

Rediscovering Montessori

A JOURNEY BACK TO
THE ROOTS



As a certified Montessori educator holding a diploma from LMI since 2011, I have spent many years immersed in the practice and philosophy of Montessori education. Over time, my classroom experience has enriched my understanding, yet I recently felt a calling to revisit the foundational ideas that first inspired my journey. This led me to enroll in the AMI 3–6 Orientation Course – not to start anew, but to realign and deepen my commitment to authentic Montessori practice. The purpose of this orientation was clear: to reconnect with the original vision of Dr. Maria Montessori through the lens of both experience and reflection. As time passes, practical classroom routines can sometimes shift subtly from the philosophy's core. I recognized the need to pause and examine whether my practices still mirrored the principles I once studied with such passion. Though my LMI diploma had provided a strong and structured foundation, the AMI Orientation Course offered something unique: a return to the source. It served as a gentle but powerful reminder of the importance of the prepared environment, the role of the adult, and the dignity of the child. The course allowed me to refresh my perspective, re-evaluate my methods, and renew my sense of purpose as a Montessori guide. This report is a summary of that journey – a reflection on what I've relearned, how it has reshaped my approach, and why I remain devoted to Montessori education. Through this experience, I am not only more aligned with Montessori's original vision but also more inspired to serve the child with awareness, respect, and intentionality.

Course Overview and Content

The AMI 3–6 Orientation Course, held online over four weeks from February 10 to February 27, 2025, was an intensive and enriching experience. Conducted through live sessions and guided self-study, it covered core elements of the Montessori philosophy with clarity and practical focus. Key topics included:

Introduction to Montessori in the First Plane

The first plane (0–6 years) is a critical stage of development when the child absorbs their surroundings effortlessly. Montessori education focuses on supporting natural growth through hands-on learning, freedom within limits, and a carefully prepared environment.

Human Needs and Tendencies

All humans share natural tendencies—such as exploration, order, communication, and repetition—that drive learning and adaptation. Montessori education supports these tendencies to help children develop purposefully and joyfully.

The Four Planes of Development

Montessori identified four developmental stages: 0–6 (absorbent mind), 6–12 (reasoning mind), 12–18 (social/emotional development), and 18–24 (maturity and independence). Each requires a unique educational approach.

The Absorbent Mind

From birth to age six, children absorb everything in their environment without effort. This is called the absorbent mind—first unconscious (0–3), then conscious (3–6)—laying the foundation for personality, language, and behavior.

Sensitive Periods

Sensitive periods are specific times when a child is highly receptive to learning certain skills, such as order, language, movement, and social behavior. Recognizing and supporting these periods enhances development.

The Prepared Environment

A Montessori environment is carefully designed to be orderly, beautiful, and child-centered. It encourages exploration, independence, and concentration by offering age-appropriate materials and freedom within structure.

Development of Language and Movement

Language and movement are closely linked in early development. Montessori supports both through real conversations, stories, and purposeful activities that develop fine and gross motor skills.

Observation as a Professional Tool

Observation is essential in Montessori. It allows the adult to understand each child's needs, interests, and development, guiding appropriate support and lesson planning without unnecessary interference.

The Role of the Adult and Assistant

The adult guides the child with respect, preparing the environment and offering support when needed. The assistant helps maintain order and models calm, consistent behavior that supports the child's independence.

Freedom and Discipline

Montessori offers freedom within limits. Children are free to choose work, but within a structured environment. This freedom helps them develop internal discipline, responsibility, and self-control.

Order, Normalization, and Independence

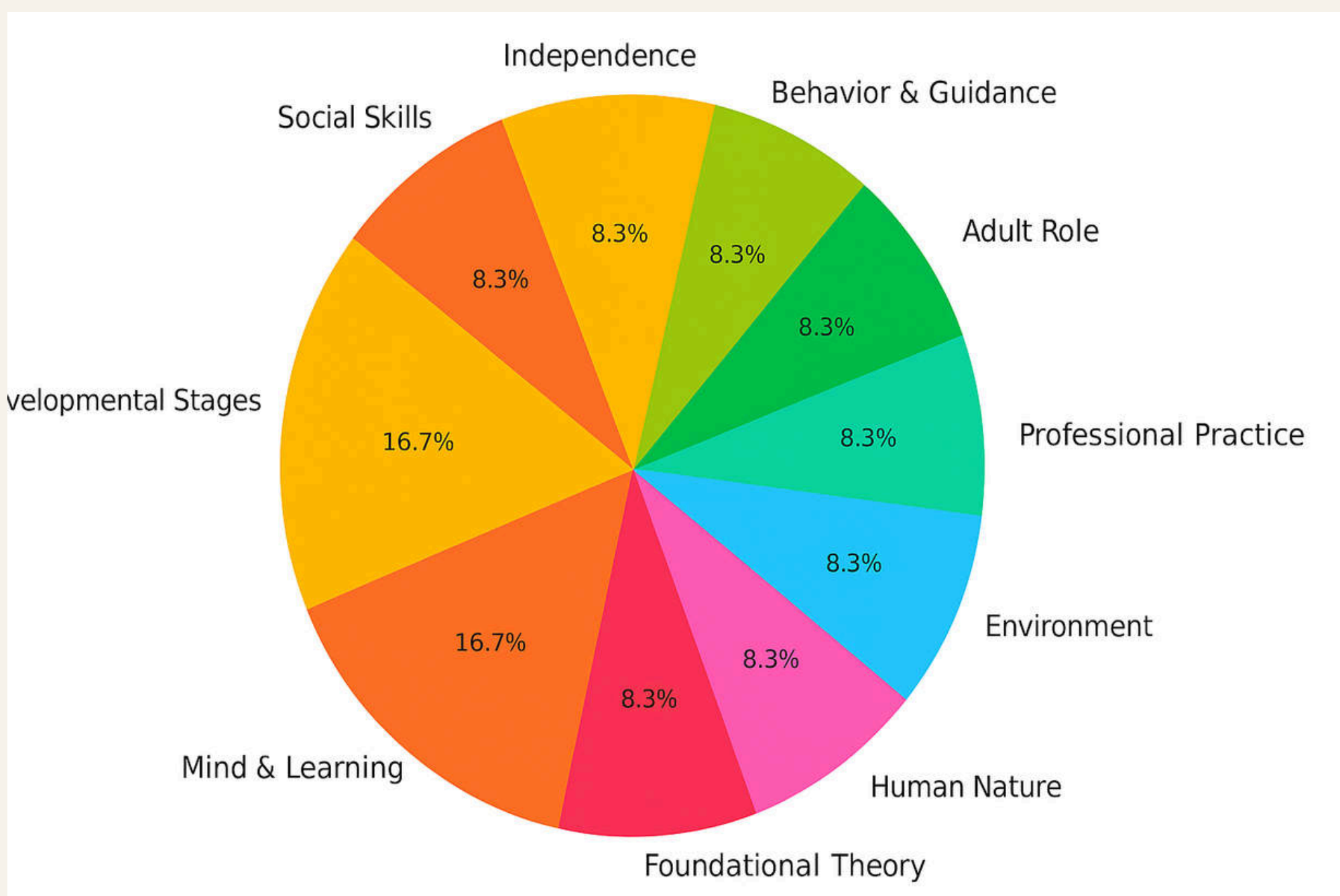
Order in the environment supports focus. Normalization occurs when children are calm, focused, and independent through meaningful work. Independence develops when children do things for themselves with growing confidence.

