with herself and is now in the middle of another divorce. The children have become more violent and have been asked to leave several daycares.



I find the saying, “opposites attract” to be very true. In the art world, blue and orange are opposites, yet they are also complimentary colors. It is very hard for someone who needs structure and order to live with someone who shoots from hip. It's important to understand that if you are attracted to the opposite type personality, it is because you both have much to learn from each other. The more you understand and embrace how you respond to the world, while also accepting and acknowledging that others do it differently, the easier and quicker the learning will be.

Chapter 5

Yellow

Future/ Optimism

The use of yellow is an indicator of a personality that has an optimistic outlook on the future. When looking at this color as part of a painting, it is important to take note of the clarity and vibrancy of the color, along with the manner in which yellow is juxtaposed to other colors. When possible, observe participants when they are painting as many colors get buried underneath other colors. Darker colors, such as red and blue, usually bleed through for interpretation, but yellow could go undetected. Also, look for the use of yellow from people who are struggling in life. Yellow, even if non-detectable once the paint dries, indicates hope and optimism for their future.

Bright yellow indicates a clear and bright view of an individual's world. Often, a painting will mostly convey fear or confusion, but there will be a tiny spot of vibrant, clear yellow peeking through. This type of personality feels that even if the world is crumbling underneath them, their situation is bound to improve.

Yellow/Orange, when clear and vibrant in color is one of an individual who is planning their future. A pattern of not using yellow could mean that the person has no difficulty staying positive about life or having a positive outlook on the future. However, a dislike of yellow indicates denial of the

importance of a pressing issue and a reluctance to deal with that issue. This type of personality has a “gloom and doom” outlook on life and needs to work on finding a more positive outlook on life.

Side bar story: On my first day as an art teacher at a therapeutic boarding school, I went to the dining hall for lunch. The room was completely filled except for one round table with ten chairs. One small girl with obvious birth defects was sitting there all by herself. When I asked if I could join her she rudely said, “why?” I laughed a little to myself. Rather than responding with my usual off color humor, I decide to just sit down and join her. She was quite unpleasant during the entire lunch conversation. She talk about how awful everyone was and she stated that she was sure I would turn out to be the same. Later that day I had her in my art journaling class. I had the class start with a base painting to give me an idea where each student was and I how I should communicate with them. This girl’s entire paper was painted in bright yellow. She took her time using yellow, employing soft, rhythmic, brush strokes. Could this really be the unpleasant girl I just had lunch with? Then just as if a switch was turned on, she painted numerous other colors on top of the yellow, making an interesting pattern of murky, confusion and fear. While watching her interact with her peers, she was aggressively mean, telling the other girls to get out of her space and had several temper tantrums , at one point she threw her paint brush and pallet across the room hitting another student in the arm. No one wanted to be near her. But she had all that yellow. I knew that, deep down inside, she viewed her world to be better than she was indicating or allowing it to be. I sat with her at dinner that night and talked about what I saw in her behaviors and what I saw in her painting. She was so convinced that no one would like her because of her deformities that she became angry and ugly on the inside. She agreed to try my assignment and experimented painting, journaling and listening to what yellow was trying to teach her. She had to practice having love in her life and attracting people to her. Her method of interacting with others which had been developed to protect her from being hurt, was a very scary thing to change. But soon, she would call herself on her abrasive behavior and apologize to her peers when she slipped. They all valued her efforts and persistence. By the end of the school year, her paintings were full of bright clear yellow, she had several friends, and she never sat alone for a meal.

Chapter 6

GREEN

Care for Others

Green is about other people. The more care and interaction someone has with people the more green shows up in their painting. Many educators and health care providers have large areas of green on their paper and it is often the first color they paint with. Green is an indicator of health and depth of relationships, so when looking at green it is important to consider the amount of space it occupies, the depth of the color, shade, value, and clarity.

Typically, the more green a person uses, the more deeply they care for others.

This shade of yellow/ green indicates a clear and loving view of other people, this type of

personality understands their roles with others and has a largely positive view of the state of the world. This personality more often looks at the world through their spiritual lens and has a great capacity for forgiveness. The more vibrant this shade is, the more confident they are in this conviction.

This shade of green reflects a personality who feels responsible for deep meaningful relationships.

