

HEART MATTERS

NON SCHOLÆ SED VITÆ

Libraries of Hope Newsletter

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to a new school year and another tour around the world through the rotation schedule. What will you discover in your explorations this year?

--**We have made a change** to the Nature Series. It will no longer be Nature, Art and music--just Nature. The Art and Music books will be added to the new Appreciation Series next year, but available as individual purchases in the meantime.

The insides are the same, but we have added new Fine Art covers and the Music and Art books have been replaced with the Nature Bundle. If you are a current subscriber, you will finish out with the original books unless you tell us otherwise. You can see the new covers on our [Nature store page](#).

--**One more book you may want** to include in your order is the new Symphony Stories. What I did was take all the stories from the program notes of the North Carolina Youth Symphony Stories, arranged them by rotation and put them in one handy reference book. This gives you a simple grab and go music appreciation lesson. They are the same stories you’ll find in the Music+Story feature on the Enrichment pages, but I never got through all of the program notes, so this gives you a more complete collection.



Symphony Stories

ADELINE MCCALL

“THE HEART IS A PLACE THAT UNDERSTANDS YOU IN YOUR PRESENT PLACE.”

If you go to [Spotify](#), there is a

(Announcements cont.) “Symphony Stories for WEH” list. The numbers correspond with the numbers in the book. Or, you can do a quick YouTube search to listen to the music performed.

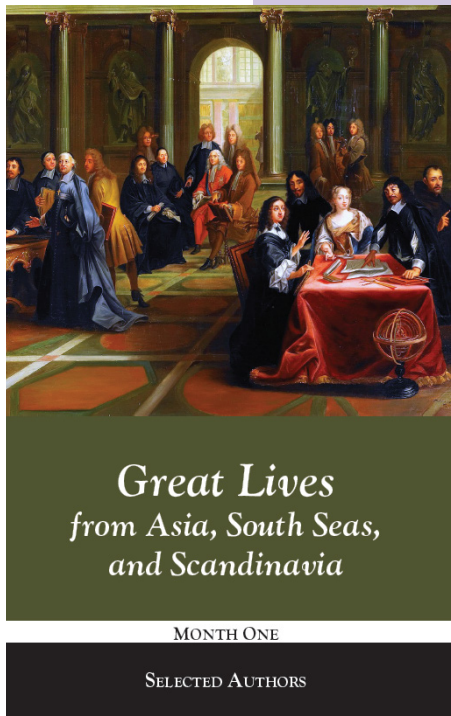
[Here’s a link](#) to the book in the store. You’ll find it in the “Other” category.

--I recently announced that we are offering an alternate version of the Great Lives Series. I, personally, can’t think of any more valuable study for our youth than the study of lives. It isn’t so much what we need to know about them --it’s what they can teach us about living our own lives that matters!

Currently the Great Lives are organized by subject--Great Artists, Great Inventors, Great Humanitarians, etc. That version will continue to be available to you.

But the new version is organized by rotation. We included all the stories of the original version, but found a few months needed some more.

Month 1 was especially lacking. So you will find a lot of stories not found elsewhere. Month 1 includes stories from Asia, Scandinavia and the South Seas.



Because a people’s religious and spiritual beliefs are very much a part of their worldview and stories, and we are growing hearts that understand others, I included chapters from a wonderful book I found called *Had You Been Born in Another Faith* by Marcus Bach. In month 1, we cover Buddhism, Shintoism, Confucianism, and Hinduism.

Although the stories of the lives are arranged chronologically, you will find an index where the stories are sorted by country if you are looking specifically for people from specific countries.

Many of the names will be unfamiliar--but all of them are there to inspire your hearts.

--“The only thing that counts in the world is character, and education matters only so far as it helps to shape character. If it leaves character untouched, it is useless.” --Arthur Mee

Arthur Mee was born in 1875. He wanted to make learning interesting for children, so he created *The Children’s Encyclopedia* in England which was later brought to America and introduced as *The Book of Knowledge*. Ever

striving for the uplifting of humanity, after World War I, he created a *Children’s Newspaper* for the purpose of inspiring and lifting the hearts of young people and showing them what good looked like. The world at large was showing plenty of the bad, just like today. He was encouraged to take a seat in government, but he said he could do far more to right the wrongs of the world by reaching out to young people and inspiring their hearts.

