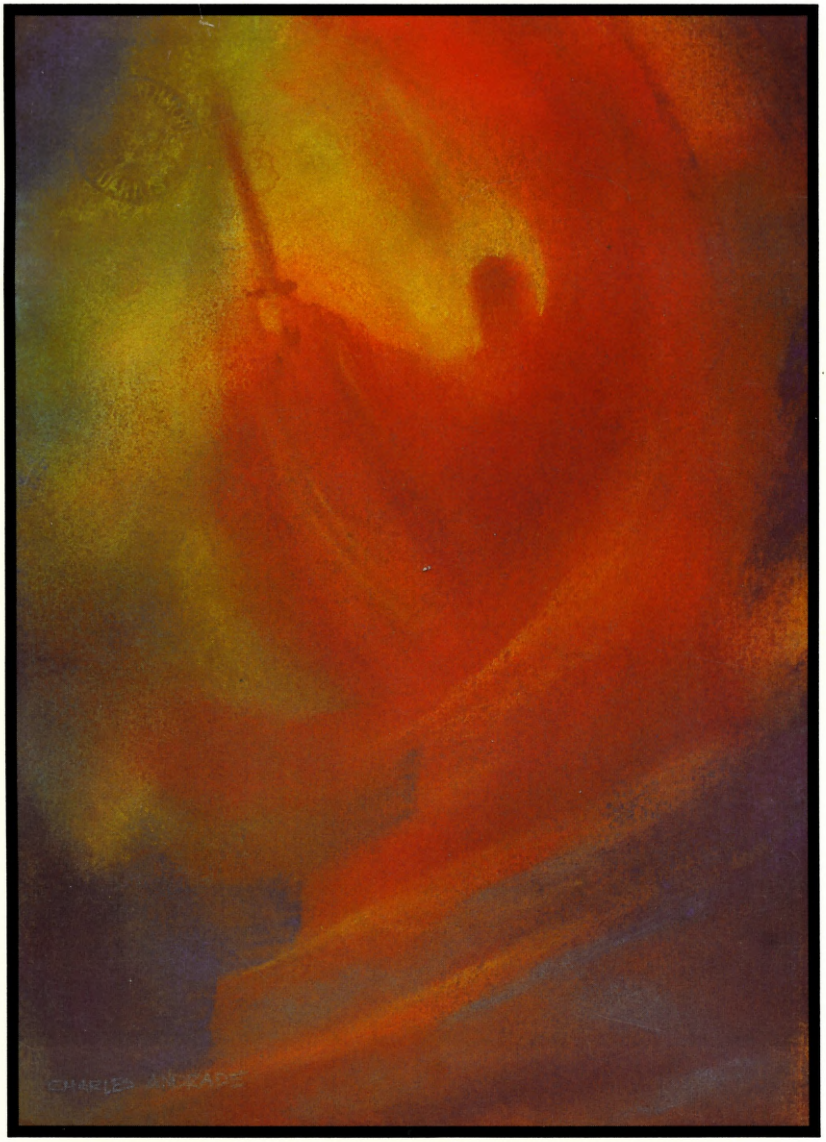
# Journal for ANTHROPOSOPHY

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*My prayers seem to be more of an attitude than anything else. I indulge in very little lip service, but ask the great creator silently, daily, and often many times a day, to permit me to speak to him through the three great kingdoms of the world which he has created—the animal, mineral, and vegetable kingdoms—to understand their relations to each other, and our relations to them, and to the Great God who made us all. I ask him daily, and often momently, to give me wisdom, understanding and bodily strength to do his will.*

*Hence I am asking and receiving all the time.*

*—George Washington Carver*

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## Alisse's Song

Ancient dragons from the mists like winds approach me
As I lie here on this stone. The dragon made of stars
Whirls incense through my body, and I hurt;
I ache; I sense old wounds. And through them now
I see again the god-world ever-moving,
And know eternity in time.

Through my star-body waking in this tender flesh,
I sense, incarnate in all the Earth, my very Self,
And the angelic kindness cascading through me into time.
Eternal is this Self I Am, and sure my path,
As I become world again.

***Martin Croes***

## Sue's Own Heart-song

Sailing close to the wind is my very Name;
and as I move, in the universal breath of God
I see my face. My deathless eyes,
gazing into my mortal ones, give power of
sight to trees and sky.
My deepest nature lives in motion!
I am vision in the dance of wind,
the meaning of all movement. I am the
heart of gladness in children running.

***Martin Croes***

# The Single Mother[1]

BY MICHAELA GLÖCKLER, M.D.

There exists today a vast literature addressing the mother-child relationship. The interest in this topic indicates the complexity of the pertaining experiences, problems and perspectives, as well as the difficulty of their psychological and sociological interpretation. Some authors stress the underlying socio-cultural structures conditioning the mother-child interactions and investigate their impact on the child's subsequent biography. Other authors emphasize the emancipation and, in particular, the new lifestyle of 'mothers without husbands.' A significant segment of the respective literature deals with *working mothers* and attempts to help overcome, on the one hand, the prejudices and social isolation, and on the other hand, the lack of faith in oneself and paralyzing self-reproaches. The plethora of this literature, and the multitude of problems described therein, shows that the occupation of being a mother, though old as mankind itself, continues to require a thorough reconsideration and a new understanding in the present social context.

## Why are so many marriages failing?

Presently, there are some school classes, in which only one-third of the children have families in which the father and mother live together. The times are gone when a marriage was maintained because of social norms, or by virtue of the strength of a vow given in church. Today, both partners' opportunity to pursue their personal interests and goals within family bonds forms a basis for a successful companionship. At the same time, this new social justification reveals that without clear criteria and motives and without self-control it is becoming increasingly difficult to cope with other persons, with their

[1]The editor is grateful to Dr. Virginia Sease for recommending that this article be translated and published for our readers. It was translated from German by M. Orlowski from the July issue of 'Erziehungskunst', (July 1989).

needs, their habits, and their temperaments. Disappointed expectations, unrestrained demands, misunderstandings, unfulfilled desires, wishful thinking, greed, jealousy, and differences on how to rear children and how to organize the family life can easily derail any relationship, unless these conditions are recognized as fertile ground for discussion, adaptation and change of the partner and of oneself. It quite often happens that only one partner realizes the necessity of self-discipline, of sacrifice, and has enough strength to carry on with the relationship, which already might have been seriously damaged. Sometimes, the situation goes out of control, so that it is beneficial for all involved—the partners and the child—for the partnership to be terminated. A child is much better off growing up without a father, in an otherwise harmonious relation with the mother, rather than being exposed to the daily tensions and icy or malicious feelings between the parents. We will consider, therefore, the situation of child rearing by a single mother.

## What does a child expect from its mother?

By answering this question we can offer help and provide guidance for mastering the new life in its social and emotional dimension. The child expects from its mother what was its unquestioned privilege prior to the birth: unreserved acceptance and safety. The atmosphere of protection, of being fed, of care and of safety during the pregnancy does not end at birth, but continues and characterizes the essential features of the relation between the mother and her child. However, in contrast to animals, humans enhance and activate their biological abilities with suitable emotional, intellectual and social behavior patterns. In the worst case, these patterns can even reverse the behavior dictated by instincts. Humans can display a wide gap between the physical capability to provide protection and the willingness and readiness to do it. This is because they themselves feel insecure, unaccepted, and unclear about their personal goals. In short, mental and spiritual qualities activate and mobilize purely biological functionality and transcend them at the same time. There might be a lack of courage to take the next step, to make necessary but tough decisions. There might be lack of perspective and orientation to choose the right solution. The emotional backbone might be broken while the physical one is unimpaired.

Brief reflections of this kind make clear that while the physical skills are fully developed, the spiritual and emotional side of a human

being is always in the process of permanent evolution, self-search, and of life-long learning. Moreover, a human being has to master his physical abilities once again, now, however, on a different level, namely in a emotional, spiritual, and mental way—so that they can be integrated and can become a genuine part of his personality. How can good child care be realized?

— On the physical level: warmth, shelter, nurture, and the organization of its life.

— On the emotional level: by embedding the child's life into one's own life, by love and devotion.

— On the spiritual level: stable orientation, a sense for experience, understanding of the relationships and dependencies, and an ability to assess the difficulties.

**How can these skills be learned?**

We cannot separate the child's care and education from our own development. The overall conditions for this development are as important for us as for the child, for we resemble the child in emotional and spiritual ways. We stumble, we fall, we use wrong words. It is instructive to ask where the child's energy is coming from to practice continually to stand up and to speak—despite all their failures. In the child's attitude we encounter something of great importance: the child begins to refer to itself as "I" *after* it has mastered the crucial phases of its young life. This leap in consciousness, which accompanies the process of learning, allows us now to decide whether or not some skills are important enough to be learned and to assess the degree of effort to acquire them. An older child or an adult can decide to give up after having been repeatedly unsuccessful. An infant does not react in this way, because it does not have this sense of judgment; rather it follows its instincts and tries again and again. The observation of the unremitting and joyful readiness of a small child to learn, shows how a critical examination of the outer world and of oneself can lead to discontent, dullness and destructive attitudes. Being aware of this can help the mother to approach the child in the spirit of: "Your confidence in me, your preparedness to accept my world as a sensible framework and being worth imitating, your zest for life—all that you are giving me, I want to give back to you, by giving you confidence in the world and in me, by setting goals for your and my own development." A child has a keen sense for such attitudes and tendencies in his

parents, and finds therein spiritual protection, emotional stability, and social reliability.

These qualities do not depend primarily on whether the mother is not working, employed part time or full time, or whether there is a father living with the family or not. Quite to the contrary, these are qualities which can be acquired by anyone and passed on to the children. Even a teacher with such qualities can furnish a 'motherly' atmosphere of safety, and thus, in certain cases, make up for deficiencies in family life. Before we continue to discuss the problems of upbringing of a child by a single mother, I would like to touch on two fundamental questions of modern motherhood: the question of the social esteem of being a mother (in the sense of a profession) in today's society, and that of a mother working full-time.

## Is '*being a mother*' a profession?

Looking at the daily schedule of a mother to satisfy the needs of a child, it is clear that being a mother is a tough, strenuous, full-time job, without regular working hours, without free weekends and holidays. If appropriately remunerated, it would be one of the best paid jobs. But it is far from that. In our societies, in which a product or a service that is free of cost is deemed inferior or even worthless, in which the maximization of profits is one of the highest practical values, the profession of being a mother has a low reputation and a much lower "market value" than the actual effort, dedication and work would be valued otherwise.

Furthermore, a mother lacks the support of continuing programs in educational, psychological, nutritional, and socio-hygienic issues. Even if granted that the essence of the mother-child relationship does not depend solely on social change, it is undisputed that its socio-psychological context changes as fast as the entire society changes. There are few financial resources, very little research and inadequate guidance which can support a woman in her role as a mother. What she is doing, she must do by her own impulses, quite often, and without spiritual and moral support from the outside world. It is a serious problem of our times that, based on the materialistic values which prevail in our societies, and despite the visible presence of churches, only those commodities are valued which have a corresponding monetary value.

It is true that one sometimes encounters people, for example physicians, who do not 'make' much money, because they refuse to

ask for 'customary' or 'reasonable' fees. They are admired by some people, but are mostly regarded as unfit and ill-equipped for life—solitary, strange, or not in the mainstream of society. Those who were brought up in such a system of values must regard the profession of motherhood as inferior, because she is not paid for it. There have been initiatives in our society demanding some form of salary for the upbringing of a child, but in the world of profit maximization, dominated mainly by men, such demands have been flatly rejected.

The life of a mother and her child would be different if the mother were supported by a basic salary, compensating her for her efforts in raising a child and providing the economy with a skilled work force. Such basic pay would allow her to organize her life in a more flexible way—for example, by having a housemaid occasionally. This would also compensate for the social degradation which results from the exclusive control over money by the man. In even more drastic cases, a mother who is convinced that she and her child would be much better off alone, would have not to stay with the man purely for financial reasons. The risks of social decline, and the burden of working to make a living and raising the child at the same time, prevent many women from taking such steps.

Since the society and economy are interested in raising children to replenish the work force and are willing to pay a substantial amount of money for the higher education of their current employees, there is no compelling reason why the mother should not be compensated for her crucial economic input and her investment into the economy. A basic stipend for mothers raising their children would not only increase the quality of their lives, but it would also enhance their social esteem, and most importantly improve the quality of a child's upbringing, especially in low income families. Such a measure would also avoid the immense social and economic costs of dealing with socially derailed, damaged and criminal people. It would also constitute an attractive 'job offer' and would, in the long run, help to reduce abortions.

We should also mention that there are many mothers who like their role, who say 'yes' to the pleasant and unpleasant sides of their role, that there are also husbands who recognize their wives' efforts, and, finally, that there are children whose happiness is the highest reward for their parents. A young mother, who gave up her job after the birth of her first child, was asked about the essence and purpose of her new 'profession.' She responded, "The essence of being a mother is

the child itself." "In what respect?", I asked. "In the sense of an incredible beauty and adventure—to see and to experience what it means to become a human being." Then she told me many details and her eyes beamed with joy, happiness, and passion. Finally she said: "I have the feeling of having a good reason to live. One is doing something for the future when one gives a human being the foundation for his life."

Of course, every mother would respond in a slightly different manner to this question. But this one specific answer contains nevertheless an important message. It shows that a mother who previously worked professionally, and who wholeheartedly decided to become "only" a mother, has the self-confidence and strength to identify herself in a positive sense with her new "job," and that she finds satisfaction by virtue of her occupation itself rather than by explicit recognition by someone else. Various mothers respond by saying simply that they wished to have a baby. But the question "why did they wish to have a baby?" often remains unsatisfactorily answered. Anyhow, they would hardly say "because I am interested in how humans become humans." Most mothers feel strangely about this 'why.' For them it is self-explanatory that a woman has the wish to have a baby.

Mothers confronted with the same question, who established a family more or less by accident, without any explicit wish or decision to have a baby, have to cope with many conflicts and problems. The children are regarded as a burden and an inconvenience. At times, when these mothers see all the negative sides in exaggeration, they see that they are unable to pursue their goals, their interests, their lives; they perceive their present life as an imprisonment. They are facing a painful process of becoming conscious of the new situation and of all its implications. In short, the dilemma they are confronted with is this: they have no means and no foundation to justify and to internalize a major change in their lives, which they entered unprepared, unaware, and psychologically unmotivated. Even the process of adaptation and of acceptance of the new situation is prone to the risk of relapsing in old doubts and depressions, and in despair of not knowing how to cope with the plight. It requires something more than faith in individualistic values to master such situation; it requires the acceptance of one's own destiny—not for personal advantage, but for someone else. It is not possible to become a loving mother of several children without having accepted this circumstance inwardly.

However, if a mother succeeds in saying "yes" to her children in her heart, she will be best equipped to provide her children with warmth, protection and stability.

The ability to identify oneself with the realities of life is perhaps the most difficult task but presumably also one of the highest achievements we can reach. Poets like Goethe have referred to this as the toughest of all tests in life, and he said that the self-conquest or 'internal victory' represents one of the highest human moral values. Once the mother consents in her heart to her new role, the absence of a father can be compensated for much more easily. A child needs somebody who accepts it unreservedly; by doing this the mother also has achieved more stability through an increased identification with her role.

Many people live today with a shaken confidence in themselves. They are not in accord with themselves and their self-esteem is damaged. The personal qualities they possess are deemed worthless, and character features they see in others, and which they do not have but wish to have, are overvalued. They often indulge in purely wishful thinking. The true *ego* is floating precariously between these extremes. The stronger the resulting tension, the less possibility exists for true self-identity, and the weaker the capability becomes to distinguish between personal desires and the real world. Circumstances of this sort can arise from involuntary pregnancy, divorce, sudden illness, or some other deep-seated experiences. However, such grave adversities can also initiate an entirely new development, a complete turnaround, which is sometimes called a 'second birth.' The term 'second birth' refers to the acceptance of one's own individuality, and indicates also a new volition to develop oneself and to determine one's own position in the world. At this point we encounter again the thought, that everything which physically affects us, or which constitutes our physical capabilities, has to be first acquired and mastered on a spiritual and emotional level. An access to new territories of life can only be gained if we are able to enter the pertinent regions of our feelings and of our soul.

The acceptance of being a mother thus transcends the individual life of mother and child. It is a paradigm of becoming a human. The message of being a mother is to see and actively to accompany the development of a child. At the same time it means to be called upon to do the same with oneself. Mothers who are aware of this and have discussed their experiences with others are rewarded by insights

which enrich those sides of their lives which are neglected in our societies, driven as they are by mechanistic and quantitative notions of efficiency. These 'motherly' qualities can be regarded as an offer to society to balance the predominant male character of the society which is characterized by competition and by emphasis on values based on comparison (of being better, being 'number one,' more powerful, wealthier, richer, better paid, etc.) rather than based on an acceptance of *what is*. These qualities are also required for working men and women exposed to stress, hurry, caught in hierarchical structures, and coming home with nagging problems.

## The working mother

A working mother really has two jobs and it is almost impossible to be fully devoted to each of them. She has to compromise. Having a positive attitude to the compromises is always the best solution for the child under such circumstances—for such compromises can be entirely compatible with a child's healthy development. A prerequisite in this situation is an appropriate response to the question: "What are the child's needs, and what can I give to the child under these circumstances?" It is obvious that the functions of a mother now have to be distributed among several persons. A harmonious relation among the involved persons, cooperation, and cohesion in basic principles of education and of upbringing are crucial for the quality of the child's overall development.

Quite often, paradoxically, the main obstacle is the mother, who refuses to share the 'soul' of the child with others. The child may become confused by his affection for other persons, on the one hand, and from the more or less apparent, even if well hidden, disapproval of these persons by the mother, on the other hand. The child is forced by such a situation to distrust his own affections and feelings. Such mothers do not recognize that the exposure of her child to her stress, hurry, and discontent with herself is more detrimental to the child than any potentially negative character traits of the persons caring for the child the mother is trying to shield the child against. Again, it is essential to consent wholeheartedly to this situation. This implies also that the mother has to be aware and ready to cope with problems of rivalry between her and other people who care for the child. Instead of asking whom the child loves more, it is more appropriate to accept and integrate the respective persons into one's own life.