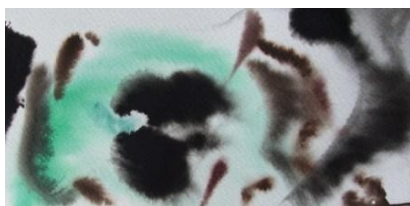
This dark blue/green presents a personality that not only feels a deep responsibility for others but also an urgency for fixing or helping. This color when used as a pattern in small children's paintings should be watch as it can lead to stress, anxiety and an inability to focus on present tasks.

Difficulty or fear interacting with people will be apparent if there is a murkiness to the green. For example, orange or analytical processing mixed with green makes a murky brownish color, indicating confusion or frustration with interactions, while green and black indicate fear of others. Colors mixed with green that stay clear and vibrant such as blue indicates a healthy and caring emotional response towards humanity.

Lack of Green: If one does not like, green or has a pattern on not using green it could be an indicator of being self absorbed, such as in the story of the fourth grade boy who only used red, or it could be an indicator of fear of people or relationships or possible avoidance of social situations. Although it is typical for young children to use more red than green, it is a pattern I watch for. Fear or lack of care for people can lead to self harm or harm to others.

Side Story: I was conducting a professional development workshop for a group of educators and was pleased to see a teacher friend of mine I hadn't seen in years. All of the participants were painting with various colors and large amounts of green as I had expected. My friend's painting was all green with no other color. I smiled as I thought about how true that was, she had been teaching first grade and kindergarten for over twenty years and was a huge contributor to the school and community. As I was reminiscing in my head, she took black paint and covered her entire painting. I was both worried and puzzled, this is not a typical color combination for an experienced, loving educator. All I could think of was maybe she was tired and done working with kids, but knowing her the way I did, that seemed hard for me to digest. I approached her at the end of the workshop, trying desperately to choose my words carefully. I pointed out that her painting was communicating fears and doubts about people and asked if there was any way I can help. She said, no, but thank you, as she and began to cry. Her husband was dying of cancer.

Concerns: The frequent use of green and black.



This first green-black painting is from a 5th grade boy who was bullied and teased about being the teachers pet! He hides his emotions, and himself and was often found under his desk. He became less and less involved in classroom activities and had difficulty making friends.

The second green-black painting is from an 8th grade boy who in contrast is outwardly inappropriate both physically and verbally. The same color combination but two drastically different outwardly behaviors. Both these behaviors are designed to hide the fact they care very deeply for others because they are embarrassed about their love and sensitivity. If not addressed this personally has potential to be violent and do harm to others. When nurtured and guided these beautiful souls love the world and feel love in return.

Chapter 7

Purple

Energy

Purple reflects one's energy level. The use of purple indicates that a person's energy needs attention. Most people can recognize the factors that drain their energy, but not many are able to discover what replenishes it. When looking at purple, I look for depth of color, clarity and juxtaposition.

Dark Purple

The darker the color the, more energy is being used. If the color is clear and vibrant without the mixing of other colors, then it indicates a replenishing energy.

Deep Violet indicates a high level of energy that is more worldly in nature, Personalities who paint in this color consistently, typically are very spiritual and content.

Light purple, even if it is clear in color indicates apathy or lack of energy. I find many children who have not found their passions to paint in mostly light pastel colors. This color also appears with adults who have become uninterested in their current life.

Where or what that energy is being used on is indicated by the color it is next to. For example, purple next to orange indicates energy is being expended on thought while purple next to blue indicates energy is being expended on emotional processes.

When purple mixes with other colors to form a murky color, it indicates that energy is being depleted. The color that purple is mixed with indicates what factor is depleting one's energy. For example when purple mixes with yellow and creates muck, it reflects a need for examining the energy being spent on ones future.

A Pattern of Not Using Purple: Purple typically only shows up when we are spiritually in tune and radiating energy or when there is an issue of depleted energy. For most people, especially children, a lack of painting in purple is not a concern. However, a dislike of the color could indicate a personality that is un-engaged or uninterested in life.

