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Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

We are now moving from Advent into the Christmas season, a time for contemplation and rest. The heavenly world opens up to us in the days between Christmas and Epiphany, the time *between the years* as it is often referred to. A fitting description really as it pays tribute to the fact that this is a special period, a period separate from everyday life. Let us make use of this period in the best possible way.

Does our pedagogy still enthuse us? Does the 100-year anniversary inspire us to think about this question? I have just been reading an article about the curriculum. Surely there is no question about it being out of date. Rather we should ask ourselves: how do we penetrate the curriculum to make it even more current than it has always been? How do colleagues in schools and training courses manage to really grasp what lies behind? Why do we do form drawings in the Lower School on a daily basis? Why did Rudolf Steiner advise us always to teach from the whole to the part? What is it about the imagination? Often we are of the opinion that imagination is most needed in the Lower School. However, Rudolf Steiner spoke in much more detail about imagination in the middle school. Why is that? What is it about storytelling? Why does the curriculum offer material for stories for each year? And what about the threefold way of teaching? Presenting, characterising; and then, the next day, comes the realisation. Surely this means that there is a quality somewhere in between which allows the presented material to become reality in all its different colours. Florian Osswald has written a series of articles about

the night. How should I design my teaching in such a way that it has an effect during the night?

There are many more related questions – no need to list them all. We hope once again to inspire many questions with the articles in this edition of the journal; maybe we can answer a few, and some may be further discussed in your meetings.

Florian Osswald rounds off his thoughts about the night with another article, this time sharing reflections about conversation. Claus-Peter Röh speaks about the value of the teacher speaking imaginatively in the lesson. The spoken word is gaining in importance in this modern era of digital media. The next teacher generation will have grown up with these media. What new skills will they bring into the schools? Alain Denjean speaks wonderfully in his article about this 4th generation. Christof Wiechert allows us to take part in his thoughts on the connection of the Calendar of the Soul verses and teacher meditations. Often the Calendar of the Soul verses make a connection between the teachers who perhaps read them together in the morning before the start of the lessons. There is another article offering thoughts about the difference between training and educating. Christof Wiechert has been reading the book by Dorit Winter and is inspiring us to read it ourselves or to give it to English speaking friends.

I am particularly pleased to point out a report from everyday life in the classroom. Zhenfei Chu from China lets us take part in her life as a class teacher, accompanying her

pupils right into puberty, by speaking about their anxieties, questions and new challenges. Reading about her path is very impressive indeed!

We are pleased to present this journal to you with all its essays, thoughts and ideas, and hope to be able to offer you an inspiration here and there for your teaching, your meet-

ings, or your parents' evenings. Wishing you all the very best for a light-filled and restful Christmas season.

With all good wishes for the New Year,

Your Pedagogical Section

Given the Night – Part IV

Florian Osswald

'Thus, the everyday ego and the everyday 'you' are only supplements of the great ego. Every 'you' is a supplement of the great ego. We are not an ego at all – however, we can and will become an ego. We are seeds of an ego. We should transform everything into a 'you' – into a second ego – only in this manner do we raise ourselves to the Great Ego – that is both One and All.' (Novalis)¹

Normally, we only consider the 'day side' or the conscious aspect of a conversation. It would be rather unusual to speak of a 'continuation in the night' – or of the subconscious aspect of a conversation. However, this is exactly what we are trying to explore in this paper. We are looking at the dynamics of conversations; dynamics which can only come about through both aspects, day and night. This paper concludes the series 'Given the Night' which was published in the Journals of the Pedagogical Section Vol. 58, 59 and 60.

The Shape of the Whole

Modern communication theory has been thoroughly researched and ample literature has been published on the subject. The literature refers mainly to the conscious aspects of conversations, the so-called 'day aspect'. However, the day cannot exist without the night. The night is the hidden, subconscious part of ourselves. Communication – just as life – is rooted in both sides. Only if we become aware of both, if we create a complete entity, we can perceive the actual shape of a

conversation and a rhythmic – polar process becomes visible. To look at something in this way is not at all unusual because quite a few processes appear in a polar or dual shape to begin with. Consider for example, light and darkness or sympathy and antipathy. We can only see the whole if we perceive both sides. As Rainer Maria Rilke says:

*'Like the moon, life certainly has a side which is constantly turned away from us but is not its opposite. It is a complement to perfection, to completeness, to the real, immaculate and full globe and sphere of being.'*²

Only the perception of the whole, the complete entity makes it possible to see *'the real, immaculate and full sphere of being.'*

Every conversation is an opportunity to break down the polarity of speaking and listening and to create a rhythmical whole.

In this paper we are trying to describe this process in more detail. Readers who regularly practice the exercise, which is the basis of this series of articles, will find an intimate connection between the gestures of speaking and listening and the gestures of falling asleep and waking up. (See appendix)

Communication Starts with the First Breath

There are a huge variety of reasons for conversation, from informal small talk to decision-making discussions and everything in between.

¹ Novalis, *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopedia*.

² Rilke, R. M. (2012) *Letters to a Young Poet*, Merchant Books.

Depending on the type of communication, we sometimes focus more on the structure of a conversation, sometimes more on the process. Every conversation is based on the two fundamental elements of speaking and listening. Many communication theories are based on the concept of sender and recipient. We all know how this model translates into technology, we use it constantly in our daily lives. People have always wanted to send information quickly across long distances. The Chinese used mirrors, others used fires or smoke signals. Our modern devices today fulfil the dreams of our ancestors to a large extent. However, technological development does not change the fact that the principle of dialogue is found at the centre of all human communication.

Even a newborn baby starts a dialogue with the world. The baby does not only imitate, but it triggers a reaction in other human beings. Newborn babies therefore have first 'conversations'. Today, we know that babies develop language based on the dialogue with their environment. What comes first is the dialogue, that which connects listening and speaking. As Rudolf Steiner explains in *Practical Advice for Teachers*:

*'You will easily see from this that speech is really built up on a persisting rhythm of sympathetic and antipathetic activity – like feeling. Speaking, too, is primarily anchored in feeling.'*³

By listening, the child feels at one with language. Understanding is a gradual process because *'the thought content of our speech is introduced by our accompanying the content of feeling with the content of knowledge ...'*⁴

The continuous interplay between sympathy and antipathy is one of the most basic aspects of the human soul.

*'We develop within us all the world of feeling, which is a continual alternation – systole, diastole – between sympathy and antipathy. This alternation is continually within us. [...] Here we come to the real understanding of the life of soul and spirit. We create the seed of the soul life as a rhythm of sympathy and antipathy.'*⁵

Holistic Practice

As we can see here, rhythmical processes are the basis of learning our mother tongue. A further milestone in development is the way a toddler practices speaking. The child does not practice any singular aspects such as the 'technique of speaking'. The small child dives into the language and learns from simple activities. It rhythmically repeats short chunks and makes connections until it finds its own way of expressing itself. Children acquire language best when they are surrounded by people who listen attentively and who give them ample opportunity to speak and listen. Language and speaking come alive in situations where careful listening and imitating are required. To listen to others and to express ourselves are the two key elements of conversation.

