

LNS EQUILIBRIUM



Places to Experience in the Sculpture Park

Alyson Shotz, "Temporal Shift", 2021

"*Temporal Shift*, a site-responsive sculpture by New York-based artist Alyson Shotz, is a refined meditation on time and space. The sculpture interacts with natural light and its surroundings to probe our perceptions of space and time. Its elliptical form alludes to the Earth's revolution around the sun over the course of a year. Its mirrored surface of *Temporal Shift* reflects light and casts shadows to mark different times of day and seasons similar to a sun dial."

- thetrustees.org



Teachers:

Our teachers begin the school year focused on building a trusting relationship with each child. Through close observation and listening, they come to know each child. The routines the teachers have created give the children predictability to their day. At this time in the year the children know the routines and most days have a state of "flow." There's equilibrium! Teachers support children during these highly charged holiday periods with the predictability of life in the studios. This is why at LNS "holiday" themes are not part of the teacher's planned curriculum. When children return to the studio each week, they resume what is familiar and known. The flow is what allows children to settle and do the work of childhood.



Children:

What does “equilibrium” look and feel like from a child’s perspective? Children create frameworks for conceptual understanding - schemas. With every new encounter of information, they build on those existing frameworks. They have to make sense of how the new information fits with their known knowledge. Piaget created the term “equilibration” to define the process of finding balance between these new and previously known ideas within a child's development. When we create routines and preview those routines, it helps form a child’s schema about “a day”. “I wake up, brush my teeth, eat breakfast, get dressed, get in the car, go to school, ... etc.” This is why children thrive on consistent daily rhythms and rituals. It not only grounds them, but it reinforces their knowledge about time and what a day looks like.

During the winter season, those routines and rhythms shift as we experience less daylight. Additionally, there is the “hustle and bustle” that comes along with the season. The winter season brings new activities, experiences, celebrations and people. There is so much to do. It brings with it much excitement, but it also requires children to do a heavy lift of equilibration. In quick bursts, they have to assimilate, or accommodate all that is new in their day. The idea of finding balance then becomes that much harder.

For this reason, the greatest gift we can give children is ample time to do things and make transitions from one segment to another - the idea of “less is more” is invaluable. Providing a preview of any changes to the routine can also help. Balance can be found by simplifying their day as much as possible, maintaining familiarities of their routines, and having some quiet, alone time with them. Growing and learning is hard work. Finding equilibrium within that, can make all the difference.



Families:

Parenting is uniquely personal. We each have to find a way that is our own. We learn to trust our own instincts and to nourish and refine them. We **practice** staying very much in the present moment as there are many distractions calling for our attention (i.e. emails, cell phones, internal “to do” lists, etc).

The challenge is learning to live with tension without losing your own balance. Practice seeing that whatever comes up is “workable,” trusting your intuition and best instincts. Your child, especially when young, needs you to be a center of balance and trustworthiness. We often worry that we may disappoint our children and miss the imaginary bar of “good parenting”. By finding common ground - where everyone’s true needs (not expressed wants) can be met - we may be surprised by how much overlap is possible, especially if we are patient and strive for balance.

Parents and caregivers are the reliable landmarks by which children find their bearing within their landscape. While doing the work of parenting, it is important to have effective and healthy ways to replenish your inner resources when they are depleted, to restore ourselves and bring us to equilibrium. Simply stated, take good care of yourself while doing this important work.