Side story

A high achieving business woman was creating her fist base painting with long strokes of yellow. Next to that was a wash of green and then gray was painted on top of the green. Black dots where then carefully painted on the yellow. She took a large pause and a deep breath as she stared at her work

before painting large purple flowers on top of everything, covering up all the colors underneath. Watching a painting happen is like listening to a conversation without any filters or judgments. Her fears were about the future, and there were doubts about people, and she was spending a lot of energy covering up her worry and concern. Talking with her and looking at her painting I could feel her inner struggles with fear and failure. People looked up to her, she was responsible for their income, and if she failed she would feel embarrassed and demoralized. I work with so many people, who are afraid to fail. I like to remind people that the only way to fail is by not showing up in your life, the failure is in the not doing. All life experiences, pleasant or unpleasant, are necessary for our growth.

Chapter 8

Brown

Protection/Hiding/ Shielding

The use of brown is indicative of protectiveness and a tendency to hide the self from others, as denial and a tendency to lie to the self or others. Brown, like black, is a color that often gets a reputation for being a “bad” color. When people hear that the use of brown is associated with hiding or protecting, they typically feel that it’s a negative trait that should be fixed. Brown merely indicates questions like every other color. Often, the things that people feel the need to protect when young end up becoming road blocks in the way of building happy, healthy relationships and need to be revisited. Brown will help people examine if they are overly protective, or not protective enough. It will pinpoint embarrassments and it will guide people to reexamine old childhood patterns. Sometimes people need to find their shields of protection, sometimes they need to learn to only be protective with certain people, and sometimes it’s about breaking down walls. There is never one answer that fits all, but when looking at brown I look for depth of color, layering and position, and juxtapositions. Consider for, example, these various shadings and positions when asking questions.

Dark brown indicates intense and deep levels of protection, hiding or shielding. This dark shade is serious in nature and is an indicator of a very protective personality.

Light brown indicates a less intense need to hide, protect or shield a life situation or thoughts. This is often a shade painted over orange indicating a protection over thoughts or ideas.

Murky brown, can be made up of any color combination or even all colors overly mixed together. I will typically see this color pattern in young nonverbal children. Murky brown is an indicator of frustration and confusion, the outward behavior that goes with this color combination often includes biting, temper tantrums, and physically hurting others. In adults this pattern typical shows up when there is a mixture of blue and orange and indicates confusion in processing thoughts and emotions together.

Red brown, is a relatively new color combination that has been calling my attention to asking questions about childhood trauma. I have only been seeing this combination and exploring it for the past few years or so, but feel it's worth mentioning. For many of the people I work with, their need for protection or hiding from life situations developed early on at the age of four or five and was caused from a traumatic event. I saw this color recently when I was interpreting a man's painting so I mentioned to him my new findings. He assured me his childhood was care free and wonderful. As we continued I couldn't move my eyes away from that red brown area, so I and kept asking questions. In his next breath he talked about his young son who had died two years ago at four years old. This color definitely warrants further attention.

Layering and position: The color that brown is painted over or what color the brown is next to is an indicator of the area of life in which protection is being used. For example, I often see brown over orange indicating a protection over thoughts and ideas. When brown is layered over blue it's a protection from showing a type of emotion and so forth.

A Pattern of Using Brown: When a pattern of using mostly brown occurs, it indicates one is living in a protected or shielded world and is often in denial. It can also indicate suppressed emotions or thoughts and perhaps an overly protective or controlling personality.

Lack of or Dislike of Brown: Not using or liking brown indicates a lack of responsibility or a need to protect oneself. I often see predominantly blue personalities not use or like brown. Because these personalities live life intuitively, they rarely think or plan for safety or keeping an emotional thought contained. This often causes another person in the relationship to feel the need to be responsible and protective for them.