The Principle of Rhythm and Dialogue

The principle of rhythm and dialogue is ever present in the development from baby to adult. The rhythm of sympathy and antipathy, which is expressed in the act of listening and speaking, lives in the small child in the interplay between autonomy and the joy of discovering. Exploring and discovering sup-

3 Steiner R. (2000), *Practical Advice for Teachers*, Lecture 2, Anthroposophic Press, Great Barrington, GA 294.

4 *ibid.*

5 Steiner, R. (1996) *The Foundations of Human Experience*, Anthroposophic Press, Great Barrington, GA 293.

port autonomy, and strengthened autonomy in turn fosters the joy of discovering. The relationship with the world is born out of the interplay between these two forces.

With every developmental step the question about the relationship between the human being and the environment needs to be addressed anew. Again and again we need to find a safe haven, a starting point from which to explore the world. In every age group this can happen best through devotion to our fellow beings and the world. Every development seems to be based on this contradictory experience which expresses itself in different ways with every new step. Not the one or the other is more important, but it is the process of rhythm and dialogue which is essential. The parts are not the important elements, but what counts is the perception of the whole process.

*'If you want to know your own being,
Look into the world all around you.
If you really want to know the world,
Look into the depths of your own soul.'*⁶

This principle is found in speaking and listening, in being awake and sleeping, in thinking and perceiving. The entity, the whole, embraces the polarities and lifts them up into an actively gained synthesis such as life, learning, cognition and dialogue. Life encompasses being awake and sleeping; learning encompasses remembering and forgetting; cognition encompasses thinking and perceiving; dialogue encompasses speaking and listening. Life, learning, cognition and dialogue are the benchmarks by which the polarities fade into rhythmical interplay.

Viewed in this way, real relationships between people are secure in this all-encompassing en-

tity which must be recreated through rhythmical processes at any one moment. We can never truly achieve the correct rhythm because it is created anew at every moment. It does not live in space or time; it creates its own time and space. It is a form of life, of learning, of cognition, of dialogue.

Let us now look at this process in connection with communication.

Conversation as a River

In his book "Speaking, Listening, Understanding"⁷, Heinz Zimmermann compares a conversation with the flow of a river from the source to the sea. The source supplies the content. It transports the matter, the water, to the surface. At that moment, the interaction with the environment starts. The water leaves traces in the landscape. Additionally, the river flows at a particular speed by which it approaches its final destination: the ocean.

The metaphor of the river can help us to find orientation in a conversation: A conversation needs a content. The interaction with the environment starts as soon as the content has been expressed. The final destination might be clearly defined or it might only emerge in the course of the conversation. With a little practice we can develop a sense for the right amount of content, tempo, contours and aims. We can start to ask: Do we have too much or too little to talk about? Can everyone take part in the conversation? Have we considered every aspect of the topic? What is missing? Where is this conversation heading? What belongs to the topic and what doesn't?

Every river and every conversation take their own course. We can mark the traces of a river on a map just as we can record the

6 Steiner, R. (1988) *The Calendar of the Soul*, Steiner Books, GA 40.

7 Zimmermann, H. (1996), *Speaking, Listening, Understanding*, Lindisfarne Press, Hudson, N.Y.

course of a conversation on paper or in some digital form. Sometimes, when we look back on a conversation, we might see inner pictures connected to it. Those pictures are also a kind of record. Every type of record preserves the conscious aspects of the river or the conversation.

We can now elaborate on this and add the 'night dimension'. There is an invisible trace of water from the ocean to the source. This trace cannot not be perceived with our normal 'day consciousness'. However, we sense that there must be some sort of cycle: from the source to the ocean and back to the source. Liquid water becomes water vapour and then turns into clouds. What does the 'night dimension' of communication look like?

The practice which was described in Part I of this series helps us to investigate the 'night'. Many people do not see themselves as a being who has a day side *and* a night side. The reason might be that we can only use our day consciousness to describe what is happening at night. If we presume that the night has its own dynamics and is not only a processing of the events of the day, we may ask what kind of 'conversations' we have at night. Are they only a continuation of the conversations we had during the day? Might there be any nightly interlocutors?

Regarding these questions, Rudolf Steiner's words can be of great help. They offer a glimpse into the events of the night. If we manage to light up the night, we will have gained some insight into the common bond between day and night.

And where might this lead us?

In the last decades many Waldorf institutions have invested a lot into quality man-

agement. This has strengthened their day aspect. The night side, however, has been somewhat neglected. In the next few years we will face the task of strengthening the night side because '*sleep is the great social stabilizer*'.⁸ The social question is the most crucial question of our time – not only in connection with education. How to deal with conflicts is an enormous contemporary challenge. Therefore, the real task is to strengthen the processes of dialogue and rhythm. Only the work with the day and the night lets us enter into a kind of communication which enables true relationships with our fellow human beings.

Daily life is rich in communication. To talk to each other is a basic need of people. In an educational context we can distinguish between three types of conversations: educational conversations with our pupils, the conversations with parents and those with colleagues. The night can help us in all three of them.

Take heart and encompass the whole! If you do, you will experience a process of waking up, of waking up to the night. Social processes make us aware of others. Our fellow human beings become points of reference. They enliven us and move us forward into new development. Conversations live of what we build together, you and I, what lives in day and night.

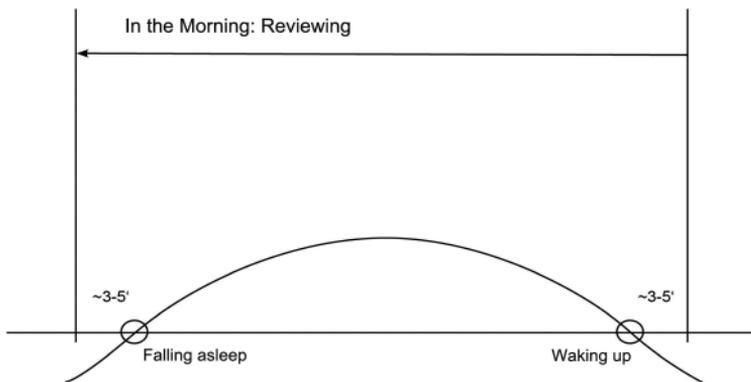
We should transform everything into a "you" – into a second ego – only in this manner do we raise ourselves to the Great Ego – that is both One and All.

A wonderful kind of hospitality lives in these words. They show us a new kind of conversation, the "welcoming dialogue".

8 Steiner, R. (1979) *The Challenge of the Times*, Anthroposophic Press, Lecture August 22, 1918, GA 186.

Here, we continue exploring a short practice which is based on a lecture by Rudolf Steiner on October 10th 1918⁹. It is a kind of retrospective exercise which includes the following steps: Shortly after waking up in the morning, pause for a moment for a brief review of the morning, the night and the evening. Imagine yourself going back in time to the moment when you woke up. Perhaps you can see yourself getting dressed, cleaning your teeth, pushing the duvet back or

opening a window. Go back one more step. Now you meet a kind of threshold. Keep going backwards 'into the night' as it were. Perhaps you remember a dream. Usually, we do not have any memory of our sleep, it happens subconsciously. Keep going backwards until you arrive at the moment of falling asleep. Which were your last thoughts, your last feelings before falling asleep? Keep going backwards for a few more moments into the evening and then stop.



