

# AWSNA Northeast/Quebec Regional Conference

Presented by **Meadowbrook Waldorf School**



**Facing Anxiety: Cultivating Resilience**

**Friday and Saturday March 23rd-24th**

MWS is pleased to host the annual Regional Delegates Meeting and Conference for the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). This year's theme is Facing Anxiety and Cultivating Resilience. The **Delegates Meeting is on Friday, March 23** and the **Conference is on Saturday, March 24**. Additionally, we will host an **Evening Presentation on Friday, March 23** by **Kim John Payne**, Simplicity Parenting author and educator, titled **Facing Anxiety and Cultivating Resilience**. The Regional Conference and Evening Presentation are open to the interested public with pre-registration. Space is limited.

## **Friday, March 23** Delegates Meeting

9:30 - 10:00	Delegate Arrival and Welcome
10:00 - 12:00	Morning Meeting
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 3:30	Afternoon Meeting

## **Friday, March 23, 7:00PM - 8:30PM** Facing Anxiety and Cultivating Resilience

How do we work with children (and ourselves) to meet the challenges of our anxious times?

**Kim John Payne** has worked for 24 years as a counselor, adult educator, consultant/researcher and educator helping children, adolescents and families explore issues such as social difficulties with siblings and classmates, attention and behavioral issues at home and school, emotional issues such as defiance, aggression, addiction and self-esteem.

Kim is the author of many books, including the best-seller, Simplicity Parenting.

## **Saturday, March 24** Conference

8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and Coffee
9:00 - 10:30	Welcome and Opening Address with Kim John Payne
10:30 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 12:30	Morning Workshops
12:30 - 1:30	Lunch
1:30 - 3:00	Afternoon Workshops
3:00 - 3:45	Plenum

## **Conference Fees**

\$ 95	<b>Early Bird Price</b> register by February 23
\$ 115	<b>Regular Price</b> register by March 9
\$ 15	Food (coffee, snacks and lunch)
\$ 10	Kim John Payne Evening Presentation only

To register electronically and pay please follow this link:

<http://www.meadowbrookschool.com/facing-anxiety-cultivating-resilience-awsna-march-conference-speaker>

For further information, please contact Meadowbrook Waldorf School at **401 491 9570** or email us at [info@meadowbrookschool.com](mailto:info@meadowbrookschool.com)



**Nicki Robb** has been involved with farm-based education since 1981 in many roles including: CSA co-founder, developer/administrator of the School-To-Farm Program at Hampshire College, and Director of Land Stewardship Program and Agricultural Arts teacher at the Hartsbrook School. Nicki completed the Camphill Curative Education Course and holds both a BA and MEd in Special Education from UMASS Amherst.



**Catherine Hopkins** has been a class teacher at the Hartsbrook School since 1987, taking three classes through grades 1-8. She developed a classroom-based practical arts curriculum, including fiber arts, cooking and preserving food, and worked closely with Nicki Robb building the farm and land based curriculum at the Hartsbrook School. Catherine holds a BA and MA from UMASS, and a Certificate in Waldorf Education from Antioch College.

**Patti Smith, Ed. D.**, is a facilitator for the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the Center for Biography and Social Art, where she develops programs using biography as a source of community building and self-discovery. Co-editor of *More Lifeways: Changes in Family Life in the 90's*; *Service Learning: Students at the Heart of Learning*; and the documentary *Taking a Risk in Education: Waldorf Inspired Public Schools*.



**Charlotte O'Brien** was the administrator of MWS from 1998 until 2011, and retired in 2012. She designed and co-led the original Orientation to Service workshop from 1999 to 2011. While AWSNA delegate, she brought back and initiated the revised study form the Board uses. Charlotte holds an MBA from University of Chicago, and a BA in Economics from Columbia University. In addition, she has post graduate studies in education from SUNY, and has been a class teacher and special subjects teacher at MWS.

## Morning Workshops

### Being at Your Best When the Class Is At Its Worst

*Kim John Payne*

The role of healthy and sustainable emotional self-regulation for the educator.

### Nature as Teacher: Farm and Garden as Classroom

To help our students develop skills and capacity for the 21st Century

*Nicki Robb and Catherine Hopkins*

Through an Agricultural Arts curriculum (K-12) developed at the Hartsbrook School over many years, participants will explore and discuss how a hands-on, skills-based curriculum fashioned out of an authentic relationship with a farm and garden environment can provide essential life skills to support our children and adolescents today.

### Awakening Connections: Creating Community

*Patti Smith*

We will practice creating circles of trust. These safe places, where people can engage in deep conversation, are created through biography exercises, dialogue practices, and artistic activities. These places counter anxiety, cultivate resilience and demonstrate the power of listening to your own inner voice and the voices of colleagues. Join us in sharing life stories to experience how they awaken deeper connections within our communities.

