

***Self Development as a Basis for the Relationship
Between the Child and the Adult
Michaela Glöckler, M.D.
Medical Section of the Anthroposophical Society***

From a lecture given 28 February 1998 during first international anthroposophical conference on “The care of the little child under three years outside the home”, held at Blangstedgard Rudolf Steiner School, Odense, Denmark. From notes by Barbara Paulsen, revised by the lecturer.

Michaela Glöckler opened the lecture by sharing her experiences surrounding the last hours of the life of her father, Helmut von Kügelgen, who had died three days earlier. She described him as being fully in life until the last moments, yet prepared and aware that his time had come. He was concerned about the coming conference about the little child, and Michaela Glöckler felt that his being was with us in these days.

The closer a child is to birth, the less individualized he is. Babies are similar to each other and easy to mix up. A care giver, relating to a group of infants, will have more difficulty in recognizing them from one another, than for instance if he/she had been relating to a group of elderly people, where the individual personality is very pronounced. The little child lacks self-consciousness; the individuality is not yet born. We meet the child in this delicate phase of life, where he possesses qualities which can be called generally human.

Because of this, it is essential that we as care givers generate our most powerful general human qualities. And if we ask ourselves what is meant by generally human, the answer is to be found in that realm which is accessible to everyone, regardless of age, language, or background. We meet in the realm of sense perception, where a gesture or a smile of joy is recognized by anyone. In our daily life, and in caring for the daily rhythms, we move in the realm of what is generally human. To this also belongs our life of thought, our gestures, and our speech. The little child is open towards everything that surrounds it, and therefore it is essential that our consciousness penetrates this realm of generally human qualities, in which the child lives. We must learn to generalize ourselves and to meet the child without expectations or prejudices. As care givers we can sometimes do this better than parents. It is also essential that one has love for those whom one cares for, and here we have a big advantage, for it is easier at first to love a baby than, for instance, a teenager.

Practicing self discipline in the realm of thinking, speaking and doing is essential, as these penetrate and color the daily life of the child. In the realm of thinking, this is the search for truth. It is important to observe thinking, and to see how every thought has its own truth, its own reality. Thoughts serve each other, penetrate and carry each other. We must learn to purify our thinking - to discern what is really true, irrespective of our own opinion.

Our thoughts live in our speech, colored by our life of feeling, and they also influence our deeds. We must consider if our intentions are relevant, so that our deeds fit the need. Is my deed healing or destructive? We must learn to look at our “good” deeds also from their shadow sides. For instance, you all think it is very good that you are attending this conference, but for those at home it may be a very bad thing, because there we have left things undone. Can I carry the consequences of my deeds? And does my speech reflect not only what is true and what I intend to do, but also carry warmth and love for the children?

We can discern three aspects of our speech:

Thinking Is what I say true? - **Truth**

Feeling Does it express what lives in my heart? - **Love**

Willing Can I be trusted to stand for what I say? - **Freedom**

We are speaking here of the most delicate and precious human substance, which is an expression of how the Christ lives with us. It is like a handshake with Christ each day, when we say yes to living out of these 3 qualities of truth, love and freedom.

Rudolf Steiner described 3 paths of self-development; the personal, the professional and the generally human one.

The personal path is described in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, and is the individual way. In following this path, one can have a “sidetaste” of egoism. Regarding the professional path of schooling, Steiner has given different indications for those who take up the tasks of a healer, an artist, an educator, and so on. These paths are followed to develop faculties to help others, and are selfless paths.

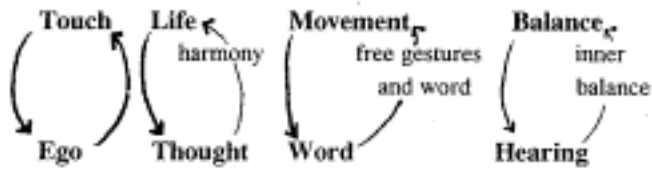
The third path is the generally human path, where we must develop ourselves, so that we feel more and more a part of humanity in general. What is the purpose and meaning of what is happening in the world today, at the end of the century? How do I deal with the evil that is growing in the world around us - not only in wars, destruction and killing, but also in the social life and in meetings between people? We must work to recognize and combat misunderstanding. The forces of evil are so strong at present, and we must learn what their message to our self development is.

As a counter-picture to all this evil and destruction, Steiner tells us that mankind is crossing the threshold to the spiritual world. Killing takes place in the world around us, where the battle is not taken up inwardly. Killing is in its place when we overcome something in the shadowside of ourselves. When we use the power to overcome, to conquer something within ourselves, we are then able to project peace outside ourselves. Meeting the questions of our time in this way, becomes a real path of schooling. Steiner himself has called his book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, an “anti-war book”.