9 Steiner, R. *Der geisteswissenschaftliche Aufbau der Seelenforschung von deren Grundlagen bis zu den lebenswichtigen Grenzfragen des Menschendaseins*, Zürich, October 10th 1918, GA 73.

The Fourth Generation – 100 Years of Waldorf Education

Alain Denjean

A Canadian song describes what can happen in the progression of the generations:

*“our great-great-grandfather cleared the land
Your great-grandfather ploughed the earth
Your grandfather obtained the yield of the earth
And your father sold the property to become a public official.”*

1. The Cycle of Historical Events

As Waldorf teachers, we are used to dealing with rhythms. Above all with the rhythm of the seven-year periods and the stimulus intersecting this rhythm at each third of each seven-year cycle. The first rhythm is concerned with the so-called sheaths, the physical, etheric and astral bodies, while the other rhythm is intimately connected with the individuality itself. These are the most important rhythms for the development of the individual personality.

But what is the situation regarding the institutions and establishments active in social life? Are they also subject to these rhythms? Precisely 100 years ago, Rudolf Steiner pointed out in a lecture cycle in 1917¹ that social structures are subject to different rhythms. He spoke about the cycle of historical events. A person introduces an initiative into the world – they might for example, establish a company based on a new idea. Now, according to Rudolf Steiner, it takes 33½ years, that is, a whole human generation, until this initiative, this germinal idea or activity, becomes a social reality. Then it continues to work for 66 years in the subconscious and after 100 years it has arrived in its culture. A spiritual impulse, an idea, has become part of the world, of the culture.

It may then be the case that the initiative is filled with life or is hollowed out after these 100 years. This depends on how the people who are associated with the initiative carry it forward.² The first generation often draws its strength from personal acquaintance with the founder and acts out of its respect for the founder, whom it knows. The second generation frequently knows only the first generation and its way of doing things. The third generation is exposed to the risk of merely turning into a tradition those things which have until then been done successfully without penetrating the spiritual impulse. In that case, the germinal act no longer bears any innovative power within itself after 100 years.

Once we have become aware of such a rhythm, we can find remarkable examples in history. Jan Hus, for example, fought for religious renewal at an early stage. As a result, he was condemned as a heretic by the Council of Constance in 1415. What, then, happened to this thoroughly spiritual impulse? Researchers date Martin Luther's Tower Experience, which was pivotal in initiating the Reformation, to about 1515; and in 1517 his 95 Theses, which triggered the Reformation, were made public. The fruit is ripe and the spiritual impulse very quickly – if not with-

1 R. Steiner: GA 180, December 23, 1917.

2 R. Steiner: GA 180, December 26, 1917.

out a struggle – becomes a new cultural principle.

Can Copernicus' revolutionary book *De revolutionibus*, published in 1543, be seen as the product of Cusanus' work of 1440, *De ignorantia*, which developed a speculative cosmology?³ Is it a coincidence that Rudolf Steiner edited Goethe's *Theory of Colour* in 1890/91, that is, 100 years after Goethe started with his study of colour?⁴

Could it be that a well-meant impulse can degenerate in the course of the third generation? Psychoanalysis was developed by Sigmund Freud around 1900. His theory was characterised by a materialistic viewpoint and started to free sexuality from its taboos. In 1936 Wilhelm Reich published the book *Die Sexualität im Kulturkampf* (published in English as *The Sexual Revolution*), and deliberately contributed to underpinning this new attitude. In 1968/69 the hippy movement, with its slogan "make love not war", spread rapidly. What did the fourth generation receive 100 years later? At the start of the new century, around 2000, the Internet provided new ways of accessing sexuality in the form of pornography.

2. The Three Generations of the Waldorf School Movement 1919 – 1952 – 1985 – 2019

On 7 September 1919, the first Waldorf school was opened by Rudolf Steiner in Stuttgart thanks to Emil Molt. The "mother school" became the centre of Waldorf education throughout the world. In its first 33 years the school, however, experienced mixed fortunes. It was closed by the Nazi authorities in 1938, was bombed during the War, but opened

again in 1945. In his last letter to the school's college of teachers in Stuttgart,⁵ Rudolf Steiner himself called the Waldorf school "a problem child" but as such, he added, "also a symbol of the productiveness of anthroposophy within the spiritual life of humanity." In this way he pointed to the spiritual impulse that was to be carried forward.

After the War, the school opened again out of this productive spirit so that it, together with the other Waldorf schools, which had meanwhile been opened, could reach the boundary to the second generation in 1952. Up to this point the teachers of the Waldorf school in Stuttgart had been responsible for everything. Apart from teaching and the conferences, they worked in the Anthroposophical Society, ensured that new teachers were trained by setting up a training course, took care of public relations through the journal *Erziehungskunst*, and administered the whole school movement (In 1927 the "Gesellschaft für die Pädagogik Rudolf Steiners in Deutschland" was established as the forerunner of the German Association of Waldorf Schools).

When Erich Schwab, who had led the German Association of Waldorf Schools, died in 1953, Ernst Weissert took on its leadership. This was the beginning of a new era. Ernst Weissert continued teaching at the school for a long time, but through him the Association grew into an institution in which the Uhlandshöhe school was just one among an increasing number of schools.

Thirty-three years later, in 1985, the school movement faced a new challenge. It had grown so much in the past 15 years that there

3 R. Steiner: GA 326, December 24, 1922.

4 R. Steiner: GA 291, Preliminary Remarks.

5 R. Steiner: GA 260a.

was a risk that the contact between the teachers and the schools in Germany, in Europe and in the whole world would become severed. Through the initiative of Jörgen Smit and others, the first world teachers' conference took place at the Goetheanum in Dornach at Easter 1986. In Germany, the immense demand meant that three autumn conferences (or teachers' conferences as they were still called at the time) were held in Hamburg, Prien and, as usual, Stuttgart. Once again "problems" and "the productiveness of anthroposophy" were closely associated. But the location – the Goetheanum – and the fact that the attempt was made to train as many teachers as possible, demonstrated the continuing power of anthroposophy.

3. The Fourth Generation

Today, the world school movement is standing on the shoreline of its 100 years. The "mother school" of the first two generations has long become a "grandmother school". What next?

Are we facing a roaring 100th anniversary with champagne and lovely speeches? After 100 years the impulse has arrived in the world and it is wholly justified to look at what the world does and has done with it. It is important that we observe how our Waldorf impulse is reflected in the world, however distorted it might be: We are a school where the pupils dance their name, boys learn to knit and pupils are confronted with technology and computers at too late a stage; we are a school for children who have failed elsewhere.

But we are also a school in which the pupils are equipped with a wide range of skills at the end of their school career: A school with a proportionately greater number of pupils passing their university entrance exams than in the state school system, a school in which

most pupils develop a particular sensitivity with regard to social issues and subsequently like to enter social professions ... The image needs expanding.

Or has Waldorf education become an alternative form of education to mainstream schools? How often have we heard in recent years and decades: Waldorf education, yes, but please without Steiner! Will Waldorf education be handed down in such a way that it bears alien fruit? Put another way, can we distinguish "Demeter" from "organic": "Demeter" is "organic", but is "organic" therefore "Demeter"? Would a separation from its anthroposophical background not prove fatal for the Waldorf school?