The double role of a working mother requires an ability with which non-working mothers are confronted at a much later stage of the child's development: the ability to see the child not as a possession, but as an assignment and a mission. For the working mother has to learn from the beginning that she is giving the child away, and at the same time she has to accept that the child does not entirely belong to her but to the world. This acceptance must be accompanied by an emotional and spiritual affirmation of this circumstance and can thus help to overcome the motherly egoism and jealousy. Then, instead of tensions and rivalries and actions which spoil the child, an atmosphere of harmony can be created in which the child can flourish. This situation is similar to the situation at puberty, in which the non-working mother has to loosen her bonds to the child because of its growing individuality and when new, sometimes peculiar features emerge, not entirely familiar to the mother. However, as long as the children themselves do not oppose their parents by trying to be different, it is difficult to overcome the mother's attachment, love and egoism.

The double role as a mother and as a working woman also has some additional advantages. As the children are growing up and the process of separation is becoming more and more pronounced, it is easier for a working mother to find contact with the outside world. For the non-working mother, this requires a complete changeover of her entire life. The non-working mother can alleviate the readjustment by learning a language, playing an instrument—doing something which she can pursue when the children are grown up.

## The non-working mother

Among mothers who are rearing their children alone, full–time and part–time mothers can be distinguished. Most often, the full–time mother has a low income and lives in poor circumstances compared with the part–time mother. If the mother is able to identify herself with her life, the children will be happier than in a wealthy family with strife and conflicts. The identification is not only important by its impact on the child but also for the mother herself. Identification with her own situation is conducive to making contacts with friends and other families, which can help to ease the hardships experienced. Of course the non-working mother also has to compensate for the absence of a father. However, as we already have said, tensions

between parents are not likely to create an atmosphere of happiness and a place of safety. A single mother cannot be drawn into discussions on education, schooling, summer camps, and things to be purchased, all of which can lend themselves to quarrels and harsh disputes. The child experiences that its mother is doing things she thinks are right. This clear and unambiguous kind of performance creates a feeling of safety, stability, and reliability. It is true, however, that the child is less exposed to techniques of conflict solving, mediation, and compromises.

Studies of adults who have been fatherless in their youth, or who spent their youth without a father, as in many cases during the Second World War, show that many of these are harmonious persons, looking back at their childhood full of gratitude. A man—himself already a father—told me that he experienced his father only as a small child, before his father went to war, and that he never had the feeling of being fatherless. During the war the mother waited for the father's return and told the child much about him. When the notice arrived that he had been killed, she spoke even more about him. They looked together at old photographs and the mother told the boy that he now had a father in heaven. What is important is the *spiritual presence* of the fatherly element.

This case is a good example of how the physical absence of a father can be compensated for. If the mother is able to succeed in depicting the father as he was when she still loved him, she can instill in the child the principles and ideas of a father. Since the father is becoming so positive a figure, it is easier to tell the child that the father has to take care of another person, or that he is working in a foreign country and therefore is unable to come.

Somewhat more difficult for the mother to cope with are visits by the father, since they require a balanced approach to explain and justify his absence most of the time, and to affirm and interpret his entries into the child's daily life. The father might allow the child to do things, like watching TV, of which the mother might disapprove. It is difficult to remonstrate with the child for acts about which the parents disagree. In such cases it is helpful to let the child tell what it has experienced being together with the father. Then the child has the opportunity to reproduce in an active way the passive reception of TV. And also the mother has the opportunity to participate in her child's experience and to help to correct its interpretations and to integrate its content into the child's life. It is of great important for the

child to integrate new experiences into the familiar and unshaken frame of its life. This is much more important than the sheer avoidance of detrimental influences to which the child might be exposed.

Finally I would like to share a thought, which might be helpful to any mother. Being confronted with many problems, one often forgets that there are plenty of favorable circumstances in one's life. If one is not aware of such an advantageous state of affairs it is advisable to search for and to identify them. Whether as a housewife or in the work force the life of a single mother has disadvantages, but also some advantages, some additional potential to develop new strengths and capabilities, which are not required in a two-parent household. If one succeeds in being aware of them it will become easier to develop a positive attitude towards one's own life and to provide a healthy environment for the child's development.

[To avoid possible misinterpretations the editor quotes the initial part of the discussion session with the author after the original lecture was delivered.]

*Question:* You have described the rearing of a child by a single mother in such positive terms that I almost had the impression that a father is a disturbing factor in the child's upbringing.

*Answer:* It is a fact, that nowadays many women decide deliberately to live without a man, because in their view the damage outweighs the benefit of having a husband and a father. Besides, there are, of course, many women who suffer from being abandoned by a man and who see only the negative aspects of it for them and for their children. They have a bad conscience towards the children, in that they have been not able to provide them a father. They are often depressed that they failed as a woman to keep a man at their side. Often they regret that they were not tolerant enough to be able to stand the partner's habits. A divorced woman told me: "If I would have known that I could endure my husband's habits, I would not have divorced him." She said this fifteen years after her divorce.

I have tried briefly to indicate some aspects of being a single mother in taking into consideration various cases, in an effort to provide insights for a positive identification with such a situation. I have not addressed the situation of a two-parent family, which is confronted with different sorts of problems. I tried to get across my conviction that it is of paramount importance, both for the child and for the adult, that the single parent accepts his or her situation and finds a positive attitude with which to work on it.

# Poetry, Music and Imagination

BY CHRISTY BARNES

What follows is largely based upon what I taught at the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City in the first few days of the tenth grade "History of Poetry" block (one of the ten or so high school literature blocks) before we went on to the history of lyric, epic and dramatic poetry.

I came to begin the course as I did—first because it was what interested me enormously, and next because of something in the boys and girls at this age. The soul of the adolescent is in a state of glorious imbalance. Adolescence is a disease without which you are not healthy. It is an abnormality without which you are not normal. The soul is a-flow and a-wash with the new, fresh tides that are pouring into it, in search for the depths, breadths, ideals, dangers, dramas and mysteries of life.

These tides may, in some cases, be dammed up and then all but drown a young person in a seeming apathy. But often the currents of these waters are so indomitable that they will break through anything that stands in their way whether family, established custom or morality, unless floodgates are thrown open to them through which they can flow. Then, if the boys and girls find that the channels now accessible to them lead them in the direction of their deepest and truest longings, they may set to work with an enthusiasm, dedication and industry that is surprising.

In the historical part of the block, in our study of the lyric, starting with Sappho and Pindar, we concentrated on a few lyric forms and the sonnet and sonnet-sequences from Dante and Petrarch to Millay and Hopkins. The students wrote a sonnet or Spenserian stanza, Sapphics, triolets, cinquains, haiku and limericks. We reviewed the forms of great epics and Longfellow's pseudo-epics. In dramatic

poetry we focused on the relation of Greek Drama to the Ancient Mysteries and the transformation of conscience as shown in the three great Greek playwrights, ending with a workshop on scenes from Sophocles' *Antigone*, involving the study of dramatic gesture.

## Poetry

> I am interested in language as something that fashions destinies and worlds—language as the most important skill—language as a ritual and magic charm—the word as carrier of dramatic movement .... Isn't just the subtle abuse of truth and of language the real beginning of the misery of the world we live in?
>
> —Vaclav Havel in *Disturbing the Peace*

Of what earthy use today is poetry or the study of it in this technological, highly complex and televised world, with its threatened environment, economy and human rifts between races, nations and creeds, the split atom and the split personality? Has poetry any possible power to heal, re-form or transform the times or ourselves?

Why is it that in Russia it is just the poets who have been exiled and incarcerated? Why are they feared? Why is it that we still speak of the ages of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, Chaucer and Milton? What gave them the ability both to characterize and to form their centuries? What capacities must a poet have to achieve such stature?

What is the very first capacity that marks a poet? Gradually we realize that it is the ability to open oneself to the world. You cannot be nourished by food unless you first open your mouth, nor can you be nourished by experience and grow strong from it unless you first open your eyes and look about you—not with the glazed and passive eye of the TV viewer—but with that gentle opening of the soul which we call wonder.

Yet wonder is till more than this all-embracing openness. An inner stirring begins, a warmth, an inner brooding, a humming, musical mood, a gentle absorbing of the world that can grow to become something like a chewing upon the cud of life, a digesting and transforming of its rich, raw stuff. Now we want to explore the essences and origins of things. Curiosity belongs to the delighted intellect, but wonder to the heart.

> *The very first effect and sign of poetic knowledge and poetic intuition as soon as they exist in the soul,* says Jacques Maritain, *is a kind of musical stir produced in the living springs in which they are born—a stir of unformulated song, with no words, absolutely inaudible to the ear, audible only to the heart; here is the first sign through which the presence of poetic experience within the heart is recognized.*

"Wonder," the Greeks said, "is the beginning of Wisdom." Rachel Carson in her book, *A Sense of Wonder*, writes:

> *I could wish as a gift to each child in the world a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life as the unfailing antidote against boredom and the disenchantment of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.*

Henry Vaughn longs for the time

> *When*
> *My gazing soul could dwell an hour*
> *Upon some gilded cloud or flower.*

And W. H. Davies asks:

> *What is this life if, full of care,*
> *We have no time to stand and stare,*
> *No time to stand beneath the boughs*
> *And stare as long as sheep or cows,*
> *No time to see, in broad daylight,*
> *Streams full of stars, like skies at night ...*

It was this sense of wonder that led men to ponder about how the world began. What could there be that could be created out of nothing, yet could hold within itself all the future of creation? What can I as a human being create without any help from outside myself, without the help of clay or wood or paint, and yet can hold in itself and tell about all that is? What but words which can paint, sculpture forms, describe every detail that exists, but can also pulse with joy, sorrow and life, can command and even have power over life and death! And so we write and recite together the beginning of the St.

John's Gospel in English and in Greek:

*In the beginning was the Word*
*And the Word was with God*
*And the Word was God.*
*The same was in the beginning with God.*
*In Him was life*
*And the life was the light of men.*
*And the light shineth in the darkness;*
*And the darkness comprehendeth it not.*

*En Arche ain ho Logos*
*Kai ho Logos ain pros ton theon*
*Kai theos ain ho Logos*
*Autous ain en arche pros ton theon.*
*En auto tzoe ain*
*Kai e tzoe ain to phos ton anthropon.*
*Kai to phos en te scotia phainei*
*Kai e scotia auto ou katelaben.*

So quite easily we learn some basic Greek roots: *Arche*: archaic—the first of time, ancient, in the beginning, the first of angels: archangels, archbishop, arch-fiend, archetype. *Theos*: god; *Thea*: goddess—theater, the home of the goddess, en-*thu*-siasm—the god within us. And so on through *Logos, Anthropos, auto, tzoe, phos.*

## Words

And yet, what really is a word? How is it born? Arising as an invisible thought or the impulse of a warm heart, it must build itself a body if it is to be effective in this physical world of ours. And so it does—out of the most ephemeral and intangible of substances: the stuff of sound. With the instruments of lips, teeth, tongue and palate, the delicate yet sturdy consonants are shaped to provide keel, masts, sails and vessel, and in the hull of each syllable is placed a musical, glowing vowel—

Enclosed, protected, cherished, held in place
By many-sided care of consonants.[1]

like a jewel set in the prongs of a ring. For like Astrid in Rudolf

Steiner's first *Mystery Drama*, language has the magical power to "*condense the life of sound*,"

> *that glistening it may ring,*
> *and ringing, it may glisten.*"

So the little boats of each word are ushered forth into the world, uttered, born from the human mouth, and then bourne outward on the stream of the outflowing, warm, slightly moist breath: winged words that fly straight to their goal—another human soul. An impulse arising within us may first appear only as a glint in the human eye, next in a gesture and finally in the transformation of them both, as speech carried on the spear-throw of the breath.

It is characteristic of speech that it is never for itself or its author—always it is for "the other." And it is most itself when it is spoken with the greatest concentration of the *subject's* activity but put at the service of scrupulous *objectivity*. In this way a true marriage of subjectivity and objectivity is celebrated. They become one. And when this happens, it gives the speaker who has brought this about a sense of effectiveness in the world, an inner firmness and natural unselfconscious self-confidence.

There are only three arts that need no more than the human body for their performance: the arts of movement, song and speech. Of these the art of speech can best express thought, the activity most characteristic of human beings. And speech includes within its own nature all the other arts.

## Music in Language

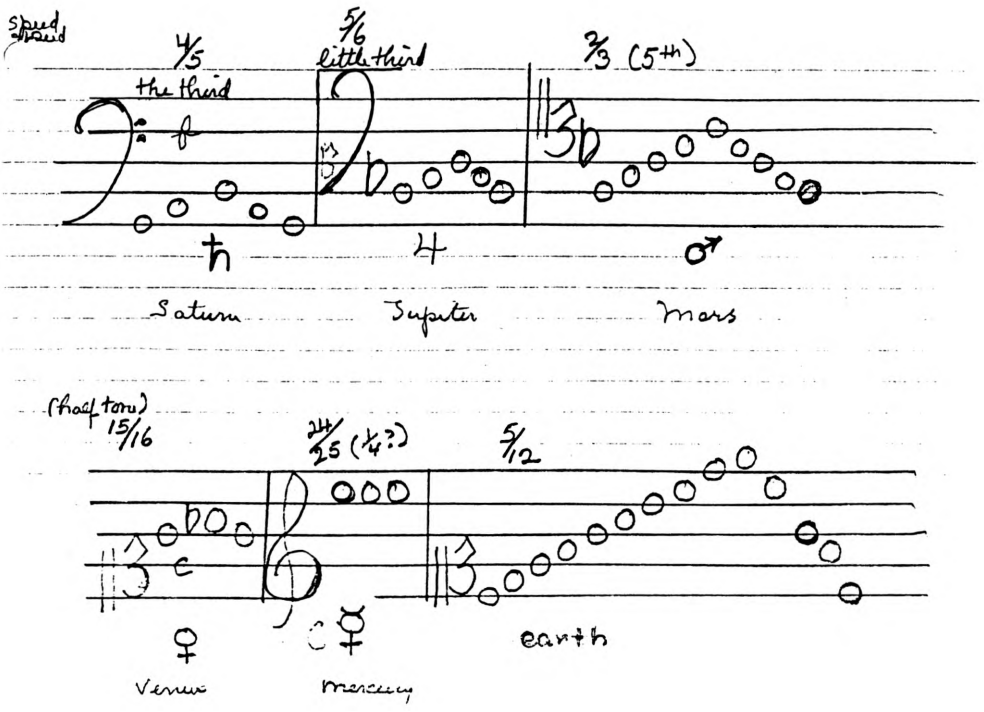
A large part of the power of poetry lies in its music. Poems without rhythms and repetitions, onomatopoeia and tone-color hardly move the heart or awaken us to fresh vision and delight. How can we bring this home to a tenth grader? We can tell them how Pythagoras spoke of the great, harmonious motions of the starry worlds as sounding "the music of the spheres," and how out of this the creative ordering of the universe arose. This conception permeated men's imagination up through medieval times and later it inspired Dryden in his "Hymn to St. Cecelia:"

> *From harmony, from heavenly harmony*
> *This universal frame began.*

*From harmony to harmony*
*Through all the compass of the notes it ran,*
*The diapaison closing full in man ....*

*Then hot and cold and moist and dry*
*In order to their stations leap*
*And music's power obey ....*

The astronomer Kepler was convinced that the courses of the planets were musical in their motions and, in his search for the harmonic basis of their orbits, came upon the facts of astronomy which have made him famous. He found a set of mathematical ratios very similar to those that underlie the mathematical ratios of the harmonic series in music. As a result of one of his projects, he wrote the score of the melodies of all the planets including the earth. He had transposed into musical notes the fractions made by the relation of two speeds: the speed of a planet at its apogee (when it is farthest from the earth) and its speed when nearest the earth, its perigee.




Kepler's music of the planets.

That the music of the spheres sounds also in the human soul was a thought that, in *The Merchant of Venice*, Lorenzo pondered as he spoke to Jessica one star-lit night:

*Look how the floor of heaven*
*Is thick inlaid with pattins of bright gold.*
*There's not the smallest orb that thou behold'st*
*But in its motions like an angel sings*
*Still choiring to the young-eyed Cherubim.*
*Such harmony is in immortal souls,*
*But whilst this muddy vesture of decay*
*Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.*

We can go further and make a Chladni figure. A violin bow is drawn across the edge of a copper or a crystal plate over which fine powder has been strewn. As the tone grows stronger, the dust particles form themselves into an harmonious pattern and then into a different form when the pitch changes and a new note sounds. You can show the class a movie of iron filings that stand up on end and perform intricate dances to a passage from a symphony. Now we realize that music can send a similar harmonious pattern not only into iron filings but right into our own physical bodies. No wonder that music therapy can bring healing into a disordered, disoriented body or soul. On the other hand, noise destroys. Insurance companies will not insure heart patients if they live on a noisy thoroughfare. Stimulated by this latter fact, a student wrote for me a well-researched paper on the damaging effects of noise on the functions of the body.

But there is something still more significant to be drawn from this experiment. The plate across which the violin bow is drawn must be either of copper or of crystal. So the diaphragm of the soul, if it is to respond subtly to the world around it, must have the warm, sensitivity and mobility of copper or the purity of crystal. A lead plate can only respond to a kick. How often we have heard, "I did it for kicks!" All the world craves drama, especially young people. The copper soul finds it in Shakespeare, the soul allowed to become leaden finds it in drugs and guns.

"What passions cannot music raise and quell," Dryden writes. Music moves the motions of the soul, the e-motions. An iambic rhythm stirs us to activity, the trochaic to thoughtfulness, the anapest to dance, the dactyl to health. Shakespeare again puts it best of all:

*That man who hath no music in his soul*
*Nor is not moved by concord of sweet sounds*
*Is fit for treason, strategems and spoils.*
*The motions of his spirit are dull as night*
*And his affections dark as Erebus.*
*Let no such man be trusted.*

## The Genius of Language

It is the genius of a language that shapes the architecture of its grammar and the stanzaic forms of its poetry, imbues it not only with music but with sculpture, color, drama, and the art of black and white, dark and light. We can discover some of the artistry of the English language through the way in which it can build a whole ladder of mysterious shades that span the way from darkness to fiery light. Start with the hint of a word such as *glint* and then arrange a mounting sequence such as *gloom, glimmer, glint, glisten, glitter, gleam, glare*! and afterwards assign a composition that starts near a woodland pool and ends with a forest fire. Start out along the trail of *whirl, swirl,* half dance, half sculpture, past *furl* and *curl,* not forgetting, last but not least, *girl*! Make the four elements sound out in a short poem, only one noun, one verb to a line: *Rocks crack,/ Winds blow,/ Fire flickers,/ Rivulets flow.* There are endless such discoveries to be made.