Side Story

I had a young girl and her mother in one of my workshops a few years ago. The girl was only in fifth grade at the time. I knew her mother well and was happy to see them both attend my workshop. I often ask different guided questions before people paint, but this question was quite simple and open ended. Paint how you feel right now. The room became silent and meditative, some notes were made in the journal I provided, and then the paintings were done. The young girl had equal amounts of blue and orange and both were very clear and bright indication that the mix of thinking and intuition and emotions did not cause her confusion. However, across the entire top third portion of her paper was this dark looming purple covered in gray and black. Clearly she had fear about the amount of energy she had for everything she needed to do in her life. As we talked about this she rattled off everything she did and was responsible for. I was exhausted just listening to this daunting list. It was way too much and NOT fun. The young girl cried and gave me permission to talk to her mom. Her mother came up next and was holding her own painting which was done almost entirely in pastel browns. The mother was oddly defensive about her own painting, almost as if she could not comprehend any words that were said. No matter how I rephrased or simplified the fact that she was protecting and or hiding from some aspect of life, she was not ready or able to hear it. I knew it was not her time to listen or do the work, so I moved on and mentioned her daughter's feelings of being overwhelmed and overworked. Her response was, "oh she's smart she can handle it". This is another good example of how brown

personalities can stay in denial and hide by putting their head in the sand. The young girl is now in seventh grade and has begun to take her life and situation into her own hands. She's begun failing a few subjects, she's lying about where she is and who she is with and has started cutting herself. Her mother still feels she'll grow out of it. That black on top of the purple was saying, "Stop, and examine what you really have energy for." I see this black and purple color combination often and if it continues to be unheard, it will cause people to shut down and even become ill with destructive behaviors. The destructive patterns seen in black and purple can include eating disorders, cutting, and addictions.

Chapter 9

White

Ready for Something New

White is an interesting color, or non color. Any book or website that talks about the symbolic meaning of white will include words such as purity, innocence, holiness, perfection and love. When I'm interpreting a watercolor painting, white space left on the paper indicates that a person is ready, wanting, preparing, and allowing something new in their life. It is a conscious awareness and readiness for "new" to begin. The amount of white space left on the paper determines how much space one has open for suggestions, opinions, and advice. This is one of those colors that can change from day to day depending on how much someone is dealing with at any given moment.

When I see that a person has filled every inch of the paper with color, especially if there are a lot of movements and direction in the brush strokes, I know they are full. This is a good time to just listen and help them process. It is not a good time or good idea to make suggestions or offer your opinions. I find this to be a very helpful tool to use before trying to communicate or teach a class.

The simple act of painting can actually make some space for people feeling full. Depending on the person and the reasons for their emotional state, a free form watercolor painting can create space or at the very least put their thoughts and emotions in order, making them feel calmer and in control.

Side Story

These paintings were done by a young boy who had been kicked off the bus for biting his brother, hitting a friend, and swearing at the bus driver. He pushed his way through the door through the students and started flinging his coat and backpack across the room. I had been at this childcare center for over a year and all of the students knew I was the paint person. Without a word I held up a paint brush and he came right over to my little table. I call this process clearing. The first painting was full of fear and confusion about his emotions and himself. The second painting is a little more organized with some white space showing. It depicts lots of energy being expelled on his emotions and lots of brown, protecting his feelings. In the third painting we are getting back to this beautiful, intuitive, empathic, sensitive little boy, there is still a hint of fear and protection but look how clear it's becoming and look at all the white space. The last painting, wow. In less than fifteen minutes he was calm and ready to join his class.

I have many educators report to me that after my workshop, they set up watercolor stations in their

classroom. Once students practices and understand what it's for and how it feels, they will use it on their own. When the onset of stress, anxiety or anger start to build they can use the paint station to reset. It typically takes three to four quick painting before a student is ready to rejoin the class and have space for learning. This is a wonderful self regulation technique.

Chapter 10

Black/Gray

Fear/Doubts

The presence of black and gray in paintings is representative of the fears and doubts present in the painter's life. The darker the shade of black, the more fear is present in the painter's life, while gray tends to be indicative of doubts. Further, the juxtaposition of black and gray to other colors reveals a good deal about the specific nature of the painter's fears and doubts. For example, if gray or black, is covering or next to red, it indicates fears or doubts about some aspect the painter's sense of self. Depending on the shade of red to which the black or gray is near, fears and doubts could be about a physical appearance or an issue with a job performance or any parts or pieces of the self. In looking at black and gray it is also important to consider quantity or what percentage of the paper is occupied by those colors. Additionally, it is crucial to look for intensity in color and movement. A light wash of gray over yellow, for example, indicates slight doubt about an optimistic future while dots of dark black indicate many deep fears that could keep someone from moving forward. Many people have a fear of "fear" and will try to avoid using black once they know what it reveals. However, if fear and doubt need to be seen and examined, black and gray will make themselves by the blending and mixing of the other colors. Fear should not be ignored as it can be our best teacher.