### Orientation to Service In a Waldorf School: An Inquiry

*Charlotte O'Brien*

Initiated in 1999 as an inquiry into what is Waldorf Education, the purpose was to open the "spiritual eye" of prospective board members and of faculty so that they could behold each other in light of the common mission of a Waldorf School. It proved so valuable in creating community alignment and releasing creative energy that it became required for all new employees, all prospective board members, and major committee chairs. This session will describe the inquiry used, will illuminate the elements of successful inquiry, and examine tailoring a successful inquiry for your specific school.



## Morning Workshops

### Practicing Self-Expression Within Limits

*Colleen O'Connors*

Beginning in the early grades and continuing into high school, children and young people practice their written language skills in a variety of ways. Writing creatively exercises and strengthens the imagination and the will. Age-appropriate writing prompts provide the necessary inspiration to launch reticent writers, while clear parameters create 'safe spaces' for cautious composers. Modeling a wide range of literary forms allows self-expression to 'bump into' various limiting factors, fostering creative resiliency, and resilient creativity. In this workshop, participants will be led into a series of creative writing exercises that can be used effectively in grades 7-10.

### Incorporating Resistance

*Daniel O'Connors*

Resilience is a two-way street. How do we integrate impulses coming towards us from the world into our own intentions? How do we strengthen our own impulses that they contribute to the whole? In this workshop, participants will experience possible answers to these questions through the medium of clay.

### A Human Education For a Technological World

*Charles Weems*

Technology will present our children with serious challenges as they enter adulthood. Preparing them to meet those challenges and thrive in a digital world requires a conscious effort that starts in early childhood and progresses through the elementary and high school grades. This workshop explores several critical capacities that children must develop, and methods of helping them to do so. Participants will be lead through experiential activities in preparation for discussion and will need to bring devices capable of sending and receiving text messages and accessing web pages (e.g., smartphone, tablet, or laptop).

### Nature's Design for Innate Resilience

*Annika Hurwitt*

We are designed to be resilient, but mental stress and anxiety wear down our resilience. However, just as the principle of gravity allows you to regain your physical balance throughout the day, there are psychological principles in place for your mind to restore its psychological balance when you start to experience anxiety or stress, without the use of exercises or techniques. In this workshop, you will learn how simply understanding some basic facts about how the mind works will allow you to experience mental calm and presence throughout the day, which are the antidotes to anxiety and stress, so that you are able to experience the great well of resiliency inside us all.

Three Principles for the last 25 years. Annika works with individuals, couples and adolescents, coaches leaders, and trains practitioners. She lives in Temple, NH, with her daughter Rhianna, who is currently a student at The High Mowing School.



Colleen O'Connors' children led her initially to and through Waldorf education. Presently a teacher at High Mowing, she has taught all grades, 1-12, in nearly all subjects in the last 25 years.

Since receiving her M.Ed. in Waldorf Education in 2011, Colleen also serves as adjunct faculty in Antioch New England's Waldorf Teacher Training program.

After completing his studies at the Plastikschule (Practical Arts School) at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, Daniel O'Connors has worked for more than 30 years in various Waldorf



and public schools in Switzerland, Germany and the USA. He has brought the arts of stone carving, shoemaking, copper-work, blacksmithing, clay modeling, pottery and woodworking to students, adults and apprentices in a variety of settings. He presently teaches practical arts at the Monadnock Waldorf School, in Keene, NH.



Charles (Chip) Weems holds a Ph.D in computer science. He is a founding teacher at Hartsbrook High School, where he has taught earth science, computer science, and photography for 16 years. He is a member of the Association for Computing Machinery, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the Anthroposophical Society and the Pedagogical Section. He also has 40 years of university teaching experience; and he is an associate professor of computer science at U. Mass-Amherst.

Annika Hurwitt, Ph.D is a psychotherapist by training, but has worked with a new paradigm for mental health and well-being called The



## Afternoon Workshops

### Recognizing Soul Gestures

*Daniel O'Connors*

This high school clay modeling exercise schools the adolescent understanding of the physical expressions of various soul states. Learning to recognize and acknowledge the condition of the other, or of oneself, can be a first step in discernment. Developing a conscious observation of soul gestures raises the adolescents' awareness of how they are affected by the world around them – a key aspect of resilience. In this workshop participants will explore physical expressions of soul gestures and capture them in clay.

### Soothing Parent Anxiety

*Somer Serpe*

How do we meet the fears and anxiety that today's parents bring? How can we create an environment of calm and connection that embraces and inspires parents? As teachers, we carry the tools to help parents have more trust and bring more harmony into their children's lives.

### Awakening Connections: Creating Community

*Patti Smith*

We will practice creating circles of trust. These safe places, where people can engage in deep conversation, are created through biography exercises, dialogue practices, and artistic activities. These places counter anxiety, cultivate resilience and demonstrate the power of listening to your own inner voice and the voices of colleagues. Join us in sharing life stories to experience how they awaken deeper connections within our communities.

