



Beth Emeth Early Childhood Center

Robin Cohen, Interim Director (robin@bethemeth.org)

THE GIFT OF TIME

As I spent time in the Gimel (3-year-old) classroom this morning, I couldn't help but smile at what came to mind. Time. A refreshing version of time. The kind that reminds me of what life should be about. Like a fly on the wall, I just watched. I observed a child meticulously studying a marble sized piece of green playdough in her hand, looking at it closely, rubbing it between her fingers and studying it again. She did this for quite a while. Then she picked up the scissors along with a larger piece of playdough and cut it, slowly and patiently, into little pieces.

I moved to the next table and saw two children engaged in exploring a bin filled with assorted stones and smooth glass beads. Though they were quietly each focused on their own exploration of these materials, the shared experience inspired one of the children to look up at his friend, smile and say "Let's be happy!"

Still in the far corner of the room from me I overheard a little commotion. Two children were going back and forth arguing about something when the third stepped in as the mediator saying "why don't you both do it!" I saw the teachers a respectful distance away, observing, but not interfering in their process.

The best "gifts" to me are the intangible ones. One of the biggest gifts we choose to give the children at BEECC is the time to have these simple, yet essential, experiences. Time to explore. Time to create. Time to play. Time to discover. Time to socialize - in their own way. Time to

problem solve. Time to develop their own theories about the world. Time to . . . think! Children are born with an incredible wonder and curiosity about the world. The best way for children to learn is by doing things, not by being told about them. When children are young, they are not only learning things, they are learning how to learn – and they need and deserve the sacred time to do so.

When my oldest daughter who is now 11 was in the Kitty Cat (3-year-old) class, her teacher told me "I don't believe in ever telling a child to 'hurry up' ". I never forgot those words Morah Carol shared with me. At BEECC we are always reminding ourselves to slow down to honor our value in giving children time.

I have been thinking a lot about this notion of time in my personal life and I love how I continue to grow as a person when I reflect on these simple gifts we offer the children. As you begin 2018, I encourage you to take a moment to think about this idea of time, and how, in this new year, you will choose to spend this priceless commodity.

--Robin



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Questions? Contact Morah Robin at robin@bethemeth.org
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