Children have a keen ear for expressive sounds and love such words as *slosh, slush, flop, slop, plop.* I would like to tell you about an instance of this. When I was little and my sister and I made our beds, we would stand on either side of the white sheets and point out the rimples that had to be smoothed. It was not until college, when I asked a friend to smooth out the rimples in her sheets, that I was told there was no such word in the dictionary, which only goes to show how *wrong* a dictionary can be! Our sheets had no hummocks or coils in them. They were not *rumpled.* Neither were they wet, so not *rippled. Wrinkles* belong in old ladies' faces. No, our sheets were distinctly *rimpled*! Now you might say that we were being creative. But no again. We were being exact. We were going to the source, the origins of things. We were being original but not creative. This was by no stretch of the imagination self-expression. It was world-expression!

## Imagination

This brings me to something which I think of the greatest importance. It is why I have never taught so-called "creative writing." We all

and children especially, need to learn how to be true in its fullest, most living, most unpedantic sense. But how true do we think imagination can be?[2] What is its nature? How can we train high school pupils to be as responsible toward the truth of imagination as they try to be towards accurate truth in mathematics and science? And how can we do this in a tenth grade "History of Poetry" block?

One way could be this: Call up before your mind's eye the image of a flower petal, of a rose or a mallow, with its pure, clear color and delicate substance that can flutter in the breeze. It is narrow close to the stem and flares outward, widening into the air and light.

And now turn to a different kingdom of nature. Paint for yourself a picture of a butterfly's wing, pointed where it is attached to the body and widening out into the full, beautifully colored wing, of a texture so impalpable that it can glide and float on the wind.

And you say, "See, a butterfly is a flower tossed by the wind!" You have had an *image-a-nation*! What have you really done? You have seen deeper than what first met your eye. You have seen *through* the vivid impressions made by two quite distinct and separate physical organisms to the invisible laws and forces which informed and built them both, just as did the Japanese poet who wrote the haiku:

*See, white petals blow*
*Back up to the cherry bough!*
*No, a butterfly!*

and as Rudolf Steiner did when he wrote:

*Behold the plant!*
*It is the butterfly*
*Held prisoner by the earth.*
*Behold the butterfly!*
*It is the plant*
*By the whole cosmos freed!*[3]

Now with Blake you can

*...see a world in a grain of sand,*
*And a Heaven in a wild flower,*
*Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand*
*And Eternity in an hour.*

and understand why he says:

*We are led to believe a lie*
*When we see with, not through, the eye.*

But the lens through which we look in this way is still unformed in many of us and needs careful shaping and training.

If more of our scientists and inventors could "see through" to the upbuilding forces of nature, might they not make discoveries and inventions that neither poison nor pollute, such as the "Flow Forms" designed by John Wilkes and like the sprays and preparations involved in bio-dynamic agriculture—an agriculture which, instead of causing erosion of top-soil, as commercial agriculture does, or keeping it constant as organic farming is able to do, actually increases its volume. This quality of insight is needed today in every sphere if we are to turn things about before much greater damage is done.

When I was trying to understand and convey to high school students the role that truth plays in imagination, the biology and chemistry teacher was working to show her pupils that imagination is as powerful an instrument for exact scientific research as is any microscope or telescope. The discussions we had were an enormous encouragement and help to me, as were each instance of a similar collaboration with other teachers.

Now I think that it is just during high school that people can work at building and developing this kind of eye that has the power to foresee the consequences of their actions and to look into the invisible laws that create the miracles of intricate plant, animal and human forms. With our physical eyes we see the marvels of these forms and of color, stars, oceans and of people, but they can not see into the world of the invisible forces that create them, or into the inner nature of a human being. Is there really an eye that can do this? And you see, there is such an eye! Poets call it imagination.

### *Kinships*

But imagination has a still further and very particular property which could be of special importance for the world today. It does not only see the very core, heart and whole of what it perceives. It is an organ which recognizes and fosters the likenesses and kinships among people and in nature. It probes through the altogether different faces and personalities that surround us and glimpses—deeper than what

first meets the eye—the archetype of humanity that imbues each member of every race, every nation and creed and makes us all akin. When we are able to recognize this archetype in one another, we no longer need to hate our differences but are somehow freed to welcome and even delight in the wealth of diversity that these variations provide. We have a new grasp of the unity and wholeness of mankind, of families and of our own invisible core, our individuality.

Through the eye of analysis, on the other hand, we see and are able to make sharp, fine distinctions and divisions. To this we owe much of the greatness of our modern civilization as well as an important and not-to-be-neglected stage in the training of clarity and exactitude of thought. But it also leads us to distinguish and too often to foster the differences and dividing walls between races, nations and creeds, the divisions in families and in the subtly interwoven forces that weave the fabric of our own souls. We split the atom and our own identity.

Gazing into nature, imaginative insight, with its love of likening, sees the star form in the vast night skies and again the same form in the faces of daisies in a morning meadow. It recognizes it in crystals and in how thought itself radiates star-like into the world. It discovers how the courses that rivers take across countries and continents is echoed in the boughs of trees, in the veins of leaves, the veins of rocks, in our own veins and arteries. The whole world, we realize, is interrelated in one analogy after another. We are embedded in a meaningful web of laws that weaves the earth and the heavens, the East and the West into a whole. Poetry is one of the weavers of this web, so I would like to include here a poem written some time ago by a high school student which will illustrate better than I can what profundities and kinships a poem can reveal

LINE

*A pure bright beam—a ray of light*
*Will pierce with power the death of night.*
*It flows through void, it glows unending—*
*One pure dimension, never bending,*
*Never ceasing, never straying,*
*And to the infinite outraying.*

*A thought is gold, undying, bright—*
*A straight line, perfect in its flight,*

*From primal Star-Point reaches out—*
*From consciousness—to shatter doubt.*

—*Andrea Woodner*

Our physical eyes are finished, and if there is something wrong with them, they have to be corrected by glasses or contact lenses. But the eye of imagination is never finished, and it is only we ourselves who can build it ever further so that it becomes more and more transparent to the light of reality; so that the curve of its lens grows more perfect and there is ever less astigmatism to distort what we see into fantastic shapes and illusions. We ourselves can learn to focus this lens so that it does not limit us to near-sightedness but gives us broad perspectives and clear views.

I would like to point to some examples of how the kinships in nature are shown in most beautiful and revealing ways. In one of the last chapters of Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, the whole life of one of the characters becomes suddenly meaningful and worth living again when she recognizes the kinship between the patterns of the blood vessels in a dead bird she is dissecting and the branches of a thorn tree, between those in a fallen leaf and the antlers of a deer. Thoreau carries this still further, just after describing the leaf-like forms in the earth of a thawing bank beside a railway track in the chapter "Spring" in *Walden*, and cries out, "God but patented a leaf!" In a book called *Snow Crystals*[4] are shown 2,453 photographs of snowflakes, no two alike, yet each one limited to the hexagonal form and almost all to no more than three concentric circles of radial symmetry. The thought that this demanding restriction can give birth to such a profusion of diversity is breathtaking. The photographs in Theodor Schwenk's *Sensitive Chaos*[5] give instance after instance of these "rhymings" and echoings in nature.

## A Heightening of Imagination

This organ of imagination can heighten its powers even further if you direct it towards all that is positive. When you do, like the sun itself, it sees and draws up towards itself all that wants to grow. We have all heard of the "evil eye" that supposedly puts a curse upon all it rests upon. But we have also experienced people who have a "good eye." When they come into a room, everything about them seems to brighten and thrive as a landscape does when the sun comes out from behind a cloud. And conversely, if you look up to the image of what

you, in your heart of hearts, would most dearly love to be and look up to it as steadfastly as, say, a dandelion looks up to the sun, "never ceasing, never straying/ But to the infinite outraying," you can gradually *become* what you imagine, just as a dandelion becomes a tiny golden image of the sun itself. And so, in this way, too, you can gradually bring about some of the ideals you have for the world around you and make the world "As You Like It!"—not in any trivial or superficial sense, but as you like it in your truest, most thoughtful self.

"Trust thyself! Every heart vibrates to that Iron string."

## Inspiration

Poets have capacities of still another kind. Homer begins *The Iliad* with the words, "Sing, O Muse, the wrath of Achilles." Even today a poet will tell you, "The poem is not really mine. I heard it." Something higher than his ordinary self has inspired, breathed it into him, and now he in turn can breathe it out again and inspire his listeners. Inspire! As you recall the cousins of this word, *as-pire, ex-pire, re-spiration*, you become aware of what a universal process this breathing is. You can breathe in a thought, an ideal. You can breathe in the very light—the morning-light over a summer meadow or aslant a white birch. You can breathe in the tone of a distant church bell and, still more deeply, the silence upon which it floats. I believe everyone shares such experiences, but to varying degrees.

That the awakening of this kind of awareness is part of human progress you realize if you read what Rudolf Steiner has to say in *The Mission of the Archangel Michael.* In ancient times, he tells us, the spiritual was in-spired with the breath strengthened by yoga exercises. Today the air is no longer enspirited. However light and tone still are. Our senses do not merely respond to vibrations. In a wonderfully subtle way they are breathing organisms. When with each sight we see and each tone we hear we become able to breathe in their indwelling spirit, we shall, he tells us, have reached the Michael Age.

In imagination the poet sees with his inner eye. Inspiration allows him to breathe in something beyond himself. With intuition he *becomes* more than himself. Intuition makes possible the imitation of a tiny child and the art of acting. Keats, glancing out the window, felt the dust sifting down through all his feathers. He had caught a glimpse of a sparrow taking a dust-bath.

Shelley has given us three pure examples of these three poetic capacities: of imagination in "To a Skylark," of inspiration in "Ode to the West Wind," and of intuition in "The Cloud."

We began, and I would like to end, with the Word that was in the beginning: the great, creative artist of the universe. The poet becomes its pupil to the extent that he develops wonder that leads him to Wisdom; a love of language in which he awakens to its native music, sculpture, motion—and its unique creative nature; and a power of imagination which he shapes into the eye of truth. Then he may gradually become ready to receive, as a gift from the gods, their inspirations and become more than himself, in very deed, a poet.

## All Men Are Poets at Heart

Emerson tells us:

> *The poet's problem is to unite freedom with precision. Dante was free imagination—all wings—yet he wrote like Euclid.*

And in his *Defense of Poetry* Shelley wrote:

> *A man to be greatly good must imagine intensely and comprehensively; He must put himself in place of another; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is imagination.*

And Thoreau:

> *It is something to paint a picture or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of the arts.*

> *Respect for the word is the first commandment of the discipline by which a man can be educated to maturity—intellectual, emotional and moral. Respect for the word—to employ it with scrupulous care and an incorruptible, heartfelt love of Truth is*

*essential if there is to be any growth in society or in the human race.*

*To misuse the word is to show contempt for man. It undermines the bridges and poisons the wells. It causes man to regress down the long path of evolution!*

*—Dag Hammarskjold*

## NOTES

1. From *The Mercury Capital*, a one-act play by Albert Steffen, in *Albert Steffen, Translation and Tribute*, Adonis Press, 1959.
2. In this article the words imagination, inspiration and intuition are used in their usual senses—not in the greater sense in which Rudolf Steiner uses them in his fundamental books.
3. Translation by Arvia MacKaye Ege.
4. By W. A. Bently and W. J. Humphreys, Dover Publications, New York.
5. Rudolf Steiner Press, London. Available from the Anthroposophic Press.

# The Wondrous Weed
# Why I Wrote *The Dandelion's Cousin*
# Reasons — Joys — Obstacles

BY GERTRUDE TEUTSCH

Suppose you observed a gray-haired lady on a walk furtively waving and smiling at some weed in the dirt. You would probably be right to say, "That is Gertrude Teutsch." The weed would be *Sonchus oleraceus*, the Hare Thistle, or, as I like to call it, the Dandelion's Cousin. I can't help but greet it because it has become my friend; for years I have been watching its fascinating antics.

Often it is mistaken for a Dandelion. I recall my first attempt at seeding a wild-flower patch. An overly zealous visitor pulled up the first "wild flower." "It's just a Dandelion," he responded to my protests. It was Hare-Thistle though—obviously not a part of the hoped-for wildflowers. Hare-Thistles volunteer at the slightest encouragement.

A Dandelion is a Dandelion. There is little room for doubt though a few varieties exist. The Hare-Thistle, on the other hand, takes so many different shapes that I have at times wondered if two specimen growing right next to each other were not really of two different species. Its outstanding property is change, metamorphosis.

When it blooms, most people nevertheless will call it a Dandelion. Learning to be observant is not generally stressed in our world. And that is the cause for my adventures with this "cousin" of the Dandelion, the reason why I wrote the book *The Dandelion's Cousin*, a picture book for children and all other people.

Writing a book had not been on my mind. For many years I taught art in a public school. Loving plants, I had read writings by Grohmann, Pelikan, Adams and Whicher, and others, rejoicing in the many form-structures, their transformations and underlying geometric principles. Particularly an article by Dr. Jochen Bockemühl had remained in my

mind. It dealt largely with the leaf-metamorphosis of *Sonchus oleraceus.*

One year, wishing to open up for high school students an approach to living form, I turned to that plant. So many other ways had only led to further proliferation of the purely imitative process. The young people were asked, "how many types of change can you see here?" They loved the activity. I will never forget the enthusiastic exclamation of a girl of fifteen who was experiencing painful problems both at home and in school, and had never taken any active interest in any task, "Hey, you could really get into this!"

The students found one change after the other: in leaf-shape, stem-shape, stem-length, direction, size, color, and on and on. A most productive period of drawing followed. The ability to observe sharpened. The sense for form began to wake up.

Much later, after puzzling for months whether this subject could be helpful to a younger group, I suddenly saw the story line of *The Dandelion's Cousin* in front of my mind's eye. The plant was raising questions. I began to seek the answers myself and I realized quickly that my ability to observe also needed honing. Very active years of work followed.

What *does* change in *Sonchus oleraceus* during its process of growth?

Of course we expect an annual plant to grow bigger, taller, to change color when it blooms, to have blossoms—and seeds of a shape different from the blossom, etc. Are we able to describe *how* they are different?

First the "Cousin" makes a flat rosette on the ground, then it reaches upward. We might call this "gesture." (Though we can't see it, there is a gesture downward at the same time, the root.) The leaves are flat. The buds are spherical. We might call this "dimension." The solid form of the bud ultimately turns into a fuzzy cotton-ball—"texture." The leaf-shape changes in a fascinating sequence—"Movement." The classifications could go on and on.

However, it is almost impossible to notice all these changes without a sense of wonder arising. This little weed that looks so totally ragged and disorderly and usually is pulled out liberally begins to set the imagination to work. When the rosette's horizontal gesture is

replaced by the vertical, it is a surprise. (Those inclined to fancy may wonder who is climbing up the staircase.) When the spherical shapes appear for the first time in the knots, they so much resemble babies in a cradle with their arms stretched up! The unbelievably thin stems carrying up the "heads" let us experience the attracting power of the light. When the melon shapes open into suns it is impossible not to rejoice along with all the creatures who visit them. A new world has opened.

When finally the "lamp shape" appears, the magic of visualizing a lamp comes naturally (Is ripening not a warmth process?); and I cannot imagine that there is anyone who has not succumbed to the enchantment of a Dandelion's "candle." The cousin has a somewhat denser cotton ball. But the tiny parachutes fly just as magically.

So many more changes happen. Most exciting and, most unusual, though, is the change of form from one leaf to the next. This is what had originally involved me in looking at *Sonchus oleraceus*. The metamorphosis can be pictured as two metamorphoses moving into opposite directions and becoming an adventure.

Think of the leaf as consisting of a leaf-stem and leaf-top. In the first leaf, the stem is thin, insignificant, a line; in contrast, the top is round, almost circular.

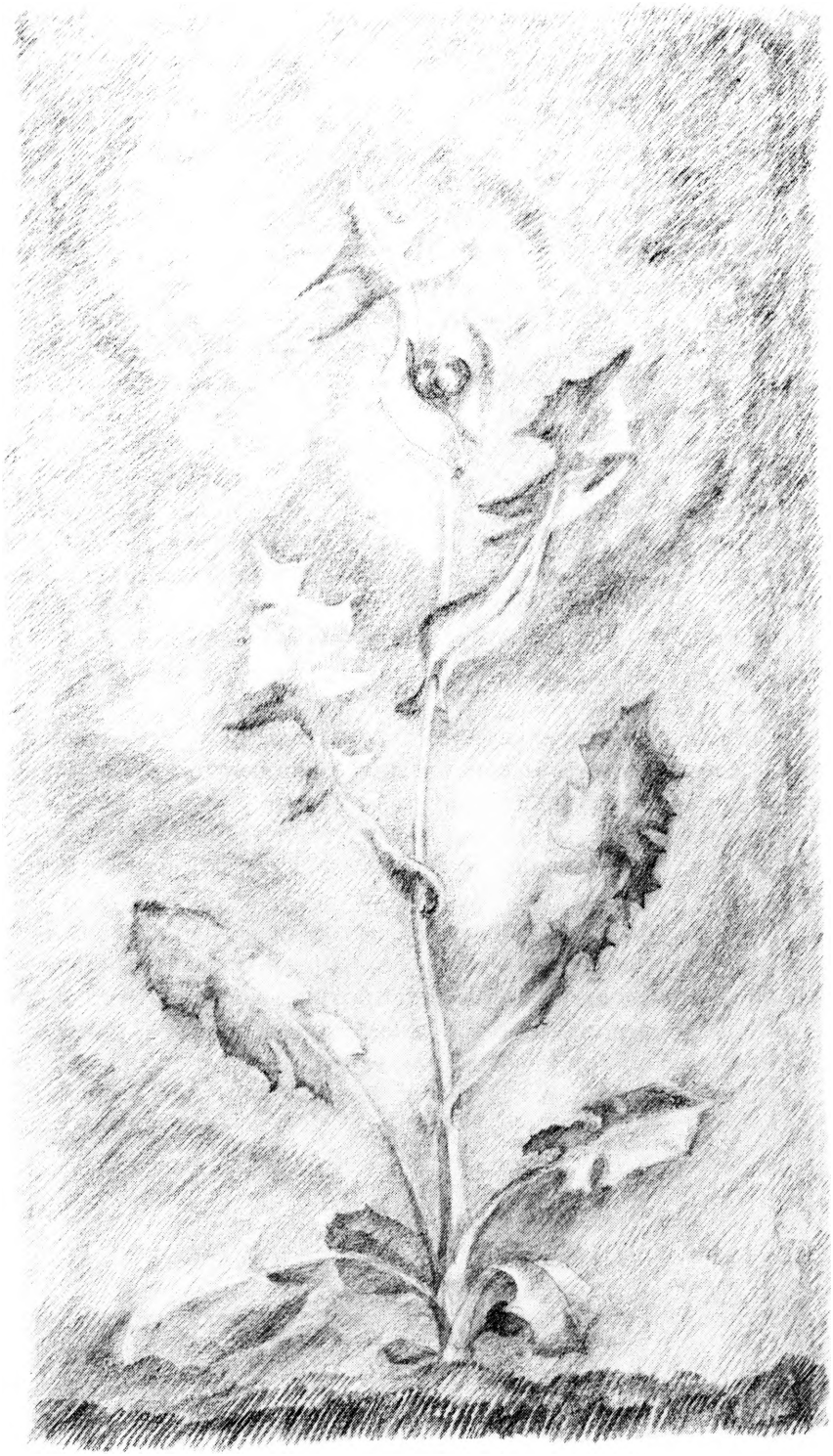
Departing from the germinal leaves, each new leaf-stem turns more rounded, wraps around the stem, ultimately forms a point and finally pushes away the leaf top.