Side story

This painting is from a young adult a year after college. She is very outgoing, the center of attention and she loves helping people. She, was on the honor society, played soccer, track and rugby, sang in the choirs and loved being in the school plays. If you were to ask anyone they would say she is always so happy and full of life. Her colors were mostly vibrant and clear with a few murky and fearful areas around her feelings about herself and her future. I would expect this type of fear for a new graduate however it was the beautifully painted black flowers of the entire paper that was my clue to ask more questions. I had her write her thoughts on the back of her painting, it read, "I feel content for now, yet slightly down. I'm set in my place in my life but feel a certain emptiness. Am I on my way to happiness?" Clearly there was more going on than just graduation from school and she admitted to being very depressed for a long time and just going through the motions. This painting was the catalyst for conversation and a new life plan. This second painting is from the same girl one year later after she had taken a leap of faith and moved across country to begin a new life.

Chapter 11

Children Using Black

As I was washing and refilling the many watercolor palettes I use for both of my after school programs and for my adult workshops, I realized that yellow is the most used color for adults and black is the

most used color for children. I laughed a little as it took me back to a conversation I had with a wonderful friend and amazing preschool teacher. She had been taking my professional development class for a long time and has incorporated the *Intuitive Art Method* in her classroom as a daily activity. She is diligent in monitoring and checking the wellbeing of her students. This particular year had been quite challenging for her. She had a difficult group of children that were requiring more of her time teaching emotional safety and conflict resolution while having less time for numbers and weather charts. As we were visiting and doing our own bit of art, she confessed that she just couldn't take it anymore, that her room had turned into a sea of black paintings, and she just needed a break for one day, so she took all the black paint away. Laughing, she finished by saying, so they mixed the paint and made their own black!

Again, If black and gray need to show up, they will. Many parents and teachers, when they first learn about the meanings of these colors, become very worried when their children use black. Yes, there are cases where the combination and repeated patterns of using black with other colors can be a sign for concern and professional help should be sought. However, and, I cannot emphasize this enough, you must think like a child. As adults we are concerned with our child's physical and emotional safety but the average child's fears and doubts are not the same as those of adults.

Chapter 12

Children's Fear

I'm always curious what fears children have so in one of my visits to a preschool class I had an exercise that I hoped would illustrate two things: First children's fears are very different than adults'. Second, this method could be used for checking a child's level of resiliency. The exercise was simple. I had a piece of watercolor paper taped to a flat board with a piece of tape dividing the paper in two. The first set of instructions was to paint how they felt when they were scared. I watched the children paint with lots of blue and black. After about ten minutes, the second set of instructions was given and the children were asked to use the other side of the paper to paint how they felt when they were happy. Most of the children in the class were able to make the shift from painting their scared feelings to their happy feeling. The black seemed to stop and lot of reds, greens, and blues were used, but there were two children who could not make the shift and continued to paint in black. The paraprofessional in the room was struggling with my direction of allowing both these children to continue painting "scared" and not follow the directions of changing to "happy". The children did not want to contain their paintings to one side or the other, and there was no division between scared and happy. In talking with both children, they only wanted to talk about the scary stuff, no matter how many times I tried to redirect the conversation. I think about this exercise often when, tragedy hits our families and communities. Some children really need more attention and processing time.

Interestingly, I found out that the number one thing these children were scared of on that cold November day was deer. It took me a while to remember to think like a child. This was hunting season in Vermont and most children here grow up in hunting families where it is tradition to shoot, clean and hang a deer in their yards. Often, the child's picture is taken with this dead deer. I'm not weighing in on hunting, I'm weighing in on having conversations. As the teacher and I talked about this fascinating discovery, she decided to include hunting traditions into her Thanksgiving curriculum, along with sending a note to parents to just talk about hunting in their own families.

Chapter 13

Empathy

I am finding another reason children often paint with black is that so many of our young children are empathic. These children feel what others are feeling, but often have neither an understanding of these emotions nor a way to define them.