Among his offerings was *Arthur Mee’s 1000 Heroes*. Starting on September 1st, once a day I will release a new audio of one of his heroes at myworldstorybook.com. Just like *My America Story Book*, you can listen for free, you can read it for free, or you can buy a hard copy of the book with full color illustrations.

And just like *My America Story Book*, you can print out images I’ve provided that can easily be cut out and pasted into your own book of *Heroes*. I’m in the middle of putting together a podcast on that. If you don’t have a printer, for \$5.00 a month (plus shipping), you can have the convenience of having them delivered to your home. Look at the top of the monthly pages in the site for the links.

The stories are arranged chronologically according to the monthly rotation topics, but you can quickly see which ones will be the ones that will align to whatever you may be studying that month.

“THERE IS NO SUCH
THING ON EARTH AS AN
UNINTERESTING SUBJECT;
THE ONLY THING THAT
CAN EXIST IS AN
UNINTERESTED PERSON.”

--G.K. Chesterton

Art credit: Springtime by Johann Sperl



(Announcements cont.) There is no getting behind on this. The stories are short--10 to 15 minutes is all. A small investment of time to do some character building.

Will you watch and share this short [2-minute video](#) with others? These stories are for everyone. Let's spread the influence of Arthur Mee's work--we need it. Look for it on the app under My Story Book.

Tribute paid to Arthur Mee: Our storytelling guide is the incomparable Arthur Mee who was a friend to millions of children all over the world. His life's work was to make the world interesting to children. He believed the solution to a dark and war-torn world was to fill the hearts of the youth with goodness. This tribute was paid him upon his passing: "He has given us many wonderful things to guide us on the road of life; books that we may become wise; knowledge that we may become learned; the arts that we may appreciate the beautiful, and he shared that love with us. Arthur Mee influenced the characters of thousands of children. Our friend has passed from this world, but he has left a heritage that will be dear to our hearts for ages to come."

--A year ago I introduced My America Story Book. We've added a lot of members to our group since then, so let me re-introduce it. I gathered stories from dozens of American history books written for young people a hundred years ago. I think you will be surprised at how fair and balanced they were. The purpose of MASB was to awaken an interest in the study of our nation and I have been so happy to hear the success stories that it has accomplished exactly that in many of your homes.

There is a story for each weekday that you can listen to for free, or read for free, or if you'd like a hard copy of the book with full color illustrations, you can purchase that in our store. There are also images you can print out for creating notebooking pages or if you'd like the convenience of having them delivered to your door each month, it's \$5.00 a month.

The stories align with the rotation schedule. Although I unfolded one story a day, that was for my own pacing purposes. Now that they are all available to you, go at your own pace. Don't fall into the trap of feeling that you are falling behind! Just do what works for you!

What age are they for? That's hard to say. Generally, I'd say 8 and older. But some of you have children who are younger than that who have enjoyed them. And some of your children may not be ready until they are a little older than that. Plus there is a variety of age appeal among the stories. So I would say--listen for you! And see which of your children listen with you.

Also, I noticed a lot of people didn't notice the Music button that went with a lot of the stories. It's a simple way to add a little Music into your day that goes along with the stories. Find it all at myamericastorybook.com.

WEH IN ACTION

--Guys!! The Well-Educated way of learning works. Our family went to a history museum and met Lincoln, Washington, and Mary Bickerdyke, a Civil War nurse, and more. The re-enactors were so impressed with the children's knowledge and interest in hearing their stories. The kids fired so many questions at them and we had long conversations. My daughter looked at me as we were leaving and said, "Mom, it was like meeting an old friend." I felt my heart just warm.

--I am viewing our homeschool as a river versus a canal. A canal is in a straight line, it has concrete barriers on each side and weeds growing on the ground around it. A river curves and follows a natural path. It crosses over a straight line but is not inhibited by it. Many beautiful plants and trees grow on its banks. Fish swim in it. A river is life giving all along its path.