But even if the productiveness of anthroposophy continues to live in this system of education, will it continue to exist in precisely the same way in which it started? Do we still want to teach the upper school pupils shorthand? The upper class main lessons in globalisation were not included in the curriculum of 1919; neither were the subjects of love and sexuality. Will the fourth generation with its intimate interpretation of anthroposophy develop the same forms? Do we have to make a clean start and abandon what has existed so far? What can and should be adopted? What has to be transformed? What has to be created anew and added? What are the criteria that lead to "good" decisions?

4. Experiences Gathered in the Interaction with Young Waldorf Teachers

If we regularly have the opportunity to mentor young teachers at various Waldorf schools, we learn things that may be subjectively tinged, but that does not make them any less real. I have repeatedly noted that young people have a different access to anthroposophy compared to older generations.

In the past, it was often the cognitive work with the writings and lectures of Rudolf Steiner which were of central importance in dealing with anthroposophy.

Among the young teachers of the fourth generation, I have often noticed the desire to come to grips with the content of anthroposophy in group work, maybe also without Steiner texts. Joint discussion, often triggered by acute questions out of real life, has become the foundation for the work as a Waldorf teacher. When is anthroposophy individually deepened? Often through opportunities which arise suddenly in life and are the subject of a swift decision; or such deepening remains a longing which is not really satisfied – but rather intensified – by innumerable further training opportunities.

Are young teachers, then, not capable of being Waldorf teachers? Of course they are. My experience has been that the young people of this generation have high moral intuition and as a result can perform meaningful work. But often they feel unsure about their intuition and need the exchange with experienced colleagues whom they consider to be familiar with anthroposophy. Such dialogue, if it takes place, can give rise to superb lessons.

But the older mentors must not forget that anthroposophy should always be experienced individually and that the common aspect between the mentor and young teacher is located *above* them. *Within* them the caring interest for the actions and goals of the other, the Christ impulse,⁶ is at work. The older mentors must learn to leave the young people the freedom they need to gather their own experiences. Only afterwards, in joint discussion, do we look at the educational

forms which have come out of the young teacher's intuition. There is nothing better than a teacher who asks their mentor to join them in their lesson because they intend to try something new and want to discuss it afterwards.

But if intuition does not arise through the deepened individual study of anthroposophy, the question arises as to the "commonality above us". One teacher might have wonderful childhood memories of his schooling, which for some reason was held in a very small group in the living room of a familiar house. Therefore, he might feel that this form of teaching is what children need today. He also finds some passages in Rudolf Steiner's lectures which can be interpreted in this way and wants to set up such a system of "living room" education in a Waldorf school.

How does a college of teachers deal with such an initiative? I recently had the opportunity to discuss similar questions with the college of teachers in a number of Waldorf schools in Canada. We began by avoiding them altogether and started with a passage from Ray Kurzweil's book *The Singularity is Near*, which describes the future of transhumanism, the transition from human being to machine. In contrast to this, the college of teachers worked in small groups, and then all together on a list with the ten most important themes in their work with the children. The comparison of the small groups' results was impressive. A great commonality, which had not been anticipated in this form, was revealed. In this case, the commonality above was a fact and could be warmly experienced.

The second level consisted of practising a culture of conversation without any hierarchy

6 R. Steiner: GA 160, June 15, 1915.

(but with designated conversation leaders). It seems to me that this culture of conversation is too little known in Waldorf schools or practised too little. Only in making use of these values and techniques, which cannot be described in greater detail here, can we approach the questions raised above and many others.

So often, almost insurmountable disputes arise between teachers in their decision-making because colleges think that a teachers' meeting in a Waldorf school consists of a meeting of the teachers present. They forget or do not have the strength to include the spiritual beings who wish to unite themselves with our task as members of the meeting. They forget to give them the floor during the night. But it also means that the meeting between teachers also includes the "higher human beings" in the colleges of teachers who are connected with the hierarchies.

5. The Commonality above Us

In a workshop on how the 100 years should be approached, we, at the Uhlandshöhe Waldorf School in Stuttgart, tried to summarise what Rudolf Steiner gave us as esoteric impulses for Waldorf education and what we consider to be important themes with regard to this system of education today.

In this context, every school will have different priorities depending on its situation. I will merely refer here to the book *Zur meditativen Vertiefung im Lehrer- und Erzieherberuf*, which was compiled by the Pedagogical Section for working teachers and is available in various languages.

At the Uhlandshöhe, we compiled a list for ourselves, going further than the esoteric

substance mentioned in the book to include for example, the Foundation Stone Meditation and other points.

The work on this esoteric substance, on the commonality above us, enables us to receive the moral intuition necessary for our time, which then inspires the lessons. Here too, each school must find and work on the subjects relevant to its own situation. For us these were topics such as celebrating rituals, habits, (seasonal) festivals.

6. The Continuity of Drawing from the Future

- the joint analysis of contemporary phenomena from the perspective of anthropology; for example, let us describe together how the mechanisation of the spirit is advancing, what the vegetating soul looks like (in English we refer to "couch potatoes") and what the animalisation of the body entails. Alternatively, let us describe the three concepts "phrase", "convention" and "routine" in concrete terms and the role they play in the everyday life of education.
- knowledge of the various forms of group soul;⁷ a college of teachers in a Waldorf school forms a group soul which works not out of the blood stream, not out of a common national language, but out of common goals coming toward us out of the future. A Waldorf college has its commonality ahead of it, not behind it. It has to be wanted constantly.
- the unbiased conversation with one another without knowing at the beginning how it will end; a conversation consisting of speech which captures thoughts and active listening. In other words, a true

7 R. Steiner: GA 257, March 3, 1923; GA 160, June 15, 1915.

encounter of responsible people in a common spirit.

- the knowledge that incarnating human beings have been "tutored" in their life before birth⁸ and we "only" have to continue the work of the third hierarchy (Angeloi, Archangeloi, Archai) to give them our help and support.
- the enhanced effectiveness of those teachers who take note that when the pupils start school the teachers have to embark on their own path of schooling.

All these things which have been striven for and practised in the last 100 years in Waldorf education, this whole future can continue to live in the changing garment of everyday life.

That which saw the light of day 100 years ago, the Christmas present of the first Waldorf school, can come to expression 100 years later like an Easter event in the souls of colleagues, who, through conversation with one another wish to awaken, by virtue of the soul-spiritual aspect of the other. The highest in the Waldorf teacher's soul wants to reach out to the highest in the pupil's soul. Let the first verse of the foundation stone for the Waldorf school in Stuttgart represent this awakening of the inner re-founding 100 years later:

May there reign here spirit-strength in love;
May there work here spirit-light in goodness;
 Born from certainty of heart,
 And from steadfastness of soul,
so that we may bring to young human beings,
Bodily strength for work, inwardness of soul
 and clarity of spirit.

⁸ R. Steiner: GA 203, January 22, 1921.

Verse of the Week and Teachers' Meditation On the Metamorphosis from Healing Forces to Educational Forces

Christof Wiechert

One of the very powerful images that can be derived from Rudolf Steiner's artistic creation is his verse of the week for the spirit of Michaelmas.

