

Waldorf Journal Project #3

June 2004

AWSNA

Challenges on the Path of Child Development

Compiled and edited by

David Mitchell

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 book other than the one standing before us and this is the children themselves. But in order to read this book, we need to develop the widest possible interest in each individual child!

— Rudolf Steiner



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Foreword

The Waldorf Journal Project, sponsored by the Waldorf Curriculum Fund, brings to English-speaking audiences translations from essays, magazines, and specialized studies from around the world.

This third edition of translations is comprised of articles intended for personal and faculty study. Some of the articles, such as the ones on life's anxieties/life's opportunities, hearing, sleep disturbances, sexuality, puberty and its crisis, and drug addiction, will be significant to share with parents. Hopefully, they will be aids in helping to understand and transform some of the challenges the modern world has placed on children and on raising children.

All the articles are available on-line at

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The editor is interested in receiving your comments on the articles selected. We would also be interested in hearing what areas you would like to see represented in future Journal Projects. If you know of specific articles that you would like to see translated, please contact me.

— David Mitchell, editor
Waldorf Journal Projects

Life's Anxieties – Life's Opportunities

Anxiety and Its Importance to Inner Development

Two Essays

by

Pietro Archiati and Felicitas Vogt

Introduction

Rudolf Steiner characterized what the results of the materialistic world view of the nineteenth century would be if, during the course of the twentieth century, this world view was not redeemed by a conscious, spiritual impulse. In a lecture series titled *Becoming Human, World Soul, and World Spirit*, he foretold that if a turning-toward the spiritual did not take place, there would be a “war of all against all” in the future. Steiner stated that during the time when materialistic intellectualism would bring imaginative life to its “highest level,” also raging within humankind’s subconscious would be that which “enslaved people in their instincts.”¹

How can knowledge and insight of spiritual connections be gained? In a lecture given at Easter time on March 27, 1921, Steiner explained that this path can only be found through pain and suffering. With this foundation it is easy to understand that the present human situation is, in many ways, fear-provoking.

Only a spiritual world view in opposition to materialism can free us from the present condition. Only a world view that embraces the reality of the spiritual can counterbalance the destructive effects of a materialistic world view. There must be a turnaround that works on all of us since we are all permeated by materialistic beliefs.

The following article is a combination of two lectures were given by Felicitas Vogt and Pietro Archiati in the spring of 1996 at the delegate’s conference for the Anthroposophical Medical Society. The theme of these essays is the justification and the task of fear in our time.

—*Felicitas Vogt*

Living Fearlessly with Anxiety: The Therapeutic Mission of Fear in Human Development

by

Pietro Archiati

If we observe the behavior of a small child and ask the questions: Does the child have *angst* about one thing or another? Is he afraid that today, as an exception, he will not get any nourishment or will not be able to fall asleep? Is the child perhaps afraid of losing his parents or of becoming ill? From our own life experience we would, of course, know that all of these questions are superfluous. The small child has no anxiety because he can not yet have fear; he is not yet capable of angst. Something basic to being a child is that the capacity to have anxiety is not yet present. Our thoughts flow out of the conclusion that only adults are capable of angst.

Let us look back at development thousands of years ago around the fifth or sixth millennium before Christ. If we practice this possibility of soul metamorphosis and transplant ourselves into the spiritual situation of people living at that time, we find something similar to the small child. To our amazement, in the ancient Indian or Persian cultures if one spoke of angst, they would not know what was meant. They did not know anxiety.

Angst came about during human development just as it develops during the course of a human life. It is dependent upon development. Children experience natural fear but this is different from existential anxiety. Existential anxiety and fear have to do with consciousness and can therefore not be present in a small child because that which we call consciousness, the ability to be conscious of one's own self, is not yet present in a small child. That is why the entire phenomenon of angst and fear that so very much preoccupies humankind today, and will continue to do so, can be appropriately considered only from the perspective of development.

Taking Development Seriously

Here, it should be pointed out that in the Spiritual Science of Rudolf Steiner, the methodically considered perspective of development is the most important. All phenomena can be understood only if we embed them within the course of development. We must ask what it means that anxiety is a developmental, modern phenomena of our times, what it means to live in a time when fear and anxiety have become illnesses.

As little as one thousand years ago it would have been impossible to bring up angst as a theme. We would have searched fruitlessly for such a phenomenon. For instance, if we opened up a lexicon used during Goethe's time, we would find, surprisingly, that the word "angst" was hardly used at that time in the German language; there are only the words "*angst sein*" (to be fearful), but under "angst" there is nothing. The word "*Sorge*" is found in German which means "care, trouble, or sorrow. In *Faust*, it is the impulse of *Sorge* which makes him go blind; and Faust overcomes his trouble through the knowledge that he is blind in the physical world but he will see in the spiritual world. Goethe intuited something very profound: People must have angst because they have become blind to the extrasensory, the spiritual, and they no longer know by what powers and forces they are being supported. They have become boxed into the physical-material. Existential anxiety comes about by "seeing" only the material because one no longer knows anything about the essence of the spiritual world. One is no longer conscious of it and that it is full of positive forces and carries us daily.

If we very consciously consider anxiety by means of the perspective of development we find in the Spiritual Science of Rudolf Steiner an important statement that is also the central declaration about the meaning of development. Anxiety has arisen; it had to arise and it definitely belongs to development because anxiety goes hand in hand with the narrowing of consciousness. In order to become an individual each one of us must separate ourselves from the whole. A small child does not have existential anxiety because it "goes with the flow" and does not yet have the capability to become separate, to go into isolation and therefore into anxiety, to feel abandoned by everyone else. Anxiety has to do with the fact that none of us may be identified with the whole any longer. Because of the fall of man—in this case a fall into separateness; i.e. not a fall in the moral sense, but a primal necessity of development—everyone stands alone. This "being alone" is the source of existential anxiety.

Narrowness within the "I" Creates Anxiety

Anxiety comes from constriction. It comes about when people have so constricted themselves that they stand completely alone and no longer intrinsically experience communion with the whole. They are fearful of being alone, of being abandoned. Today, it is not only the fact that people who share the burden are leaving. There is a double burden. Anxiety does not come only from being alone, not only from fear of being without another, but also from being against another.

This splitting, or atomizing, of humankind necessarily bears a certain amount of anxiety with it through the fact that I want to assert myself as an independent person compared to all the others. I can not experience my

independence without asserting myself against all the factors that want to “swallow” me. This need for self-assertion against all that which wants to take me in creates a state of conflict with others.

This conflict situation is the last radicalization of anxiety: It is not enough that I have lost companionship with all the other people, but, on top of that, I have the anxiety that I will not be able to assert myself against everyone else and will have them against me because they also are full of anxiety. That is why I am always trying to fight them or control them. I must experience others in this way since they are also trying to repel me and assert themselves.

That which we experience internally is outwardly expressed in business, in the area of competition, for example, an unmerciful conflict. If we were to generalize and deepen this phenomenon, we can see within it an absolute, basic feature of the developmental necessity of the individualization of every person. The fear is two-fold that each person will be left standing alone, hemmed-in, in their isolated being. By understanding anxiety as a polarity, and, we can once again survey the task of freedom: we are shown that in the course of development two one-sided aspects appeared in succession that are still apparent today.

Expulsion from Anxiety-free Paradise

The initial one-sided aspect was Paradise: a beautiful image that in reality symbolizes a stage of development. There was communion in Paradise, without self-consciousness, without individualization. Now, in a middle stage of development, we experience the second one-sided aspect: humankind atomized through the loss of the original oneness.

The great myths speak of this atomization of humans: the image of the fall of man in Genesis, the myths of Osiris or Dionysus whose bodies were split. Humankind, unified in the beginning, is symbolized with these images. We had to split apart in order for the individual “I” to come about. An individual’s dignity arises when one is able to experience oneself as an independent individuality. This individualizing and splitting through extensive loss of being one with another, communion, we clarify with the term “egoism.” Steiner warned us many times against proscribing egoism because we must accept it as an impulse that is necessary to development just like angst. The task of the future, the task of free consciousness will be to reconcile these two one-sided aspects that we have successively experienced: communion without individuality and present individualization through the loss of communion.

Thus, the whole task of the future consists of weaving together the two primal dimensions of humanity: the state of being for one another, that is, intertwined with another, and independence of every individual. This is the concept of the organism: Human beings are, in actual fact, a single spiritual organism. This image has always been used in holy writings and scriptures to represent humanity’s task for the future. In a physical organism (let us

think specifically of the human body), these two primal dimensions have been perfectly reconciled to one another. An organism is ruled by perfect unity; otherwise it would be ill or dead. It is a unified whole in which all the members are simultaneously intertwined and individually independent. Thus, the heart has a different task than the lungs or liver; otherwise it would not be an organism. This is an image of the future task of all of humanity: individuals merging together again and building up the spiritual body of Christ.

It is our further task that this building-up of the unified spiritual body of Christ in which humanity will again become a unified entity occurs in such a way that the individuality, the uniqueness of each person, is not lost. Otherwise, we would again have oneness without diversity, i.e. monotony. Oneness within diversity, individuality within the contributions and the being of every member, is what creates the beauty of the organism. If this is the whole task of the future, that one person is perfected thanks to another person so that communion becomes perfect because every individual contributes something new to it and every individuality perfects itself through it, that they integrate themselves into the whole and obtain their identity from the whole, then communion and individuality will no longer be experienced as polar opposites but rather much more as a reciprocal deepening. Communion deepens the individuality of every person and, conversely, individuality enriches communion and makes it ever truer.

Anxiety about Having Something or Not Having Something

If this is the two-fold task of humanity, then angst will become more strongly radicalized in the future because evil will also radicalize itself and will two-fold as well: On the one hand, fear that individualism will cause a loss of connection, and on the other hand fear of becoming totally merged into the community, i.e. being absorbed and losing one's own individuality, one's own uniqueness.

If we view angst as such a polarity between individuality and community, then individuality and communion are, on one side, the two most valuable and comprehensive assets of humanity and, on the other side, the loss which human beings must fear the most.

We can understand anxiety better if we stay away from moralization and place it in context with the largest accomplishments of development. Angst is fear of missing these accomplishments. In other words, we begin to understand anxiety from the side the two-fold possibility of missing the mark, so to speak. Thus, if we understand anxiety from this aspect, we stop moralizing because we see a two-fold task of development in a positive light; namely, to reach perfect individuality and complete communion. Anxiety does not consist of something evil that is real because there is no real evil; if it were real, that would be good.

In summary we can say: Either a person has anxiety about losing his or her individuality in some way or anxiety about missing out on community, being for and with each other.

Aspects of individuality such as angst and fear of missing something are just as endless as aspects of communion. However, precisely because these phenomena have proven to be so complex, it makes sense, as a foundation, to connect this entire complexity to the primordial polarity. That allows us a methodical thought orientation so that we can ask ourselves again and again: Of what am I afraid? Am I afraid of losing my own, original, individuality or of not being able to realize it? Or, am I perhaps afraid of being absorbed into the community which may prevent me from realizing my own self?

As I have in the example of an organism we really only lose both together and can only realize both together. Either both dimensions are present or both are lost.

Do not Be Afraid of Fear!

The fundamental step toward overcoming fear and anxiety is accepting fear and anxiety as necessary to development. At the beginning of this article I stated that we would be as children if it were not for fear. Without angst there would be neither fear of failure, freedom without failure is no freedom, individually or in the community. Individuals must have anxiety, in the healthy, positive sense, in order to remain alert and vigilant; they know that individuality and communion do not find a balance without each the other.

People must learn this and practice it daily because they will not be able to do it at the drop of a hat once they accept it. Steiner outlined the ways in which a person should handle themselves in regard to this theme in the six basic training exercises known as the “auxiliary exercises.”

There is, for example, his lecture about equanimity. We could take equanimity as a counter to anxiety, anxiety as a deficiency of equanimity and equanimity as the overcoming of anxiety. However, Rudolf Steiner stressed that a person who exhibits calm and composure at the outset is an indifferent person but not a person of equanimity. Equanimity is always overcoming “non-equanimity.” In other words, it is all right if anxiety crops up again and again. Our task is to overcome it again and again so that equanimity can be achieved. Only achieved equanimity is true equanimity.

This is the first way in which we can accept anxiety as a therapeutic impulse for the development of humanity, anxiety as having a central and continuous function in working on ourselves. If a person never experiences anxiety, then he or she has nothing to work on in themselves. This would not be for the best but for the worst because he or she could imagine that he or she had to work only on others! Because circumstances in the world and life will always provide us with an ample supply of anxieties, each one of us

has enough to work on with ourselves. This task of working on oneself is most important.

Anxiety and Egoism are Necessary for Development

We must consider egoism and anxiety in a similar way. It would be a grave mistake to think that it would be better not to have egoism, that it is too bad egoism has come about in the course of development. Egoism also gives us the opportunity to work on ourselves: Egoism exists to be transformed.

In order to overcome egoism it is necessary to bring it to the forefront. How can one overcome what one does not have? (This goes for anxiety as well.) The most important requirement for enjoying the experience of overcoming anxiety is to have anxiety again and again. It is completely all right if angst appears over and over again. Someone who becomes angry about his or her anxiety is basically a lazy person who does not want to have anything to do.

The good in life does not come about through an absence of anxiety, but rather that I daily, joyfully, work on my anxiety and find the reasons for it and the strength to overcome it, and to find a connection to that which is in me that can overcome my anxieties anew. Forbidding anxiety is just as much an act of moralizing as forbidding egoism. In that case, one does not want to see the absolutely positive aspect—that this narrowness, the anxiety that comes from it, where each one is alone and separated from all others, occurred for a reason—to present humanity with the constant positive task of working on their anxieties from new perspectives, so that life's anxieties can be overcome.

Materialism as a Deeper Source of Anxiety

I would like to go a step further and speak about another over-all source of anxiety from another perspective: materialism. Why is materialism an over-all cause of anxiety? As has already been mentioned, materialism consists in the fact that human beings live, in their thinking, feeling, and willing, as if the spiritual, the supernatural, did not exist. Perhaps someone knows theoretically that he has a guardian angel, for example, or perhaps he even denies it. Materialism can be a way of life as well as a scientific theory. Theoretical materialism reached its highpoint in the nineteenth century and practical materialism became a marked feature of the twentieth century in which people lived as though the spiritual did not exist. People no longer even try to find a theoretical justification for their assertions. What is the result of such a denial or disavowal of the spiritual? We would have nothing to fear. Let me put it this way: Since we are getting to know the material

world better scientifically and are better able to master it technically, we have nothing to fear from the assumption that the spiritual does not exist because we are managing the physical world better and better all the time.

It may become clear (do not take this as philosophical proof, it is more of a substantiation from practical life) that anxiety is rooted in the fact that we ignore an entire world that does exist, that we do not take this world into consideration. The narrowness within humanity, the atomization, is due to the fact that human beings have had to lose every direct connection with the spiritual. If we had not lost this direct connection we could not experience ourselves as single individualities separate from all others. That means individualization is only possible through materialism. The dry-spell of materialism is there to be overcome in the course of development. Ironically, this is exactly what we ignore through our materialism!

The True “I” Has no Fear

We experience, for example, only the lower “I” and ignore our higher “I.” Since today everyone ignores their higher “I,” they ignore the fact that everything they encounter (which we call karma or destiny), whether good or bad fortune, an illness, or a happy meeting, is chosen, planned, and yearned-for. Everything that happens to me is longed-for by my higher “I” with a view to the positive that can grow from it, and only the positive! My higher “I,” from which I am separated in my normal consciousness, carries within it an indestructible, complete trust in karma because it knows that it is supported by karma. Even while immersed in the pain of an accident, the higher “I” knows why even this was desired with joy and gratitude, knowing full well that this accident could make possible certain strides in development which would have been impossible if things had been easier.

The higher “I” lives in a world of positive forces: karma. Karma is purely positive. The lower “I” experiences anxiety because it perceives this positive as a negative because it shrinks from the task of overcoming oneself. Because materialistic people of today are no longer consciously connected with their higher “I,” this trustworthy and supportive karma, they no longer consider how all people are interwoven together nor do they know of the way in which all people’s higher egos, in their pure substance, really only want to mutually assist one another.

Steiner said that the true “I” of every person is a part of the Christ Being, and this higher ego, the will of the higher ego, is pure goodness, pure love. The higher “I” can not will anything other than good and loving things for itself and for others. In the same measure that a person submits himself to his destiny in which karma is active, in that measure he will overcome the illusion of being alone and immerse himself into the forces that weave us together and support all of us.

Material Separates – Spirit Unifies

The fundamental law of material is exclusion. The fundamental law of spirit is inclusion. Therefore we must have angst in the material world because things there are mutually exclusive: What I have you can not have at the same time, what I drink now you can not drink at the same time, where I am physically occupying space you can not occupy that space at the same time. The basic law of material is exclusion and that instills in us anxiety. Inclusion, as the primal law of spirit, awakens in us trust and allows us to experience togetherness with others. Another person can also learn and understand what I learn and understand, maybe even better than myself. A work of art that I enjoy can be enjoyed at the same time by another. When we gather knowledge together, my progress does not exclude the progress of another, but rather has the effect of mutual stimulation in the spiritual aspect.

Actually, we can understand the entire angst phenomena when we look at it as a mental mirroring of the spiritual state of materialism. Materialism is the primary spiritual phenomenon of our time, and anxiety is the primary soul phenomenon of our time. An example of the physical mirroring of materialism in our time is the AIDS phenomena in which the so-called material cause, whether in the form of microbes, viruses, or bacteria, is difficult to detect and also controversial. Basically, it is a complete breakdown of the physical, just as anxiety is a complete breakdown of soul forces. And materialism completely eclipses the human spirit. Materialism has to do with global, not limited, phenomena, as perceived mentally in the form of anxiety and physically in the form of AIDS, which are related to some physical organ or some partial occurrence. Positive can come about if one daily overcomes angst as well as materialism just as physical breakdown can be halted by rebuilding with the help of soul and spirit forces.

Overcoming anxiety the first time always requires a firm grasp of the meaning of the situation. Anxiety has its roots in a lack of meaning. For this reason I have described angst as a phenomenon of consciousness. A child with an undeveloped consciousness can have no anxiety. Anxiety always proves itself to be some aspect of a lack of meaning.

Two-Fold Initiation: Mysticism and Ecstasy

Steiner depicted that, especially before Christ, there were two kinds of initiation. Within the Northern folk groups such as the Persians or the Germanic people, we find an initiation into the macro cosmos, and within the Southern folk groups such as the Indians or the Egyptians, we find an initiation into the micro cosmos. The Christ mystery, Christianity, held the task of bringing this two-fold initiation back into a synthesis. In Greece we also see both together; the Greek cultural epoch fell within the time of the Mystery at Golgotha. The Dionysius initiation had more to do with the

microcosmic human and the Apollo initiation the macrocosmic. Initiation into the micro cosmos was called mysticism and the other initiation was called ecstasy, the ecstatic going-out into the macro cosmos.

In light of the two-fold quality of initiation, we can perhaps understand the origins of anxiety in a deeper way. What do people find when they go deeply inside themselves? They find in their internal selves all the impulses of egoism. This place of egoism, the evil in humans that exists in everyone, was identified by Steiner as malice, betrayal, and murder.

Humans are denied access to their internal selves initially because they would perish from shame and horror if they were actually confronted with what forces must come about internally in order to separate themselves from all other beings, in order to stand before the entire world as an independent individual. Every person, no matter whether he realizes it or not, unconditionally carries within himself the impulse for malice, that is, the negative aspect of thinking; being against another in thinking. In his feeling nature, his heart, he carries the forces of betrayal, that is, hate. And the impulse for murder, which is opposing another in the will, must be carried by every person because the only way we can contain ourselves within ourselves, is to have “murdered” every other being within us.

Fear of Oneself (Micro Cosmos)

This is a reality, a necessity for development. Let us assume that the ego (“I”) is a point at the beginning of development. All the beings in the world have held sway over this ego; this was the original paradise. In order to become ego-like, human beings (all of us carry these will impulses in our being) had to choose and take part in the denying of all other beings within themselves. Acknowledgement of this is a task of consciousness. Every person carries within themselves the tendency to kill another which is initially, justified. It becomes excessive when one physically kills another. Not only may you not work in me without my permission, but also I want to cut you down!

The mystery of the Apostle *Peter* presents us with the image of primal malice; denial of association with other people. We have the *Judas* mystery as a primal image of betrayal. He sought to turn over others through traitorous action. And, as a primal image of murder, we have the mystery of *Cain* who not only murdered the other in his own being but also in physical reality. Steiner stressed how astute Shakespeare was in his assertion that a person who can not appreciate and enjoy music is a person who is capable of malice, betrayal, and murder. The impulse for malice is overcome through the melody, the telling of the truth. The impulse for betrayal is overcome through the harmony, the togetherness of the tones. The impulse for murder is overcome through rhythm. This parallel also helps to illustrate Steiner’s considerations in regard to the task of art.

If we are courageous enough to admit that we not only carry all this within us, but that we must do so as a result of our development up to this day, then we can begin to not only better understand anxiety, but also overcome it.

Fear of “The Greater World” (Macro Cosmos)

What happened to the Northern people who were initiated into the macro cosmos? There were twelve initiators who helped the initiates because through this form of initiation another primal form of anxiety came about. As the individual began to penetrate into the endlessly complex macro cosmos, he would lose himself, feel faint, fear that he would melt into nothingness. Just as the Southern people’s task was to overcome egoism through sympathy and love, overcoming the fear of losing oneself in the vast expanses of the cosmos consisted of exercises in versatility and all-roundedness. The human being wants to imitate the Sun which has not just one position, but rather goes through all twelve signs of the zodiac. It is the primal image of the “I” part of human beings: Creative freedom is experienced because the “I” is able to experience twelve viewpoints of one phenomenon.

Each phenomenon can be viewed from at least twelve characteristic positions. Add to that a seven-fold aspect of soul experiences. Steiner explained this mystery of the twelve-fold, seven-fold, and three-fold, or single-fold, as the case may be, in a booklet titled *Human and Cosmic Thought*. In ancient times initiators had to be present to prevent a person from losing himself. The initiator had to look at things one time from the viewpoint of Aries, one time from the viewpoint of Sagittarius, and so forth. In today’s humanity, the task of practicing all-rounded versatility out of our own forces has grown so that we can overcome anxiety in light of the complexity of reality.

The original form of anxiety is the fear of egoism, of mine and of others, the fact that I carry the impulse within myself to kill another and vice versa. The second form of anxiety is the fear of the complexity of reality, the fear of the macro cosmos. One can master this fear only by daily practicing all-rounded versatility. To pursue this mastery, humanity was given spiritual science.

Anxiety will ever lesson just because one knows that matters can always be looked at from totally new viewpoints. But one also knows that one has the power; therein exists the ego-force, the Sun-force that visits all twelve signs of the zodiac, i.e. the force to look at things from ever new aspects. Through this one overcomes angst: I can understand it like this. Or, if it is presented another way, I can understand it in another way. I am not really at all inflexible and one-sided. Why should a person be immovable when he

has an “I” (ego) and is capable of thinking? One must only practice and within the practice of thinking lies the overcoming of angst. Anxiety comes about when thinking is not exercised. In that case, one will be fearful of not understanding things. People of today are not aware enough of how much anxiety comes about because things are not penetrated enough by thought. What I do not understand must make me afraid and what I do understand relieves anxiety in me because I know how to proceed.

The Events of the Temptation and on Mount Olive

We find this two-fold aspect of anxiety, losing oneself in the cosmos and being confronted with the threat of egoism, the murderous aspect in one’s own being, in the Gospels, in the primal phenomenon of humanity, the Christ event. In his second lecture of a series titled *From Jesus to Christ*, Steiner elaborated on this two-fold aspect, the two pillars of the three-year sojourn of Christ on Earth: the temptation at the beginning by delving into the inner nature of humankind and the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane on Mount Olive before rising again into the macro cosmos. The temptation in the desert right after the baptism in the Jordan represents the entire experience of becoming connected with the physical, the entire experience of becoming closed into the micro cosmos. By penetrating into the three-fold bodily nature Christ is initiated into the micro cosmos. Without this he would never have been able to experience what it means to be closed into this refuge of egoism, or “the hearth of evil” as Steiner called it, to experience it as “separateness.” This is the whole experience of Christ, of his becoming human, through the temptation, initiated into the human micro cosmos. The end of the three years on earth had to do with leaving the body through death, going out again into the macro cosmos, not only as the Christ but also as a man. His becoming a human being had to do with the fact that he wanted to experience death in the same way as humans. How does one experience death? Death is a flowing out into the macro cosmos. Human beings experience death in conjunction with fear, the fear of losing one’s self. And this mystery of angst, losing one’s self through flowing out into the macro cosmos, is represented by the scenes in the Garden of Gethsemane and on Mount Olive.

In the ancient initiation mysteries there were two formulations for this double aspect of a primal experience. One said either: “The world is losing me” (the impulse of egoism), or one said: “I am losing myself in the world.” Either humankind is losing me, I will encapsulate myself in my egoism and do nothing for anyone else, or I will become aggressive, I want to flow out, impose my being upon others, and break myself down in the process, and lose myself in the world.

Fear of the Depressive “Thief” and the Aggressive “Robber”

These two terms were summarized by Christ in a sentence found in the Gospel of John: “All who ever came before me are thieves and robbers. . . .” (John 10:8). This is a sentence that through ordinary theology we can understand only with difficulty. Christ is saying: Before the “I” force of the middle way, the mediation between extremes, has come about, everywhere where the force of the ego is missing. A human being is either a thief (the world is losing me) or a robber (I am losing myself in the world). The thief steals away, the world loses him, while the robber hammers through and will reach his goal by force, but thereby breaks down his own self and in this way is smashed by interacting with the cosmos. Where the power of the “I,” the power of balance, is missing, a human being is either a luciferic thief or an ahrimanic robber.

Finally, one can think about the two basic disguises of angst. Anxiety disguises itself on the one hand with depression and on the other hand with aggression. Or one can describe the two basic phenomena of depression and aggression as disguised anxiety even though there are, of course, endless aspects and paths of consideration; at least twelve, as I have indicated above.

What is depression? Fear of abandonment. What is aggression? Fear of being swallowed-up. One determines the other. Individuals who have completely encapsulated themselves experience depression and those who wish to impress their being upon others experience aggression. Aggression and depression stand in polar opposition, and they evoke each other. A depressed person is potentially aggressive and an aggressive person is potentially depressed. Still, no one wishes to remain in one-sidedness. They swing again and again from one side to the other. In depression I experience the egoism of others. In aggression the others experience my egoism. This is the see-saw of life, and the art of life is finding the balance, to overcome anxiety, depression and aggression through free flexibility. No human being can exist free of depression and aggression. There is no such thing. What does exist (and this is the task) is finding the balance again. As the pendulum swings, so both sides will become ever less extreme.

The Times Are Becoming Apocalyptically Close and People Fearful

Chapter 1, verse 3 in the Revelation of John begins: “The time is close,” *ἡ οὐρα καὶ ὁ καιρὸς ἐγγύς*. The German words “Enge” (closeness) and “angst” share the same root in the Greek word “ἐγγύς.” So the Revelation of John is saying that things are getting serious and that we may have angst because the time is “close.” The common translation of this verse is: “The time is near,” which does not make much sense. What does this mean, the time is close? Time is never close for a child. Time is experienced by a child as a

progressive continuum in which the child is embedded. Time becomes close only for a being who has consciousness of the one-time opportunity for development; a being who knows when these possibilities for development have elapsed which exist only at a certain hour of one day, or in a certain year because then the world constellation is different and he might have missed this moment of possibility. The closeness of time is part of the mystery of freedom in which human beings, in accordance with their consciousness, comprehend that freedom is only possible where there is always the possibility of missing something. And that is anxiety as the mystery of the time: Human beings must know that if the constellation of events, the constellation of world factors always returned, nothing could ever be missed because everything would be retrievable. That would mean, however, that we had no freedom.

For this reason Nietzsche held the view of eternal repetition of the same things for only a few months and then no more. He said to himself: if the same things reappear over and over, then there can be no progression to “Übermensch” (superman). Therefore, he did not speak further of the eternal reappearance of the same things. Rather, every moment is unique: “*ἡ οὐ καὶ ποτὶς ἐν γυῖ.*” The world constellation, the developmental factors, are, in this moment, able to offer me these specific possibilities for development. If I do not grab hold of them, it is too late because the developmental factors will never be like this again, allowing me to achieve exactly this.

Indefinable Angst and Incomprehensible Happiness

The closeness of time belongs to the mystery of freedom where people must grasp their momentary opportunities for development with spiritual presence and alertness or lose those opportunities forever. With endless complexity, but in each case one-time constellation of world factors, the hierarchies offer us this anxiety about the possibility of missing something as a healthy opportunity for development. The only way to overcome anxiety is for people to develop so much wakeful vigilance that they grasp their particular task and fulfill it. In this way they also overcome anxiety. However, this does not happen automatically. The healthy aspect of anxiety is that it makes us mentally aware of the unique tasks of the spirit.

The opposite of alertness in the spiritual-present of the moment is anxiety that is totally undefined, a widespread phenomenon today. It is the exact opposite of being focussed in the moment.

Within the domain of undefined angst, many people feel anxiety without being able to clearly say of what they are afraid. It is the emotional mirroring of what Steiner explained in the thirteenth chapter of his book *The Philosophy of Freedom* as modern human being’s hunt for indefinable “happiness.”

People want to be happy. However, someone who wants to be happy, in reality, wants nothing specific. And because, in his spirit, he does not want anything specific, within his soul there grows an undefined anxiety which seems to come from nothing.

Someone can overcome this life addiction, the search for happiness, if he understands that real happiness is a by-product which will be imparted to him when he stops wanting to be happy. Otherwise, he will never be happy. If I take joy in the task that is now concretely before me, my opportunity for self-realization, and if I can achieve so much love for the deed that it becomes satisfying in and of itself, then the indefinable anxiety will cease of its own accord.

Love for the situation-appropriate action that is present at the very moment causes the hunt for happiness, which can make people unhappy, to disappear and allows them to overcome free-floating anxiety which is such a plague on human beings today.

Without Concern for Daily Cares

I would like to conclude with a phrase by Goethe which he spoke to Eckermann on August 16, 1824, about how he saw trust, giving-in to destiny, as overcoming angst. "In the morning we are the cleverest, but also the most concerned, because anxiety is also a kind of cleverness, albeit only passive. Foolishness does not know anxiety." In other words, anxiety is cleverness from the passive side. If we are passive-clever we have cares, we have anxiety. However, when cleverness becomes active, we overcome our concerns, we overcome anxiety. Our concern makes us notice the present task.

Transforming Consciousness through Anxiety

Anxiety Phenomena in Daily Life and Its Opportunities

by

Felicitas Vogt

The purpose of this essay is to describe the typical angst phenomena of our time with their destructive effect and also, especially, in their awakening effect, so that anxiety can be understood not only as a threat but also as an opportunity. Since this essay contains a number of statements and research from Rudolf Steiner, a knowledge of his life-work, anthroposophy, will be helpful.

Let me begin by describing a few characteristics of our time that typify symptomatically the conclusion of the twentieth century. One of the most distinguished psychotherapists of our time, Viktor Frankl, characterized the twentieth century as the century of anxiety. Statistically, every ninth German suffers from some phobia, an anxiety disorder that makes it difficult for that person to complete his or her biography out of his own strength. Last year the World Health Organization (WHO) published a census showing that approximately six percent of all people suffer from anxiety disorders. The tendency is increasing.

However, anxiety appears in disguise, hidden behind phenomena that Frankl characterizes as signs of our time: depression, aggression, and addiction. Interestingly, anxiety is most prevalent, in all its apparitions, in those countries that have marked outward security and comfort.

The recent emergence of the term “angst” or “anxiety” in literature shows just how much the concept of anxiety belongs to the twentyfirst century. Søren Kierkegaard in 1844, the middle of the nineteenth century, was the first to describe the phenomenon of anxiety in an essay he published titled *The Term Anxiety*. We know from his biography that Kierkegaard, an anxious neurotic, wrote from a deep personal relationship with anxiety.

As the anxiety-ridden state of soul in the waning nineteenth century gradually became a heeded subject, literature about the phenomenon of anxiety grew undeniably in the twentieth century. No more is it only single individuals who are threatened by anxiety but rather modern biographies seem to be fundamentally characterized as being accompanied by anxiety.

Jacques Lusseyran sees in anxiety not only a gesture of soul that should be overcome as quickly as possible, but he attributes to it an important task and he calls upon anxiety for help in his booklet titled *Against the Defilement of the "I."* He turns directly to his readers: "And now I call upon you – all who would never recommend anxiety – let us have anxiety!" Lusseyran adjures us to accept anxiety as something that jolts us awake and to finally open our eyes to the dangerous position in which our own, non-self-seeking ego finds itself. Still very young, undeveloped, and inexperienced, it finds itself in constant danger of being buried, suffocated, and killed when it is left without protection to the outer world and its attacks.

Drug addicts who are in therapy after a long career of taking drugs and are asked about their motives for their drug consumption often say anxiety was their main motivation. Not fear of death which a drug-addict usually does not have, but rather fear of a life that is dead.

A second motive that is given over and over again is hopelessness of ever identifying with something, not with one's own self or with any kind of goal that could give meaning to existence and a perspective on the future.

A further characteristic of our time is the "burn-out syndrome." In the last few years thousands of manuals and self-help books have been published on the subject of burn-out syndrome which attests to how bad the suffering of these symptoms of exhaustion and burn-out really are and how necessary it is to find help. In many cases these symptoms are caused by a deep, existential anxiety that the sufferer does not admit to having. An important result of research by Steiner helps us understand the sudden appearance of the burn-out syndrome around the middle of the twentieth century.¹

Next to the pathological anxiety disorders, there are an abundance of anxieties that pervade our daily lives without provocations by any particular situation. These anxieties can be categorized into three groups. While one category is related more to individuals, the second category is related to the social environment, and the third to the general situation of the times. I would like to cite a few typical examples of all three categories.

An often-expressed anxiety that belongs in the first group is not living up to a certain standard, a certain idea of perfection. As an example, let us look at the qualities of a person representing the picture of perfection as suggested in advertising. The man must be good-looking, tan, and muscular with brilliant, white teeth, appropriate, stylish, hip clothing, surrounded by attractive female admirers, used to success, and rich. Together they enjoy their freedom which in advertising language means free time and is characterized by a white yacht, blue sky, and blazing sun. Almost as an afterthought the product being advertised appears.

This is a typical example of the advertising images we see on a daily basis and as our children and adolescents also experience them. It is one idealistic image of the human being; completely spellbound and captivated

by the physical. Trying to live up to these suggested idealistic images causes anxiety for many people.

I see in this also one of the many causes of anorexia and bulimia. Renunciation of the flatness and emptiness of the world of advertising all around us seems to me to be a major motive for this particular disturbance of the soul. This typical statement from one adolescent is very telling: "I really don't want to grow up into the world of you adults!" Henning Köhler expressed this same sentiment in his book titled *The Quiet Yearning to Go Home* (not yet translated into English). The adolescents in this book do not want to fully, responsibly incarnate in the world that they find before them. Rather, they withdraw back from whence they came.

Fear of growing old is another common cause of anxiety. An entire industry has been built around methods for defying the aging process. A short time ago an anti-aging pill came onto the market in the United States. It was heralded as a great achievement and is touted to make one ten to fifteen years younger, including the reproductive forces. Years-long research has been invested in this and billions spent. This pill is already selling rapidly even in South America, a clear symptom of anxiety about aging. The value and importance of qualities of age, the wisdom-filled, blessing old person seem to me to be increasingly disappearing from our consciousness.

Another form of anxiety that plagues us daily is the fear of illness. I would like to speak briefly here about AIDS an illness which has brought the entire world together in horror at its terrifying specter.

A long-term study conducted in the United States about this disease examined the mental/emotional states of HIV-positive persons during the course of their illness. Two groups of patients were treated intensively both medically and psychologically starting at a particular stage of the disease. One group consisted of patients who were filled with high anxiety from the first outbreak of their illness and followed every symptom with spellbound interest. In the other group were patients who were little affected by anxiety and therefore had a rather relaxed attitude about the symptoms of their illness as they appeared. The results of the study showed that the patients who were fearful and anxious proceeded to the subsequent stages of the disease rapidly. In contrast, in those patients who had less anxiety a remission of the illness was observed, often even a reversal, a healing process, so that the disease never developed into AIDS.

A Swiss physician summarized these results by using the acronym AIDS which stands for Acquired Immune Deficit Syndrome, and put it like this: *Angst Ist Das Schlimmste* (anxiety is the worst).

It is really moving when one thinks of the saying: Fear goes straight to the marrow. Literally with AIDS as the immune cells are formed in the bone marrow, here we can vividly see the deep relationship between the soul aspect of a person and his physical aspect.

Besides the anxieties on an individual level, we also suffer daily from feelings of anxiety that are related to the social environment. Who among us does not know the fear of non-recognition, contempt, criticism, or loss of prestige? The list goes on and on. Many forms of angst that are often also disguised in the social realm. I would like to refer to two trends that seem especially characteristic of the times. On one side there is enormous anxiety about being insignificant; experiencing loss of influence and prestige which often shows up in the social sphere as behaviors involving the exercise of power. Today we have very much to do with this form even though it is often hidden and subtle. There is certainly a tendency to this living in each one of us which must be constantly examined in order to consciously overcome it.

However, the power only functions if it comes together with corresponding social behavior. A behavior that is likewise determined by anxiety but has a completely different cause is self-condemnation. Both these anxieties can lead toward a very dysfunctional symbiosis in the social sphere. Those who exercise power need those who have fear of self-condemnation. A melding can take place between the two groups that is often experienced by those in the social environment as something akin to a fortress into which only those found to be sympathizers are accepted.

Steiner expressed great concern about these old social structures as they related to the college of teachers in Waldorf schools. He characterized three formerly undeveloped social structures as follows:

The first form, which is well-known to all of us, is the hardened, fixed social structure. Within this structure there is one personality, or one small group, who has mastered some special knowledge and brings it to every situation. A lively discussion process, a real debate about something, is stifled. Seriously weighty statements, abruptly spoken, leads to silence. In this way wisdom can be perverted into a weapon of persuasion. Steiner very succinctly named this form of social structure the dogmatic form. A practical example may clarify the effect of such a social structure:

A college of teachers puts forward this question: How should Halloween be celebrated in the upper grades, with or without electronic music? The colleagues struggled to decide if they should allow recorded music, and if they should allow electrically amplified music. A pertinent statement by Steiner is thrown into the debate: "We must be successful in removing every form of technology out of the education of children up to age nineteen." That was the end of the struggle; the end of lively debate. The imposition of Steiner's statement (there are many others by him on the subject of technology) in order to push through one's own opinion divided the college of teachers into two camps: those for and those against. Instead of moving forward to a new level of community through debate of the question, what transpired was division and paralyzing hardening of positions within the college of teachers, a sad earmark of an outmoded social structure.

