



Toespraak Riemer Brandsma

Montessori Europe, Oslo, 11 mei 2025

War. Military conflict. Economic instability. Inequality. Injustice. Climate change.
I am above we are.

These aren't just headlines.
They are the rhythm of our time, a harsh drumbeat echoing through news broadcasts, newspapers, and dinner tables.

These words don't inspire. They paralyze. They don't open doors. They close hearts. Fear. Hopelessness. Uncertainty.

And yet...
It is *because* of these words that we must act. Not despite them. But *because* of them.

Because in the face of darkness, we light a match. Because where fear grows, we plant courage.

We respond not only with diplomacy or projects, but with something even more powerful: *Education. Montessori Education. The red line that connects all of us in this room.*

We rebuilt the foundation. We strengthen the classroom. We give young people their wings — their wings to fly. Not just to escape, but to *fly* toward something better.

This is where transformation begins: by turning words of despair into action. Into hope. Into a reason to keep going.

And now, more than ever, we must remember: the most powerful weapon against a broken world... is a student, child, adolescent who knows their worth.

Saying yes and now, saying why and why not. Taking a risk, fall down and standing up.

Learning is doing and exploring who you are and who you will and want to be.

And yes... youth isn't ready to do it all by themselves,

I... we... need you. The teacher. Who is our infrastructure to knowledge, skills and competences.

We feel powerless. We search for answers in leaders, in systems, in laws.

But perhaps... Perhaps we are looking in the wrong place.

Because hope, true hope, does not begin in parliaments or palaces.

Hope begins... in a classroom. A classroom like yours.

Where a child, with eyes full of questions, is given the freedom to explore.

Where mistakes are not shame, but stepping stones to understanding.

Where collaboration is strong and people understand each other.

Where the teacher's hand is not a ruler, but a guide.

"Help me do it myself," said Maria Montessori.

Not controlling, but empowering. Not molding, but nourishing. Not ruling, but liberating.

For when we teach children to think, to feel, to choose — We raise not followers, but creators.

We don't build walls, we build bridges.

We don't just teach facts, we awaken the soul.

Education — true education — is not the filling of a vessel, but the lighting of a flame.

So let that flame burn.

In every town, in every school, on every street. Let the fire of curiosity dispel the fog of fear.

Because yes, the world is broken. But in every child, there is the glue. In every child, a future stronger than our past.

From despair to action. From division to connection. From fear to learning, and from learning — love.

So let us not wait for better times. Let us create them. With pencils, with questions, and with the unshakable power of a child who dares to dream.

War. Military conflict. Economic instability. Inequality. Injustice. Climate change. "I am" above "we are."

These words are not our source of negativity, but our power to unite, stay stronger and move on together. Now and in the future.
Thank you!