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To this edition

Dear colleagues,

First we would like to warmly thank our readers who have supported us over the last year with their larger or smaller donations. Even though their contributions do not cover all our costs, they are really helpful and we very much appreciate them!

We always welcome feedback on the articles we print. Wolfgang Auer, for instance, wrote a response to Detlef Hardorp's article (Journal No 39), since he has studied the same topic from a different angle. This will inspire further discussion on the sense of thinking which can only be fruitful for our school movement.

We also received an article from Dieter Centmayer on learning to read and the "right" time to do this.

Christof Wiechert's article, a shorter version of which appeared recently in the journal *Erziehungskunst*, brings us closer to Rudolf Steiner as a teacher.

We are busy preparing the next World Teachers' Conference and the World Kindergarten Conference. As promised we will share this process with you by publishing relevant articles. There are three of them in this issue, as well as some thoughts on recommended reading. All age groups are addressed – from the first to the third seven-year period and beyond.

For more information on either of the international conferences please visit our homepage (www.paedagogik-goetheanum.ch). You will find all articles there in German and English. Readers who offer to translate them into their languages are welcome to do so and can send us their translations. We will be happy to include them on our website.

The theme for the conferences was discussed by the International Council last year and the following English title has been chosen:

Teaching: When Future is Now How the Self Finds its Way

We hope that you will find the various articles in this issue inspiring and wish you much joy in your field of work.

*With best wishes from
the Pedagogical Section
translated by Margot Saar*

Do you love your Teachers?!

Rudolf Steiner as an Educator

The question is often asked, how was Steiner *himself* as an educator? This question is worthwhile because it gives us a new opportunity of discovering that we have a phenomenon in Rudolf Steiner, someone who *always* taught only what he himself had done or achieved. In my view this is the ultimate indicator of whether we are dealing with an exception or not.

This raises a human being like Steiner to the rank of a teacher for people in general (so as not to overwork the phrase ‘teacher of humanity’). It is also an expression of the double meaning of the phrase that *all* education is self-development; his biography shows this in the clearest way.

The fact of his being a teacher for people in general was already documented in his articles; these appeared in 1904-05, in the journal *Luzifer-Gnosis* and were published as a special edition in 1907. Later they became known under the title ‘How to Attain Knowledge of Higher Worlds?’¹

In the major chapter on the conditions which lead to self-development one condition is given that says you must feel yourself to be ‘a member’ of humanity as a whole; in other words, to develop and direct yourself in your feeling life that you do not put yourself in the position of an onlooker of life but right in life. Two examples are given which can develop this feeling: *“If I am a teacher and a pupil is not what I would wish him to be, I should not direct my feeling primarily against him but against myself. I should feel at one with my pupil to the extent of asking myself: ‘Is his shortcoming not the result of my own action?’ Instead of directing my feeling against him, I shall then far rather reflect upon how I should myself behave in order that he may in future be better able to satisfy my expectations. Such an attitude gradually brings about a change in the whole of a man’s way of thinking. This holds good in all things, the smallest and greatest alike. With this attitude of mind I shall see a criminal, for example, differently. I suspend my judgment and say to myself; ‘I am a human being just as he is. The education which circumstances made possible for me may alone have saved me from his fate.’ I shall then certainly arrive at the thought that this human brother would have become a different man if the teachers who took pains with me had bestowed the same care upon him. I shall reflect that something was given to me which was withheld from him ...”*

Then Steiner goes on to speak about the *shared responsibility* which every person has towards life as a whole.

What does this tell us?

This can hardly leave us with any other impression or thought than that these words are spoken with the authority of an all-embracing love of mankind.

1 How to Attain Knowledge of Higher Worlds? GA 10, Chapter: Conditions of Esoteric Training.

And we realise that an educational and a social example are used to portray this. And indeed the art of education derives from a social impulse ...

Further on, in all the pedagogical stages in Rudolf Steiner's life we shall see how this unshakeable, rock solid love of mankind constituted per se *the* element through which he worked.

Steiner wrote the articles shortly after he had been dismissed from his post at the Workers' Educational College, founded by Walter Liebknecht, in Berlin. He had been working there from 1899 until the beginning of 1905.² They had wanted to throw him out much earlier, but had not dared to, because he was by far the most popular and most respected teacher among the numerous students, workers and course participants. There had already been attempts to get rid of the teacher who publicly criticised Historical Materialism and had also become General-Secretary of the German Theosophical Movement; yet, in vain. Then a confrontation in a public debate was arranged in order to have it out at last.

An eye-witness account should reveal more than many other things would: *"It was, in fact, around 1904 when he gave up his teaching post at the Workers' Educational College. The literalist guardians of the true Marxist faith had kept on for a long time against the teacher without a squeaky clean Marxist background. He was suspected of being a heretic, and only the great affection which the students held towards him, had prevented his opponents from launching their attack. Finally, however, it had come to this point. They sent in the unprepossessing Max Grunewald with his firm grasp of Marxism. They arranged an evening, on which the two opponents were to try out their strength. It grew into a battle of minds on a mighty scale. Steiner was in great form. He spoke with growing dramatic effect, moved in on him with a tremendous amount of knowledge, he spoke with passion and fire and captivated even his enemies. Grunewald, that little failure of a doctor, did not even get off the ground. He was certainly not stupid and was otherwise feared because of his wit and his quick replies. Yet he had already lost hopelessly in the first round. Steiner left, but he left as a victor, cheered by his faithful students."*³ (Bold print CW).

It was in this same period that Rudolf Steiner taught at a private school for girls in Berlin, which was, in fact, at Motzstrasse 3, almost next door to his flat. Frau Anna Peltsohn had created an establishment, in which "school girls of various ages did their homework under supervision, practised the piano and violin and went for walks in the afternoon". Later on a further education college was founded – also by Frau Peltsohn – at the same address. This was the place

2 Beiträge zur Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe, Nr. 111 „Wissen ist Macht-Macht ist Wissen“ 1993 (Articles on the Complete Works of Rudolf Steiner, no. 111 “Knowledge is Power- Power is knowledge”, 1993).

3 Emil Unger-Winkelried, ‘Von Bebel zu Hitler’ Berlin 1934 quoted in Beitrage zur Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe, no 111, 1993 (Articles on the Rudolf Steiner Complete Works, no. 111). A very readable publication, in which Dr. Walter Kugler meticulously records the episode in the Workers' Education College, full of facts. Unger-Winkelried was a student there at the time.

where Steiner taught some groups of girls history, geography and perhaps philosophy too.

