

Active Verbs

Hermione swatted a fly.



Passive Verbs

Hermione was swatted by a fly



Education as an Art

*Cover: Page of a fifth grade grammar
lesson, Toronto Waldorf School.*

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The Inner Meaning of Children's Diseases: Measles

Let me start with a comparison. A man moves into a house that he has inherited from his parents. He likes it fairly well, but in its present state it doesn't quite suit him. It seems to be arranged according to his parents' tastes and habits, and he is not merely their son but also an individual with his own ideas, plans and work. Therefore he starts to renovate the house completely; he tears down and builds up, indoors and out, until—in six or seven years' time—he has changed everything in accordance with *his* needs, *his* preferences, *his* particular personality.

What an adult human being carries out in this way in full consciousness, our ego—our inner spiritual kernel—carries out in our first seven years, certainly without a knowledge of its aims but nevertheless with the greatest intensity, order and wisdom. In the depths of our spiritual nature there is a vast treasure of hidden wisdom, which every newborn child brings with him.

With his first breath, the spiritual nature of the child, his ego, "moves into" the body inherited from his parents. He begins to remodel his "house", according to the needs of his personality; and in the course of the first six or seven years of life, he will have transformed all the material of his body. At the end of this time he even throws out his baby teeth, as if he wants us to be aware that a complete transformation has taken place. By this time the child's body has been built over in its entirety, down to the last body cell, transmuted indeed; now it corresponds to the individuality and uniqueness of this particular ego.

The fact that the body of every seven-year-old child stands on the earth as a single, unique creation—into the structure of every hair, into the very lines on every finger—shows that the spirit which is impressing itself so individually upon the bodily material cannot be a product of heredity, cannot be the end-result of a purely physical line of evolution: it can only be understood as an active spirit-seed with its own specific form—this spirit-seed which we call the ego.

But each individual ego is not only filled with new impulses, new ideas, new intentions, but is driven by a tremendous, uncontrollable will to live. This is the origin of the extraordinary achievements the ego has to bring about every day, every hour, indeed every minute, through an entire lifetime—and at no time in such variety and intensity as during the years of early childhood.

The child's ego has more and more to become "head of the household", master of its body, until it has learned to control all its functions—from grasping, sitting, standing, speaking, orientating itself in space, to thinking, feeling and many other faculties. It must take charge of an ordered interplay of its inner organs, a task truly immeasurable in scope. Besides bodily growth and development already mentioned, one must point to other life processes: health, illness, recovery, regeneration.

Take measles as an example. Of the authentic children's diseases with the common symptom, a red skin eruption, measles, scarlet fever and German measles, the inner meaning is especially clear. Someone has discovered a name for it: "a help-towards-life". It describes the situation perfectly.

I once had to treat a little pair of identical twins who had measles. One of them had a severe onset of the illness with high fever, while the little sister's symptoms were quite mild. When the illness had run its course, the twin who had been so severely ill recovered remarkably well; she was obviously impelled to greater physical health and inner steadiness. The little sister, however, had afterward to struggle for a long time in her bodily development and showed a lack of harmony. Thus the same contagious disease can take its course in identical twins with quite different intensity and can have correspondingly different effects. And thus the "help-towards-life" of the illness was fully active only in one case. The example also shows that a disease is not something foreign, breaking in from the outside to penetrate a human being, nor is it something carried into a healthy person by some germ or other: otherwise there could not be so many different courses of the disease and so many outcomes. The illness is always latent in the person, and the germ only gives the last thrust towards the onset.

Almost all children need measles for their healthy development, and so their organism is prepared for the disease. For this reason almost every exposure leads to the illness. A person who

has not been "measled through" is hard to find. Even the slightest exposure to an acute case, especially in the days just preceding the skin eruption, leads after ten or eleven days to a catarrhal condition that starts this new case, the skin eruption following then three or four days later. We can recognize the nature of measles from the picture the course of the disease paints on the child's skin. Accompanying a quickly rising fever, the skin of the face becomes bloated so that the features are washed out, become indefinite. The mucous membranes of eyes, nose, throat, larynx, and trachea also show inflamed swellings and have mucous discharge. Starting behind the ears, a rash of large red spots spreads over the head and then over the entire body, including even the inner mucous membranes. Soon the child cannot tolerate the light, there is a cold, conjunctivitis, and catarrh of the air passages. In rare cases there is even an increase in the pressure of the cerebro-spinal fluid, causing fainting spells or convulsions. Tiny white specks, like sprinkled powder, appearing on the mucous membrane inside the cheeks, are the infallible symptom that enables the doctor to diagnose the illness as measles; often it is not easy to diagnose, as compared for instance with German measles.

There is apparent in all these phenomena a kind of turmoil, a kind of rebellion, in the fluid organism of the child—whose body consists, after all, of 70% water. With measles an abnormal amount of fluid pushes into the skin of the face and into the mucous membranes of the air passages. Fever, and the fact that it is often quite high, points directly to the activity of the ego. The ego has obviously induced all this revolt. After three or four days the rash begins to pale, the facial swellings go down, the inflammation and itching of the mucous membranes subside, cough and cold disappear, and the child quickly recovers. But there are also cases with severe, stubborn cough and the feeling of being quite ill.

In the weeks that follow, an observant person can notice not only a gratifying balancing and adjusting of the child's nature that has overcome a few bad habits, but also often striking changes in the features of the face. Parents report with astonishment that a former likeness to father or mother has vanished; the child has found himself through the illness, even as far as his facial features. The whole process is a particularly vivid example of the transformation of the "body-model" spoken of so

often, which the human ego has to accomplish during childhood. Measles gives the child's ego the opportunity to penetrate his inherited formative forces, and so to transform his inherited tendencies that he can thereby obtain the individual form that is right for him.

