

For some of us this experience is about renewing old connections, or possibly making new ones. Fortunately, the ability to see and make and understand universal connections across physical, emotional, and spiritual plains through the use of music, literature, math, art, science and language is the endowment we all become beneficiaries of when we walked through the doors of the Wilhelm Schol . What you learn when you can make these connections is the simplest concept: We are all one.

I have memories from school. I remember watching Dr. Cooley perform open heart surgery from the amphitheatre. I remember Keibun paintings. I remember fizzy rock candy from a laboratory. I remember riding in the back of Ms. Wilhelm’s station wagon and swimming in her apartment pool. I remember jumping jacks while counting in French. I remember Don Quixote. I remember Van Gogh’s Sunflowers. I remember my violin. I remember sliding face first in to the gravel outside. I remember tea ceremonies. These are just vignettes though, little snapshots. In the long run, what is important is that I left there with gifts from the great masters that would support me as I made my way through the world even when I didn’t realize it – Confucius, Plato, Bach, Voltaire, Jesus, Van Gogh, Pythagorus, Aristotle, Pascal, Tchaikovsky, Zoroaster, Euclid, Schweitzer, Einstein, Shakespeare, Buddha! I left there with the ability to think for myself and wanting to learn more.

The benefit of an education as romantic as the one provided by the Wilhelm Schol  is a never-ending amazement at the possibilities of the universe and profound joy at the discovery of each new facet of it. The interconnectedness of every animal, vegetable, mineral – what bliss, what excitement!

The ability to connect with our pasts, cross-culturally, is vitally important to the success of humanity. We are all on our own paths, in our own time, but on the same circle. Our paths will merge and diverge and each new connection we make can change our life experience if we are willing to accept and appreciate what we find as we find it. The key may be found in the quantum foam or perhaps we can find in it some mystical recess of the human heart. I like to believe they are connected! I think of Jung when he said that “we know the immensities of space better than we know our own depths”.

Marilyn Wilhelm taught me how to think, not what to think. She taught me The Golden Rule. She taught me to love learning, and I really do. She taught me to be grateful, and I truly am. I believe it when Voltaire said that by appreciation, we make excellence in others our own. Many of us here owe a debt to Ms. Wilhelm that we cannot pay back, but we can pay forward. We are here to be of service to one another however we find that work to do.

I am a happy and grateful recipient of a bountiful universe. I am enriched by the world around me not so much because my eyes are open to see it, but because my heart is open to feel it. To live is to learn. To learn is to love.

I travelled to Tanzania and visited Oldupai Gorge, where the Leakey’s discovered the first hominid footprints. As the guide there described the camp logistics and the fossil footprints, he said “many of you have come from the far corners of the world because you felt throughout your life a strong desire to visit Africa – an urge, a pull as if Africa was calling to you.” As he waved his hand out over the gorge he said “This is why. You are my brother. Welcome home.”