Many years later in a roundabout way, as destiny would have it, one of the girls had her attention drawn to him and she recognised her teacher from the Berlin period in him. It was Hedwig Denekamp, who remembered Steiner vividly as a teacher. At that time she had been a 'typical teenager' so that the other teachers had had to give her lots of warnings since she had a markedly sanguine nature which could muster little interest for what was presented in lessons. "*Only Dr. Steiner acted as if he did not notice anything and calmly went on speaking until she looked interested again. Whereas she can no longer remember anything of the content of the lessons, his soul attitude was stamped deeply into her memory*".⁴ (Bold CW).

Prior to the Berlin years there was a well-known stage in Steiner's teaching experience when he was a governor in the home of the Specht family in Vienna from 1884 to 1890. He was entrusted with educating the four sons of Pauline and Ladislaus. It is good to consider that Steiner was all of twenty three years old at the moment that he began this task. After six years when he asked for a reference (for the University of Rostock), Ladislaus Specht ended it with the sentence, "*From the above it will be perfectly obvious that Herr Steiner only departed from our house at his own wish, accompanied by the grateful acknowledgement of my whole family.*"

Otto, the second eldest of the four sons, was not considered capable of being educated on account of his serious hydrocephalic condition. When Steiner started work, Otto was 11 years old; he had taken an examination for the first class of elementary school, which he did not pass and he had learnt nothing since he had not been to school. "After two years he had progressed to the point where he could enter the Gymnasium (grammar school). He was hydrocephalic, with a huge head that steadily became smaller".⁵ Steiner frequently uses this example to illustrate the principle of economy in teaching. The lad was so weak to start with that he only managed fifteen minutes of the lesson. Steiner needed all of three hours to compress and condense the full wealth of the contents of the lesson into this. A powerful self-healing process must have been instigated in the boy by this teaching. Before this the doctors had given up on him.

Even though much of this remains a mystery for the following generations, in so far as our understanding of the real processes are concerned, it is, nonetheless, possible to say: this fact led to the establishment of the archetype of what later

4 Der Lehrer, der nie schimpfte (The Teacher who never scolded), Hedwig Denekamp/Walter Buehler in *Erinnerungen an Rudolf Steiner* (Memories of Rudolf Steiner), Stuttgart 1979.

5 Address and discussion at a parents' evening, 09.05.1922 in Rudolf Steiner at the Waldorf school, (GA 298 in German)

became the art of education in Waldorf schools and what can be called **the new paradigm of education which heals instead of making children sick.**

However, the education that Steiner gave in this family had great magnetic power on the extended family. Cousins, nephews, the children of families they were friends with would come and a lively climate of artistic, educational activity prevailed in the (often sickly) family; here important personalities would visit, such as the doctor (and co-founder of psychoanalysis) Josef Breuer, the composer and friend of Brahms, Ignaz Bruell, and other personalities of Viennese cultural life.

How do we know this? We have indirect evidence for it. After Steiner had left Vienna and had moved to Weimar, he kept up a lively correspondence with all the children, all the cousins and nephews, with Pauline Specht and somewhat less so with Stanislaus. And although Pauline Specht began almost every letter ('My dear friend ...') by telling him off for being a lazy correspondent, in all these letters one senses nothing other than love, attachment, high esteem and gratitude:

Dear Herr Steiner,

1891

I ask you to definitely come here at Easter. I would like to have a letter from you. How are you doing?

Greetings and kisses from your dear
Hans

Dear Doctor,

1895

I thank you most warmly for your kind gift and for your kind letter and for still thinking of me. I was delighted with the lovely quill holder, we stopped school on 21st December and have holidays until 2nd January. Latin is not hard for me and in the other subjects the teachers are quite content with me too. It is snowing terribly.

I hope you are having better weather. How are you? Mama had an operation in the autumn and her hearing is really improved.

Thanking you warmly once again,

Your Hans Specht as ever

Dear Doctor,

1915

Aunt and mother have given me the task of giving you, as a close friend of the family, the sad news that our dear, good Otto died in service on 14th September in the Russian part of Poland. The poor fellow was, as you know, in active service from the beginning of the war. Recently his hospital, where he worked as a senior physician, was turned into a hospital for infectious diseases. He picked up an infection there and died of typhoid fever after four weeks. He was buried on the spot. How this blow has affected us, in particular the two elderly ladies, you, dear doctor, who know our family life, are very well able to judge.

Your most devoted
Hans Specht

How can one have such a soul presence, 25 years later in a family in which one had been a private teacher for six years? Actually only if a seed of pure human love has been planted which has sprouted. If you have an overview of the correspondence with the Specht family (little Hans was not even one of the four sons) and you imagine simultaneously what work load Steiner was subject to at the time, this borders the inconceivable. For Rudolf Steiner too these six years must have been heart-warming; after all, he was allowed to participate in the happy life of a large family. Maybe this resonates in the letter that Steiner wrote to Ladislaus Specht, which takes off thus, “*Since my time working in your esteemed family forms such an integrating part of my biography ...*”⁶.

We encounter something of the secret of the ongoing relationship of the teacher to the pupils many years after the time at school in several biographies of former Waldorf pupils.⁷

Now, in Steiner’s life there are a lot more major but, above all, minor stages of his work as a teacher, which cannot be taken into account here in this limited space. What is meant among other things are the hundreds of pieces of personal advice to parents about the education of their children as well as the amazingly effective forms of assistance with the overcoming of illnesses.

We intend to look at the really major stage, the founding of the Waldorf school. Where in this context do we experience Steiner as an educator? There are a lot of small exemplary scenes: he was not able to walk across the playground without being surrounded by swarms of children; he suffered in the college meetings when teachers only saw the difficulties in their pupils; he was delighted when a pupil in Max Wolffhugel’s lesson had drawn a form that inspired him (Steiner) and had this boy pointed out to him in the school break. Then he thanked the boy for this inspiration which he intended to use in the building of the Goetheanum. There are lots of these small scenes.

Nevertheless, there are some which are really major and telling. They are his addresses to the pupils and his visits to the classes.

The school had started on 16th September, on 21st December the whole school community (classes 1-8, teachers, parents) gathered for the first Christmas celebration of the new school. Steiner gave an address,

Dear children! Several weeks ago, when we all came to this school for the first time, I visited you more often. Then there were a few weeks when I had to be quite far away from here, but each morning when I got up and went to work, I wondered: “What are my dear Waldorf children and their teachers doing now?” This thought came to me often during the day. And now, in the festive Christmas

6 A most fruitful source of material has been collected once more by Dr. Walter Kugler in the series *Beitragae zur Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe* (Contributions to the Complete Works of Rudolf Steiner), Doppelnummer 112/113, 1994.

7 For example, in the little known yet delightful collection ‘Waldorfschule- und dann? Ein biographisches Lesebuch’. Astrid Hellmundt, Dorothee Kionke, Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Waldorfschulen Berlin-Brandenburg, Berlin 2004.

season, I have had the privilege of being able to visit you again. I went into all your classes and asked many of you, “Do you love your teachers?” (“Yes!” shout the children.) And you see, you answered warmly, just like that. And I said to you, “That is an especially nice Christmas gift for me!” (Bold CW).