I struggle with the notion that our children need to be taught how to be empathic. Some may be but not the majority. I have been studying various educational practices that teach social- emotional intelligence and my classroom experience illustrates that we might be missing the boat. Most children today are born with a combination of empathy and intuition. You will see this in children who continually paint with dark blue. For me the question has never been can you feel what others are feeling, but do you know what to do with those feelings and do you know that they are not yours?

I was working and painting with three preschool girls. We were sitting around a tiny table talking and the girls were painting in light blue, purple, magenta, and green. We were interrupted by a teacher grasping a little boy's hand. He had been destroying the classroom, hitting and kicking anyone who came near him and swearing at his teacher. This was my clue to invite him to paint with us. As I was getting his paint and paper ready I looked over to see that all three of the girls covered their paintings in black. The little boy painted in red and black. I didn't want anyone going back to their classroom in that state, so we stayed and painted for another thirty minutes. This time I put the little boy in my lap while we painted together as I told him how much I loved him. The last painting from the girls went back to their original colors with lots of white space, the little boy's painting was all red with some white peeking through.

One of the four year old girls from this painting group joined me in a parents night. She was going to be my helper and show parents how to do a watercolor painting. She sat down and painted with each parent that came by our station. What was fascinating was that each of her paintings were nearly identical to the parent's painting.

So who are these little beings? This little girl comes from a very typical situation. Her and her brother were taken away from the parents and put into her grandmother's custody. She is overly responsible and constantly making sure her little brother is not in danger. She also scans the classroom making sure everyone is doing what they are supposed to be doing, if not she informs the teacher. She often seems sad and has bursts of what I call quite, temper-tantrums where she crosses her arms sits on the floor and refuses to move. Even at age four she is able to work with me on sorting out whose feelings she is feeling, and what we should do with those feelings.

I have seen this situation demonstrated on numerous occasions. I was working with a young mother of one who wanted another child. She was diagnosed with OCD, (obsessive-compulsive disorder) depression, high blood pressure, and was taking a cocktail of medicines. She started coming to my studio for sessions, and often brought her three-year-old daughter with her. The little girl loved to paint with us and seemed happy to do so for an entire hour. The mom painted and talked in code, about all her fears, her nightmares, her childhood etc. while her child was sitting next to her painting all in black.

To the mother, this immediately confirmed, that all her horrible thoughts and fears that her child was being harmed in some way were true.

During the next six months of working with the mom and her residual childhood fears, we tried a few exercises with the daughter. One day, I had her paint with just me. Her painting was clear red, blue, green and oranges. It looked and felt content. The next time, I had her paint with her cousins and some of their friends. Who she sat next to would determine what the painting looked like. The painting always looked the same as the child she was sitting closest to. We did this four times with the same results. This little girl's level of compassion, empathy, and intuition show up in her paintings and she paints the feelings of others. As the mother, worked on rewriting her childhood beliefs her fears begin to disappear and her doctor was able to take her off all her medication. She is happily pregnant with her second child. I have seen this scenario play out with many children and adults.

Another example of an empathetic child was a five-year-old girl who I began working with during my after school program. This child has the most wonderful parents who are very attentive and loving. Week after week she would paint in beautiful hues of blue and magenta. One day, she painted black on top of everything. Not being too concerned I chatted with her to see if there were any changes in her life and how she was feeling. There seemed to be nothing different. After the second week of seeing this pattern of black, I had to ask her parents the same question. The parents were worried and concerned, but had no idea what would cause her pattern of fear. They did notice that her energy level was down and she was not her usual chipper self. The next day, the parents told me that the father had been diagnosed with cancer. The young girl talked about it some in class that day, but her paintings went back to blue and magenta. Even now, her parents can tell days before a doctor's visit if the father is in remission or not by the colors painted by their daughter.