The second kind of social structure likewise prevents any lively process. However, in this case, it is not an individual who imposes but rather each person hides behind the opinion of the others. In this way the following, for example, can happen: The weekly teacher's conference takes place before the meeting of the College of Teachers. When certain telephone lines are busy for hours on Thursday afternoon and this is repeated week after week, even an unsuspecting young teacher will slowly realize that during this time the actual consensus of opinion of certain groups about themes of the afternoon or evening conference is taking place, and in the conference only fixed, group views are represented: "But we think . . . My colleague also thinks . . . I have spoken with the other colleagues," and so forth. Since the individuals lack the courage to come to their own conclusions, a lively process of debate within the college of teachers is not allowed. This can only lead to partisanship and mutual conflict. Steiner called this energy of dissolution within the community sectarian.

He certainly did not mean that exchanging ideas or having discussions before or after the conference should not be allowed. It is only critical how individuals who have had previous discussions react to such a process during the conference. Does someone take an active part in the discussion, alert and speaking up at the right moment in order to carry the process forward without intent, and beholden only to his or her own, just-forming ideas, or does the someone take support only from something that has already been determined thereby just passively accepting a development, a process? This is the decisive question.

Steiner suffered endlessly under the third form of social structure. While the dogmatic community flourishes under the influence of Ahriman and the sectarian form is under the influence of Lucifer, the third form of social structure is affected by both the Ahrimanic and the Luciferic forces together.² The result of this cooperation is a tendency to confuse compromise.

The group in this third form is lacking the energy to advance into the conviction of their own ideas and to persevere until they are accomplished. Community processes are met with a lukewarm attitude and not carried to their conclusion. There is a lack of enthusiasm and no commitment to the actual goal. One feels bound to the common ideal only insofar as nothing disagreeable can grow out of it. Relativism and pragmatism are frequently cultivated without realizing that irreproachable truths do exist.

The Study of Man by Rudolf Steiner is, for example, such an irreproachable truth that may not be corrupted through compromise. When certain actions become necessary in light of an anthroposophical knowledge of man, then these actions should be completed whether it is socially pleasant or not. The aspect of personal agreeableness may not play a role when a really clear conviction of knowledge is present. I will not elaborate here on how such a conviction of knowledge can be attained. But there are clear steps that lead to it as Steiner described in the course on curative education.

Consider all the anxiety phenomena together. Whether they are related primarily to an individual, the social environment, or the situation of the times such as fear of wars, environmental catastrophes, natural disasters, and so forth, we see them characterized by a common criterion: the fear of separation, separation in which connection is sought and a yearning to be connected is present. It could be separation from the home environment, from loved ones, from a certain life situation, or, the furthest level, separation from one's own self by the loss of identity.

People today experience themselves primarily as homeless, without protection or identity. How was it in earlier times?

Let us turn for a moment to the past in order to compare the feeling for life that earlier generations had with the feelings of people today. A modern-day, homeless, lonely person stands vis-à-vis a person from an earlier time who is supported by the community and wrapped in social protection. The further we go back in the past the larger and more stable were the groups of people who supported individuals, offered them security, and protected them. An individual could identify with that group.

In earliest times the soul incarnated into the whole human stream which gave it an identity. Later, the soul incarnated into a certain geographic area where a certain language was spoken. There, where one's own language was spoken, one felt spiritually at home. Identification with one's own people followed, subsequently with the tribe, then with the clan, and finally, the identity group was the family. Initially, the extended family but in the end the latest remaining identity group is the nuclear family, and today even this identification is rarely carried past childhood.

In this development it has also become clear that since the middle of the twentieth century the traditional source of strength has been quelled. In prior times, an individual was representative of a group and the individual carried the features of the group as if wearing a protective mantle. Today the individual stands alone. Since they are completely dependent upon themselves, individuals can now identify only with themselves. This is a dramatic moment in human history. For the first time in human development the ego is set apart from every group. For the first time human beings are representative of themselves.

Understandably strong egocentric forces are necessary for this self-assertion. For the time being egoism is a necessary prerequisite. Around and around it goes: The more a person is separated from others and supported by egoism, the more isolated is that person's "I." This developmental step becomes especially dramatic during encounters when the respective egos collide "naked and unprotected," as Steiner characterized it.

Here is a typical example of this drama: Imagine this situation in an elevator. Someone in the elevator wants to ride up to the tenth floor. Modern man that he is, he stands as a "significant representative" of himself in this

little room. As soon as another “significant individuality” steps into the elevator, the space narrows regardless of how large the room is in reality. At each floor other “significant personalities” enter the elevator. Now, standing close together becomes so painful that certain gestures of avoidance come about with which we are all familiar: Someone looks nervously at his watch, at the floor indicator, the points of her shoes become interesting, or the lint on a sleeve. An encounter with the others is avoided by being centered on one’s own self. Finally, the elevator door opens onto the eighth floor and a dog enters. The tension releases and one can turn one’s attention to the dog; one is finally free from fixation on self.

It is always fascinating to observe, (also with one’s own self), how often this kind of non-encounter is repeated. Those who are representing only themselves must necessarily feel lonely, isolated, and trapped in their innermost being.

The Latin word *angustia*, which is the root word for the German words *Enge* and *Angst* (closeness and anxiety), shows just how direct a relationship there is between both. Having reached this painful point of development, it is easy to understand why all the offerings from the outside world that promise release from meaninglessness, loneliness, and narrow closeness, have been so intensely received. To this category belong:

- Drug and media consumption, drastically on the rise.
- Yearning for groups that promise harmony and a better world. A guru is followed under the condition of giving-up individual responsibility.
- A need for violence and destruction in order to make room for one’s self.

These are dramatic gestures of avoidance prefacing the agonizing experience of inner distress. Jørgen Smit spoke of this situation in a lecture as the “drama of the consciousness soul at the end of the twentieth century.”

Characterizing the passive side of our ego, as so very cuddled and spoiled by each one of us today, Lusseyran was describing one cause for this drama. It is the ego which loves to be served. It is the ego which misleads us into naïvely believing everything we hear through the media and statistics. (Analyses of news media have shown the nightly news shows, which claim to be instruments of objective truth-telling, are, in reality, some of the most dishonest programs on television. See Heinz Buddemeier’s *Living in Artificial Worlds*, Stuttgart, 1993.) This passive side of our ego entices us into selfishly paying attention only to our own interests without observing the context in which we live.

Steiner presented how strongly this egoistic attitude, which is in accord with a certain degree of human development, can lead to an opening vis-à-vis evil in his lecture: *How Can I Find the Christ?* For approximately two-thirds of the lecture he described the increasing emanation of evil and its justification in our time. At the conclusion he described extensively the blackout experience; unconsciousness, powerlessness. The German word he used was *Ohnmacht*, nine times in two pages. He said today's human beings must go through this experience if they are genuinely striving to know themselves. A person can only be helped in this situation when he or she learns to allow this blackout experience of powerlessness without fighting it. In that moment one undergoes a zero-point experience. If one achieves this prerequisite in which all past moments are brought to silence, then forces of the future can stream into the created void. Only in this way can the Christ Being reveal himself to humankind at the etheric level. Steiner spoke further about this in the lecture cycle titled *Symptoms behind History*. He explained that the mystery of evil must first be traversed before the forces of the etheric Christ could be available to anyone.

How is the "I," the ego, to be preserved so that it does not succumb to the various Lucifer-influenced and Ahriman-influenced groupings and group-held views? As contemporaries, we are all endangered. Our anxieties mislead us again and again into error because occupation with anxiety prevents building any conviction of views. Someone who is tied up with their anxieties is helpless against the assaults in our time upon their thinking, feeling and willing. Just how much we are all endangered becomes clear in these subtle ways:

- Dulled thinking with a tendency to use catch phrases and clichés
- Numbed feeling-life that allows only conventional encounters
- Paralyzed will that is capable of only routine action

The most extreme form of this hardening tendency was described by Steiner in a lecture cycle titled *The Inner Aspect of the Social Question*. If there are no new, inner impacts, hardening will progress to such an extent that:

- thinking becomes paralyzed within a mechanization of the spirit. (Self-perpetuating computer technology, genetic manipulation; are these not already such expressions of the above?)
- the feeling life succumbs to vegetation of the soul. (Group behavior without individual responsibility, image

presentation according to the current trend, do not these things already show a tendency to a plant-like, dulled existence that has lost all momentum towards the spiritual?)

- the will leads to animalization of the body in which the soul forces are pressed into the body and chained there. (Unrepressed libido and aggression already appear to be signs of this development.)

This developmental hardening heralds the arrival of the social bottleneck that Steiner clearly described as a challenge for the end of the twentieth century. It is understandable that this development is accompanied by anxieties, anxieties that can have a paralyzing effect on the one hand, but on the other hand can call us to a state of heightened alertness.

Steiner described the double effect of angst in this way: Either it completely throws the ego off track at the moment of its inception or it leads to an enhanced “I” experience. If we overcome the aspect of anxiety that releases panic and paralyzes, then anxiety becomes an opportunity, a glimpse into a new level of knowledge, even though it may be agonizing. Consciousness development is always connected with anxiety. The higher the consciousness, the greater the potential for anxiety.

In a lecture on December 12, 1918, Steiner stated: “In this age of the consciousness soul the task of humanity will be to grasp the entirety of the human being and to make human beings dependent upon themselves.” This is a process that will always be accompanied by anxiety. In this sense Jacques Lusseyran said: “Let us have anxiety!”

So much for the diagnosis of the situation in our time. How can we proceed with courage? How can we develop strength to overcome our anxieties? After we have acknowledged once-and-for-all the validity of anxiety we will muster the strength to confront it. A typical characteristic of anxiety is that it sneaks up from behind and takes us unawares. Therefore, our first act must be to get it from behind us, set it before us, and enter into a dialogue with it face to face. This means that we must approach it through our consciousness.

In the lecture cycle entitled *Social Understanding through Knowledge of Spiritual Science* Steiner associated anxiety to Ahriman and said that it must yield wherever the light of knowledge shines. We find in these statements the esoteric explanation of why today’s people must see it as an essential task to gain a correct relationship to Ahrimanic forces of anxiety. The observation that anxiety associated with the social sphere can be extraordinarily helpful must be brought into this right relationship. Surely I would become more attuned to my fellow human beings and more empathetic

if I had myself suffered through anxiety processes. Obviously, anxiety can make us more sympathetic.

During my time as a class teacher I experienced examples of this many times. For instance, once two hours before a parent evening a student's mother telephoned me to warn me of a brewing conflict. I went into the meeting with the appropriate anxiety and on this evening I experienced myself as especially empathetic and perceptive toward the parents. Through my own anxiety, an openness had come about that made it possible for me to have a much more intense bonding or sharing with the parents than was previously possible. I was actually grateful for the telephone call.

Let us summarize the helpful qualities of anxiety in daily life. Anxiety can help us develop a more alert consciousness. It allows us to experience being restricted to ourselves and our separateness from the world. It makes us aware of the precipice at the barrier and, if we engage it, it leads us to the zero-point where our masks fall away.

The task of the consciousness-soul must be to get past the closeness and anxiety of the zero-point and into new areas. We have seen how thinking, feeling, and willing are the soul-foundations for the working of the ego and how they are being relentlessly attacked in our time. Just think how much thought-energy, how much time, how much money are used to try to corrupt these three activities of the human soul. Human thinking, feeling, and willing must be very precious indeed.

If we want to get past the zero-point and forge a path into the future, we must establish a healthy relationship with anxiety in order to develop a new relationship to thinking, feeling, and willing. With thinking, with our consciousness, we will need to overcome the Ahriman-influenced understanding of the material world. If the spiritual character of reality is also to be recognized material can not be considered the origin of all things. Material should be understood as an emanation of the spirit if one wishes to think in terms of reality.

Consequently, in order to apply this knowledge concretely in our lives, we must deal with the laws of reincarnation and karma. If it is true that spirit is the origin of all things, then the conditions and events that I meet in my physical incarnation also have something to do with me and my state of development. Joy in discovering truths about destiny can be awakened with this insight. Every social encounter has something to do with me specifically and can not be explained away as something accidental. When we think that our guardian angel has been working for eight hundred to one thousand years in order that we meet a certain personality so that further development can occur, then the significance of an encounter starts to become clear.

What a complicated preparation: Finding the parents at the right time, the appropriate language and nationality, childhood and adolescent

development so that the desire arises to work within a certain group, and all this for two people.

Imagine that these two people actually come together. Naturally, it occurs through a conflict because they have something that they have to carry-through together. What if one person says: “No, thank you, I want nothing to do with this conflict!” What a disaster! Eight hundred years of work for nothing! Now everything has to begin again from scratch.

How do we interact with others when we have come to the realization of supernatural reality? Steiner described the quality that lies at the beginning of an extrasensory path to knowledge as the ability to be awed. I am awed when I realize that what I perceive in the physical world is only a part of the whole and the rest of it resides in the spiritual realm. I am amazed about what I encounter in the physical and I open myself to spiritual knowledge. Spiritualization of thinking can begin in this way. It makes possible a completely new approach, including a new approach in the social arena.

With a second step, I can, through this insight, acknowledge the spiritual origin of others. A lively interest in the essence of others is awakened in me. Encounters between the essence of beings can take place that are supported by sympathetic forces. In crass opposition to this stands all hardened nationalism which measures the worth of a person by ethnic origin, skin color, and language. These are characteristics of the past when people were identified according to group associations that provided their members with supportive social energy. In our time of development of individuality these outmoded identifications can only have a detrimental effect as we have clearly experienced in the conflict in Yugoslavia. Here is the proof of Steiner’s insight that evil is just good at the wrong time. However, if we bring a real interest in the essence of another, try to understand another in his or her unique individuality, we spiritualize our feeling nature.

Spiritualization of the third area, the will, is especially difficult because the will is unconsciousness. Using the example of biography, I would like to demonstrate how an expansion is possible through inner cognition. Hiltgunt Zassenhaus was selflessly engaged in helping those persecuted by Hitler’s regime. In her autobiography, *A Tree Blooms in November*, she described how her constant attention to the welfare of others brought her to the brink of exhaustion and led her to sharply judge her fellow human beings according to their dedication and, as need be, mercilessly condemn them.

She was a translator and given the duty by the Nazi Regime to oversee all the Scandinavian political prisoners. In a military uniform, armed with the keys to the prison, day after day she cared for these prisoners both physically and psychologically. Thanks to her care and dedication, shortly before the end of the war, all of the prisoners were saved from execution and with the help of the Danish and Swedish Red Cross taken to Scandinavia.

In her autobiography, Hiltgunt Zassenhaus looks back at this wartime with brutal honesty and describes how her readiness for sacrifice also made

her overbearing. She felt superior to all her compatriots who had silently accepted the injustice of the Nazis, consciously looked away, remained passive, or even complied with the Nazis. A dramatic experience in her life precipitated a fundamental change of heart. Her brother was a physician and sent to the front for duty. He came home for a few days leave. The siblings felt an inner connection to each other and for this reason he sought her out to discuss everything he had experienced and suffered. But Hiltgunt had so much to do with “her prisoners” at that time that she never found the time for a talk with her brother. Disappointed, her brother returned to the war, and just a few weeks later he was killed.

When Hiltgunt received the news of his death, not only was she overcome with a deep sadness, but also an agonizing bad conscience and the devastating feeling of failure. She gained understanding for the weaknesses and failures of others through her own experiences of making such sacrifices to do good while at the same time miserably and irrevocably failing to make time for her dearly-loved brother. Through her own failure she learned to allow others the right to fail. The more she overcame her tendency to judge others based on good and evil, the more tolerant she became and the more freedom she could give to herself and others to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes. From the narrowness of judgment, Hiltgunt reached a level in which acting in freedom was possible.

Our will, unconscious as it is, can be expanded when we recognize the value of development. We learn to handle our mistakes openly and positively. Without failures there is no possibility of further development. Steiner one time pointedly expressed it this way: “There is little that is right that was not at one time done wrongly.”

In education we still have much to learn in this area. We should develop a pedagogical ethos which teaches children the joy of learning. When a teacher enters the classroom with a pile of corrected papers and a grim look the mood becomes immediately heavy. Taking the paper with the most mistakes and slamming it down on the poor student’s desk with an appropriate gesture will certainly not teach the joy of learning through making mistakes. How different it would be for the student if the teacher returned the paper with the comment: “You have already learned much, but there are a few mistakes that we should go over together. You still have some more to learn. I will be happy to help you with it!” All of us are predisposed to coming down hard on discovered mistakes. Naturally, it is mostly the mistakes of others that are discovered and exposed. This is a behavior which encourages us to fear one another and especially hinders our development and the development of others. Only when we recognize the value of mistakes will we be able to create a level of encounter in which it is possible to learn. Learning means to want to more intensely connect with the world. Every learning process is a

connection process which is only possible if it is accompanied by sympathetic forces.

Rejection, accusation, and prejudice with their antipathetic gesture can not awaken a will to learn. In short, no one learns if they are being threatened with the whip. This consciousness calls for a completely new jurisprudence; one in which the deeds are judged and the perpetrator must be stimulated to further development.

We know that when it comes to these conditions of development, all too quickly they become lost in the course of daily interaction. Only when we make ourselves repeatedly aware that our behavior towards mistakes and errors is a decisive factor in whether an atmosphere of freedom can exist where development is possible will we muster the strength to overcome our everyday behavior. This is the only way that the maxim which Rudolf Steiner proposed of a free human being can be fulfilled: “Live in the love of action and let live in the understanding of the other’s will.” (*The Philosophy of Freedom* by Rudolf Steiner).

The path up and over the total closeness of the zero-point, with all its attending anxiety phenomena, can be found only by achieving a new level thinking, feeling, and willing. If we make it clear to ourselves that such an undertaking is a process then we will not lose patience. We will assiduously continue the struggle to achieve it. Let us pay attention to our own practice and effort (and not that of others) and freedom can move into our dealings with our own efforts as well as interacting with others.

- *Acknowledgement of the spiritual origin of all things* so that reincarnation and karma are recognized as a reality.
- *Acknowledgement of the spiritual essence in every human being* that awakens sympathy and love for fellow human beings.
- *Acknowledgement of individual states of development and individual development dynamic* that allows for true tolerance of the behavior of others.

This threefold acknowledgement leads through the darkness and powerlessness of the zero-point of our developmental situation into a new expanse. Steiner provided us with help in this development process in many aspects. In his book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, which he labeled an anti-war book, Steiner describes exercises that appear to me to be explicitly for overcoming anxiety. He points out the fundamental causes of anxiety in daily life by telling how we have isolated ourselves inside our own consciousness from our physical bodies, from our life forces, from our soul forces, and from our own “I.” In order to overcome this separation Steiner gives us conditions which, upon being met, can create a bridge to our own

consciousness. The effort to meet these conditions is a prerequisite for attaining knowledge of higher worlds. As we will see, this effort is also a prerequisite for life in general.

The first condition has to do with the necessity of connecting once again the consciousness with the physical body. People must re-learn how to enjoy things, an astounding exercise. In the times we are living, I believe it is important for all of us to learn how to rightly enjoy things again. This has nothing to do with pleasure as an end in itself, but rather enjoyment as a counterbalance to a former effort. It is the task of enjoyment to allow body and soul to exhale after exertion and to relax. If one's consciousness is connected to the pleasure, then it must learn to use its ego forces and stop. We all have heard the saying about stopping while the taste is best, or stopping work on a drawing or painting before we go too far. In this way we can achieve a balance between tense, fulfillment of responsibilities and relaxing pleasure. It is an exercise to connect the physical with the consciousness.

The second condition has to do with re-bonding our consciousness with the context of our lives. Steiner described it as the tying of consciousness onto the etheric. Here we must again re-learn to feel ourselves a part of the whole. He gave an example of this which, as an educator, pleased me very much.

When a student has been impertinent to a teacher (this was certainly a terrible thing in 1918) and the teacher's only reaction is to discipline the student, the teacher loses his or her connection with the whole. First of all, the teacher should ask himself what this student's behavior has to do with him. Had he perhaps paid too little attention to the student lately, or was his instruction too boring because it had become routine? There are many questions through which he can reconnect to the entire social-complex of what happened.

What should be practiced here can be applied to everyday life. For example, one could ask: Why do I have this marriage partner, this profession, these friends? What does this have to do with me? Only when I learn to relate to life around me in this way can I accept the fact that the network of relationships around me is a part of my own self. In this way a lively exchange between the inner and outer sides of my ego can occur. At the end of this journey the world and I will be one again.

The third condition has to do with re-connecting our consciousness to our soul forces, our astral body. This happens when we perceive our thoughts and feelings as being just as real as our physical actions. This is the only attitude with which we can consciously connect our thoughts and feelings so that we accept full responsibility for them.

The fourth condition has to do with completing a bridge to our own ego. Here the task is to very consciously connect with everything that I do so that the consequences of my actions are in line with my possibilities. If I have completed an assignment with alertness and dedication, then praise and

criticism from others are not necessary motivators for me anymore because they would not be able to increase my effort. Here Steiner shows us a path to ego-identity that is appropriate to the will-mystery at the end of the twentieth century.

These remarks reveal how separation from our selves within various aspects of life can be overcome. At the same time this path makes clear how loss does not merely signify “not having something” but also proffers the opportunity to gain something totally new. To value loss as a positive possibility opens a perspective that turns one’s view from the past of “no more” toward the future of “not yet, but soon.” Seen from this angle the characteristics of our time such as depression, aggression, and addiction can be reevaluated. On one side they signify loss of security, protection, and identification and on the other side they represent a perverted filling of the empty space created by the loss. Rather, let us understand these traits as a call for help from a deep yearning for one’s own, inner satisfaction and we will learn new ways to direct our efforts.

Let us apply this perspective to anxiety. Anxiety shows us that former securities have been lost; on the other hand it is the harbinger of new insights which can disclose new securities. As an indicator of a consciousness process come due, anxiety calls us to self-action. If we do not accept the challenge, then we merely passively, as an observer, shoulder our anxiety and proceed along in constant danger of being so devoured by our anxiety, our only escapes remaining are typical gestures of avoidance.

The active way out of our anxiety leads us through various stations. First, anxiety should be accepted as a harbinger of new insights and should not be suppressed. Suppression of anxiety prevents the possibility for gaining new attitudes about it and perpetuates the suffering with which it is always connected. This makes it possible to recognize anxiety and suffering from the side of their necessity to our development and not only from their painful side.

With a positive attitude it will be possible, through anxiety and suffering, to gain the insight that I am separate from the world and I desire a new connection with it. If I consciously acknowledge the yearning, I can acquire an inner listening, a new contact to my innermost being. If the outcome of this contact is a new impulse, then I can actively strive to realize it in the world.

This path gives exemplary insight into how the separation of thinking, feeling, and willing is to be overcome at the threshold and lead us into a new unity. Let us understand anxiety as a challenge to step onto this path. It can be our wakeup call to expanded consciousness for a new task in life and therewith the renewal of life qualities.

Footnotes:

- ¹ “Forces of human development which have accompanied human beings unconsciously so that they could move forward, are now exhausted and will be totally exhausted by the middle of the twentieth century, approximately speaking. New forces must be dredged up out the depths of the soul. And, human beings must see how they are connected with the roots of spiritual life in the depths of their souls.” From *The Mission of Michael* by Rudolf Steiner.
- ² The double nature of evil represented in the Bible with the names Satanas and Diabolus is represented in Spiritual Science by the spiritual beings of Lucifer and Ahriman. Intellectual temptations belong in the realm of Lucifer, and libidinal/sensual temptations belong in the realm of Ahriman.

Sleep Disturbances

&

Healthy Sleep

by

Christa-Johanna Bub-Jachens

Introduction

Sleep disturbances are a very common problem. In industrialized nations especially, many people suffer from some form of sleep disturbance. Data about the frequency varies between twenty-five and fifty percent of the population.

Sleep disturbances are not illnesses in the real sense of the word. They are symptoms of a variety of physical, mental, and spiritual impairments. Before we begin looking more closely at sleep disturbances, let us ask ourselves: What is sleep? Why do we need to sleep? Where are we when we sleep?

If we can get some insight into these questions, then we will be able to find answers as to why so many people today suffer from sleep disturbances. We must ask ourselves what the meaning is behind sleep disturbances, what are their causes, in order to finally understand how we can counteract them.

Basics about Sleep

What Is Sleep?

People sleep at the equivalent of one-third of their lifespan. About eight hours of sleep per night adds up to nearly three thousand hours per year. Calculating from an average life expectancy of seventy years, that adds up to about twenty-four years of sleep. The essential aspect, however, is the rhythmic alternation between waking and sleeping; everyday begins a new with approximately eight hours work, eight hours for ourselves, for free-time activities and family, and eight hours of sleep.

What Do I Do When I Sleep?

When we are tired in the evening we lie down. We go from the typical, upright human posture to a horizontal posture. As we fall asleep, what takes place? Consciousness vanishes. Everything around us remains as it was, but we do not perceive anything through the door of our senses. In contrast to comatose states or induced unconsciousness, we can still be awakened. During sleep, our perceptions of sorrow, delight, happiness, and worry are temporarily erased. Also pain is not felt. As long as I can feel pain I am awake. When I am able to fall asleep, the perception of pain disappears even though the cause is still present. We move during sleep, but it is involuntary, undirected movement. (During sleep-walking [somnambulism] the person moves without the participation of the consciousness.)

During sleep our conscious, mental activities such as thinking, feeling, and willing are dulled. We lay in bed without any conscious activity and when we awaken the next morning we are rested, refreshed, and strengthened. Our tissues have been supplied with more absorbent, watery-lively substance: We are rejuvenated. For example, our intervertebral discs have gained fluid and we are up to one centimeter taller in the mornings than in the evenings. We go to bed in the evening feeling tired and exhausted and we awaken in the morning feeling fresh and energetic. Is that not a miracle? These processes appear as a matter of course and we notice them only when something goes wrong.

During sleep the physical body lies in bed. However, the body does not disintegrate, as is the case after death; it lives. *The functions of building-up, growth, and regeneration are taking place more intensively during sleep than in our waking state.*

Where is the soul-spiritual part of us during sleep? A poem by Paul Ernst (1866–1933) about sleep gives us a beautiful answer to this question.

Sleep

You who release the limbs of all the living,
That man and beast may carefree rest,
Repose from every work is given,
Come near, oh sleep, at our behest.
God and angels hover, ever watchful, striven;
Their work like water flowing toward its valley quest,
While sleeping, we awaken to purposes grown high.
Our wider being must be awakened by the Sun grown nigh.
In sleep, throughout the Universe our soul is diffused
When first undisturbed by dreams it rests,
Because dreams are with reality still infused.

Softly beats the pulse, quiet comes the breath;
The soul, open still to worldly things, does not refuse,
As it does in blessed, silent death;
Oh sleep, impart to us the mercy to awake
And on a new day of divine, pious laughter partake.

In the night, human beings climb to the heights. Angels watch over them. We are closer to the divine/spiritual. The soul expands, lives in the surroundings, in nature, and the Universe. In a poem by Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857) we also hear that the soul spreads its wings “as if it were flying home.”

It was as though the sky
had silently kissed the earth,
so that it now had to dream of sky
in shimmers of flowers.

The air went through the fields,
the corn-ears leaned heavy down
the woods swished softly—
so clear with stars was the night

And my soul stretched
its wings out wide,
flew through the silent lands
as though it were flying home.

—Translation by J. Fogel

Rudolf Steiner described pictorially how our soul detaches itself from our body every night in order to strengthen itself within Divine substance. The source of the archetypical images which form and maintain the likeness of human beings is found in the cosmic, divine, spiritual. We cross the threshold into the spiritual world every night, but we do not enter consciously. The process of renewal that takes place in the physical body during sleep is only indirectly perceived in that we feel energized the next morning.

These nightly excursions are pictured by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in an especially beautiful, description in the first act of part two of his play *Faust*.

Hovering around this head in circles airy,
Look that ye show the noble law of fairy:
Appease the furious conflict in his heart!

Draw out the burning arrows of remorse,
From suffered horrors cleanse his inmost part!
Four pauses makes the night upon its course:
Hasten to fill them with your kindly art!
His head upon a cooling pillow lay,
Then bathe him in the dew from Lethe's stream!
His limbs, cramp stiffened, soon will freely play,
When rest has made him strong for morn's new beam.
Perform the fairest elfin rite,
Restore him to the holy light!

—Translation by George Madison Priest

Fairies calm Faust; cleanse his inmost parts from “suffered horrors,” allow him to forget his sorrow, and strengthen his body so that when he finally awakens he is refreshed. The verse speaks of “four pauses makes the night upon its course.” In modern sleep research, sleep is divided also into four stages which occur in connection with the dream phases, the so-called REM phases (times of rapid eye movement behind closed lids).

Stage 1: Falling asleep
Stage 2: Light sleep
Stage 3: Middle-deep sleep
Stage 4: Deep sleep

Let us look once again at Goethe's poetic description. Do we not find described here in poetic images exactly what we know from today's modern sleep research? “Four pauses makes the night upon its course.”

Stage 1: “His head upon a cooling pillow lay.” This describes the transition between waking and sleeping, the falling-asleep stage.

Stage 2: “Then bathe him in the dew from Lethe's stream.” Here Goethe uses an image from Greek mythology: Faust bathes in the Lethe, the stream of forgetfulness. In stage two of sleep we lose our normal consciousness as the spiritual-soul detaches itself from material processes.

Stages 3 and 4: “His limbs, cramp stiffened, soon will freely play when rest has made him strong for morn's new beam.” Middle-deep sleep transitions relatively quickly into the deep sleep stage. Deep sleep is the deepest of all the stages. Above all, physical regeneration occurs during this stage. Body movements often appear at the end of this stage. Body movements guarantee the necessary feeling of refreshment after sleep.

Goethe also describes the soul-spiritual regeneration that corresponds to what sleep researchers refer to as the REM phase (dream phase) of sleep:

Appease the furious conflict in his heart!
Draw out the burning arrows of remorse,
From suffered horrors cleanse his inmost part!

From the viewpoint of modern sleep research, the REM phase of sleep is accorded a soul-cleansing function.

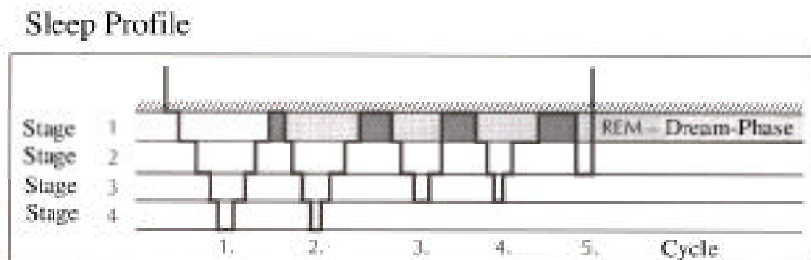
We see that during sleep we are in no way merely ruled by peaceful quietude and that the sleeping state is not passive, not “nothingness,” but rather something in which very much happens. Modern sleep research has also concluded that sleep is an active process, that the brain does not take a rest during sleep but only works in different ways than during the day, in some ways becoming even more active. This can be determined by an electroencephalogram, which measures electrical brain waves.

Recently, natural-scientific knowledge has confirmed the spiritual-scientific research of Rudolf Steiner: “Initially, sleep life remains unconscious, if it is not, in a certain way, riddled with dream life. But this does not signify inactivity, quite the opposite. Sleep life has a much more active inner soul life . . . than the waking life of soul.” Contrary to this, Nobel prize winner, Scott Sherrington (1857–1952) made his opinion known around the turn of the twentieth century: “When we sleep, the lights go out in our brain.”

Michel Jouvet (1972), one of the most prolific sleep physiologists, admits: “As long as we do not know in what way and why sleep imposes a necessary and regularly reoccurring change in our relationship to our environment, it is also impossible to give a definition of sleep. . . . In spite of all research efforts, the causes and mechanisms of sleep are still unknown to us.”

If we examine the content of fairytales, poems, and spiritual-scientific research, many thoughts appear which can lead us further. Current natural-scientific research results can easily be incorporated. In this way, some light can shine into the opaque and unknown nature of sleep.

First, let us take a closer look at the measured stages of sleep as they have been put forth by sleep research scientists. The sleep profile below outlines the sequence of the various phases of sleep.



After the first stage has ended, which is a transitional stage between waking and sleeping, the second stage, light sleep, begins. Many researchers see this second stage as the actual beginning of sleep. The third and fourth

stages are often referred to together as the stage of deep-sleep. After a renewed transitional phase between waking and sleeping, there follows a completely new sleep quality, the so-called REM phase (dream-phase). Then a new cycle begins. In one night, this cycle is repeated four or five times. The deepest sleep phases occur in the first two sleep cycles. In contrast, the REM phases become longer with each succeeding cycle. Stages one through four (non-REM sleep) make up approximately seventy to eighty percent of the entire sleeping period; REM sleep accounts for about twenty to thirty percent. Approximately every ninety minutes a REM phase occurs which lasts twenty minutes on average but increases in length throughout the night. Deep sleep and REM sleep demonstrate a counteractive duration. After the first stage of falling asleep, sleep is deeper and therefore it is more difficult to awaken a person. Physical regeneration occurs mainly during the first stage. Towards the end of the night, dreams and soul-spiritual regeneration are at the forefront. One additional note: REM sleep makes up a larger proportion of total sleep time for children than for adults.

What Happens When We Dream?

In illustration of the sleep curve, we see that during the REM phases, we are very close to awakening. These dream phases are transitional stages; our soul-spiritual aspect has already partially immersed itself back into the physical body. Paul Ernst put it very aptly in his poem: "...because dreams are with reality still infused." Rapid eye movement (REM) is observed during this phase of sleep. This phenomenon was observed and first described by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C.

The outer world becomes the content of our consciousness through our sense perceptions. In contrast, our soul-spiritual aspect works from the inside during our waking state. In other words when we are outside with another person, we are simultaneously intensively observing that person. We are "in" the flower we are observing. Steiner described how during sleep the soul-spiritual part of a person, which has immersed itself into the spiritual cosmos, reacts with us through our sense organs, such as the eyes, for example.

If we now look at the content of our dreams, we can determine that their origin and meaning are different. The following classifications have been known since Aristotle's time.

Often dreams can be traced back to the soul life and are also referred to as *subjective* dreams. Wishes and various scenes from daily experience appear imaginatively decorated and altered. Dreams help us to work through our experiences. Further, what we have learned during the day penetrates our long-term memory. Dreams about people who have died belong in this category. Such a dream experience is a witness to the fact that we have previously been engaged with the dead person before, whether on a conscious or unconscious level.

There are dreams that have *physiological* causes, i.e. they are caused by physical processes. For example, if someone has a headache she might dream that she is crawling through a cave. Dreams about snakes often indicate irregularities in the intestinal tract. Bad air could be the catalyst for a nightmare. If someone dreams about a hot oven or a fire, then the cause may be fever or bedcovers that are too warm.

Finally, there are dreams caused by some outside *stimulus*. For instance, someone dreams a long, exciting story, with many details, in which someone falls. At that moment the person wakes up and hears the noise of some falling object in the room. The long, imaginative, dramatic, dream story plays out in a short moment of time. Time appears to stretch. Another example: We experience a terrifying fire in a dream, see a huge home go up in flames and hear the hissing of the fire. The trigger was a fire truck driving by outside with its sirens going that we perceived during our sleep. Or of a dream in which dogs are being chased away, the cause might have been a blanket that got bunched up in the wrong place and had to be pushed out of the way. In another case, a child had a dream in which the child wildly fought against a lion when his sister had thrown a pillow in his face. These dreams reflect reactions to direct, outside effects or perceptions and do not indicate psychological problems. The images are echoes from daily, waking life. There is something arbitrary about the way these dreams are formed. When the wild animal that is being repelled in the dream is a lion, then perhaps the child has consciously or unconsciously seen a picture of a lion during the day. The dream alters the waking sense perceptions into a creative, imaginative picture. When the soul is completely disengaged, these pictures sink and dreamless sleep begins.

Prophetic dreams in which clairvoyant perceptions are reflected are well-known. Rudolf Steiner pointed out that these dreams more often occur with people who are spiritually highly-developed and have gone through an appropriate training.

One should be careful and reserved regarding the interpretation of every dream. One can quickly fall into generalizations and schematizing psychology.

For an anthroposophical doctor the content of dreams is much less significant than their quality and quantity. When the spiritual-soul aspect of the human organism harmoniously takes hold of the enlivened physical aspect and then correctly detaches itself again during sleep, then an abundant amount of dreams do not occur. The frequency of dreams can be a key to revealing a person's constitution.

Rhythms of Sleeping and Waking

Sleep, and its organization of various phases, is indispensable to human life. However, the rhythmic alternation between waking and sleeping is just

as important. Whereas researchers in the 1960s and 70s were more concerned with understanding the inner structure of sleep, the cyclic change from REM sleep to non-REM sleep, today many sleep researchers are more interested in the connection between the sleeping-waking cycle and other rhythms. It has been recognized that all of our life processes work rhythmically and that the rhythms inside the human organism are connected to the cosmic rhythms. *All body functions are subject to a twenty-four hour rhythm* (Sun rhythm). Interestingly, it is not an exact twenty-four hours because in the area of living things there is no exact linearity. So, in the above instance, one speaks of a *circadian rhythm* derived from the Latin “circa” meaning “about” and “dies” meaning “day.” One prerequisite for our well-being is met if these rhythms in our human organism run synchronized with our environment, that is, if our microcosmic functions are in harmony with cosmic rhythms such as the rhythm of day and night or the rhythm of the seasons. If this harmony between inner and outer rhythms is missing, the result can be problems with existential orientation and illness.

Originally, human beings were more connected with these cosmic rhythms than they are today. People went to bed in the evening when it became dark and arose in the morning with the Sun. Today we know that light, which permeates the rhythm between waking and sleeping, is a very significant factor in physiological reactions. Sunlight is an important timer for our body’s thermal system. Body temperature rises in the morning just before we awaken and sinks again in the evening hours. This is an expression of our human ego or “I.” If this sinking, this letting-go, can not properly take place, then sleep is disturbed.