—WILHELM ZUR LINDEN

(Translated by Gladys Hahn)

Dr. zur Linden (1896-1972) practiced first in Berlin as a specialist in pediatrics. During World War II he was in charge of a large military hospital in Czechoslovakia. Condemned to death for his antagonism to the Nazi cause, he was rescued, taken prisoner, but soon released by the U. S. Army. In 1945 he opened a practice in Bad Godesberg where he worked until his death as a well-known and beloved pediatrician, particularly successful in developing a polio treatment from indications of Rudolf Steiner. He also campaigned vigorously for quality in food and helped to bring about new legislation on food additives in the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1966 he published his autobiography, Blick durch's Prisma. From his later book, Geburt und Kindheit the above article was taken; the first part of the book has been published in an English translation: A Child Is Born (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1973.)

To Become A Teacher

Who is a Waldorf teacher? What distinguishes this education? How often have we asked ourselves this question! Is it teaching in blocks? Organizing the day around a main lesson? Continuing as a class teacher from year to year with the same group of children? Teaching in pictures? Knowing about reincarnation and karma? Teaching woodwork, painting, bookbinding, recorder, eurythmy?

Rudolf Steiner says that "what is of most importance for the teacher is his conception of life and of the world. . . . The inspiration that flows to the teacher from a world conception inwardly and ever newly experienced is carried over into the soul constitution of the children entrusted to him." In other words, this means, he says, that we should learn to "read" the world and to "read" the riddle of man's being in quite new ways. "There must arise in the whole human nature of the teacher an intensive impression of the child, again as one whole being, and what is perceived in the child must awaken joy and vitality. This same spirit-awakening joy and vitality in the teacher must be able to grow and develop, till it becomes immediate inspiration, answering the question, 'What am I to do with this child or with that?' . . . We must pass from the reading of human nature in general to the reading of the individual human being."

This conception of what constitutes the central life force in education should pervade the training of teachers from beginning to end—or, better said, from the beginning on, for there is actually no end. The older a teacher gets, the more he knows that he is only at the beginning!

In the extraordinary little book which we know in English translation as *The Essentials of Education** (5 lectures, Stuttgart, April, 1924), from which we have already twice quoted, Rudolf Steiner devotes a brief passage in the central lecture to the possibilities inherent in a whole new approach to the education of teachers. His few remarks open up perspectives for a lifetime of endeavor. There he points to a fourfold penetration into man's full human being. Describing these, as he has done again

*London, 1968, *out of print at the moment*

and again in other educational and related lectures, he points to the fact that we are not only the human being whom we observe with our ordinary senses, but that this physical organism is imbued with life, that it is further permeated by consciousness and that physical body, life body and consciousness are all in their turn penetrated and organized by the individuality itself, working spiritually into the members of its total being. To the trained investigator each of these four realms of forces is perceptible to the appropriate organs of perception. Just as our physical senses observe the physical, so other senses, not dependent on the physical organism, can be developed to perceive the realms of living processes, of consciousness, and of the activity of the ego. Our effectiveness as teachers depends on the ability to experience these four realms in man and in the worlds to which he belongs and on our ability to learn to see how they unfold from one stage to the next in the development of each child. Learning to "read" the nature of these forces, how they reveal themselves in the bodily organism, and how they develop throughout the first twenty-one years of life is basic education for the teacher. The burning question is: how can I school these faculties of perception and learn to read in a new way the language of a child's development?

In the third lecture of *Essentials* Rudolf Steiner hints how this might be done. Fundamental is a thorough knowledge of the child's physical being and of the physiological changes which are the outer milestones of his inner development. Beyond this, the teacher should learn to experience those forces of growth and vitality which mould and differentiate and organize the physical, working like an invisible sculptor during the earliest years of life to shape the child's organism in the image of his own individual blueprint of development. To this field of vital, sculptural, image-forming powers, Rudolf Steiner gives the term "etheric-formative forces". We come to know this realm, he says, "when we live into the formative, moulding process, when we come to know how a curve or an angle grows through the shaping power of inner forces. . . . We cannot understand the etheric body with the ordinary laws of nature, but with what we experience in the hand, the spirit-permeated hand. Hence there ought to be no training of teachers without activity in the sphere of plastic art, of sculpture, an activity proceeding from the inner being of man himself . . . It is not at all necessary to know masses of modern examination matter. There is no harm in referring to an en-

cyclopedia. No encyclopedia, however, can give us that mobility, that *able knowledge* and *knowing ableness*, necessary for an understanding of the etheric body, because the etheric body does not proceed according to the laws of nature; it permeates the human being in formative, sculptural activity."

If with the help of the "spirit-permeated hand" we gain a feeling for the quality of the etheric-formative forces, even though we may yet be a long way from experiencing them in full awareness, we find that we can teach the elementary school child in quite a new way. For these are the forces which worked invisibly as image-making powers within his physical organism during the imitative years and which are now partially liberated after the change of teeth as the powers of imagination with which the child learns to divine the hidden meanings within and behind the pictures in which the world presents itself to his awakening consciousness.

But we must also be well aware that the spirit-permeated hand has itself been intensively trained and educated. It is no longer the hand which is limited to the shaping of the merely useful or practical, important as these are; nor the skillful hand which can reproduce outer likenesses, or the talented hand which creates interesting abstract three-dimensional forms. The hand to which Rudolf Steiner refers is the one which can penetrate to the shaping, mobile powers which have created the crystal and the plant, the animal bodies and the dynamic symmetries of man. To reveal these powers is the goal toward which the great sculptors of our time are striving and the teacher must awaken kindred powers in himself if he wishes to know "how a curve or an angle grows through the shaping power of inner forces". He will not be satisfied merely to know about these sculptural forces which have built the collarbone and shaped the pelvis and the skull but will long to experience them in the disciplined work of his own hands. Therefore he will seek out teachers who have themselves gone a certain distance along the path toward a new sculptor's art, such as practiced, for instance, in the School of Sculpture at the Goetheanum, part of the School of Spiritual Science arising out of Anthroposophy.

