

We definitely couldn't delve into our month of learning without exploring:

## LEARNING THROUGH CREATIVITY!!



**INTERVIEW:** We are thrilled to be able to share an interview with you between Raising A Warrior and our guest: Ms. Carol Marshall. Carol is a Mum, Grandma, incredible fine artist, teacher, self-development coach and true advocate for understanding ourselves through connection. Carol was such a pleasure to interview – her spirituality, creativity and intelligence shine through in her answers.

**We hope you enjoy our interview as much as we did.**

### PART 1

#### **Question 1: What is your happiest, creative experience?**

*Carol: I could answer this in a split second. It was the painting I painted of myself, a self-portrait called *The Bella Donna*, which was based on a piece of poetry called *Rocking Still*. That piece of poetry was given out to the lady I was with at the time, and I had gone down to her studio to paint. I said, "I want to paint this piece of poetry." It is going back to releasing your creativeness and how important that is for everyone. Not knowing how important it is, is detrimental to your wellbeing. And I think, being in Covid-19 now, it's even more apparent to me - the importance of everybody understanding that pathway, be it painting or not, but something where you can express yourself and your thoughts.*

**Carol talks more about this experience in a wonderful Ted Talk she did last year. You can listen to it in full by clicking on the following link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95zIzNyBUik>

#### **Question 2: How can creativity help children during difficult times in their lives?**

*Carol: I think creativeness enables us to focus, especially children. This is important because they lose time when they're focusing on something, and they then end up being in the now, in the present, rather than worrying about something. Children who need to forget about their worries, which may well be in their head, can just focus on being in that creative, little bubble. So we allow ourselves to become immersed into something we, hopefully, are enjoying. And that's a distraction for our brains. So children can be distracted from, for example, something going on at home, and for that period of time, just be with that creative activity. It stops the white noise, stops the worry.*

### **Question 3: How can creativity help children explore different emotions?**

Carol: *Well, I had a little girl in my class and she was 10 going on 11. It was many years ago now but her Mummy was going through a divorce. I had Mummy in and said to her, "I know I can help, if you will allow me to. And just allow this little girl to download what may well be going on in her head, which she can't actually speak about." I'd gone on a course called 'Draw to Talk'. So, she spent 20 minutes a week, in her lunch hour, and we just talked about what she drew. We did it every week and at the end of the year, Mummy came to me and said how much it had really helped her. Because, downloading, for me, be it an adult or a child, especially if you're a child, is so important. Just being able to draw something that, again, may well be upsetting or worrying you, or when you're not quite certain why you've constantly got this image or this worry in your head - to just draw it and to talk about it, is so empowering. I'm very, very aware of how powerful that is.*

### **Question 4: What are the top 3 pieces of advice you would give to a creative child?**

Carol:

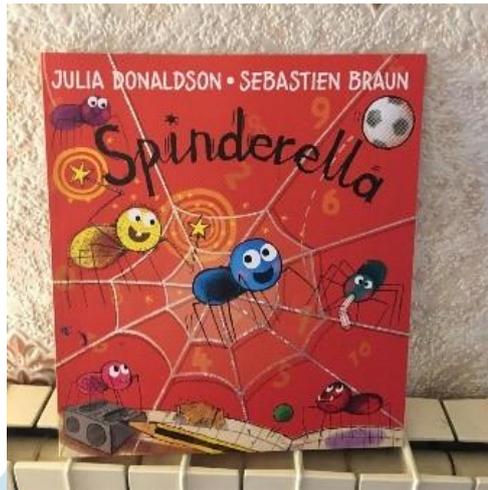
*Number 1 - PLAY: Well, I would say this – especially to children – use something that you feel is fabulous in your hands, something you actually love playing with. Because to me, creativity is about play. So, it could be anything – it could be art straws, playdoh, clay, muds...absolutely anything. And find out whether you are somebody who likes to construct, or, are you a free-flow spirit who just likes to play around? Play more with the materials you actually find yourself going towards. That doesn't mean to say you want to go towards them all the time though, so try lots of different things.*

*Number 2 – TRY AGAIN: Allow yourself - this is important, I feel - NOT to get upset if you don't really like it or it's not what you wanted the end result to be. Because, allowing yourself to try again is understanding the pitfalls of where you may have gone wrong in the first place.*

*Number 3 – CURIOSITY: I know that I can go to my painting easel in my studio, and start a painting and not like the end result. But, that doesn't stop me from thinking, "well, it hasn't worked out this time, but I'm curious to find out whether I can pull off something better." So, it stops me thinking that the next one is always going to be the same. I'm so excited to try it again. It's the excitement of the curiosity of pushing myself again, to go and do it again, maybe in a different way, maybe with a different colour. But, I find painting so exciting, for me, because it excites my curiosity. And I hope that's what children will find once they mess about with different mediums. So, go find what extends your curiosity.*

#### **PART 2**

**ART IN THE FAMILY: Carol has 3 grandchildren: aged 9 years, 7 years and 4 years. So, we then turned our attention, in the interview, to a special, creative activity that she and her grandchildren had done together. Carol chose to speak about an art project which followed on from reading the book: *Spinderella* by Julia Donaldson and Sebastien Braun.**



**Question 1: Why did you choose this particular creative activity?**

Carol: *So, what happened was, we sat on a bed, and (my 4 year old) said, "let's read a book, Nanny." So, she picked Spinderella. And, we just sat there, and within about 2 minutes, her big brother turned up, who is 9, and said, "can I listen, Nanny?" So, we looked at the photographs and the pictures, and he read a few of the pages for us. And I commented on what a lovely book it was, and that I was glad they'd chosen it. I hadn't read it before, so asked if they would like to go and do some painting from it. Big brother said 'yes', so we found middle brother, who is 7, and we all sorted ourselves out and got started. And from it, came the art work. They all did their own thing, obviously, being different ages, but they're all very creative.*

**We absolutely love that story-time turned into a creative experience that all the children were able to enjoy!**

**Question 2: What did your grandchildren gain from this activity?**

Carol: *Well, we started with the pattern of the spider-web and talked about why that was important, and the fact that it was his 'catcher' to catch food. We questioned why he needed to catch food, and where our food comes from. We talked about why it was important that Mummy and Daddy went to work and why Nanny was with them, so that we could have some food from the supermarket when Mummy and Daddy went to work and got money. And then we talked about why spiders have 8 legs and we only have 2, and if that was a big advantage. So, the conversation also went into developing our skills and playing a game, which happened to be football.*

*I explained that, sadly, we all can't be good at certain things. So we discussed what kind of things we were good at. I also went on to say that it wasn't a problem to have a go at something, even if you weren't very good at it, or you were afraid of not being very good at it. I told them it's mainly to do with having fun, and not being negative, even if we haven't tried it before, or maybe think we can't do it. They hadn't painted a spider before, or even a spider's web. So, I talked about this, and how it was great fun and a positive thing to do.*



**How incredible that this creative experience led to conversations about work, money, food, development of skills, people not being good at everything, the importance of having a go and not being afraid of failure. Who knows where an activity will lead.**

**What an amazing LEARNING THROUGH CREATIVITY activity for Carol's grandchildren.**