When we look at the little child, who is incarnating into the realm of what is generally human, we must look at its development of the senses. This touches an important aspect of the professional path in the light of developing generally human qualities. In the first seven years the child lives more strongly in the four lower senses. From 7-14 he lives strongly in the middle senses, and incarnates between 14-21 in the higher senses.

The way in which we give support to the development of the lower senses in the early years, is essential to the development of the higher senses in adolescence. We have in our hands the capacity to help or to hinder individual development through what is generally human.

The way in which the child incarnates in the four lower senses of touch, life, movement and balance, creates the organs whereby he later can develop the senses of ego, thought, word and hearing. The way in which the care giver lives through her higher senses, influences and forms the child as he incarnates in the lower senses.



(The downward arrow indicates the relationship between the child's lower senses and the later development of the higher senses. The upward arrow indicates how the adult's being works upon the child.)

- The sense of *touch* is the precondition for the development of the sense of I or Ego of the other person.
- Sense of life develops the sense organs in the child, whereby he can later perceive the *thoughts of others*.
- Development of the sense of *movement*, is essential for the development of *speech* and the sense of *word*.
- *Balance* and inner calm are the preconditions for *hearing*.

What must the educator develop to support the development of the four lower senses of the child? He must cultivate self-experience through the twelve senses, regarding the gifts he wins through sense experience.

The following description addresses the way in which the child incarnates in the lower senses, and how the adult can aid this process, realizing the gifts, which are the results of sense experience in his own being.

Touch

Touch gives self-awareness, an experience of our bodily form and self-existence. Other people carrying and caring for us nurture this experience. Babies need cuddling, the care giver must be sensitive to the individual child's need and respond to that. Some children want less. contact than others. A baby who cries a lot may have difficulty incarnating in the lower body, and may be helped by leg and foot massage. In the little child the sense of touch and the sense of I are still one, and only develop separately after the age of three.

The ego sense of the adult is essential in establishing good social surroundings and the care of the child. Any form of abuse - lack of ego presence where the animal drives come to the fore - is more damaging at this age than at any other age.

Life

To stimulate the child's sense of life - the social sense - one must care for the daily rhythms, the preparing and giving of meals, sleeping and so on, in a harmonious way. For children who come from a home where there may be a lot of noise or disharmony, it is of great importance to experience harmony and peace in the adults' manner of relating to one another.

Movement

The children must possibility to move freely - in this lies the development of freedom. The bodily experience of freedom is the basis for the later experience of being a free human being. The adult's gestures and words influence the child's movement development, our spontaneity and joy have a positive influence on the child, whereas untrue words make the child unfree in its movements.

Balance

The little child should be allowed to roll and climb about in all possible positions, so that the sense of balance can develop. (It would be a good thing from time to time to invite a Bothmer gymnast to observe the children in their play. She would have the possibility to recognize any movement disturbances very early, and possibly recommend treatment to the parents if this is necessary.) The adult's inner peace and balance, knowing when to interfere and when not, is essential.

Where trust (sense of touch), harmony, freedom and the inner balance are established in the growing young person, drug abuse becomes impossible. This can only come about where these qualities are lacking.

The guiding motive of the first seven years of the child is that of the Father God. The child lives in the realm of the Creator Being, the giver of the senses and sense perception. The child must experience that the world is good. If we can, establish child care centers where this is possible, then we can together with the parent's care at home, provide the best possible basis for the child's healthy development.

Plenum with Michaela Glöckler

Q: What do you mean “war inside/war outside”?

MG: I am glad that you ask this question. We are at the end of the first third of the three periods of development of the consciousness soul. Through the deed of Golgotha, the death and resurrection of the Christ, man was for the first time able to carry his I consciousness through the death experience, and this I development continues. Christ did not only bring peace, but also the strengthening of the I experience, and along with this comes egoism. (*Gospel of St. Luke*, Chapter 12)

In our epoch the struggle is with evil. The old traditions carry us no longer, and we must therefore develop our higher ego qualities. This situation will last into the seventh Post Atlantean epoch (about 7,700 A.D.), where it will be a war of all against all. Waldorf education is based on altruism and the developing of general human qualities. These are necessary as a counter balance to the development of individualism.

Q: Who comes first - the mother or the child?

MG: As care givers, of course, our first concern is the child. We must “take on” the mother as well and not try to educate her. If we do, we only increase her guilty conscience. We must give her joy in her child, tell her about small, wonderful experiences with her child and make her happy about him. If we succeed in making her so happy about him that she gives up her job, so as not to miss being with him, then we have been really successful! If she herself feels confident enough to ask questions, we can then answer these. The most important thing is to support her in feeling she is a good mother. We must make the mother happy, as the child thrives on joy!