Then he said we should not feel sad and envy the birds because they are able to fly and we are not, for we have two wings as well, just that they are invisible and we are able to fly very far with them, the invisible wing on the left is industriousness, on the right attentiveness.

Shortly before the end of this brief address Steiner spoke these words to the pupils, “Children, when you enter these rooms with the other boys and girls, recall that you are meant to love each other warmly, to love each and every other one. If love prevails among you, you will thrive under the care of your teachers, and your parents at home will have no concerns and will have loving thoughts of how you are spending your time here.”⁸

This motif, that the unity of the school comes about through the mutual love, through the mutual respect of the pupils for one another and of the pupils for the teachers and the teachers for the pupils, occurs in all these addresses, together with the request, the heart-felt appeal (often clothed in charming fables) to the pupils to work hard and pay attention. It is the realisation and the test of what Steiner expressed in the first sentence of the Course for the teachers, “My dear friends, we will begin by making a preliminary survey of our educational task; and to this I would like to give you a kind of introduction today. Of necessity our educational task will differ from those which mankind has set itself hitherto ...”⁹

On this matter there would be a lot to say and, partly, it has already been said. However, one thing is evident: everything described up to this point is a transformation and manifestation of what is present in the sentences mentioned at the beginning. There is no education worthy of the name without the power of love.

Let us return to Steiner as an educator and let us have a look around the classes which he entered sometimes intervening in the lessons.

Herbert Hahn and Anna Friede Naegelin both had class five. These were so overfilled that it became necessary to have a third class five. At the beginning of October 1923 the two classes were divided up into three. Class 5c was to be taken by Martha Haebler; a painful process, therefore, Steiner took it upon himself. He took the new group with him across the playground (approx. 34 children), took them into the new classroom, spoke personally to each one, sitting on the benches, calmed them down. Finally he said to the class he was so glad that he *had found an especially kind-hearted teacher for them*. He then

8 Address at the Christmas assembly, December 21, 1919, in Rudolf Steiner at the Waldorf School (GA 298 in German)

9 Study of Man, 1st lecture Stuttgart August 21, 1919 (GA 293 in German).

asked Martha Haebler to start the lesson while he remained leaning against the wall with the children.

Martha Haebler had prepared grammar and sentence structure; while she was speaking about the melody of sentences she let slip the word ‘accent’. Steiner came to the front and asked the children, *Do you know where the word accent comes from? No answer, of course. He now explained how the Romans were engaged in trade, bought and sold and thus had always to count money, sometimes they had to count for a long time. He (Steiner) illustrated this very graphically by tapping lightly on the bench with every number and then when he had reached a hundred, he knocked very forcefully and said that they would thus commit the hundreds to memory in future: ad centum – accent.* Then she took over the lesson again. After one hour he left.¹⁰

In Holland in 1923 the first Waldorf school outside Germany was established in The Hague. In June 1924 Steiner visited the new school with great earnestness and attentiveness as if it were already a large establishment. He came into the class of the founder teacher, Daniel van Bemmelen, who was a trained painter. It was a drawing lesson, black and white shading and van Bemmelen was trying to get the pupils to draw a tree that was lit by the slanting rays of the sun. Steiner went to the front of the class, took a cloth and the sponge, with which the blackboard was cleaned (at that time they were round, natural sponges), held them both with his hands one over the other, went to the window and confirmed full of joy that now they had the tree which they could draw.

Van Bemmelen suddenly knew what applied imagination was.¹¹

Rudolf Treichler belonged to the original college of teachers and was one of the supports of the school until it was closed under the National Socialists’ rule of force. He was an exceptional figure as a class teacher and as a teacher of foreign languages, equally rich in talent and temperament, composing class plays at Christmas with great educational engagement. He was responsible for letting future generations know that Steiner once called off the Oberufer Christmas plays, which were intended as a present for the pupils because he was not satisfied with the educational achievement of the teachers. *“Even that could happen and it made us feel deeply ashamed.”*¹²

One day Steiner came into his lesson. Then an exceptional situation came about. All those present may well have touched by Steiner’s spiritual imagination and presence of mind in the teaching situation. There are also such moments in the school visits to Walter Johannes Stein.

However, we will close this fragmentary account with Treichler’s description of the experience in his class. There is no date given but we may assume that the

10 Martha Haebler, *Meine Erinnerungen an Rudolf Steiner*, in *Erinnerungen an Rudolf Steiner*, Stuttgart 1979.

11 Daan van Bemmelen, *een leven voor de Anthroposophie*.

12 *Wege und Umwege zu Rudolf Steiner*, Rudolf Treichler, in *Erinnerungen an Rudolf Steiner*, Stuttgart 1979.

class concerned was six or seven; but it reveals Steiner to us as an educational genius in a way that can hardly be more beautiful or clear:¹³

“It was in an English lesson and I had gone through the Lord’s Prayer in English – as I later did time and again – and had begun to learn it with the children. Rudolf Steiner entered just as we were speaking the closing words: ‘For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory – forever and ever.’

When we were finished Rudolf Steiner stood up, went to the blackboard, took a piece of chalk in his hand and said to the children: ‘Now you have spoken the beautiful, final words of the Lord’s Prayer in English and, of course, know the German words for them. Well, every kingdom has a certain compass, a definite size.’ – and at this he drew a circle. ‘And the power of this kingdom, where does it lie?’ – in the centre, answered the pupils, ‘Yes in the centre’, said Steiner and put a dot at the centre of the circle, – ‘and the glory, the splendour that this kingdom radiates, it shines out a long way!’ And he drew something like rays of light all around. And now he continued, ‘How does the whole thing look now?’ After a brief hesitation they called from all sides, ‘Like the sun!!’ – ‘Yes, that is the sun’, Rudolf Steiner said with visible satisfaction and left the room.”

*Christof Wiechert
translated by John Weedon*

13 Wege und Umwege zu Rudolf Steiner, Rudolf Treichler, in *Erinnerungen an Rudolf Steiner*, Stuttgart 1979.

How do we perceive thoughts?