The simple, round leaf-top in turn becomes ever more jagged, manifaceted with each new leaf, ultimately turns lacy, and finally just flies away.

How can this complex process be made graphic in a simple illustration? This was a true obstacle necessitating an unending number of sketches and more-or-less-finished drawings before I arrived at one immediately accessible to the eye. (Page 18 in *The Dandelion's Cousin* is a simplification of the final solution.) It needed an accompanying song to make it truly alive. The children could do it in eurythmy.

> "Stretch!" said the leaf-stem.
> "Tuck!" said the leaf-top.
> etc.

and the disappearing butterfly drives home the point.



I am still observing *Sonchus oleraceus.* My neighbors are probably not too grateful for the rich crop of seeds flying from my garden. Right now, I am watching three remarkable specimen each with a leaf-shape markedly different from the others. A fourth plant is largely red and hardly has grown upwards at all, though it is unusually sturdy with a thick stem, and bears blossoms already. On my walk this morning, I observed one consisting of mostly pointed, triangular shapes—"lion's teeth." One bright red one growing from a crack in a warm wall may go through all the stages in six inches. Another may keep going through all stages after the rosette and grow high and wide enough to hide a person. What causes these variations? Another book might be *The Many Faces of the Dandelion's Cousin.*

Also: Why do the leaves which usually are quite flat suddenly turn their sections at an angle to the main surface? The process of observing brings with it a "playing detective" pleasure. For a while I wondered if a comet caused that change, a good example of a wild guess.

Occasionally the opposite mood arises. Is it right to watch nature while it creates miracles? Has anyone ever seen the "candle" or the "cotton-ball" appear? *Should* we watch? This process usually hides from view. How *does* the "lamp" turn into a cotton ball?

One morning, I saw one of the cottonballs—with the dry petals still sitting on top, a crown fit for a king. This was a high point in my observations. I spent the day elated as though I had received a special, precious gift. I am still sorry that I could not find a place for that image in the story.

How humbling it was to find later many a petal-tip sitting on top of a cottonball. My eyes simply had not been sharp enough.

Many observations are less subtle, for instance the noisy conversation of the linnets while they harvest the seeds. How comical they look with their beards of fuzz surrounded by flying seeds. One year, I knew a family of linnets so well that I could recognize the individual birds.

Unfortunately not all the joyful events found space in the book. The first time we had green june-bugs in the garden, I was uneasy about the metallic, blue-green object circling over my head with an—equally metallic—rattle. When one landed on the Dandelion's Cousin—what a happy occasion for observation! I sneaked up close. Alas, the poor thing had died! Dry and shrivelled, it hung from one leg.

But at least I would be able to get a photo. Quick, get the camera! Returning to take a picture, I found my armored object had flown. It had just played dead.

Is *Sonchus oleraceus* interesting to the world at large in any way?

To most, *Sonchus oleraceus* is a pesky, funny kind of Dandelion, irrepressible, but a little easier to pull out than the other kind.

The first indication that metamorphosis is not the only noteworthy aspect came from a gardener, "Oh, that's the plant we use as a catchcrop for aphids."

"Heard tell" abounds. A gum obtained from *Sonchus oleraceus* is said to have been used as a "cure" for opium addiction. Feeding the plant to the pigs is said to help in bringing forth piglets. Hares are said to like it, or live in it.

Boulos explains that the plant is widely recognized for its great variations of form. He notes that *Sonchus oleraceus* is edible. This is stated in various herbals also. In view of its wide distribution and irrepressible vigor of growth this could signal a welcome addition to our menus. But I do not advise serving Dandelion's Cousin Salad without further inquiry. Perhaps not all *Sonchus* are edible. I found it impossible to distinguish the varieties by their popular names. Boulos lists names in 20 languages among them 13 popular names in German, 8 in French, 11 in English. He names: Sow-thistle, Dindle, Hare's lettuce, Hare's thistle, Hares colewort, Milky tassel, Milk weed, Milk thistle, Saint Mary's seed, Swinies. Names from a variety of languages include more animal references: the hog, lamb, goose, quail, and French even offers the picturesque names "Donkey's milk" and "Hare's palace." What rich challenge for more investigation. What should be the title of that book?

The aim of writing *The Dandelion's Cousin* was to help children develop a sense for living form through observing nature. With this, I hoped to open for them one possible approach to experiencing the etheric world. In the process, I myself learned to observe more carefully, I experienced again and again the sense of wonder, the warm joys of discovery and of finding lively, valid images. True love for my object is the result.

I hope to have guided the reader through the same path—for it is the true learning process. If I succeeded, it will no longer be possible to guess the name of the person waving at the little weed. Many will be waving and smiling.

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*The Dandelion's Cousin* is written and illustrated by Gertrude Teutsch and published by Mercury Press. $13.50.

## Winter into Spring

"Who'll buy my bags of leaves
for bleached bones?" said the Beech.
"I will," said Winter,
scurrying round the grey trunk
setting the leaves to tremble.
"Forget your despair," said the Creek,
"for I will bring a Song of Summer,
'though Winter creeps as snow on cat's feet,
Spring has Green to cover the earth."
Ferns are bewildered stars in the beds of leaves.
Autumn! You are sleeping!
Now Green comes in the smallness
of moss on fallen trees—
—no more casting of shadows
for these long-lost giants!

Rock, root, edge the Creek
and the broken crust of ice.
Are these the caves of the Spirit of the Water?
She has long green fingers
and a song like laughter catching the sun
on the frost-bright days.
At darkness,
when Night makes stars
and Frost dances on the water
She gouges herself a cave in the heart of the earth.

*Continued*

Vibrant blue, bluebirds
with chests the colour of sour cherries
people the fallen tree.
The wood shimmers with all the smaller voices.
Are the trees just listening
to the resonance of birds?
Woodpecker is conductor
spanning the intervals
with his wooden throbbing.

Walking along the green curve
edged by bleached-blue beeches
I remembers the arc of gravelly space
before the lake
and the chintering Aspens.
They gather wind for their toil and pleasure!
and set the words spinning.
You talked of their chintering
at your Grandparents' house
of waking up and listening to them.
You were not there to hear
their conversation lessen
as cold wind brought Autumn
and the passing of summer.

Think of it—they are silent now
standing sadly erect
gazing on the snow
while Wind searches.
The distant forest will be blue
and the broken boat will ache
to catch the lap lap of water.
Did you know it had a Willow growing in it?

***Susan Yates***

# Some Reflections on Counseling and Psychotherapy

BY LEE STURGEON-DAY

One of the great challenges to those of us working in the field of counseling and psychotherapy out of anthroposophy is that Rudolf Steiner did not give a course on this subject and develop a training, as he did for doctors, priests, teachers, farmers and so forth. His writings are full of indications, he left a vast rich legacy for those wishing to work in the "soul" field, but we can't go off and immerse ourselves in a four-year program and emerge with credentials and, hopefully, real capacities to bring to our work. It struck me very particularly when reading *Pastoral Medicine*,[1] where Steiner gives the polar images of the priest's and the doctor's sphere of action, that there was this great unknown space between them—the space of the soul between body and spirit. And I must confess, in those early days, I felt a stab of panic and resentment that he hadn't filled in the middle for me with similar clarity, that I would have to go plunging into the dark and, worse still, often by myself! "You will be working with the rubble left by a passing glacier," commented an anthroposophic doctor to me once. Not a very comforting picture. But it is not a very comfortable profession.

Of course, many since Steiner's day have made valuable contributions to our work, through writings and some training opportunities. The whole development of the social field offers opportunities to enhance and often radically rethink our own. Professor Lievegoed's *Man on the Threshold*[2] stands out for me particularly, offering a compelling alternative vision to the narrow perspectives of most conventional (and less "conventional") psychologies. This growing body of more recent research, and any opportunities we have to meet, share and support each other as our

numbers grow, are all seeds, or perhaps compost to fertilize our knowledge and abilities in the psychological field. But, usually, we are on our own, finding our individual paths, through trainings and work situations, which may be very different.

There is no cohesive "section" of the School of Spiritual Science for counseling and psychotherapy, though we may draw much from the Social, Medical/Therapeutic and Pedagogical Sections. There are few opportunities, in this country, to work in a *therapeuticum*, together with an anthroposophic physician and the curative and artistic therapists, which—for me—would be the ideal. We are spread far apart, working often in isolation, either within a conventional clinical setting or, like myself, privately, on one's own. If for no other reason, this creates quite profound differences in thought and practice between us. And the reflections I share here come only from my own experience. There are probably as many points-of-view as there are counselors and psychotherapists—as there are as many ways of being a student of anthroposophy!

When I think simply of that fact, I wonder perhaps that Steiner did not develop a training is not merely because no one asked him to—psychology being such a new creature in those days—but for a deeper spiritual reason. It often leaves us in a similar condition to the people we meet in our own practice: confused, anxious, full of uncertainties, and needing to find the courage to go forward, despite this, to create something out of ourselves and bring help to the lives of others. I do not want to suggest that we sit before our clients in a crumpled heap and confess we know nothing and are afraid, but I think it is a vital starting point (one we need to return to again and again) for all that we do develop as we go—the particular capacities, methods, even moments of wisdom and insight we may acquire on our own journeys and may be allowed to share with others. For it places us right in this middle, this illimitable, deeply mysterious, "savage and beautiful country" of the human soul, that weaves between body and spirit and is the realm where the Ego fashions itself and creates its sense of individual meaning and purpose.

We invite our clients to discover their meaning and purpose, often as they stand at the edge of the abyss. It may be significant that we stand so often on the brink of our own. We need to feel again and again that we know nothing, that however often we traverse a similar terrain with someone else, it will always be different. We must lose ourselves to find ourselves, and feel a kind of innocence as we stand

before another human being, with a sense of the absolute newness and unrepeatability of this moment. I know this is true for other professionals—doctors, teachers, artistic therapists. Yet they do have supportive substances: medicines, paint, clay, a curriculum. We too may develop our own "soul pharmacopoeia" or "soul curriculum," but I think it is tremendously important not to rely on it, or thrust it too readily upon others. We are continually thrown back upon ourselves, for the substance we are really working with is our own humanity. It is to the extent that we develop our own soul life that we are able to walk with another through the intricacies of his or hers.

## Choosing Training and Therapies

Our own journey begins with selecting a training, if we wish to be even modestly qualified. There are, in this country, literally hundreds of trainings with widely divergent orientations. We will probably be led to our choices through some combination of inner predilections and outer availability—that being how karma works! In retrospect, my own choices (pastoral counseling in England, with a heavy immersion in Jung's psychology, followed later by a year at the Boston Family Institute) actually reflect inwardly my slow, labored passage through old ways and consciousness (I think Jung's psychology is something of an attempted recapitulation of the Greek mysteries), towards striving to take up the new mysteries as inaugurated by Steiner through anthroposophy.

A formal qualifying training doesn't complete the process. Psychologies develop, as do we ourselves, and we are always seeking to extend our work. We may be drawn to explore further methods and techniques which we see being used very effectively. We live under intense cultural pressure to produce *results*. In fact, we live on the one hand in a climate of thought that says we really shouldn't have a problem: it's just a temporary glitch in the system which a minimal outlay of time and money will soon adjust, and we'll all end up playing happy families, with functioning children and washing machines, a balanced soul, a balanced bank account and, of course, a bigger, more glamorous car than we owned before. On the other hand, we see the profession of counselors, therapists, and social workers, swelling to meet the equally burgeoning needs of thousands who are clearly finding it impossible to make their lives work.

We know, from anthroposophy, that our times are not meant to be easy, that what we experience and see around us are actually

symptoms of a massive upheaval in human consciousness, what Steiner calls the "crossing of the threshold," and what confronts us individually and collectively offers a tremendous opportunity (along with the attendant dangers) for a quite new development of awareness and action into the future. That knowledge alone is another vital starting-point, ***thinking*** which may sustain and strengthen us and, even if we do not express it to others, communicate hope and inspiration to them, along with the courage to transmute what wells up, often so darkly, from hitherto unexplored regions of their souls.

Most psychotherapies that I know tend to address only one or another aspect of the human being. I have found none that contain such a full and precise image of man as that given by spiritual science. Some appeal to the "quick fix"—a weekend or so for transformation and enlightenment. These often neglect the inner, untransformed life of the past, aiming at a materialized state of bliss reminiscent of eastern traditions now adroitly marketed by western minds. (Thus, to quote one mentor, do Lucifer and Ahriman join hands behind our backs!) Others go to the opposite extreme, inviting, even compelling people to submit to years of therapy. These are based primarily on turning within, and towards the past. And, as again we know from anthroposophy, this may lead to great illusions. Times, and we ourselves, have changed. We no longer find the Self by turning within. Since Golgotha, our true being is brought to us by others, and lives also in the surrounding world.

As John Davy once commented, anthroposophy is not only a movement, it is a path of discrimination. Our study and practice can help us distinguish the more or less healthy work of others in the world. As an example, I found the work of the Boston Family Institute extraordinarily impressive, and examined one of their methods in the light of anthroposophy elsewhere.[3] Other counselors probably have similar experiences, where they find anthroposophical concepts already embodied in a fruitful approach.

We know from anthroposophy that our psychology must be a psychology of the "middle," or the Ego working within the middle, to balance all the opposing extremes; past ***and*** future, inner ***and*** outer, waking ***and*** sleeping, remembering ***and*** forgetting, the vision ***and*** the real. Thus, a return to the past will be, to use one doctor's words: "ploughing the field of the etheric so new seeds can be planted," not sitting in a rut contemplating, with painful or shameful attachment, the unchanging land. As much as we turn within, we must turn

outward too, sharpening our perceptions, feelings, and thinking response to what meets us in the world. Here, above all, do we find ourselves and the sources of our next steps. Both thresholds must be approached, if not actually crossed, in our time. We must "feed the soul, as well as dissect it," seeking what will nourish us, enliven us, and provide new energies in ways that so often heal past wounds. Words that stay with me are those of Emil Bock in *The Three Years*:[4] "Would it not be a far better method of healing to summon from the depths of man's being, not those forgotten realms which make him ill, but those which make him well, the real spiritual worlds?" This goal must lie at the heart of all we do.

Our knowing that a modern path of initiation lies not in withdrawal from the world to perfect our wisdom, but in courageously striving with the facts of our daily existence with our fellow human beings, supports our work tremendously. Again, we may not share this in so many words with others, though I have found few people in recent years who fail to respond to this imagination. They are already quite intuitively aware of it. And, as helpers and companions of others on this path, we must try to discern the intentions of an Ego as it struggles through the body it inhabits and the body of experience it has inherited, to do something it has never done before, both in terms of inner development and outer action. The new mysteries are mysteries of the will. "In the end," as Goethe reflected, "everything has to be done." All insight we acquire, through self-contemplation, must be brought creatively into daily life. And, from the vast perspective of reincarnation, we know that it is the struggle that counts, that builds forces for our future existence, if we never see results this time round. This knowledge may be the linchpin on which all our work rests, for both the outer and inner conditions of many people we meet have often damaged their capacities so heavily that the changes they and we hope for may never be seen.

## The Setting for Counseling Work

When we come to ongoing professional work, we tend, for lack of anthroposophical centers, to go in one of two directions—either a conventional clinical setting, or private practice. Either way, we will be something of a heretic. I was immensely struck by Lievegoed's description of the working Ego: always a "dissenter"—a heretic to the established order. That we may need to be heretical ourselves may

strengthen our own Ego forces, which we will certainly need if we are to support others in strengthening their own!

Working within the system we will have to keep a "double-entry ledger" (as Steiner told other professionals to do), accountable to the world's views and rules, while holding inwardly true to what may be a very different image of the human being, and often needing to trust that this latter is subtly communicated to the other person. This can be very painful, a real trial for the therapist. The "diagnosis and treatment plan" with which many will be so familiar and, as one colleague commented: "gives me nightmares," all too often reflects a crude selection from a battery of psychological tests, which in turn reflect current trends and fashions in psychology, and sometimes merely the personal biases of supervisors and peers. It may simply not be addressing the real issues at all. As James Hillman, a psychologist and continually provocative thinker, stated in a recent interview, not only does current psychology lack any real new thinking, but therapists *en masse* are merely marketing, and treating in others, their own most pressing and favorite neuroses!

In private practice, we are spared this strait-jacket, but are prey to a different trial—the often unbearable nature of freedom! What, out of the wealth of knowledge that Steiner offers, are we going to choose to take up and deepen, until these ideas become ways of perception and action? Will we concentrate on the study of karma, or threefold man, or how Lucifer and Ahriman work in the sheaths, or the temperaments which Steiner indicates are the riddle of each individual's being? One friend and colleague works in a prison almost exclusively with the six basic exercises, often with extraordinary and moving results, such as the moment a young man incarcerated for life for a murder he claimed—and his therapist believes—he did not commit, said in their last meeting before he was transferred (thus losing his single positive support): "Thank you. I know that it matters what thoughts I think, that it makes a difference to me, and to the world. So I am going to try to think positively from now on." This story tempted me to throw out my entire psychological pharmacopoeia and give all clients a heavy dose of the six exercises. But then I hear of a particular way someone is working with biography, or has developed an anthroposophical slant on psychodrama, or dreamwork, or the 12-step program. (As I write this, the O'Neill's book, *The Human Life*, full of insight into adult development, has just been delivered to my door!) As with the rest of our lives, we have to make choices, and commit ourselves to a

fragment of all the possibilities with as much ardor and endurance as we can. Soul development again!