And if the teacher wishes to know something of the reality of those powers set free for the use of the soul at puberty he must strive to discover what lives in the whole dynamic world of musical experience. He must learn to hear through the acous-

tical sounds the inner movement of the intervals, to move from tone to tone in the scale. This body of forces which is the bearer of consciousness, of sentience, of feeling in the animal and in man, Rudolf Steiner designates as the astral member of man's being. It is, he says, "not natural history, natural science, or physics; it is music. . . . A man who studies the outer human organization in so far as it is dependent on the astral body must concern himself with physiology not as a physicist, but as a musician. He must know the inner, formative music within the human organism." And again, the teacher who wishes to gain access to this realm will turn to those who have preceded him along the road toward mastership in the art which Bruno Walter spoke of as "intrinsic musicianship" which opens to us "that vast, transcendental realm of the soul that harbors the springs from which music flows."* And in this effort he will soon discover that he has an invaluable guide in the study of musical eurythmy where the intervals, tones, rhythms, beat come to visible expression in movement.

But the teacher who intends to work in the spirit of Waldorf education knows that he cannot stop with an understanding of the physical, etheric and astral realms. Without the individuality there is no capacity for memory, conscience, thought, motive, speech. The single animal is the expression of his species. Man transcends his species and becomes the bearer of that indivisible entity which alone can take responsibility for what he thinks, for what and how he feels, and for what he does. It is this fourth member of man's being which Rudolf Steiner means when he speaks of the human ego. To arrive at experienced knowledge of the ego, Steiner says that we must learn to understand the inner structure of speech. Not speech merely as conveyor of meaning, but the formative power of the sounds and rhythms of language as creative activity of the spirit in man. In this sphere, eurythmy is again of invaluable assistance, when the vowels and consonants, the grammatical structure, as well as the elements of rhythm, picture and meaning unite in the language of visible speech.

In these brief indications of Rudolf Steiner lies the seed for a radical re-orientation of all teacher training, not only for those studying to become teachers, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, for those who are already teachers and who wish to grow and to deepen their capacities. As one works with the ideas Steiner sketched out for us fifty years ago one comes to realize that behind them stands the world conception which

*Of Music and Music-Making, *W. W. Norton, 1961, New York.*

places man as a being of body, soul and spirit in living relation with the spiritual background of the cosmos and of world evolution. One comes to realize that it is indeed this world conception, "inwardly and ever newly experienced", which becomes the source of inspiration for the teacher and gradually, over many years, awakens in him the creative capacity to know what he has to do in a given moment with a certain child.

* * *

It was these and similar considerations which gave rise in the summer of 1973 to an experimental effort to establish a workshop which would devote itself over many years to pursuing the path of experience according to the method suggested by Rudolf Steiner in the context which we have briefly tried to describe. Such an effort, it was felt, could supplement the study which is already part of the work of every Waldorf school faculty during the regular course of the school year. It could eventually bring together teachers from many schools in an intensive work of a strongly artistic character, whose goal would be to develop capacities through practical doing, to work for experience rather than information, at a time of the year when they are not burdened with daily preparation and teaching. The first such workshop was held at the Rudolf Steiner Farm School in Harlemville in July, '73, over a period of thirteen days. The group consisted of about twenty teachers recruited largely from the Rudolf Steiner School, N.Y., the Pumpkin Hollow School, Great Barrington, Mass. and the Hawthorne Valley School, then about to come into existence in Harlemville. The workshop took as its theme the understanding of the etheric-formative forces in man and the world around him, as experienced in eurythmy, modelling and in the plant kingdom and the study of the four ethers. The success of the first effort encouraged a second which was again held at the Farm School, this year for eight days in late August. The theme was the experience of the nature of the astral forces through music and, again, eurythmy was a mainstay, with excellent practical courses devoted to a new approach to singing, to the music of the lyre, to improvisation, and to basic musical exercises. A very special pleasure for the participants was the presence of a number of musicians who shared their talents generously with those who were not so gifted. Almost double the number of teachers took part and among them nine Waldorf schools and two Camphill centers were represented.

The response this year was again such to encourage us to continue, and plans are already underway for a third workshop in the third week of August '75, with the understanding of the ego organization through speech and drama as the central theme. Eurythmy and speech formation should provide the practical artistic basis for study.

What can be accomplished in a few days each year is, of course, very little, nor is such an effort unique or entirely new. But it is equally clear that if the effort is not made and consistently supported, little progress in this direction can be expected, and after ten years one will still have to make a beginning, outer circumstances may be very much more difficult and the intervening years will have been lost. It is the purpose of this report, therefore, to draw attention to a method inherent in the training of teachers who seek to work out of a spiritual-scientific view of the world and to make even a beginning toward the new capacities for which mankind today stands in such desperate need.

—HENRY BARNES

. . . Where is that book to be found in which the teacher can read what teaching is? The children themselves are this book! We should not learn to teach out of any other book than the one lying before us and consisting of the children themselves; but in order to read in this book, we need the widest possible interest in each individual child.*

—RUDOLF STEINER

*R. Steiner, *Human Values in Education. Ten lectures given at Arnheim, Holland, 1924. London, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1971.*

With the following short letter from a concerned parent, we wish to introduce a continuing column that many of you, we hope, will contribute to. Mothers, fathers, teachers, — even aunts — are surprisingly inventive. Let us hear!

A Child's Fear at Night

I would like to tell you of an experience I have had with my five-year-old child and of its astonishing result.

Anja suddenly became afraid of the dark. She didn't want to be in her room alone; she refused to be left to go to sleep by herself without a light. And she began waking us up during the night.

One evening, in place of the usual fairy tale, I began to tell tiny stories about the night: simple little descriptions of the life of the night-moth and the barn owl and the great horned owl—creatures that love and need the night. About the gnomes who are busy working during the night. How the plants and flowers need to rest at night after the hot sun has been shining down on them all day. Oh! there were all sorts of things to make a tiny story. Even how the many, many kernels of grain cannot become properly ripe if only the sun shines on them; they all need the dark, quiet night.

Again and again I was giving, so it seems, descriptions of *peacefulness*. I spoke of a shepherd and his flock of sheep, how the sheep are protected by their shepherd through the dark night; how children, too, never need to be anxious, because each one of them has his guardian angel standing near him—but this I told more in passing, very carefully.

After a week of "night stories", Anja's fear disappeared. She went to sleep by herself. Now and then she still woke us during the night, but the dark had become her friend and she needed only our answering call to go back to sleep again.