To Detlef Hardorp's paper on the sense of thinking¹

There is a scene in Bertolt Brecht's play *Life of Galileo*² where Galileo is expecting the university professors, hoping they will overcome their antagonism and be swayed by the evidence. Everything has been prepared, the telescope is set up, directed at Jupiter and its moons. The scholars arrive and Galileo asks them to look through the telescope to see for themselves that the heavenly bodies are indeed there. They refuse to look, arguing that these bodies cannot exist because Aristotle does not mention them. I was reminded of this scene when I read Detlef Hardorp's paper on thinking and the sense of thinking. Here is someone who speaks about perception without going into the matter, condemning other views and supporting his own view on the sense of thinking with quotes by Rudolf Steiner. But Steiner's explanations are no proof and he never meant them to be used as such. They were indications and suggestions for us to embark on our own journey of world exploration. When we study the senses this journey will lead us into the sensory world: we have to train our senses, really perceive and investigate our perceptions and their disturbances. Honing our thinking on the *Philosophy of Freedom* does not suffice. We must also practise our senses on the sensory world before we can draw conclusions about them.

Hardorp takes particular exception to the first sentences in my book on the senses³: *What we know about the world we know through perception. This holds without exception.* Hardorp considers this to be, reading it as stating that thinking was not necessary since cognition was *part and parcel of sense perception* anyway, a view that would go against the *Philosophy of Freedom*. But I was not talking about thinking or cognition, I was talking about knowledge. And what does that mean? What happens when we try to form thoughts about something we have never perceived? We will not get anywhere, because without perception we do not know that the object in question exists in the world. We need to perceive an object in order to know of its existence. That applies to the thoughts of other people as well as to our own body. If we cannot be aware of our body through our bodily senses it does not exist for us and that has far-reaching, problematic consequences. It is the lack of perception, not the lack of thinking that causes these problems for us. Of course we need to form a mental concept of our percepts so that the latter can gain reality in our minds. But that

1 Detlef Hardorp, Denksinn und Denken: Wie nehmen wir Begriffe wahr? Paedagogical Section Annual 39/2010, p.16-36 (Thinking and the sense of thinking: How do we perceive thoughts?)

2 Bertolt Brecht, *Life of Galileo*, Scene 4 (Methuen Modern Plays, 2001, tr. J. Willett)

3 Wolfgang-M. Auer, *Sinnes-Welten. Die Sinne entwickeln, Wahrnehmung schulen, mit Freude lernen.* 2007

is true for all perceptions, including those of the sense of thinking. Here we must also differentiate our perception of a thought that is given to us as sense impression from the outside, from the concept that we intuitively form of it.

How do we perceive thoughts? Hardorp agrees with Dietrich Rapp that, with our sense of thinking, we can only perceive thoughts while they are being formed by someone. This would mean that we could not perceive thoughts when we read, nor when we look at art and certainly not when we perceive an object. Experience teaches us something different, however. Let us look at this more closely. One condition is given: thoughts or meanings have to be revealed or expressed by others so that we can perceive them with our sense of thinking. This usually takes place through language. But there are different kinds of languages. In spoken German and English, it can happen that words which sound different convey the same meaning. Visual and tactile sign languages can also convey meaning. In all these cases it is the language that allows the thought or meaning to be perceived. Visual and tactile signing are fully valid languages. Helen Keller and hundreds of others bear witness to that. Experience shows therefore that thought perception cannot be restricted to spoken language. We can perceive thoughts and meaning in all forms of language, including everything that people can construct and create. From such perceptions children also learn, not just meanings and thoughts, but also how to think for themselves. Without explanation! Children also understand, without explanation, when we point at things or use other gestures. We can even, as a rule, observe when this happens for the first time.⁴

At this age children also become aware of the meaning of objects. Hardorp believes that we do not perceive the actual objects but individual sense data which our thinking then turns into objects. Let's have a closer look at that. How do children learn about the meaning of objects? Children might have experienced balls in their environment for some time. They were aware of them, saw them, touched them, picked them up, rolled them about, threw them; they experienced how some of them bounced and others didn't, they listened to the different sounds they make and observed others using a ball. Again and again, they heard the term adults apply to this object. Children therefore can name the ball and speak about it. And they will also recognize balls even if their colour or material are different from the ones they have known so far. And all this although they are not yet able to go through cognitive processes and to work out what it is that the individual properties such as colour, shape, elasticity etc. belong to. But they do not have to run through this process each time from the beginning. We don't do that either. The elements of perception have long been integrated by experience into an object in which the integrating factors, i.e. function and meaning, are now perceived. But function and meaning are the thought aspect of objects and this aspect is perceived by the sense of thinking.

4 See Auer 2007, p.103

This sense and its perceptive capacity are able to develop because children experience, next to the various forms of language, objects and their functions. In this way we also develop our intelligence. If the sense of thinking is impaired in the realm of vision, as in the case of *visual agnosia*, we will be unable to perceive the thought aspect of objects. We can see colours and recognize shapes and their manifestation, but we do not know what kind of objects they belong to. We will then be unable to read, not sign language either. We won't understand gestures and symbols and won't be able to differentiate things and people. Oliver Sacks presents impressive examples of this kind of perceptive disorder⁵. It is not a defect that has to do with thinking, but it has to do with the sense of thinking in the realm of vision. With all other perceptions, including those of the sense of thinking in the realm of hearing and touching, the thinking is fully functional.

Even if this is an unusual thought for some people: we perceive objects with the sense of thinking and are therefore able to form the pertaining concepts. And the sense of thinking is also involved when we read, otherwise we would spend all day trying to decipher this short essay. And we would certainly struggle with objects, too.

Wolfgang-M. Auer
translated from the German by Margot M. Saar

5 Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, 13th edition 2009. Oliver Sacks, *The Mind's Eye*, 2010

When children learn to read later

It is still one of the main concerns of parents and teachers alike if children don't learn to read fast enough. This is often accompanied by troubles concerning writing and spelling. In this case, more and more people in Germany tend to consult specialists. The child is examined, tested, diagnosed. Extra support and tuition are given. Because of 'not fitting in' the child is from now on put under enormous stress. Their degree of development is seen as a weakness or even as an illness.

But then reading competence develops extremely differently among children. Some are able to read before school age, others may struggle along with it until Grade four or five.

There is no point in trying to teach a child reading if he cannot or is not willing to read.

You might as well try to attempt lengthening the undeveloped wings of a fledgling and ask it to fly. It will struggle to flutter, but will hardly rise.

Learning to read requires plenty of capabilities involving the activities of the senses and intellect, which the child first has to develop if they are not given from the beginning.

Rudolf Steiner indicated just how difficult and complicated this process of acquiring the ability to read is: *„If we teach children reading and writing as is commonly done nowadays, we are basically using very artificial means to introduce them to something that is foreign to them.“*¹

That's why teachers at Waldorf schools apply a special method of approaching reading and writing. First, writing is acquired through the means of an artistic process, by drawing, painting, reciting and music. *„We do so much good when the child has this opportunity. Our children will learn to write and read out of life itself. This is our intention. We will not pedantically force them to write letters that for every child seem all the same at first.“*² *„(You teach) the child how to write out of the artistic understanding of the written letter ... and then through writing how to read.“*³

At the beginning, the Waldorf method deals only marginally with reading. Having learnt the forms and shapes of the respective letters, children do a lot of writing and also some reading after they have written the words. Often the written texts have been learnt by heart before; thus the process of reading is made easier for children who have difficulty in it. The children will not be given unknown texts until much later.

