
Protection Imagination: Build a House

— Steven Moore

This was shared at the November 2012 Kinder Saturday, an informal gathering of Denver kindergarten teachers regularly hosted by Nancy Blanning, as we were speaking about images and gestures of protection. It originated with eurythmist Steven Moore, who now graces the spiritual world with his artistry. He graciously shared that it would be fine for non-eurythmists to use the “B” gesture.

This begins with one person sitting on a chair or a few (two, three or four) children sitting together on the floor or on a cluster of chairs back-to-back in the center. All the other children and adults stand in a fairly big circle. The child or children in the center will receive the sheltering that is about to happen. The verse goes:

Build a house, brick by brick,
Higher and higher, tighter and tighter

With each emphasized word, those in the outer circle take one step forward, gradually shrinking and tightening the circle while making a eurythmy “B” gesture with the arms at each step. Start the “B” at about waist level, letting the gesture climb higher. The idea is to suggest stacking bricks, so the hands in the gesture should not be more than about six inches apart, one above the other. With each step, the hand that has been the lower one is placed above the other, so the top hand will alternate right, left, right, while building up the “bricks.” When you have reached the end of the verse, the hands will have climbed up to head level at least, if not above—and you have finished your “building” with the roof. Everyone should now also be standing in a tight circle around the person or people in the center, continuing to stand with their hands creating a sheltering roof and everyone’s bodies collectively being the walls of the house.

Now some individual children are indicated to race around the outside of the circle as the wind, rain, and so on.

And then the wind blew *accompanied by wind whooshing sounds while the child makes one circuit around*

And the rain came down *make any appropriate rain sound—pit pat, tip tap, and so on. One could also insert thunder and lightning to create a stronger picture of outside turbulence and inner safety*

Optional –

And the lightning flashed *those running around can streak their arms up into the air or just run*

And the thunder roared *stomp feet but not too loudly or dramatically*

When all this movement is finished, let it grow quiet and stand for just a moment of quiet hush. Begin to open up the “roof” of the house and step back slowly, as though sunshine is being allowed to flood into the house.

But look! What a good, tight house! No rain got in!

This is the conclusion of one round. A mixed-aged group with a good number of older children can usually and happily sustain this for three repetitions. Make sure always to have each young child companioned with an older one, as this can be too big an experience for very young ones alone. If you have a very timid child for whom you think this would be healing, sit in the middle yourself and hold this child in your lap. You can still speak the verse as teacher while sitting in the middle. ♦

Steven Moore *was a eurythmist and speech formation artist. He passed into the spiritual world in 2004.*