I have recently realized that by following the rotation we get regular exposure to poetry, stories, fairy tales, nature study and art. I was trying to do all of these separately and it was a little overwhelming. This year I have organized my extra books by rotation and printed off all of the booklists. I am excited to follow the rotation all year this year!

--Since reading the MU Art book, I adopted a simple daily experience to better appreciate art and have passed it on to my children. I want to share it here because sometimes we tend to over complicate things--and this philosophy is actually quite simple and organic.

Simply put, we tell stories about the art we see.

I began the rotation early, because

I'm about to have a baby and wanted to feel able to take a break when baby comes--so we are studying Scandinavia this week. A part of our Morning Basket is reciting poems and interpreting stories from art. We often use the WEH Book of Delights for this. It's fun to come up with different stories for the same piece of art.

My son's stories are often my favorite because he actually tells a story. My daughter always describes a snapshot in time of the story and is fun to hear.

--TLDR: Notebooking, y'all. Just try it!

I made a connection a few days ago that was like a punch to the gut. I was getting frustrated that I would read amazing non-fiction books and not retain hardly anything from them. I'm a fast reader, so I could get through one in a few days, so I have a pile of books I have read that I can't remember much from. After Marlene's post a bit back about notebooking, I started feeling a nudge to get back into it. I used to do it all the time, but it slowly died as kids came into the picture and the 'I'm too busy' excuses came along with them. I realized that I'm 'too busy' NOT to do it. The thoughts and ideas I find are treasures I should cherish, and I don't want to have to try and find them again when I can have a central place for them all.

I decided to take Marlene's comments about notebooking as a challenge to get back into my note taking habit. I printed out some dot grid paper, threw a cardstock cover on it and called it good. It's not pretty, but it's functional and works. I'm currently reading a book that could have taken me a few days to get

through, but I'm going on two weeks with it. But, I've been able to find things that have helped me in my life and home that are immeasurable. And now I have a record of those things to go back to and remember.

I know I'm lucky that notebooking and writing things down comes easily for me. It's a challenge for my husband (he has dyslexia, so words are tough for him), and he always says he's jealous of my talent. I never thought of it that way, as a talent. But, talents can be cultivated and worked on, strengthened and refined. If you feel the push to do it, try it out. It will be hard at first, just like any new habit or skill, but keep with it! It's worth it! I promise you won't be disappointed.

--I've been really getting into and enjoying notebooking! For years I've been studying and trying to feed my heart--but so little has stuck with me--I love something and I forget! It's been frustrating and overwhelming because I have not known how to take it all in and keep it. We play a lot of sports at our house so just go with me here... In baseball, notebooking is like fielding a ground ball and taking it in to your chest and making sure you have it before you throw the ball to make the out. I can't share my knowledge before I catch it and take it in--I've got to hold onto it myself before I can let it go!

--Mom-heart being warmed here... I borrowed *The Unknown Lincoln* from my dad's library this summer. I ate that story alive. I read it whenever I could. I really savored getting to know Abraham Lincoln through Dale Carnegie, the author. It reminded me of the book *Rifles for Watie*, an historical fiction book about the Civil War. So I picked it up

(WEH in Action cont.) and read it. There was overlap, so I came to understand both stories better, particularly the Missouri Compromise and Kansas free-men. I wanted to know better the lives of Generals U.S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, so I picked up their book in the Freedom Series. Then, I was listening to “State-Making” in MASB and found more information that overlapped that made me smile. The big picture is coming together for me as I read many stories! And I like it so much that I remember them and tell them to my kids whenever I can!

--Why are you a part of WEH? What is it all about? Rhetorical question. I had a light bulb moment after listening to ‘A planner’ in section 5. I was refreshing my memory for the new school year, and I have to admit I almost skipped it. But I’m so glad I didn’t. I was blown away by all of it! Isn’t it funny how doing, watching, listening to something countless times we catch something different every time? The rotation makes so much more sense now.

--I’ve wanted to post this for a while, but haven’t. Marlene posted this morning: “Think simple.” I can attest to that. All I did was check out her amazing booklist for the month. I put as many as were at my library on hold. I picked them up, brought them home, and placed them on our shelves. And then we read (which is nothing new around here). I read to the children, I read to myself, they read to themselves, they read to each other, my husband read to them. And it has been magical!

