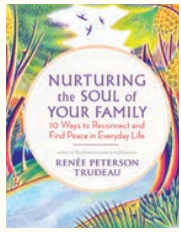


Nurturing the Soul of Your Family

Written by Renee Peterson Trudeau



This was my summer favorite! *Nurturing the Soul of Your Family* was written for parents to help them “reconnect and find peace in everyday living,” as the title says. The book touched my heart, gave me pause to reflect, and made me want to keep reading. Each chapter opens with what Renee coins as a “pause for peace,” and a short, thoughtful introduction to the chapter’s topic. It helps focus and center the reader. The chapter ends with an invitation to look at your family life and recognize what is working: successful moments, practices, or traditions. She also lays out how to put the idea into practice and suggests a journaling exercise as a means of reflection and contemplation.

The book appeals to both men and women. It’s about family life, espe-

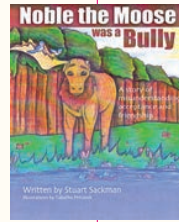
cially for those who are in the throws of child rearing. My husband and I are mostly at the empty-nest stage of our lives, and I found it to be a wonderful reminder for me to be conscious and active in creating peace and staying connected with him. As I read it, I also thought about my daughter and son, who are not in the child-rearing stage yet, but who are certainly in relationships. This book would be great to help prepare them and their partners for a time when they might choose to have children. Obviously, it will strongly appeal to those of you who have children and want to find peace and connection in your families.

You will want to own and get copies for friends and family. You can order your copy at www.amazon.com.

Noble the Moose Was A Bully

Written by Stuart Stackman
Illustrated by Tabatha Petrasek

This is an interesting story about an animal that was a bully to other ani-



mals and even people. The idea of the book is to show that sometimes a bully just needs to be stood up to in order for things to change. In this story once the bully was stood up to, he became less aggressive and began to talk about how he had been misunderstood. It seemed to be quite an easy process to go from there to becoming friends.

Young children (3-5 year olds) have a difficult time when we give human traits to animals such as speaking, sleeping in human beds, and crying. The story could be confusing as well because it seems that all the animals

are friends with each other which is not a characteristic of these forest animals. So I would suggest that it might be a good discussion starter for elementary age children. In this way older children, who have a more mature grasp of reality, could get a more in depth and realistic idea of how to deal with “bullying” situations.

learning experiences. Our teachers, parents, and folks from the Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (IFAS) have made great efforts to put together activities in our gardens. And, I am always on the lookout for great resources for parents and teachers to help in providing challenging, fun, and engaging activities and projects for gardening and nature studies. Kelly Johnson, an artist, gardener, and seasoned Montessori teacher has put together this simply illustrated gardening and outdoor learning guide that is loaded with activities and projects for children 3-10 years old. Parents and teachers alike will find this a useful resource for enhancing their children’s experience in nature.



I love that Kelly shares activities to get children ready to go into the outdoor environment with the tools, the respect, and the information to have meaningful encounters with the plants and animals they will encounter. For example, before the children go out, they make their own “sit-upons,” organize their collection baskets, create pouches for magnifying glasses, scissors, and more. Conversations are had while preparing to go out into the garden: what they may see and how to observe; the jobs of insects and birds; and the kinds of plants and leaves that can be discovered. Preparation is the key to how the children will act in nature: the difference between ‘recess’ and actual reverence and inspiration.

Kelly provides observation charts, experiments with pollen, designs bird stationary, and celebrates “bird day!” Do you want to know about composting? Would you like to find out about the different types of birds’ beaks and how they work? What about seeds and leaf shapes, or how about a color-wheel scavenger hunt in nature? I love this book! If you would like to learn more, you can go to Kelly’s website at www.wingswormsandwonder.com. Also, plan to join us in Sarasota for the Montessori Foundation/IMC Conference in November, where Kelly will be one of our many amazing presenters. See you there!

For more information you can go to www.noblethemoose.com.

Wings, Worms, and Wonder

Written & Illustrated by Kelly Johnson

Ok. So I already said that *Nurturing the Soul of Your Family* was my favorite summer read; however, *Wings, Worms, and Wonder* is equally brilliant and inspiring.

We are so fortunate to have garden areas for every classroom at NewGate School (Sarasota, FL). They are wonderful additions to our students’



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