In either setting, we also meet people who already feel they know what their problems are—who bring their own diagnoses with them, which they have picked up from an atmosphere as dense with psychological labels as toxic chemicals. Many, in a country that so aggressively markets slogans and images, have such a fragile sense of identity that they depend on a label—even an unsavory one—as a way of knowing who they are. You hear people exchanging them "I'm co-dependent," "adult child of alcoholics," or, in sophisticated circles, "a Persephone woman"—almost before they have exchanged telephone numbers. I was delighted and grateful to a colleague who saw a client of mine for artistic therapy, responding to her self-introduction of "I'm co-dependent," with the warm, yet firm statement: "Aren't we all! Shall we paint now?" This young woman returned to me freed of an immense burden, but naturally quite afraid of what she might discover without it.

## The Challenges of Counseling

A further challenge to us is learning to distinguish what we can and cannot do, and when to direct a person elsewhere. Lievegoed distinguishes three levels of therapeutic work: counseling (or the healing conversation), psychotherapy, and psychiatry; the last two are to be supported by medication, preferably anthroposophic, though conventional drugs will almost certainly be needed at some stage by the psychiatrist. In one lecture Steiner indicates that Ego problems alone often expressed as chronic illnesses should be addressed by psychological work, problems of astral body through diet, and the etheric and physical bodies treated with plant and mineral remedies.[5] In practice, such distinctions are hard to make. The stresses on the sheaths are now so acute that there are few people who, at least occasionally, cannot benefit from anthroposophic remedies, which can support Ego incarnation and soul development so wonderfully. As my own doctor once commented: "We'd better try to bring you (my Ego) in, before it's time for you to leave again!"

How I try to work with these distinctions is that, for counseling alone, there must be sufficient Ego freedom for a person to work consciously on an issue. This often requires a quite fine diagnostic sense, since it frequently appears that a person is well in command of his or her conscious processes, but then you begin to get a hunch that

the sheaths continually act as a barrier to any real progress, and that both of you are wasting time endlessly rumbling over the same ground. We may also sense, even in an initial interview, that this person's needs might be far better served by an artistic therapy. The "talking cure" that so often excites and irritates the astral body, may actually be counterproductive, until a non-verbal therapy has built something of a container.

But referral elsewhere can pose further difficulties. We may have few resources where we live and, very significantly, many people naturally resist such alternatives. If you suggest a doctor, they imagine themselves far sicker than they had supposed, and feel you are pushing them towards treatment as a clinical specimen, which is just what they are wisely avoiding. If we suggest artistic therapies, they wonder why on earth they should paint, do clay or speech, which appear either as a frivolous and irrelevant response to material they articulate so burningly, or as yet another rejection. Someone seeking help is already exposed to risk, and usually feels intensely vulnerable. Also, as an absolute law, each must be left entirely free in their choices. In my own practice, I try to find appropriate ways and timing to introduce what I may consider more healing alternatives, often a matter of phasing out conversations, or combining these with some artistic therapy which, happily, exists here in Detroit.

Alternatively, we may encounter a situation where conventional practitioners have diagnosed a far graver situation than actually exists. For example, a young woman found her way to me, having been diagnosed, hospitalized and treated for psychosis. It emerged that, while fleeing from her boyfriend who carried a loaded gun (no empty threat in this city!), she had briefly hallucinated. Was she crazy, she asked, and should she continue with the drugs she hated taking? I said I thought anyone who had the common sense to run from a gunman was eminently sane, and that such a shock to the system could easily cause her to hallucinate. Now we needed to look both at what might ground (incarnate) her after this episode and, at the same time, seek an outer situation where the threat might not be repeated. A couple of sessions were all she needed to be on her way. I have also found it is often one new idea—a book to read, a fresh perspective on a problem—that catalyzes change, even in what appear to be quite extreme conditions. There is such a deep urge at the core of all of us to go forward creatively, it may only need a little nudge, a small barrier dissolved, for the human spirit to be on the move again.

If we are engaged solely in the healing conversation, I think there is no better model or archetype to draw from than that expressed in *Conversations on Counselling* by Marcus Lefébure. Here, the doctor (a counselor and anthroposophist), who was interviewed, describes the seven stages of the counseling process with the beauty and lawful wisdom we see expressed in the human skeleton. However we may flesh out these stages in our individual ways, according to our own development and life context, I think this *is* the process we must all follow if we are to do justice to our encounters with those who seek our help. The training for the counselor is obvious: take up a true spiritual discipline *and* gain a rich and varied life experience. Both these may help us enter the experience of others and guide them forward.

In moving among the various experiences that challenge us as counselors, I try to assess my own ongoing tasks in this way. I imagine it is no accident that someone has stepped through my door. Without being messianic, I need to believe they have come for something that, maybe, I have the power to give, and, through the questions brought to me, to try to discover what further work I need to do.

In a brief, sweeping survey of the past couple of years, I see certain needs expressed. There is a tremendous general need on the one hand, to find deeper resources for individual creative development, what I've come to see as a need for practical spirituality, and, on the other hand, for ways of working more fruitfully within relationships. Whether this is initially expressed as depression, panic attacks, or marital conflicts, the underlying urge is to take steps as an individual and as a member of a community. The blocks in a person's life, so often perceived as laid by others in the path, are the means whereby the individual strengthens forces. And there is a need for encouragement in seeing that much may be achieved that does not appear to bear effect immediately in the physical, material world. I would say we all need to learn to trust in our own life path and, equally, to increase our sense of responsibility towards another in theirs. Such small steps as we take may seem insignificant and ineffective against the powerful messages conveyed to us by the culture, and it requires courage to persevere in the face of what seems so unflinchingly committed to quite different moral values. John Davy used to quote a passage from *A Sleep of Prisoners* by Christopher Fry. I think it is a guiding image for our times:

Thank God our time is now
When wrong comes up to face us everywhere
Never to leave us till we take
the longest stride of soul men ever took.
Affairs are now soul size ....

I think people are searching for such images of hope, and need encouragement to go forward, each in their different way. Young people have a particular task to keep alive their ideals, and I find there a particular responsibility to support and affirm these, when they often find so little in the outer world to mirror them, to which they may say: "this is what I want to do, this fits me." They bring their dissatisfaction and anguish, often fearful that they are losing touch with reality. And when what lives in them becomes more conscious, we usually have to see it less in terms of finding an outer vocation through which they can express this (particularly with unemployment running so high) but as an inner attitude they will need to cultivate wherever they find themselves. Thus, when exploring with a young woman who worked as a waitress, having dropped out of school, and together wondering if she might work towards a professional training that would exercise her obvious intellectual capacities more fully, she said suddenly: "You know, I might be a waitress all my life. And what is really important to me is to meet people, to serve them as beautifully as I can, to be social and caring with every customer. And if I can learn to do that better, I will feel fulfilled. It won't matter if I never get a 'better job.'" This was her real gift. This was what she wanted to work further on. And I was deeply impressed that one so young should have come to this essential truth many of us still struggle to accept!

Increasingly, many people of all ages and widely differing backgrounds bring their spiritual experiences. These can be frightening, or so unfamiliar that they wonder if they may be falling apart—a clear symptom of the threshold crossing in our times. As a student of anthroposophy, I may help them to understand these, to know they come from another dimension of reality, and sometimes I can offer guidance in taking up a spiritual discipline. Interestingly, in a recent women's group, members wished to continue for another few months and I asked them what they wanted to do. They said "Find practical ways to train for daily life." They had no trouble seeing life as an initiatory path. It was glaringly obvious to them. And we saw we needed to train our "spiritual muscles" as an athlete trains physical

ones. We worked with spiritual exercises, particularly those in Steiner's *Overcoming Nervousness*, and found them extremely helpful in increasing self-awareness and mastery over ourselves and our daily existence. In such groups and, indeed, individual sessions, I see a quite definite movement in myself and these people towards the creation of "adult learning communities," which Dr. Robert Sardello (in his excellent introduction to Steiner's *Psychoanalysis and Spiritual Psychology*) suggests must become the true soul-healing for today. In these, we are all fellow travellers on the same path, needing to learn together and support each other, as distinct from the priest/healer/guru and patient/pupil model so characteristic of many psychotherapeutic relationships.

In these groups and workshops I am often aware that, while I do and must bring the content and perspectives on life that anthroposophy gives us and that these ideas and approaches are, indeed, valuable and re-enlivening, it is often equally, if not more important, that people *meet each other*. Watching these encounters unfold, knowing how they continue beyond the workshops, I often feel: "this is what this day is about, that people can find each other." The formal "frontage" of the workshop offers an opportunity for karma between people to unfold.

## A Final Question

This sense leads to a final question and reflection on my (perhaps all counselors' and psychotherapists') role and function in the community. Dentists must fix teeth, doctors body parts, realtors must sell or buy property, and lawyers arrange divorces and custodial rights. Our role and "frontage" is flimsier, more permeable. And if we do not harden and define it too strongly, we may allow impulses from the spiritual world to stream through it and guide our encounters with others in deeper and more fruitful ways. A person may indeed seek us for counseling, in the more formal sense. He or she may need to know of other therapeutic resources for their lives. But they may enter my living room for quite other reasons. If what I am striving to work out of is my own humanity, then I, as a human being, am far more than my professional label and role. I am woven into a web of resources—ideas, initiatives, people, and it may simply be that I am a link for another in the threads that connect us all. What or who are they seeking? Can I lead them towards this? A person I know? An education for their child? A possible vocation they never heard of? It could be

anything. And often when I look back, I see our meeting was for a purpose I never dreamed of at the time. And no encounter has failed to teach me something and enrich my life.

These people bring me my destiny, as much as I am a figure in theirs! Then I will often recall Steiner's description of our experience immediately after death, when we are finally able to distinguish the essential from the inessential events and meet first (often with shock and surprise) the most important karmic encounters, gradually raying out through those we have met until we are connected with everyone. This picture encourages me to trust that I do not know the path that leads me, or leads another—only that, with as much attention and openness as I can muster, there may occasionally be glimmers of light along the way. And to know, too, that such light comes from the light at the center of our humanity—the "not I, but Christ in me," Who, as the sum of all our Higher Egos, is now the bearer of all our destinies, and only through Whom can the true Healing Spirit invade the work that each of us do on this earth.

## NOTES

1. Available from Anthroposophic Press.
2. Available from Anthroposophic Press.
3. "Remembering in the Etheric," *Anthroposophical Review* 6,1(1984).
4. Emil Bock, *The Three Years*, Floris Books, 1987.
5. Rudolf Steiner, "Different Types of Illness," in *The Being of Man and his Future Evolution* (Berlin 1908).

# A Landscape Madonna

I knew that she must have been there
For her face was indescribably ancient;
The lines of her brown like the contours
That accompany a traveller, journeying;
Her countenance of cloud color that awakens
At the slightest blush of a dawn or a dusk,
Resilient, leathery and folded;
Receding, as into a cavern, or approaching
With a clear definition of courage.

I knew her rainbowed or slightly suffused,
At times bearing herself upon shafts of light
That robed her, glorying
into the soul's eye.

But I knew, from the unspoken alchemy
Of her eyes, that mirrored every lake,
Jewel, flame, flower and star,
I knew that they had rested on The Child.

***Andrew Hoy***

# To See Livingly but to Live Seeingly

BY PAUL PLATT

Rudolf Steiner in his lectures on *Lucifer and Ahriman* makes the following suggestion in connection with the soul's encounter and with its Luciferic tendencies:

> Again, what wells up in man's inmost being today is strongly Luciferic. How can we train ourselves rightly in this direction?—By diving into it with our Ahrimanic nature, that is to say, by trying to avoid all illusion about our own inner life and impulses and observing *ourselves* just as we observe the outer world. Modern man must realize how urgent it is to educate himself in this way .... The essential is that man should approach his own inner nature with Ahrimanic cold-bloodedness and dispassion .... His inner nature is still fiery enough even when cooled down in this way! There is no need to fear that it will be over-cooled.[1]

This method of observation, when directed to the outer world lays the foundation for what Abraham Maslow has termed 'spectator science.'

> ...He can be cool, detached, emotionless, desireless, wholly other than what he is looking at. He is in the grandstand looking down upon the goings on in the arena, he himself is not in the arena.[2]

Simply put might we say that Steiner is suggesting that we bring the current of cool, detached, 'cold-bloodedness' into our 'fiery' inner nature—just as we in modern times are inclined (and this is now questionable) to observe outer nature in this fashion. Now at first sight this seems a radical suggestion from a man whose work is full of

startling insights and guidelines. Yet I will argue that it is not, in fact, as radical as it appears, being an essential exercise in many contemporary paths of inner development. Let us hear from some varied voices concerned with the cultivation of the inner life in our day. (The reader should understand that I am suggesting there is an essential common inner gesture being encouraged in each of these examples—yet I am not suggesting that they are identical. I hope my point will be clear. Within the scope of this article I can't make finer distinctions.)

One may immediately be reminded of the fourth principle of Alcoholics Anonymous: "Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of oneself."

Or Carl Jung, the founder of analytical psychology:

> Therefore the individual who wishes to have an answer to the problem of evil, as it is posed today, has need, first and foremost, of self-knowledge, that is, the utmost possible knowledge of his own wholeness. He must know relentlessly how much good he can do, and what crimes he is capable of, and must beware regarding the one as real and the other as illusions. Both are elements within his nature, and both are bound to come to light in him, should he wish—as he ought to—to live without self-deception or self-delusion.[3]

Here we find a certain clear similarity in this prescription for modern man to Steiner's above cited suggestion that we avoid all illusions about our inner lives. Next let us hear the voice of the great Indian teacher, Yogananda:

> I have long exercised an honest introspection, the exquisitely painful approach to wisdom. Self-scrutiny, relentless observation of one's thoughts is a stark and shattering experience. It pulverizes the stoutest ego. Man can understand no eternal verity until he has freed himself from pretensions. The human mind bared to a centuried slime is teeming with the repulsive life of countless world-delusions. Struggles on the battlefield pale into significance here, when man first contends with inner enemies! No mortal foes these to be overcome by a harrowing array of might! Omnipresent, unresting, pursuing man even in sleep subtly equipped with miasmic weapons, these soldiers of ignorant lusts seek to slay us all. Thoughtless is the man who buries his ideals,

> surrendering to the common fate. May he seem other than impotent, wooden, ignominious?[4]

Out of the East, a graphically articulate characterization of the confrontation with the 'heated' world of the inner life. Yogananda's method of meeting that current characterized by Steiner as Luciferic: "an honest introspection" which "pulverizes the stoutest ego."

Next let us look at Yogananda's portrayal of the autobiography of his great contemporary, Mohandas Gandhi:

> Many autobiographies replete with famous names and colorful events are almost completely silent on any phase of inner analysis and development. One lays down these books with a certain dissatisfaction, as though saying: "here is a man who knew many notable persons, but who never knew himself." This reaction is impossible with Gandhi's *Autobiography*; he exposes his faults and subterfuges with an impersonal devotion to truth rare in annals of any age.[5]

So here too we find in this picture of the words of one of the outstanding personalities of our time a relation to an impersonal devotion to self-knowledge. Echoes I would suggest of Steiner's council to practice cold-blooded and dispassionate self-observation.

Finally I would like to listen to a lesser known, though equally articulate voice, that of Isha Schwaller de Lubicz, who with her husband R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, tried to reintroduce to contemporary men something of the mystery tradition of ancient Egypt. The following is from her book: *The Opening of the Way.*

> If in the revealing light of some cataclysm you were to meet your double, not dressed in its world glad-rags not armed with the buckler of excuses, which conventional hypocrisy uses to cover our secret wishes, but in all its moral nakedness, showing its tendencies and urges, its pitiless cunning and its cowardice, are you certain that you would recognize it? How many sages are there on this earth who could and calmly would call by their real names the secret motives of their actions? That, nevertheless, would be the greatest victory a man could gain over himself, and the first proof of his mastery—a clear vision of all the tendencies which rule his inner being.[6]

And further:

> If you want to enjoy the sympathy of the crowd, if you want normal people to make excuses for you, do not enter the maze which this fearless search will lead you .... But if your aim is to attain Masterhood and knowledge, then illuminate one day of your life with the cold light of impersonal judgment; observe the finer points of all your impulses, excavate without pity and without excuses, until you lay bare their roots and origins.[7]

Translating into Steiner's language we can once again see in the above a clear articulation of the encounter with Lucifer: using the cold light of impersonal judgment in self-observation, that gesture normally brought into the outer world in natural scientific investigation. In fact, one can only wonder if this is not precisely that towards which Rudolf Steiner was pointing in the subtitle of his central work, *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*: Results of Introspective Observations According to the Method of Natural Science.

Now I think it is unnecessary for me to labor this point any further. The characteristic soul direction in each of these contemporary prescriptions should be evident in their similarity. In each case we are being told, to use Steiner's language again: to approach our "own inner natures with Ahrimanic cold-bloodedness and dispassion."

Summing up the first section of this article we could say that we find general prescriptions given out of various, more or less contemporary streams to students of self-knowledge. Let us now look at more specific suggestions offered by Rudolf Steiner in relation to the exercise of making clear and wide-awake how particular influences are at work in the inner life.

He suggests:

> If you consider the will as I have done in my *Philosophy of Freedom* one can advance by entering deeply into the will to the extent of becoming wholly quiescent, by becoming a pole of stillness in the motion one otherwise engenders in the world of will. Our bodies are in motion when we will. Even when the will is nothing more than a wish, bodily matter comes into movement

> .... Now if one does the exercises described in my book, ***Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment***, and thereby succeeds in opposing one's own deliberate inner quiet to this motion in which one is caught up in every act of willing, if to put it in a picture that can be applied to all will activity—one succeeds in keeping the soul still while the body moves through space, succeeds in being active in the world while the soul remains quiet, carries on activity and at the same time quietly observes it, then thinking suffuses the will. When we have achieved the suffusion of our will with our thinking we grow into the experience of entering into the Moon's activity within us.[8]

Now I will take the liberty to rephrase the preceding and suggest that one of the fruits of bringing the cold-blooded, dispassionate Ahrimanic current into our inner lives—this current of quiescence and motionlessness (Maslow's "cool, detached, emotionless, desireless, wholly other")—particularly into the life of our willing, is to uncover essential aspects of its cosmic background. As one who has worked at this exercise for many years I would like to share the following. If one makes efforts to carry out this practice suggested by Steiner, and let us say takes as a hypothesis some correlation between the Moon's motion through the heavens and the inner life, one can in fact determine for oneself the truth of the above characterization. One can even confirm for oneself and out of oneself how currents relating to the twelve senses, the twelve world outlooks, the twelve primary shaping forces, eurythmy gestures, sounds of speech, virtues and failings are rhythmically awakened in one's impulse life, by virtue of the Moon's motion through the heavens each month. This aspect of the lunar impulsed with life can become ever more transparent to one's 'cold-blooded' inner observation.[9]

Now, having achieved this lighting-up as to how the Moon is influencing his or her inner life through "introspective observations according to the method of natural science," one might also pose the question to oneself: can I direct this current of wakeful stillness, opposing my deliberate inner quiet, not only into my life of will, but into my life of feeling as well? If I do this what might I discover? Here we enter a complex area. What I will suggest needs to be considered as, at best, a very partial answer, offered in the context of this particular article.