REM sleep follows a circadian rhythm. That means it is dependent upon the time of day. It reaches its maximum in the late nighttime hours and its minimum occurs in the late afternoon hours. Normally it takes ninety minutes for the first phase of REM sleep to appear. If a person goes to bed late the amount of time is shorter.

In contrast to the REM sleep rhythm, the so-called non-REM sleep is dependent only upon the time of wakefulness and not the time-of-day/light rhythm. The longer the time of wakefulness before sleep, the longer the portion of deep sleep. Deep sleep always reaches its maximum at the beginning of the sleep period. This means that in the case of shift work, for instance, deep sleep accommodates itself to the situation; physical regeneration is assured for the most part. In contrast, REM sleep, which is more responsible for mental/emotional regeneration, suffers when one goes to bed too late. From these facts it becomes clear that the old saying is true: “Sleep before midnight is the best.”

Individuals can experience a relationship between their abilities and the time of the day. We can differentiate between a *morning person* and a *night*

owl. Morning people have a tendency to get ahead of the daytime rhythm. They react quickly, and sometimes even overreact, to the activation that the morning brings. With night owls this active phase is put off to the nighttime hours. This postponement can even cause variations in rhythms of physiological processes like body temperature, for instance.

In a healthy person, the ideal ratio of respiration to heartbeat is 1:4. During the waking period it constantly changes. Sometimes the nerve/sense pole is more strongly active and respiration is at the forefront; then the metabolism/blood pole takes over and the pulse increases. However, during sleep the ideal ratio of one breath to four heartbeats is restored. The faster this coupling takes place, the shorter the sleep period can be while remaining restorative.

The morning-types tend to have a pulse-to-respiration ratio that is higher than 4:1. In contrast, when respiration is more prominent in relationship to the heartbeat it signifies a stronger nerve/sense impact, i.e. more tearing-down. Naturally, personal habits and professional or personal necessities play a role.

A regular rhythm, in accordance with a person's individual needs, contributes to synchronization with daily rhythm, even if it is forced by the ringing of an alarm clock. The well-known Monday-morning-tiredness is caused by lost synchronization that can come about due to sleeping later on the weekend, for example.

Just as the daily rhythm plays a role in the sleeping-waking rhythm and the rhythm of internal organs, the *seasonal rhythm* also has significance for human beings. Both rhythms are dependent upon the Sun. Even though the length of sleep periods is shorter in the summer, a high level of physical performance is still possible. For instance, getting out of bed in the morning is easier in May and June and positive moods occur more often than in November and December when getting up in the morning is more difficult and depressed moods occur more easily due to a lack of light during shorter days and overcast weather.

According to today's sleep physicians, all of these rhythms make up the objective measuring rod for the quality of sleep. It has also been observed that sleep quality is not the same every day. Only the same days of the week can be compared; for example, Wednesday can be compared to Wednesday of the following week, but Tuesday can not be compared to Wednesday.

Mental performance is also subject to a daily and *weekly rhythm*. It decreases during the course of the week so that a pause on the seventh day is sensible and necessary. A different "weekly" rhythm instituted for practical reasons (a ten-day week, for example) lacks a physiological basis and can cause a person to become ill. Modern, natural-scientific research increasingly confirms evidence from spiritual-scientific research.

Lunar rhythms, that is, rhythms derived from the Moon's orbit, also have an effect upon human life. A woman's hormonal rhythm, a pronounced lunar rhythm, can affect her sleep. To the best of my knowledge it has not been scientifically described, but is definitely observable, that there is a connection between dream life and the Moon phases. Steiner pointed out the stimulation of the imagination from the Moon.

Not only do we find such biological rhythms which correspond to the full length of the cosmic-earthly rhythms, but we also find such rhythms based upon cutting the larger rhythms in halves or quarters. For instance, there is a *four-hour rhythm* during the day; after four hours have passed, sleepiness becomes noticeable. Scientifically, these are referred to as sleep-window periods which can be used to advantage by people who have trouble falling asleep. The *ninety-minute rhythm* (amount of time before the first REM phase begins) also plays a role during the day. During this time, lack of concentration, fatigue, or even sleepiness can temporarily be experienced.

The Significance of Sleep

Everything that happens during the waking hours has significance for sleep, both quantitative and qualitative. Just as the length of our waking period affects our deep-sleep period, that which we think, feel and do during our waking hours is also significant to our life of sleep. Conversely, the possibilities for us during the day are influenced by what happens during sleep in terms of wonderful, wisdom-filled building-up, or also that which is perhaps disturbing.

Sometimes dreams are a type of physical self-knowledge. As has already been described, dreams can indicate the inner organic life of a person. However, dreams also play an important role in a person's ability to learn and mentally-emotionally process what has been experienced during the day. We can see that these nightly pauses are of great significance and also how important it is to go to bed at a proper time. For instance, getting enough sleep before a test can be more useful in terms of results than studying long hours the night before.

Steiner described how dreamless sleep also works toward gaining knowledge. The interruption of the stream of memory which happens during sleep makes it possible for people to come to a better idea of their own selves and help them not lose themselves in the outside world. A sense that answers to questions we have can be found in the night from spiritual beings (angels, people who have passed away, and so forth) is apparent in these sayings: "Sleep on it;" and "Sleep over important decisions for three nights." Continuity of daily experiences can be ensured only through remembrance. Every day we must again take hold of the thread anew on this side and every night on the other side. In this way we can always take hold of our destiny anew.

Steiner said that sleep was more important to life than food. Modern science has reached a similar conclusion. Food deprivation can be endured longer than sleep deprivation. Absolute insomnia can not be survived for more than a few days. Resistance is quickly worn down, and psychological symptoms such as hallucinations and experiences mimicking alcohol-related delirium tremens occur. It has been reported that at one time in China death penalties were carried out “non-violently” by sleep deprivation. Absolute insomnia is not compatible with life. Just as the physical body needs food, so must the soul body draw nigh to the images of the surrounding spiritual world through sleep. It is these archetypal images, whose source lies in the spiritual world, that make possible the construction and maintenance of the human form.

We say today, generally, that the information is contained in the cells. But how do the individual cells know to differentiate in embryonic development into liver, lung, or brain cells? A higher power is at work that is archetypal in a certain way and, at the same time, has a specific effect. The workings of these specifically-organizing, differentiated, formative forces can easily be disturbed. This can lead to defective developments or carcinomas, for example. Construction of the physical body and its maintenance is bound to organized, new construction, guided formation, and growth all subject to a concept.

In the embryonic phase these constructive forces are the most intensely active, but there is no actual consciousness present in the normal sense of the word. An infant also has few conscious functions. Directed movements or even thinking are not yet possible. A newborn infant goes through the day sleeping, for the most part, and completely abandoned to a horizontal position. Older infants sleep about sixteen hours per day and toddlers about twelve hours. The more the formation of the physical body, the internal organs, is completed, the less sleep is necessary and the more a person can use these forces which were previously used in organ formation for a quickened soul life. The same forces which were active in building the physical organs then transform themselves into thinking forces. So, it becomes clear that the result of conscious, lively, soul activity causes a tearing-down of the physical organism. Consequently, adults need sleep. Unconscious, formative activity with the building-up of the physical body alternate in a rhythmic sequences when the deconstructive elements of the processes of conscious thinking, feeling, and willing. That explains the alternation between waking and sleeping bound up in cosmic rhythms.

Just as a person turns toward the outer, earthly world during waking consciousness and tarries in the spiritual world during sleep, so is a person an earthly being between birth and death and between death and re-birth without a physical body in the spiritual world. People work through their

earthly experiences in the spiritual world and gather impulses which allow them to build up new physical bodies in accordance with their future tasks. In this sense we can understand the saying: “Sleep is death’s little brother.”

Various Sleep Disturbances

Sleep disturbances can occur for many reasons, from outer or inner influences. Among the causes originating on the outside are environmental disturbances such as noise, light, room temperature, a bad mattress, improper bed linens, and the like. A quick change in altitude to above 1,500 meters (approx. 5,000 feet) can have a negative effect on sleep. Everyone has experienced problems when becoming accustomed to new surroundings and sleeping in unfamiliar beds. Children who do not have a regular bedtime also can suffer from sleep disturbances. Sleep disturbances can be caused by sleep medications or other kinds of medications. Substances containing amphetamines (psycho-stimulants and especially in appetite suppressors) belong in this category. In the group of psychotropic drugs, these substances are found in neuroleptics, antidepressants, as well as lithium salts. Unstable sleep can come from medications that stimulate blood circulation, as well as cortisone compounds, antiepileptic drugs, ephedrine and drugs containing theophylline (flu, cough, colds, bronchitis, and asthma medication, also in spray form), antihypertensive drugs of the beta blocker type, thyroid medication (thyroxine), digitalis glycoside (given as support for heart function) if given in too high dosages, and medications to prevent fluid retention. Please consult your doctor if you have questions about the above-mentioned medications.

Stimulants such as coffee, tea, nicotine, energy drinks, and cola that are consumed in the late afternoon or evening can noticeably disturb sleep. Overeating, eating heavy foods, or eating too late in the evening is often not tolerated well. An erratic, irregular lifestyle can also lead to sleep disturbances as well as travel across time zones (jet lag), or shift changes at work.

At the forefront of sleep disturbances with an inner cause are all acute or chronic physical ailments. In this category are problems with the heart-circulatory system, the central nervous system (spasms or Parkinson’s disease), as well as the stomach-intestinal tract, and the musculoskeletal system.

Problems with physical reorientation during menopause, premenstrual syndrome, and psychiatric illnesses like depression and schizophrenia can all cause sleep disturbances to appear.

Very often a person’s mental state can leave one susceptible to sleep disturbances, problems like angst, worry, and hardship. Excessive demands in daily life resulting in nervousness and stress can also have lasting and disturbing effects on sleep.

Often people have *misconceptions* about their sleep. For instance, a patient in a hospital complains that she did not close her eyes the whole night while her neighbor in the next bed complains that the patient snored for hours. This situation is also familiar from studies in sleep laboratories. Usually, people get more sleep than is apparent to them.

By *temporary sleep disturbances* I do not mean those that do not last longer than three weeks. They are usually caused by particular situations like nervousness before exams or other one-time challenges or concerns. *Chronic sleep disturbances* are those that last longer than three weeks and despite the disappearance of the original cause. The extent and length of the problem is no longer related to the cause. In addition, there is a difference between *problems falling asleep* and *problems sleeping through the night* as well as *awakening too early*.

Parasomnia should also be mentioned here. This includes sleepwalking (somnambulism), night terrors (pavor nocturnus), nightly bedwetting (nocturnal enuresis), nightly teeth grinding (bruxism), and periodic myoclonic episodes (cramp-like twitches during sleep). These can have organic, physical causes or mental causes and they should be examined by a medical doctor. (Limb twitches while falling asleep is very common and not a cause for concern.)

Suggestions for Treating Sleep Disturbances

Temporary Sleep Disturbances

The following words by Goethe can help us in regard to temporary sleep disturbances:

Those who have never eaten with tears in their bread,
Those who have never the sorrowful night hours
Sat crying upon their cheerless bed,
They have never known you, you heavenly powers.

Such situations are part of being human. Suffering and pain can be our helpers. They affect a higher degree of consciousness and more alertness. They can lead us to new things. Many great things have been born from suffering. In this regard Herman Hesse wrote the short piece of prose titled “Sleepless Nights”:

But I can not love a person of whom I know that he has never had a sleepless night in his life. He must be a nature-child with the most naïve soul...

I mean the inner education that sleeplessness can give. Every illness and forced waiting is a taskmaster not to be misunderstood. However, the school of all nervous ailments is especially haunting. . . .

No school can teach mastery over one's own body and over one's own thoughts as well as the school of insomnia. . . .

Insomnia is a school of reverence; reverence for all things, the kind of reverence that can pour out the fragrance of a continuous, heightened sentiment. . . .

Hesse goes on to describe how one perceives things like a scurrying mouse, a rolling wagon, a ticking clock, a running fountain, the sound of the wind, and creaking furniture quite differently during a seemingly endless, sleepless night than during the day when one goes over it in one's mind. He ends this essay with the following words:

In this way all those suffering sleeplessness have already certainly turned their hardship into a virtue.

Problems Falling Asleep

Most problems falling asleep are, above all, dependent upon our inner attitude. Taking what Hesse wrote into consideration, we can try to make ourselves not nervous, and try to relax. Let us try to not think of the loss of accomplishment which may take place the next day, but rather, let us try to enjoy the peacefulness of the night. We can try to center ourselves in this stillness. For to allow the day to introspectively fade away, some may be helped by a walk, others by a good book. A prayer can be a good preparation for sleep, or reading a Psalm or a selection from the Gospels.

Steiner wrote a beautiful bedtime poem that can help children to trustingly give themselves up to sleep without fear.

From my head to my feet,
I am the image of God,
From my heart to my hands,
I feel the breath of God;
When I speak with my mouth,
I follow God's will.
When I behold God,
In father and mother,
In beast and stone
In flowers and trees,
I shall feel no fear
But only love shall fill me
For all that is around me.

Fairytales also Can Be a Help at Bedtime

One can soon achieve a restful, inner peace if one cherishes the melody, the rhythm, and the images of poems such as the following by Goethe.

*Over every mountain peak,
Is peace,
In all the treetops,
You feel,
Nary a breeze.
The birds are silent in the woods.
Only wait, soon,
You too will find peace.*

Another suggestion on how to meaningfully end the day is a *review of the day*, called the *Rückschau* in German. One begins at the end of the day and pictures in one's mind the happenings of the day backwards from that point. One observes one's self from the outside, like a stranger, and allows the events of the day to unfold in broad images in reverse order without judgment or emotions. If a person is in a depressed mood, it may be wise to do this exercise initially by concentrating only on positive events.

With adults, but especially with children, it can be observed that *not being able to stop activity early enough* and crossing the "point of no return" can lead to feeling "too-tightly wound" which makes "shutting down" all the more difficult. Going to bed is put off more and more until, finally, the sleeping-waking rhythm is impaired. These are all big helps in preventing sleep disturbances: Always go to bed at the same time and arise at the same time, even on weekends; have regular mealtimes; take breaks during the day.

It is especially important for children to have *set bedtimes* and to cultivate a "bedtime ritual." A song, a prayer, a story or fairytale, perhaps a kind of daily review in which unpleasant things are carefully and objectively discussed and good things especially praised; events will then be digested by the soul and contribute to being able to fall asleep more easily.

The more success adults have in becoming peaceful and introspective the more positive it will be for everyone. Stimulating books and television before bed are absolutely not appropriate.

Falling asleep also can be helped along by *outer applications*. Cold feet can prevent one from falling asleep. Therefore, it is wise to pay attention that feet are warm and put on bed socks or use a hot water bottle as needed. Warm foot baths, perhaps with pine needle or lavender milk baths, as well as showering thighs and calves with cold water (not longer than five to eight seconds), or washing the entire body with cold water that has some relaxing

herb added to it, can all be very helpful in promoting sleep. After speedily washing, one should lie in bed without drying-off. Some people react well to a moist, three-quarter body wrap. A prerequisite for every cold-water application is that the patient is capable of reacting to the application with an increase in body warmth, never apply cold water to cold body parts! A warm bath with lavender or pine needle milk bath is recommended. However, it should not be too warm (96.8° to 98.6°) or it can have a stimulating effect.

Some people, especially children, are helped by a whole-body massage or a massage of the arms and chest with mallow oil. Another recommendation is: Oleum Malvae compound manufactured by WALA.

An unsettled heartbeat can be quieted by a cold, lower-arm soak, for instance with arnica added. After the soak, the arms should not be dried off; rather the person should swing their arms dry. An arnica compress on the heart area can also help as will a compress applied with Aurum/Lavendula/Rosae ointment manufactured by Weleda.

The problem of restless legs that can be so disturbing during the night can be helped by strongly massaging the soles of the feet with oil or an ointment containing iron (for example, Ferrum met. 0.4% manufactured by Weleda). Cold-water spraying of the calves and gymnastic exercises in which the legs are stretched high while lying down (holding the legs straight or doing a bicycling motion) are both beneficial. If a person suffers from these problems he should avoid stress and heavy meals.

Herbal teas for sleep and relaxation are a further help in getting to sleep. There are also many sedative tea mixtures available. One can also make his/her own tea mixture using, for example, a combination of lavender flowers, mallow (hollyhock) flowers, hops flowers, and valerian root, as well as chamomile flowers and St. John's wort flowers, marjoram leaves, and lemon balm leaves. A teaspoon of honey will support a sleep-promoting effect.

A late-evening meal has a detrimental effect on sleep. There is good reason for the saying: "Eating and drinking holds body and soul together." Our souls should be able to detach in order to address other tasks. There is further truth in the saying: "Breakfast like an emperor, lunch like a king, and dinner like a beggar." Above all, one should not eat too late in the evening (not after 6:00PM if possible); nor too much food or foods that are hard to digest.

For a good sleep it is important that the *room temperature* is neither too high nor too low. An ideal temperature range is 57°–65°F. Of course, one should use the quietest rooms in the house as the bedrooms. After all, a lot of time will be spent there. It has been scientifically proven the noise causes stress. Even if we apparently do not perceive the noise and sleep well in spite of it, increases in level of stress hormone and cholesterol have been registered. Each individual must decide if the window is to remain open or

closed. If there is noise, fog, or smog present it is recommended that the window remain closed. Also, if a person feels pestered by noises outside, then the window should be closed during sleep and after a thorough airing of the room.

“The way a person beds is the way they sleep.” The bed plays a very important role in sleep. It should not be too soft or too hard. The mattress, sheets, blankets, and bed clothes should be made from natural materials. It is advantageous to not lay the mattress directly on the floor so that there is better air circulation around it. The best bed consists of wooden slats with a one-piece mattress, for instance made from latex foam with a wool covering. Bedcovers should give enough warmth. Comforters filled with wool are very good. Feather beds can create problems as they can easily lead to a build-up of too much heat, which can lead to a rise in body temperature and even cause a fever in children. The pillow is also important. For children, a millet pillow is especially recommended. These pillows, filled with either millet chaff or the whole grain, are very comfortable. The child can get enough air, the pillow conforms to the shape of the head, and it always smells fresh. Of course, such a pillow can also be beneficial for adults.

With an infant, one should take care that it feels enough protection while in the bed. This can be accomplished with a delicate, silk cloth as a canopy over the crib or cradle. We would not feel comfortable if our bed stood in the middle of a large hall, but that is what it is like for a small child who lies unprotected in a room.

Problems Sleeping through the Night

Here, Hesse's thoughts also are worthy of consideration. If you are lying in bed awake, try not to let feelings of discontent arise. Feelings of anger or envy of the partner sleeping next to you should be transformed. There are surely a few things to be observed that can lead us to a more positive and benevolent mood. The stillness of the night and the darkness do not have to be experienced as threatening, but rather as peaceful and quiet. In the darkness our light-filled thoughts can make us all the brighter inside. Finding an attitude of peace and composure can be practiced. Some are helped by reading a book or a poem. Or, we can look out an open window and admire the stars and the moon in the sky and enjoy the fresh air. One must realize that some sleep has already occurred and it is not really so bad that one is now awake. If one awakens in the second half of the night, it may be annoying. For purposes of regeneration however, it is less grave than one may think at first. According to each situation and condition, one will either remain in bed, calm and relaxed, to recuperate or one will undertake some meaningful activity. Perhaps we could make a note of good ideas that would otherwise be easily forgotten.

Arising Early

Arising early in the morning most often stems from the fact that one has had enough sleep. In this case one can say: “The morning hours are golden” and then happily begin the day. How wonderful it can be to hear the birds singing in the morning. What a lofty and special experience it is to see the red dawn of the sunrise.

There are causes for early awakening that are not so pleasant or normal. A drop in blood pressure in people with unstable blood pressure can stimulate awakeness. When older people get up to use the toilet due to the 4:00AM rhythm of the kidney and there is perhaps an added suppression of consciousness of a sleeping medication, there is danger of a fall. We hear often of hip fractures in the early morning hours. Furthermore, wakening early can be a sign of a serious illness such as endogenic depression. *All sleep disturbances caused by illness* should naturally not be self-treated: *Seek professional medical help!*

Abnormal Physical Phenomena Accompanying Sleep Disturbances

Sleep is often accompanied by *snoring*. This can be the result of colds, allergies, sinus infections, as well as enlarged tonsils. An appropriate treatment is advisable and often brings relief. Corpulent people often snore while lying on their backs. Fatty tissue around the pharynx begins to vibrate creating the conditions for loud snoring. Sleep is therefore more shallow and not as rejuvenating.

Sleep apnea syndrome occurs mostly in men of middle age or older, especially if they are overweight. This involves a cessation of breathing lasting up to two minutes and occurring ten or more times in an hour. Often, an extremely loud snore will mark the end of each episode of apnea. The lack of oxygen and a temporary, sharp increase in blood pressure can put a very serious burden on the heart and blood circulation. In contrast, a very short halt in breathing is quite possible during normal, healthy sleep. With overweight people, their girth usually forces them to sleep on their backs for the most part. Lying flat is an unfavorable position; raising the upper body can be helpful.

A consequential weight-loss program can relieve symptoms. An examination at a sleep research laboratory might also be helpful. Of course, nicotine and alcohol, as well as depressant-type medications all have a negative influence. Since it can not be ruled out that physical illness could be the cause, a consultation with your medical doctor is advisable.

Since 1988, *Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)* has been making headlines. Weakness of the immune system, viruses, and chronic distress (mental and physical instability) are all factors considered as elements of this syndrome. It is possible that viral illnesses also play a role. The causes are really

unknown, but there are thought to be many people suffering from CFS in the United States and incidents of this harassing ailment are epidemically on the rise in Europe. Many patients are unable to work for long periods of time. In addition to long-term fatigue, this syndrome can be accompanied by insomnia.

In 1924 Steiner told young physicians that youth could not get away unscathed with superficiality, that it would be the cause of their ruin, going even into their organs. He described that when a person does not deepen himself spiritually he can not sleep properly. The result would be world-wide epidemics of insomnia and that these people could not longer effect civilization. Is Chronic Fatigue Syndrome perhaps such a phenomenon?

Children who fear falling asleep are also quite numerous today. A study done in Freiburg, Germany, showed that children ranked television films as the number one cause. (Parents continue to underestimate media influence.) Other causes included fear of darkness, fear of being alone, problems at school, and discord in the family.

One should consult a physician about *specific sleep disturbances in children*. Rocking during sleep, which can have a brain-organic cause or a psychical cause, Pavor nocturnus (night terrors), and bed-wetting (enuresis) are disturbances in this category. Enuresis can also have an organic cause. In any case, stress, disquiet, and overloaded, overstimulated senses should be avoided. One should strive for a regular daily rhythm in which physical and mental activities are harmoniously alternated. It is well worth the effort to create a protective atmosphere without intellectual over-stimulation as well. The important thing is to not dramatize disturbances. One should lovingly calm the child and look for possible causes such as burdens from school, troubled or difficult relationships with others, or injurious experiences, for example. An often-occurring but completely preventable cause is television (films about monsters, violence, or cruelty for instance).

Various Soporific Drugs

Synthetic Sleep Medications

Synthetic sleep medications do not lead to a physiologically rejuvenating sleep because they negatively influence the rhythm and structure of sleep. Either the REM phase or the deep-sleep phase is changed. "Any other explanation is either wishful thinking or an unqualified claim by an advertiser" (Faust-Hole). Fundamentally, it should be taken into consideration that the effectual mechanism of sleep medications is largely unknown. Much harm has been done by these medications: Think of thalidomide, developed during the search for a safe sleep medication and thought to prevent morning sickness

during the early stages of pregnancy. But the side effects included a deformation of the embryo which led to disfigured human beings. What illusions were, and are, kindled by these substances! One of the effects of benzodiazepine is retrograde amnesia which means it influences the memory so that the next morning the patient can not recall the period of wakefulness the night before! This leads to an erroneous evaluation of the medication's effectiveness. This danger is all the more-so for the elderly and the periods of effectiveness of these preparations decreases over time. Certain medical procedures make use of this amnesia effect, for example, the patient does not remember the gastroscopy that he or she has just undergone. If such medications are taken during the day to suppress angst or disquiet, for instance, amentia (confusion) can be simulated (pseudo dementia): The affected person will possibly ask the same question twice within a few minutes because he or she can not remember asking the first time! A short time ago I read that in England there has been a correlation drawn between abuse of sleep medications and an increase in the crime rate. Also, the numerous suicides precipitated by sleep medications should be taken into consideration.

Elderly people are especially endangered by sleep and sedative medications because their period of effectiveness can be lengthened by a slower absorption rate than in younger people. Aftereffects of benzodiazepam drugs have been registered in older people weeks after they stopped taking a fourteen-day series. There is also a greater danger of night-time accidents when, for instance, these people get up in the night to use the toilet and are not able to come completely awake.

Even after taking these drugs for a short time there is a *decrease in their effectiveness*. Long-term usage of sedatives can actually have the undesired effect of periods of wakefulness longer than without the use of medication. Most sedatives lead to *addiction*. Known *side effects* include problems with the stomach and intestinal tract, damage to the liver, heart and kidneys, and mental alterations. Interactions with other prescription drugs are also alarming. Other, possibly life-saving, medications can have their effectiveness reduced up to complete ineffectiveness. On the other hand, other drug-interactions can cause an increase in effectiveness to the point of poisoning. Furthermore, there is the *danger of summation*, or one drug's potency increased by the other such as sleep medication with sedatives or neuroleptic drugs with antidepressants. The summary effect of sedatives and alcohol can have very serious consequences.

One should be very cautious about medications which contain synthetic substances (barbiturates, bromines, or diphenhydramine) in combination with plant-based drugs like valerian and hops. The plant-based addition does not mitigate the possible danger of the main synthetic substance!

Alcohol as a Sedative

Using alcohol as a help to get to sleep can be countereffective. Even small amounts of alcohol can disrupt sleep patterns. One falls asleep quickly and the first dream phase is reached rapidly but deep-sleep is reduced and the REM phases are significantly shortened. There are also less significant changes in the discharge of brain waves (EEG discharges).

Sleep Medications from Anthroposophical Medicine

There is a vast array of substances with a homeopathic, naturopathic, or anthroposophic basis which can help people to sleep better. These medicines neither cause addiction nor effect essential changes in the sleep structure. These medicines should be individually prescribed for patients by their doctor. For that reason, only a few will be mentioned here.

The most well-known, sleep-promoting medicines are mostly flowering plants (hops, *Humulus lupulus*, passion flowers, lavender). Sulfur is also used in an appropriate dilution. Leaves with a flower-like character and a high content of essential oils such as lemon balm can be of help as well as valerian root which is permeated with a flower-like aroma.

Avena sativa has a sleep-promoting effect. In higher potencies, the homeopathic remedy *coffea tosta* can help in cases of restlessness or agitation that are similar to those experienced after drinking too much coffee—the principle of “*similia similibus curentur*” (like heals like) applies. The kava kava root, which comes from the South Seas, can relieve anxiety, nervous anxiety, and disquietude, but it does sometimes alter the dream-state. If depression is suspected *St. John’s Wort* can be of help.

An anthroposophic doctor will choose from a wide variety of medicines based on a careful appraisal of numerous conditions in the patient, including the constitution of the patient and functional status of internal organs. For example, *Bryophyllum*, phosphorus, sulfur, *Hepatodoron*, and *Vitis comp.* may be used.

Further Therapy Possibilities from Anthroposophical Medicine

Besides medication therapy, there are numerous exterior applications such as compresses and hydro-therapy, and the dietetic-hygienic suggestions available treatments for sleep disturbances: Magnet therapy, in which physical magnets are used, *art therapies* such as painting, sculpture and clay modeling, music therapy, speech therapy, as well as *curative eurythmy*, all can fundamentally contribute to physical and mental harmonization and healing. Physician and therapist should work closely together in these cases. Unlike the therapies which are directed at specific illnesses or diseases, every artistic endeavor has a harmonizing effect and is therefore beneficial in promoting healthy sleep.

The Meaning of Sleep Disturbances

Sleep disturbances are not illnesses; they are symptoms of physical, mental, and spiritual problems. The causes of sleeplessness and insomnia can be physical ailments, mental imbalance, or spiritual one-sidedness. Viewed in this way, sleep disturbances are signs that something is not in order. They are messages from the organism that corrective measures are necessary. We become more alert to problems. We notice mistakes such as a life change that puts us out of our rhythm, a flood of unprocessed sense perceptions that burden us, and other things. Like all afflictions, sleeplessness is a fundamental experience of human life on Earth.

Treating symptoms can never relieve the underlying cause of a problem. Illnesses and afflictions have meaning for our lives and should not simply be expunged or eliminated by medication. Removing symptoms makes the search for the cause more difficult, sometimes impossible, and there is a danger that much worse harm can result.

What Time of Day Should One Go to Bed?

The amount of sleep required varies with each individual. The same goes for the best time to go to bed. However, it is generally true that a regular bedtime is beneficial to sleep quality. Sleep before midnight is especially restorative. We call it “beauty sleep.”

The poem *Watchmen's Call* by Johann Peter Hebel tells us something about bedtime:

Listen to what I will tell!
The clock has struck its tenth bell.
Now pray and now go to bed,
And if there is no remorseful thought in your head,
Sleep soft and sound! A serene eye,
In heaven keeps watch till morning is nigh.

Listen to what I will tell!
The clock has struck its eleventh bell.
And whoever still sweats at their task,
For the last time you are asked:
It is high time that you were in bed!

Listen to what I will tell!
The clock has struck its twelfth bell.
And who still at the hour of midnight,
Has a heart that suffers a painful plight,
May God give you a still, quiet time;
Make you happy again with health sublime!

Listen to what I will tell!
The clock has struck its second bell.
Heavy cares do nibble the heart,
Poor thing, from your sleep you're apart;
Oh, God, what is clouding the mind, do tell?

Children should be put to bed at a time appropriate for their age and always at the same time. Older people, on the other hand, should not go to bed too early. They require less sleep and sometimes suffer from a pseudo sleep disturbance because they are in bed too long. Of course, there are professions and life situations in which a regular sleep rhythm is impossible (shift work, night shifts, on-call services, for example). Even though these are not conducive to sleep quality, they are necessities that some people have taken upon themselves to perform for the good of others.

How Much Sleep Do We Need?

There is also no general answer to this question. There are many variables: a person's age, physical well-being, effort, mental challenges, the weather, and so on. Children need significantly more sleep than adults, especially older adults. In times where mental activity is predominant (when we are learning) sleep is especially important. Everyone must decide what the right amount of sleep is according to his/her stage of life and level of activity.

Just as too little sleep or disturbed sleep can cause problems, *too much sleep* can also have negative effects. In the case of too little sleep, the organism can make up the necessary sleep at a later time. In contrast, too much sleep can become problematic and more harmful than not enough. Who has not awakened on a weekend feeling battered, bloated, and not-together because he or she slept too long? As was described at the beginning of this article, regeneration of the physical body takes place mostly at night. Too much regeneration can lead to illnesses. Health is a *delicate balance* between too much and too little. It has been statistically confirmed that people who get between seven and eight hours of sleep per night live longer on average than people with more hours of sleep. Mortality rate increases with either extreme. For instance, too much vitality can build a suitable foundation for pathogens and lead to infections. On the other hand, when a person gets too much sleep and the spiritual-individual aspect does not penetrate, then the physical body cultivates the earth forces too strongly which can bring about sclerosis or even cancer formation. In such cases, might sleeplessness be seen as an expression of a tendency to self-healing?

The Significance of Daily Experiences for Sleep

Let us look once more at the daytime-side, the waking time. Sleep can be viewed as a rhythmic, regular, repetitive process which interrupts our periods of wakefulness and places us in another relationship to the world.

How one begins the day is important:

Take your time in the quiet of the morning fair,
And all through the day you'll have hardly a care.

If one awakens unhurried it has a positive effect on the entire day. In contrast, if we begin the day discontented or in a hectic state, everything will be more difficult. If we try to concentrate on what is essential in the mornings, even if we awaken less refreshed than we would like, if we are grateful and happy that we can begin a new day, everything will be easier. A short preview of the day conducted in an attitude of contentment and affirmation can have a beneficial and regulating effect. Those who have trouble getting started in the morning can help themselves by washing with the herb rosemary. This will help one become energized to tackle one's tasks with initiative and aplomb.

Everything we do during the day, our experiences, our thoughts and perceptions, has an effect on our sleep, on that which we can experience as help, and with which spiritual beings we come into contact. Whether we concern ourselves with spiritual or religious matters, or ask about the deeper meaning of our existence, all has an impact. Naturally, there are also effects when we spend the day lazy and comfortable without inner or outer activity. We sleep better after physical, mental, and spiritual activity. It is beneficial to alternate these activities. For example, one should go on foot as much as possible, not only for one's health and fitness, but also to observe nature and other people with loving interest. Short, relaxing breaks should be taken between times of exertion and tension. Pause for a moment and then let go before beginning a new task. That contributes greatly to feeling balanced. We should become artists of life. Truly, artistic activity helps us to create strength for daily life. Painting, sculpture and clay modeling, playing music, and eurythmy help us live our lives with initiative and positive attitude. Artistic activities intensify and improve our waking life and thus our sleep.

Conclusion

Every night we are immersed into primeval, creative forces. Higher beings are active in the regeneration and renewal of our physical bodies. These processes usually remain hidden to us; as our consciousness lapses during sleep. Our thoughts, our feelings, and our actions during waking consciousness are very important to what happens during sleep. The more consciously and positively we go about our daily activities, without losing ourselves in the outside, material world, the more we warm ourselves to all things of the world and our fellow human beings in loving interest, the more we try to penetrate to knowledge of the essential, then all the more can the divine-spiritual be revealed to us during sleep. Our waking life effects our sleep. Not only do we experience positive or negative effects on our own organism, but also that we can have a beneficial or perturbing effect on other spiritual beings such as the deceased, for example.

Each person has individual strengths and abilities and individual sleep requirements. One should try to find the golden medium, the right measure, in everything. The rhythm between a spiritualized, physical activity and a spiritual stimulus fired by the will, the rhythm between activity (tension) and calm, introspective regard (relaxation) is of great importance. Just as daily life should be permeated with rhythms, so also should there be rhythmic alteration between waking and sleeping. The more we consciously and freely integrate into cosmic rhythms, the more healing and curative aspects can enter into our lives.

The moods of soul that can help us to have a positive relationship to life are calm trust, contentment, and gratitude for everything that destiny sends.

Nutrition

Modern Food: Is It Really Future-Oriented?

by

Petra Kühne

Introduction

Genetically engineered food, “nutraceuticals,” and convenience foods are only a few of the names applied to various foods now available in the market. The media is filled with reports about these foods. These products are cause for concern because nutritionists can not yet categorize these foods and they may have negative effects on people’s health. Further, announcements about these new products are not always in the best interest of the consumer.

We have seen more changes in lifestyle at the end of the twentieth century than in practically any other time in history. Globalization and the resulting social and economic problems are pressing in upon humanity. Food and nutrition have been affected by these changes. In earlier times the amount of time needed for food plants to become “native” to a certain area was decades or even centuries. Today we are faced with an acceleration process that does not allow enough time for us to become accustomed to everything new. Skepticism, or even fear, of too much that is new has been one result.

The Origin and Development of Food

Food comes from nature, that is, from plants and animals. We use certain living microorganisms such as yeast in limited quantities. Salt and various additives from the mineral kingdom do not nourish us, but are added for taste or used as part of a processing technique, such as brine salt in sausages.

Minerals are more often integrated into plant or animal organisms and are thus absorbed by human beings. This allows for a completely different utilization than is possible with isolated ingredients.

Food has a natural origin, but it is not always a pure, natural product. That term applies only to wild plants and animals that grow without any interference from human beings. Nutritional plants from the field are grown under the care of farmers. Even wild game is controlled and the forests are

appropriately tended. So really “natural food” should be called “cultured food” because people, with their ideas and their labor, have created their food. They have grown and bred the needed plants and animals and created an environment containing the required supplements for growth.

Food is also a mirror of the cultural development of humanity. *Fast food*, which has come about in our time, is very connected to the way we handle time, and the value placed on haste and leisure. *Functional food* is supposed to serve a specific purpose such as cancer prevention, osteoporosis prevention, or strengthening intestinal flora. In addition nutrients have been refined for specific uses as *food supplements*.

There is an old Chinese saying that expresses the significance of food that has been further developed by humans:

Human beings differentiate themselves from animals by their spirit and by cooking their food.

Processing food means that people create their food according to their needs with the help of their spirits. This differentiates humans from animals. Food processing corresponds to a soul-spiritual need and is a cultural process.

For the time being the above statement is neutral. First of all, a processed food can be judged only in reference to the intent and the original food. If one wants pleasure only, then one gets pleasure foods that often are not, however, especially “healthy.” If one wants easy preparation, desire often conflicts with nourishment from original, naturally-grown quality.

History of Food Processing

Food processing has developed dramatically during the last century through technology. Many commonly-used products today have come about because of technological advances. For example, it is interesting to note that the technique of sterilization was first discovered and put into practice and only later did Pasteur discover why and how the process worked for food preservation.

New Methods (Sample Choice)

19th Century

Sterilization, pasteurization (1813 first canned food factory opened in England)

20th Century

1940s Frozen foods

1960s Freeze-dried, pressure-cooked foods

1980s Microwave Cooking

1990s Induction Cooking

Before pasteurization there were no preserved fruit juices, for example, only fresh-pressed at harvest time. In order to preserve fruit juice one made wine out of it; alcohol fermentation was a useful method. In old books one still finds writings about the beneficial effects of wine for ill people as we read in the fairytale of *Little Red Riding Hood*, where cake and wine are brought to the sick grandmother, not for celebration but to help make her well. Today, because of its alcohol content, wine is less often given to the ill for their recovery and more fruit juice.

During the twentieth century many new processes were invented such as deep-freezing or microwave cooking that quickly became standard practices in the kitchen but, at the same time, brought forth criticism.

Likewise, new foods have been developed that could not have come about without the new technological applications.

New Foods (Sample Choice)

19th Century

White flour

White beet sugar

20th Century

Fruit juice (Pasteurization)

Margarine

Cola drinks

Artificial sugar substitutes and sweeteners (Sorbitol,
Xylitol, Saccharine)

Liquid formula for infants

Frozen Foods

This preservation method has been regularly used since the middle of the twentieth century. Initiated in cold climates as a way of naturally preserving meat and fish, the freezing process was expanded to include just about all foods in industrialized nations. The one requirement is a “cooling chain”: uninterrupted cooling at the processing plant, transportation to the market, and storage by the consumer.