### The Parent-Student-Teacher Triangle

*Regine Shemroske, M. ED.*

The triangle is one of the strongest geometric forms, and the Parent-Student-Teacher triangle provides a dynamic model for building and strengthening our classroom work in Waldorf schools. During this workshop, we will explore the qualities of triangles, the healthy and sometimes challenging dynamics of Parent-Student-Teacher relationships, and how, by working as partners, we invite trust and gratitude to manifest in this relationship. Between parent and teacher, the individual child can blossom into an independent thinker who participates in life in a heartfelt and active manner. When we embrace the Parent-Student-Teacher triangle, we inherently support every student in our class, and the classroom becomes as vibrant as a crystal. Please bring colored pencils, compass and ruler. Regine will provide materials if needed.

**Somer Serpe** trained as an artist and as a teacher, earning her BFA degree at Parsons School of Design and her Masters in Waldorf Early Childhood Education at Sunbridge College. She



currently teaches Kindergarten at the Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School where she has taught since 2005. Somer is a Northeastern Regional representative for WECAN and serves as a mentor for teachers and inspirational coach for parents. In the classroom, Somer enjoys puppetry, singing, purposeful work and creating healing stories for children and parents.



**Regine Shemroske** graduated from the Pedagogical College in Freiburg, Germany, Tufts University (M.Ed.) and received her Waldorf teacher training at Antioch University.

Regine has taught in Waldorf Schools for 38 years in many capacities. While a class teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Regine served on the Board of the Waldorf Institute of Southern Michigan (WISM) and in 2014, Regine gave the Keynote Address at the Midwestern AWSNA conference on Technology and Spirit. She graduated two eighth grades from the Hawthorne Valley School, in Ghent, NY; and also served the school as Admissions Director. While raising her family in the hills of New Hampshire, Regine taught German and Music at Pine Hill Waldorf School for 16 years. She enjoys adult education and has taught classes in Waldorf Pedagogy, Music, Anthroposophy, and Summer Renewal faculty in Wilton, NH. Regine strives to build successful parent-student-teacher teacher triangles and makes music with others whenever she can. She and her husband Gary live in Boston where she is currently shepherding a third grade at the Waldorf School of Lexington.

## Afternoon Workshops

### The Four Lower Senses and How to Support Their Healthy Development

*Su Rubinoff*

Rudolf Steiner spoke of human beings having twelve senses, including four lower or foundational senses. These lower senses are: touch (the tactile sense), self- movement (proprioception), balance (vestibular), and the sense of life. Please join me both inside and outdoors to delve more into these senses and discuss what activities we can do to help support children as they develop.

### Bouncing Back: Tools For Recovering Your Space

*Julianna Lichatz*

In this movement workshop, we will explore exercises from Spatial Dynamics, Agile Aging, and mindful movement practices to help us define our space and learn how to recover it once it has been compressed. Come prepared for gentle movement. Comfortable indoor shoes recommended (sneakers or eurythmy shoes work best).

### Breathing Through Painting - Healing Through Stories

*Kathleen Morse*

In this workshop we will explore the use of pedagogical stories during 1st-3rd grade painting class. Pre-reading:

<http://ssagarin.blogspot.com/2013/07/what-would-steiner-say-about-painting.html>

### Board Study

*Charlotte O'Brien*

The MWS Board studies works of anthroposophy for the first hour of every board meeting. Although study has been a regular part of board life since 1999, it took on a new power when it adopted a new form brought by Jon McAlice and Michele Starr at an NE AWSNA conference. Initially, the board agreed to a one-year experiment with this form. It has been renewed annually because the trustees are personally enriched by this study and find it brings increased depth of compassion, love, and maturity to board decisions and responsibilities. This session will share the process of board study and the outcomes experienced, and will create an experience of a study session.



**Su Rubinoff** has been working in many capacities with children for over 40 years and involved in Waldorf education for more than 25 years. Su received her master's degree in Remedial Education (Association for a Healing Education) from

Sunbridge College. She brings her fascination of sensory integration, and other interests such as gardening and nature, woodworking, cooking, crafts, animals (she has chickens and bees at home) into her curriculum.

**Julianna Lichatz** teaches movement and health at the High Mowing School in Wilton, NH. For the last 20 years, she has taught in Waldorf schools from New York to Colorado. She is a Level III Spatial Dynamics practitioner and taught movement education in the Antioch Teacher training program the last few years. When not teaching, she finds rejuvenation playing in her garden and exploring the natural world.



**Kathleen Morse** is the grades teacher at Lakeside School at Black Kettle Farm in Essex, NY, where she teaches in a combined first and third grade class.

## Hotel Information

For your convenience, Meadowbrook Waldorf School is offering room reservations at the Hampton Inn of Coventry. Reservations must be made before **February 23** by attendees for our discounted rate. Space is limited.

Please call the Inn directly at **401 823 4041** for reservations and more information.