If one carries out this exercise, now directed to one's life of feeling, one can gradually grow into the experience that one's feeling life can be seen to have a clear relation to macrocosmic phenomena. Put simply one discerns that the passing moment, related to one's feeling sense of being in the present moment, 'being here now,' spirit-mindfulness, has in part a relation to the Sun's movement through the heavens.[10]

Further one can begin to wake up to a reality towards which Rudolf Steiner pointed in the following words:

> If we are able to conceive not only the sun-body, but also the Sun-Spirit we find that this spiritual part is the love that streams down upon the Earth. Human beings exist in order that they may take into themselves the warm love of the Divine, develop it and return it again to the Divine. But they can only do this by becoming *self-conscious ego beings.*' (emphasis mine)[11]

I will suggest that what one can discover is that through bringing the cooling Ahrimanic current of self-consciousness into the heart-centered feeling life, the center responsive to the Sun-inspired love impulse, we can become conscious of the relation between our Egos and the Sun-Spirit. What most often occurs is an unself-conscious experience. As it becomes more self-conscious it can lead to the question: now that I have become awake to the participation of my feeling in the love impulses of the Sun-Spirit, how do I take this warm love of the Divine and *develop it* and return it again to the Divine?

So whereas previously we awakened to our Moon-impulsed will natures, now we awaken to our Sun-impulsed feeling life.

Let me complement this characterization with one portrayed by Valentin Tomberg in his studies of The Christmas Foundation Meditation, particularly concerned with the practice of spirit-mindfulness:

> The soul of man must learn to face the Cosmic Present; must learn to say: At this moment I stand within a World-constellation. I belong to it with my whole being. The tide of the cosmic hour flows through my breast as well as through the heavenly spaces...
>
> These and similar thoughts can give solemnity to the Moment. Man can experience how his breast expands and his breathing is transformed. He breathes in time with the Cosmos, and his soul

> expands in concentric circles of solemn tranquility. But these concentric waves do not beat upon emptiness, they encounter waves of still deeper solemnity which flow from the heart of the Universe. And in this encounter the human heart and the cosmic heart unite. Then the soul of man may reflect: Every moment receives blessing from the heart of the world, and you have not been aware of it.[12]

In Tomberg's proposing that "every moment receives blessing from the heart of the world" he is telling us that we are, in fact, inspired by the warm love of the Divine, yet we do not participate wakefully in this process: we have not been aware of it. We are not yet truly self-conscious ego beings because we have not yet become wide awake and aware of the union between our own hearts and the heart of the world. Hence, we cannot fully, self-consciously understand how to develop the warm love of the Divine. The distinction here, I think, is between being a Sun-inspired Ego being and being aware of the true foundations of our Egoity: i.e., making this experience clear and self-conscious. At least these are some central questions which arose within me as I grew more awake to the spiritual background out of which both Rudolf Steiner's and Valentin Tomberg's characterizations above seemed to emerge: the fruit of my work with the exercise of bringing a dispassionate power of self-observation into my feeling life. (I am not suggesting that this is the only exercise necessary to attaining this awareness, yet it is an essential contribution towards it.)

Now the reader should understand that the essential thrust of this article has been one-sided. For if one considers more completely different aspects of Rudolf Steiner's path of training, as well as that of other serious students of human development, one can see that the fundamental current of enlivening the thinking life through bringing will into it, thereby rendering mobile and alive a region of the inner life which through its own inherent tendency is more quiescent and fixed, has been omitted in this discussion. What I have *briefly* touched upon is not this gesture at all, rather its opposite and complement. That is what happens when we bring the Saturn-impulsed pole of stillness into our Moon-impulsed will nature, then into our Solar

impulsed feeling nature. Whereas there is great interest today in the quest to see into the spiritual worlds (bringing one's will into one's thinking), what has been here described might be thought of as the impulse to have the spiritual worlds see into one (in this case through bringing the thinking pole into the Sun- and Moon-inspired natures within us).

Certainly this is the gesture of which Rudolf Steiner suggests that it is "urgent that modern man educate himself in this way." Is this not an essential component of that pursuit of relentless self-knowledge, without which one's seeing into the spiritual worlds may be liable to many forms of confusion and misunderstanding? Is this not also the gesture encouraged through AA's "searching and fearless moral inventory"; Jung's "knowledge of how much good we can do, and what crimes we are capable of"; Yogananda's "self-scrutiny, honest introspection which pulverize the stoutest ego," etc.?

Now, anyone who has tried to carry out the above exercises could well understand the many voices of resistance which arise in one: the pitiless cunning, the cowardice, the excuses, etc. For although *Right Examination* is an essential foundational gesture in many paths, the fiery inner nature often shrinks back or combats this "taking counsel with oneself, testing and forming one's principles of life, feeling genuinely pained at one's own errors and imperfections," etc.[13] Yet if one takes one's gaze from the limited range of the inner life and considers this *call* in a larger sense today, what does one find? Whether in the sphere of ecology, the caution and fear brought into the impulse towards sexual expression through AIDS, the growing reserve on the part of increasing numbers of people to the careless use of pharmaceuticals, etc., we find an essential inner gesture behind these particular expressions. In each case we are being encouraged in manifold ways to *think about what we are doing*, or in the language of this article: bring our cold-blooded pole of thought into our heat of will. And further when one sees the growing concern with human freedom and equality, the efforts of Amnesty International, the manifold questions directed to, at least, a beginning exploration of the true foundations of the Sun-inspired Ego we can hear the words: "think about your feeling; what is the foundation for your true humanity?" (I am reminded of the picture of Archbishop Romero, shouting through his prison bars in response to the tortured cries of one of his spiritual brothers: "we are human beings, we are human

beings.") From Rudolf Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*, and growing numbers of contemporary voices, we are encouraged to 'think about our thinking.' So it seems to me that both individually and collectively we are being *called* to find the courage to 'see, even as we are seen.' For whereas to see into the spiritual world we are challenged to bring life into our seeing, for the spiritual worlds to see into us, are we not being asked to bring seeing into our doing, feeling and thinking?

## NOTES

1. Rudolf Steiner, *Lucifer and Ahriman* (pp. 27-29).
2. Gebert, Hans, *Journal for Anthroposophy*, 52(Spring 1991), p. 84.
3. Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* quoted from Paul Platt, Qualities of Time, Vol. I, p. 22.
4. Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, quoted from Paul Platt, Qualities of Time, Vol. II, p. 115.
5. Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, quoted from Paul Platt, Qualities of Time, Vol. III, p. 35.
6. De Lubicz, Isha Schwaller, *The Opening of the Way*, p. 79.
7. Ibid., p. 79.
8. The reader must forgive me here, I'm afraid this paraphrased excerpt was found amongst my papers as part of a few pages I had photocopied from out of a book of Rudolf Steiner's lectures. I have as yet been unable to locate the entire lecture. Any reader interested in obtaining a copy of the four original pages I do have in my possession is encouraged to write to me and I will be happy to send it to him or her.
9. During the last two years I have offered a Moon Guide for those individuals who might have an interest in carrying out such explorations.
10. For the sake of simplicity I am not going into this question in detail. Readers interested in a more detailed exploration are referred to my first Volume in The Qualities of Time series.
11. Cookson, B. Nesfield, *Rudolf Steiner's Vision of Love*, quoted in Paul Platt, Qualities of Time, Vol. II, p. 106.
12. Tomberg, Valentin, *Studies on the Foundation Stone*, quoted from Susan Riley and Paul Platt, The Twelve Holy Nights.
13. Steiner, Rudolf, *Guidance in Esoteric Training*, quoted from Robert Powell, Hermetic Astrology, Vol. I, p. 197.

# Health Care and the Homeless: Interview with Owen Lynch, D.C.

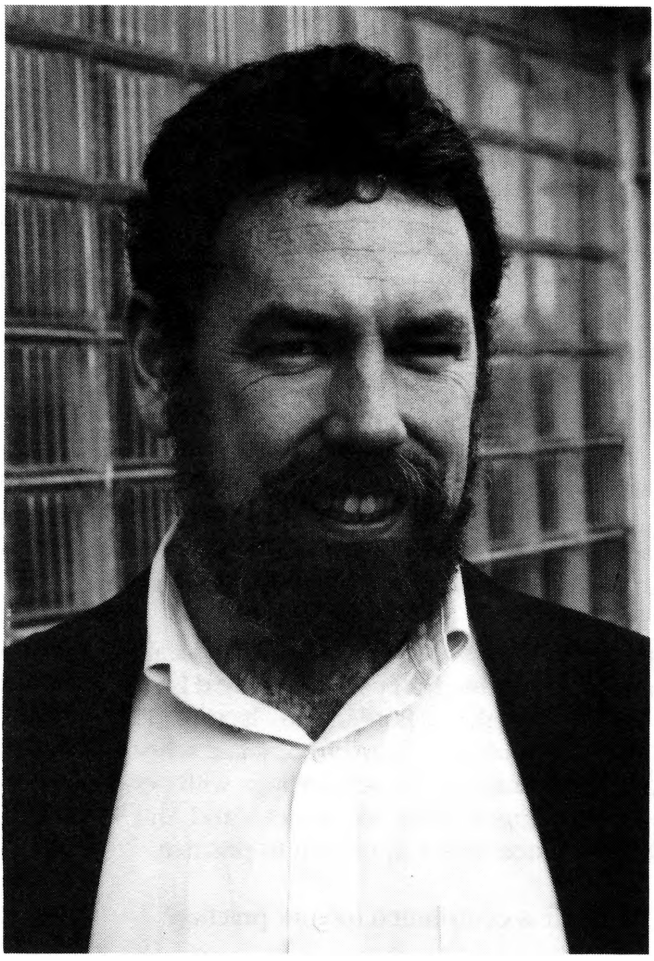
12 APRIL 1991, PORTLAND, OREGON

*Owen Lynch is a chiropractor. He was born and grew up in Massachusetts. After ten years as an automobile mechanic, he was about half way through the engineering program at the Western New England School of Engineering when he became interested in chiropractic. He enrolled in the Western States Chiropractic College and graduated in 1986. He is married to Patricia Lynch, and their four children attend the Portland Waldorf School, where Patricia teaches handwork, is faculty chairperson, and serves on the board.*

HM: How did you get interested in treating homeless and indigent people?

OL: In my private chiropractic practice, some people couldn't afford the fees. I began to think that health care is a right and should be available on the basis of need. It's not an economic privilege, a commodity to be purchased. So I felt it wasn't right to turn people away due to a lack of income and I began to treat them based on what they could afford. I found that I couldn't resolve this financial problem and still make a living from my practice, but I began volunteering one morning a week at the Eastside Community Clinic in the Salvation Army's Recovery Inn. I worked with DCs, MDs, PAs, and RNs. The clinic is a satellite clinic of Western States Chiropractic College here in Portland.

My volunteer work developed into a full time position for WSCC as clinic director. The medical staff left the clinic in 1990 primarily due to



budget difficulties. Most of the 200-300 patients seen each month are unable to afford chiropractic or medical care, and many are unaware of the available services for the needy in the Portland area.

HM: What are your duties as supervisor?

OL: I supervise senior interns from WSCC who treat patients four days per week. The interns gain the experience of treating acutely ill patients who benefit tremendously from their care. They have commented that they find the patients to be quite thankful and

responsive, interesting and unpretentious. At the same time, the interns learn the value of contributing community service.

Portland numbers approximately 4-5,000 people in the homeless population, while the medically needy population is many times greater. Many of the homeless people are unaware of, or do not want to seek heath care from other sources. We are the place of primary health care for hundreds of people, and we make referrals to emergency rooms and to other forms of medical and social intervention. We send people to social workers, mental health counseling, shelter and housing referrals, and employment services. Here in Portland, there is a coalition of community clinics—eight free clinics operated part time with volunteer nurses, nurse-practioners, and MDs.

HM: What interested you in anthroposophy?

OL: First it was through my children being in the Portland Waldorf School. And while I was a student at WSCC, I found a copy of *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* in the Waldorf School bookstore which I read non-stop to the end. It was very exciting, and I haven't stopped since!

After I got interested in the anthroposophical approach to medicine, I attended two medical conferences led by Dr. Otto Wolff and I hosted Dr. Wolff's trip to Portland to lecture. This was at the time when I had just graduated from chiropractic school, and was preparing to begin my practice. These meetings with people, especially Dr. Christa van Tellingen from Sacramento and Dr. Wolff have had a formative influence on my approach to practice.

HM: How has this contributed to your practice?

OL: I realized that the anthroposophical world view is fundamental to learning to see behind health needs, by asking the question: What is the human being and his place in the world, and how to understand it. I have had to ponder the meaning of illness on the one hand and the meaning of human freedom on the other hand. This understanding must form the major link between doctor and patient.

If you look at illness from a materialistic point of view, then it appears to be a *chance occurrence* when an injury or illness occurs, so there is no need to look for a meaning beyond the immediate diagnosis. Yet I have learned that most people *do* question the

meaning of their illness in their biography; they don't see themselves as a statistic.

This question, which I carry with me, even though it may not come out directly, does help tremendously the process of understanding the patient, especially when taking the case history. At the shelter, many of them are surprised that you really do care, that you take an interest in them, and this then gives the patients a sense of *themselves.* I try to convey this process to the interns whom I supervise.

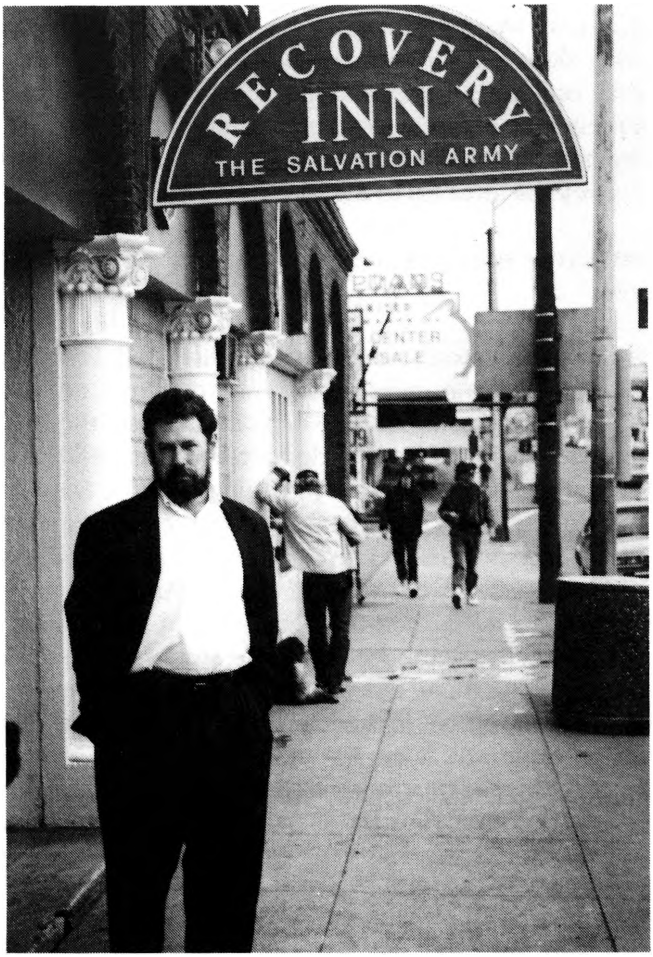
HM: What is your strongest interest in your anthroposophical studies at present?

OL: I am especially interested in fairy tales and folk lore. I began by reading and telling fairy tales to my own children, and I now tell stories at the Waldorf school, too. Then I looked into the background of the stories, particularly from Rudolf Steiner and a little from Joseph Campbell, but mostly from my own reading of Celtic tales. I find that commentaries are so often dry compared to the tales themselves.

I work with the images and it seems very productive for my inner life. It provides such a wellspring of images! And the images are so lively. If I learn to *tell* it, then I gradually get in touch with, and can have a sense of, the living being of the stories—through thinking about them, hearing them, talking about them with others.

There was a movement in the late 19th century in many nations of collecting fairy and folk tales. I'm most familiar with Ireland, where they were very passionate about it, debating in a society whether to take them down verbatim. This was partly a reaction against universal literacy—they felt that this was a last chance to preserve the legacy of the past, of the oral tradition that is common to traditional societies. Now, maybe in reaction to the electronic media, we have a resurgence of storytellers.

I am particularly drawn to the "wonder tales," which give very clear pictures of human struggles. There's not much development of individual characters, but rather a picture of human potential—which comes through various *trials.* These stories can give me a picture of my own life, my own challenges and what they mean. I begin to see rhythms and patterns in my own life if I can achieve a sufficiently wide perspective, and such a perspective is what you gain through these tales. It's a larger view than getting the children off to school, paying the bills, etc. The wonder tales portray the essentials of life.




Through the constant repetition of phrasing and other patterns of the stories, you begin to see the same sort of repetitions I observe in life—every time my wife wants to talk about *this*, I react in *that* way. So the stories, taken meditatively, become a kind of mirror for our own soul.

When we are immersed in these imaginative pictures, they stir our own inner life, the imaginative forces that stem from the etheric forces. So I think these stories are a real antidote to the overstimulation of the soul life, particularly of the nervous system, to the drudgery of repetitive, boring tasks of most work, and to the detrimental

aspects of the intellect. The tales call forth in us the imaginative antithesis to these aspects of modern life.

It's really amazing to stick with one for a long time. You begin to see more and more in the images and realize how *fluid* they are. It's difficult to say what they *mean*, because they have such great depth, such a richness of meaning. The image is *alive*, so you can't pin it down—there's too much movement in these images. It is like a botanist stripping the leaves and branches off a living plant: he learns what the plant is made of, but loses the living essence.

***Interviewed by Hilmar Moore***

## Cain's Unknown Wife Reflects [Theologically]

"And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived..."