Foods are “deep frozen” quickly at temperatures of at least minus twenty-five degrees Fahrenheit (commercially minus fifty-eight degrees Fahrenheit) at which a kind of cold-rigor sets in. Normal processes of deterioration that occur when the temperature is slowly lowered have no time to develop. Storage temperatures must be kept at zero degrees Fahrenheit or below in order to maintain the cold-rigor. All bacterial deterioration processes are stopped. Chemical and enzymatic decomposition is significantly slowed. This allows for a long storage life of frozen products.

Following the exact recommendations for freezing (which often does not happen in households) allows for the preservation of vitamins. The inner, life-quality and vitality are not destroyed, as has been demonstrated by the use of frozen semen of men and animals in artificial insemination techniques.

Despite these facts, there are still some doubts about this modern method of food preservation. From an ecological viewpoint, the energy used for the cooling chain is a detracting factor. As far as quality goes, one must differentiate between the polarities of vitality and ripeness. The ripening process requires warmth (from the sun) and time in order to create color, aroma, and taste. Cold is the polarity to this. Freezing preserves vitality, but it interrupts the ripening process, or does not allow it to fully occur. In truth, thawed foods quickly lose their aroma and their structures disintegrate as soon as the cold no longer holds them together. The vitamin content remains sufficient, but that represents only one aspect of food quality. Experiments using imaging methods indicate a simultaneous loss of form and formative forces.

These methods should not be rejected out of hand, but it is important to look at the effects beyond the substantive content. In our culture are we not surrounded by more cold processes than warmth processes? How does this apply to the ripening of fruit, for instance? When do we have or take the time to let food “ripen” in peace? Today, is not so much accelerated so that it may be preserved for a long time?

Microwave Technology

Microwave technology was applied as an energy source for cooking food in the second half of the twentieth century. Previously, Microwave was known as a medical therapy; it was used to bring warmth into certain skin tissue.

The advantage of microwave cooking is its speed which satisfies people's need for quick preparation time. Microwave ovens allow us to thaw frozen foods and cook small portions very quickly. It does not really save much time in meal preparation for larger families (more than three portions). This technology fits well in a society that mostly consists of small households that have less and less time for food preparation.

Microwaves are electromagnetic waves of relatively high frequency that penetrate the food in bundles. The energy waves cause heat from friction with the water already present in the food. This kind of heat generation is very different from conventional cooking whereby the heat meets the food and diffuses (convection).

Microwaves accelerate the vibration of the water, affecting the inner energy structures in the food. Materially speaking, there is no more loss than with conventional cooking. However, if one understands that food is an

organism formed by forces, vibrations, and energies, then one can look skeptically at such changes. Unfortunately there has not yet been enough research conducted about this kind of influence.

While the microwaves have no other effect on the food itself, the user must be protected from exposure. Therefore, microwave ovens are intensively insulated and shielded. Even so, one should not remain for long periods of time in front of a running microwave oven. In households that is not often a problem; however, in restaurants or places where meals are mass-produced, this consideration should be taken seriously.

There is also a social aspect that should be considered. Those in favor of microwave ovens have said that they like being able to cook or reheat single portions of food with little effort any time of the day or night. As practical as this is for single persons, in communities, such as families, it can lead to family members eating alone and at any time they feel like it. It takes extra effort to maintain the family meal and teach waiting for others.

Novelty Foods and Genetic Engineering

A big milestone in food production occurred a few years ago through the use of genetic engineering on food crops. Researchers had been trying for decades to produce edible fats or other foods from lifeless materials such as coal or petroleum; all of their attempts failed. Even the breeding of single-cell microorganisms into biomass to produce protein-rich foods was not successful. Again and again it was demonstrated that people are dependent upon the plant and animal kingdoms for their nutrition.

Large corporations began to try more intensely and more specifically to change these agricultural raw materials. Genetic engineering, a method for gene manipulation, is applied for adding specific, single characteristics to certain plants or animals. Often the organisms of these living things as a whole are in no way taken into consideration.

Compared to conventional breeding methods, genetic engineering is faster, intervenes more radically in the molecular structure, is mostly irreversible, and is mostly uncontrollable. The objective to be met through genetically engineered changes is, first and foremost, short-term economic success, and improvement in food quality or quantity are hardly ever inquired about. At this time (1999) there is still not many genetically engineered foods: enzymes, corn, and soy. However, research is being conducted with almost every nutritional plant and many animals.

Organizations for organic agriculture have banned the use of genetically engineered plants or animals in their food lives. Acclaimed chefs also reject such food.

In 1997, after long negotiations, legal parameters for these food products were outlined which define the rules of registration and declaration. Included

in these so-called *Novelty Food Regulations* are not only genetically manipulated foods, but also exotic foods, synthetic foods, and foods that are produced by new techniques.

Novelty Foods Regulations

- Foods which contain genetically manipulated organisms (GMO)
- Foods that are produced from genetically manipulated organisms but no longer contain them (i.e. oils, lecithin)
- Foods with a new molecular structure (i.e. synthetic fats)
- Foods from microorganisms, algae, or mushrooms
- Foods that have not been previously consumed by our population (i.e. beetles, grasshoppers, exotic fruits)
- Foods that are produced by previously uncommon methods (i.e. high-pressure sterilization)

These legal parameters show what is possible. No foods are banned, but there are established guidelines for their production and identification. Genetically manipulated foods that still contain genetic material or proteins must be labeled as such. Sugar from genetically manipulated sugar beets or refined oil from genetically manipulated rapeseed need not be labelled. Food additives, such as soy lecithin from genetically manipulated soy, are also not included in the requirement for labelling. This is not an altogether satisfactory solution for the consumer.

All this demonstrates that human research has now entered into an area that is directly connected with life. The acceleration of the development has led to such discoveries being immediately put into commercial use including food production. Consumers have not been allowed enough time to either emotionally, or educationally, evaluate these developments, resulting in widespread rejection (80% of consumers) of genetically manipulated foods.

Since the end of 1998 the food label *GMO-Free* has been sanctioned. Producers can declare their products *GMO-free* if they can prove that all ingredients and additives were made without the benefit of any genetic engineering. Traces of genetically manipulated contents may find their way into foods from an uncontrolled source, such as cross pollination that can occur between crops in neighboring fields, or from small quantities in transport containers, or machines, and so forth. These traces are, at the present time, allowed.

It is ironic that producers must absorb the cost and time in proving they do not make use of an undesirable technology while the producers that do make use of genetically engineered foods are, in part, freed from any form of declaration (for example, additives, enzymes, refined oils, and so forth). The advantage for consumers remains that there is finally a way to be informed and becoming oriented.

Food Supplements

Besides novelty “food” products, there is a category that, at first glance, does not seem to be food but is legally defined as such. These are the various vitamins and minerals, single substances like amino acids, and secondary plant-content materials offered as nutritional supplements in the form of pills or capsules created and marketed because, supposedly, normal nutrition is no longer adequate.

Some Examples of Nutritional Supplements:

- Vitamins and minerals
- L-Carnitine (affects the metabolism)
- Carotene (provitamin)
- Selenium (trace element)
- Omega-3 fatty acids (found in fish oil)
- Gamma-Lanoleic acid (found in Evening Primrose Oil, for example)
- Co-enzyme Q10 (important for cell metabolism)
- Secondary plant content material (coming soon)

All of these nutritional supplements occur naturally in foods. In fact, that is where their effectiveness, i.e. health-promoting qualities, was first observed.

Example: Omega-3 Fatty Acids Instead of Mackerel

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fish oils. A polyunsaturated fatty acid, it is regarded as being very active biologically. Its positive nutritional effects were discovered when it was observed that Eskimos, whose diets consist mainly of animal products, suffered less from arteriosclerosis than the North and Central Europeans whose diets also contain many animal products. Studies showed that the difference was in the form of the food consumed. While the Eskimos ate a lot of fish, the Europeans ate more beef and pork, and fish fat is very different from that of beef or pork. Because they move in water, fish can not use heavy, saturated fatty acids. They must have a “light,” unsaturated fatty acids, similar to vegetable oil for their organism. These biologically “active” fatty acids were named after their chemical structure, omega-3. They help prevent the formation of the plaque found in arteriosclerosis, a common result of our lifestyles and of refined foods: animal fat (land animals), animal protein in excess, cholesterol (animal products), lack of exercise, smoking, alcohol, and so forth.

The fact that industrialized nations have a higher risk for sclerotic diseases is not due to a lack of unsaturated fatty acids, as found in fish oils, but rather to bad habits in choosing food and lifestyles.

Nutritional counselors now recommend vegetable oils which contain similar unsaturated fatty acids. The fatty acids found in fish oils, especially mackerel, are supposed to be even more effective; eating more ocean fish or using fish oils is recommended. On one hand, there is a problem of availability and on the other hand, there is a problem of taste. Fish oils have an intense, fishy taste that is not always acceptable. Additionally, these special fatty acids have been isolated and are now offered in the form of nutritional supplements. However, no attention was given to the question of whether the consumption of such fatty acids separate from the whole fish is sensible.

Food Supplements: Yes or No?

Food supplements are not suitable or effective on a permanent basis. They cannot balance unhealthy habits in nutrition and lifestyle over long periods of time. In the case of illnesses related to metabolic disorders, a doctor-prescribed substitution for a specific length of time can be helpful. In these instances, concentrated preparations made from plants, and so forth, are more effective than isolated, synthetic preparations.

In order to balance deficiencies permanently, the causes must be remedied. How can food that gives people adequate nourishment be raised and grown? Plants and animals that can develop in optimal conditions for their species (organic agriculture) are the best foundation for our nutrition.

Functional Foods

In earlier times almost everyone knew that food promoted good health, even prevented illness. Today this knowledge has almost disappeared. For instance, one knew that garlic prevents arteriosclerosis, that onion juice is good for coughs and cherry juice for blood formation. A more analytical scientific view has reduced food to its nutritional qualities. With the knowledge of vitamins, minerals, and trace elements, this clinical viewpoint has expanded to include the “effective mechanisms” necessary for metabolism. Vitamins are touted as disease preventatives, not only as cures for specific illnesses resulting from vitamin deficiencies such as scurvy (vitamin C), or beri-beri (vitamin B1). Historically, diseases resulting from vitamin deficiencies occurred only when the diet was very one-sided. The diseases were not cured or prevented by taking isolated vitamins, but rather by eating whole foods such as sauerkraut or fresh, spring herbs and citrus fruits for scurvy, and brown rice for beri-beri.

In the last few years, especially in the USA and Japan, the particular health-enhancing effects of particular foods have been newly revisited. Such foods are described as functional foods. They are supposed to have supplementary positive effect on physical or mental health in addition to their value as nutrition. Foods are now assigned effects over and above their supplying of nutrients (nutritional physiological value).

In other words, in addition to their nutritional value, functional foods have positive influences on health, physical energy, and mood of individuals.

Our modern way of thinking still defines health value in purely materialistic terms. Single substances are researched such as lycopene found in tomatoes or omega-3 fatty acids found in mackerel. With the intention of rounding out the nutritional “programs” of individuals, such substances have been isolated and offered as supplements. However, various studies have shown that these substances do not work as well in their isolated form as when consumed in natural foods. Some studies have even shown harmful effects. Clearly nutritional supplements do not replace whole foods.

A functional food, therefore, must be a real food, not a powder or a tablet. It should be a staple food that is eaten daily so that regular consumption is assured.

Functional Foods

- are foods (no capsules, tablets, or powders)
- are eaten daily
- fulfill special functions besides their nutritional value

Admittedly, this approach to nutrition has already been taken up by the commercial arena. In Japan functional foods must be approved and their health-promoting properties proven through research studies. So companies are now doing this for their specific products and not for natural foods like fruits or vegetables. Chewing gum with teeth-protecting sugar substitutes and hypoallergenic rice from which the protein allergen has been removed are now officially recognized as functional foods.

The second nation to label functional foods was the United States, first functional foods arising in the fitness and wellness movement: drinks that are supposed to enhance the physical capability of athletes by supplying energy (usually from sugar) and certain vitamins, minerals, and other additives. This development led into customized foods based on the very latest standard of knowledge (food design). Often a supplement or an additive is still under scientific scrutiny and discussion when it is offered to the public as an additive in some foods.

In Germany the term “functional food” is not yet legally recognized. Still, there are foods already available with such additions. Belonging in this category are pro-biotic and pre-biotic milk products containing special bacteria cultures originally isolated from human intestines and then cultured, supposedly to improve the intestinal flora, stimulate the immune system, and increase the cleansing function of the intestines. Naturally, these processes are especially aided by the use of product X from manufacturer Y

with the patented bacteria culture Z. Research trials confirm these statements. These same results apply to regular yogurt.

That food has a much greater role than mere nourishment has been generally accepted, but at the same time, it is being commercially abused. Supplements are not viewed as natural components of food, but rather as substances that must be put into it by the food industry. In the near future it may very well be that certain substances will be injected into natural foods through genetic engineering, thus turning them into functional foods.

A further problem exists because of the narrowness of our vision. For example, while tomatoes are seen to be cancer preventatives because they contain one substance, they also contain many substances that can be shown to cause cancer.

Convenience Products

A paper on new food products would be incomplete without convenience products. Convenience products are supposed to make food preparation easier. The term “convenience food” is practically synonymous with “pre-cooked” or “fully-cooked” food, often with a negative twist of being degenerated, low-quality products. Of course, this does not apply to all convenience products. In principle, bread is a convenience food; it relieves us from eating porridge that must always be prepared fresh and it frees us from set meal times and the need to be in the kitchen: One can always take along a slice of bread and eat it at any time.

This principle of convenience now applies to a great variety of foods. The most obvious convenience foods include prepared soups, sauces, and puddings; entrees that need only be warmed; baking mixes; granola and other cereals; instant powders, and pre-cooked foods that require less cooking time (for example, grains and legumes). These products have been available in conventional grocery stores for a long time and are now being sold in health-food stores.

One major disadvantage of convenience products is the preservation process, be it through the use of chemical preservatives, heat processes (sterilization, pasteurization), cold processes (freezing, for example), or air exchange processes (CA-controlled atmosphere, or removing oxygen and replacing it with nitrogen or carbon dioxide).

Convenience foods can lead to poor eating habits in particular to a decline in the consumption of fresh foods. However, this is mainly dependent upon the consumer and his or her buying and eating habits.

The convenience is saving time; the amount of work needed for food preparation is greatly reduced. Advertising expounds upon the many possibilities for variety, but this should be critically examined. Prepared foods exhibit a certain monotony, a sameness in taste and appearance that is often glossed over in advertising.

Convenience: Joyful Living without Frustration?

An apartment without a kitchen? Something that seems unthinkable in Europe is already well-known in the USA. In many households only a refrigerator and a microwave oven indicate that warm meals are ever available there.

This development became possible through modern convenience products. Open the package, heat for five minutes in the microwave, and there you have a finished meal on the table.

But convenience means more than mere timesaving and comfort. Convenience brings variety and change in the menu plan. Mexican tacos, Asian rice, or Italian pasta; the culinary world is now open to those who are less talented in the kitchen.

– Taken from: *Food Ingredients Aktuell*, July 1997

Convenience products have brought the principle of division of labor now more strongly into the home. As always with new developments, other skills, parts of daily culture, are lost. On the one hand it is regrettable, but on the other hand, it is a fact that today fewer and fewer people wish to cook daily in their households.

Convenience products can not be separated from societal development, obviously because these foods are purchased more and more often, obviously because they fulfill a need of consumers. Let us take a quick look at the societal changes in the last few decades.

Changing Food Habits

Societal and demographic changes have given nutrition a different significance. The time available for purchase, preparation, and eating is decreasing. Further the lack of knowledge and the will to occupy ourselves with nutrition are on the increase.

In earlier times, one purchased food daily. Today food shopping occurs only once or twice per week. Food with a longer shelf life is required (pasteurized milk today lasts five days, earlier two days, UHT milk up to six months). When in Germany UHT milk makes up fifty-two percent of all milk purchased, this says much about our changed eating habits.

At the same time, however, freshness is an important and sought-after criterion for quality. On vacation and during free time, people shop pleasurably in markets, bazaars, and the gourmet sections of grocery stores.

In the health food industry, the trend is for larger stores with expanded services: more parking, packaged products, subscription produce, and home delivery. Service is desired so that shopping takes less time. Households have become smaller; large cities have up to fifty percent single-occupant households.

Preparation

Daily people eat in restaurants, cafeterias, bistros, and cantinas. Even in families, fast food is desirable and promoted through technology (freezers, microwaves) and convenience products. On the whole, less cooking is done because skills and time are on the wane.

At the same time, people have higher expectations for their meals because of vacations, advertising, and experiences in restaurants. More and more consumers are eating Chinese or Italian food without knowing how to prepare it themselves from scratch. For this reason, more prepared or partially-prepared foods are purchased, everything from frozen pizza to canned minestrone soup. For example, in the natural foods industry, prepared Italian tomato sauce and frozen oven-baked Frenchfries are very popular.

Eating

Our eating culture is changing. In families there are fewer mealtimes together because, among other things, it is technically possible with microwave ovens to eat separately without much trouble. Even children can prepare a meal for themselves when they get home from school or play. Non-rhythmic lifestyles are on the increase, along with the desire for lighter foods. Often, meals dissolve into several small snacks in which finger foods are chosen.

The goods sold in grocery stores are changing because all of us have changed. This may cause some to complain but it simply is the result of changes in our lifestyles.

Is Our Nutrition Insufficient?

During his agricultural course in 1924, Rudolf Steiner warned: “Even the materialistic farmer, if he is not simply living a dulled existence, but contemplates things that are going on daily, or at least yearly, can calculate approximately how many decades it will take until the products are so degenerated that sometime during this century they can no longer serve as adequate nutrition for people.” Is our nutrition really no longer adequate? And, if that is the case, how can it be improved?

The concept of nutritional supplementation identifies the deficiency as a lack of certain substances. Can this can be remedied through substitution, i.e. adding these substances taken from material that is possibly already deficient?

However, implementing this supplementation concept can not alter the fact that many people do not fully nourish themselves with enough fruit, vegetables, whole-grain bread, and other grain-based dishes due to stress, extraordinary pressures, or simply not paying attention to eating a whole-foods diet with enough variety. This is the responsibility of the individual and can be most easily improved by changes in eating habits to include highly

nutritious foods. However, the situation is not helped by quick and comfortable “solutions” like swallowing pills, for instance.

The idea that it is possible to substitute a whole-foods diet with supplements is driven by materialistic thinking. Conventional science defines food based exclusively on its identifiable nutrients that are seen as the only valuable components. For this reason a vitamin that has been added is given the same value as one that is originally contained in the food. This kind of evaluation can be changed only if a different understanding of quality underlies our concept of nutrition. This is also key to the above statements by Steiner.

Health Food

Already in the nineteenth century, and especially at the beginning of the twentieth century, new approaches and ideas about new nutritional forms were born. The increasing influence of technology on food, and the separation and isolation of single components were all compared to a more holistic view of quality. Dr. Bircher-Benner (1867–1939) was a pioneer in this field. He recognized the life-forces, the compressed sunlight, found in plants. He prescribed specific juices and raw foods to heal sick people; very much in opposition to the accepted medical knowledge of his time. In the 1940s Werner Kollath (1892–1972) created a foundation of a whole-foods diet that was later further developed by the Giessener Group associated with Dr. C. Leitzmann. This group also spoke of the important influences of Dr. Kollath and Dr. Bruker and, later, about bioactive substances. Substances were described that had been recognized as being necessary during animal testing, but these substances could not be analytically proven at that point in time.

For a long time one believed in still-unknown vitamins or trace elements. With the methods of analysis available the last few decades it has become possible to examine these substances more closely which were known to be components of food but whose effects remained unclear. Often these substances were found to be so-called non-nutritive substances that were, in part, qualified as being harmful to health. For example, this was the case with phytine, a phosphorus-storing substance found in seeds of grains or legumes. Today phytine is known as a bio-active substance that has cleansing and cancer-preventing qualities when consumed in normal amounts. Similar re-evaluations have occurred with the natural plant pigments (carotenoid, anthocyane), and with flavorings such as sulfur oils found in onions and garlic, for example.

Always one is looking to a substance that underlies metabolic properties. In whole-foods diets there is a clear distinction made between naturally-grown foods and highly refined food products in which these fine substances are partly missing. The background for a holistic view, does not, however, include consideration of the actual liveliness in foods as an independent force.

Therefore, their recommendations are often based on, as Dr. W. Kollath said, “Let the natural remain as natural as possible.” In actuality, this attitude negates the human spirit; it implies that human beings do more harm than good in their interaction with their nutrition. The fact that food preparation can cause an improvement in the nutritional quality of the food is hardly recognized. A possible loss of vitamin content often means a gain in the flavor and tolerance of food. This is one aspect of the anthroposophical approach that goes beyond the material. It associates human beings and their cultures with the creation and preparation of their nutrition. Through their ideas and will, human beings are in a position to affect positive changes in their nutrition and, with that, to encourage development.

The Anthroposophical Approach

In 1924 Rudolf Steiner (1862–1925) gave a professional course for farmers in order to bring a new impulse into agriculture. Steiner wished to help farmers to produce real, nutritional food. Speaking of the basic tenet for creating quality nutrition he said: “Forces must be taken from the spiritual realm.” In other words, only through a newly developed understanding of who human beings are, can really nutritious, and not just stomach-filling, food be grown. The degrees of inner flexibility, vitality, and maturing forces are measurements of quality. What modern food should give people is stimulating energy that offers them the possibility of working on their inner selves and being active in the soul-spirit.

The trend of supplementing foods with isolated substances is really in opposition to human needs. The exceptions are people with illness-related, and not nutritionally-related, deficiencies. The question arises of just how far the increased supplementation of isolated substances can go in embedding themselves into the structure of a living organism, causing inner strain, sluggishness, or deposits. This would be the opposite to the image of inner stimulation, fullness of ideas, and desire for activity.

Anthroposophically-oriented teaching about nutrition is based upon another image of human beings than is normally presented by natural science. If human beings are imagined to be only physical bodies that have to be given consumed material and energy so that they are capable of activity, then nutrition is understood to be the optimal consumption of nutritional substances and calories. However, if human beings are seen to be soul-spiritual beings that have enlivened physical bodies, then, at the very least, it is acknowledged that nutrition has a far-reaching influence. It is then comprehensible that the emotional impression, for instance, that food makes upon people is significant. A meal eaten with pleasure is much better received than one that is swallowed with difficulty. Foods that are hard to digest are also difficult for the soul-spiritual life. This can just as easily happen with constant, small snacks as with a single, very heavy meal. With time it can

affect one's ability to concentrate. Other foods facilitate soul-spiritual alertness, such as grains, for example, that, as complex carbohydrates, support spiritual and physical activities.

However, nutrition does not stand alone as the single determining factor. One can not eat one's way into Heaven, thereby improving the quality of one's thinking. This must still be accomplished through working on one's inner self. But one can either make one's life, health, and ability to concentrate easier or more difficult, depending upon one's choices in food and drink.

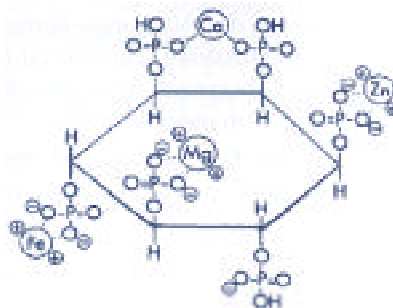
What Nourishes Human Beings?

Against this backdrop it becomes clear that, with food, what it comes down to is the spiritual background, that is to say the idea of the food, the plant, or the animal. At first is the thought and then comes the material manifestation. First the idea of "apple" must be there before the appropriate genes can form which allow the tree to grow. This is comparable to a human being who wishes to build a house. First comes the idea, then a plan is made, and that plan is put into action with material such as stones, wood, and so forth. As something that is not alive, a house is held together by static forces. Food is held together by forces of life. If those forces are no longer effective, the food decays. This life force can be seen in the forms, the configurations, such as an apple tree and the apples, or the pork cutlets.

Life forces (formative forces) are what food is comprised of. When we eat an apple, we destroy its structure in our mouth, and during the course of its digestion everything that could identify it as the original apple is broken down: apple protein, apple fat, and apple carbohydrate. Food allows human beings to become active, to build energy and enzymes in the gallbladder and pancreas in order to purposely and specifically digest food.

The necessary self-activity of digestion strengthens us. It is similar to physical training. During this activity energy is gained that is used for the formation of human substance. Food makes us internally flexible and alert.

Mineral absorption almost always takes place through the consumption of animal and plant foods. One exception is salt; it is a pure mineral. Such direct minerals which we take in without the "help" of plants or animals present us with similar challenges to isolated vitamins and pills containing nutritional substances. We must first integrate them into our organism. They offer us no stimulating forces because they come from a non-living sphere. One significant characteristic of these substances is their prominent crystalline structure. For example, vitamin B-2, (see illustration). Alternatively, the natural



Phytine

vitamins contained in a plant or animal organism have a living connection to the cells and other substances. We get these vitamins in foods such as cheese, vegetables, and so forth. We benefit from the integrative work already accomplished by the plant or animal and do not need to perform this work ourselves. Therefore we should be cautious when it comes to the intense absorption of pure minerals; metabolizing could easily become too intense for us.

In 1924 Steiner spoke about the degeneration of food that would occur at the end of the twentieth century. He surely meant this loss of quality at the living level. Diminishing, reduced, or one-sided formative forces lead, for example, to an inability in plants to properly absorb minerals from the soil into their organisms. This would require human beings to put more into their metabolic activity in order to integrate minerals into their organisms. It would require metabolic forces which, today, human beings no longer have at their disposal.

Steiner said that the application of mineral fertilizers prevent the plants from finding enough liveliness in the soil. After a few decades the plants are weakened in their ability to form protein; deficient protein quality is the result of too little liveliness in the soil. In turn, if people eat these plants, then they are missing the inner liveliness, the stimulation for their own protein formation, the energy increase that a whole-foods diet can give.

A diet that is deficient in inner liveliness but supplemented with isolated mineral substances will have a weakening effect in the long run. Therefore, a worthy goal is to produce, procure, and eat strong, vital, and fully-ripened foods without mineral supplements.

The Task of Agriculture, Processing, and Preparation

Then it is clear what the task for agriculture is in growing food. Instead of adding non-living minerals (first and foremost, nitrogen fertilizers), it must be realized that plants need living soil. Ecologically sound cultivation methods are helping us along in this direction by advocating the use of animal and plant fertilizers (manure and compost). The biodynamic method uses preparations as well that come from all the realms of nature and, through their particular preparation, help plants absorb living forces. Part of the biodynamic method purposely is to stimulate the liveliness within plants in order to cultivate a living quality.

“Liveliness” does not mean that all foods should be eaten raw or that the plant is the liveliest. That would be a purely quantitative interpretation. “Liveliness” in plants shows itself in the entire structure, in growth, ripening, metabolism, and substance formation. It comes down to a qualitative, inner quality.

The task of processing is to form the “raw materials” from plants and animals so that an improvement in their inner quality can occur. Processing

and preparation are formative and creative tasks. There are different guidelines or rules for different foods. For instance, a salad is already complete and just needs a dressing to “refine” it, but not through a cooking process. On the other hand, the forces stored within grain kernels need to be unlocked; with water and heat we can make a porridge that is especially nourishing for people with weak digestion. Or, we can make a nourishing, will-promoting, hefty loaf of whole-grain bread. In each case different forces in the human organism are required and activated in order to deal with food made from whole grains. Looked at in this way, processing and preparation can have a variety of effects:

- Improvement in food-tolerance and digestibility
- Lengthening of storage life
- Improvement of flavor
- Development of new products

Food for the Future

Reviewing the tendencies of our time, one can begin to see trends:

1. One way is the addition of isolated substances, selective alteration, and functional foods with one singular quality. In this case, human beings are viewed as creators of new products.
2. The other way portrays nature as the creator and best source of food. In this case only foods in their natural state are recommended. This way excludes any positive effects of human creativity on food processing and preparation.
3. The middle way strives for integration, with nurturing the creative abilities of people, and with becoming creatively active with respect for the life of food crops and animals. Unlike the other two directions, this way can not be clearly defined, it is preconnected with our changing culture and the possibilities of plants and animals. It requires creativity, intuition, and inner flexibility. For example, a whole-grain can be prepared in such a way that it gains digestibility without losing any of its inner value, or fruit can be cooked and seasoned so that it tastes like a different food. The conditions in which animals are housed and fed play a role in agriculture. How can one get a good-quality meat when the animal is never allowed outside the barn, or a chicken lay its eggs onto a conveyor belt from a narrow cage? Ethical views in food production belong to this middle way. One could speak of “cultural food,” as food that is made for people and meets the needs of the consumers and not just those of the producers.

Just exactly how the food of the future will be depends on us, the consumers. We will buy and eat the foods that meet our needs. We can make our purchases in a conscious way, using the head and the heart and not only out of an unconscious want. What follows are some recommendations for creating a healthy, consciously-conceived diet.

Suggestions for Food Choices

- Biodynamically grown foods (Demeter™ or Helios™) or organically grown foods because of the superior quality of the growing methods.
- A predominantly plant-based diet with milk and milk products. Meat, fish, and eggs can be included in small amounts. One should pay attention that the animals are raised in a species-appropriate manner.
- Processing serves to open-up the food and should improve tolerance, digestibility, and sensory quality for the people eating it. Techniques involving genetic manipulation and irradiation are undesirable. Intensively processed foods such as isolated substances (isolated protein, for instance) or additives (artificial sweeteners, synthetic fats) should be avoided. This also applies to foods with such additives as preservatives, artificial colorings, and artificial flavorings.
- In food preparation, use fresh products quickly (no long storage); a gentle cooking method for vegetables (steaming instead of boiling); allow enough time for liquid absorption when preparing grains, bread, and legumes. Frozen foods and microwave cooking should be avoided. Good seasoning with herbs and spices not only improves the taste, but also strengthens health-giving qualities of food.
- Nutritional supplements such as isolated vitamins or minerals are superfluous in the daily diet.
- In general, fruit and vegetables that are in season and grown in your region should be given preference, with occasional choices of tropical or “exotic” fruits.
- Cold-pressed vegetable oils and butter as well as oily seeds, nuts, and almonds. Protein requirements should be met for the most part by plants, milk and milk products. Vitamins, minerals, and trace minerals are abundantly present in vegetables, fruits, and grains.

It is hoped that this article has provided information and background about the development of modern food and will be a help in consciously creating your own individual nutrition plans.

TIMELINE

EDIBLES AND QUAFFABLES

[ADDED BY THE EDITOR]

The Nineteenth Century

1872, Blackjack chewing gum
1876, Premium soda crackers
 (later Saltines)
1881, Pillsbury flour
1886, Coca-Cola
1887, Ball-Mason jars
1888, Log Cabin syrup
1889, Aunt Jemima pancake mix
1889, Calumet baking powder
1889, McCormick spices
1889, Pabst Brewing Company
1890, Knox gelatine
1890, Libby introduces keys
 to canned meat
1890, Lipton tea
1891, Del Monte
1891, Fig Newton
1891, Quaker Oats Company
1893, Cream of Wheat
1893, Juicy Fruit gum
1894, chili powder
1895, shredded coconut
1895, Triscuits
1896, Cracker Jack
1896, Michelob beer
1896, S&W canned foods
1896, Tootsie Roll
1897, Campbell's condensed soup
1897, Campbell's tomato soup
1897, Grape Nuts
1897, Jell-O
1898, Nabisco graham crackers
1898, shredded wheat cereal
1899, Wesson oil

The Twentieth Century

1900, Chiclets gum
1900, cotton candy
1900, Hershey's chocolate bar
1901, instant coffee
1902, Barnum's Animal Crackers
1902, Karo corn syrup
1902, Pepsi
1903, Best Foods
1903, canned tuna
1903, Sanka
1903, Sunshine Biscuit Company
1904, banana split
1904, Campbell's Kids introduced
1904, Campbell's Pork and Beans
1904, Canada Dry ginger ale
1904, Dr. Pepper
1904, peanut butter
1904, popcorn
1905, Epsicle (later Popsicle)
1905, Holly Sugar
1905, Royal Crown cola
1906, A-1 Sauce
1906, bouillon cube
1906, Kellogg's Corn Flakes
1907, Hershey's kiss
1908, Dixie cup
1908, electric toaster
1908, monosodium glutamate
 isolated
1909, Melitta drip coffeemaker
1909, puffed wheat and rice
 (Quaker)
1909, Tillamook cheese

The 1910s

1910, tea bag
 1911, Crisco
 1911, Mazola corn oil
 1912, Cracker Jack puts in a prize
 1912, hamburger buns
 1912, Hellmann's mayonnaise
 1912, Life Savers
 1912, Lorna Doone cookies
 1912, Morton table salt
 1912, Ocean Spray cranberry sauce
 1912, vitamins
 1912, Whitman's Sampler
 1913, Campbell's cream of celery
 1913, Oreo cookie
 1913, Peppermint Life Savers
 1914, Doublemint gum
 1914, fruit cocktail
 1914, Morton Salt girl
 1915, processed cheese
 1915, Pyrex bakeware
 1916, fortune cookie
 1916, Kellogg's All-Bran cereal
 1916, Mr. Peanut
 1916, Orange Crush
 1917, Clark Bar
 1917, Moon Pie
 1918, Campbell's vegetable beef
 1918, Contadina tomato sauce
 1918, French dip sandwich
 1918, Welch's first jam, Grapelade
 1919, Fridgidaire
 1919, Konabar, Peter Paul
 1919, Malt-O-Meal
 1919, Sunkist oranges

The 1920s

1920, Baby Ruth
 1920, boysenberry
 1920, Good Humor bar
 1920, La Choy Food Products
 1920, Wonder Bread
 1921, Betty Crocker
 1921, Eskimo Pie
 1921, Hershey kisses get
 blue & white streamer

1921, hybrid corn
 1921, iodized salt
 1921, Land O' Lakes butter
 1921, Mounds bar
 1921, Oh Henry!
 1921, Sioux Bee honey
 1921, White Castle hamburger
 1921, Wonderbread
 1921, Wrigley's gum
 1922, A&W root beer
 1922, Charleston Chew candy
 1922, Almond Rocha
 1923, Milky Way bar
 1923, Reese's Peanut Butter Cup
 1923, Welch's grape jelly
 1924, Bit-O-Honey candy
 1924, Caesar salad
 1924, Dum Dum sucker
 1924, fruit-flavored Life Savers
 1924, packaged sliced bacon
 (Oscar Mayer)
 1924, Wheaties
 1925, Green Giant canned peas
 1925, Mr. Goodbar
 1925, Wesson oil
 1926, Cobb Salad
 1926, Hormel canned ham
 1926, Milk Duds
 1926, Orange Julius
 1927, Gerber baby food
 1927, homogenized milk
 1927, Kool-Aid
 1927, Lenders bagels
 1927, Mike & Ike
 1927, Welchade
 1928, broccoli introduced to U.S.
 1928, Butterfinger
 1928, Peter Pan peanut butter
 1928, Nabisco shredded wheat
 1928, Progresso Foods
 1928, Rice Krispies
 1928, Velveeta cheese
 1929, Colombo yogurt
 1929, Karmelkorn
 1929, Klondike bar

1929, Libby canned pumpkin
 1929, Lithiated Lemon (later 7-Up)
 1929, Niblets corn
 1929, Oscar Mayer weiner
 1929, Po' Boy sandwich
 1929, Popeye the Sailor
 1929, Ruby grapefruit

The 1930s

1930, Birds Eye Frosted Foods
 1930, Bisquick
 1930, Jiffy Biscuit Mix
 1930, Lime Jell-O
 1930, Mott's Apple Sauce
 1930, Snickers
 1930, Toll House cookies
 1930, Twinkies
 1930, sliced Wonder Bread
 1931, Alka-Seltzer
 1931, Beech-Nut baby food
 1931, Cryst-O-Mint Life Savers
 1931, dehydrated onion
 1931, *The Joy of Cooking*,
 by Irma S. Rombauer
 1931, Reed's Butterscotch candy
 1931, Tootsie Roll Pop
 1932, Three Musketeers bar
 1932, bagel
 1932, corn chips
 1932, Heath bar
 1932, Jell-O chocolate pudding
 1932, Skippy peanut butter
 1933, Budweiser Clydesdales
 1933, canned pineapple juice
 1933, Lithiated Lemon renamed
 7-Up
 1933, Prohibition ends
 1933, Sunsweet prune juice
 1933, V8 Juice
 1933, Waldorf salad
 1934, Campbell's chicken noodle
 1934, Campbell's cream of
 mushroom
 1934, Ritz crackers
 1934, Sugar Daddy

1935, 5 flavors Life Savers
 1935, Adolph's Meat Tenderizer
 1935, Friendly Ice Cream restaurant
 1935, Realemon lemon juice
 1935, Royal Crown cola
 1935, Sugar Babies
 1936, Dom Pérignon champagne
 1936, Elsie the Cow (Borden)
 1936, Fifth Avenue bar
 1936, Girl Scout cookies
 1936, Mars bar
 1936, Waring blender
 1937, A & P Supermarket
 1937, Good 'n Plenty
 1937, Kit Kat bar
 1937, Kix cereal
 1937, Kraft Macaroni & Cheese
 Dinner
 1937, Pepperidge Farm Bread
 1937, Ragu Spaghetti Sauce
 1937, Rolo candy
 1937, shopping cart
 1937, Smarties
 1937, Spam
 1938, Bumble Bee tuna
 1938, Hershey Krackel bar
 1938, Lawry's Seasoned Salt
 1938, Mott's apple juice
 1938, Nescafé, first instant coffee
 1938, Nestlé Crunch bar
 1938, Teflon
 1939, food stamps
 1939, Lay's potato chips
 1939, Nestlé chocolate chip
 1939, pressure cooker
 1939, Sara Lee cheese cake

The 1940s

1940, cellophane-wrapped meat
 1940, Dairy Queen
 1940, Rain-Blo gum ball
 1940, York Peppermint Patty
 1941, Cheerioats
 (renamed Cheerios in 1946)
 1941, garbage disposal