--When I first found Well-Educated Heart I loved the ideas and they resonated with me so much, so I tried to jump right in. I loved the idea of finding joy more often, but as a lot of us have found, the execution seemed to be lacking.

I often found myself feeling discouraged because I would want to feel more joy because I was feeling sad, anxious, or overwhelmed so I would go and listen to some happy classical music or read a silly poem. Now sometimes this worked, but the majority of the time I would end up feeling like maybe I was doing something wrong. I feel like I have gotten a lot better at applying these principles, but a thought came to my mind this morning that helped me to understand why they are working for me better.

The heart is a place that understands you in your present feelings. Joy is actually found when we understand and are respectful to ourselves! If you are feeling sad and you go and find a poem that captures the reason you are feeling sad or listen to some sad classical music, you could feel joy much quicker than if you were trying to distract from what you are presently feeling.



“TEACHING KIDS TO COUNT IS FINE,
BUT TEACHING THEM WHAT COUNTS IS BEST.”

--Bob Talbert

Art credit: Mental Calculation by Nikolay Bogdanov-Belsky



MARLENE'S MUSINGS

--As you prepare for a new school year, for those of you who want to incorporate more of a WEH learning style in your home, remember--it doesn't have to be all or nothing to begin. I always recommend that you keep doing whatever is working for you now, keep studying yourself, and then gradually make changes according to what makes sense to you.

I compare it to dieting. Have you ever switched to a drastic diet of unfamiliar foods? Pretty rough, huh? And chances are it failed. What has had the most success for me is to keep adding healthier alternatives to my favorite foods; to add better habits like more water or more exercise. Doing Silver Sneakers at my age is a much better choice than starting with a 26-mile marathon.

Keep repeating to yourself: If I can't make a mistake, I can't make anything. Because really--there are no mistakes! Only opportunities to learn, and often it is learning what does NOT work.

I'll do all I can to support you from my end and you are surrounded by wise and caring friends in this group. You don't have to do this alone. By small and simple means, great things will be accomplished!

--If you are struggling to plan for the coming year and want to give the rotation schedule a try, think simple. It is so easy to overthink things and to overplan.

We recently organized the [Forgotten Classics Family Library](#) by the rotation. Within each month you will find the books from the library that apply to that month's topics. They are laid out from beginning learners to more mature learners. I suggest you start at the top and work your way down no matter how old your kids are.

How do you use them? You open the book and read. The stories are the teachers.

Each volume is unique--they may have 300-400 pages, but if you look inside, you will see you don't have to read front to back. Most are comprised of several smaller sections.

For instance, in this month's Norse Stories, I included 3 different book versions. I always put the simplest first. So maybe this year you'll start with just the first book within the book. Or even a few stories. Then revisit it in a year or two and maybe pick up the second one. It reviews and adds to. Everything in the library is designed for layering. These books are available as free digital reads or you can buy hard copies.

Then see where interests lead you! Use the bigger LOH library to supplement.

No need to read all day long. That may just give your kids indigestion. Many stories will suggest activities--for instance, when you read about the stars, you'll find yourself wanting to go outside and explore the stars yourself.

I'm working on a new notebooking presentation. A lot of you are struggling with the concept. I'll see if I can make it any easier. And if the rotation is still daunting, I suggest starting with Book of Delights Series and for your 8 and older, My America Story Book and the new My World Story Book.

Throw in one of the first Sunshine Series on the list for a family read aloud, and you will have a very rich 'curriculum.' I need to move Golden Name Day up to the top of the list--it has a Scandinavian flair for Month 1 and is perfect for little listeners. I even recorded it if your voice is tired. You'll find it in mybelmonde.com.

--Like many of you, I am shocked and horrified at how quickly the Taliban has seized control of Afghanistan.

As I have pondered over the situation, to me it is a clear demonstration of how Mind and Reason aren't enough. Government officials counted on the fact that the Afghan troops heavily outnumbered the Taliban. They had equipped them with firepower and heavy weaponry. Logic would have them the victors.