However, her interest in the "night stories" continued. I even had to jot them down briefly, so that I could tell them the second time precisely as I had told them at first!

I am happy, I must say, that this idea came to me and that it had such a positive result. And that is the reason, of course, that I have written about it.

—LIESL VICTOR-KASSEL

(Translated by Gladys Hahn and reprinted with the kind permission of DER ELTERNBRIEF, December, 1970)

The Role of the Class Teacher and Its Transformation

The founding of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart came from a social impulse, from the insight of Rudolf Steiner into social needs that were becoming clearly apparent in 1919. The school was intended to answer the question: how must people be educated in order to solve the social problems that present themselves in the 20th century—in order to solve them creatively, actively, constructively?

And so the school was founded as a school for *all* children. It was organized entirely on the basis of what is common to all human beings: the body-soul stages of development from childhood to adulthood which every person has to go through, regardless of background, sex, race, regardless also of intellectual capacity or practical talents and such occupational goals as result from these factors: thus, *co-education* in the most comprehensive sense, a class community based entirely on age, allowing no discrimination, no special groups, no failures!

We are often asked: does it really work? And it can actually happen that when one is confronted by a skeptical onlooker plus one's own uncertainty, one even asks himself the question: does it really work? isn't it really quite impossible? But truly *it does work!* Continuous observation over many years confirms this. Then what helps to make what appears impossible possible?

Two strong aids have often been described: the curriculum, planned according to the age-levels of the children, and the artistic method. A further aid (from among others) is the subject of the present discussion: the coming together of a class of individuals, a meeting by force of destiny.

At the center of this meeting stands first of all the class teacher, who receives the first-graders and who leads them through eight years of school. The children who are entrusted to him, the six- or seven-year-olds, are not yet a "class", even if they number thirty or more; they are just a crowd of children of the same age, who are congregating about the teacher as center of their new world. In no time at all the teacher has become

father or mother to them, responsible for everything, dearly loved, and called upon as a matter of course in every emergency, whether there is a sorrow to be comforted or a shoe to be tied.

The importance of this for the lower grades is seldom questioned. But the fact that the teacher accompanies the children through Eighth Grade whenever possible is often looked upon dubiously, even by the teachers themselves, who have to shoulder this heavy task. And yet just here lies the blessing of such an arrangement.

On the one hand, through his long years of experience with them, the teacher acquires a deep knowledge of his individual children, their background, their potential, their learning-capacity and -tempo. He works painstakingly at forming the class in a social way, balancing, healing, giving every child a place, knowing the unique worth of each one and nurturing him accordingly.

At the same time, however, as teacher, he too is a learner. For even if he has carried another class through school before, it has been normally eight years since he concerned himself with the material he now has to use—time enough to practice forgetting and to become more demanding of himself. He will have to *learn anew* what he wishes now to *teach* to his pupils. And this learning process is different each time, not only because he is older, because the times have changed, science more advanced, but above all because now he has other children before him, with different questions and needs.

Although the children do not become fully conscious of it, still they do experience this effort to learn on the part of the teacher. The learning process becomes visible. It is precisely on those occasions in seventh or eighth grade when the pupil observes that the teacher is not just “pulling it out of his sleeve” with no effort at all but must first learn it himself—it is in those moments that the child has an intimate experience of the fact that man can learn, that learning need never stop, that it belongs to the noblest human faculties.

Thus the teacher *learns ahead* of his pupils, he learns for them and with them and leads them from year to year into new areas of learning. And when the richness of the various subjects becomes apparent, when along with English and mathematics the natural science courses appear, as well as history and geography and much more besides, then through their teacher the pupils

become aware that one can learn everything, that the individual human being is the center of a whole world and, in knowing, can take a whole world into his grasp. The unity of the material which thus confronts the unity of the class becomes visible in the oneness of the learning teacher.

But this mood of soul is transformed when puberty sets in. Devotion to the class teacher gives place to joy in the variety of subject teachers. One's own capacity of criticism and judgment is gradually waking and wants to assert itself. The student must now learn to recreate the unity of a world that is thrusting itself upon him in such manifold ways. And the image he has unconsciously absorbed through the years is what gives him confidence in his own new task: the image of the learning teacher, who was able to unite in his single intelligence all the subjects that now approach the young person from this side and that, ever more demandingly, and that require to be mastered by him.

At this time, then, in the social framework of the school, what takes the place of the class teacher?—who takes over his functions? It is this that people find hard to accept today, for the answer is the class itself, the age-group class, one can also call it the class-by-destiny; the community of children, of young people, who have studied together through long years, who have experienced the same teacher; the class in its complete unsorted, unchosen variety. And one can have this experience in the Waldorf schools: that the more varied the pupils of a class are, the more all possible conditions of humanity are represented in it, with all kinds of backgrounds and goals and talents and interests, so much the better does the class function as a social form.

What until now the class teacher has always done, now the class does as a single unit of people. Each member of the class, with his potentialities, his weaknesses, is well-known to the others; occasionally he is treated roughly but generally he is suffered, he is carried, with amazing patience. The scale-weight that fits him and his capacity is known to them all as a matter of course. If an untalented student gives a good recitation, their criticism is different from their criticism of the work of a so-called "good" student. Where formerly the teacher learnt for the pupils, now they learn for one another. The variety of subjects makes it possible for almost every student to find at least one field in which he can be slightly ahead of the others. Those who are awkward with their hands observe with amazement how a

natural craftsman handles his tools. Those who are of slower intelligence listen puzzled or even with expectant attention to the way the others take hold of a theme, illuminate it from all sides, discuss it, even often explain it to the weaker ones with great skill because they know them so well, sometimes with more success than the teacher. And when in an eleventh or twelfth grade deep questions are considered that challenge an individual's purely human maturity, then a teacher may happily experience how the weaker students, until now perhaps always very quiet, have actually learnt from the others how to enter into a discussion; often then they express themselves very decidedly and reveal a human maturity and depth that otherwise has remained hidden. And if their expression stumbles in its outer form, there will always be others in the class who out of their long common experience understand them and who now become their interpreters, to clarify their thoughts for the class and for the teacher.