1941, M&M's plain chocolate candies
 1942, Dannon yogurt
 1942, Kellogg's Raisin Bran
 1942, Sunbeam bread
 1944, Chiquita banana jingle
 1945, Constant Comment tea
 1945, Fleischmann's Active Dry Yeast
 1945, Junior Mints
 1945, Tupperware
 1946, French's Instant Potatoes
 1946, Minute Maid frozen o.j.
 1946, Mrs. Paul's frozen food
 1946, Ragu pasta sauce
 1946, Tupperware
 1947, Almond Joy
 1947, aluminum foil
 1947, cake mix
 1947, Kraft singles
 1947, Minute Maid o.j. concentrate
 1948, Baskin-Robbins
 1948, Nestle's Quik
 1949, electric dishwasher
 1949, Jolly Rancher candy
 1949, Junior Mints
 1949, Minute Rice
 1949, Pillsbury Bake-Off
 1949, Whoppers malted milk balls
 1949, violet M&Ms replaced with tan

The 1950s

1950, Ball-O-Fire gumball
 1950, cyclamates
 1950, Dunkin' Donuts
 1950, Green Giant Co.
 1950, Sugar Pops cereal
 1951, Ore-Ida Foods
 1951, Swanson beef, chicken, turkey pot pies
 1951, Tropicana juice
 1952, fish sticks
 1952, Kellogg's Frosted Flakes
 1952, Lipton onion soup mix

1952, No-cal Ginger Ale, First sugar-free soft drink
 1952, Pez comes to the U.S.
 1952, Saran Wrap
 1953, Cheez Whiz
 1953, Danny's Donuts opens (became Denny's in 1959)
 1953, Howdy Doody tumbler from Welch's
 1953, Irish coffee invented in S.F.'s Buena Vista Cafe
 1953, Lawry's spaghetti sauce
 1953, Sugar Smacks cereal
 1953, Swanson TV dinner
 1954, Burger King
 1954, Butterball turkey
 1954, colored appliances (G.E.)
 1954, M&M's Peanut Candies
 1954, Reddi-whip
 1954, Shakey's Pizza opens
 1954, Trix
 1955, Del Monte stewed tomatoes
 1955, Kentucky Fried Chicken
 1955, McDonald's hamburgers
 1955, Special K cereal
 1956, Imperial margarine
 1957, Sweet'n Low
 1958, aluminum beverage can (Coors)
 1958, Cocoa Krispies, Kellogg
 1958, Cocoa Puffs, General Mills
 1958, Green Giant canned beans
 1958, Internation House of Pancakes
 1958, Jif Peanut Butter
 1958, Lipton Instant Tea
 1958, Pizza Hut (Wichita, KS)
 1958, Rice-a-Roni
 1958, Williams-Sonoma opens
 1959, Haagen-Dazs ice cream
 1959, Frosty O's, General Mills

The 1960s

1960, Coffee Rich non-dairy creamer

1960, Dominoes pizza (Detroit)	1971, Rolos candy
1960, Granny Smith apple imported to U.S.	1971, smoked Spam
1960, red, green, & yellow M&M's	1971, Starbucks
1960, Sprite	1972, Egg McMuffin
1961, Coffee-Mate non-dairy creamer	1972, Top Ramen
1961, Green Giant frozen vegetables	1972, Tuna Helper
1961, Mrs. Butterworth's Syrup	1973, Cuisinart food processor
1961, Total cereal, General Mills	1973, Honey Maid cinnamon grahams
1961, Charlie the Tuna (Starkist)	1976, Jelly Belly
1961, kiwifruit	1976, orange M&M's
1961, Sprite	1977, McDonald's Happy Meal
1962, Bridgford frozen bread dough	1977, Yoplait yogurt
1962, Diet-Rite cola	1978, Reese's Pieces
1962, Pet-Ritz Frozen Pie Crust	The 1980s
1962, Taco Bell	1981, aspartame
1963, Chips Ahoy! cookies	1981, Prego spaghetti sauce
1963, Chiquita banana blue sticker	1981, Stouffer's Lean Cuisine
1963, Cremora non-dairy creamer	1982, Diet Coke
1963, Fruit Loops	1982, Equal
1963, self-cleaning oven	1983, Nutrasweet
1963, Tab cola	1984, Ben & Jerry's ice cream
1963, "The French Chef" debuts	1985, Cherry Coke
1963, Weight Watchers founded	1985, New Coke
1964, Kellogg's Pop-Tarts	1985, Pop Secret microwave popcorn
1964, nachos	1986, Classic Coke
1965, Cool Whip	1987, Cherry 7-Up
1965, Gatorade	1987, Nestlé Alpine White chocolate bar
1965, Poppin' Fresh, Pillsbury Doughboy	1987, soy milk
1965, SpaghettiOs	1989, Symphony candy bar
1965, Tang	The 1990s
1966, Fresca	1990, Campbell's cream of broccoli soup
1967, Bugles	1990, dolphin-safe tuna
1968, McDonald's Big Mac	1990, Hershey's kisses with almonds
1969, Bac-Os	1990, Jamba Juice
1969, Diet 7-Up	1992, Crystal Pepsi
1969, sugarless gum	1992, Spam Lite
The 1970s	1993, The Food Network
1970, Eggo waffles	1993, Hershey's Hugs
1970, Hamburger Helper	1995, blue M&Ms
1971, canned A&W Root Beer	1996, Olestra
1971, Jell-O pudding treat	1998, Jell-O Museum, Rochester, NY

1998, Pepsi One
1998, Wow potato chips
1999, Benecol
1999, Hershey's Bites
1999, Incredibles, push-up food

The 21st Century

2000, Betasweet carrot,
 genetically altered to be a
 powerful antioxidant
2000, Heinz green ketchup
2000, pre-cut carrots and celery sticks
2001, Boston Market Homestyle Meals
2001, Chicken of the Sea Tuna Salad
 Kits
2001, Heinz purple ketchup
2001, It's Pasta Anytime
2002, Multi-colored M&Ms

Food and Nutrition

What Nourishes Our Children?

by

Petra Kühne

What is Quality Nutrition?

Surveys indicate that children's best-loved foods are pizza, frenchfries with catsup, spaghetti, and pudding. Vegetables, fruits, and grains are at the bottom of the list. What kind of a taste for food are our children developing? What do they need and how can we make those foods palatable? Balanced nutrition makes possible the growth of the physical body, its formation, and vitality. It is the foundation of children's soul-spiritual development, that is, their ability to concentrate, activate their will, and sustain energy. It has also been found to influence social behavior. Proper nutrition influences children's development far more than is generally recognized.

Four Levels of Quality in Nutrition

1. Nutrition indicates supplying *nutrients*, but that only represents nutrition at its basic level. Naturally, food must contain enough protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, and so forth.
2. Nobody eats nutrients. Everybody eats *food*. What matters is the form in which it is eaten. Like protein, for example, protein found in the grain of bread is completely different from protein found in meat and it has different effects on a child.
3. The next level of quality has to do with how food is grown, processed, and prepared. This level of quality is brought about through human activity, a quasi *soul-spiritual* process. Farmers decide which method of farming will be employed: organic, biodynamic, or methods using mineral fertilizers and pesticides. The consumers have in their control the quality level of food that they purchase for

their children and ultimately how nature and the earth are treated in the growing of the food they buy. The same goes for food processing and preparation. Our choices in food exhibit varying grades of quality: sugar-based soda beverages or fruit juice, chocolate candy bars or shortbread, fish sticks or fresh fish. The *quality of production* structures and changes food and also the nutrients in food. Consequently, it has an overall, formative effect on the quality of the food.

4. Finally, nutrition becomes *individualized* by the food and drink that is put on the family table and consumed by the children.

Nutrition – Levels of Quality	
Nutrients Quality of Substance	Food Quality of Vitality
Production + Processing Soul-Spiritual Quality	Family Meals Individual Quality

The Character of Food

In order to nourish children according to their developmental requirements, we need knowledge and experience in the area of nutrition. Adequate nutrition for children consists of a sensible mix of high quality foods. That means that the inner vitality, the actual nourishing power within food, should be taken into consideration *along with* its nutrient content. Food should not only fill the stomach, it should stimulate the human organism and activate it into a state of agility. This depends upon the degree of “life energy” in the food product. Digestion of food challenges the metabolism of human beings. Thus human beings are invigorated. That is real nutrition.

This inner structure of vitality within a plant or an animal is predetermined as to its character (grain, pumpkin, pig, sheep, and so forth) which unfolds itself during growth. For example, grain has its own substantial power to stand upright. Its blades, heads, and ears grow toward the sun by their own power. A pumpkin, with its heavy weight, does not stand upright. It does not have this special strength aspect. The differing energies of nutritional plants also have differing effects on human beings. For instance, one would feed a child who has a phlegmatic temperament (pudgy figure, prefers comfort) more grains rather than watery, less-upright, melon-type plants. Beyond that, the farming method used is decisive, *how* these energies can unfold. A greenhouse plant that is transplanted outdoors will have less resistance and heartiness than one that is planted outdoors from the beginning. Accordingly, it can also pass on only certain energies to human beings. If a child eats only such “sheltered” plants, then no “robust” stimulation can be expected from food. This is also significant for the psychological constitution of the child.

The quality of nutrition opens up possibilities to give a child the stimulation needed for his or her development. The biodynamic farming method takes the characteristics of these energies into consideration and their species-appropriate unfolding in a special way. For this reason, food grown using biodynamic methods (Demeter® or Helios®) are highly recommended.

As in many other areas of life today, we see big changes in the choices of food and drink available to us. Foods designed and marketed to children by well-known name-brands are supposed to speak to the “kids.” Even the natural foods industry is going this route. However, we must ask if all of these offers are in line with the goal to provide a foundation for the health and development of our children?

Our eating habits are formed in the first years of life. Later in adult life, these habits are very hard to correct unless an illness or deficiency forces us to change. It is the task of those raising children to introduce them to many different foods. Just as we do not give full responsibility to children in questions of daily life because their faculty of judgment is not fully developed, so, too, we should not give them full responsibility for their nutrition by granting all of their wishes and cravings. Adults must lay the foundation, with consideration for particular likes and dislikes that a child may have. In this way, parents have control over whether their children become used to white bread or whole-grain bread, canned or fresh vegetables.

Illnesses Caused by Over-consumption and One-sidedness – Results of Faulty Nutrition

We in the industrialized nations have enjoyed a high standard of living since the 1950s. Seldom has there been such a wide choice of food available at such affordable prices. However, a wide choice requires that people choose their food selectively to create healthy and tasty nutrition. Herein resides the problem. All too often food is bought and eaten according to tastes and cravings to such an extent that while we seldom run into deficient nutrition, we often have faulty nutrition. Eating the wrong foods for years can cause afflictions and illnesses resulting from inappropriate nutrition. These afflictions even begin in childhood.

Illnesses Caused by Faulty Nutrition
• Diabetes • Gout (Uric Acid) • Problems with Fat Metabolism (too much animal fat) • Goiter (iodine deficiency, iodine utilization) • Anemia (iron deficiency, iron utilization) • Tooth Decay (too much sugar, white flour) • High Blood Pressure • Heart – Circulatory System Illnesses • Cancer of the Digestive Organs

Adults have a special responsibility to children in choosing their food and nutrition. A small child can not differentiate between “healthy” or “unhealthy,” “desired” or “less-desired.” Today, learning to eat right is more important than ever before since many products, such as sweets, are produced with children in mind and marketed directed to children in a wide variety of advertisements.

The main nutritional mistakes that appear during childhood are:

- Over-eating at meals
- Eating too much sugar
- Eating too little fiber
- Eating too much fat
- Snacking too often

These things can be remedied if children eat only at mealtimes as much as possible and if they are given fruits, vegetables and whole-grains. One can reduce the amount of fat in the diet by reducing deep-fried foods (frenchfries, deep-fried chicken, potato chips), fatty meats like hotdogs, and cheese. Sweet foods should be chosen very carefully and sugar replaced with sweet fruit.

From Infancy to Adolescence – The Needs Change

Humans require twenty years for their physical growth to be completed. During this time, various impulses are working that are also indicators of nutritional needs. This shows itself very clearly during infancy, and is met in the way in which the infant is slowly introduced to solid foods. Starting at age two the child is slowly brought to the point of eating the same food as the rest of the family at mealtimes. However, a two-year-old is a long way from eating everything and also should not be given everything that is put on the table. In order to understand the nutritional needs of the child, it is helpful to observe the phases of growth because children do not always grow at a steady pace, but rather in “spurts.”

During these growth phases children have more appetite for protein-rich foods. Inbetween the growth spurts there is more desire for carbohydrate-rich foods like bread, rice, potatoes, and sugary foods. Carbohydrates act more on the *nerves* and support soul/spiritual development. Protein is significant in *physical growth* and muscle development.

These phases of growth occur in children at the following times:

Ages 5 – 7 – End of kindergarten
Ages 10 – 12 (Girls), 12 – 14 (Boys) – Preadolescence
Ages 16 – 18 – Full height reached

Soul-spiritual development is more of an inner process. In a toddler, for instance, it shows itself with the first forays into thought, learning to speak, and, later, at the beginning of kindergarten age, in the development of social abilities. By the time

they reach school age, children are capable of new things: directed learning, a desire to “discover” and experience the world. They no longer just play. Foodstuffs in their manifold variety are discovered and differentiated more according to likes and dislikes. Puberty follows and brings an end to childhood. From this point onward, one speaks of *adolescence*. Often, adolescents develop their individual personalities separately from their environment. As a result, their nutritional needs are also in a state of transition. These growth phases can be ordered within the following three stages of development:

Ages 0 – 7 infancy and early childhood
Ages 7 – 14 school-age
Ages 14 – 21 adolescence

During these stages of development a child has differing needs to be supported by the appropriate nutrition.

Infancy and Preschool-age

In the *first years of life* a child becomes accustomed to the rhythm of mealtimes: They progress from liquid food (breast milk or a formula) to porridge and finally to solid foods. The infant is given only small amounts at a time to get used to the food.

Starting at age two, the child increasingly eats what the rest of the family has at mealtimes. Some children begin this earlier while others need more time to make the transition and still enjoy their meals of porridge.

The important thing at this age is the *regularity of mealtimes*. Most children do not value change; they would rather eat the same, well-liked foods. At this age, children mimic what they experience with others. They learn from the behavior and nutritional habits of their parents. Sometime around kindergarten age, children begin to get much joy in preparing “real” food for others and not just playing in their doll kitchens.

School-age Children

The needs change when children reach school age, and, not only that, they eat more. Their increasing need for movement also creates increased thirst and an interest in more food variety, and they want to experience the world through their sense of taste. At the same time, their likes and dislikes begin to take shape and be strongly identified. This is the last period of time during which it will be possible to instill good eating habits; this kind of training is no longer possible during the adolescent period. In addition to having breakfast at home, a snack for recess should be given, perhaps whole grain bread or crackers with cheese or some kind of vegetarian spread along with a piece of fruit or vegetables (carrots, celery, turnips).

At noon, there should be an easily-digested, but filling, lunch with warm soup, if possible. After school a glass of milk and snack will allow the efforts expended at school to recede. A lacto-vegetable, whole-food diet is well-suited for this. Furthermore, it is important to continue with regular mealtimes.

Adolescence

When you begin to hear very critical comments about foods that were previously well-liked, then you will know that adolescence has begun. During puberty, adolescents experience the outside world more intensely, its temptations and dangers. They want to come to grips with it. Daily life becomes a “matter of taste” and there is a “hunger” for experience. The eating habits of the family are often rejected. New, different foods are tried of which parents often disapprove. This behavior is a result of their normal development. Adolescents want to choose and judge for themselves. In conjunction with this there is a need for more nutrition, especially protein. Parents should try to balance out the adolescent’s often one-sided food choices by serving more fruits and vegetables.

Modern Food Choices – Are They Child-Appropriate?

In earlier times children took part in their fair share of family meals soon after infancy. Parents were careful that certain things were not given to the children such as spicy foods or drinks with caffeine. Today there is the opposite trend of putting special emphasis on the requirements of the child. This is manifested also by the development of special foods for children or recommendations for increased consumption of certain added vitamins or minerals.

Does My Child Need Vitamin and Mineral Supplements?

Vitamins and minerals belong to that group of nutrients which human beings need in small amounts. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies are actually unknown in our present varied diet. Only people who have extreme or one-sided diets are affected by deficiencies. In spite of that, the number of vitamin and mineral fortified foods, especially for children, is very much on the upswing. Calcium, iron, and iodine are the most prevalent minerals with which foods are fortified. Of the vitamins, B1, B2, and C are the most commonly supplemented. New food supplement regulations for children younger than three years of age require such a high vitamin content that practically all products destined for children must be vitamin-fortified.

Vitamins are effective mainly through their relationship to the whole food as well as to the other ingredients. Isolated, artificially-added vitamins can not take over these functions. Experts agree that vitamin and mineral supplementation of foods is mostly superfluous and accustoms the child’s organism to enriched food. With a reduced supply (no vitamins added), the child might possibly have problems subsisting on what nutrients are available. Fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K) can be dangerous at high dosage levels. For the consumer, the addition of vitamins

and minerals to a variety of food products can lead to uncontrolled dosages: for example, calcium in juice, calcium in yogurt, and so forth. Vitamin C supplements can not replace oranges.

Iron-rich Foods

- millet, oats, beans, lentils, sunflower seeds, pistachio nuts,
- sesame seeds, peaches, red fruits, eggs, animal innards

Calcium-rich Foods

- milk, milk products, sesame seeds, almonds, legumes

Vitamin B-rich Foods

- oil-rich seeds, yeast, oats, wheat germ, pork

Vitamin C-rich Foods

- sea buckthorn, black currants, oranges, paprika, parsley,
- broccoli, kale, kiwi, fennel

What Can You Do?

Children should learn to get their nutrition from a palette of natural foods and not depend upon artificially enriched products. Hence, such products are not recommended. Instead, concentrate on food that has not been fortified with artificial enrichments.

Some general guidelines:

- Sweets are not improved simply because they contain supplemented vitamins.
- A glass of fresh milk is better than one that has been enriched with minerals.
- A piece of fruit is a good replacement for sweets.

Problems of Nutrition – Too Fat, too Thin

My Child is too Fat!

Up to twenty-five percent of children in Germany are overweight. Among other things, this presents a high risk for later metabolic diseases. It also presents a psychological burden when, for instance, a child is teased by his or her classmates or is unwilling or unable to move around much because of being overweight.

The table below provides information on normal weights. Slight deviations are still within the normal range.

Age and Body Weight			
Age	Weight in Kilograms/Pounds		
1	9.3/20.5	to	10.3/22.7
2	14.5/31.9	to	14.9/32.8
4	16.6/35.5	to	16.8/37.0
5	19.0/41.8	to	21.2/46.6
7	23.3/51.3	to	24.0/52.8
8	25.5/56.1	to	25.9/57.0
9	28.3/62.3	to	28.7/63.1
10	31.6/69.5	to	31.7/69.7

In the long run, weight reduction is not easy. Crash diets and fad diets bring short-term success and often also faulty eating habits. Adolescent girls often have a dominating desire to lose weight even if their weight is normal. In this case, society's body ideals play a role. Parents and educators must confront this issue with their children before unbalanced eating habits have a chance to take hold. Here is one method to reach a normal body weight:

- Reduce the amount of food, especially fats and sweets.
- Learn about healthy nutrition so that in the long term over-eating does not reoccur.
- Get enough exercise. With children this does not necessarily mean sports and training clubs, but rather everyday exercise such as walking to school when possible, playing outdoors, and so forth.

My Child Eats Such Unhealthy Food!

Being underweight is seldom a problem in our affluent society. However, there are children who appear very thin and are “bad” eaters. They are often from families in which there are siblings who quite “normally” take in their food and are in no way thin. Many times the thin children are very sinewy and germ-resistant and are no more susceptible to illness than their siblings. If you look at the parents

and see one parent with a similar constitution and form, then you know that this is an inherited trait. You should also consider the fact that our body ideals are often stamped with the image of very well-nourished children so that thinner children already appear to be underweight.

Certainly, there is the phenomenon of children who eat very little at mealtimes and then have between-meal snacks. In this case, it is no wonder that they eat little at mealtimes. Snacking spoils the appetite. The wide variety of bars and snacks readily available is a temptation to children. They are enticingly packaged and easily procured. Often these snacks are high in calories and thus very filling. In their nutritional composition, many of them do not meet recommendations. They are either too sweet or too fatty and they spoil the appetite for nutritious meals.

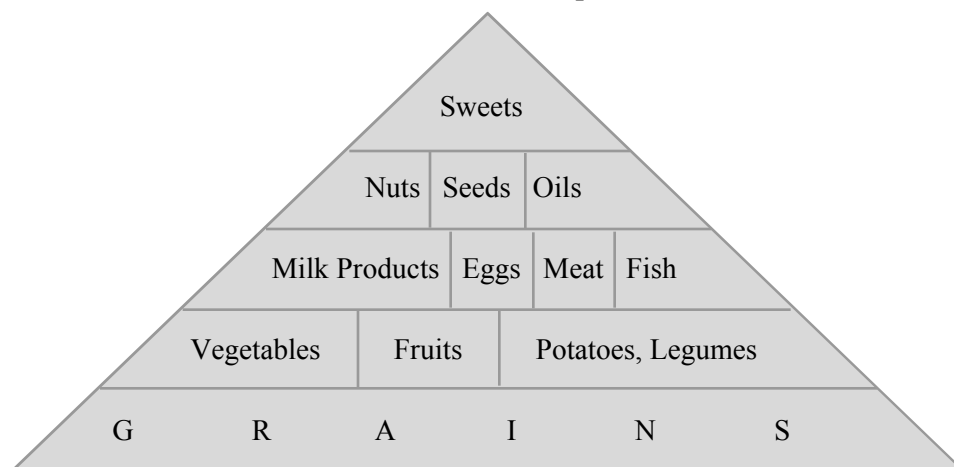
The only remedy is to see that children eat something *only* during the five organized snack and meal times. Raising children by this concept begins when they are toddlers—this is when they become used to mealtime rhythms. Rhythmic eating is also therapeutic for the digestive and metabolic organs a rhythm of the “working time” and “rest.”

In a situation where someone is truly underweight, one should try to stimulate the appetite. This is possible by stimulating the liver function and also by talking to the person in a positive, morale-building way. Eating must be combined with sympathy. With children, one can still depend upon their true nutritional instincts which often are accurate about what foods are right for them. This method has been considerably more successful than trying to trick children into consuming more calories.

In addition, bitter herbs have proven effective in stimulating the appetite. They can be incorporated into the meals, for example: drink a glass of grapefruit juice before a meal; eat a light, bitter salad like endive, or drink a light, bitter herb tea like chamomile or centaury. Common “fattening diets” with a lot of fats and carbohydrates are usually only successful in the short term and often ruin a person’s joy in eating, having the opposite effect in the long run. Naturally, you can make sure that these children get more cream and butter with their meals, but that does not increase the appetite and usually does not increase calorie consumption. When in doubt, consult your doctor.

The food pyramid tells which foods are important for sensible, healthy nutrition and where these foods stand in relation to the other groups. The nutritional model is built upon grains in the form of bread, rice and pasta. The next most important group is fruits, vegetables and potatoes. Milk and milk products follow, along with the other animal food products – eggs, meat, and fish – which have a somewhat lower valuation. Fats and oils are in one of the smaller areas of the pyramid where nuts and oily seeds also belong. At the smallest, top section, with the lowest nutritional value, are sweet foods. They belong in the diet, but only in small amounts. Drinks will be considered separately.

Which Foods Are Important?



Grains, Bread, and Pasta – The Things that Satisfy Us

Grain is a high-quality food that is the nutritional foundation for the entire world. Wheat, spelt, rice, barley, millet, rye, oats, corn, and the grain-like seeds of buckwheat, amaranth, and quinoa, all belong in this group.

Grains, which are seeds, are a “compact” food; they must be opened-up before they can be eaten. This is accomplished by grinding, sieving, dough-preparation, baking, or cooking.

Flakes, grits, and semolina are generally well-liked, easily-digested foods. Muesli made from grain flakes is an ideal breakfast food with added seasonal fruit and milk (Bircher-muesli). Grits (cooked to a grainy consistency), bulgur, or couscous are usually well-liked and made for quick lunches. Grain dishes such as muesli, made from uncooked oats, are generally too hard to digest for small children.

Bread should be in the form of well-baked, whole-grain bread. Whole grain berries in bread are often difficult for younger children to digest. A finely-ground, whole-grain loaf of bread is lighter and just as rich in nutrients. Herb-seasoned bread usually tastes very pleasant to adults, but children are not so enthusiastic when they bite into caraway or fennel seeds. Light seasoning with ground herbs and seeds is a good alternative.

Bread should be made from the easily-baked grains of wheat, spelt, or rye and are among the most important foods in our culture since they are rich in nutrients and satisfying. However, there are differences. White bread contains fewer of the important vitamins and minerals than whole-grain bread. Dark, whole-grain bread provides a child more nutrients, vitamins, and fiber than the lighter varieties. Therefore, whole-grain bread is an important component of healthy nutrition.

Vitamin B1 – The “Nerve Vitamin”

For concentration and immunity against colds and infections

Whole-grain Bread 0.18 mg = 100%

White Bread 0.09 mg = 50%

Iron

(found in blood and metabolic enzymes)

Deficiency leads to fatigue, pallor, exhaustion

Whole-grain Bread: 0.70 mg = 100%

White Bread only: 0.24 mg = 34%

Potatoes or Grain – Is it only a Question of Taste?

In many regions potatoes are the unquestioned nutritional basis and the most important, filling part of the midday meal. There are many potato products that are well-loved by children: mashed potatoes, fried potatoes, frenchfries, potato puffs, hash browns, potato salad, potato cakes. Potato chips and other potato snacks shall not be included here. Children are usually not so enthusiastic about boiled potatoes. It is not widely known that the potato became a staple in our kitchens only about two-hundred-fifty years ago and that it pushed out regional grain dishes as diet staples. The potato is often praised for its vitamin C content. This was significant in the times when, in the spring, there were hardly any vegetables or salad available. Today, with the availability of fresh fruit and vegetables at all seasons, the vitamin C content of potatoes no longer holds the same significance for our daily diet.

Anthroposophical nutritional science does *not* recommend potatoes as a staple food, but rather more as vegetables that are not eaten everyday. Instead, grains should become the prominent staple food. Nutritionally, grains are much better endowed than potatoes. Better to have cooked millet or bulgur than boiled or mashed potatoes. Furthermore, potatoes are solanaceous herbs (which means they grow at night). If one looks at its growth from the viewpoint of its inner structure of forces, then one sees there are one-sided qualities that can, among other things, contribute to poor memory abilities in children who are predisposed to that affliction, another reason potatoes should not be a predominant part of our diet. The more preparation that goes into cooking potatoes the better for children: for example, fried potatoes, potato puffs, dumplings, mashed potatoes. Through intense preparation, the characteristic quality of the food is reduced somewhat and the general, satisfying qualities become more prominent.

Fruits and Vegetables – Fresh Variety

Fruits and vegetables are the second most important food group for children's nutrition. They are prized for their natural aromas and colors as well as their stimulating effect on the metabolism and various other health-promoting effects. They deliver the most important vitamins and minerals. Above all, fruits contain vitamin C and minerals such as potassium and iron. It is recommended that children have at least one piece of fruit daily (apple, pear, peach). Seasonal fruit should have precedence because are fully ripened, they taste better, and are less likely to contain fermentation. Fruits can be grown in ways that are environmentally friendly.

Seasonal Fruits	
Spring Summer	Strawberries Currants, Blueberries, Raspberries, Blackberries, Gooseberries, Cranberries, Apricots, Peaches, Nectarines, Cherries, Plums, Melons, Apples
Autumn	Rose Hips, Elderberries, Apples, Pears, Quince, Grapes, Buckthorn

Vegetables belong in children's daily diets since they are also rich in vitamins and minerals. It is sensible to eat a salad or a few pieces of raw or cooked vegetables everyday.

A few tips about choosing vegetables:

- *Use seasonally-ripe vegetables*

Children live according to the seasons. A vegetable that carries the energy of the season within supports the child's experience. Seasonal vegetables grown outdoors are healthier; for example, they contain fewer nitrates than their greenhouse-grown counterparts.

- *Use vegetables grown in your region when possible*

Vegetables grown in the region where you live grow under the same impulses of nature that your children also experience. They unfold under the same influences of the region such as sunlight, moisture, light, and warmth. This harmony has a strengthening function.

- *Choose vegetables according to their location on the plant*

One can roughly differentiate between above-ground and below-ground vegetables. Roots and tubers are underground and green leaves, stems, fruits, and seeds are above-ground. Lettuce, chard, and cabbage belong in the leaf and stem group. Tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchinis, pumpkins, and melons belong in the fruit group. In order to take in the wide variety of impulses of the *whole* plant that nourishes the whole human being, it is beneficial to eat all three kinds of vegetables everyday; for instance, carrots, green, leafy salad, and cucumbers. Since fruity vegetables are not always available, they can be replaced by seeds such as sesame or sunflower.

Legumes like peas, lentils, or beans hardly play a role in today's nutrition. However, they are significant protein sources for vegetarians. Since legumes are all somewhat more difficult to digest, with the exception of lentils, they are hardly used in child nutrition. Preferable legumes for children are green beans or peas.

Milk – Nutrition from the Very Beginning

Milk is one of our oldest foods. It is important for both children and adolescents. In adulthood, consumption of milk declines and consumption of sour milk products increases.

Milk provides children with protein and calcium. It is a “light” protein in comparison to other animal proteins. Rudolf Steiner spoke of milk as a food that gives human beings firmness without being too much of a burden on the human organism. Milk helps in bone development and formation.

Today we see extreme behavior regarding milk consumption. Either children get too much milk or their parents reject milk altogether; neither behavior is appropriate. Consuming too much milk, together with cream and other milk products, is not healthy, such over-consumption leading to doughy skin and delivering too much protein to the organism which again must be broken down. Milk should be completely removed from the diet only if a proven allergy to lactose exists or a genuine intolerance for milk. Even in those cases, one should try to give the children other milk products or cheese. Sometimes it makes sense to change over to milk products from other animals such as sheep or goats.

Daily recommendations for children	
Young Children (Ages 3 – 7)	3 servings of milk (including milk products)
School Children (Ages 7 – 14)	3.5 servings of milk
Adolescents	4 servings of milk

Meat, Fish, and Eggs – Necessary or Dispensable?

About ten percent of the German population is vegetarian and at least ten percent seldom eat food made from animal products. This tendency is increasing, especially among young people. Often the wish to eat no meat or fish comes from the children. Very young children seldom have a desire for meat as its stringiness is not well-liked; they would rather eat hot dogs because they look less like something from animals.

From the standpoint of nutrition and physiology, meat and fish are not a necessary part of a child’s diet. Very young children, up to age one, should eat neither meat nor fish since the high protein content can be a burden on the internal organs. It is best to introduce these animal products after age three since they have a more formative effect on the child’s small organism than milk has, for example. However, this all depends on the eating habits of the parents, and children of “meat lovers” usually start eating meat at an earlier age.

A requirement of a vegetarian diet is that the child receives enough vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and milk and milk products (cheese, fresh cheese, yogurt)

as long as there is no allergy or intolerance of milk present. Such a lacto-vegetable diet makes up a physical basis that does not bond itself too strongly with the body and provides the child with inner support for that openness that he or she needs to have self-determined, free development.

One should never dogmatically insist upon a vegetarian diet for school-age children, just as one should tolerate a child's rejection of meat and fish. The child simply eats what is normally provided at home. If animal products are eaten, it is recommended that you pay attention to its ecological quality (consider how the animals were kept and fed), as well as limiting the amount. Even for adults, nutritional scientists recommend meat consumption in moderate amounts (one or two times per week). This is because of the higher cholesterol, fat, and protein content of meat.

Eggs are not in the same category as meat and fish because from a fertilized egg, an animal can be formed. Eggs contain a very dynamic, growth-promoting yolk and also albumen (egg-white) which is very moldable (it can be whipped into meringue, for instance). The part of the egg that actually contains minerals, the calcium-rich shell, is not eaten. The growth dynamic that is in a chicken egg, which is shown in the nutrients it contains (cholesterol, protein, and fat), leads us to the conclusion that children should not eat too many eggs so as not to stimulate their physical growth too strongly. This depends upon factors such as the child's age, the season (children grow more in spring, up to Easter, than in summer!), their level of physical activity, and their intake of other proteins. Eggs strengthen the body but they do not impart any soul-spiritual stimulation; therefore, they make one more dreamy and sleepy. That is why one would hardly ever give eggs to children with a phlegmatic temperament, but rather to sanguine, nervous children. In general, the recommendation for egg consumption is similar to that of meat and fish. On average, older (school-age) children should not have eggs more than three to four times per week. Just as with meat, one should look at quality when buying eggs; inform yourself about how the chickens are kept and what they are fed.

Fats and Oils

Children's meals should not contain too much fat. *Cold pressed oils* such as sunflower oil or olive oil with vegetables or on salads are important sources of essential fatty acids. *Butter* is ideal to spread on bread. Nuts and oily seeds (sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds) mixed with dried fruits such as raisins are "nutrition for the nerves" and are well-suited to school children.

Deep-fat-fried products such as french-fries, which are so well-liked by children, should not be on the menu too often because of their high fat content, among other things. The same goes for other fried foods whose fat content is often underestimated.

Sweets – No Minor Matter

Children love sweet foods. This begins with the very sweet mother's milk. Sweet foods contain easily-digestible sugar that can be absorbed without great digestive effort. But too much sugar can lead to health problems like tooth decay or fermentation in the intestines. For this reason, sugar intake should be limited. It can be enjoyed in moderation through the use of natural sweeteners in baked goods and other sweet foods given to children. Manufactured sweet foods often prove to contain too much sugar, besides added artificial flavors or colors. These artificial ingredients are foreign substances for the organism which require a tremendous effort to digest. Here one must be very careful and choose well what is to be given to the children. Fruit, fruit bars, and cookies from a natural foods store are good alternatives. Isolated sugars like refined cane sugar, grape sugar (dextrose), and fruit sugar (fructose) should be avoided. They do not contain the naturally-occurring, accompanying nutrients that the body needs to digest sugar. Instead of these refined sugars, we can use natural sweeteners such as maple syrup, whole cane sugar (sucanat), beet sugar, molasses, dried fruit, and honey.

Sugar Content of Certain Foods			
Sweet Products		Fruit	
Candy	97%	Banana	18%
Gummi Bears	77%	Grapes	15%
Chocolate Bar	65%	Mango	12%
Nut-Nougat-Cream	54%	Apple	10%
Sherbet	32%	Peach	8%
Tomato Catsup	17-28%	Blackberries	5%

Beverages – The Best Thirst Quenchers

“Stop drinking so much, it will make you sick!” some parents call out to their children when they see the amount of liquid they can take in on hot days or after sports. How much fluid does a child need? People take in liquid as well as solid nutrition. In the beginning, infants do not yet have this separation of liquids and solids; an infant gets everything s/he needs to eat and drink from breast milk. After this phase, nutrition is separated into liquids and solid foods. An infant's food becomes incrementally more solid beginning with porridge and progressing to bread. Supplementary drinking then becomes necessary.

A person's fluid intake requirement depends upon, among other things, how much fluid is lost through perspiration and other elimination processes. If one looks at children playing and running around, then it is no wonder that they drink more liquids than adults. Dry, cold air or strong winds also lead to increased thirst.

By the way, it is not true that children who drink a lot have a more difficult time with toilet training.

Vomiting, fever, and diarrhea result in loss of fluids, and obviously increase the necessary fluid-intake requirement. The need for fluids is also increased in the case of a cold with a runny nose, sneezing, or coughing.

Last but not least, the fluid intake requirement depends upon the child's diet as a whole. If a family eats a lot of bread and less muesli, fruit, salad, vegetables, and soup, then there is more thirst. The following recommended fluid amounts should serve only as a guide.

Necessary Daily Fluid Intake in Liters		
	Beverages	Solid Foods
Preschool-age	0.9	0.5
Kindergarten-age	1.1	0.6
School-age (7- 13)	1.2	0.6 – 0.7
Adolescents (age 15)	1.3	0.8

Herbal teas are important beverages, for example, fennel tea for infants and toddlers. Lemon balm and peppermint teas have a relaxing effect. There are fruit teas available without artificial flavors such as rose-hip, apple peel, hibiscus, and assorted mixtures.

Fruit juices are valuable foods that are very concentrated in their undiluted form and should not serve as thirst-quenchers. One should dilute them with mineral water or fruit tea. The most important fruit juice is the well-tolerated apple juice. Red grape juice is rich in iron. Orange juice has high vitamin C content. Fruit juices made for children are mixtures blending the advantages of the different juices and should be given rather more for their nutritional value than diluted as thirst quenchers. Of the *vegetable juices*, carrot juice is best for children.

Fruit juice drinks that contain mostly sugar with added fruit juice absolutely are not recommended. Soda drinks should likewise be avoided as they contain less juice than additives. Cola drinks are especially questionable since they almost always contain the nerve stimulant caffeine and are not at all good for children. The same goes for the modern *energy* and *thirst quenching* beverages which often contain even more caffeine than colas. *Low-carbonated mineral water* is also very appropriate for children. Some families enjoy drinking "*grain-coffee*." For children it should be mixed half milk and half grain-coffee beverage. It is a good, warm, breakfast drink and contains no caffeine. *Milk* should be considered more as a food than a beverage.

Our Children Need a New Eating Culture

Besides the question of what kinds of food our children need today, the question of how food is presented is becoming ever more important. There is a saying:

“Man does not live by bread alone.” Rather, we live also by our eating environment, the presentation of our food and its regularity. Just a few decades ago eating customs were regulated by tradition. These traditions are outdated. Modern cooking techniques, commercially-prepared foods, and our mobile lifestyles have led to changes in our eating customs and meal presentations. It may be that adults find it freeing and comfortable to eat here and there whenever they feel like it, but for children, this kind of restlessness and “independence” is burdensome. It saps energies that a child needs for his or her inner development. Children want to know where they stand. Therefore, it is important that families create new habits and customs for their mealtimes. Parents who make this effort will soon notice how young children especially love these rites and repetitions. What follow are a few important basics that make up a culture suitable for eating.

Rhythm

Regularity in daily life, a daily rhythm, has a nurturing and healing influence. Everyone lives within nature’s rhythms of day and night, the weeks, and the seasons. Our metabolism is formed out of rhythms and they help save energy because a regular configuration does not require permanent attention “monitoring.”