*O Nature, your maternal life
I bear within the essence of my will.
And my will's fiery energy
Shall steel my spirit striving,
That sense of self springs forth from it
To hold me in myself.*

The verse is potent and barely needs decoding. It does however conjure up ideas from the realm of pedagogical anthropology.

Our colleague Joep Eikenboom, class and special educational needs teacher in the Netherlands, recently drew my attention to a curious fact. At one of the early Kolisko conferences in London, the Head of the Pedagogical Section at that time, Heinz Zimmermann, deemed it necessary to point out to an audience of medical practitioners that pedagogy had its own anthropology. Why was this necessary?

At the time, a medical anthropology which was based, inter alia, on a two-fold idea of the human being, was strongly represented; the idea embodied an upper and a lower human being. The dutch doctor Frank Wijnbergh¹ explained this in detail.

In addition to three and four-fold forms, pedagogical anthropology may also be struc-

tured in a two-fold form, in two ways. The first kind relates to the goal of education. In the first chapter of his *Study of Man*, Steiner presents this almost like a definition, stating that *"The task of education, understood in a spiritual sense, is to bring the soul-spirit into harmony with the temporal body. They must be brought into harmony and they must be tuned to one another because when the child is born into the physical world they do not yet properly fit each other."*² In modern terms, we call this integration. Many lifestyle-related diseases of civilisation are rooted in incomplete integration. This is one aspect.

The other one is, how the teacher prepares for the task of achieving complete integration? In technical terms, it is the musical-sculptural handling of the teaching process, its dynamisation, its 'breathing' that makes integration possible. Therein lies the essence of the art of education.

There are also inner approaches to this preparation. In addition to an imaginative preparation by way of situational meditation, Steiner also gave the teachers two-word meditations.

The so-called first teachers' meditation describes how the will lives in the phenomenon of the created world (creation). It is a will that conceals its power, but reveals itself in creation's light of wisdom. This is the first

1 Frank Wijnbergh, *De twee stromen*, Pentagon, Amsterdam.

2 Rudolf Steiner, *The Foundations of Human Experience previously Study of Man*, (GA 293 in German), 1st Lecture, 21st August 1919, Stuttgart.

concept. The second one describes the same process within the human being.

Man's will shines within the I. It reveals itself not in wisdom but in thinking, thus relying on the inherent power.

If we perceive both realities – that of the world and that of the human – an inner voice may sound:

*O Nature, your maternal life
I bear within the essence of my will.*

At the opening of the first Waldorf school in the autumn of 1919, Steiner presented the first meditation for teachers which prepares this inner sphere between the world and the human being. The teachers received their second meditation in October 1923, following the three brief, but immensely profound lectures on the inner pervasion of the teaching and caring professions.³

These lectures also describe the relationship between curative and educational work. (*"We must counter [illness] through a higher process of healing, through a process of education, which is a metamorphosis of the healing process. The forces inherent in education are metamorphoses of therapeutic forces: they are therapeutic forces transformed."*)⁴

The lectures give an insight into the nature of the will and end in the gruesome but true imagination of St Michael's struggle with the dragon, illustrated for Waldorf teachers: a picture in the lecture hall of St Michael fighting the dragon is obscured by black gauze ...

Steiner could hardly hide his disappointment in view of the many problems the school had to face. He had to accept that his words were as yet unable to have an effect. They (still) got caught in the listeners' intellect and were (as yet) unable to take effect as healing, pedagogical deeds. His words have a startling harshness, and every teacher with a heart would have felt them like a sword cutting through their soul. They reflect the pain of what had not been achieved.

Older editions of 'Deeper Insights into Education' finish in the last lecture from 16th October 1923 in the evening with the sentence *"Tomorrow, I would like to present this to you as a formula you can meditate on."* He is referring to what we now call the second teachers' meditation.

What is the gesture of this second meditation? It now describes the two-fold human being from the perspective of the teacher rather than that of the child. "Cosmic brightness" and "earthly darkness" are outlined. In perceiving these facts, man creates a state of being conscious.

And it is this state of being conscious that can bind cosmic brightness and earthly darkness with the human being's upper and lower parts.

In the human being's upper region, the inner being shines forth cosmic brightness. What is it that works in the lower region, bound with earthly darkness? It is not darkness as such but the forces from the depths which are transformed by the human being, transformed into forces which are human formative forces.

3 Rudolf Steiner, *Deeper Insights into Education* (last three lectures of GA 302a), 2nd Lecture, 16th October 1923.

4 *Ibid*, 3rd Lecture, 16th October 1923 in the evening.

These are forces which engender formative forces in the child, and which create strength out of one's self.

Now we can experience the metamorphosis of the curative healing forces which result from the synergy of the physician's intention and the substances he employs. The meditation, however, describes how the teacher's encounter with the forces from below engenders, formative forces, ethereal forces in the child without the use of substances. This is the climax at the end of the second meditation.

Now, we can gain an understanding of the outlined areas of activity. For the field of medicine, this is an external and an internal ethereal and astral activity, and for the field of pedagogy, an external and an internal physical and ethereal activity.

Let us briefly look at the areas where education takes place. External and internal physical activities point to the processes of the senses. With regard to external activity, this is the entire outward-facing world of sensual activity. With regard to internal activity, this refers to the associated degradation of the nerves. This, however is healed by an omnipresent 'ethereal activity' in the classroom.

Let us return to the climax at the end of the second meditation. It is the self – in our case, the teacher's self – that engenders what is power-creating and will-sustaining in becoming aware of its position between the upper and the lower. In the imagery of St Michael, this means the lower forces of the dragon are not killed but transformed into forces of the self.

Now, we can hear the words of the spirit of Michaelmas resonating:

*And my will's fiery energy
Shall steel my spirit striving,
That sense of self springs forth from it
To hold me in myself.*

Suddenly we understand why, when founding the School of Spiritual Science after the 1923 Christmas conference, Rudolf Steiner decided to head the General Anthroposophical and Pedagogical Sections himself.

(For the texts of the first and second teachers' meditations, see "**Zur meditativen Vertiefung im Lehrer- und Erzieherberuf**". This book has been compiled for practitioners of Waldorf education and is available through the Pedagogical Section.)

Individuality Today II

Storytelling as a Challenge for the Future

Claus-Peter Röh

Quality storytelling in class is one of the mainstays of Waldorf Education. Anyone who has ever observed how attentive, involved and focused children and adolescents can be when they listen to a story being told (not read), will never forget the intensity of this human encounter. Looking at the world today we can say that this artistic educational tool is becoming ever more relevant.

The Pedagogical Section held a conference in September which was entitled *The Digital Age – Education – Challenges*. All the speakers at this conference¹, although they presented different standpoints, painted a clear picture of the impact media use and digitalization have on society. The cultural situation today is such that we see, for instance, a loss of the experience of identity, especially in young people: observing oneself as from the outside and being seen outwardly, being overtaken by probability algorithms, keeping one's options open for as long as possible before taking action. Based on the phenomena which were then presented in more detail, an image arose of the challenges education will face in the future. For students and teachers alike it will be crucial to develop new qualities of inner freedom:

taking hold of one's own body with new vigour;
rediscovering paths towards the other person; and
developing new joy in and energy for actions and taking biographical steps.