*(Genesis IV)*

There is a man who swears I taste of grape,
The ruddy kind whose vines careen the dark
Green splendid unkempt brush where hushes make
A softer bed than even tender marks

Of red in rolling leaves whose swells I squeeze
Together when he presses me apart.
He holds me down beneath the boughs and teases
How he pushes plows and vows we are at heart

The earth he turns below our feet. But I
In thickets of the night with crickets stilled
By sighings might consider sod and sky
To be the way to practice sacred skills.

Then touching him again in dust and dew
Finds hard, then vague, then gone all he calls true.

***James Barfoot***

# Oblique Angelus (for the end of the Century)

Is it possible this earth
to hemorrhage abuse
in fire of volcano
quaking of the center?

Birds sing in winter
as if it is Spring.
And it is snowing in Madrid.
What will halt this continuing
or the digging of the trench.
Take this desire that
is not really ours unleashed by
the winds of another century.
The plague of prejudice
stalking the street
and the embryo of thought
closing in shadow.

The Sun retreats from vacant
Holy roads.
Who stirs in the diminishing spaces?
Come to the wilderness between man and man
for nature were you the beginning
and man and God the end?

***Judith Adams***

# Journal Bookshelf

We gratefully acknowledge receiving the following books:

There are two new translations of lectures by Rudolf Steiner:

*Earthly Knowledge and Heavenly Wisdom* (Anthroposophic Press, 1991, translated by Sabine H. Seiler; 146 pp., $14.95 pb).* In these lectures, given in Dornach in February, 1923, Steiner turns back to his earlier work on Christology. These lectures are concerned not so much with providing the historical, mythological, and cultural background of the Christ Event as we find in the various "Gospel" cycles, but rather with building a series of pictures through which we can establish for ourselves the connection between our inner life and the Christ being. Any single lecture in the cycle could merit its own review. To highlight any one theme certainly should not be taken as a slight to any other. My opinion is that this book and *The Universal Human** (reviewed in the previous issue) are essential in comprehending Steiner's Christ-centered approach to spiritual development. The latter volume can bring many insights to the increasing diversity and an apparent cultural "collectivism" that grows stronger each year and the "selfless individuality" and understanding of the universality of the truly human element that is necessary to cultivate as a balance. The present book provides marvelous contemplative material for one's inner connection to the Christ, such as "Human Beings as Citizens of the Universe and Hermits on the Earth," and "The Invisible Human Being Within Us."

*Community Life, Inner Development, Sexuality and the Spiritual Teacher* (Anthroposophic Press,1991, translated by Catherine Creeger; 191 pp., $14.95 pb)* contains lectures and documents related to a crisis in the early years of the Anthroposophical Society (1915, particularly). While this crisis may seem to be an isolated incident, it was Rudolf Steiner's way never to leave any issue cut off from the sweep of life, but to relate it to a much wider spiritual perspective. Therefore, as several of the persons involved were practitioners or "clients" of psychoanalysis, Steiner devotes three lectures to an explication of Freud's work from the viewpoint of spiritual science. In this regard, these lectures augment the recently published *Psychoanalysis and Spiritual Science.** They go further in comparing Freud's methods of perception to the spiritual vision of Emanuel Swedenborg, and they relate important aspects of spiritual seership. Those interested in channeling and other examples of mediumship will find much to contemplate here. A culmination comes with the lecture "The Concept of Love as it Relates to Mysticism," in which Steiner provides a clear picture of the relationship of sexuality and eroticism to spiritual striving.

Two lectures are very helpful in understanding our relationship to the Anthroposophical Society: "Requirements of Our Life Together in the Anthroposophical

Society," and "The Anthroposophical Society as a Living Being." Thus this book is connected to an overall understanding of the karma of the Anthroposophical Society and of the nature of spiritual striving and vision. Christopher Schaefer has written a very helpful introduction.

*The Easter Story Book* contains thirty-six stories collected by Ineke Verschuren (Floris Books, 1991, 239 pp., $27.95 hb).* The stories, which come from the Gospels, the work of Chekhov, Tolstoy, the Grimms, Selma Lagerlöf and other writers, are grouped according to the four main festivals, and the editor has suggested the age for which each story may be appropriate. Some of the stories are familiar and readily available from other sources, but many are little known, such as"The Three Poppies," a Spanish tale, and the exquisite "The Hidden Icon" from Russia.

*With the Tongues of Men and Angels: a study of channeling* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1991; 232 pp., $12.95). The author, Arthur Hastings, is a professor at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Menlo Park, California. He has written a well researched and documented survey of channeling. Among the subjects treated at some length are Alice Bailey, Edgar Cayce, Seth, and "A Course in Miracles." Many *Journal* readers will be aware that today there are literally thousands of channelers who claim to transmit the words of spiritual beings, human and otherwise. "A Course in Miracles" alone has sold over 700,000 copies, and readers of *Common Boundary*, a magazine for psychotherapy, responded in a survey that the "Course" was the most influential book they have read. Clearly, channeling is a phenomenon that has gained enormous exposure and is not likely to go away soon. Channeled communications once were eagerly sought by those who felt they could not achieve spiritual experiences for themselves; today, while we have witnessed a huge increase in the quantity of spiritual experience, people are even more drawn to the information provided by various channelers.

It is the virtue of *With the Tongues of Men and Angels* that Hastings is both a well trained scholar and has an open approach to spirituality. Although he claims that this is not a scholarly study, he really means that he has not let the demands of academic scholarship interfere with readability and usefulness. Readers who have a sufficiently broad acquaintance with Steiner's work will find many things of interest here, not least being a deeper appreciation of the theosophical movement with which Steiner attempted to work in the first decade of the 20th century, the work of Edgar Cayce, and the whole nexus of spiritualism to which Steiner devoted the lectures published as *The Occult Movement in the Nineteenth Century and its Relation to World Culture*. The bibliography, index, and sources for further research are helpful and suitably extensive. This is a well written book and a valuable contribution to understanding the spiritual background out of which we work in the present time.

There are several videotapes which will be of service in providing an overview of anthroposophical endeavors:

Carl Levin has produced and directed two documentary videos. "Rudolf Steiner and the Spiritual Science of Realities" is a general introduction to his life and work. Narrated by Henry Barnes, the film cuts from biographical segments to descriptions of some aspect of anthroposophical work. Among those interviewed are Konrad Rudnicky, Christa van Heek, René Querido, Hilmar Moore, and Betty Staley. The cinematography and editing is excellent, and this film can be very useful in introducing the scope of anthroposophy to varied audiences. Although Carl hopes the video will be shown on public television, it is available for purchase (in both European and U.S. VHS formats) for $29.95 from Light-filled Productions, 20929-47 Ventura Blvd., Suite 235, Woodland Hills, CA 91364; 818-882-7262, Fax 818-882-4122.

Carl's second film is a beautiful and visually dynamic treatment of Steiner's two Goetheanum buildings. The film is without narration, and accompanied by music. A printed text is supplied with the video. It is available for $15 ppd. from the Anthroposophical Society, 529 W. Grant Place, Chicago, IL 60614.

Jonathan Stedall, a British filmmaker who works for the BBC, has made three documentaries, called "Candle on the Hill," about the Camphill movement. "Fifty Shades of Orange" looks at work with handicapped children in Scotland, Switzerland, and the U.S. over a period of twenty years. "Botton Is My Home" covers the workshops, farming, and households of Botton Village in England. "Is This Work?" primarily examines the three Camphill communities in Pennsylvania and also profiles work in other nations. These three cassettes cost $21 each or $60 for the set ($2 postage per cassette) from Camphill Foundation, P.O. Box 290, Kimberton, PA 19442.

*Available from Anthroposophic Press.

# Book Reviews

## A SLICE OF LIFE: A PERSONAL STORY OF HEALING THROUGH CANCER

*by Lee Sturgeon-Day*
Royal Oak, MI: Lifeways, 1991, 147 pages, $10.95 pb

Reviewed by Hilmar Moore

The central thesis of this wonderful book is contained in its subtitle, "healing through cancer," because the author, a counselor and educator, states that "without the cancer I would not have learned, experienced, perhaps grown as I did." Her modesty pervades this story, but it is apparent to the reader that she certainly has grown from her illness and her work to understand it and to heal herself. In addition to her own experiences, she has given us the examples of other courageous souls she met during the course of her therapy. This is clearly a personal approach, but it transcends the personal and gives many helpful insights to all of us who are now or will be facing our own sojourn on the karmic path of illness-health, or involved in assisting the journey of others. Robert Sardello writes in his foreword, ". . .spiritual life is no longer found in the secluded monastic life, nor the temple, nor the church, but through the way in which we take up our deepest afflictions."

In such a book, the danger is always to be so personal that the reader finally says, "I no longer care about this person or her problems. She is too wrapped up in herself and I feel it is suffocating me." That would be impossible in Lee Day's case. She is simply too brutally honest, and a warm but often biting humor permeates every page. She may have some trouble meditating (who doesn't?), which she makes into a fine bit of comedy, but she is surely becoming a master of karma yoga, of finding the right relationship to life in all its manifestations. This is her real meditation, and it is a path which, for all of us, will someday involve a confrontation with illness: "Life is *the* terminal illness," as one person remarks.

The writer takes us through her inner battles and her various therapies (a combination of homeopathic, naturopathic, and anthroposophical treatments). These chapters on diet, medicines, spiritual healing, rhythmic massage, curative eurythmy and color-light therapy are most informative and are filled with the author's humor and her wide life experience. I especially enjoyed her hilarious version of a conversation with someone who tried to convince her that it was a defect in her personality that had caused the cancer. This is characteristic of her approach—devastating humor and honesty, and penetrating observation.

Her inner voice told her at the beginning of this experience: "Listen," "Love the earth." It is most inspiring to accompany this very intelligent, articulate woman on her journey as she tries to follow this command through the insights, crises, and debilitating fear that seem to be inherent aspects of cancer. After reaching the "dark night" of her struggles to come to terms with her illness, she travels to the Lukas Clinic in Arlesheim, Switzerland, an anthroposophical clinic for cancer patients. For this reviewer, Lee Sturgeon-Day's vivid description of her time at the Lukas Clinic was a revelation. She goes into great detail, telling us of the wonderful meals, the attitudes of the clinic co-workers, and the manifold therapies specially combined to meet the needs of each patient:

> Slowly this day and following days unfold. Like observing a great painting many times, sometimes I notice the background, the broad landscape receding into hazy, then invisible distances. Sometimes I am aware of the foreground figures, the drama of their activities. I am part of this picture too, that is nothing less than a masterpiece.
>
> In this work of art there is a pervading sense of order, beauty, peace. Unobtrusively, maids come to make our beds and clean the rooms. I go out on my balcony, while they move quietly and quickly about—the only sound a soft chatter in Portuguese, and a gay acknowledgment to me as they leave. There are no vacuum cleaners, or other electrical gadgetry. They polish the corridors with great soft mops, swishing and swirling like ocean waves. Throughout the clinic there are no radios or TVs. We are restored to a world of natural and human sounds. Though the nurses and nurses' aides are dressed in crisp white uniforms, they in no way resemble their sisters in regular hospitals who tend to equate

> efficiency with bustling, crackling intrusiveness. Yet they are far more prompt in meeting our requests. We never have to wait, and each person gives the sense of having unlimited time. No request is too insignificant; shampoo, information on some local attraction, another cup of tea, are given the same priority as a shot of morphine in the night. I think the cooks would lay down their knives to attend to our needs
>
> . . . Our doctors, visiting us twice daily, combine the necessary routines and exchanges about our bodies with such a leisurely, spacious interest in the doings of our souls and spirits, that I see myself and others begin to bloom into a new sense of wholeness under their regard. The structure and rhythm of our own days is also so carefully created that we too can move through them at the same unhurried pace. Within a week I feel I have stepped into a new sense of time and space. And this outer order and harmony begins to imprint itself inwardly, fitting some long forgotten way of being like a glove to the hand.

She gets to the heart of what is perhaps the essence of anthroposophy, however much we obscure it with our ceaselessly active intellect: that Rudolf Steiner has provided us with pictures of what *health* is and can be.

> In fact, this whole place is sending me to sleep. At least the insomniac self who chatters, frets, makes lists, clutching at information, projects, words as if they were lifebelts to save me from drowning on the ocean of uncertainties. But such habits die hard and, inveterate conwoman that I am, I persuade myself that my motives for jerking myself awake so frequently are pure and positive. I have not just come here to be healed. I have come to learn. About myself, my condition, and about this medicine. . .
>
> . . . Despite the limitations of language, doctors and therapists seemed quite open, yet somehow our dialogues always fell a little flat. And I began to feel another stronger force at work, perhaps in me as much as in any of them. It compelled me to relinquish my need to know conceptually and begin to trust another kind of knowing, born of direct experience. I even began to be glad that language erected certain barriers and I was forced back on myself and a wordless appreciation of what was happening.

> . . . Yet, with each session, I feel an image of wholeness, perhaps of "normality" guides this process and, when I empty my mind and take my attention into the fibers of my flesh, once in a while I sense this image beckoning my corded muscles and old bones. I feel this image calling; out of a future none of us can know and beyond the grasp of language to describe, yet not less real because we have not yet come to it.

Everything "practical" that has resulted from anthroposophy has a therapeutic aspect to it, whether it is biodynamic agriculture, organizational consulting,Waldorf education, curative work— eurythmy, education, painting or clay modeling, or others. This healing quality comes from Rudolf Steiner's constant meditation on the threefold image of humanity and on his understanding of what love is, of what the Christ, the Being of Love, is. Lee Sturgeon-Day has begun to realize in her own life what this means, and it is the great gift of this book that she can relate her path of understanding to her readers.

The author asks a fellow patient:

> "And what do you think of [the clinic] now that you're here?" She looks down at her plate, then back at me, choosing her words with care. Her eyes have filled with tears. "I think," she says slowly, "that this is the first time I feel so carried by love that I can let go and be healed." This is the moment that this truth walks through my door. What I am seeing and feeling here is love. Love in action, down to the smallest thing. And my discomfort comes from knowing how much I still have to learn. I so often think and practice love as effusive warmth and fail to see and express it in its true ways and forms. . . No staff member of the Lukas Clinic has hugged me to date. Yet, like this woman, I feel healed by deeds of love through each night and every day. It guides the quiet steps and voices of the nurses, cleaners and aides, rearranges pillows and flowers, prepares our food, tends the gardens and has fashioned these spaces with such artistic care. . . Everywhere I turn I see this thing.
>
> And I see, too, that perhaps it begins with small details, for love is born of interest, not of sympathies and desires, and it is only when we see the other—person or object—clear and whole against the sky, for what they are in themselves and not for how they gratify, that we are coming close to it. It is a committed

> attentiveness to what lives, grows, dies, not a vague romantic attachment to what attracts and pleases us.

I could write several more pages about this book, but the best thing would be for you to read it for yourself and to give it to someone who could benefit from it. We owe the author our thanks for sharing her journey with us, and particularly for the grace, wit and clarity with which she has shared it.

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT: MEDITATION IN DAILY LIFE**

*By Jörgen Smit*
Floris Books, 1991, 95 pp., $10.95, available from Anthroposophic Press

Reviewed by Ernst Katz

This booklet presents the contents of five lectures, given by Jörgen Smit in 1986, at age 70, for some 200 young people at an international Youth-conference in The Hague (Netherlands) in response to the question "how to gain a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of anthroposophy and of the Foundation Stone Verse." Jörgen Smit was in a most favorable position to respond to this call. For 21 years he had been a member of the governing council ("Vorstand") of the General Anthroposophical Society, with widespread international connections. Many young people felt a strong affinity to him, because of his sympathetic, sincere understanding of their ways and their search, and because of his direct, unembellished, yet profound way of answering their questions. Accordingly, this booklet deals with a host of contemporary questions, to which answer-paths are clearly sketched.

Smit addresses himself to all who do not want to remain as they are, to stagnate, but who want to grow in depth, to awaken the inner spirit-man who has that perseverance and that creative force which never gives up, even in dark times; the force by which a person rises above himself, always growing and becoming new. He calls it the force of the "werdende Mensch." Our time calls urgently for this awakening of the "werdende Mensch," to help in steering humanity away from its present catastrophe-bound course.

This awakening will be fruitful only if the human soul undertakes expansion in *three* distinct dimensions simultaneously. Two or one will not do. These expansions require three practices, which the Foundation Stone Verse calls "spirit-remembering," spirit-contemplation," and "spirit-observation." The first means awaking to the will of the "werdende Mensch" as the agent in all our actions and those of others, forming our destiny. The second means awaking to what is greater than oneself in the world. The third means awaking to truths which transcend personal beliefs and opinions. Our civilization calls for these three practices for the healthy life and growth of the

"werdende Mensch." At the same time they prepare for initiation schooling. The Anthroposophical Society is meant to awaken growth and creativity of the "werdende Mensch" without a set of given beliefs or absolute truths, and is therefore non-sectarian. Moreover, one will discover more and more that any community of people will either lack stability and disintegrate, or become dogmatic and sectarian, if these three impulses are not consciously cultivated.

Three current attitudes are the opposites of the three practices: To view the world of space as empty nothingness devoid of being; To see everything in the world as ending in death and disintegration; To cling to personal opinion or conviction. These form a mutually reenforcing malignant triplet, preventing growth of the "werdende Mensch."

From starting observations such as these Jörgen Smit reaches out into many diverse directions, all the while dropping pearls of wisdom. Though out of context, we give here a few, in order to characterize the flavor and the thrust of the booklet.

A wall of fear of the non-material can be created by power-hungry manipulators.

Anthroposophy is not a set of beliefs.

Everything that takes place in the Anthroposophical Society should be . . . direct personal experience of the spirit.

Sectarianism can only be conquered by activity which radiates into cultural life, eurythymy for example.

America and Russia are dependent culturally on Central Europe; they are unable to survive without it.

The power of money must be permeated with consciousness. Otherwise people are borne along by this great beast unable to really direct it.

As individuals approach Anthroposophy they become at first homeless.

The world of destiny, of the beings of the hierarchies, is filled with love.

People often ... want community without cognitive work ...; this is always sectarian, hence has no place in the anthroposophical movement.

The more a person achieves on earth over and above his natural abilities, by way of love and cognition, the more independent will he be after death when he is embedded in the higher hierarchies and working with them.

Every person has a powerful double, or even two or more doubles. Also the spirit of each community has a double.

The Foundation Stone is the stone of the Grail. Three parts of the Foundation Stone Verse address the "I," the fourth part the "we." Shepherds and kings are related to the Abel and Cain streams, both of which every awakened individual has united within himself in the radiance of the Christ sun.