In this way something can arise in the young person: trust—trust in his own capacities and trust in the others who, however different they may be, nevertheless belong to him and understand him and are understood by him. Self-confidence and confidence in his human community: this enables an individual to be a member of the social organism, and while presenting an unmistakeably unique individuality himself, also to see and recognize it in the others.

With the class community is coupled another field of community experience and another meeting of destiny: the faculty of teachers, consciously working together and complementing one another, each one contributing through his particular subject to the student's broad education. What it means in social contact, in work economy and in moral support for the young person to experience his teachers not as a team of experts who have doled out the work among themselves, but as a community of educators, would be worth an article of its own. Let us limit ourselves now to the one subject, the class community.

In this sense one might now inquire into the further metamorphosis of what we have described: what the class teacher does for the children, then what the class community does for the individual—how is this continued later? The young adult must bring it to fulfillment alone. And he can if confidence in himself and trust in the world have matured in him. Then he will know

how to insert his individual destiny meaningfully into the common destiny.

It is told how Rudolf Steiner said in a commencement speech to the first Waldorf School graduates: "The discussions you have had with your classmates will be the most important memory for you later on in life. Always keep coming back to them." One can well ask what this meant; why Rudolf Steiner, who had so carefully selected the curriculum for the students, disregarded it entirely in this speech. Actually, the significance of the teaching material for later life is self-evident. With the "discussions", on the other hand, can only be meant that element which I have tried to point out: the capacity that is developed through long years of practice, to see the human qualities in one another and to enter into a genuine community life with one another. This is the very strength that humanity will need in order to solve the social problems of our time.

—IRMGARD HÜRSCH

(Translated from Erziehungskunst, Monatsschrift zur Pädagogik Rudolf Steiners, Stuttgart, June, 1972, with the kind permission of the editor)

Physiology and Education

*A Dialogue between Scientists and Educators
at High Mowing School, Wilton, New Hampshire, June, 1974*

Speakers: Karl E. Schaefer, Professor of Environmental Physiology, Brown University.

Maria Linder, Assistant Professor, Department of Nutrition, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Inge Dyrenfurth, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Columbia University.

Uwe Stave, Professor of Pediatrics at the Fels Institute, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

J. Herbert Fill, former Commissioner of Mental Health for New York City.

Raymond Moore, Professor, Hewitt Research Center and Andrews University.

Sheldon Stoff, Chairman, Department of Education, Adelphi University.

Henry Barnes, Faculty Chairman, Rudolf Steiner School, New York City.

There can be no quarrel with the fact that Science, science as a method of inquiry into the nature of reality and science as an ever-burgeoning body of knowledge, has set the tone and pace of our society for the last hundred and fifty years. Man has been the recipient of much because of this: improved nutrition and health care have led to a longer life span, technological developments have led to wider horizons than ever before. But along

with antibiotics and air travel have come the missiles in underground silos controlled by computers; fruit bred, not for nutritional value or taste, but to withstand thousands of miles of travel; children sitting in darkened rooms for hours each day passively watching images of violence and emptiness on TV screens. For decades, many people have expressed concern, even alarm, that man—his need for beauty, for relatedness, for meaning, his very nature—has somehow been lost sight of in the ever-increasing development of science and technology.

In September, 1973, a conference on Man-Centered Physiological Science and Medicine was held at an anthroposophical hospital in Herdecke, West Germany, under the auspices of the International Research Institute for Man-Centered Environmental Science and Medicine.

As an outgrowth of this meeting, a Karl Ege Memorial Conference at High Mowing School this summer brought together educators, scientists, and physicians. The focus was on individuality and the education and development of children: What are the physiological bases of individuality? What are the implications of these observations for the development and education of children? In his introduction, Dr. Karl Ernst Schaefer emphasized the need for man to be placed in the center of the stage of modern medicine. As computer technology threatens us with increasing dehumanization, the need for men and women who are conscious of the possibility of human dignity and freedom in all fields of knowledge, especially the scientific, becomes increasingly urgent. Each human being has a highly individualized bodily configuration, which provides an exquisitely sensitive and responsive instrument for the human individuality.

Dr. Schaefer presented the first paper, "Individual Respiratory Patterns Affecting Metabolic Processes and Central Nervous System Function", demonstrating by means of meticulous observation and measurement in many experiments, the intricate way in which physiology permits, makes possible, and mediates our unique humanness. The effect of respiration on consciousness, on the emotions, and on will is all-pervasive, even though below the level of conscious awareness. When awake, we breathe faster than when we sleep. People tend either to breathe slowly, in a relaxed fashion, or to be fast breathers, who are tense and internally charged up: the first group are often athletic, the second usually intellectual. A Swedish group found that when

bright young adults exert themselves, they breathe too fast and too inefficiently; when they began to exercise daily, their breathing pattern became normal.

The rate and pattern of respiration and the amount of oxygen actually taken into the lungs and blood are related to the emotions, the nature of the emotions, and their intensity. Grief and reverence are associated with slow, shallow breaths; anger, hate, and sex with rapid deep inspirations. Respiratory patterns also vary with increasing age: young children breathe more rapidly and deeply than when they grow older.

As the time of birth approaches, the oxygen concentration in the blood of the fetus gets lower and is actually comparable to being at a high altitude. With the first breath after birth, air and oxygen fill the lungs. Thus the myth of the stork dropping the infant to earth through the chimney actually describes the physiological event of birth in terms of oxygen concentration!

Following the talk relating to individual patterns in the rhythmic system, Dr. Maria Linder discussed the metabolic system, addressing the meeting on "The Biochemical Bases of Individuality". There are enormous potentials for diversity in the physiological development of the individual. There is an enormous variety of metabolic patterns possible, due to the many variables in each individual and impinging on each from the outside. Inborn factors include the specific combinations of genes, and age and sex, both of which are mediated by hormones; among the environmental influences are light, air, food, stress, and biography. All these factors interrelate to bring about organisms which are increasingly complex and increasingly individualized. Individual differences on a biological level are so profound and pervasive that "normal" constituents of the blood, for example, or "normal" dosage levels for the administration of medication are very difficult to interpret and apply. The "normal" levels of substances in the blood have been determined in terms of a narrow range of values, derived from testing the levels in many thousands of individuals. However, if the normal level in one person is very low and this person develops an illness which increases the amount, the level may be highly abnormal for that particular individual, while the absolute value of the substance in his blood may still be measured as being within the "normal" range.