Mealtimes can help people achieve rhythm in their lives. A rhythmic structure can be created: breakfast, mid-morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, dinner. The week could be divided into weekdays and Sunday. For example, on Sundays there could always be something “special” that differentiates it from the everyday meals. Perhaps there is a candle on the table, or flowers, or a “Sunday tablecloth.” But, above all, there should be more “time and calm” at mealtimes on this special day than on the weekdays. Young children do not orient themselves to abstract terms like “weekdays,” but rather on observable events, for example, Wednesday is “millet day.” This gives them security and orientation and creates a foundation for their “standpoints.”

The seasons also offer possibilities for structuring meals. For instance, you could use seasonal fruit and vegetables. As adults, perhaps you can remember the time of year when there were fresh strawberries and asparagus at Easter or cracking nuts at the time of Advent. The yearly festivals can become special high points. They can contribute to experiencing the rhythm of the seasons as well as offering a special assortment of foods.

Age-appropriate Standards

The wide variety of foods available often leads to even young children becoming acquainted with a large number of products including foreign foods. This over-abundant supply should be viewed very critically. There is a danger that the child’s metabolism becomes overtaxed. Every food must be “recognized” by the digestive organs and very specifically broken-down. If there are too many unknown or new foods introduced into the digestive tract, then it becomes overtaxed and, finally, the body goes on strike and has an allergic reaction.

Challenges to the child's digestion should, therefore, be age-appropriate so that certain developments do not appear too early and take away energy that the child needs for other development. This concept includes all areas of life such as toys the child is given, as well as nutrition. There is good reason for infants to start out with liquid nutrition, then porridge, and then solid foods so that they gradually become accustomed to the appropriate nutrition. Likewise one should not offer a child of kindergarten age too many different kinds of foods. And, one should show preference for seasonal foods and those grown in the region where one lives so that your food ripens in the same climactic zone that the child experiences. This creates security and recognition. Almost all children love repetition whether it is listening to the same fairytales over and over or eating the same foods. Usually starting around age twelve, but sometimes as late as age fifteen, children begin to eat foods they had previously rejected, the children's menu is no longer required.

Building the Will

What does the will have to do with nutrition? This legitimate question can be answered if one looks at the process of digestion. All metabolic processes are based upon inner will—that inner, driving force that creates the actual living part of us. Digestion and metabolism mean tearing-down and building-up, the directed activity of material transformation. The inner will wants to become active and tear down food. From the look, smell, and taste of the food, the body learns to put the appropriate digestive activity into action. A diet based on natural foods that contain substances which our senses can perceive leads to metabolic stimulation. A person's entire structure of vitality is strengthened by this. However, if a child has a diet of foods that promise much from their look and smell but are really "imitations" like artificial flavors, for example, then the metabolic system has prepared itself for nothing. It does not receive what was expected based upon the sense perceptions. If this happens often, the inner will becomes lame. Such a diet leads to inner dullness and a weakening of the metabolic will. Metabolic forces determine the strength of the vitality of body, soul, and spirit for a person's entire life. A lack of challenge or slackening or outright misinformation has the effect of a general weakening. When one thinks that inner "flexibility" shows itself not only in the physical, but also in flexible thinking or feeling, then one can see the full significance of vital and sound nutrition. A diet based on whole, natural foods that are grown biodynamically, if possible, can stimulate the metabolic-will in a variety of ways and makes an important contribution to a person's long-term health.

The Credibility of Parents/Educators

All parents want what is best for their children even when they deny or try to impose certain foods. However, often parents turn to their children when it comes to food decisions. This can be very problematic. Children learn mostly by imitation in the first nine years, not what parents *say* but what they *do*. For instance, it is

very detrimental if a child gets no candy because the parents know the effects, but the parents like to snack on sweets and so they keep a “stash” hidden somewhere. Children sense this “dishonesty.” It would be advisable to have clear-cut rules, regardless of what those rules are, as long as they are upfront and transparent. Even outright denial, of coffee for example, will be accepted by children if they see that parents are acting out of a sense of inner consequence. “You can’t have that!” or some other lukewarm statement is often not successful. The child will probably try to get the desired food anyway by whining or crying.

Every adult should weigh the consequences of his or her words and actions. Nobody is perfect, but it is the striving that counts. Parents and educators may find help in this regard in a book by Steiner called *Knowledge of Higher Worlds* in which exercises are given to help in self-education.

Learning Social Behavior at Mealtimes

Mealtimes are one of the most important training grounds for learning and practicing social behavior. Where can one better learn to share, to have regard for others, to put one’s own needs in second place, rather than selfishly inhaling the food as soon as the plate is placed on the table? These challenges, which should be practiced on a daily basis starting with toddlers, are part of the school of life and should not be underestimated. They can be expanded. Meals also include preparation (cleaning vegetables, cooking, making dough, and so forth), setting the table and clearing it afterward, doing the dishes (or filling and emptying the dishwasher), even purchasing the food is important. While children of kindergarten age like to help as much as possible, this desire markedly declines starting around age ten. This seems to be more the case today than in earlier times. It requires efforts of inner strength, nerves, and will power for parents to insist upon the completion of small chores. Sometimes it helps if there is a written plan of who does what: get the beverages, empty the garbage, or clear the dishes. This social aspect of nutrition should not be forgotten. Rules, division of duties, table manners, and beginning each meal with a blessing or thankful pause are all helpful. Such habits and considerations stay with people their entire lives and positively influence their behavior in other life situations.

Hands-on experience of meal preparation is important. There are so many ready-to-eat products on the market that children no longer know how much work is involved in cleaning vegetables, cutting fruit for a salad, or in baking a cake. Children are losing the opportunity to develop *appreciation* for the human work that is done in the kitchen. More and more young adults can not prepare even the simplest foods because they did not learn to cook at home. It may be that in our world where most adults work outside of the home that cooking everything at home is no longer possible or even desired, but it is important that parents expose their children to the everyday culture and experience of food preparation. Today many schools require that children visit farms and plant vegetable beds in the school

gardens to learn how food is grown. This does not always continue at the same level when it comes to the preparation of food in the kitchen. However, the home was and is the best place to teach children about food preparation.

Every Child is Not the Same! The Influence of the Temperaments

Very early on it is possible to tell if a child is dreamy or alert, if she plays alone or needs stimulation from other children or adults. These differences stem more from the tendency to a certain temperament than from upbringing. Knowledge about the temperaments helps us develop understanding for a child's likes and dislikes when it comes to food.

Sanguine children (air) prefer sweet foods. Above all, they need warm food and will often reject "cold," raw food. They have trouble maintaining warmth in their organism. Little choleric (fire) prefer robust, spicy foods. They like pieces of raw vegetables and would prefer crunchy muesli or whole-wheat bread with a savory spread over warm breakfast porridge. Phlegmatic children (water) need quiet and repetition when it comes to eating. They prefer soft and warm foods. Melancholic children (earth), like choleric, prefer chewing sturdy foods.

It is very helpful to take these needs based upon a child's temperament into consideration. Naturally, it would be impossible to cook something different for every temperament in the family, but a meal usually has several components so it should be possible that everyone gets something to their liking. Here is an overview of likes and dislikes of the four temperaments:

- **Choleric:** The choleric loves firm foods that must be conquered, such as heavy, whole-wheat bread, crackers, crunchy grains, raw vegetables, and spicy foods. Sweet, "accommodating" foods are not well-loved. Oats is the grain that supports the choleric temperament. Rye is also appropriate because it requires digestive strength.
- **Sanguine:** Sanguine people love change and favor small, light meals. They do not enjoy chewing because they want the meal to be finished quickly. Millet is the grain that is supportive of the sanguine temperament. They love sweet foods and their sweet tooth can be easily satisfied by fruit and natural sweeteners. It is important that every meal have something warm since they easily feel cold and often do not like "cold" salads.
- **Phlegmatic:** Phlegmatic people favor soft foods and bread. A warm, cooked porridge for breakfast warms up the body and stimulates the metabolism whereas bread can "lie like a stone" in their stomachs. Phlegmatic children like to eat constantly and they can easily eat too much. Rice is the grain that supports the phlegmatic temperament.

- **Melancholic:** Melancholics like to chew and they love robust foods. They also require peace and quiet at mealtimes. Corn (polenta) is the grain that supports the melancholic temperament. On the whole, this temperament is supported by the warmth in the food.

Sample Menu	
Breakfast	Whole-wheat bread, butter, cheese (fresh cheese) and one glass of milk <i>or</i> muesli flakes with fruit, yogurt, one beverage (herb tea) <i>or</i> cooked porridge
Mid-morning Snack	Bread, butter, cheese, fresh fruit or raw vegetable pieces (cucumber, carrots, turnips, salad greens), one glass milk, yogurt drink, water, fruit tea, or herb tea
Lunch	Vegetables, salad, pasta (or rice or other grain like bulgur or spelt), sometimes potatoes, possibly eggs or meat, or fish, dessert such as curd cheese (good for vegetarian diets), compote, fresh fruit <i>or</i> a casserole <i>or</i> pizza or vegetable pie <i>or</i> a stew
Afternoon Snack	Fruit, milk beverage or bread with a sweet spread (honey marmalade, molasses) <i>or</i> yogurt <i>or</i> sometimes cookies, pie, or cake
Dinner	Light soup, bread, salad, low-fat spread, and beverage

These recommendations should serve only as ideas. If milk is given in the morning, then it is not necessary in the afternoon. If curd cheese is eaten at lunch, then do not serve yogurt or a milk beverage in the afternoon. In general, it is beneficial to the liver's rhythm to eat savory foods in the morning and sweet foods in the evening. However, many children much prefer their morning bread with a sweet spread. In this case, you should consider a child's individual preferences.

Conclusion

This basic knowledge about children's nutrition should help parents in daily life. It shows that it is very possible to live well without the intense array of processed, ready-to-eat food products for children and thus avoid their harmful effects. It is important to prepare many things oneself. Convenient and quick tp

prepare highly processed foods nevertheless suffer in their quality. It is better to cook simply. This saves time as well as meeting the needs of most children. A lunch consisting of grain (rice or millet, for instance) and vegetables is complete; fresh cheese or yogurt will round out the protein requirement. A piece of fruit and crackers with butter are enough for a mid-morning snack and are usually gladly received.

Keeping staple foods on hand in one's pantry is a good idea. Vegetables, fruit, and milk products can be kept for a few days in the refrigerator. There you already have all the ingredients to prepare quick and economical meals that taste good and are wholesome.

Children's nutrition creates a foundation for their physical, mental, and spiritual development. It is important to begin with a healthy diet and healthy eating habits as early as possible in your children. A healthy diet must taste good; otherwise it cannot fulfill its purpose. There are many good cookbooks available with a wide variety of recipes. In addition, supporting eco-friendly and biodynamic food products promotes the health of the earth and its inhabitants. It is an investment in the *future of all children*.

The Feet Reveal the Human Will

by

Norbert Glas

In my article *The Hands Reveal the Human Being*, I stressed again and again how the arms with the hands belong to the area of the rhythmical man. If we consider Rudolf Steiner's indications of man as a threefold being, this is the region which has its center in the organs of the chest cavity. This "middle man" becomes the expression of the sentient soul. The hands visibly reveal it. Their essential area of action lies in the horizontal, even though they are capable of grasping upwards and downwards.

To the legs, the lower segment of space has been assigned. With a standing human being the legs and thighs are directed towards the center of the earth. The feet are needed to give proper support to the long limb bones. The soles establish an intimate connection with the soil. Our wandering on earth, as far as it has to do with the forward movement of the body, depends on the activity of the feet. Every action carried out requires from the soul impetus of the will.

Herewith we come to the significant viewpoint essential for a physiognomy of the feet: They are the most important visible expression of the human will. At the beginning of life, even if marked only from birth, continual growth is the most important occurrence for the infant. For this the lively metabolism in all the organs and tissues is responsible. It happens for the child, though he is completely unaware of it. Slowly light enters into this darkness as soon as the motion of the body is not restricted to the inner formation of the organism, and when the child brings his body outwards into active touch with his surroundings; this clearly begins with the lifting of the head, the grasping with the hands, the kicking with legs and feet.

From a developmental viewpoint these events express the manner in which the awakening will rays into the personality of the child. However, a feeling of satisfaction will only be attained when the young child has learned to stand upright and to walk. The exultation with which the child usually

greet the achieving of upright posture is an indication of the sense of the well being caused by the penetration of the feet with the will of the ego. These first steps constitute the initial ones towards the important goal of humankind: to find the path to freedom and personal independence. It takes a long time, as a rule, until it is reached. The way-stations necessary along this path leave their imprints in the wondrous structure of the human body. Some of it appears as if predesigned at birth. Many marks of the willing human are incarnated into the feet. It will be the task of this article to recognize and decipher these marks.



At the beginning of a discussion on the physiognomy of the feet, one must point out the difference that exists between the feet and the hands. The hands belong, as mentioned before, to the middle or rhythmic man and have thereby a direct relationship with the two activities of this region, respiration and blood circulation. In contemplation of the hands we notice a kind of twofoldness: we can talk of a finger region of the hand which is more related to the breathing and a thumb region of the hand more connected with the circulatory organism.

The feet lack such a division. Even at the first glance we notice a greater uniformity than in the hands. Compare the hand and foot of the same child. All the five toes belong harmonically together in their arrangement and mobility. In a delicate arc the bases of the first joints lie well proportioned and next to each other. In the hand, however, the thumb sticks out conspicuously from this association. Though without doubt there exists a relationship between thumb and big toe, the difference between them is significant, despite their connection with the blood circulation and the metabolism; the thumb-hand remains a member of the rhythmic system. This is clearly expressed in the physiognomy of the hands. It always holds true for the thumb that it must be regarded as a part of the hand. This is different regarding the big toe. It virtually assumes the leadership in the realm of the toes—for the foot represents after all an undivided whole. To each of its forms is stamped the affiliation with the willing human. All other influences, some meaningful ones as will be demonstrated later, are of secondary

importance. In the spatial descent from the hands towards the feet, the twofoldness of man becomes simplicity in the truest sense of the word.

Another visible difference between hands and feet that is seldom noticed shows up under the following circumstance: put the hands palms down on the table in front of you, in such a way that the fingers are stretched out with the two thumbs touching each other. In this position the hands diverge outwardly, the left one outwards left, the right one outwards right. In other words the direction points away from the body. This is the manifestation of the construction of the bones and joints of which anybody interested in anatomy may find proof. The possibility to assume the position just described is of physiognomic significance. It reveals how the left hand by its nature strives outward towards its own side and the right one tends to go out to the corresponding side. Therein lies the expression for the tendency of hand movements away from the body. But at the same time when the twofoldness of left and right is revealed, it is also part of the search for the proper equilibrium. For all feeling is swaying motion, never standing still, similar to music. With our breath into the realm of feeling rays the world of thinking; from the other side the power of willing wells up with the warmth of the blood.



Try now to bring the feet into a corresponding position and compare. The two sections of the big toes are positioned close together towards the middle. If this is done, the feet assume the opposite direction to that of the hands. The feet are turned towards each other, toward the middle of the body, not towards the periphery, and between the feet an angle opens in the rear. This is also a consequence of the anatomical structure. In the feet lies the tendency towards a uniform containment, as is the case with the will. Left and right are not of major concern. In the indicated position the feet point towards the body, not away from it, as do the fingers of the hand.

The starting point for a physiognomy of the feet is best taken from the most important movement of the legs, from walking. Steiner has examined in particular the process of striding in his elaborations for eurythmy and curative eurythmy. His presentation of threepart walking offers a most valuable basis for our considerations. In walking three acts can be observed. One should first imagine the standing man and follow step by step what he

does in order to move forward. First, the heel of one foot is lifted from the ground. Thereby part of the body weight is shifted from the back to the front onto the ball of the big toe. From here the foot rolls a little further forward until the somewhat thickened cap of the big toe touches the ground. This action, threefold in itself, may be designated as the first phase of the walking process. The second phase begins as soon as the tip of the big toe as well as the other toes are lifted from the



ground. Now the foot assumes in the air a more or less flat arc which ends where the big toe touches the ground again. With this movement the striding foot relieves itself completely from the weight of the body. The following third phase commences with the renewed positioning of the toes on the ground whereby the main effort rests again on the big toe. There follows the positioning of the ball of the foot and a roll back towards the heel. What happened in the first act from back to front repeats itself in retrograde manner—the third act also in a threepart motif. A step forward has been executed. Of course, the active leg needs the support of the other leg, the so-called standing leg, otherwise one would have to remain suspended in the air. It is important to observe how for the active leg the weight of the body gradually diminishes up to the middle of the second phase, and afterwards at the end of the third phase rests again entirely on the heel.

This description refers to an ideal, one could say, of a healthy step. Though all walking occurs under the influence of the will, it reflects definite soul activities in the human being. These emerge in the sweep of the willing act and are thus integrated into the will. The initial act lies clearly in the heel, and the first phase may be looked upon altogether as the archetypal picture of the will. It is understandable why Steiner has assigned this part of the striding motion to the will in particular. The center of the force from which the walking is immediately carried out lies in the round heel. With its help we attain the effort to push ourselves up from the ground. Important for the walking, of course, besides the heel, is the sole, mainly its outer rim. Furthermore the ball of the toe is particularly utilized in jumping and skipping. Finally the stream of the will works itself up from the end section of the big toe towards its tip. These three parts, heel, ball and big toe tip, belong formatively to one another. The round shape of the heel is repeated first in the ball and finally at the end of the toe. The discharge of the will occurs

most strongly at the heel and subsides gradually towards the toe in front. One can realize this is so when a blindly raging man expresses his fury by forcefully stamping his heel. In this region lies a hidden or great amount of power for the action of the will. The force of expression diminishes towards the front because gradually other impulses of the soul, feeling and thinking, assert themselves in the will element and restrain it, as will be shown later in this essay.

An entirely new picture emerges when the foot, executing the second phase, overcomes the effect of weight. The foot frees itself from the influence of gravity. In the free-floating position a situation is created that to some degree may be compared with thinking: in thinking man is also able to free himself from gravity. This is even substantiated physiologically. In many of his writings Steiner stresses that it is of primary importance for the potentiality of thinking that the brain, as the instrument for thinking, is liberated to some extent from gravity. Indeed, this organ is kept swimming in the cerebral-spinal fluid. Thereby the proper weight of the brain is reduced by the weight of the displaced fluid. Even here Archimedes' principle holds true: a submerged body, in this case the brain, loses as much of its weight as the displaced spinal fluid actually weighs. If this were not the case, the small blood vessels on the underside of the brain would be crushed. This is prevented by the uplift that overcomes gravity. To this man owes his ability to think. In this context it becomes understandable why in eurythmy and curative eurythmy the second act of the foot motion is put into relation with the thinking process. We should also remember that Steiner in his *Philosophy of Freedom* describes how the thinking, which takes place above, in the head, is always accompanied by a willing which thrusts upwards. Our thinking is stimulated and influenced by the activity of the legs. This way it seems understandable why some thinkers find and collect their thoughts best when walking for hours. Jacob Grimm did until a ripe old age, as he himself relates. The famous School of Philosophy in Greece even derived its name from the fact that teaching took place while walking about: the disciples of Aristotle were called the *peripatetics*, which means "the strollers."

After man has lived in a gravity-free state during thinking, he must descend again to earth. In soul life the realm of feeling helps to that end. Feeling, which belongs to our middle region, opens in two directions: up towards the thoughts through the force of breathing, or down towards the pole of the will by means of the blood circulation.

The third phase of walking consists mainly in descending from the realm of thinking through feeling into the, region of willing. What takes place in the soul has its physical counterpart. This occurs when during the third act of the walking process the big toe descends quite cautiously onto the ground before the entire foot drops completely and the sole touches the base again. One can actually sense distinctly how, with the motion of walking, the feeling

soul dips into the will. In this manner, Steiner brought this part of striding into relation with feeling.

In summing up, the following may be said about the threepart walking: in it everything is put into effect by the force of the will, but always an element of thinking and an element of feeling are connected with every step. One question could arise, from where does man receive the lightness in his thought life by which he is able to overcome gravity? To this one can give a clear answer founded on physiological fact. On the one hand, one becomes master over gravity through the uplift in the cerebral-spinal fluid, through which the brain as the instrument for thinking becomes buoyant and gives up the major part of its weight; and on the other hand, through the impulse of will in walking, this occurs as the heel lifts from the ground.



The significance of the particulars of threepart walking lies in the fact that many minor problems and difficulties of adults and children can be read by observing the walk and the position the feet assume in it. This is of medical and educational importance, and through relevant motion exercises of the lower extremities it becomes possible to

exert a healing influence on various conditions of illness whose origins can be looked for in specific disturbances within the will system.

Considering what has been presented about each of the singular parts of walking, one could also try to understand certain dances. One is able to judge from the activity of the feet in what direction the dancing steps influence the human being. It is easy, for instance, to comprehend the well-known wild dance of the Cossacks, in which one squats low and stamps the foot forcefully with the heel in a certain rhythm. This gives rise mainly to willful fighting courage. In squatting one approaches the ground spatially, and is by virtue of that alone more strongly exposed to the earth forces. The Serbs of Yugoslavia have a similar folk dance in which the heels have the major part. Also the so-called Schuhplattler of the Tyroleans and other mountain people stresses the forceful stamping with soles and heels. Those people are of a very strong-willed disposition. Life in the mountains trains them to subdue the unwieldy earth. They have a strong relation with the soil. On the one hand, they have a desire to feel it properly underneath them and are tightly bound to it with their whole being; on the other hand, the activity of the heels

expresses an intentional pushing away from the earth in order to assert themselves.

From an educational standpoint, it is important that one should not let small children participate in those folk dances that emphasize the willfulness. Too much stamping is apt to influence the development of the child up to, say, the fourteenth year, in a negative way. This forceful trampling on the ground can make boys and girls mature too early, pushing them towards forces too much tied with the earth.

From the physiognomic viewpoint of the feet it is worthwhile to consider for them a dance like the waltz. The dancer has to regard the particular movements. These are in themselves very harmonious already, the three-quarter beat is in sync with the essential nature of man. One can readily analyze the waltz step. We designate as number one the elevating of the heel and lifting onto the ball of the left foot. It remains in this position, turning slightly inwards. Following this the right foot, which also rested on the ball, is lifted a little, swishes in an arc sideways and somewhat to the rear in order to land on the tip of the toes and the ball. There follows for the left foot motion number two, the removal from the floor by disengaging the left ball. While floating freely in the air this foot swings sideways and forward in an arc. In our example this is the opposite direction to that of the right foot. And now there follows motion number three for the left leg: the left big toe with the ball touches the floor again whereby at the same time a cursory putting down of the heel and sole may occur. We see, in short, that here are all three parts of walking. Everything takes place in a very balanced form and is relieved from weightiness almost like a thinking winged by fantasy, one could say.

The healthy attraction of the waltz lies in the fact that although everything, mainly through the central activity of the feet, takes place in the realm of the will, there is at the same time a connection with the feeling. This occurs at first, because the big toe and ball are always in a state of gently sinking down. One is first of all reminded of that phase of walking when the feeling enters into the motion. This always occurs delicately, and is immediately lifted into the region of levity where the thinking should originate. From the interaction between these two soul impulses results the swinging pace of the waltz that is so appealing. The uniform turning in a circle throughout an entire dance hall enhances once more a lightness in the body.

Steiner showed how such a circling has not so much to do with the physical body only, but specifically with those living forces by which life is properly maintained, those parts in man which he called formative or etheric forces. They are polar opposites of gravity or weight and have to do with light, sound and warmth. Plus, the waltz derives its existence from music.

Steiner related the basic elements of music—melody, harmony, and rhythm—in the following manner to the three soul qualities—feeling, thinking, and willing: melody with thinking, harmony with feeling, and

rhythm with willing. If we apply this to the waltz, it corresponds with what has been presented so far. Let us regard one of the most brilliant musicians, Johann Strauss, through whom in his time the waltz came to its prime. His bubbling, inventive spirit produced a wealth of melodies of such simplicity and ease as would really be desirable as an attribute of fantasy-endowed thinking. But Strauss was at the same time a magnificent harmonist. With complete artistry he accomplished the steadily changing, always agitated harmonies that keep our feeling, as it were, in a certain balance. The will living with rhythm adjusts itself to the human being without force; the soul willingly fits itself into the three-quarter measure, because it is itself of a threepart nature.

When we look at modern dance endeavors, what is presently cultivated by youth as new dances stands in full contrast to the depicted waltz of the past. While in the waltz the feet are being liberated through the rhythm of the music from the element of gravity, a totally different goal prevails in the modern dances. The will, which can also become an expression of the lower instincts, connects with the earth and its weight. The legs and feet follow the pull of gravity with wild ecstasy towards a kind of underworld. The lower limbs attempt in their movements to spiral downwards, even to below the surface of the floor. In the corresponding music—if such tone sequences deserve the same name as that branch of the arts—the importance of melody is lost, precisely that which lies within the realm of weightlessness. This is true also for harmony; what remains is a hard and heavy beat that tends to bear the body into the depths. For this article this brief characterization of rock and roll and hip-hop as to their effect upon the dancer must suffice, though one could say more about such manifestations in our present-day life from the point of view of psychology and morality.

After having spoken so far about eurythmy, about dances like the waltz, rock and roll, and hip-hop, and about ordinary walking, one should also consider various sports, which can have particular consequences for small children later in life.

Perhaps one would today designate the activity in question no more as sport but simply as a specific means of transportation. Under consideration is the bicycle and cycling. To my knowledge enough attention has not been paid to the dangers that arise for children who ride bikes to the extreme. In many countries it is probably hard to tell where it does not happen, for children receive already at the age of two and a half or three years a tricycle or small toy car which is put into motion by pedaling. After the little ones have occupied themselves for a while with these wheels, one considers the time ripe, say at five years of age, to put them on a small bicycle. Wherein lies the danger of the baby tricycles as toys and of the bicycle? In early childhood and youth proper walking is limited or severely curtailed.

It has been shown in many examples the significance walking has for

human beings. It has been clearly explained what happens with each step. One should realize the difference between this foot movement and the locomotion by bicycle. In walking the will must be active, consciously or not. The gait that is peculiar to each single human being adapts itself exactly to his individual bodily conditions. The temperament already influences the manner in which one walks, whether in long strides or short steps. A special characteristic lies in the manner in which the heel, the sole, the ball and the toes are set upon the floor. In each movement there is a constant cooperation of the will with the forces prevailing in the head and heart. Despite this intimate interplay, the willing stands in the foreground. Through the threefold division with every step in the activity of the feet, a delicate gradation in the execution of the movements results.

One must remember this in order to comprehend the great difference for the feet, and thereby for the entire man, between walking and cycling. On the bicycle we deal first of all with a thrust or pressure that is mainly executed downwards with the leg and through the ball of the big toe. The thrust is immediately transferred upon the mechanism of the wheel and causes a rotating motion of the feet. This happens to the rider, but more passively. Only the downward push is active. Usually only one foot is acting while the other one is just taken along. This changes when riding fast or when overcoming major gradients, in which case each foot executes pressure. Most often the right foot participates more strongly in the work. What is finally the main occupation of the feet in riding? The ball simply presses upon the pedal more intensely on one side; everything else happens mechanically. With locomotion on the bicycle all the many impulses that humans commonly receive while walking, and which they can incorporate into their souls, are entirely lost. Nothing remains but the forward push with the ball of the toe.

How two alternating movements of the ball of the toe take place in walking was described above: at the end of the “first phase” the sole begins to lift, rolling forward; and the stage set to elevate the foot into the lightness, which has more to do with the thinking element within the will. The other movement with which the ball is involved comprises the dropping down again of the toes to the floor, initiating the third phase; it sinks the feeling into the will. This twofold activity of the ball in striding already creates a beneficial equilibrium through which, in the realm of the will, feeling and thinking impulses may balance themselves. This resembles a breathing process anchored in the motion which, like the real breathing, promotes health. There lies in such a working of the balls of the toes first the lifting from and then again a gradual dipping into the weight of the body. This takes place not mechanically but through active human effort.

Now when a child rides a bicycle, everything is reduced to the simple downward push; the rest goes by itself, namely by the machine, without the human being. The rider is relieved of the remaining work. What effect will

excessive bicycle riding have upon the soul life of the child?

In the realm of thinking, the capacity for lightness, for fantasy-enriched creative activity, is suppressed and the materialistic thinking which tends towards heaviness is promoted. In the realm of feeling, the delicate soulfulness, which lives in the breathing and which should be preserved in mobility, is extinguished. The will itself, a primary element in the movement of the feet, is engaged only to a small extent, because the heel, through which all our being's energy exerts itself in the act of walking, is not even employed in the movement.

In summary, one may say that extreme cycling, particularly at an early age, furthers questionable qualities in the human being and may even be the cause of them: inclination towards a narrow materialistic way of thinking, a coarsening of the soul life which appears as rudeness and lack of sympathy, and in the willing a tendency to laziness and indolence, which may show up in every sphere. The devastating result is not limited to the soul life. After some time there could also be some clearly physical injuries such as anomalies of the lungs and heart, known as troubles in respiration and circulation which can lead to organic changes in the lungs and heart, and problems with the genitals due to the ergonomics of the bicycle seat and the impact of a bumpy ride. Also, one must not overlook the fact that during prolonged riding there occurs congestion in the region of the abdominal muscles, even within the organs located below the diaphragm. In the course of time there can develop a cramping or a tendency to cramp. This has a bad effect during the years of adolescence—particularly, and may, for instance, cause disturbances in the monthly cycle for girls.

It is appropriate to remind ourselves of the significance of insufficient exercise of our feet in general. The rhythmical man is readily subject to harm when natural walking is avoided too much. The automobile has cut out the labor of the feet and has allowed for a variety of circulatory illnesses. Not only smoking but also the neglect of regular foot movement, due to the increase in automobile riding, plays a significant roll in circulatory diseases. The warmth which flows through the organism with the will impulse at every step affects in the blood vessels a partial dissolution of the deposits there, which otherwise can become the cause of sclerosis. The heart ardently desires, if one may express it in this way, to feel the upwards-flowing heat; the occurrence of the dreaded ailments originating from the narrowing of the coronary arteries could be reduced if human beings will move their limbs in an appropriate manner.

In conclusion, the rhythmic human being needs natural walking for health of body, mind, and spirit—for clear thinking, a rich feeling life, and directed will.

Hearing

Door to the Soul and Spirit around Us, with a Look at Technological Media

by

Heinz Buddemeier

First Image

A man is walking through a small town. The pavement echoes with his footsteps. He hears a child laughing through an open window. In the church the organist is practicing a chorale that the congregation will sing later. A dog barks after him as he walks by the last house.

Second Image

A woman is standing at a bus stop. Countless automobiles drive past. They are so noisy that the birds singing and twittering in the tree next to the bus stop can barely be heard. Inside the bus, people are reading or listening to music with headphones. The bus stop reverberates with a voice that comes from a taped message on a loudspeaker.

At home the woman meets her roommates. She has a discussion with a couple of them. Music can be heard in the background. Later they all watch a television program together.

Changes in the Hearing Landscape

It is clear to everyone that the visible environment has fundamentally changed in the last few decades. That a similar transformation has taken place in the realm of perceived sound must be brought to conscious awareness. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, that which came to the ears originated from just a few, easily identifiable sources. There were people speaking and shouting, sometimes laughing or scolding. There were noises emanating from household work, workshops, and farms. There were the sounds of nature: rustling wind, pattering rain, thunder, mooing cows, and purring cats. Sometimes something very special could be heard, music in the form of singing or instruments being played.

All of these sounds have a clear relationship to human beings. Just as a human being has a body, soul, and spirit, so also can the sources of sound impressions be so divided. Through his hearing the man who walked through the town was immersed in all three regions. The noise of his steps said something about the composition of the ground. The sounds from the laughing child afforded a glimpse into her soul. The tones resounding from the church organ revealed a quality of spirit. In the realm of that which can be heard, the human being's organization of body, soul, and spirit corresponds to the noise, sound, and tone.

The changes that have taken place in the area of noise can be clearly illustrated by imagining the following: Two houses are being built, one house is being constructed by hand, the other using machines. At the construction site for the hand-built house, the first thing one hears is the digging of the foundation. Spades and shovels dig into the ground and the kind of sound they make when coming into contact with dirt indicates the composition of the soil. Then the building materials are brought to the construction site and unloaded. One hears the clinking of stones falling upon stones. The wooden beams sound denser when they thump on each other. One hears the sloshing of the cement being mixed. Stone masons are chipping stones, using trowels to butter the stones with mortar, and then scraping off the excess as they set the stone. Finally, the carpenters arrive to set the trusses. The rhythmic rat-a-tat of the hammers high above can be heard from far away. It tells of wood, nails, steel hammers, and of the purposefulness of the men using them.

Today, as everyone knows, it is a quite different story. First, a bulldozer comes, scrapes and digs out the foundation in no time. During this process one hears nothing of the soil and rocks, or of the material from which the giant shovel is made because the noise of the hydraulics and the grumbling staccato of the engine overwhelm everything. The sounds are screeching, harsh and abrupt. More machines arrive: trucks, cranes, cement mixers, electric saws, pneumatic drills, air hammers, and so forth. When the house is roofed the carpenters use automatic hammers or staplers; each hammering echoing like a pistol shot.

A house built by hand enriches the hearing landscape. One is happy that a new house is being built. The standard construction methods today disturb people. In order to keep the impact within certain limits it has become necessary to measure the noise volume and determine an allowable limit. Most of the time the workers themselves must wear ear protection.

Volume is not the only problem. A bulldozer is a disturbance for quite some distance. Its noise is penetrating and gets on one's nerves, one could say. The reasons for this are easy to determine. For one thing, mechanical noises lack rhythm. They do not open up any of the three areas to us out of which our world is partitioned. It is difficult to sort out and organize these kinds of noises. At the same time they are penetrating and impossible to ignore. What we call noise today presents us with a big problem.

The German word for noise is "*Laerm*," developed out of the word "alarm." Actually, one is startled and "alarmed" out of one's activity when these noises are heard. Mental work, especially, can be so disturbed by noise that it must be postponed. Of course, machines are not the only source of noise. When the neighbor's dog barks constantly, then that is a noise disturbance that can become tortuously irritating. The same goes for the violin coming from the neighbor's apartment that is perhaps going on and on with the same music and the same mistakes. Of course, it makes a difference if this is happening with a neighbor that one does not like or if one's own children are practicing, in which case, one is happy they are practicing at all. In this instance, one has a different relationship to what one is hearing.

Noise is not a new phenomenon but it has increased enormously in the last few decades. In its most widespread form, traffic noise is considered the source of many health problems because it is with us day and night. In order to prevent the worst effects of this problem in Germany, emissions protection laws were established in 1974 that stipulate certain noise limitations in residential areas.¹

Legislation about noise pollution standards represents progress. However, one must also realize that many problems remain unaffected. For example, during the first school semester, after many weeks of unaccustomed living in a large city, I had the opportunity one weekday to drive to a lake in northern Germany. I sailed out in a boat and enjoyed the sky and the water, the landscape, and the wind. But I was not alone. From a nearby airport a private plane took off and circled the lake endlessly. Airplane noise covered the entire area. It was immeasurably intrusive. I wavered between anger and disappointment and sent not-so-friendly thoughts in the direction of the offender who was preventing me from having my hoped-for experience because he simply "interrupted me."

Today mechanical noise is all-pervasive. Inside houses there are humming refrigerators, hissing furnaces, whirring air-conditioners, and buzzing fluorescent lights, just to name a few persistent noise makers.

Outside we are surrounded, above all, by traffic noise. If one pays attention one will notice that there is hardly a place where traffic noise does not exist. Noise from streets, train tracks, or airplanes overhead reaches almost everywhere, especially in densely-populated and highly industrialized areas. In other words, quiet places have become rare.

Whoever wishes to clarify this for his own satisfaction, it is recommended he undertake a kind of hearing protocol from time to time. One becomes aware of what can be heard at a particular place at a particular time. Perhaps one will realize (even on the first try) that one must stand still, for even walking creates so many sounds that other sounds are drowned out. Besides, walking requires a certain amount of attention that is then not available for listening.

I have experimented with this many times. It is especially impressive in a chosen place where the immediate surroundings are quiet. In Bremen (Germany) I occasionally ride my bike on a hedge-lined path that is bordered on one side by a cemetery and on the other side by gardens. Sometimes I get off the bike just to listen. The birds are singing in the trees. The wind rustles through the leaves. In the background, however, I hear the same monotonous drone of the big city. The first time I stopped to listen, I thought there was something unusual taking place, something like a column of tanks driving through or large construction machines. I waited, expecting that it would pass. Finally, I had to admit to myself that what I heard, that clamor enclosing me like a ring, was completely normal, daily noise.

What are we dealing with here? Mechanical noise disturbs us because it does not blend in with what we know. Nature and the human world are known to us. What we encounter on the outside also exists in some small way on the inside. With mechanical noises, on the other hand, we feel that there is something working against us. Many people have experienced how a peaceful mood in the backyard or garden is shattered when a neighbor starts his lawnmower, chainsaw, or leaf blower. The disturbance is caused not only by the noise volume. What can be heard has something akin to a voice; this voice cries, screams, complains, and is sometimes filled with hate. Sometime, try to determine this by just calmly and earnestly listening to what is to be heard.

Before turning to a consideration of the consequences of this all-pervasive, mechanical noise, I would like to relate the following experience. After a few "hearing tests" in the city, one December morning I drove to the edge of town in the hope of experiencing quiet. To my right was a forest, and to my left the street followed an old canal. On the far bank was an area of individual garden plots. In the same measure that the street noise receded, the wind in my ears and squeaking of my bicycle seat became more audible. If I wanted to hear anything quieter I had to stop and get off the bike.

After a short time, what came to my ears was the same droning, dull, incessant noise that I had heard on the path by the cemetery, only more muffled. I had not yet escaped from the city. In spite of that I tried to open myself to the environment. As the night before had been frosty, it was damp out and a film of hoarfrost lay on the trees and the leaves on the ground. A thin sheet of ice had formed on the surface of the canal, geometric surfaces with their intersecting points. Some areas were free from ice, and the water rippled when the wind blew over it.

If I wanted to experience more I would have to wait. Gradually I was taken back into the space that I had hurried through before. It took me in and surrounded me. Things became visible to me and it was clear that they had something to do with one another. The tree that stood before me belonged to the trees standing behind it. The bush belonged to the tree, the tree to the sky, and the wind to the dry leaves to which it spoke.