The anthroposophical movement is on a winter path, through an ice cold landscape, but with seeds that begin to grow, provided they are tended and nurtured by active humility and perseverance ("long will").

Is this booklet only useful for young people? I would recommend it alike for young and old, for newcomers to Steiner's work as an orientation, as well as for old-timers as a gauge to see where they stand on this winter path. Through this booklet speaks in clear language and in powerful images the voice of a strong, creative, honest, and unpretentious seeker of the spirit, a voice to which I have listened numerous times with warm interest, a voice which will no longer be heard alive, as Jörgen Smit passed through the gate of death on May 10, 1991, leaving us this booklet as a crystallized heritage of a lifetime of practical wisdom and idealism.

## DAY OF THE WOUNDED EAGLE

*By Daisy Aldan*

New York: The LeMay Co., 1990, 160 pp., $9.95 pb, $19.95 hb; available from Folder Editions, 260 W. 52 Street, Apt. 5L, New York, New York 10019

Reviewed by Charlene Breedlove

Two friends who have not met for a while begin their summer vacation together in Greece, seeking in that ancient setting both regenerative connections with the past and renewal of their relationship, now curiously strained. Both are artists, teachers, and anthroposophists—they read aloud writings by Albert Steffen—attuned to their mythic powers and transformative beauty still to be found in their surroundings. In Damouchari, a village along the coast, they find an idyllic haven for mind, body, and spirit peacefully to unfold. Yet, despite best efforts, they fail to effect the deeper communication that would heal their isolation and complete their desired journey. Why is true friendship so difficult between this idealistic young poet and older "Rhythmist," a woman of much charm, experience, and wisdom? And what in our natures, the poet-narrator seems to be asking, inures us to beauty's inspiration and leads us to reveal an inner ugliness instead?

Part of the answer is contained in the title of this poetic and densely layered novella. *Day of the Wounded Eagle* describes a scene the friends witness on one of their outings: Greek children, egged on by their elders, risk a harrowing climb solely so they can brutally stone to death an injured eagle. Their senseless cruelty is scrupulously recorded by the poet-narrator, as is another, far subtler destructiveness that he personally suffers daily: the wounding criticisms of his companion. Like the wild children, she is blind to the true and indeed noble nature of another being and to the pain caused by her petrifying words. And, like them, she seems to be enacting an atavistic rite embedded deep within the human psyche, a blind compulsion to triumph over those perceived, if only momentarily, to be weaker—however weakness is defined.

Through everyday incidents, in the way food is gathered and eaten and in the many small transactions of travel, we see how private rituals, whether unthinking or consciously artistic, can obliterate

whatever or whoever stands outside their magical circumference. When the beautiful Mila greets each dawn with a swim, emerging like a radiant sea goddess from the Aegean and displaying her exquisite sensitivity to nature's moods, we are caught off guard as surely as the poet, Gabriel, by her cutting censures because he fails to pour honey "correctly" (in a spiral flow), or despoils the honey jar with fallen crumbs, or cuts both heels from a loaf of bread—thus defiling bread's "sanctified quality"—all evidence of someone uninitiated in nature's higher harmonies.

And what of his own nature? He's reminded—"scolded" fits the tone—that he's too impatient, too willful, that he should calmly wait for experience to unfold, not be so subjective, so dramatic, so enthusiastic. For Mila, a German and Apollonian perfectionist, who distances herself from emotions and defends her criticalness as "precious learning," the Dionysian expressiveness of the young American is an irritant in need of schooling and self-discipline. For the American, no presumption of greater insight or knowledge can justify the pain one person needlessly inflicts on another. Human relationships, the warmth and caring that passes from one soul to another, is much more to be valued, he comes to realize, than is a cultivated, but abstract, knowing.

As the story unfolds, we, more perhaps than the narrator, discover just how profound are even the obvious differences between them. Gabriel, for instance, is 28 years old, about half Mila's age; he is active in the urban cauldron of New York City, whereas she practices Rhythms and lives in Risor, a name suggestive of a secluded kingdom. The scant physical descriptions we have of him are mirrored through her dissatisfied eyes, where he appears graceless—a fault he diligently strives to correct through her Rhythms lessons—at times overly self-conscious, and quite ordinary. In his eyes, she is tall, elegant, immediately attractive—the kind of woman a smitten poet might easily mistake for a heavenly muse or loving earthly mentor.

Nothing in their physical makeup or temperaments, nor certainly in their ideas about art—around which their most impassioned discussions and disagreements turn—can account either for their attachment to one another or for the karmic shadow that leads and divides them. Their favorite pastime, swimming in hidden coves, provides an apt metaphor for the eddies and tides of their mutual and self exploration. So intense is the poet's personal examination and so convincingly exact is its expression that the novella itself seems to

have been projected from a spiritual journal onto the stage of a Greek amphitheater, where the mind's many voices can echo freely and each be clearly heard.

What Gabriel learns is not what Mila tries to teach, but what in her human being she reveals: that what we know with our minds we may know less well with our hearts and translate poorly into everyday words and actions. Steffen's reminder that "Every wound has a meaning through which exists the possibility of resurrection" points the way for Gabriel to recover from his descent into a netherworld of deadly perceptions and awaken from his dreaming. As they prepare to leave Greece, the summer of their friendship seems almost over, but as readers of *A Golden Story*[1] will know, their inward odyssey resumes in that volume, the last in this trilogy and the first to be published. Not until the beginning of this delicate tapestry is finally woven will we come to see how it spins forth the middle panel and the end.

[1]Available from Anthroposophic Press.

**THE TRUTH OF IMAGINATION: AN INTRODUCTION TO VISIONARY POETRY**

*By Andrew J. Welburn*
(Foreword by Owen Barfield)
New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989
xvi, 238 pp. $22.

Reviewed by Frederick Amrine

*The Truth of Imagination* is devoted chiefly to Milton, Blake, Shelley, and Yeats, but also offers interesting digressions into Wordsworth, Goethe, and Steiner. Welburn means by "visionary poetry" writing that is born of a "commitment to the full range of experience," and thus "comparable to an initiation, a crisis of rebirth" in which "one's whole existence, the meaningfulness of anything or everything" is risked (p. 3). What this otherwise disparate group shares is "the determination to be true, at least in their life's work of poetry, to imaginative experience wherever it might lead them, however unorthodox the heresies their deepest intuitions might suggest" (p. 2).

Unlike other recent interpreters of Romanticism inspired by deconstruction (strangely praised on p. 26!), who argue from post-visionary collapse to the impossibility of vision ("the miler who just broke the record is too exhausted to stand, and thus cannot possibly run"), Welburn sees visionary poetry as "touching the limits of the imaginable," and thereby defining "an obscure confrontation with ultimate powers" (p. 5). Moreover, he has had the courage to call these "powers" by their proper names, Lucifer and Ahriman, and to discuss openly Rudolf Steiner's more explicit portrayal of these tempters in *The Portal of Initiation.*

The heart of this study comes at the end: a beautifully written and profoundly original chapter on Yeats. In his "aim of establishing spiritual certainty without abandoning critical consciousness," Yeats is seen as recalling Steiner, "with whom his development is curiously intertwined" (p. 167). Yeats supported attempts to revitalize the "Rosicrucian" Order of the Golden Dawn, of which he was a member, by turning to anthroposophy as an inspiration. Around the same time, Yeats fell in love with a young anthroposophist named Georgie Hyde-Lees. In 1917, at the age of 52, he married her. (I recommend

highly, but must here skip over, Welburn's fascinating account of the history of the relationship between Steiner and the Order of the Golden Dawn.)[1]

Welburn argues at length, and very persuasively, that it was above all Georgie's "automatic writing," conveying messages from Yeats's supersensible "Instructors," that inspired *A Vision* (1925), which would become the theoretical foundation for all his later work; and thus, that "the unconscious use of Steiner's far-reaching occult thought" accounts for the "strange coherence" of that work (p. 188). The artistic fruit of these struggles can be seen in the late "Byzantium" poems, where "in his refusal to yield to Ahriman, his determination to face the power of material reality and to assert that 'leap' of the spirit into the supersensible, Yeats [emerges as] the poet of what Steiner hailed as a new Michaelic age" (p. 200).

The remainder of Part II, entitled "Devil's Companions—Romantic Mythologies," addresses itself to Blake's *Book of Thel*, Goethe's *Faust* and Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, and Steiner's *The Portal of Initiation*. Welburn, whose doctoral thesis dealt with Blake and the Gnostics, sees Blake's writing as "totally committed to imaginative intensity," and thus "a first complete embodiment of the Romantic impulse" (p. 100). He reads the difficult "prophetic books" not as narrative epics, but rather as long lyrics that probe ever more deeply into the same imaginative truths. As a model of such reading, Welburn interprets the earliest of Blake's "prophetic books," the *Book of Thel*, "as a sequence of intensifications, deepening our experience of the poem 'lyrically,' and seeking to awaken in the reader a parallel process of self-discovery" (p. 106), and thus "as source and generative spring of a psychic pattern whose elaboration and expansion occupied much of our poet's career" (p. 107). This "psychic pattern" is indeed a Romantic archetype: M. H. Abrams has termed it "the circuitous journey," and explored it thoroughly in his magisterial study *Natural Supernaturalism*. What is new here is Welburn's identification of this pattern as a path of initiation, and the drawing of an explicit parallel with Rudolf Steiner's descriptions of those paths.

The chapters in Part II devoted to Shelley, Goethe, and Steiner recapitulate briefly the arguments offered in Welburn's definitive earlier study, *Power and Self-Consciousness in the Poetry of Shelley* (1986; also reviewed by the author in No. 47 of this journal). Here, Goethe and Shelley are seen as "poets of supreme importance for the modern age" because they are able to help us "come to terms

imaginatively with the Ahrimanic sphere" (p. 147). This is followed by a section in which Steiner's *The Portal of Initiation* is compared rather generally to Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, and, more interestingly, interpreted as having been written in a kind of "sonata form." In his typically evocative style, Welburn argues that

> the fulfillment of Steiner's Rosicrucian mystery does not mean a renunciation of the natural world. Steiner accepts that world as the stage of human action. But in the process of inner awakening its reality is transposed into another key, it is brought into relation with the 'symphonic' wholeness of man's experience. The music of Steiner's poetry, and the musical form of the play, may be perhaps its deepest message. (p. 164)

An ambitious, but less persuasive segment is devoted to Milton as a "visionary" poet who explores the depths of the unconscious generally, and the "luciferic" temptation specifically, thereby anticipating the "Promethean" heroes of the Romantics. Of course, reading Milton in light of the Romantics is hardly new (e.g., an entire academic journal is devoted exclusively to that constellation), but the real difficulty here is seeing *Paradise Lost* as the precociously modern, "highly personal, even intimate document" Welburn claims (p. 53). Welburn reads *Paradise Lost* not as a biblical epic, but rather, in the way that Blake would later read the work, as "a sequence of images, imaginative states linked by inner rather than external or narrative necessity" (p. 57), and as a "'Rosicrucian' progression through levels of vision" (p. 58). The problem is that Milton's "initiatory" experiences are nowhere depicted in a personal idiom, but rather always in a series of traditional *topoi*: how, then, are we justified in reading personal experience into them? Even Welburn seems to admit this indirectly: e.g., he concedes that "if we now look again at the poem in its unity, we cannot but remark that the narrative Milton developed in order to articulate his imagination of the 'journey' is strikingly inadequate at several points to his purpose—or better said, to the energies of his imagination" (pp. 75-6); and that "the structure of consciousness he tried to project imaginatively was not quite attained" (p. 77). He also admits that Milton's vision is profoundly skewed, and agrees with Steiner's criticism in *The Mission of the Archangel Michael* that Milton's "Heaven" is Luciferic and his "Lucifer" Ahrimanic, with Christ nowhere to be found (p. 87f.). It is hard to make this all add up to an authentic visionary experience. Even less convincing is Welburn's

strangely unsympathetic and reductive treatment of Wordsworth as a failed visionary—even as one who gave in to the Faustian temptation and took his ease in nature (p. 25). The less said the better here.

Barfield's introduction heaps lavish praise on this book, which it richly deserves, both because it carries on Barfield's work (Welburn's prose has even taken on a "Barfeldian" ring) and because it is finely wrought. Welburn is brave to have flown in the face of the "tabu" on Steiner. Yet, like Barfield, I also fear that this book will be easily and unjustly ignored—although for somewhat different reasons. *The Truth of Imagination* mentions the battles of recent literary criticism, but does not really join them: it is in that sense more an evocative, than a scholarly book. As such, it will provide insight and comfort to those who still wish to read in an imaginative way, but I fear that—the chapter on Yeats perhaps excepted—it will do little to persuade the unconverted.

## NOTES

1. Editor's note: See Andrew J. Welburn, "Yeats, the Rosicrucians and Rudolf Steiner," *Journal for Anthroposophy*, 47(Summer 1988) and 48(Winter 1988) for a discussion of this relationship.

**TO PAINT THE BLOWING WIND**

*By Judith Adams*

P. O. Box 565, Kimberton, Pennsylvania 19442, 48 pp.

Reviewed by Daisy Aldan

In our time, when so much poetry deals with violence, rebellion, explicit sexuality, frequent obscenity, it is refreshing to come upon the poems of Judith Adams, which remind us that revelatory beauty in nature and in humanity still exists for those who are able to penetrate these with insight and compassion.

This is not to imply that the poems in *To Paint the Blowing Wind* are all ecstatic reveling in nature or that the poet is insensitive to the time's evils. There is sadness also for age which daunts a beautiful old woman, once valiant, now "... more delicate than a child"; for a town, once vibrant, reduced to "rust and rubble"; with all its appurtenances of contemporary decadence: the juke box, the trash cans, the thrift shop, the deprived "girl—scarlet lips and harp-shaped eyebrows—" who gazes "... absently/ caressing a small heart beat." And there is indignation also for the felling of an old oak, upon whom, "...the seasons came and went/ like the tide upon the shores of earth." And there are her childhood memories of "a land laid waste" where "Flowers with no radiance, expressionless people/ all doors closed, the spirit dead/ Iron echoing into a lifeless tunnel," are depicted.

Many of the poems are extremely painterly, demonstrating a skill at selectivity. For example, the poem, *Passing New York* is reminiscent of the paintings of the thirties. To write an original poem about New York City after the multitudes of works that city has inspired, would seem almost impossible, and yet this poem succeeds. The superfluous and cliché are omitted, and her pen paints " ... the old man" who sees "the red geranium balancing at the window..." and the old woman who lies with "the ticking hum awaiting her moment/ wrapped in little/ but her nobility." The light of a street lamp illumines "a doll in a blue dress" who "stares between pink curtains."

In the nature poems, Judith does not merely represent the external decorative, but records the inherent which reveals the spirit within. One of her most remarkable poems is *The Poppy*, in which "Spring enters the hand of summer ..." She asks will she experience the poppy "... at dusk/ Blood in the throat of the Dove's love song?"

Poems like *The Violet* with its cognitive exchange, or *December*, evoking the Birth Event at the Winter Solstice manifest the poet's debt to Anthroposophy. We recognize with gratitude that we may add to our midst a poet of quality, whose works are not filled with so-called "Anthroposophic clichés," which are to be found in so many poets within our ranks.

Some of the best poems in the volume are: *Ode*, a moving work dedicated to a catatonic youth whose external oblivious body may be sheltering a King, *The Deer Across the Road*, *The Sunflower* whose "petals afire" are "torches in the dark night" and with whom the poet identifies, *Violet*, and *Gift of a Paint Box*.

It is Judith's spiritual insight which gives her poems stature, through which she achieves a dimension beyond the sentimental. Thus her best poems become meditations in the greater sense of that word. In a brochure describing a poetry course she was to present, she wrote, "We strive to find a new way of seeing, of being, so that a melody arises and we do not sleep in our faculties."

The book is tastefully designed by Anne Kennedy.

# Notes on Contributors

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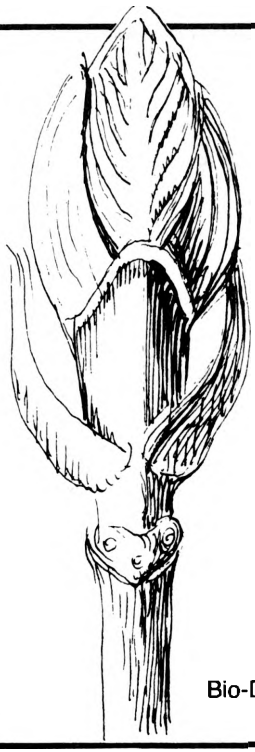

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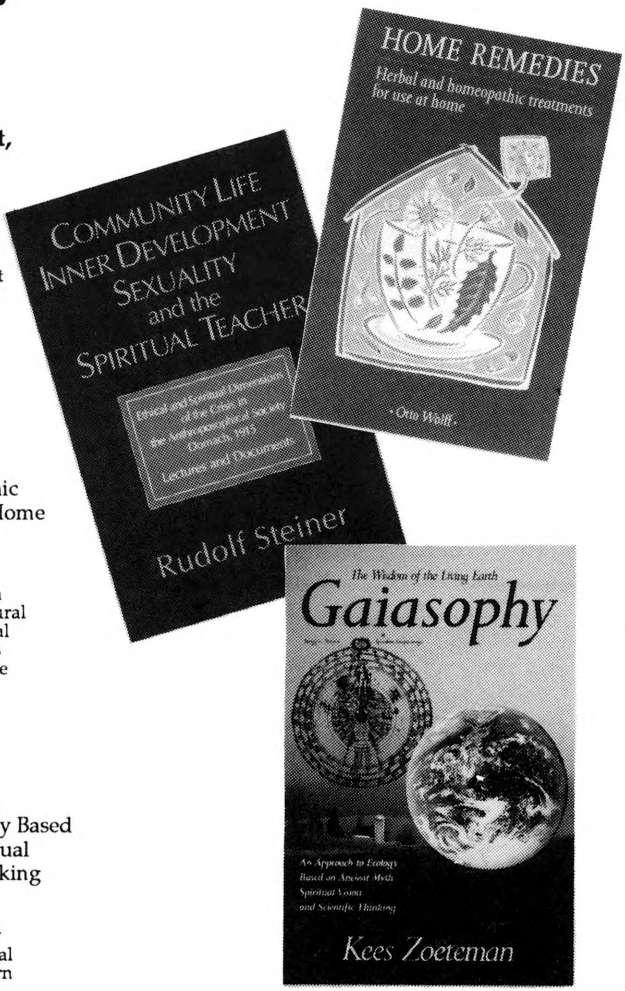


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