A second approach was to look at different relationships between the constituent parts of the fourfold human organization in order to develop exercises for educators and teachers that focused on the question "*Individual Will or Bondage?*": how, for instance, can a healthy, free, harmonious relationship be established, in our pedagogical work and in the children, between the evolving ether forces and the astral body which unfolds its effect out of the future? These questions led us to consider specific teaching situations and to present examples of methods used with the various age groups. What became apparent was a very clear tendency across the ages for the consciousness, which reflects and judges what is perceived outside, to grow stronger compared to the inner confidence to take action. The first goal that was formulated was therefore to support, from the lower school, the forming of an inner soul space as the basis for the will to take action.

The Transformative Power of Storytelling

The urgent need for such an inner space and for young people to find their identity was the theme that all the contributions and work groups at this conference had in common. Bearing this need in mind, let us examine the effects of storytelling. The first aspect to consider is that of transformation.

Pay a visit to class 1. Following the Main Lesson and two subject lessons, the children return from their break for a final lesson in the

¹ Robin Schmidt, Basel; Andreas Neider, Stuttgart; Anette Neal, Widarschule Wattenscheid.

classroom. After the many impressions from the morning, it is a bustling hive of activity. Running, laughing, talking, packing up. One child is crying and one is so tired that she has to prop her head up. After the teacher has welcomed them with a song and given a few explanations, she begins by asking two children to recount the story they heard on the previous day. It is remarkable how the different children recall the same story in their own imagery, finding their own individual ways of expression: while one child is led more by her all-transforming imagination, the other adheres to the storyline "factually". Then the teacher begins to speak, calmly, "Once upon a time there was a queen ...". Everything changes magically: the moving limbs come to rest, the eyes focus first on the teacher, then their gaze turns inward. The mouths open in amazement, silence falls and a reverent mood fills the room despite all the inner activity. During this inner journey through the folktale that is being told, the teacher observes the children and decides to introduce a variety of nuances to her narrative, from stormy winds to a calm gaze that takes in the sweeping views from the castle tower. The tension and accentuation she introduces remain embedded in the calm stream of the narrative. – Only 25 minutes later, when the wedding has been celebrated in the story, do the children return inwardly to the classroom. Some need to re-orientate themselves first. The mood has been transformed and the children, inwardly calm now, say good-bye at the classroom door.

This process of letting go of the outer sense experiences and building up an inner space where the children can create their own imaginative pictures, could be described for all classes, metamorphosed to suit the different ages: a class six teacher who is faced

with 'cliquing' and tensions in his class, describes storytelling as the daily chance for his pupils to reconnect with a soothing, shared inner image. In classes 7 or 8 the students are more awake and inquisitive: if the teacher manages to make a scene from the life of Julia Hill, Mother Theresa or Nelson Mandela come alive by building up a picture (freely, not by reading) of the historical or current world situation, each individual student can feel inwardly involved: the subsequent conversations will reveal how profoundly the adolescents struggle to relate the scenes that they have actively lived through with their own inner searching.

How can storytelling unfold such a transformative power? We find a first answer to this question at the beginning of *Practical Advice to Teachers*, where Rudolf Steiner presents one of the fundamental methods of the new Waldorf School, that of invariably developing intellectual understanding out of the whole human being. With storytelling, for instance, the experience of the story's images is reflected in the astral body and the astral body is connected with the child's whole being. "... if you tell fairy tales to the children out of your own inner mood, they will be able to feel them in their whole body. Something will radiate from the astral body up to the head."²

The astral body holds the rich sensations of daily experiences and is therefore very close to the child's 'I'. But it also detaches itself, together with the 'I', from the body and day consciousness when the child goes to sleep. The nocturnal aspect of the astral body can be described as a kind of spiritual home. Deeper layers of existence and individual ideals and life goals are associated with the astral body. When the young people wake up in the morning, they can, depending on their

2 R. Steiner, *Practical Advice for Teachers*, GA 294, Lecture of 21 August 1919.

situation in life, sense the quality of the re-freshed and recovered astral body. Rudolf Steiner describes this dual aspect of the astral body, the everyday experience and the nocturnal quality as follows: "When we sleep, the astral body draws back from the impressions of the physical world, which no longer contains anything harmonizing, and joins the universal harmony of the cosmos out of which it has been born. In the morning it returns, bearing the resonance of the night's renewal."³

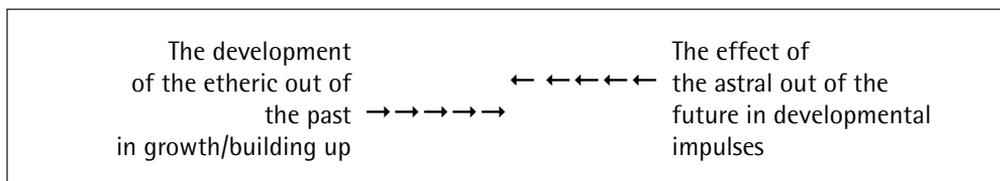
Waking up Open for Biographical Impulses

While, in ordinary conversation, the 'I' of the listener constantly alternates between focusing on the speaker and returning to its own day consciousness⁴ when listening to a story, the astral body and the 'I' detach themselves to an extent from the life body and physical body. This makes it possible for the young people to actively create inner images. At the same time, they emotionally enter into the narrative stream so deeply that an inner space opens up where they experience, evaluate and make choices. This space of inner activity and freedom is an essential prerequisite for the formative effect of storytelling in lessons. The children do not form their inner values on the basis of moral admonitions conveyed to them by adults. The deep place where individual values are

formed can only be reached by images which the young listeners grasp, move, recognize and evaluate out of their own free will.

This effect is particularly evident when it comes to stories that teachers invent in response to particular situations in class. When a student experiences a problem or injustice or has made a mistake that he now needs to work through, astonishing transformations can happen in the younger classes when the teacher tells a "meaningful story". The teacher does not approach the problem intellectually by addressing it directly but clothes it into images, into a story, so that the dramatic experience can be processed in the inner space of freedom described earlier. It is astonishing to see the determination in the pupil in question, or in their fellow students, as they advocate a change or improvement, guided by this inner, higher, ideal.

How can such a "meaningful story" inspire a child to let go of a lingering everyday experience and willingly follow an impulse that seems to come out of the future? This question leads us to another quality of the astral body: while the ether body, which engenders growth and builds up life forces and faculties, unfolds its effect from birth towards the future, the astral body comes towards life from the future:



In the inner soul space created by the storytelling and imaginative listening, the two streams can meet, and a dialogue, a mo-

ment of freedom, can arise between the constructive past and the individual impulses which awaken in this process. Rudolf

³ R. Steiner, *Rosicrucian Wisdom: An Introduction*, GA 99, 26 May 1907.

⁴ Cf. R. Steiner, *The Foundations of Human Experience*, GA 293, 29 August 1919.

Steiner described this encounter between the past-oriented ether body and the future-oriented astral body as follows, *"If you look into your soul life at any time, you realize that there is a stream that flows from the past to the future and one that runs from the future towards the past. The two penetrate each other and as they interpenetrate the latter confronts the former in the form of desires, interests, wishes etc.."*⁵

The astral body's future-orientation means that the young person's individual inner involvement in the story is connected with his entire biography: what the student, out of his feeling and will, recognizes as essential, will be carried into the future as a seed or value. In later life this seed can then unfold as a particular impulse or attitude and give guidance to the young person in question.