Q: How many children should there be in a group and how many adults should there be?

A discussion followed, of which the writer derived: The archetype of a child care group should be the old-fashioned large family. This gave rise to many questions, as no family has 12 babies. Our task is now to work with many forms of groups, each having their own questions.

MG: Try to establish routines for the children as much as possible without change. If changes are necessary, make them after a half or a whole year.

The following holds true regarding human rhythms:

The ego - 24 hour rhythm
Astral - 7 day rhythm
Etheric - 1 month rhythm
Physical - 1 year

We should also make a list of problems as well as suggestions for solutions. It would be good to find people prepared to specialize in studying each year by itself. During the first third of each period the child is most vulnerable.

First year (of 3 year period)
First 4 months (of first year)
First 3 months (of pregnancy)

Q: What about vaccination?

MG: Steiner spoke about vaccination, which at the time was only against smallpox. He said that spiritual development in the adult is the only way to combat the negative effects. Vaccinations weaken the immune system and the ego development. To combat this, we must fill ourselves with love, idealism, joy, enthusiasm, religion and culture!

Q: Can you say more about how the astral body of the educator works in the etheric body of the child?

M.G.: We speak about the Pedagogical Law, which Steiner gives in Lecture 2 of his *Curative Course*. The Pedagogical Law is that the higher body of the teacher influences the next lower body of the child:

- What lives in the **ego** of the teacher, works upon the **astral** body of the child.
- What lives in the **astral** of the teacher, works upon the **etheric** body of the child.
- What lives in the **etheric** of the teacher, works upon the **physical** body of the child.
- What the teacher creates in the **physical** is part of the child's **destiny**.

When the teacher works with his ego, he stimulates the astral body of the child with light and warmth. The adult's work with the Subsidiary Exercises' influence his astral body, and have a positive effect on the children - it is then easy to establish good habits. Rhythm, repeating things, strengthens the etheric body and also the physical body.

Flaws or basic moods from one life which have not been overcome, influence the next lower body in our next life. The karma we carry in our astral, etheric, and physical bodies, is formed through our past lives. However, in our ego we don't carry impressions from past lives, there we are free and can work to overcome, to transform and to heal our past. In developing our ego capacity we can gain power to bring the Pedagogical Law into effect.

For further understanding, Michaela Glöckler recommends her booklet *Begabung and Behinderung* in which aspects of the pedagogical law and self-experience in the 12 senses are described.

Diagnostic, Pedagogical and Therapeutic Tasks in the Kindergarten Ann Pratt, Peterborough, New Hampshire

A report of a workshop at the Kolisko Conference with Bruno Callegaro, M.D., from Kassel, Germany, and Bonnie River, remedial educator and kindergarten teacher from Boulder, Colorado.

This workshop was attended by some 60 people, including many kindergarten teachers, three physicians, several therapists, and people involved with teacher preparation. For a part of each session, Dr. Callegaro and Bonnie River gave presentations, but a great deal of the time was spent in discussions during which our workshop leaders tried to help us to think differently about case studies of children in our care. At times we were disappointed and even stretched to frustration that more “answers” were not given. Yet this was, of course, the point of the leaders' approach - opening doors and inspiring us to investigate and research further - to come to a fuller understanding of what they put before us. We all were given a direction, and many tools and jewels to carry away with us.

The highlights revolved around two children Bonnie described out of pure observation from a classroom setting. No medical, parent's or other teacher's descriptions were part of this picture. We were urged to avoid coming too quickly to the usual question -

“What should I do?” - but to try to create an empty space into which the child could tell us what he/she needed us to do. Some methods on how to accomplish this task constituted our work together.

We were encouraged to work with polarities - to consider children in extremes within the elements, for example: our two case-study children presented a very contrasting set of moist and dry elements. In addition, we were advised to be sure to appreciate the struggle children experience in finding their way into a physical body, with all the wondrous extremes and difficulties that inheritance gives, and to allow them that struggle in the physical and soul realms, while at the same time to see them as beings of both point and periphery. Our study of a child should bring in as many people as possible who deal with the child. Our own view as the teacher provides only one aspect. Parents, doctors, therapists and other teachers should all be involved in contributing observations.

We were urged to delay judgment for quite some time, until those around the child hear and see what the child tells them is the right way of approaching a remedy. A picture that helps to clarify this method is to

perceive the many level of will activity in society around the child, and - as knights of the round table see everything from all sides - to have many

The six basic exercises can be found in Guidance in Esoteric Training by Rudolf Steiner, or in WECAN's new booklet, Spiritual Insights.