

The IMSA Kaleidoscope

I collect kaleidoscopes. At first, I found their artistry magical; however, as I surrendered to the unique song of each kaleidoscope, I became aware that my surrendering was transformative.

Paying attention to the lessons of reflective symmetry made possible through the integration of art and science, of sense and soul, I began to see the kaleidoscope as a powerful symbol and metaphor for our individual lives and our collective lives as members of the human family. I began to see the kaleidoscope as a profound teacher and so I “listened” with a renewed sense of possibility and promise.

I pick up a kaleidoscope whenever I need to give myself permission to enter on an introspective journey; whenever I need to make sense of seemingly disparate and unconnected pieces; whenever I seek wholeness, harmony and coherence; and whenever I crave the inexplicable healing and restorative power of wonder, surprise and awe.

In essence, I pick up the kaleidoscope whenever I need to remember that health, healing, harmony and happiness are only possible when we are engaged in relationships and that at the deepest levels of human experience there is unity, integration and order inherent in the universe. The kaleidoscope enables disparate objects to dance together in wondrous patterns of symmetry and wholeness.

Why did I want IMSA to have a special kaleidoscope all our own?

Because the IMSA kaleidoscope is a symbol and metaphor for the essence of our institution -- our commitment to develop the integrative mind and heart capable of connecting for ourselves and for others, the seemingly separate elements that fragment our existence. The IMSA kaleidoscope stands to remind us that both self and community are essential for the deep patterns of connection to emerge. Devoid of the self, relationships cannot be sustained; devoid of the context of authentic relationships, the self struggles for meaning. Together the song emerges.

The IMSA kaleidoscope is a symbol and metaphor of our belief that “the good life is harmony between the body, mind and spirit”; of our vision of “liberating goodness and genius for the world”; and of our mission of “transformation through connections within and among mathematics, science, the arts and the humanities.”

Within a kaleidoscope, science enables the art to dance.

Each of our lives represents a kaleidoscopic journey -- a journey filled with paradoxes and possibilities. The hopeful message of the kaleidoscope is the ever-emerging song of order out of disorder, unity out of separation, harmony out of dissonance, serenity out of uncertainty and peace out of discord.

As you and perhaps a friend sit together and experience the unfolding magic of our kaleidoscope, please view it as an invitation to listen to your own heart song. You may be surprised with what it has been trying to tell you.

Go well on your journey.

***Stephanie Pace Marshall
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