The Concept of the Human Being in the Storytelling Adventure

There are many examples of childhood impulses and experiences re-emerging in later life. In his book *Memories Look at Me*, in which he looks back on his life at the age of sixty, the Swedish writer Tomas Tranströmer describes infancy as the time *"in which the most important features of our life are determined."*⁶ From his observation of himself, Tranströmer speaks of remaining inwardly young – a quality described here as deriving from the astral body's ability to connect the future with the past – as a quality of the 'I'. *"We always feel younger than we are. I carry inside myself my earlier faces as a tree contains its rings. The sum of them is me. The mirror sees only my latest face while I know all my previous ones."*⁷

Knowing that the quality of our storytelling in class will form the basis of a young person's values makes us aware of the great responsibility we bear as teachers and storytellers. The depth of the child's experience in forming his or her own inner images requires the same depth in the teacher's development and preparation. We can learn from the younger pupils in this respect: the questions they ask about the images they experience reveal that these images are absolutely true for them. The story they hear is not "invented". The beings in the story are real for them. It can happen that one of the "wide-awake" children we meet today jumps up in the middle of a story and calls out a piece of advice to the protagonist who is in some kind of danger. The child's inner need to experience "true images" demands that the narrator, when preparing the story, not only concentrates on content and language, but works on himself and his relationship with the story. If the narrator feels that the images of the story are "true", he will make the children's inner space of freedom deeper, richer and more colourful.

How do the narrator and the children recognize an image as true? This question leads us beyond the individual biography. We clearly bear within ourselves, in our spirit-soul, an idea of what is truly human. This archetypal image guides us in our development, our forming of values and our actions. *"A good man, in his darkest yearning, is still aware of virtue's ways,"* says God in Goethe's *Faust*. This living "idea of the human being" cannot be captured in statistics; it changes dynamically as we continue to develop.⁸ The richer the idea that children and adolescents have

5 R. Steiner, *A Psychology of Body, Soul and Spirit*, GA 115, Lecture 4.

6 Tomas Tranströmer, *Memories Look at Me: A Memoir*, New York 2012, tr. R. Fulton, p. 3.

7 Ibid., p. 39.

8 Cf. *The Foundations of Human Experience*, Lecture 9.

of being human, the more intensely and actively will they take hold of their life; and the more clearly will they see this idea reflected in the other person.

Addressing this idea of humanity through the ages, from ever-changing perspectives, constitutes the real adventure of storytelling in education. If we do this successfully, the young people's trust in their own abilities will grow and they will feel embedded in the stream of human evolution.

Here is a summary of the qualities and effects of storytelling:

- creative imagination through active image-forming
- empathy and a feeling for language through listening
- stages of imaginative thinking
- self-identification
- experiencing true images
- forming individual values as biographical seeds
- deriving trust from the "idea of the human being"

TRAIN a DOG, but RAISE the CHILD

Christof Wiechert

Dear readers of the Pedagogical Section Journal,

I would like to draw your attention to a delightful publication by our colleague, Dorit Winter. Based in California, she is an accredited Waldorf teacher, seminar leader and author of a variety of books.

Her most recent publication is a real treat for educators and parents alike, even more so if they enjoy the English language, as this little book deserves to be read in the original. It is full of wit, so vivid and brilliant – simply a joy for anyone to read.

What is it about?

The author noticed that, in our culture, parents often find it easier to train their dog than to raise their own child or children. Thus, these styles, training and raising, are inauspiciously intermingled.

Dorit knows what she is talking about, though. A junior high school teacher, she is also a passionate dog owner. While this makes for hilarious comparisons, it also gives a rather more serious portrayal of what Waldorf education is supposed to be, making the book an ideal read for parents-to-be. Dorit manages to portray the essentials of education without the use of anthroposophical terminology. This is no mean feat; she derives everything from common sense.

Her use of language is adorable.

We, on this side of the Atlantic, would use English mainly for the purpose of communi-

cation. Through this small volume however, Dorit introduces us to the rich imagery of American English, slightly ironic, through New York Jewish humour:

'About Meteorology and the Classroom Weather', 'in the heyday of my career', 'the gulf stream of parents'. Expectations, 'you don't believe it? YouTube proves it!'

'Children are happy when they are confident in their teacher. This confidence has to be earned.' 'It should not surprise us when 11th graders experiment with identity makeovers.'

She also includes a critical discussion of modern trends. Her imagery is to the point: 'For most of us in the so-called First World, the trajectory from the first car ride home after birth until graduation after college includes massive subjection to physical densification. A conglomerate of industries has hoodwinked us into believing that muscle density is an index for health.'

Dorit's comparison of everything from the acquisition of good manners, both at home and at school, to playing the violin is as enjoyable and full of humour as it is plausible, even for readers who have outgrown that particular stage of their life.

I was grateful for her referring to the biography of the pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton. He was the first to discover how sensitive and responsive infants are. Right up into the 1960s, child psychologists generally assumed that small children were largely unresponsive. Brazelton managed to prove convincingly that this unresponsiveness stemmed from a

kind of cataleptic state due to the fact that the children were observed under laboratory conditions, away from their mothers. A remarkable piece of scientific history.

This book is a treat for anyone with an interest in early education and language.

I can heartily recommend it!

Dorit Winter, *Train a Dog, but Raise the Child: A Practical Primer*

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Meeting the World, Meeting My Class 7

Zhenfei Chu

My Preparation

I have prepared to be a class teacher from the first day I came to know Waldorf Education in 2008. It has never been a challenge for me as I have always been the one longing to be a class teacher. I enjoyed the whole journey from then till July 2016, the end of class 5 when suddenly I realized I would teach class 6 and onwards. Until then I hadn't realized that deep in me I had developed a certain fear of being a teacher of teenagers.

I can't clearly identify when, why and how I had developed such fear towards this age group, but I clearly felt the uncertainty deep in me: in China there are only one or two class teachers who have survived class 6. Most of them didn't. As the pioneer teacher, I don't have anyone to support me and I am so keen to finish this cycle that I am also very fragile. Thus, my whole summer holiday was spent in training after training program and then on a long trip to search for the proper feeling or inner mood or inner gesture of a class 6 teacher.

That summer I came across a storm in nature, which had only lasted for 5 minutes, but clearly the storm had destroyed the whole beautiful garden right in front of me within these short 5 minutes: the trees were broken off with branches and leaves covering the flowers blocking the paths in the garden. I was thrilled and enlightened as well – at that moment I started to feel connected with the "storm" of puberty. Somehow, I felt released and got some feeling of my class in their teens. Actually, they didn't surpass that storm, so I survived class 6 with a wonderful

class trip along the Yangtze River, ending with a nice drama play.

Even so, the following summer holiday was still spent on training first, then a long trip. This time, I decided to take a journey into a different culture. Some colleagues and I spent 18 days travelling along the Silk Road, covering 10 cities over 3,400 kilometers. That was my trip of discovery, which was also a big step in walking out of my comfort zone. I felt I was prepared to be a class 7 teacher until we met each other in our new classroom.