Social Harmony

A Montessori classroom promotes peace and respect. Through mixed-age groups, grace and courtesy lessons, and cooperative work, children learn empathy, problem-solving, and positive social behavior.

Each of these topics was approached with a focus on practical application and philosophical grounding, enabling a deeper understanding of Montessori education in the early years. The structure of the course not only helped refresh my knowledge but also deepened my appreciation for the delicate balance between freedom and structure within the Montessori environment. Each of these topics was approached with a focus on practical application and philosophical grounding, enabling a deeper understanding of Montessori education in the early years. The structure of the course not only helped refresh my knowledge but also deepened my appreciation for the delicate balance between freedom and structure within the Montessori environment.

Developmental Focus Area



These modules were delivered through a combination of presentations, discussions, assignments, and observation tasks, making the learning both reflective and applicable.

Key Learnings & Reinforced Concepts

Observation - A New Lens on the Child

The most impactful part of the course for me was the practice and philosophy of observation. Through guided observation exercises, I rediscovered how to truly see – not just watch – a child or object with intention, calm, and patience.

“Observation is the silent tool that speaks volumes.”

As an exercise, I observed a simple apple. In that moment, the apple became more than a fruit – it was a symbol of attention, presence, and curiosity. I noticed textures, color patterns, weight balance, and even the soft scent. This renewed my belief that every child, like that apple, holds unique stories if we take the time to notice them.

Freedom Within Limits

This principle came alive again as I reflected on how structured independence empowers children to act with responsibility and joy. True freedom in a Montessori setting comes from clearly defined and respectfully upheld boundaries.

The Role of the Adult

The adult, as a prepared and peaceful presence, models grace and calm. We are not instructors; we are careful observers, patient guides, and quiet supporters who step back when the child steps forward.

The Prepared Environment

This course reminded me that our environment must evolve just as children do. Order, beauty, accessibility, and respect for the child's pace are essential in designing a space that speaks directly to the child's inner needs.

Difference between LMI and AMI-Orientation

The LMI Diploma was a full and in-depth academic journey into Montessori philosophy, covering theory, methodology, and material presentations in great detail. In contrast, the AMI Orientation Course served as a concentrated reflection and philosophical recall. It allowed me to return to the essentials – to see Montessori education through a renewed lens.

The difference was not in content, but in intention: one was comprehensive, and the other was clarifying.

Application in My Current Practice

After completing the orientation, I have already started making some subtle but meaningful changes in my classroom:

- I have slowed down my presentations to allow more space for the child's own exploration.
- I observe more intentionally before stepping in to assist.
- I have revisited the order and flow of my shelves to ensure they invite purposeful, independent work.
- I am more conscious of how I model grace and courtesy.

These small adjustments are already making a visible difference in how children respond, focus, and engage.

Quotes and Insights That Stayed with Me

One quote that deeply touched me during the course was:

“The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, ‘The children are now working as if I did not exist.’”

– Dr. Maria Montessori



This reinforced my understanding that our ultimate goal is not to teach, but to prepare – and then step back to allow the child's natural development to unfold.

Course Summary & Completion Statement

Completing the AMI 3–6 Orientation Course has been both a refresher and a powerful professional renewal. The course offered a meaningful blend of live sessions, independent study, and child observation, all of which helped deepen my understanding of Montessori principles and their practical application. More importantly, it reignited my passion for Montessori education. It reminded me why I chose this path—to serve the child, honor their individuality, and guide them in an environment rooted in respect, freedom, and order. It reinforced the vital role of the Montessori adult, not only as an observer and facilitator but as a lifelong learner committed to growth.

This experience has strengthened my clarity, compassion, and confidence as I return to the classroom. I am grateful for the opportunity to reflect and reconnect with the true spirit of Montessori, and I carry forward a renewed sense of purpose and commitment in my work with children.

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