The above quotation states that our children will learn to read "out of life itself". "Life" here means the pure artistic process of teaching, which

1 „Rudolf Steiner in the Waldorf School“, (GA 298, page 73), Anthroposophic Press, 1996

2 Rudolf Steiner, *Idee und Praxis in der Waldorfschule*, GA 297, S. 77

3 a.a.O. S. 210

corresponds to real life. From my own personal experience I can say that the majority of the children will be able to read more or less fluently at the end of Grade two without any extra work or intensive reading practice, if the Waldorf method is consequently carried out.

Reading Problems

There are always some children who are not able to read (or very insufficiently) at the end of Grade two and who also find writing more difficult than other pupils. This is usually when the greatest worries of teachers and parents start. For Rudolf Steiner the problem was not the late beginning of reading. He saw the bigger problem if teachers demanded the learning of reading too soon: *„In many respects, it is a mistake to learn to read and write as early as this happens in other schools. The point is not to make the children acquire certain capabilities as quickly as possible, but rather to teach them to be good and capable people later on in life, people who do not make life difficult for themselves.“*⁴

In another quotation Steiner points out that health problems for the individual child could be a consequence of having trained the child to read too early. These would not show immediately, but much later in life: *„The real point is that it may not be at all beneficial for such a child to learn to read too early. For by doing so, something is being blocked for life. If a child learns to read too soon, one leads it into abstraction prematurely. If reading were taught a little later, countless potential sclerotics would be able to lead happier lives.“*⁵

Rudolf Steiner's remarks go even further. He thought that a relatively late beginning of reading could even be positive. The thus saved forces could have a positive effect in later life. In his pedagogical lectures he points out that many important personalities often started reading late in life and had difficulty in learning to write at school: *„We should first ask ourselves whether it is altogether justified to require children to read and write with any degree of fluency by the age of eight ... Anyone who knows a lot about Goethe knows that if we had approached him with what is demanded academically of a twelve-year-old today, he would not have been able to do it at that age. He would not have been able to do it even at age sixteen, and yet he still grew up to be the Goethe we know of.“*⁶

*„Reading and writing as we know them today are really not suited to the human being till a later age – the eleventh or twelfth year – and the more a child is blessed with not being able to read and write well before this age, the better it is for the later years of life I can speak out of my own experience because I could not do it at the age of fourteen or fifteen ...“*⁷

4 „Rudolf Steiner in der Waldorfschule“, GA 298 S. 73

5 Rudolf Steiner, *„Die pädagogische Praxis von Gesichtspunkte geisteswissenschaftlicher Menschenenerkenntnis“*, GA 306, S. 82

6 „Rudolf Steiner in der Waldorfschule“, GA 298, S. 129 f

7 Rudolf Steiner, *Die Kunst des Erziehens aus dem Erfassen der Menschenwesenheit*, GA 311, S. 34

Aids

If a child does not acquire the ability of reading within the “normal” time you won’t just watch, waiting and doing nothing, though for some children waiting would be exactly the right thing to do. This is what you must find out. Inwardly therefore, a Waldorf teacher will intensely devote their attention to that child to find out what is special in that individual being.

They then will develop and use their creative measures accordingly.

For example, sometimes the teacher can notice that this child often has a special way of participating in the lesson. In those classroom contributions something very individual or typical wants to express itself. One might have to create a special shelter and protected surroundings for that child within the class or even within all of their social background. Sometimes one has to fight outwardly with courage and power to create that shelter.

These children might even have very fine capabilities within areas not yet accepted in our present civilization. They might be clairvoyant and read the minds and feelings around them. Sometimes they even feel far more intensely than other children, which can often be seen in the strong capacity of their imagination.

It is a big task for parents and teachers to realize this and act accordingly towards the child.

Dieter Centmayer
translated by Dorothea Habmann

The Journey of the Self into Life

In preparation for the World Kindergarten Conference, April 1-5, 2012, and the World Teachers' Conference, April 9-14, 2012

At the end of Lecture 3 of "Balance in Teaching" (CW 302a), Rudolf Steiner summarizes in three methodical steps how teachers can progress from internalizing and deepening the study of the human being to implementing it in their teaching:

- by actively studying the human being
- by understanding the human being through meditation
- by remembering the spiritually acquired knowledge of the human being in the teaching situation

In Lecture 4 Steiner described how the child's I gradually connects with the growing physical and ether body during the various developmental phases: *"The human I arrives out of the spiritual world, on astral wings, as it were. We observe how children develop when they are still very young, how they gradually bring their physiognomy from deeply within their being to their body's surface, how they increasingly take hold of their organism. What we see is essentially the incorporation of the I."*(All quotations are taken from CW 302a, Lecture 4 of September 22, 1920)

Steiner then referred to the transformation of the child's life forces during the change of teeth as the *"birth of the ether body"* on the one hand and the *"emancipation of intelligence from the physical body"* on the other. These forces become free and the child's I streams into them *"organizing them by degrees; this means that at this time the eternal I permeates what is being prepared ..."*.

From about the seventh year until the gaining of earth maturity in their fourteenth year school children absorb a new, musical element, *"which in fact lives in the world around them. But the element of music and tone that they absorb vibrates through the astral body."*

Daily we experience especially in the Lower and Middle School how easily and joyfully children relate to rhythm and singing. As the children actively experience the musical elements of the various lessons from one class to the next, their astral body grows ever richer and stronger. Its previously close ties to the organism are increasingly loosened: *"In puberty the astral body is born. – Again, it is the eternal I that enters into what is becoming emancipated. This means that from birth to puberty and beyond we see how the I continues to establish itself in the entire human organisation."*

In summary we can say that the I or self penetrates the organism in the following stages:

- Before the change of teeth the I establishes itself in the physical body, mostly through active imitation
- From the age of seven the I establishes itself by organising the ether forces that have become free
- After puberty the I connects with the astral body that is now free

Education and teaching have the important task to balance this process artistically. The I should not enter too deeply into the physical-etheric organisation as it might become too rigid and dependent on the body. If, on the other hand, the I does not take hold of the body sufficiently the connection with the physical organisation will be too loose which means that the child might become too dreamy, fanciful and lacking in competence. – In Lecture 4 Steiner describes first how a balance can be brought about between these extremes with an artistic approach in the various lessons and activities, then he goes on to speak of the interaction of cosmic-sculptural and cosmic-musical forces.

Recommended Reading for the Conferences:

Balance in Teaching (from CW 302a), lecture of September 16, 1920: The Three Fundamental Forces in Education

Adolescence – Ripe for What? (from CW 302a), lecture of June 22, 1922.