How was it with hearing? In such a situation it is of no consequence if one listens especially attentively to single sounds. It really has to do with feeling one's way into a space with one's ears. If that can be achieved, the space opens itself and tells some of its secrets.

With mechanical noise, on the other hand, we can do nothing. In its presence we develop the tendency to withdraw our attentiveness away from our ears. We block it out. We hear only what we absolutely must hear and avoid any kind of openness to listening. In addition, mechanical noises often occurs at volumes loud enough to overpower other sounds and make them disappear. This masking, as it is referred to in the discipline of hearing psychology, leads, together with the withdrawal of auditory attention, to a weakening of our relationship to our world. This also means that the sense of hearing is not allowed to completely develop. A further consequence is that of soul poverty because inner enrichment develops through exchange.

Such considerations could be interpreted as general animosity toward technology. However, that would be a misunderstanding. Technology now belongs to human life. But, we must admit that technology has partially gotten away from us. In many cases we have thoughtlessly surrounded ourselves with environmentally unfriendly products. Vehicles that spread as much noise and pollution as automobiles, for example, are not yet sufficiently engineered and should not be in service. (The reasons as why this happens anyway – businesses motivated by profit – is not the subject I will address here.)

Consideration of our sense of hearing could have a transforming, healing influence on technology development. For example, transportation could have not become increasingly faster. Attention to hearing could have also prevented our agricultural methods from becoming one of the worst offenders in environmental pollution. This new method could demand the use of tractors which put a bell jar of noise around the farmers. Would a farmer be capable of spraying poison if he could hear the birds singing?

The noise about which we have been speaking comes as an undesired side effect of the using of machines. But how is it when machines are used specifically to create sounds, for example as is the case of loudspeakers? Do machine sounds transform human voices and musical tones?

Before we consider this question further, I would like to draw your attention momentarily to the situation in which we find ourselves in regard to this problem. Nowadays, when someone asks himself at the end of the day how much time he spent in direct conversation with other people, how long he read or wrote, and how long he listened to voices and music produced by electronic speakers, then many people may come to the conclusion that communications through the media were in the majority.

It is routine, even at small gatherings, for people to reach for microphones and speakers to amplify their voices. Conference tables that have places for

only ten or twenty participants often have microphones available for each person. In addition to that, there are most often many speakers providing constant background music. Researchers have found that this background music in supermarkets affects the subconscious, dulls reasoning, and actually results in increased purchasing. Public and private rooms are often continuously bombarded with sound. We must also contend with the fact that the holding pause on the telephone is filled with music.

In the more restricted field of art, speakers and microphones are now taken for granted. Live concerts are recorded and edited on the spot. When the required electronic players are on hand, they are available anytime and anywhere. For many people the artistic evaluation of a musician depends upon the number of times these recordings are replayed or broadcast.

Within religious groups there is little concern about the use of microphones and loudspeakers. Even small churches are outfitted with these electronic devices. Nobody stops to ask why church services were possible for hundreds of years without electronic amplification devices. Actually, one should really ask if the ministers have lost their voices or if the congregations have stopped-up ears. Instead, people are proud of what they call simply “progress.”

Television screens are deprecatingly called “boob tubes.” Those that spend much time sitting in front of them often experience a quiet, uncomfortable feeling. Surveys show that they would rather watch less television so they could do other things, but they are magnetically or psychologically addicted to passivity through the programming and find it hard to motivate themselves to other activities.

Sound media, on the other hand, is not viewed as problematic. It is unconditionally accepted. There are various reasons for this attitude. The person on the television screen is flat and small when compared to reality, and the space-time continuum of reality is hacked-up by various settings and editing, to name only two differences. Recorded sound, on the other hand, is fairly true to the original. A further reason lies in today’s widespread, accepted conception of hearing.

Different Concepts about Hearing

In a psychology lexicon one reads that: “hearing perception is the returned decoding of a sensory-physiologically processed impulse.” The primary task of the “two-ear apparatus,” according to the *Fischer Lexicon*, is “the processing of sound and registering the location of sound-producing bodies.” Such a definition harkens back to research, the foundations for which were laid in the last third of the nineteenth century. In the *Meyers Conversation Lexicon* from 1876 the word “Auditory” is allotted eight pages. In addition, there are two pages with exact drawings of the auditory organs.

Without exception, the presentations are related to the physical and physiological aspects of hearing. They are supported, above all, by Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894), “The physiology of the hearing process has been brought to a very high level of perfected understanding through the brilliant research by Helmholtz and, at the present time, the auditory organs, in spite of the many as yet unanswered questions, can be counted as the best researched of all the sensory organs.”

The plethora of discoveries in the field of natural science supports the illusion that hearing had been completely researched. It is very telling that in the lexicons of the nineteenth century under the word *Hören* (hearing in German), one is directed to the word *gehör* (auditory in German) where the natural scientific research is then presented. Human beings with their feeling nature and thinking nature are thereby removed from the picture.

In this respect nothing has changed to this day. Today every school child is taught about these nineteenth century concepts. The “progress” made consists solely in the fact that people have learned to penetrate deeper into the material process. As an example of the understanding today, take the already-quoted *Fischer Lexicon* in which these words appear at the beginning under the term “Theory of Perception”:

Our sensory organs transform the physical-chemical energies in disturbances of the biological balance in nerve cells which are then centripetally transmitted as electrical impulses along the sensory paths, finally leading to the brain cortex where they act as stimulants on certain ganglia cells.

According to this explanation, our sensory organs transform captured stimuli into electrical impulses from which the brain conjures forth our experienced sensory perceptions whereby the perceptions supposedly have more to do with the brain and sensory organs than with the objects that precipitated said perceptions. Helmholtz upheld this view that in turn led to Kant’s teaching about the imperceptibility of the world in sensory psychology.

If one starts with the conclusion that the basis for hearing lies solely in acoustic and physiological phenomena, and, if one further concedes that while the sensory organs certainly provide us an entry into the world, at the same time, they separate us from “the things themselves,” then it makes no difference if the voice I hear comes from a human larynx or from a loudspeaker. The loudspeaker actually has some advantages: its range is considerable and it does not get tired.

A critical look at amplifiers and microphones is only possible when the predominant view about hearing is corrected. A first step toward this is to work toward getting clarity about it. How was hearing understood before the

purely scientific research and interpretations of the nineteenth century? If one looks in the famous *Great Complete Universal Lexicon* published by Johann Heinrich Zedler in 1735, one finds that the words “hearing” and “auditory” form one term. The article begins:

One of the five outer senses; the soul takes in and recognizes what is transmitted as all kinds of sounds and voices by the ears.

Here the word “soul” is very freely spoken. It is the soul that hears but it must make use of all kinds of help such as the auditory organs of the ears. The idea that the brain, that is, a mass made up of blood and protein, could hear, would have seemed completely absurd to the people of the eighteenth century.

Two passages in the New Testament of the *Bible* give another view about hearing. Paul’s letter to the Romans in Chapter 10: Verse 15 it says: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Verse 16: But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” Verse 17: So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ (New Revised Standard Version). In Paul’s letter to the Hebrews in regard to the Christ it is written in Chapter 5, Verse 11: “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing,” (New King James Version). Here, also, hearing is an ability of the soul, and we can speak of that which does not even require ears.

Anthroposophy is in a position to enlist the aid of spiritual-scientific research in interpreting natural-scientific research about hearing and, in so doing, to reinforce the oldest concepts about hearing and make them more precise. Before this presentation, I would like to point out the following: Views about hearing stemming from the nineteenth century have neglected to differentiate between technically-created voices and music and their immediate reproduction. Additionally, those views contributed heavily to the invention of technical sound media. This can be shown using the example of the microphone.

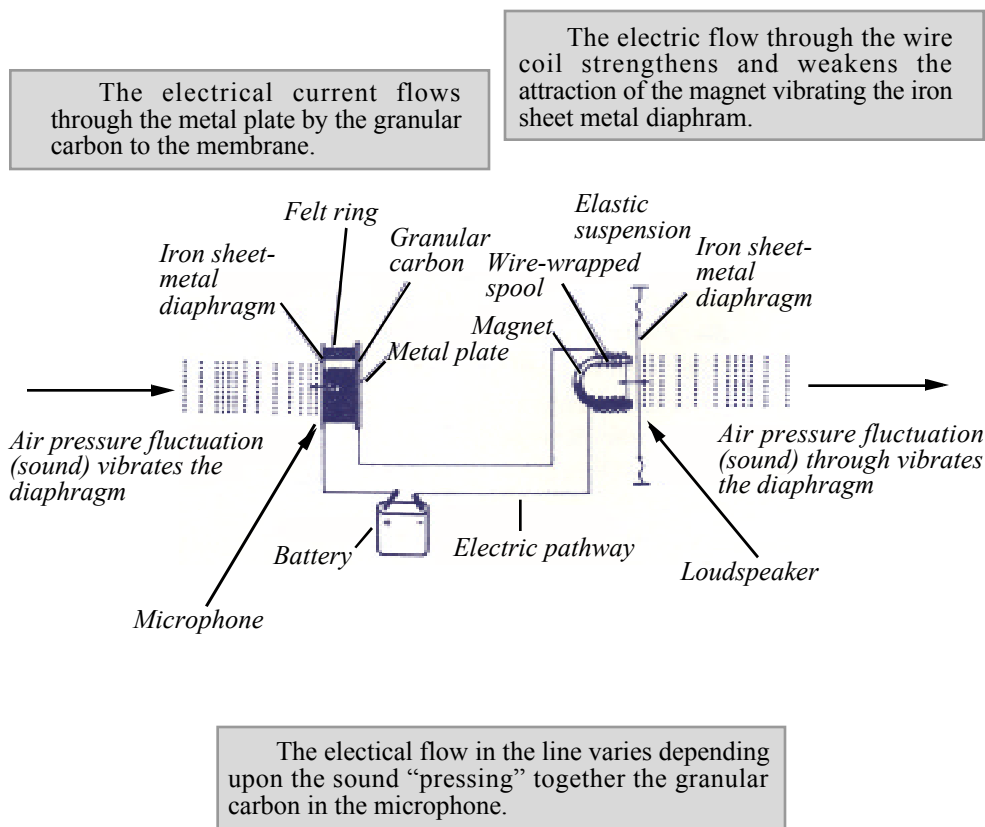
How do Microphones and Loudspeakers Function?

Thomas Edison invented the microphone in 1876. Edison wrote in his diaries that during the time he was working on the microphone and the phonograph (precursor of the record player) the most varied theories about acoustics and hearing were spinning around in his head. In reference to hearing, the inventor concentrated at that time on investigating the inner ear, especially the cochlea with its basilar membrane and its twenty-five-thousand cilia (tiny hairs), the actual sensory cells. It was correctly assumed, that here

is where the sound-created mechanical vibrations are transformed into nerve (electrical) impulses.

At the time there were varying opinions about this process. Helmholtz upheld the view that has been incorporated into science as the *Resonance Theory*. Other theories were developed that opposed this. Edison knew about this discussion and obviously used it as a stimulus because the principle of the microphone is that mechanical vibrations can be transformed into electrical impulses with the aid of a membrane .

Since the quality of technically reproduced voice and music can be better judged when it is known how recorders and loudspeakers function, I shall give a short description of the microphone invented by Thomas Edison. It is the carbon microphone still used today in telephone receivers.



Hearing as a Bridge to the Soul

This especially applies when someone listens to another person. I have chosen to illustrate this complex process with only those examples that show how an opening is created to experience another person at the soul level.

Third Image

There are times and places in which the gods speak more clearly, such as at an ocean shore. Yesterday morning I stood upon a cliff on the west coast of Brittany. There was a light swell. From time to time a long wave rolled upon the beach. It sounded to me like the breathing of the sea.

Let us assume that a person who experienced the above was compelled to say “How beautiful!” to express the impression of the experience. A friend who hears these words would become alert to the special aspect of the moment because of the emotion resonating in them.

What happened with this speech and this hearing? Let us begin with the speaker: First of all, there is the perception of nature and the internally experienced answer to the perceptual soul. The desire arises to give expression to the impression. In the above instance, this occurs by way of speech. The speech must be formed with the help of the tools of speech. Since the soul cannot directly activate the organ muscles, etheric forces transmit the desire which in turn stimulates the formation of outer sound waves, allowing the person to speak, thereby creating an expression of the soul.

There is a progressive sequence to this process, from the soul, through the etheric, to the physical. A person’s physical aspect is penetrated by his or her soul aspect with the help of etheric forces. In the case of speaking, the physical aspect consists of varied sound waves that can be exactly described as tonal pitch, length of duration, and tonal volume. One can also say that through speaking, the soul receives clothing perceptible to the senses. If the listener is interested, a real encounter is possible in which the listener, with his or her soul, ventures onto an “etheric bridge” and receives what is met.

What does it mean for the hearing process when what is heard comes from a loudspeaker? For now, the question can be explored using the example of birch wood. First of all, it must be clarified as to what extent a microphone and loudspeaker are capable of receiving and sending out again the sound waves produced by two pieces of wood colliding. When one considers that the membrane in a loudspeaker, unlike a piece of wood, has a two-dimensional, planed surface, then it must be assumed that with today’s technology standards, the sound waves emanating from a loudspeaker are less differentiated than those coming from the original. (In principle, it must be assumed that sometime in the future it will be possible to copy acoustic phenomena exactly.)

Even with all the imperfections, the transmission process of technical equipment today is so far developed that different kinds of wood can be differentiated. It is possible that someone could get the impression “birch wood” from something that is heard out of a loudspeaker. How is such an impression created?

Since a quality is being experienced with which the hearer has a soul connection, the sound waves generated by the loudspeaker must have enough

energy to stimulate the tone ether because there is no direct path between the physical realm and the soul realm in either direction. This stimulation of the tone ether happens on the surface since the membrane is made of material that was chosen because it can be made to move without developing its own vibration. That makes the loudspeaker very versatile, but versatility also has its price; the person hearing transmissions from a loudspeaker remains cut off from the essence of what is being transmitted.

Loudspeaker transmissions do not lead the hearer to an etheric birch wood formative process as has been used as an example in the above paragraphs. Why is it that even so, the kind of wood is still recognizable? It is because the loudspeaker transmission is good enough that it is still recognizable. The impression that the hearer experiences, however, harkens back to a memory and not to a present encounter.

The result is a weakening of the hearing will. If a real encounter occurs, one tries, with one's own soul forces, to emulate that which is heard in order to understand it. If, by reason of a loudspeaker transmission, it is only possible to recognize what is heard from memory then all further attempts at understanding are fruitless because the hearer is cut off from the essential quality of the sound. Human beings are thereby educated to hear only superficially. At the same time, there is more appetite and interest in the pleasure to be had through hearing, perhaps as an attempt at balance.

The effect of a loudspeaker becomes even more clear if we imagine the words "how beautiful!" would be recorded and someone heard them played back through a speaker. A point of departure from the original event is formed by the soul. Because the soul wants to impart something to another person, physical aspects with the help of etheric forces are brought into action.

However, if a technical sound medium is used, then the physical aspect is what is present at the creation of the sound waves. One could also say that the clothes came first. The sound waves then compel the tone ether to approach. The hearer becomes attentive. He awaits an encounter that will not, cannot, take place. The hearer is hardly ever consciously aware of this because he is "stuffed" with the clothing woven of sound waves with the help of his memory and the deployment of his own soul substance.

If this happens again and again, the ability of the soul to take in what is unfamiliar becomes hardened and paralyzed. A new kind of deafness occurs that one could call inner-deafness. Before we go into more detail about this, I would like to turn your attention to something that has a special place in the world of hearing: music.

Music and Loudspeakers

The uniqueness of music has to do with the fact that our souls are moved by music in an incomparable way. When we listen to music we are completely within the sensory realm but the impression we receive does not reference

that fact. Consequently, I detach myself from all sensory references. The rain pattering on the window tells me about the meeting of water and glass. If I hear a human voice from another room, then, besides the impression of soul qualities, I have an idea of a certain person and his outer appearance. But music tells of something that cannot be found in the realm of the senses. It does not process any material as does a painter with paint, or a sculptor with stone.

The soul experiences that music brings out in us are not comparable to other stimuli, and they also cannot be brought about by any other means. Understandably, they can not be described with words. If one tries anyway, perhaps one speaks of happy or uplifting experiences knowing, however, that these words are rather inadequate in reference to music.

It is not surprising that among the earliest human thoughts were those having to do with the essence of music. Pythagoras gave us the first philosophy of music. He spoke of *musica mundana*, the music of the spheres, and meant, among other thoughts, that the perfection of creation can be heard in music. Since then many expressions about music, in their core, have been aimed at this thought. From the abundance of writings I would like to quote only Jean Paul who said, "Music tells us about the heavenly home of the soul."

First of all, the question can be pursued with a trivial example. Whoever wishes to learn to drive an automobile must know how it functions, which handles and pedals to use, and which rules apply to street traffic. Then the practice can begin, the processing of experiences and the "polishing" of maneuvers and reactions. When, for instance, in a critical situation the right foot slams on the brakes "by itself," then the ability to drive an automobile has been gained through practice.

When we speak of ability, we mean there is something we are able to do and it is available to us at the right moment. We change ourselves through gaining an ability because we can then do something of which we were incapable before. If one questions from whence this change came, clearly it can not be from the outside; the hands and feet that have learned to drive have not changed.

Anthroposophical knowledge of human beings states that the etheric body is the supersensible energy body that forms, enlivens, and maintains the physical body. It is possible to educate the etheric body to stimulate our limbs into movement when our attention is focused there.

For example, the etheric body that has been disciplined and trained is also that which supports the fingers of a violin player to glide over the instrument. And, because it happens "by itself," the musician can do more than merely hit the right notes; he or she can artistically create. The inspiration comes from the music itself. Through practice a person can become so connected to her instrument that they form a single unit, almost like a new instrument that can now serve the music. Musicians whose music moves

listeners are only in the position to do so because they have worked on themselves to the point that, when they play, the music can take hold of them. Such a statement only makes sense if it is understood that by “music” one is referring to something that has a spiritual essence.

For this reason it can not be surprising that the sound waves created by the violin strings have to do only indirectly with the effect of the music. The sound waves are something like heralds that have hurried ahead to attract the attention of the listener to the music. How can airwaves with their pressure fluctuations call forth the joy that music gives its listeners? It is the result of a real immersion of the listening soul into the musical spheres.

Here the essence of hearing comes forth as especially pure. Of all the sense impressions, hearing has the strongest connection to the soul. It allows for real encounters. Through hearing a bridge is built to the innermost parts of other beings.

In order to overcome the abyss that separates us, as embodied beings, from other beings, our hearing souls need something other than tracks laid in the air by sound waves. When music is played, one can experience, that something like a tonal space is created between the musicians and the listeners. This tonal space forms itself with the help of the tone ether which has already been discussed. An energy field is created with three centers that are all connected with one another just as in an organism. Through playing, a musician builds an etheric bridge to the musical spheres and to the listeners. The music answers by blessing the musician with its secrets. But the music also turns directly to the listeners who are opened to it by what is sounding in their senses. The listeners support the players through the intensity of their devotion. The music accepts from both equally.

The existence of the tone ether is easily proven when there is speech, singing, or instrumental music done in unison. It is perhaps made most clear in choral singing. Especially at the beginning cue, it can be felt that beginning in unison is only possible because there is an invisible connection between the singers. The cue given by the director is only an indication of this connection. The choir director Von Furtwängler is well-known for giving very imprecise cues. Probably he is trying to avoid the musicians becoming too dependent upon outside perceptions.

It is clear that music which has earned that name can always only exist as a unique, unrepeatable event. Even if something is played that has already been performed many times, music must always be newly invented. Since the people who do this are always different, or differently attuned, and since the circumstances also change, the result will also always be different. An artistic event can only be created when the music is played out of the presence of spirit. The spirits and souls of the musicians and the listeners, and the essence of the music, encounter each other in a unique way each time.

By reason of this consideration alone, that which can be heard from records and other technical sound recorders is not really music and it certainly has nothing to do with art. In place of spiritual presence, there appears a machine stimulated to make sound by electricity. It is easy for this machine to override the second hallmark of a true artistic performance, its singularity.

Mechanized recording and storing of music happens when a microphone is held inside the energy field that has been described. The microphone can take in only the most unrefined part of the energy field, the sound waves. They are transmitted to the loudspeaker from which music sounds.

If one is clear about the essence of music on the one hand and the essence of technical equipment such as microphones and loudspeakers on the other hand, it is an enigma that music can actually sound forth from a loudspeaker. Just imagine, on one side is an orchestra with many musicians and the various instruments and on the other side a few loudspeakers with their membranes that produce something that came directly from the instruments and it is impossible to tell the difference. We have tried to offer the solution to this riddle by the example of the statement: "Oh, how beautiful!"

Reasons Why Loudspeakers Are Popular

When one thinks that throughout the world many people are exposed to music and speech almost exclusively via loudspeakers, then the question arises: What makes loudspeakers so attractive? The search for an answer to that question leads us to a basic problem of our present era. First, there is the materialistic attitude that closes off the spiritual. The spirit revealed in music has something joyful; but there is also a challenge in it and an indication of one's own weaknesses. That is all put aside by loudspeakers. The music sounds without the presence of the spirit which brought it forth originally. Listeners can selfishly indulge in themselves and their feelings.

Something else also plays a role. The encounter that is made possible by listening requires ego ("I") forces which must be used to put one's self in the background so that a place is created for something new. People who have a weak "I" avoid encounters because they fear they will be overwhelmed by them. Through the interference of technology, the desire for relationships with others is satisfied, but, on the other hand, coming into contact with the "I" of another person can be avoided.

So, one aspect is that the loudspeaker is connected to our weaknesses. It also has a relationship to our deepest hopes and inklings. Many people feel that materialism is only a transitory phase. To overcome it requires the training of possibilities of knowledge that are presently only seminally formed in us. Anthroposophy describes the possibility of knowledge that goes over and beyond the sensory as three aspects of higher soul life called: *imagination*, *inspiration*, and *intuition*. Technical media give the illusion of these three steps. Image media imitate imagination and weaken the viewers' own imaginative forces. Sound media replace inspiration.

Imagination has to do with a kind of spiritual sight. The visible part of something detaches from the object and takes on an image character. For example, if I am led to an experience of autumn by a special light quality that I see in August, then I have already reached the first level of imagination. Outer aspects become porous to what lives behind, and my perceptions speak of what is otherwise hidden.

With inspiration, spiritual hearing, everything that is sensory steps back. We experience this strongest when listening to music. Naturally, close to the surface is the objection that hearing is also a sensory-physical process. But the airwaves have nothing to do with the actual quality and effect of music.

The entire organization of the ear is geared toward bringing sound waves to rest so that that which the sound waves serve, as heralds, can be newly created in the etheric, soul aspects of the listeners.

The listener must summon up courage and imagination, courage to make place for the uniqueness and challenges of the musical spirit and imagination in order to empathize with and recreate what is different and coming from the outside. Mechanically reproduced music makes it easy on us in these respects. The illusion is created that one is experiencing something at the level of inspiration so that recorded music can be perceived as a step above human-created music. This has consequences. If I hear a melody that is really played on a violin, then the music always has something of the singularity of the material from which the instrument is made. It is also experienced that the music comes from a certain area in the room. These elements must be overcome by the listener and the fact that he or she accomplishes this elevates the listener into the real musical realm.

A loudspeaker produces something that can be heard whose physical origination can not be determined. The singularity of the construction material of the instruments is not available nor is the place of origin in the room. Typically loudspeakers are hidden, and the listener is usually not interested in their location.

In this way inspiration is imitated. With this in mind, consider for a moment the fact that many people today are almost constantly within hearing range of loudspeakers. While one is going about one's daily business, in the background are whispers, voices, and tones. Someone could have the impression they were hearing spiritual beings at work, following their conversations and experiencing their uniquenesses. If this was reality, then it would be taking place completely within the region of inspiration.

Forms of Inner Deafness

What are the consequences of people allowing themselves to be taken in by illusion and even developing a preference for it? Just like noise, loudspeakers always interrupt. Through this we are made deaf to certain things that we really should perceive. These are questions and problems that

are connected to our own existence. We should listen and then take action. Background music that almost constantly surrounds many people helps them to avoid the challenges their own lives have given them. In the end, one is almost cut off from one's self.

Something similar occurs to interactions with fellow human beings. It is our sense of hearing that turns us into social beings. To be a social being means first and foremost, at an elementary level, to pay attention to and be interested in the uniqueness and desires of fellow human beings. Uniqueness and desire are included in hearing. Hearing is more than the processing of sound waves, and it is also more than the deciphering of words. One of two people who are friends says, "I would like to go for a walk with you. I want to tell you something." The mere deciphering of the word meanings cannot shed light on whether the speaker wishes to impart some juicy gossip or if some question is burning in his soul that he wishes to talk to his friend about right now. The success of human cohabitation depends upon our being able to differentiate such things.

The significance of hearing for the life of society can also be illustrated by the difference between blind people and deaf people. Blind people are very handicapped in their ability to get along with life's outer circumstances. As soon as they leave a place with which they have become familiar they must have a guide. Deaf people can be observed to move freely in the outer world. In respect to the inner soul life, however, the circumstances are reversed. Blind people have close and rich relationships with other people. They are included in the social sphere in which they can freely move through their hearing. Deaf people easily feel excluded. It is easy for mistrust to develop. They also have more of a tendency to have fluctuating emotions.

In addition to the sense of hearing being shriveled by technically reproduced sound, there often follows a handicap in speech development. As a result of this problem, the popularity of technical media increases. Finally, one is addicted to what caused the problem in the first place.

One last form of inner deafness is created by the illusion of inspiration. With it, the limits of the sensory world are almost insurmountable. This also means disappointment. Again, media is used to repress this.

If one wishes to clearly summarize the effects of loudspeakers once again, it would be best to, first of all, consider healthy soul development. One can say: It has to do with people gaining inner riches during the course of their lives. Where that is successful, every perception leads to an abundance of experiences and thoughts.

The path to that success requires something that children normally bring with them, namely, patience and the ability to be awed. Where these characteristics can develop, a person goes gently from impression to impression. He or she learns to listen to the reverberations that the sensory world leaves behind on the inside. The soul can be compared to a bell. Outer

impressions are represented by the clapper inside the bell that causes it to ring. Just as it requires only a few taps to make a good bell ring for a long time, so it is that a developed soul requires few impressions for a rich inner life.

If such development has not occurred, there is hardly any reverberation then and a person is compelled to pile impression upon impression. Here a comparison with the membrane of a loudspeaker is applicable. With its help the most varied acoustic phenomena can be produced, but at the very moment that it is not stimulated, it is mute.

Since muteness in the soul is unbearable, a hunger for experience comes about that is comparable to the hunger cravings that occur when there is never a feeling of having been satisfied. Hunger for experience makes people egoistic because in their encounters with the world they are only interested in covering up their inner emptiness. Whoever has learned to allow the world to reverberate within, through listening for this reverberation, the secrets of the world begin to be revealed.

Of course, the forms of inner deafness that have been discussed here also exist without the presence of loudspeakers. One could even say that the desire for distraction, the difficulties in interacting with other people and also higher beings, have actually caused the creation of the loudspeaker. Whoever is interested in other people and the world, and is ready to meet challenges and work on one's self, those people can do without technical media. Rather, it is often a torment to them.

A conscious confrontation with the media is therefore necessary because some of their side effects are strengthened with use, including feeding the personal weaknesses which lead to the use of media in the first place. The greatest hidden assault occurs with the use of loudspeakers, where it is most difficult to identify the effects and make them understandable.

At this point an exact analysis of the elements involved in the technical aspects of sound transmission will be helpful. How are sounds and tones created and where do they come from? How do microphones and loudspeakers function?

Those who are exposed over and over to sound emanating from loudspeakers lose important abilities. Especially with children, these abilities can not develop past the beginning stages. There are many reasons why there is so little awareness of this fact. The interference coming from loudspeakers has long-term effects. However, each time one listens to amplified music one can come away with the impression that nothing negative has happened.

Here, there are clear parallels to known problems in the area of ecology. Over a long period of time, tiny amounts of poison add up to a general poisoning of our environment. But the connection between cause and effect is difficult to discern and hard to prove. There is too little attention paid to

the media, and there are unintended consequences that occur because different poisons get mixed together.

Even though this article is focused on sound media, it must of course be understood that no one is exposed solely to this interference. All the other media also come into play, and there are new forms being constantly invented just as there are new kinds of environmental pollutants being constantly produced. Everything together is so debilitating to the healthy development of human beings that we face challenges to develop into the beings that we could and should be.

Especially significant are the already identified negative effects of the sound media on certain areas of today's musical experience in that music today is everything but a reflection of the music of the spheres. One example is the loud volume that is damaging to the ears.²

It is not only the technical reproduction of music that creates problems, but more and more also the negative content that is imparted with it. There is, especially in certain kinds of rock music, a completely original confabulation of tribulations. We find blasphemy, Satanism, pornography, and violence worship, sometimes all at once. There are special technical systems that are integral parts of this message. Many of the musicians are drug addicts. Most of them die young. Again and again there are lawsuits filed against rock bands in which the complaint is the children and youth are encouraged to commit murder or suicide by their music.³

Of course, such phenomena can not be solely attributed to the media. They have much more to do with the fact that more and more decisions are handed down concerning people's freedom and responsibilities. In earlier times music that people created was either significant or insignificant, valuable or banal. Now, it can also be classified as evil.

Technical media have not caused this development, but they serve it. A piece of music by Mozart is devalued by sound technique; it loses something. Evil music, on the other hand, is dependent upon technology. Its avenue of expression is technology. It is therefore justified to say that a relationship exists between sound technology and a kind of music that is anti-human. It is also true that this music comes from a spiritual presence, but it is an adversarial, antagonistic spirit which is in alignment with the mechanized coarseness and the solidified sameness of the repetitions because they allow this spirit to be present when a record or tape is played for the hundredth time, or, with the help of radio, reaches a million listeners.

Insight into the essence of hearing can sharpen our awareness to the consequences of such music. With our hearing we allow something to come inside of us, something that we emotionally recreate, that we allow to resurrect inside of us. We experience something similar during meditation. Meditation's strengthening and transforming effects come when we give space inside ourselves to something that has been captured from the spiritual world through

a prayer or mantra. With music's help we can touch upon the greatest mysteries that are inside of us. The sublime effect of meditation has to do with this aspect.

Through negative music what enters into us by the same process is something that pulls us down. In addition, such music can be heard over and over again with the aid of technology. During concerts, the audience often sings along in a state of ecstasy. Some music groups attract mostly children. In that case, negative influences work into the soul by way of extreme force.

What Can Be Done?

In light of the widespread presence and the popularity of the media, it is easy to be under the impression that one must let things take their course, that one can do nothing. However, in reality, even the so-called mass media is only used by single individuals and single individuals can affect only themselves and their immediate surroundings.

The following suggestions are given in the spirit of helpfulness. First of all, one should become well-informed about these matters so that one is really convinced that the media – meaning electronic media – has a negative influence. Coming to an informed judgment about sound media requires an especially big effort.

Once one has reached the point of acquiring a critical stance in regard to the media, then it is one more difficult step to teach others about it. It requires sensitivity and a lot of patience. For instance, if one wishes to bring up this subject at parent meetings, then it must be thoroughly prepared, preferably by several others as well. Otherwise, the meeting could degenerate into sharp arguments. One should give as much factual information as possible. It is really astounding how much is not known. How often, during conversations with students, I have heard the amazed exclamation: “Why wasn't I told about this sooner?”

The extent to which one sees through the media, to that extent one will find a way to push it out of one's own life. This does not happen without conflict, disappointment, and relapses. Those who are responsible for children have an especially hard time. On the other hand, that is where the efforts are most worthwhile.

There are hardly any general rules to apply. Naturally, it would be best if one could ban all electronic media from one's own home. In regards to hearing, it should be clear that it can not be considered progress if one gives up television but is surrounded by acoustic media. It will always be so that consequential behavior and stubborn or dogmatic insistence reside in very close proximity. How does one react when, for example, the ten-year-old son wants to watch a football championship on television? One will not be able to make the decision without considering how strongly the child is interested in football, what his classmates are allowed, and so forth. One

has no other choice but to negotiate. An example of negotiations is: Two games on television and the finals if the team you are rooting for makes it that far. In addition, one game on the radio. In all seriousness, a cheerful attitude should be maintained during such negotiations which are often very difficult for parents. It is generally advantageous if one does not own a television. If such discussions are entered into with conviction and love for the children, they will feel it and even though they are outwardly fighting and complaining, deep in their hearts they are thankful to their parents.

Of course, limiting access to the media and warning of its effects is only a first step. When one is successful in strengthening his interest in his fellow human beings and other creatures in this world, and to the extent that this interest grows, the media will be perceived more and more as a disturbance.

In regards to children and youth this is, above all, a question of education. As long as intellectual achievements are demanded and requested, the media will experience a boom time because it will serve as replacement for missing feelings and experiences. The media is a mirror of our one-sidedness. But when we view it as a challenge to self-education, we could even gain something positive from it.

There are two further points I would like to make in reference to this. The media threat will not be resolved without the regaining of fields of activity that we have given over to machines. Every person still needs food, clothing, and a roof over their heads, just as before; but after these things have been provided for, people have hardly anything to do. Irreplaceable fields of experience are being lost. Additionally, the joy and satisfaction of completing a necessary task is also becoming lost. I should not like to give the impression I am advocating a return to an existence as a self-provider. It has to do with giving children and youth the opportunity to get to know about basic work and learn to appreciate it. That will only happen if we bring it back into our own lives. And it is not only educational reasons that support this. The machines that are fully automated and used in agriculture and food processing create products of bad quality and burden the environment. What we change for the sake of the children will do us all good.

In conclusion, I should like to point out an area that has more specifically to do with hearing that is useful in gathering experiences that are just as important as those in connection with elementary work. I have already spoken about the relationship between music and inspiration. One must realize that for many people, especially young people, music has been sealed off as a source of inspiration. One reason could be that for too long we have depended upon tradition. If I named Bach and Mozart in the above, I did not intend to give the impression that only classical music has the power to remind us the music of the spheres. Bach and Mozart were given as examples because many people connect them to positive musical experiences.

Footnotes:

¹ The following quote illustrates how the “hearing landscape” has changed in the last two hundred years. (Taken from *Klang als heilende Kraft* by Steven Halpern, 1979) “When Mozart composed his music at the end of the eighteenth century, it was so quiet in the city of Vienna that a watchman in the tower at St. Stephens Cathedral could call out a fire alarm. Shortly before WWI all that was needed to clear the way through traffic was a bell on the fire truck. In the 1930s the bell proved to be no longer loud enough. Sirens were brought into use. In 1964 the noise level on the streets of London had already increased so much that sirens had to have eighty-eight decibels. At the present time, noise levels in major cities in the United States require that sirens on police cars put out 122 decibels. When noise reaches the level of 120 decibels as it does with strong thunder, airplane motors, sirens, rock bands, discos, fireworks, and home stereos, then it has reached the threshold of pain.”

² What we perceive subjectively as volume is created by the wave pressure by which the sound waves reach the ear. The unit of measurement for this wave pressure is the decibel. It is generally accepted that anything higher than ninety decibels can be damaging if one is exposed to this volume level for several hours. Ninety decibels can be reached by very loud music, heavy traffic noise, or the noise in a building full of machines. Ear damage occurs when the cilia in the inner ear shrivel and eventually die because they have been burdened too heavily. Since the cilia cells, as the actual sensory cells, do not re-grow, then every bit of damage to this area is irreversible.

This applies almost exclusively to adults. Some young people have even developed an abhorrence of classical music. If one looks into this, it usually becomes clear that the problem is not with the music but with the often really repugnant official promotion of the music and society events.

A paralysis has come about on a high level. It has worked its way clear into musical education. Many people lose their joy in music through grades, drills, and pressure to perform.

It is self-evident, but I will note it anyway, that music which can lead us to the music of the spheres will, in the future, sound different than classical music. Perhaps it will also require new instruments and a different method of learning to play them. Perhaps this music is even already here and we have not noticed it because of our old listening habits. In that case, we must practice listening.

The sensitivity of the ears is taken into consideration in the work place. In Germany the law requires that personal ear protection be provided if there is a noise decibel level exceeding eighty-five. If these regulations also applied to areas outside of work, then the capacity of a Walkman or Discman would have to be limited to eighty-five decibels. In reality, it is much higher. In discos and at open-air concerts ear protection should be required. But, only those who are employed at these places actually use such protection; for the audience members such regulations are unfortunately not applied.

In order to get a more exact idea of the dangerous threats posed to the ear by noise, the following table shows a maximum allowed length of time without ear protection. (Table from M. Bryan, W. Tempest, *Hearing Conversation Programs from Audiology and Audiological Medicine*, Vol. 2, Pages 829–849, by H. Beagly, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1981.)

Sound level	Maximum Length of Time	Sound Source (Example)
90 Db	8 hrs.	machine rooms, very heavy traffic noise
100 Db	48 min.	motorcycle without muffler at a distance of seven meters
110 Db	5 min.	air raid siren at a distance of thirty meters, steel mill
120 Db	30 sec.	air hammer at a distance of one meter, loud rock music at concerts
130 Db	always damaging	cannon shots nearby, jet at low altitude

The decrease of the maximum allowed time that is not damaging from eight hours with ninety decibels to thirty seconds with one hundred decibels has to do with the fact that with every ten-decibel increase, there is an increase in wave pressure of ten times. The rule of thumb is that with every three-decibel increase, the maximum allowable exposure time without damage is cut in half. Above 130 decibels there is always damage. A few years ago, before I knew anything about these things, I wanted to see a concert by Sting. I had already purchased a ticket, and on the back I read:

Concerts of this kind can be loud enough to cause hearing damage. The producers are not responsible.

At the time I had no thought of wearing ear protection. Later I did, however, investigate further what could be expected with a volume of 120 decibels. I discovered that servicing jets produces that amount of volume. The employees not only wear ear protection, but entire bodysuits to protect against sound waves which can otherwise damage body tissue. I changed my mind about going to the concert. I informed a stadium management employee about the effects of 120 decibels. She said, "It is the young people who come to these concerts. They want it this way. And, by the way, you're the first person to complain."

That rock concerts have become increasingly louder has to do with the narcotic effect of many large loudspeakers together, comparable to the effects of alcohol or strong sedatives. As with all addictive substances, with subsequent use, the volume must always increase in order to maintain the same effect.