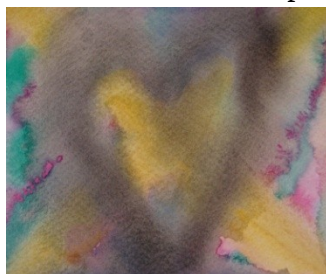
There are many emotional intelligence programs with facial expressions charts and even color charts to help children learn and understand their emotions, but empathic children feel things that are not theirs, making the question, "how do you feel," feel daunting and alien. For one teenage girl I was working with, the question made her believe she was crazy. She only felt sad and depressed to the point of being suicidal even though her life was good and included loving parents, good friends, and good marks in school. Why was she so unhappy? I had her carry a journal with at all times her for two weeks straight. She was to write down her thoughts and feelings as she woke up and then throughout the entire day. Every time she sat near someone or had a conversation, she had to write down her emotional shifts. She found that even if she didn't engage in a conversation with the person she was next to she would begin to feel an emotional change. Moving from one person to the next while examining how many times her emotions changed, confirmed that she was emphatically feeling the weight of the world. Once she realized what was happening, we were able to develop shields and strategies for using this gift for helping others without it killing her or making her think she was crazy. Even today as an adult, as she grows and helps more and more people, she needs reminding of why she feels the way she does. Fear, just like love, is transferable.

Chapter 14

Fear, Doubt and Un-love

We know that negative and hurtful words from others can make us develop fears and doubts about

ourselves, but it is rare to observe this process occurring. My students were creating the last painting of the day, a free flow painting of anything they wanted. The room was fun and chatty and the students were talking about a former student who recently moved. One student started her painting with beautiful clear yellows, blues, greens and magenta. Then another student looked at her and told her that the girl who moved never liked her. The adult supervisor in the room, in her attempt to make the situation better said, “don’t worry, I told the girl before she moved that sometimes people change when they grow up, and that she might like you when you grow up.” Without a word, this child, dipped her paint brush in black and covered her blue halo that was previously surrounding the yellow heart.

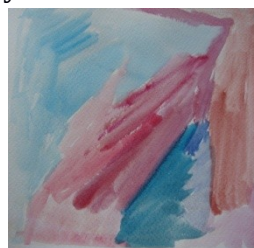


This situation also occurred when I was working with a nonverbal autistic man and his caregiver. He was happily painting in reds and blue, but then the conversation changed to someone the caretaker didn’t care for, the man immediately went to the black paint. With short, frustrated movements, he painted on top of his other colors and slammed down his paintbrush. He did this several times until the caretaker was done talking.

A substantial amount of research has been done on the subject of fear and it would be impossible to cover it all in any book. The main point is to know when fears and doubts are within us they ask, “What is my fear trying to teach me?” As for the young girl who painted the above picture I didn’t want her going home with the fear of being unloved especially by someone she thought was a friend , I brought her aside to continue painting. As we talked we listed all the things the two girls had in common, even the things she didn’t like about herself. She was able to understand that sometimes we are friends with people because they are our mirror and we can learn and grow from.

Chapter 15

Resiliency



These paintings are from two boys with similar life situations. The first painting is from the a boy whose father is in jail. And his older brother was in numerous car accidents due to drugs and alcohol. Most of his paintings look this way. When I was there for a four week Intuitive Art residency, It was all he wanted to talk about. When I relay this information to his teacher and guidance councilor they said,” yeah it gets old ,we try to redirected him back to academic work”. The second painting is by a

boy with a similar life situation. He was removed from his house by police due to domestic violence and addictions issues with his parents. He was separated from his brother and is now adopted into another family. The second boy consistently paints clear pictures. He is very present in his everyday activities which are indicated by the use of red. His emotional sensitivity is reflected in the use of blue and his clear thinking about his emotions is indicated by the use of orange. This boy has his adoptive parents to talk to daily about his situation clearly building more resiliency and acceptance. How do we know if our children are really okay or if they are just holding everything in?

Using the exercise I gave the preschool class. Ask the students to think about something that makes them scared and let them paint for 5 to 10 minutes. Next, ask them to think about what makes them happy and have them paint a new painting. The children who can't or won't move to the next assignment need more attention; they are not as easily moved from one emotion to another by suggestion or words. Let them continue with the painting their way, just take note how well they handed change throughout the day and allow them a safe, consistent place to talk and process.

Chapter 16

All our beautiful children

We have a more sophisticated vocabulary and diagnoses for our children than when I was growing up. Labels such as stupid, lazy, Special Ed, and my favorite, not living up to your potential have been redefined to ADHD, OCD, ED, NLD, dyslexic, Autistic, and with learning differences. The labels may have changed but the feelings of shame and brokenness remain the same.