My Class

My class is the pioneer class with 21 children who started in August 2011. We are preparing to build up our own high school with this class, but the school is just in the process of preparing teachers. By the end of class 6, some parents were so anxious about their children's academic performance and their future, that they started to transfer their children back to mainstream education, and some planned to transfer their children to international schools. Therefore, by the end of class 6, there were 4 children to be transferred. This was a big shock for the whole class. I tried my best to handle it in a natural and open way, but the shock didn't show until the beginning of class 7.

Two new boys have also been transferred to our class, therefore, 4 left and 2 were new. The first block was Astronomy, then Geometry. I was naively thinking that by looking into the starry sky they could feel the amazement of the world and thus "discover" a new world or horizon going into class 7. It

didn't happen. The shock has been lingering in the class, but I didn't realize that until the beginning of the second week, they started to express their unhappiness and disagreement with me in a very emotional way. I have always been a strict teacher, therefore, I kept that strictness. Then the conflict took place in one class meeting; they disagreed with my decision on a certain issue and some of them expressed their opinions very emotionally with their shaky voices.

Later on, one girl wrote a letter to me complaining of my being so strict with them, and expressing the intention to transfer to some other school as well. I felt hurt, to be frank, and a little bit shocked. What's more, one morning in the main lesson, one boy spread some air through a small bottle which caused the whole class to cough for half an hour ... I was affected for six hours.

Suddenly, I realized that this class was starting to show its individuality and I needed to step back; even though, I had prepared to do so, I was still a little bit too slow. They needed space to express themselves and I needed to step back more to provide space for them to be themselves.

I didn't know how.

I thought perhaps I can't survive this class 7.

Meeting the World – Drama Course and Government Check

As planned, the 8th to 18th September was the last module for my 3-year part-time drama course, and I had asked a colleague to cover for me and teach Geometry while I was away.

I went to the drama course with the doubt and concerns about the ability to survive this class 7. In this last module, we worked on the Shakespeare play *The Taming of the Shrew*. We only had 10 days with 12 female partici-

pants and I didn't know how we were to make it, but somehow, I trusted in our teacher and our director David Anderson based on the last five modules in which we had worked together. It just happened as planned, and the play started to grow richer and richer as the course moved on, until the fourth day. We were so involved in the whole play till late evening, with our imagination, our emotions, and our souls. I received a phone call asking me to get back to the school as quickly and as early as possible – the local government had come to check on us and asked us to close the school because we didn't have the license. We have been in existence without a license for a couple of years and have been checked from time to time, but we had never come to the point of closing the school. This was a special case.

I flew back to Beijing very early next morning and ran to the school, starting to meet people and dine with some visitors. On the next afternoon, the second check took place and for the first time in my whole life, my colleagues and I were talked to in a very unpleasant way by the government officials. I was trembling at those words – I can't tell what it was, but I was trembling and didn't know what to say. Thirty minutes later, when the officials finally stopped, I suddenly experienced a very strange peace in myself. Later that afternoon, we had shown the officials around the school site, on which we had spent millions of RMB and one year constructing, and we had moved in for only 3 terms. I had explained what we do and what we are aiming towards. They were impressed and the manner of communication started to change.

The very next afternoon, we were invited to the Town Hall and signed a document which gave us permission to reopen the school the following week.

When this crisis had been temporarily settled, that was the last day of our drama course and the performance was planned. I took the flight to southern China attending the play *The Taming of the Shrew* because that was our last module and we possibly may not be able to come back together to do drama. I cherished the chance of graduating with them together.

After that, I started to realize that every moment I am to share with my class 7 is so precious. I have taken this school and this class so much for granted and now it could be closed at any moment. Suddenly I came to appreciate what a special gift I have been endowed with in being their teacher. A new love towards these young teenagers was initiated through this meeting with government officials accompanied by this drama experience.

This is a part of the real world which I only just came to meet. Through this meeting, I came to understand the teenagers' frustration and I struggle with providing more tolerance.

Whenever these class 7 teenagers come to me with all their tricky or naughty talk or behavior, I can now easily deal with it through humor. Now I finally see, the essence of humor is love and wisdom.

Health – on a New Journey

Working with class 7 is becoming an interesting journey now and I can enjoy a good laugh with them from time to time and no matter what irritating behavior they had, I could easily deal with it and wouldn't get frustrated. Reflecting on the first few weeks, I decided to start the block teaching on the theme of Health and we have only been working on this topic for one week now. Clearly, they really cherish this theme and each lesson and each topic have been well received. We started to talk a lot about the electronic screen, sleep and posture, which I have been so strict about over the years (no screen exposure, enough sleep, good posture – recently I was challenged by them secretly and now we can openly discuss it and they have started to see the whole picture through the theme of Health!)

Frankly speaking, I am not sure whether we are on the right track or not, but I know I'm growing out of my old authoritative style. I relax so much and enjoy their questions and their jokes more. They are starting to feel so free in sharing their thoughts and ideas and even some of their secrets. Yes, as Christof has told me, they still love me, but in a different way. So, if I love them and guard the boundaries properly, we will enjoy a new relationship and we can really explore the world in an interesting way.

Waldorf100 on the way – North America

Beverly Amico

In North America, the excitement around Waldorf100 is building! In preparation for the coming celebration, each school and institute in Mexico, Canada, and the United States has assigned a Waldorf100 representative to help coordinate activities. Representatives meet monthly via teleconference to share progress, make plans, and build momentum toward the celebratory year.

Currently, students spanning across the continent from Cuernavaca, Mexico, to Toronto, Canada, and all the way to up to Alaska, U.S.A, are busy receiving and sending post-cards from and to Waldorf schools throughout the world. Faculty and community members are engaged in a rich study of Rudolf Steiner's *Foundations of Human Experience*.

In partnership with other anthroposophical organizations, such as the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, the Pedagogical Section Council, and the Waldorf Early Childhood Association we excited to participate in the broad array of international activities being planned, while at the same time adding our own, unique Waldorf100 flavor. Let's take 'Bees and Trees' for example. Here in North America we are pleased to be forming collaborative relationships with Gunther Hauk from the Spikenard Farm Honey Bee Sanctuary, Richard Louv, author of *the Last Child in the Woods*, The Children and Nature Net-

work, Green Schoolyards America, and the Campaign for Commercial Free Childhood to form a new 'continental park system' in backyards, playgrounds, school yards, and public places – green spaces developed with birds, insects, bees, butterflies, praying mantises and biodiversity in mind; creating a food-web for native species and wild life. Imagine the map!

Additionally, to sustain, uplift, and nourish community, our schools will be coordinating service projects for underserved children in their local communities and abroad. And, the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America will be providing opportunities for alumni throughout the continent to connect with one another, by formalizing a continental alumni network which we plan to launch in the next school year. We hope its success will inspire the world to join in!

Finally, we will bookend the 2019-2020 school year celebrations with community gatherings at schools and institutes on September 19, 2019, to coincide with the international festival in Berlin. These gatherings will celebrate this momentous day and also ring in the future of Waldorf Education with 100,000 points of light. In June 2020, the North American conference will be dedicated to envisioning the future of Waldorf Education. How do we innovate for our times and "Learn to Change the World!?"

Agenda

2018

February 16 - 18

Tagung zur Meditativen Praxis

May 25 – 27

Trinitatistagung (Religionslehrertagung)

For Notices

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