(continued on the next page)

(*Marlene's Musings cont.*) But as a Time article said, "In the end, not one piece of this multibillion-dollar arsenal, which now all belongs to the Taliban, could replace the willingness to fight or the instinct for survival...."

As Afghan troops saw that fellow soldiers who surrendered to the militants were allowed to live and those who fought were often brutally executed, they allowed the insurgents "to walk through Kabul's city gates untouched."

I would say their Hearts failed them. Life was dearer to them than Liberty.

How did a ragtag army of colonists beat the world's largest and most well-trained military machine? Their hearts had already decided that Liberty was worth dying for. Reason alone would never have given them the courage to declare their independence.

If we ignore the Hearts of our children, they, too, will not resist tyrannical powers. And if you haven't noticed yet in your study of history, Tyranny is always lurking in the shadows of a free people.

We cannot expect to train their minds about the workings of our Constitution and expect that to be enough when someone is threatening their life or possessions. They have to love Liberty more than Life.

We have a lot of work to do in that arena.

And the preparation happens in the world of story, not in the world of facts and information.

There was a reason that Washington commissioned the performance of a play at Valley Forge based on one of Plutarch's Lives that carried

this message: Liberty is worth dying for.

The play was frequently performed in that day. Is it coincidence that we had Patrick Henry declaring: "Give me Liberty or give me death?"

Or Nathan Hale regretting he had but one life to give to his country?

The stories I have provided you are all for strengthening hearts. But you have to read them or they won't do you any good. No need to turn the stories into a 'curriculum'--the stories are the teachers.

EDIT: While the spirit of my post is unchanged--Hearts matter in a fight for freedom--I just need to add that there are many brave Afghans who have stood up and fought and lost their lives. This story is unfolding. I am praying for them. In no way do I want to dishonor any of them.

--I finally finished recording volume 12 of My America Story Book late last night. As I finished up the last chapter, a huge storm came through and the wind was blowing so hard and the lightning and

thunder was hitting fast and furious. But I wanted to finish so I kept on going. I hope it doesn't pick up in the mic too much....but if it does, what a fitting ending.

We are living in stormy, perilous times. But if you have been listening to the story, each generation has had its challenges. The colonizers had to struggle against starvation and learn to survive in a strange land. Then came a generation who had to fight against tyranny to make us independent. Then came a generation who had to fight to keep our Union together. Then a whole army of men and women who had to fight personal battles to bring forth new inventions and new opportunities.

Progress has never happened in the calm of things. It has always been out of the storms.

Should we think we are any different?

We learn from the past to direct our future. We are the actors on the stage now. What good can we bring forth in the storms of our generation?



Art credit: Das Gewitter by Peter Frendi

WEH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

--The movie *Rigoletto* is available in [Internet Archive](#).

--“I’m going outside to nature journal.” ... This is what my 5-year-old announced to me on Saturday morning as she grabbed her backpack and headed out the back door. One of the things that I want to be more intentional about is nature journaling. To help this, I decided to invest a little bit of funds and make a nature journal kit for myself and each of my children so that it’s easy to just have the supplies all ready to grab and go outside anytime we want to. I thought I’d share this idea in case anyone is interested in doing this as well. We’ve had our nature journal kits put together for a couple weeks now and my children have been nature journaling all on their own way more often than they were before.

Of course you can include anything that you want in your own kits, but here’s what we have in ours: a small backpack (I got these from [Decathlon](#) for \$6 each); [small sketch book](#); [compact watercolors](#); [water brushes](#) (so we don’t need to take cups of water around with us for the watercolors); [binoculars](#); [magnifying glass](#); erasable colored pencils; and [blue colored pencil](#).

--We have a [Middle Level Book-club](#) on Zoom my daughter started last year and we are getting ready to start back up in September. Feel free to check it out if you are interested (be sure to answer all the group questions to join).