Further reverberations of magnificent complexity: the model of causality which we take for granted is really quite limited, one

cause acting in a linear fashion to produce one effect. Actually, in a biological system, if one of its elements changes, everything in the system changes. This is network causality, as delineated by Dr. Paul Weiss, rather than the linear causality as used in physics; network causality gives insight into the intricate interrelationships of metabolism.

Dr. Inge Dyrenfurth spoke on **"Individual Patterns in Hormone Regulation"**. Hormones play an important role in organizing and regulating the structures of tissues and organs and the functions, adaptive and restorative, of the metabolic system. The mechanism of hormone action involves the concept of homeostasis, with the feedback between the pituitary gland at the base of the brain, and the various target glands (ovaries, testes, adrenals, thyroid, etc.) acting so as to keep the level of the hormones in the blood essentially constant. However, more refined measurements made in recent years show that the blood levels of hormones undergo many rhythmic changes, differing between day and night, activity and rest, waking and sleeping, as well as rhythms observed weekly, monthly, or yearly. For example, cortisol, which is secreted by the adrenal cortex, decreases in concentration during sleep and increases when the person awakens. Sometimes the reasons for these variations seem susceptible to logical explanation; many times the reasons are obscure. Thus intricacy is layered on intricacy, mystery on mystery. Man's physical organization and metabolic functions are so complex and sensitive that hormonal rhythms are no longer only under the control of inner physiological and environmental factors, but in addition are influenced by the unconscious and even the conscious self.

Dr. Uwe Stave spoke on the topic, **"The Individuation Process and Child Development"**. Individuation is defined as that process by which an individual obtains and develops his own characteristics. Inheritance provides capabilities and potentials which then unfold selectively to degrees and in ways which are influenced by a host of factors.

Many disorders affecting the fetus can occur on a genetic basis, such as inherited metabolic diseases, while others result from intrauterine influences (radiation or maternal German measles or drugs) and still others stem from events which occur after birth. Disturbances early in pregnancy may affect the development of vital systems, while such problems occurring later

on when the fetus is more differentiated and mature may affect single organs. The event of birth is facilitated by the infant's level of maturation, and the protection afforded by the high capacity of the neonate to adapt to adverse circumstances, such as his ability to survive without oxygen for a longer time than the adult.

Investigations of the minimum brain damage syndrome (characterized by extreme distractibility, impulsivity, frenetic physical activity, and often by difficulties in learning) show that such children have a higher incidence of minor physical stigmata, such as long, curly eyelashes, too small ears, simian lines on the palms. This disorder is almost never diagnosed within the first year of life, and it is not clear how or when it starts.

Regarding factors arising after birth, studies are being made which suggest that separation of the mother and infant during the first 24 hours after birth is detrimental to the warmth of the mother-child relationship. Infants who remain in incubators for long periods may develop difficulties because of the lack of handling and human contact.

Thus it appears that, except for inherited factors, many of the problems that beset individuation in the very young child are man-made!

Dr. J. Herbert Fill, a psychiatrist and author of *The Mental Breakdown of a Nation*, spoke on "Mental Health Implications of Modern Education". Man, a being of thinking, feeling, and will, has allowed himself to become submerged by a world-view which values intellect alone and which allows technology to destroy him. This world-view is depersonalized, based on the notion that what is real must be measurable and "scientifically objective," and therefore ignores all those aspects of human life and reality which cannot be dealt with in this way. This world-view is not only inadequate to current problems; in fact, it is at the root of them.

In classrooms across the nation children learn to be apathetic and dishonest; they are made to feel inferior and are dealt with by their teachers in a mechanistic fashion. Their will is suppressed and passivity engendered; their feelings are rejected as invalid; they are taught prematurely to memorize concepts, and the intellect and true thinking ability remain undeveloped. It is necessary, for the mental health of our children and for society at large, that they be educated in such a way that their human-

ness is fostered, that feeling and will be nurtured, that intellect be developed as part of a full picture of the human being. The key for basic change in man's view of himself and in social problems is an education which revalidates the personality, acknowledges man's self as an intrinsic reality, and permits the self to get involved in constructive action.

—DR. IONA GINSBURG

(the Report continues:)

Raymond Moore: "Caring For Young Children"

To those who have kept up with the literature on early childhood education, Raymond Moore is no stranger. His views, backed up by extensive research material, have been published in Harper's Magazine (July 1972) and Reader's Digest (October 1972) under the title: The Dangers of Early Schooling. Time Magazine (July 10, 1972) used the provocative title: Crippling the Young? His detailed study, Early Education for All, has been read into the Congressional Record (October 16, 1972, pg. E8726-E8741).

Blatant misinterpretation of research, short-term experimentation, financial exploitation, and lack of common sense: all these have resulted in misinformation on a wide scale. This has produced cultural pressure for the early schooling of our young children.

There is no repeatable research, no longitudinal study, no empirical knowledge that would justify the rush towards early schooling. On the contrary, there is an impressive body of research material and empirical knowledge pointing in the opposite direction. Research on cognitive development; on neurophysiological maturation, including eye problems; on maternal deprivation and the ensuing emotional difficulties; on the loss of motivation resulting from the 'too much too soon' syndrome; on too early school-entrance with the discouraging picture fifteen years later: all these will convince any open-minded person that premature intellectual demands can warp our children for life.

We have all read about the famous experiments with rats, where animals exposed to an 'enriched' environment showed greater gain than those living in bleak surroundings. The widely

advertised conclusion that we must therefore 'enrich' the environment of the baby through learning-gadgets, television programs, etc., is totally misleading. A third group of rats, in the same experiment, were exposed not to an enriched, but simply to a natural environment, and lo, they outdid all the others.—And the natural environment for the young child is the home, free from all technological frills.