A Modern Art of Education, CW 307 (Ilkley Course), Lecture of August 11, 1923.

Claus-Peter Röh
translated from the German by Margot M. Saar

Freedom – through imitation?

Out in the garden, a four-and-half year old girl sits at the top of a ladder. She watches how the other children of her group play in the sand, run around or use branches to build dens to hide in. When the school doctor asks her what she is doing up there she says: "I'm thinking how I will get down again." When she is inside, her favourite game is spreading a large cloth on a table so that it hangs down to the floor. Then she takes a peg and pins a notice to the cloth that she has written without any help. It reads: "Private. No entry." In her "Ecole Maternelle" (state school nursery) she learned the three Rs so quickly that she ended up being bored there. The parents now send her to the Waldorf Kindergarten where she loves kneading dough, painting with water colours (she likes to paint yellow which she darkens with blue). During free play she withdraws into dark narrow huts. During circle time she just stands still, the big blue eyes in her round pale face watching what is going on. –

How can we help her to take hold of her body with joyful, carefree movements and make contact with the other children? Imitation alone obviously does not do the trick. She is too much in the habit of doing only what she can understand and consciously master.

For the teachers the pale, slender boy with dark hair and eyes is more of a problem. He also likes dark caves with lots of cushions and blankets, although he only stays in there for short periods of time. He prefers to storm through the room talking loudly and gesticulating, destroying what other children have built and grabbing what he can get hold of to take it to his den. – At breakfast, when some of the children talk about their favourite food, he says: "I like noise best." During circle time he does not watch quietly, but pulls faces and disrupts the teachers with ceaseless comments.

How can we help him to feel at home in his body so that he can, at least for short moments, open up to his environment and have the possibility to learn by imitation instead of acting always out of his own impulses and mental images?

What both children have in common is a deep loneliness. The girl experiences this loneliness by standing quietly on the side, the boy through continuous conflicts that are fed by the wish to dominate everything and by his nervousness. Both children are highly alert and aware. They understand, analyse and notice everything. With consciously led movements they are both very slow, the boy also: when he occasionally manages to stop being fidgety and engages in an activity that he finds interesting such as sawing and hammering, he does this slowly and clumsily.

“They are not Waldorf children”, people sometimes say, but we certainly meet them in Waldorf Kindergartens all over the world. When teachers quietly and joyfully raise their arms in the circle, they will not raise theirs first or they will do it differently on purpose. While some children quietly move their lips when they listen to the teacher’s story, these children will call out: “Not that story again!”

How can we foster the needs of these children in the Waldorf Kindergarten? Should we already teach them content? Should we more often invite them to take on tasks that we explain to them step by step? Or should we just go on as we do with the other children who are able to enter half-dreamily into our activities and moods?

In the light of the shocking catastrophes and upheavals that are happening in the world this Kindergarten problem might seem relevant only for experts. But Steiner thought about it differently. Even before he founded the Waldorf School, he spoke in some detail about imitation in the first seven-year period. He thinks it has an important role to play in the catastrophes of the twentieth century, those that had happened already at the time and those that were still to come (“probably a long, ongoing struggle of humanity”).

“Powerful waves of aggression will flood civilisation,” Steiner said, because certain fundamental soul needs would manifest strongly and unconsciously but could not be put into practice. He names them: socialism – democracy – individualism. Or: brotherhood, equality, liberty. It was impossible to meet this fundamental need for freedom because of the way children were educated in kindergarten. He said: “People will not be free despite all their protestations and despite all the political whining about freedom, if the required power of imitation is not implanted in young children.” This is a thought that will still strike many people as paradox: education towards freedom in the early years means not always allowing children to choose, but allowing them to live “in the soul around them, in the souls around them.” This unconscious living in the souls surrounding them has a particular effect on the physical body, an effect that prevents “animalistic instincts” from taking root there. Educating the physical body of young children by allowing them to imitate will enable them to gain individual freedom as adults.

Will the highly gifted girl only get down from the ladder by intellectual effort and will the naughty boy manage to be less alert and join in with others more dreamily? Much depends on this – more than just a harmonious daily routine in the Kindergarten. This is about the relationship of the individuality to the physical body. Can the body be the instrument of the soul or will it become a prison more and more from which it tries to escape through highly explosive conflicts with the world around it?

The 2012 World Kindergarten and World Teachers Conferences will focus on this relationship between I and body.

Teachers will work on the question: how can we inspire those children to imitate who are less and less inclined to do so? Steiner said more than ninety years ago: “In the future educators will increasingly have to answer the question: how can we best provide the conditions that will allow children to imitate their surroundings?”

The following questions are relevant in this context: What do educators have to do to inspire imitation? What kind of activities and work processes are suitable? How can they be inwardly and outwardly prepared? How can we stimulate the forces of imitation through the way we tell stories? How can we structure and prepare circle games and finger games so that children will join in more willingly? How can we support children like those described earlier with educational and therapeutic measures for body and soul so that they might once more be able to imitate?

We hope that these questions will be addressed and worked on in many kindergartens so that a fruitful worldwide sharing can take place during the forthcoming World Kindergarten Conference.

*Philipp Reubke on behalf of the IASWECE preparation group
translated from the German by Margot M. Saar*

All quotations are from CW 296, lecture of August 9, 1919, available in English as *Education as a Force for Social Change*, Tr. R. Lathe, N. Parsons Whittaker, SteinerBooks 1997. Also as *Education as a Social Problem*, Tr. L. Monges, D. Bugbey, Anthroposophic Press 1969

Quotations here translated by Margot M. Saar

The developing relationship between the I and the physical body

Being a teacher of first class children I had the privilege at the beginning of this school year to work with them practicing straight and curved lines. This was at the beginning of the first language period. The children were amazed at the complete difference between the lines. All letters are built up from those straight and /or curved lines, two types of lines that are polar opposites.

The children were absolute masters in finding straight lines that become a bit curved or curved lines that are partly curved.

Straight and curved are opposites, each focusing at the endpoint of a totality.

In considering the human body as a physical appearance we also recognize opposites. We see the head as a ball on the top, opposite the arms and legs, rays in the front and underneath. The head and the arms and legs are not joined directly to each other, in between them sits the torso, as a negotiator.

It is the same situation between the I and the physical body. The I has a purely spiritual origin while the physical body has a purely material origin. Between I and body stands the soul as a negotiator. The question is: how does the I connect with the body throughout education?

The I is the carrier of motives and impulses. When it finds its way to the earth it looks for a physical body. This physical body is the carrier of the heritage stream. When a child is born, the I has found its house on earth. And in this way the connection between the heavenly and the earthly part is established. This connection is not to be taken for granted. Newborn babies sleep an awful lot because being awake makes an appeal to the connection between these two parts and that costs a lot of effort.