As children go to doctors, specialist and meetings at schools, the parents get more worried and frustrated which often looks like anger and the teachers get overwhelmed with the huge responsibilities of classroom management and academic success. By attaching these labels and feelings, not only does the child feel broken but it also allows for excuses from the child to give up or expect less of themselves.. One amazing young boy I work with sums it up so beautifully, “The doctors don't really know what's wrong with me, but I get sent to the “*not teacher*” This illusion can be changed.

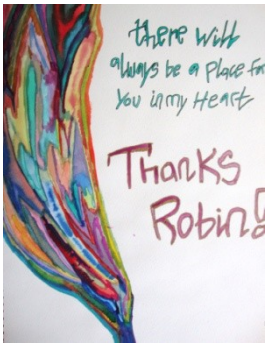
I am reminded that there are only two emotions Love and Fear and both are contagious. These are just a few examples of what some of our “beautiful” children look like.



This painting is from a young man who learned how to use Intuitive Art journaling as a way to remain sober and deal with anger, anxiety, and ADHD. This particular day he was dealing with a heated issue with his roommate. He wanted to pummel his roommate but chose to paint first. You can see and feel all the emotions he was carrying. The line work that you see outlining all the shapes and colors is part of meditative process I teach. This took him a full day to create.



This was his second painting he created before he confronted his roommate. You can see by the red and orange that he was now thinking – specifically, thinking about how he was going to respond. His emotions are less intense and his anxiety was more in check (indicated by the tightness of the line work). The conversation went well; the boys resolved the issue and they remain good friends.



This is from a boy labeled with ADHD whose teachers and doctor begged the parents to try medications. I called him a puppy due to his bouncing around everywhere; both his vocabulary and his actions were often if not always inappropriate. He is smart and funny and quite the athlete and failing all academics classes. On top of that he hated art. I allowed him to come to class and just play, he didn't need to learn how to draw or learn any techniques or theories, he just had to play in an art journal. When he was allowed to create in his journal in his classes, he found he could sit for hours and participate in the classroom discussions at the same time. He became a straight A student and went on to a regular high school, without needing medications. He's still struggles with being inappropriate but he has been demonstrating the ability to self regulate more often.



This was created by an absolutely brilliant and creative young man with the best and oddest sense of humor (most of the time it was over my head). He was diagnosed with Autism and OCD (obsession compulsive disorder). During the day, he washed his hands so many times that they would bleed. However, when he was in the art room painting and doing line work, he never washed his hands.



NLD (Non verbal learning disorder). When they told me that this young girl didn't talk much or express or understand her emotions, I wondered if we were talking about the same child. However I had read her colors and seen her art work, I felt like I had been given the privilege of knowing the depth of her emotions and understanding of the world. The more I was able to verbally communicate her words for her, the more she got the hang of doing it for herself. When our school community began to understand and honor her in her ability to communicate so deeply and gracefully in her artwork, she began to open up and talk quite clearly about how she felt. As a result she was able to nail an interview at a prestigious art high school which she passionately convinced her parents into letting her go.

Conclusion

Every time I step into a classroom or day care center I am continually fascinated with so many different combinations of personalities, behaviors and relationships between teacher student and parents. It reminds me that one question or one answer never fits all. Because emotions, personalities and environment plays a role in developing our deep and complicated selves, we must look past words and actions to truly connect, understand and help our fellow humans. The power of awareness, patience and acceptance can change the course of a day, even a lifetime. When you can look at a child's painting and respond with, "wow you look really full today, how can I help", instead of how are you today, You have step into a realm of deep trust and understanding. We all want to be understood especially when we don't even understand our self. That is exactly what this method does.

There is so much more I want share but it's impossible to digest and implement all this information all at once. This book is intended as an introduction, use it as an experiment for you and your students, parents and even you own children. The more you use it the more aware you become. The more aware you become the more change happens.

I am overwhelmed and in awe of the beautiful children and adults who trusted me enough to share their most sacred self. We can guide our children to healthy positive thinking by being aware, non-judgmental, loving and sometimes a little out side of the box.

Above all, trust you own intuition; you are here today because of your deep empathy, compassion and love.