--YouTube video: [Secrets of the Great Wall of China](#)

--I just searched, expecting that EVERYONE would have read this

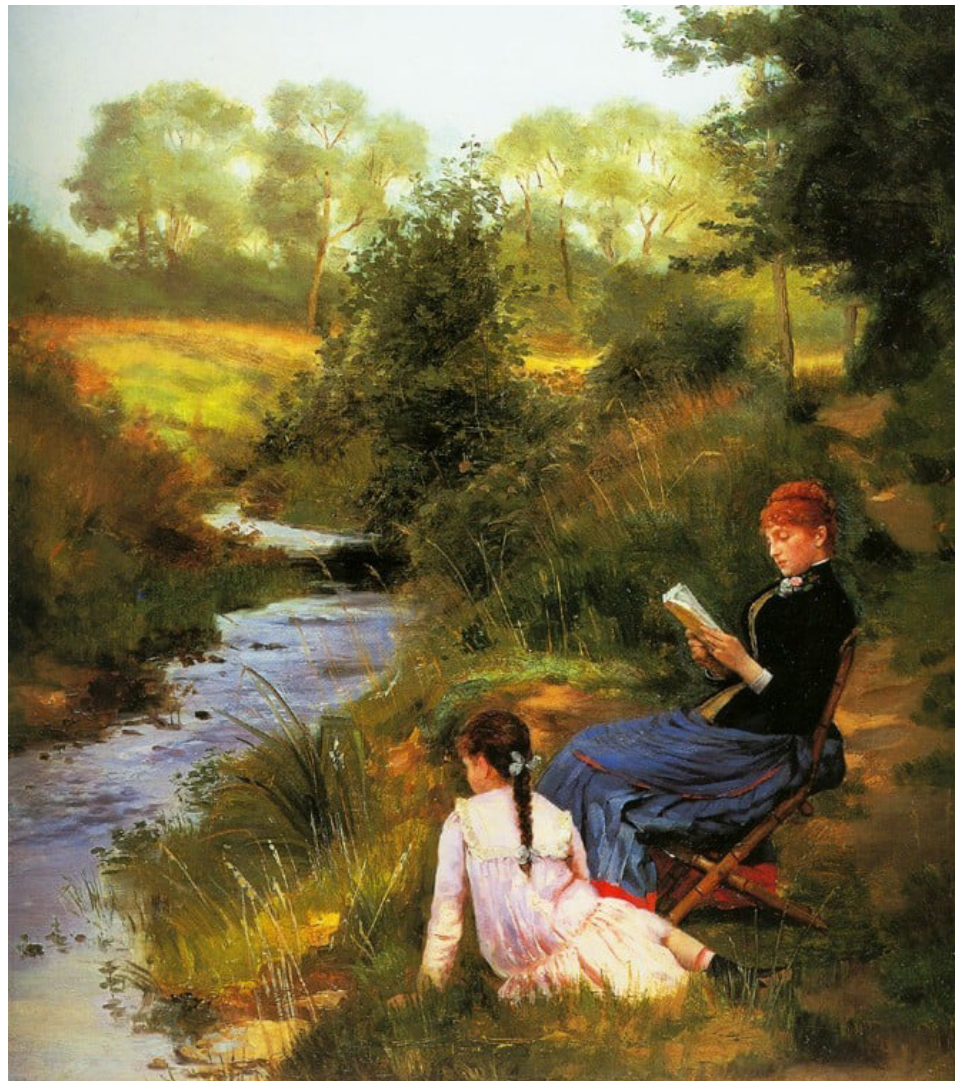
“Virtually every classic tale in literature or film has, as its driving force, some problem or conflict to overcome. Imagine how dull a book would be if the resolution came in chapter 1. We keep reading to the end because we want to know how things will work out--and we’re confident that they will somehow.

“Quite often, the resolution comes in the form of change or growth in the main character. He or she has learned something valuable, and it wouldn’t have happened without the adversity that propelled the adventure.

“Learning is what makes life’s adventure worthwhile. And while learning is sometimes expensive, ignorance costs even more. So what should we be learning? We have access to almost limitless information, but some things simply matter more than others. Some things are interesting; others are deeply meaningful. Some are thought-provoking; others are life-changing. What kind of learning will bring us the ‘happily ever after’ at the end of our adventure?”