There may be 'bleak' homes, where the child is deprived of human contact, and where an 'enriched' surrogate environment may be better. These are exceptions, and there may be many. But for the millions of children with loving parents, who are eager to do their best for their offspring, the 'natural' home provides the most nourishing surroundings. To prescribe remedies for all children because some are in special need, calls forth a comparison with medicine: methadone treatment may salvage drug addicts, but to administer it routinely to all and everyone would be gross misjudgment indeed. This applies to the young child, whose place is in the unpressured security and warmth of the home. If outer circumstances necessitate nursery and kindergarten attendance, then a homelike atmosphere should be sought, free from technological intrusion and from all 'reading-readiness' instruction.

Another unfortunate social pressure, usually brought by well-meaning neighbors upon a young mother, is that her child needs nursery school for 'socialization'. The young child has far greater need for solitude and for quiet, so that he can work out his own fantasies in play.

During the imitative phase, speech and behavior patterns are best learned at home from adults, not from peers. Only the home can set standards of behavior and teach moral values.

Young children should be included in the work around the house. At first, they imitate. Later, systematic daily chores should be given them. Experiments with large groups of children have shown that such regular responsibility given at home results in greater achievement at school and also in a drop in behavior problems. It increases self-esteem and stabilizes character.

Some years ago, the lonely voice of Rachel Carson spoke out against the damage to nature through the thoughtless application of chemicals. This inspired a widespread movement of concern for the protection of lakes, rivers, plants, and wildlife.—May

Raymond Moore's humanitarian message of Caring For Young Children be also heeded. We must become aware of the consequences and protect childhood from the corrosive poison of early intellectualism. The stability of our culture is at stake.

Sheldon Stoff: "A Survey of Educational Approaches and Their Possible Influence on the Ecology of Childhood and Adolescence"

Three major educational approaches can be observed on the American scene: Individualized Education, Open Education, and Humanistic Education.

The current thrust of education in this country is on INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION. Over forty states have passed laws for teacher-training to go in this direction. It is based on the concept that the child is a unique individuality and needs an individualized way of learning. Group learning is eliminated, because it is thought that even when the teacher instructs only three students, he will reach only one and will lose the other two.

In the attempt to create a material environment so that the individual child can learn at his own rate of speed and his progress be objectively evaluated, the child (from grade one to eight) is always alone. He has no human contact, no classes, no group activity. Hard-nosed technology does all the teaching. The student receives written instructions, works in a multimedia room, uses his own film strips and mechanical learning aids. With the help of packets of indications, he puts himself through a pre-test, then a self-test. He goes to a teacher for a written test, whereupon he receives a new package and the whole routine starts over again. Since motivation slackens considerably, and learning at the student's speed tends to relax towards no speed at all, four units a day are often prescribed.

Quick improvements can be measured, and many students show immediate gains. No longitudinal research has been done, and long-term results are simply unknown. Vandalism has

plagued these learning centers. After the first glamour had worn off, some schools were compelled by the parents to establish alternative, more traditional ways of instruction.

What are the side-effects of this self-centered, linear, solitary instruction? The life-outlook for this system seems to imply, as Prof. Stoff so aptly characterized it, that the ideal of a 'happy marriage' will be—one person married to himself! Further comments seem superfluous.

The self-directed OPEN EDUCATION was a reaction to the barrenness of the conventional classroom. It revives some of the ideals of Dewey education, but is modeled after the British Infant Schools. It is not based on empirical research, but on a philosophical feeling that we can trust the child's ability to educate himself. The teacher is to provide a learning environment that matches the student's needs.

The conventional classroom set-up disappears. Learning-corners for science, math, reading, etc. provide the stimuli for self-teaching. This is a correlation of work and play, "proceed and discover". Here also, the student is to move along at his own speed, but he follows his own interests and inclinations.

The movement in this country is widespread. One of the Dakotas, for example, has converted its entire school system.

Difficulties arise when these ideals are put into practice, so that the average life-span of the converted classroom is 18 to 27 months. The system dooms itself. Two major reasons are usually given for the failure. The British have a family structure that is different from ours, and that makes the British child more disciplined and subdued than the American. (The high noise-level that plagues the American open classrooms is apparently typical for our children.) Secondly, many teachers have been forced into the open-classroom approach against their convictions, or without their understanding the difference between freedom and license. Hence the chaos.

One longitudinal study shows that students taught in open classrooms did better work in junior high school and worse work in high school than those in traditional classes. Doing only what you like to do, and finding instant gratification of inclinations and wishes, appear to have a weakening influence on the development of self-discipline.

The focus of HUMANISTIC EDUCATION is on a "quest for knowledge with awe", that blends the analytical with the intuitive, the aesthetic with the scientific. Its aims include a deeper understanding of the self and the subject matter and an awareness that learning occurs on both intellectual and intuitive levels. The teacher must be able to take a class "up to the peak of the mountain", or to show "the miraculous in the common". (A charming illustration was the introduction of the number ONE to first-graders.)

The teacher should know where the child is at, and speak to his needs. Young children live in a world of fantasy and respond with their whole being if the teacher can clothe the subject matter in imaginative pictures. Love is a learning force; the language of the Old Testament has only one word for both 'loving embrace' and for 'knowing'.

Humanistic education implies the importance of human example and human caring: firm, kind parents in a cohesive family who encourage acceptable activity, and teachers who are conveyors of attitudes, not merely information. It has been shown, for example, that where teachers understand the child's background, he does better in standardized tests.

Self-discipline and responsibility must precede freedom, which would otherwise be selfishness rather than choosing to do what is right.

Short-term testing is meaningless. It is the whole development that counts. At the Waldorf School in Garden City, for example, fourth-graders were a whole year behind the norm in reading skills. In the seventh grade, they were one year ahead; in the eighth grade, two years ahead.

Certain insights can be derived from these comparative studies: There is a need for longitudinal research in contrast to the short-term testing so prevalent in our age, so that consequences can be anticipated.

There is a need for publishing the objectives and methods of new approaches; parents are usually not aware of several recognized ways of education.

Parents should have the right to choose the education, like the religion, for their children. The principle of freedom applies particularly to the cultural life.