During the development from baby to adult the working of the I is visible. It hangs like a light over the individual's development. It can be noticed as the child grows older and it becomes more and more aware of itself and it observes the world with a growing consciousness. It shows how the I works indirectly on its house (the physical body) by making it fitting and livable. The preparation of the birth of the I happens in three major phases:

- during the first seven years of its life a child lives united with the world. It is connected with everything in its surroundings and its I is in the outside world.
- Between the ages of 7 and 14 the child experiences the relationship between the world and itself. The obvious connection with the world becomes less obvious and is replaced by more awareness of its own experiences. The I looks for a balance between the outerworld and the innerworld.
- between the ages of 14 and 21 the child places itself against the world. It observes its environment with growing individual consciousness and learns to form its own opinion. The I finds its centre in the innerworld.

With a newborn baby the I and the physical body are loosely connected. During education these two poles comes closer, in order to achieve the set motives and goals of the I after reaching adult age.

With the younger child there are of course also moments where the I becomes apparent. Three examples illustrate this:

A girl of two and a half years was using the word “no” for a few weeks and with everything that needed doing she said “I’ll do it”. Mum asked what she wanted in her sandwich, pointing at all the jars on the table, one by one. Each time the girl said “no!” After a while the mother was desperate and asks her “what do you want then?” And the girl answered: “No!” This child had become conscious of itself and the “no” was a result of this awakening moment where the I touched the child in its thinking.

A boy of nearly ten years came to me and said: “Sir, I was playing in the sandpit with my friends. I though I looked childish and I left the sandpit. When I watched my friends playing I wondered why I wasn’t there with them. What shall I do, join in or not join in? This boy suddenly experienced an awareness in the relation between himself and the world and looked for the balance between the outerworld and the innerworld. The I manifested itself through emotions.

The third example is Camille Claudel, a sculptress, who lived in France from 1864 to 1943. During her childhood she lived in the countryside. When she became 15 she moved to Paris with her family. Camille was seventeen when she attended the Art Academy. There she discovered her life motive and she threw herself as a lioness into sculpturing. Camille became aware of her ideals and her faith set alight. Her life found its direction. The motive carried by her I merged with the qualities of her physical body.

A good teacher helps a child to realize itself. Each child carries its own case which contains a spiritual treasure. This holds a job for teachers. When a child is given the necessary physical care, when it can have healing experiences and when it is shown the world through meeting joyful people, we help the I to arrive in its physical body. This development demands love and respect from us teachers. This way we take part in the opening of the case, so every human being can carry out its treasure in its life on earth.

Sigurd Borghs

Oh, No! Not Another Decision!

Why is it so difficult for us to make decisions? It is hard enough for us to make significant decisions for ourselves as individuals; it is even more challenging for us to make decisions on behalf of our institutions. Should we ask that 8th grader – a splendid fellow of keen intelligence, athletic, artistic, the son of our music teacher – to leave the school because he continues to bring pornographic magazines into the classroom? Should we ask a parent, a successful car mechanic with a known alcohol problem, to teach our high school students? Should we hire a teacher who comes to us with poor references? Etc. etc.

These examples make it clear that the difficult decision is difficult because we are asked to weigh one possibility against the other, and that when we look at the either/or of the decision we are confronting a scale that does not tip clearly enough toward one or the other side. We are required to think our way out of the muddle, and as we know, our sympathies and antipathies confuse the issues. Our own biographical ballast insinuates itself. So in the first example above the music teacher may be our closest colleague. In the second example, we may ourselves have suffered from an alcoholic father. In the third example, we may feel that “there but for the grace of God stand I” – never the basis for clear thinking!

In all these cases, and in all decisions, judgment is necessary. We are called upon to make a judgment, to judge one set of circumstances against another set of circumstances.

In English, the word “judgment” is a loaded word. It has overtones. It has implications. It is not neutral. This is ironic, because “to make a judgment” should be a neutral, impersonal activity. But in English, judgment and judgmental are easily mixed-up. If someone is called “judgmental” we imply that they judge in a haughty manner; we imply that they “sit in judgment” and that they have determined that the thing they are judging is either good or bad, moral or immoral. In these politically correct times, you have to be very careful when you use the word “judgment” in English, even in a Waldorf teacher training where the entire trajectory of learning is meant to strengthen the capacity for clear judgment.

From our pedagogical studies we know that judgment, when it means the capacity to weigh the facts and come to a good decision on one’s own, is a capacity that can really only begin to be addressed when a human being reaches puberty. “And only with puberty comes the longing in man to gain a relationship

to the world through his own individual judgment.” (*Study of Man*, 9) Or: “It is from the age of twelve onwards that the power of judgment gradually develops.” (12) The difficulty is that the ego, which is the instrument for actually making the decision, for actually making the judgment, is not fully ripened until the individual reaches 28 years of age. And “fully ripened” is a relative term, because the true full ripening of the ego continues until we reach the venerable “years of grace” at 63. And even then, during the years of spiritual development from 42 to 63 or so, we can merely glimpse the potential development, for only in future planetary stages will the ego manage to transform astral, etheric and physical into truly spiritual entities, i.e. spirit self, life spirit and spirit body. Meanwhile, the present phase of evolution, the earth phase, should enable the proper ripening of the ego. We are only at the beginning. We have a ways to go. And that is why making a decision is so hard.

So humanity, in this time of the consciousness soul, is not yet conscious, is hampered, hobbled even, and looking for crutches in a myriad of ways. Technology is, obviously, a major tool to help (i.e. hinder) the decision-making which requires our “weighing in.” Standardization, homogenization, uniformity; easily programmable, easily quantifiable, easily evaluated – these are the criteria for much that technology offers. I wouldn’t want to live without it, but it has brain-washed us into thinking that these criteria are the basis for judgment. Whereas judgment based on living thinking requires a phenomenological approach in each and every instance. Practicing judgment in the moment requires that we be free of pre-judgment, i.e free of prejudice.

Is that why there are so few people capable of judgment? Because we resort to templates, procedures, policies and prejudices even in our own institutions and in our own lives?

In the cited earlier [GA 152] Rudolf Steiner elucidates the “ordinary, unpretentious, commonsense human understanding”

“Ordinary thinking, which every soul today has within it as a power, has this special feature: it has two faces. It is Janus-headed. On the one hand, ordinary thinking is dependent on the brain and brings to consciousness only what is reflected in the brain, the nervous system. In that case, it is more **passive**, desiring to lean on the instrument of the brain. On the other hand, this same thinking can – without any kind of meditation – by quite simply rousing itself from within, becoming conscious of itself in its true nature, tear itself away from its dependency on the brain, free itself. Then it is a more **active** thinking.”