--Lloyd Newell

Art credit: A Summer Day by Charles Baugniet

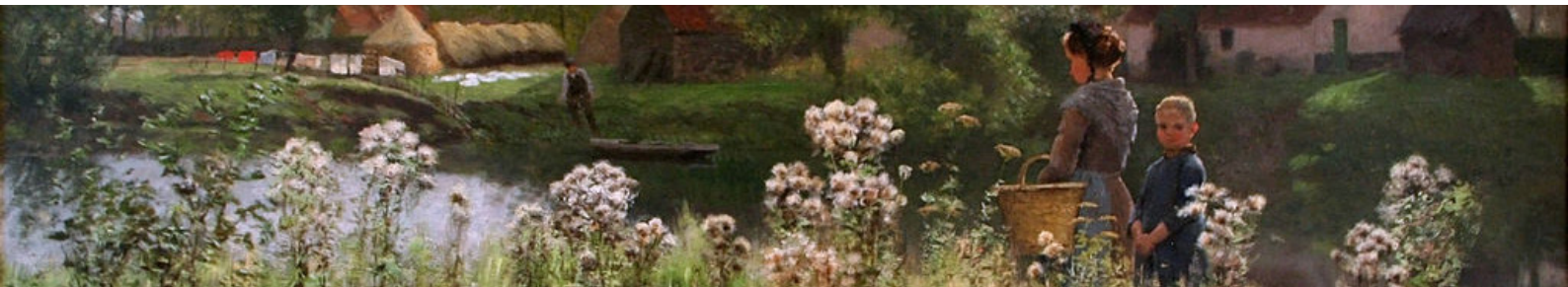


(WEH Group Recommendations cont.) book ([Mother Culture](#) by Karen Andreola), but I don't see it on the page. If you haven't read Mother Culture, you need to! It's all about the same concepts we learn in WEH. So much about filling your heart as the mother so you have bounty with which to bless your children's hearts. It has ideas about simplifying, making your home into a haven, and so much more! I also love the beautiful art in it. I've only got a few chapters left to go.

--**Just picked this up** ([Dictionary for a Better World: Poems, Quotes and Anecdotes from A to Z](#)) from the library after hearing about it on Read Aloud Revival and I think I'm going to buy it. Each page has a different trait, like compassion or empathy, a poem and quote about that trait, as well as real-life application and ideas for the reader to try that trait out during the day. Teens are probably the best audience.

--**This dopamine rush** is one of the challenges we face as we try and help our kids engage in activities that will ultimately offer greater satisfaction in the long run. [This article](#) may help you see the issue at hand.

--**Books to help your children understand** [Afghanistan](#).



MOI MINUTE

Many of you wonderful women are here to learn more about Mothers of Influence groups. Some of you want to gather your own group and others are hoping for general support and friendship on this facebook page. I hope that together we can grow and change to become all those things.

By its very nature, MOI is always going to be best in person. I see my role as helping to keep the vision of MOI pure and helping you find ways to experience it. But MOI itself is something that grows outward from our hearts together. We are the mothers that have heard Marlene's message and will know what to do with it. But first, we have to tend to our own hearts. Everything else is going to flow from there. The pattern for everything is from the inside outward.

Many feel that catching the vision is daunting or big or complicated or hard. I hope we can dispel that notion together. It's joyful and fun and exciting and filling! I promise ... all you have to do is find one simple place to start. Figure out which of the resources is speaking to you the most and nurture it. If you don't know - start with the Catch the Vision challenge. You don't even have to follow a schedule or go in order - just do or read whatever you have time for right then. The thing I can't explain is that it's all self-perpetuating. The more you truly feed your heart the more it wants to be fed. All you have to do is begin and everything else falls into place.

Facebook is a fickle place for friendship - we only see what the facebook algorithms show us. That makes it hard to share and communicate together, but there is absolutely a need for a strong online community where we can capture some of the feelings unity and friendship that are inherent to MOI. Social media isn't my forte, but I'll be trying harder to work with you over the next few weeks to identify what we can do here to bring us closer together and to have more authentic ways to grow and share in addition to what you're doing in person. I hope you'll speak up and offer your suggestions too.

I have so much passion for MOI and why it's important. I carefully distilled those feelings down on the Heart of MOI page at the website. I hope you'll visit there and start thinking about how you want to put the effort into Catching the Vision together. Check out our newly revised [mothersofinfluence.org](#) page!

XO Marley