Henry Barnes: "Ecology of Childhood and the Waldorf School Approach"

To understand and to educate man, four levels of interdependence must be clearly distinguished. Through his organism man is interwoven with the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms of nature. As Ego-being he forms a fourth, separate kingdom.

In the MINERAL WORLD we deal with laws imposed from outside. Gravity rules.

In the PLANT WORLD we enter the realm of the living, with growth, contraction and expansion, rhythms, and reproduction.

The ANIMAL creates an inner world of sentient response to outer stimuli, and expresses pleasure and pain.

MAN is distinct: he moves erect, sound is transformed into meaningful language. He has conscious memory, can develop objectivity, foresight and hindsight. He can give himself purpose and direction, and act as a moral being.

The goals of childhood education therefore require nurture and individualization on four levels: physical, life, soul, and ego.

The insights of the developmental psychologist confirm the Waldorf School approach. Its curriculum corresponds concretely, in content and methods, to the phases described by Piaget, Moore, and others. The artistic non-intellectual approach of the early school years meets the needs of the child as an 'emotional being'. The introduction of science around the age of eleven corresponds to the 'beginning of understanding of cause and effect'.

The essence of the scientific approach does not lie in the content, but in its methods; and a different mode of thinking is required to grasp each of the four levels of existence.

Waldorf Education is based on objective knowledge of man. But this knowledge must become capacity in the teacher (as Mr. Barnes demonstrated so convincingly in his example from a history lesson). The teacher must engage, and reckon with all four aspects: sense observation in the physical world; tension and relaxation, inbreathing and outbreathing, the realm of rhythms on the life level; stirring and involvement of the emotional being; crystallization into a final conceptual form, with moral values and character-building on an ego level.

Thus the image of man is the starting point, the guide, and the goal of Waldorf Education.

—GISELA O'NEIL

Book Review

DON'T PUSH ME, I'M NO COMPUTER: How Pressures to "Achieve" Harm Pre-School Children by Helen L. Beck. McGraw-Hill, New York 1973.

This book is a plea to stop pushing children and to allow them time to unfold and develop into whole people. Helen Beck, for many years a nursery teacher, psychiatric social worker and associate professor in the field of pediatrics, has joined the ever-increasing list of parents and educators who are becoming suspicious of the long-range effects of pressures on young children. These pressures are brought by the onslaught of "educational" toys, learning machines, and the overstimulation of TV. Anna Freud says in her Foreword to this book that "cognition does not prosper except in close alliance with emotional development." The author repeatedly argues that even though the mechanical devices may stimulate the child, and researchers are impressed with the child's ability to learn, these devices work impersonally and do not add to the development of human values that are a dimension of wisdom.

Reading, says Miss Beck, is pushed much too soon and devalued much too early. A three-year-old does not need to carry the onus of being a "genius". We, as concerned parents and teachers, must guard against the commercial exploitation of children. Here she points to such things as the mechanical teacher, learning fads, the "kiddie shows" and TV advertising aimed at children, often producing such attitudes as, "Dolls are for showing off", or "People like you for your possessions," or "Parents' love is evidenced in terms of buying, buying, buying." We know, too, that a child can be overstimulated with too many toys.

This book then offers many practical and helpful suggestions as to what children really need. A young child's play-time must include space and time for quiet, uninterrupted activity. Good toys are attractive, safe, sturdy, imaginative and versatile. Those to be viewed with suspicion are the *self-limiting* toys that perform independently, the pre-packaged kit, or the *uncreative* activity, such as the beloved coloring book. There follows a long list of imaginative play activities: with water, with pots and pans, or washing, mixing, making, growing things. (A small

personal objection must here be inserted: the suggestion to use noodles or macaroni to make necklaces or decorations violates what should be carefully encouraged in every child: a feeling of reverence for growing things and for food.) In the discussion of all these activities it is pointed out that parents must be involved and should participate even when they go along with their own activities and chores. A little time and imagination spent in providing constructive and absorbing things to do will save time in cleaning and scolding. Imagination cannot be taught; rather, imaginative play can be encouraged. Children need to find value in simple things.

We have to assure children human guidance that springs from human love. Helen Beck says, "We have to take time for children. We have to live with them and through them, not beside them. We have to enjoy them, not by being amused by their shortcomings, but by recognizing these shortcomings as important steps in their development. These steps can be exciting and constructive if properly channeled."

Don't Push Me, I'm No Computer is practical and easy to understand and it can help sensitive parents and teachers to find support in the struggle against the pressures of today's technological world.

—ANN R. MATTHEWS

BOOKS ON EDUCATION BY RUDOLF STEINER

Discussions with Teachers

Education as a Social Problem

Education as an Art (by Rudolf Steiner and others)

Human Values in Education

The Kingdom of Childhood

A Modern Art of Education

BY OTHER AUTHORS

Eva Frommer, Voyage through Childhood

John F. Gardner, The Experience of Knowledge

Norbert Glas, Conception, Birth and Early Childhood

Ursula Grahl, How to Help Your Growing Child
The Wisdom in Fairy Tales

Elisabeth Grunelius, Early Childhood Education and the
Waldorf School Plan

A. C. Harwood, The Recovery of Man in Childhood
The Way of a Child

Karl König, Brothers and Sisters
The First Three Years of Childhood

Hermann von Baravalle, Geometric Drawing
Introduction to Astronomy
Rudolf Steiner as Educator

C. von Heydebrand, The Curriculum of the First Waldorf
School
(with Supplement for English schools by Eileen Hutchins)

Roy Wilkinson, A Series of Booklets on Waldorf Education
(The Temperaments, Learning to Write and Read, Teaching Geography, Teaching History, etc.)

Please ask for further information

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Detroit Waldorf School

2555 Burns Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48214

Green Meadow School

Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, New York 10977

High Mowing School

Wilton, New Hampshire 03086

Highland Hall

17100 Superior Street, Northridge, California 91324

Kimberton Farms School

Phoenixville, R.D. 2, Pennsylvania 19460

Mohala Pua School

Niu Estates, 350 Ulua Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

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