He speaks of “thinking that is willing to work hard, to strengthen itself” as opposed “thinking that wants to avail itself of a crutch, that wants to bring

thoughts to consciousness merely in the reflection of the brain – thinking that wants to be comfortable, and wants only to let thinking go on with itself....”

It seems to me, and I hope my thinking is not too passive when I make this suggestion, that we are looking here at the question of decision making. It requires **active** thinking. That is why it is so hard and so rare. Who amongst us does not want to avail himself of the crutch of reflected consciousness? Who amongst us has attained to active thinking?

Steiner’s paragraph ends with the dire exclamation that “a deep-seated, unconscious love of comfort, which does not want to become active, but rather remain passive” is the root cause for the rejection of anthroposophy. The conclusion, dare I say judgment, which we can distill from this, is that anthroposophy, which depends on active thinking to be grasped, will also strengthen the capacity for decision-making. “But adherence to the anthroposophical world view is not comfortable.” Neither is making a difficult decision.

The Study of Man provides us with the spiritual scientific data we need to understand the process of judgment. It is will activity. It is feeling activity. It is thinking activity.

In the forming of your own thoughts, in the uniting of one thought with another, or passing over to judgments and conclusions — in all this there streams a delicate current of **will**.

On the one hand we have judgment, which must of course form an opinion upon something quite objective. The fact that man should be good must not be dependent on our subjective feeling. The content of the judgment must be objective. But when we form a judgment something else comes into consideration which is of a different character. Those things which are objectively correct are not on that account consciously present in our souls. We must first receive them consciously into our soul. And we cannot consciously receive any judgment into our soul without the co-operation of **feeling**. [...] True, the objective content of the judgment remains firmly fixed outside the realm of feeling, but in order that the subjective human soul may *become convinced* of the rightness of the judgment, **feeling** must develop. (V)

So this activity of judging requires the delicate cooperation of feeling and will to illuminate the thinking. Holding these three soul forces together, enabling them to unite healthily on behalf of a decision, to weigh all aspects coolly but with

warmth, to bring about that “common sense human understanding” – that is the task of the ego, the nascent, fledgling ego. It is probably an understatement to say that in making decisions we are all stretched to the max.

The following words from 6 in *The Study of Man* can shed more light on the process:

Suppose for a moment that you had the feeling that while you were forming a judgment something happened to your ego somewhere in the subconscious and that your judgment was the result of this process. For instance you say: “That man is a good man,” thus forming a judgment. You must be conscious that what you need in order to form this judgment — the subject “man” the predicate “is good” — are parts of a process which is clearly before you and which is permeated by the **light of consciousness**. If you had to assume that some demon or some mechanism of nature had tangled up the man with the “being good” while you were forming the judgment, then you would not be fully, consciously present in this act of thought, of cognition: in some part of the judgment you would be unconscious. That is the essential thing about thinking cognition, that you are present in **complete consciousness** in the whole warp and woof of its activity.

Such consciousness in the process of coming to a practical determination, a workable judgment, a decision that meets the circumstances and solves a problem, such consciousness requires that the ego subjugate any overly energetic, one-sided soul activity, be that an overabundance of feeling, of thinking or of will. It is an effort because, “The function of judgment becomes an expression of your whole being.” (8) (True, this reference comes from the discussion of the twelve senses, but it is nevertheless relevant.)

We cannot do justice to the question of judgment without reference to 9 of *The Study of Man* which analyzes the process integrating conclusion, judgment and concept. English speakers find themselves having to re-learn the meaning of these three words for the German word *Urteil* when translated as judgment, requires a gloss to clarify the meaning. Of course even German speakers have to study the text closely to follow the meaning, but since we are working on the meaning of “judgment” it is good to note that the way the word is used in 9 adds another layer of complexity because here judgment is related more to feeling, whereas a decision, as we have seen requires the clear light of consciousness in all three soul realms. In my experience, teacher training students balk at the word “judgment” and take some time to realize that it does not imply being judgmental.

As teachers, we might do well to remember that “the power of independent judgment” (Lecture 11) results from “bringing imagination continually into the

growing power of judgment of the child of twelve. [...] We must arouse the child's imagination in all we teach him, in all the lessons he has to learn during these years; all history, all geography teaching must be steeped in imagination.” (Lecture 14) Here we are in the heart of Waldorf pedagogy. Here we are in the heart of “teaching as an art.” But isn't it also the heart of our own striving? Isn't it often a lack of imagination which causes a breakdown in the decision-making process? We cannot see our way to a desired result. However, when we aspire to “imbue ourselves [sic] with the power of imagination” we work toward enabling spiritual science to become active in us. Active means practical. Active means, active in helping us with the decision. Although “imbue yourself with the power of imagination” is generally understood to refer to the teacher's task in the classroom, it is also applicable to the task of the entire faculty in running the school. In that case we might aspire to raise the activity of imagination into the realm of Imagination. [note for the translator: in English the word imagination is not spelled with a capital letter except to refer to the transformed capacity of thinking into Imagination; imagination = Einbildungskraft; Imagination = Imagination.] And that, again, has as its foundation, the intensification of the clear light of thinking. That is what can enable us to judge without passing judgment, to make decisions with the proper proportion of brain and heart. As adults we can aspire to such a goal.

Active thinking, inner activity, the expression of our whole being, that is nothing less than the goal of the path of study set forth in spiritual science. In short, active involvement with anthroposophy strengthens the ego. A strengthened ego will have more certitude when facing a decision. Perhaps it will not be the right decision. Perhaps the music teacher's son should not have been asked to leave. Time will tell. But in the meantime, perhaps the music teacher herself is relieved that a decision, stalled for weeks, has finally been made.

Of course we would prefer to make the right decision. That is the noble motive which can so easily lead to paralysis in the decision-making process. Waiting to help us make the right decision are our angels, the schools' archai, and the reigning Spirit of the Time. That is the picture we get in the “College of Teachers' Meditation,” the picture of the drop of wisdom-filled light which can help us in our decisions. But it is up to us to prepare our egos, so that we can receive the wisdom, so that we can make the judgment.

Dorit Winter

Agenda

Forthcoming Pedagogical Section Conferences and Events at the Goetheanum, 2011

2011

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|-------------------------|--|
| May 12 – 15, 2011 | Mystery Drama for teachers (in German) |
| June 17 – 19, 2011 | Conference for Religion Teachers (in German) |
| September 23 – 25, 2011 | Study of Man, 9 th lecture (in German) |
| October 21 – 23, 2011 | Individualität-unmittelbar erlebt. Von der Kunst der Begegnung mit heutigen Kindern. (in German) |

2012

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| April 1 – 5, 2012 | World Kindergarten Conference |
| April 9 – 14, 2012 | World Teachers' Conference |