- ³ On July 16, 1990, a court case in Reno, Nevada was brought against the heavy metal band "Judas Priest." The plaintiffs were the parents of two teenagers who had committed suicide by shooting themselves in the mouth with a sawed-off shotgun. On the cover of the "Judas Priest" album *Stained Glass* something similar is portrayed. The plaintiffs maintained that the record contained subliminal messages encouraging suicide. The group was found innocent of the charges. The sound engineer hired by the plaintiffs was not successful in convincing the court of the existence of subliminal messages. He would need the cassettes used to put together the album, and the record company would not release those tapes. The band was punished with a monetary fine, and nothing further happened.

The Unfolding of Sexuality

by

Mathias Wais



“The Friends” by Alexander Archipenko

The theme of sexuality has various aspects. First, let us consider the questions: What is normal sexuality from the perspective of child development? What is to be expected from sexuality? Then, we could consider, how do we deal with the so-called “doctor games” of childhood? And, finally, what is appropriate sexuality during the various phases of child development? This essay will cover the developmental span from infancy through adolescence.

The First Years of Life

In trying to understand the significance of sexuality, i.e. interest in sex, within the framework of the childhood developmental phases, we start first with the questions: What is the child's relationship to the world at various ages? In what developmental situations do questions pertaining to sexuality really play a role? In this regard we can conclude that the small child is intuitive and comes completely from a sense of feeling, connected to his/her immediate world, the people surrounding it, natural conditions, and living conditions within their house. They become almost one with their surroundings. The child stands in the middle of an elemental and trusting co-experiencing of all the goings-on in his world. This contains understanding but it goes deeper than understanding and remains below the threshold of consciousness; one could perhaps describe it as “going with the flow.”

Seen from a spiritual perspective, that is, if we look at the characteristic ways in which the child approaches his world in the first seven years, then we see that both males and females are the same. That is, there are basically two ways in which a child approaches the world. He can purposefully and naïvely grab and touch whatever appears before him in a cavalier manner; we could call that the male gesture. And, he also has the marveling, opening-up, deeply accepting gesture which we could call the female gesture. So, a child, still completely connected to the world emotionally, has both the male and female gestures simultaneously. At this stage a child is given his/her



“Couple in the Street” — Pablo Picasso

own pre-eminence and repose in its relationship to the world, one that we adults perhaps attain only again in old age. Since a child approaches the world in a way that is both male and female, then we could say that the child is mentally “gender free.”

The child is also “gender free” inasmuch as the reproductive organs become functional only after puberty. Finally, however, the child is also “gender free” because sexual desire directed at other persons does not exist at this stage. What appears in a child as sexual activity is actually on the order of naïve, loving and awed interest in the world. One part of this world is one’s own body together with the sensations that can be experienced with it and which, naturally, must be investigated just like other parts of the world.

Next, let us simply consider the expressions of this devoted interest of a child for the part of its world that has to do with sexuality. Just as a child will thoroughly investigate and finger his or her little toe or its belly button, so will s/he also naturally investigate the vagina or penis. Preoccupation with the genitals is no different than games and investigations with any other part of the body. Joy in exhibition and disrobing is also normal and reasonable at this age. In this case parents can play along without reservation. Be happily surprised when your little boy holds up his shirt and shows you his “willy.” It is often we adults who take away the harmlessness of these games by over-reacting or by promoting excessive attention-getting, scolding or even punishing. Awkward attempts to overlook such games and scrutinies are also not advisable. Let us simply be happy, together with our child, that in this world there are such things as bodies and these bodies have a vagina or a penis. A child must be able to be at ease with his whole body.

Erections in infants and also slightly older children are reflexive and are, naturally, accompanied by pleasant sensations. One should just let them happen without paying any special attention. Let the infant play with his erect penis (but we adults should not touch him).

We should also not be concerned if a four or five-year-old has phases of seeming masturbation. It is harmless and we should just let it happen without magnifying it. The child’s thoughtless playing with his/her own genitals is no more dramatic than picking the nose. If we do not dramatize it then it will stop again in a short time.

Characteristically, these phases of masturbation-like activity occur during developmental situations in which a child first experiences the removal of some of the direct connection to his world (in this case the surrounding people) that was referred to at the beginning of this article. At about five years of age, a child develops a consciousness of the principal differences between mother and father, and a first consciousness of male and female comes about. Until then, mother and father were two persons who formed a unit, a kind of archetypical shell. Now this unit becomes differentiated and the polarity of the two archetypical persons is experienced. Naturally, the child already



"Couple" — HAP Grieshaber

knows that there are men and women. But this knowledge is not yet relevant to the child's interaction with concrete persons. So, a four-year-old can ask her grandmother: "Grandma, are you a boy or a girl?" As a six-year-old, the child will no longer ask that question.

Also the "doctor games" that appear at this age are harmless because the way in which a child investigates the world is also the way he or she investigates the bodies of his/her playmates; this is the way it is. If one discreetly and exactly observes these "doctor games," then one sees that they are

seldom limited to the genitals, but rather the child is trying to understand the place of the genitals within the order of the whole body. In this case, the child should be left to play peacefully.

All of this has nothing to do with sexuality because these activities are never accompanied by sexual desire, i.e., a compelling need to experience carnal appetite or release of tension with another person. These "sexual" activities of a child are never directed at someone, not even in fantasy. A masturbating child does not imagine a sexual act with another person. "Doctor games" are harmless. They are not directed to specific persons, nor to playmates, but rather to the human body itself.

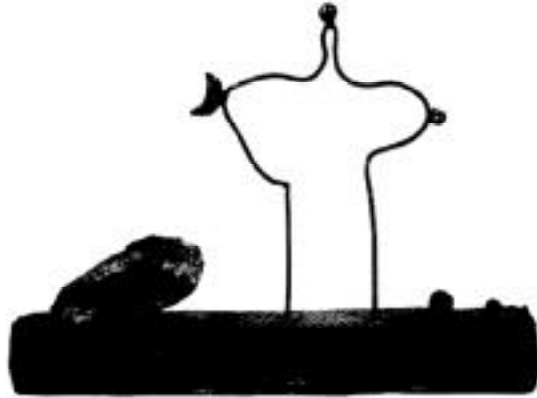
A normally developed child does not look for sexual stimulation. This is what distinguishes adult sexuality. A child is not approachable through magazines with pictures of naked breasts at a kiosk. When a child grabs his mother's breasts or pulls her pubic hair, it is not a sign of the beginning of his career as a sex-criminal. It is an expression of the rightful interest that a child has for his world.

On the other hand the sexuality of an adult is always directed at another person; even though it is possible that it is played out only in the imagination. All of this, however, has no relationship to a child's touching and investigating its genitals.

To recapitulate, in a normal developing child, there is really no such thing as child sexuality. There is only investigation of its own body and the bodies of parents and playmates. Of course, there are bodily experiences that are later incorporated into sexual life and, it goes without saying, that a child has a great need for devotion, love, tenderness, and cuddling. But all of this does not represent a sexual need.

The problem here before us is obviously and simply a misunderstanding between adult and child. The adult is relating to his or her own world instead of the world of the child. The adult assumes something to be sexual that was not intended to be sexual.

Feelings of shame appear by themselves at the latest by age seven and begin at age four or five. Little girls will now want to put on underpants and will not run around naked in front of strangers. It is unnecessary to train a child to have a sense of shame. It will certainly come by itself. Calmly allow this to happen. Be patient. Training to have a sense of shame is misplaced.



Man and Woman—Joan Miro

Kindergarten Age

The rule for the first seven years, until kindergarten age, is: Questions asked by the child should be answered as a matter of course and with the utmost seriousness. However, parents should not bring up the subject on their own. The rule for answering questions is: The questions should not be immediately answered in a scientific way, but rather “soul pictures” should be given. An example is the question about where one comes from. It is a matter of accurately listening to what the child is really asking. The question: “Where did I come from?” or “Where do children come from?” is not meant in a sexual-physical way, but rather in a more encompassing soul-spiritual way. An answer that only presents the bodily processes would disappoint and confuse the child. The child much more wants to know: Where does my “I” come from? In other words: Where was I before? This is a question about the spiritual beginning of human beings about which the child still has intuitive knowledge. Therefore, the right answer is a soul-picture, a picture that contains spiritual food for the soul and one which confirms what the child senses. An example would be: “High up in the clouds there is a big meadow where you lived together with many other people. One day, God called you and sent you into Mother’s womb so that you could be warm and protected as you grew inside because Mother and Father wanted very much to have a baby. One day you were so big that there was no more room for you inside Mother’s tummy, so you wanted to come out. So, Mother let you out, wrapped you in a warm blanket, gave you warm milk to drink and laid you in the cradle.” Such an answer, or something similar, is not a lie, as one could perhaps charge; rather the child is taken very seriously with such an

answer because with it, I am putting myself into the child's world, the child's way of thinking and experiencing. It would be pointless if I were to answer the question of one's origins with something scientific like: "Father's penis became hard, he stuck it into Mother's vagina and gave her a fluid that connected itself to a small egg in Mother's womb and from that you were formed." Such an answer comes from the adult world, and a very materialistically-inclined adult world at that.

Or, when a child notices that the mother regularly throws away bloody menstrual pads, one should not give a scientific answer if the child asks about the blood, but rather something like the following: "Mommy's womb cleans itself with the warm blood because the place where you were growing should always be clean and soft."

Other particulars such as ejaculation, erection of nipples, and so forth, should also not be explained with detailed information. Children cannot do anything with such so-called "knowledge." It does not belong in their world. In a deeper sense, they would not even understand such fact-filled explanations. They would try to work through it by doing something like imitative play and then the adults would have the impression that the child was engaging in sexual activity.

So that there is no misunderstanding here, I am not of the opinion that a child of kindergarten age should have decisive knowledge about the process of reproduction and the possibilities of sexuality. But if a child asks because s/he has, for instance, experienced how a sibling arrived, then we should explain in an age-appropriate manner and that means in pictures during the first seven years. On the other hand, I believe that a kindergarten-age child should be given correct names for the sexual organs and grow up in an atmosphere where such things can be openly discussed with parents.

The Middle Years of Childhood

When asking for explanations a child around the age of nine should be answered in a totally different way than the kindergarten-age child. At this time, once again, a gentle distancing occurs in the child's relationship to its environment: Parents and teachers and the rest of the world are now sometimes found to be strange and puzzling. The child no longer stands unquestioningly in the middle of all that is happening around him, but rather on the outside regarding things with a critical eye. The possibility that his care-free childhood could sometime come to an end occurs to him.

Misgivings about the natural authority of parents and teachers are experienced. Some children will, for a short time, occupy themselves with thoughts about trying to understand death. Characteristically, this fissure is also accompanied by renewed interest in things sexual. At this age, essentially, it has to do with the question of origin, but with a completely different emphasis: At this stage of life a child may have orphan fantasies. (I was not

really born to my parents, I came from gypsies or royalty or knights. I was left on a doorstep and my parents found me.) These orphan fantasies often come disguised as sexual questions: “How does a baby get inside its mother’s womb?”

The explanation at this age should not be so much a one-time conversation as a fostering of the consciousness of growth, of decay and renewed growth in nature. Coming from this background, one can absolutely give a realistic presentation of the reproductive process. However, it should always reference and be in harmony with the origin of the soul-spirit core of



“Departure” — HAP Grieshaber

being which comes from a supernatural realm. An example: “When we were allowed to have the job of forming your body and letting it grow, we were so happy. We hugged and kissed each other. Father let his penis glide into Mother’s vagina and by this very intimate togetherness, his sperm streamed into Mother’s womb. One sperm connected there with a small egg and your body was formed from that.”

One will experience that the child is not really so very interested in the actual sexual part of the explanation, as we adults understand it. Around age nine, the child is really searching for a solution to the contradiction that, on the one hand, he feels himself to be a unique human being and, on the other hand, his body comes from his parents; he is a kind of continuation of his parents. In answering one should also not take this tension and suspense away from the child. Sometimes, out of this suspense, “doctor games” once again surface for a short period. And, something distancing and lightly antipathetic towards the opposite sex now remains. From now on the child wishes that only friends of the same sex are invited to birthday parties: “The boys are all silly,” says the young girl.

We see here that the child’s interest in the sexual arises anew in conjunction with a further distancing from fellow human beings to whom he or she was previously taken for granted that the child was connected. After this phase, interest in the sexual declines until shortly before puberty.

Preadolescence

Around the age of ten or eleven, the child senses that he is gradually growing out of his childish state of being protected and nourished. A premonition arises that someday childhood will come to an end, that someday one will have to stand in the world alone. The child increasingly experiences that inner things and outer things are separate, that one can no longer experience internal things from the external. It is a task of development during this span of years (between ages ten and thirteen) to differentiate between the inner world and the outer world. Now, dealing with the subject of sexuality, exactly at this point, takes on an important function. Children sense that the subject of sexuality contains this tension between the internal and the external and for this reason they eagerly grab onto sexual “material,” not, however, to satisfy their own lust. Children engage with this material in a partly provocative manner, partly secretive, partly impertinent, and partly coy. At this age one experiments with the tension between the internal and the external, that which is hidden and that which is seen, private or public. Verbal sexual provocations draw something outside that belongs in the sphere of intimacy. It is fun, but it also brings with it experiences of shame and guilt because one knows that it really belongs in an internal domain. Shame and guilt can now be felt because one experiences that one can inwardly do something different from what one does outwardly.

Through shame and guilt, through a bad conscience, a child experiences itself as differentiated—as an intimate “I.” By dealing with “shame,” a child playfully secures for itself a sphere that is “secret,” that is inside. Some will lie and steal at this age and form secret pacts. But it always has to do with active experimentation with the polarity of displaying and hiding, provocation and concealment, the internal and the external. It has nothing to do with acting out sexual fantasies or needs. A child doesn’t even have inner sexuality yet. The whole subject can be seen much more as material for play. An appropriately easy-going parental attitude is advisable.

Puberty

During puberty, the gruffest distancing and, along with it, the most painful reprehension towards oneself appears. It is the third separation to come about in one’s relationship to the world. And here, for the first time, not only does a renewed interest in the sexual surface again, but also in one’s own sexuality. Only after puberty can a child experience itself sexually in the adult sense of the word.

Shortly before the onset of puberty, at around age eleven or twelve, boys especially sense what is coming and begin to copiously masturbate. At this point in time at the latest and preferably before, boys should be informed about the possibility of ejaculation in the night with the indication that this is a joyful sign that they will soon be men and could someday become fathers.

Before their first period girls should be informed about menstruation and what that means. It is especially important here to avoid describing menstruation as a necessary (or even agonizing) evil. It should be presented so that a girl realizes it is a sign that her body now has the ability, and is preparing for, motherhood. However, one should not deny the possibility that it there could be pain involved. Boys should also be instructed about the girls' periods because they will otherwise imagine all sorts of absurd possibilities.



"Lovers" — Otto Karl Mueller

Further explanations before and during puberty about sexual intercourse or birth should only be given when specifically asked.

Such explanations should take place before puberty in order to pre-empt information gleaned "from the streets." So-called street information will happen anyway. Then it is important that a child is not confronted with it unprepared. What really sinks into the child is the attitude of the parents towards this subject that they have been informed about at home. Ignoble things, which children today often get from the street or from older siblings, will be imitated but not accepted internally if children have been shown a straightforward attitude towards the sexual at home.

As for masturbation, which can frequently occur during puberty, one should not, under any circumstances, react with punishment or moralizing. It is a needed remedy, an initial becoming acquainted with one's own sexual organs and the sensations that can be experienced. The youth experiences for him or herself the very temporary nature of this sexual activity.

In general, one can spare all the moralizing about sexuality when in conversation with pubescent youths. It is much more helpful to young people when we, as parents, casually share our sexual attempts and experiences when we were their age. For instance, a mother could tell her daughter, who is emphasizing her growing breasts by putting on a tight sweater, that she was also very proud of her breasts at that time, but, on the other hand, felt a little helpless because she did not know exactly what she was supposed to make of them.

You also do not need to panic if you discover your son with a pornographic magazine. Emphasize that, for you, sexuality is an enrichment of human encounters and that you would also wish this for your son and photographs of sexual acts cannot possibly portray the essential nature of sexuality which is, namely, a basic deepening of human encounters.

In Conversation with Young People

Wondering if one should explain when one has not been asked is an ongoing problem. There is no generalized answer to this dilemma. It depends on the age of the child and especially on his or her psychological characteristics. Personally, I think it is important to educate early-on because, in my work, I have a lot to do with victims of sexual abuse. Early and accurate education, that does not go into implications, but rather calls things by their names in a child-appropriate fashion, is an essential preventative measure against sexual abuse.

If nothing is ever asked of you about sexual things, then you could try suggesting appropriate questions. For instance, if a child is to be born within the family or circle of friends, that would be a good opportunity to bring up the subject.

Or, perhaps, at some quiet moment, when you really have time to spend with your child, you could directly ask: “Do you actually know how you came into the world?” or “Now, I’d like to tell you how it was when you came into the world.” And one would not begin with the conception but rather with the birth and then talk about what happened before: “And now I want to tell you how you came to be in Mother’s womb.” Make it very personal and use language that takes the child’s age into consideration; tell about your own personal mental and physical experiences.

Shy children will probably not ask or say much. That is also not important. The important thing is the experience and that one can talk about it.

As far as sex education goes, we have another situation entirely after puberty. Young people themselves now have knowledge (even if it’s only rudimentary) of what is really being discussed when the subject is sexuality. Parents can now become discussion partners. They can become open to conversations about birth control, AIDS, homosexuality, and so forth. However, they can no longer “educate” in the narrow sense of the word. In



“Jupiter and Semele” — Pablo Picasso

my opinion, young people should be encouraged to find their own way in this and, in fact, be left in peace while they pursue their own course. Neither moral pressure from home, nor pressure for success from the street is helpful to a young person who is trying to find out for him or herself what it means to be a sexually active human being. Parents can only offer themselves as discussion partners. Whether this offer will be accepted is another question. At any rate, it will definitely not be accepted if parents try to force young people towards anything or come off as moralizing. In the end, when children reach the age of sixteen or seventeen, parents can only let go. At that age, pedagogy in this field consists of holding oneself somewhat in check. Young people communicate with each other about these things; that is what stands out the most at this age. If you, as parents, can trust in the sexual education that you have given your children over the previous two seven-year phases of their development, then your children have been helped in the best way possible.

The goal of all the previous education about sexuality was that young people become increasingly independent, by that I mean able to deal with this area of their lives without their parents. After age fifteen, teenagers begin to do that. And, actually, when is one finished? Is it really important to be “finished” with it? Are we adults finished? Let us admit to young people concerning this matter that there is an unfinished quality about it. That is how we can best take them seriously. Let us not act as though we know everything. Tell the young people that sexuality is a life-long learning process for adults. That helps them to take us seriously; that we even allow them to have a say. You now have a discussion partner in front of you, no longer a child. The question now arises: How can we talk to young people about sexuality?

First, it seems important to me that we adults do not encounter such questions in the role of an advisor or someone giving tips; rather we encourage young people to have an interested attitude vis-à-vis such experiences. Sexuality is an on-going



"Lovers in Green" — Marc Chagall



"The Kiss" — Gustav Klimt

learning experience. It is not something about which there is a clear consensus, something that someone just "obtains" at some point in life. What sexuality means to us and how we deal with it changes in the course of our lives; we are always searching. This searching quality has to do with the fact that sexuality no longer merely serves the purpose of reproduction. Sexuality is a part of our loving interest in another human being. Its "value" lies in the fact that it can be individualized which is further dependent upon the acceptance of the dissimilitude of individuals. Men and women experience sexuality differently; that is the source vantage point we

have supporting the idea that sexuality stands before us as an area of learning.

This leads to an initial assertion: female sexuality is something different from male sexuality. What does this mean? It seems that this new area of life known as sexuality comes about sharper and more physically urgent in boys than in girls. And, at first, it remains that way. Sexual need is also more urgently present in the consciousness of men than in women. When two people sleep together, the sexual desire itself and also the sexual experience is initially more clearly delineated and also more sharply concentrated on the sexual organs of men. An aroused male sex organ can demand its satisfaction with power. It appears to be a totally different case with many girls and women. In their case, sexual desire seems to be spread out over the entire body. The purposeful, urgent need for satisfaction in that one place, as is the case with men, is apparently not in the forefront of female sexual desire. Instead, girls and women turn their desires toward tenderness, snuggling, caressing, and the merging of the two souls. This basic difference is also connected to the fact that apparently boys and men think considerably more often about sex and are more often internally engaged with sexual notions than is the case with women and girls. Obviously this is a source of many misunderstandings. The need felt at one place on the body by men and boys is often so urgently brought into their carnal encounters that it can

be experienced by a female sexual partner as pressing, intrusive or sometimes frightening or even violating.

From here another concept bears exploration, one that every man is exposed to over and over again and that is, to carry out an act of possession with sex, to want to beset another with his sexuality, yes, perhaps even to intimidate another person. During sexual intercourse itself, the male appetite is directed toward having a lustful release of tension through orgasm. That is what nature, pure biology, brings to the male. On the other hand, a woman's drive during sexual intercourse appears to be directed toward something totally different; a stirring vibration affecting her entire body and a giving-in to her partner. That is probably connected to the fact that many women report, especially after their first experience, that male behavior during intercourse seems somehow strange to them; yes, sometimes even frightening. And, conversely, the often hesitant style of a man's female partner or her need for extended foreplay can be perceived by him as hesitation or "not really wanting to."

Girls often experience that intercourse is really not very pleasant the first time or the first few times. It can be physically painful or rather unromantic when her partner is aggressive or awkward. Often a boy will be "finished" just as the girl is becoming aroused. Both boys and girls experience that it is very difficult to talk to each other about misunderstandings that sometime occur in the beginning.

A further difference in male and female perceptions lies in the fact that many women complain that their partners consider sexual contact to be at an end when he has been satisfied. A woman may even perceive this abrupt ending as cruel. Girls are mentally very alert after sexual intercourse, very open and receptive. Men often internally close themselves off; some simply fall asleep. I believe that the first attempts young people make together are beautiful when afterwards, together, they can allow the energy to calmly fade away. The beauty of an erotic experience does not depend upon how quickly or impressively a youth or a man becomes aroused, but rather, afterward, how serenely the couple can end their shared experience. More togetherness can be found in this "allowing to fade away" than in all that has gone before.

For boys, sexuality enters more sharply into their consciousness, but is, through that, more isolated from other experiences and events of life. For a young man, his sexuality often has something abrupt and sudden about it and is, if he does not pay special attention, much less embedded in his interpersonal feelings than appears to be the case with girls for whom the quality of the encounter stands in the foreground. Her priority is the beauty of the encounter. And within a beautiful and increasingly intimate encounter, sexual desire also arises. That is why girls usually do not make a distinction between sex and love; while for a man it evidently does not need to be the

same. Male sexual feelings can occur without love, while women usually do not have sexual feelings if intercourse does not at least take place within an atmosphere of positive feelings.

Because of this the girls have somewhat of an advantage over the boys, which brings me to a second assertion: Sexuality derives its meaning from interest in another person. The beautiful and interesting and relationship-building part of sexuality is not the actual sex, but rather the sexuality of the partner. What do I mean by that?

As long as one is only chasing after one's own erotic satisfaction within sexuality, then bad feelings linger afterwards. One has done something only for oneself. But what has one really done for the encounter? One has really only enjoyed one's own company, and the other has been put out of mind while chasing one's own gratification. At this point, we see that in order for sex to become a carnal encounter with another human being, something creative must come into the process that is more than mere instinctual behavior and a satisfaction of the sex drive. The essential part of sexuality is the sexuality of the partner. To engage with the whole body of your sexual partner, to tenderly investigate your partner's entire body out of a sense of loving interest, his or her likes, reactions and idiosyncrasies, are what make sex something social and relationship-building. Everything that is possible in the area of bodily contact outside of and before and after actual sexual intercourse, and also those things not involving intercourse, done in mutual

freedom and respect, allows for the creation of carnal encounters. Every form of tenderness, kissing, touching, caressing, and cuddling of the whole body in conjunction with respect for the freedom of the other and his or her right of self-determination, leads us to more closely connect with the other person. To feel for the soul of another through their body, gently and inquiringly brings us together internally.

So, what conclusion can be drawn from these reflections? We can meet each other as sexual fellow-seekers when both people are more concerned with their partner than themselves. If young people, act out of respect for the other's freedom, mutually



"The Waltz" — Camille Claudel

experiment and relate to each other as though both are not yet masterfully skilled and not act as if they already know everything there is to know about the subject and if they use their sexuality to search out the other person as a complete human being with loving interest instead of only his or her genitals, and if they really live this quality of searching, experimenting, and learning together when they have sexual encounters, then this will lead to the experience that they are, when it comes to their sexuality, free and confident on the one hand and responsible human beings on the other.

One is never finished with this field of study known as sexuality. Adults must also reevaluate their stance time and again and evaluate the significance of their sexuality within their own existing relationship. Therefore, sexuality can change with every encounter. For that reason, young people do not need to push themselves to become sexual experts as soon and as extensively as possible. After all, we adults are not experts either.

Puberty and Its Crisis

Educational Help in Overcoming Difficulties

by

Johannes Bockemühl

Introduction

In this article the developmental stages of sexual maturity will be considered in order to awaken the interest and understanding of parents, counselors, and teachers in this decisive period of change. My intention is to challenge them to accompany pre-adolescents in a worthy, helpful, and competent manner. One can always become more aware of the possible crises and significant transition which lead into abnormal processes. This paper will provide methodological assistance to equip us with tools with which to accompany our children actively in times of their crises as they cross the perilous threshold into adolescence and also how to learn, with gratitude, from those crises. With this goal in mind, I will try to present the differing aspects of puberty in boys and girls in order to recognize them as such and, through that, to meet their needs. I write out of many years of experience with educators, school physicians and psychiatrists, and psychologists specializing in adolescence, whose knowledge of developmental psychology and physiology have been enhanced by the anthroposophical study of the human being, medicine, and therapeutic education. This background serves to help us better understand aspects of phenomena relating to the passageway from childhood into adolescence.

Sexual Maturity – Becoming Mature for Encounter – Earthly Maturity

No period in human development shows such noticeable changes as puberty. Puberty means *sexual maturity* but one must broaden this definition if one wishes to understand the phase of development between ages twelve

and fourteen in terms of more than just biological (sexual) maturity. We know that sexual maturity is only a partial aspect of this phase of development and that fundamental changes become clear in other areas as well. Without factoring out the biological, one can come to grips with the term Rudolf Steiner calls *earthly maturity*. *Earthly maturity* identifies the possibility of familiarizing oneself with the world: the laws and principles at work on the earth, with other people and how to encounter them thoughtfully, sentiently, and actively. It is also correct to speak of *becoming mature for encounter* because, during this phase of development, the young person will become inwardly prepared for encounters, for love in the widest sense of the word, for love of the *earthly world*. He or she will also gain the ability to meet the world in active way—in a constructive, formative, or even destructive manner.

Love as *sexuality* is a special aspect of becoming mature for encounter and initially plays only a limited role. It is seldom the cause of crises or pathological development. (Analytical psychology upholds an opposing view that the cause of crises and abnormal development should be sought in sexuality.)

From birth to age twenty or twenty-one childhood and adolescence are distinguished by three significant stages of development:

Early childhood includes the first seven years of life from birth until about the time of the change of teeth.

The second seven years of life, from the change of teeth until sexual maturity, encompass what we refer to as *school-age*.

The third seven year period, from earthly maturity to so-called maturity, includes *adolescence*. (The age of maturity was set back to age eighteen several years ago for political reasons.)

In the last few decades these stages of development which include the move into earthly maturity have been appearing ever earlier in the bodily-biological sense. They also exhibit stronger individual aberrances so that an exact point in time at which puberty occurs today can only be expressed in statistical averages. With girls the data is oriented to the time of the first menstruation. Statistically, this occurs shortly after the twelfth birthday. However, today menstruation often occurs by age ten and also considerably later at age sixteen or seventeen, without either case being considered abnormal. With boys puberty begins with the first ejaculation. This event usually takes place around the end of the thirteenth year. Psychological maturity lags behind significantly for both sexes. Timewise, it cannot be precisely pinpointed but in a legal sense, as far as criminal responsibility is concerned, it is still age fourteen. Often psychological maturity is not reached by age fourteen, even by so-called normally developed children. The entire bodily and hormonal development from child to adult takes several years, from age eleven to fifteen for girls and from age twelve to sixteen for boys.

However, it is possible that the intense, outwardly apparent, and functional changes such as growth spurts, breast development, and voice change, take place within weeks and months (European conditions).

More and more the interval of time between bodily development and the subsequent psychological development is increasing. As far as they can be observed, these circumstances are contingent upon time and lie in the principles governing human development. They indicate that mental/spiritual development is substantially more independent than bodily development. Psychological tensions can grow from these partially very significant differences in development (up to four years for some people) and carry within themselves possibilities for illness. This is certainly one of the reasons why children and adolescents go through more crises during this particular phase of their development and are more prone to mental illness today than just a few decades ago.

For instance, if one encounters a child who is fully developed physically, he or she will likely be addressed as a “mature person,” with implied expectations. Often an adolescent does not feel psychologically capable of meeting these expectations which can easily cause feelings that others are making excessive demands or exposing incapability. Furthermore, on the whole, our present way of life has made it more difficult to meet the challenge of mastering our lives.

Puberty, that is the capacity for encounter, love, or action in connection with the outer world, is the threshold from childhood into adolescence. Preparations have been made during the previous developmental phases and the previous phases are decisive prerequisites for coping, developmentally, with puberty. Likewise, they can be significant root causes of crises and pathological deviations.

1. At the time of the change of teeth a child is ready for *learning*. The senses that are needed for *perception* of the environment, other people, and oneself have been developed.

2. In the relative quiet of the tenth and eleventh years there is a stabilizing and maturing of the rhythmic system, a fixed ratio of breathing to heartbeat: *Respiratory maturity*. At the same time, deep inside, a child gains an ability to differentiate and discriminate between good and evil, truth and untruth, so that now we can speak of *maturity of the mind*.

3. The third stage is *maturity relating to encounter and action* whose outer as well as inner transformations and upsets can not be ignored.

All of these stages are completed within a short period measured by a few years. Here, I am referring to the beginning of this process of maturation.

The Appearance of Earthly Maturity

If one is not paying attention to subtleties, within a few months—“overnight” it seems—a completely new person has appeared. A new person is standing there, amazed, and amazing to others; like Adam, who suddenly realizes he is naked, that his body has changed, and he notices that he is different from Eve. The physical changes allow consciousness of the differences between the sexes to arise. At the same time, a person becomes aware that he or she has something that is missing in the other sex and vice versa. The young person experiences shame, nakedness, guilt; she begins to differentiate between her inner life and her outer life.

As boys turn into young men they become more angular, chiseled, rougher, more massive, and also more churlish and nonchalant. There are new limb proportions because of the growth spurt and new leverage ratios that are not yet mastered. Their voices “brake” down an octave. Their sexual organs become larger. They experience their first ejaculation of sperm. Mentally, boys become more closed or “self-oriented.”

Maturity for girls is more like an unfolding. Their bodies arch and round out at the “remotest places.” Their voice sinks a little, about three tonal steps. They have their first menstruation. Mentally, girls become more open, communicative, and unconstrained, at least with her peers.

Nature exhibits hides, multi-colored pelts, feathers, snouts, claws and other specializations in animals as formative soul forces. But these things are merely suggested in human beings; for example, hair appearing and growing in the oddest places. Also, the cut of the face, physiognomy as an expression of the soul and “character,” are only nominally taking on shape. There is still very little of the personal/individual to be seen. Adolescents orient themselves much more to how “one” is different now, how “one” presents oneself within the group, or how “one” detaches oneself. “One does what is *in*.”

Youth fills in where nature has short-changed them, for instance, with a cloud of smoke, make-up, or perfume (also body odor). One creates one’s own atmosphere. Fashion is important. One dresses a little exotically. Or one “styles” one’s own hair plumage in order to strike an individual note. At the same time, youth are also hiding-out to avoid personally showing themselves. There are mood swings. Silliness goes over to sullenness or strong action to lethargic inaction. Either a person is careful of outward appearances or neglects all outward appearances. The *outward appearance* often becomes the cause of numerous misunderstandings.

Inner Changes

The changes at the root of this enormous transformation play out even more in the innermost regions of the soul. What appear as changes in the body can be understood as pictorial expressions. The mental soul of a person

gradually takes shape and receives its own dimensions like a room that has width, height, and depth. It has a certain amount of autonomy but it is in no way wholly, personally, imbued with color. The personal life of soul increasingly cuts itself off from inherited connections such as family and seeks more independence. Something totally new but those going through this development is felt. For them, it is a completely unfamiliar experience and they are often mentally as helpless as a newborn is helpless physically. The entire process can be understood as a pictorial image of the new birth of the “soul body” upon the foundation of the transformed physical body.

This new feeling of independence or self-reliance is multi-layered and contradictory. On one side, freedom is felt that is the result of the loosening of all ties, and on the other side a person has the feeling of having to rely on himself or herself, no longer being supported and led by others. These new experiences in the inner recesses of the soul are often shocking and can be compared to those of a newborn when the umbilical cord is cut and he takes his first breath. Oftentimes, next to an overwhelming desire for freedom, a feeling of isolation becomes apparent. Many times feelings go from one extreme to the other and joyful freedom turns into painful isolation that reels back and forth between enthusiasm and folly. This inner tumult, this catastrophe, is comparable to a thunderstorm, a hailstorm, or a fiery blast of hot air. Whoever has experienced the enormous, fiery energy of a burning hay barn, with its intense heat and destruction, can perhaps empathize with what is taking place in the soul of an adolescent.

What is burning there in the barn? It is stored sun-energy, brought in as hay, enclosed, and held securely. There lies the loveliness of a meadow, its fragrance, people’s labor, the beauty of wildflowers; all these things are found in the barn along with junk, spider webs, and machine parts and tools. All of that which burns away is destroyed and missing in the soul. Will it not perhaps be rebuilt better, more beautiful, and modern than it was?

Such a tearing-down of the old and building-up of the new is a dramatic, crisis-filled, but developmentally par-for-the-course, progression of upheaval—a searching for the limits of experience, a survey of the dimensions of the soul. Either the soul feels drawn towards encounters with other people and the world, or it feels cast away, left to depend upon itself. It is like a breathing oscillation between the gestures of *sympathy* and *antipathy*. These grand motions of the soul are the balancing scale of this developmental step. Both are essential abilities for encounter which are found in every conversation: expression and listening, opinion and reflection, speaking and contemplation. They are essential gestures for encounter. The necessities of devotion to the world and of retreating into oneself both live in the inner soul. Over the years, adolescents must learn to make use of these important and effective gestures in order to maintain their balance and remain psychologically healthy. We are talking about mental abilities of movement

and mental stability. The first real ability for experience has been given. If the development process never enters into the dramatic and the “crisis-aspect” is omitted completely, it can be taken as a red flag and warning of a beginning illness.

There are *dangers*: One danger is the need to give oneself to the world, to “others.” This can lead to a loss of boundaries, a desire to act out one’s feelings of lust or craving of pleasure, even to actual addiction. The other danger consists of withdrawing into newly-gained critical faculties and powers of reflection, thereby depriving oneself of outer encounter and avoiding experiences or, hating oneself, destructively disposing of them. In both cases, the soul experiences a mortification of perceptions. The soul is either completely influenced by its environment or by its own self-generated emotions.

Differing Psychological Constitutions of Boys and Girls

The emotions of sympathy and antipathy are differently accentuated in boys and girls in a typical manner.

Boys’ psychological experiences are often narrower and their emotional expressions more discrete. A boy does not like to display his mind and feelings. Aloofness, reticence, deliberation, and steadiness are hidden virtues. Having said that, there is nothing more vulnerable and sensitive, or more easily hurt, than the feeling soul of an adolescent boy. It can be compared to a crab in its shell. The tendency to withdraw to the point of isolation is always present in boys.

The world of feelings and perceptions unfolds more strongly in *girls*. Typically, their behavior is more self confident and there is a tendency to communicate, be involved, meet the world, challenge to the point of provocation, and lose themselves within the experience of contact. On average, girls’ emotional sensitivity is less than that of boys.

Just by the character of the differing psychological configurations of boys and girls, it can be seen that particular possibilities for crises occur during the time when new-orientation, stabilization, and finding one’s own identity have not been mastered by the ego, the “I,” which gradually creates order.

The Influence of the Temperament

A further developmental component is the psychological constitution; the way in which the mental soul is anchored in the body, in its life forces. We call this the “temperament.” For example, the effect of a melancholic temperament on the mental soul of an adolescent boy is that it causes the awakening, mental life of the soul to concentrate itself toward the inside and through that, under certain circumstances, a boy’s psyche can become endangered and constricted even to the point of total isolation and encapsulation, including a tendency to consider suicide. On the other hand,

a sanguine temperament can enhance a person's striving to be psychologically unconstrained. Under certain circumstances, the mental soul of a girl that is inclined to sanguinity can degenerate into complete instability, addiction to change, and an appetite for self-assertion; she can not stand being alone. Her reactions to impulses and stimuli from the outside are exaggerated and unbridled; even to the point of a state of hysteria exhibiting inner discomposure.

Change in "Consciousness"

We must also consider a much deeper, hidden process of earthly maturity: How will this step of development be perceived individually by the budding consciousness of self, the "shadow of the 'I'," so to speak? Encountering the earthly world also means saying good-bye to the spiritual world that was "carried" deep inside during childhood. The child should now experience reliability, continuity and steadiness as principles of the Father-God part of our being: for instance, through his or her parents. The change into earthly maturity causes skepticism of constancy, but it is necessary for development. Everyone feels alone, dependent upon themselves, and "abandoned." This leave-taking is critically described, most often by boys: "I feel isolated, left all alone" or "I don't feel understood" or "It feels like there is a layer of cement on top of me that I can not break through" and "I don't know if life has any meaning."

Encountering the world of appearance and perception also heralds the adolescent's arrival into the realm of things and their management, which calls for experimentation in many aspects. Mechanical, electronic, and chemical tinkering begins. The physical body is rediscovered. Accomplishments such as acrobatic dance, rock and roll music, skateboarding, athletics, and show-quality horseback riding are worked on during play and also according to the person's own ambition. Interactions with peers and authorities that were respected up to that time are put playfully to the test. The unusual and the forbidden become attractive. The joy found in new behaviors, discussions, persistence, and defiance can even go so far as to lead to an addiction to such encounters.

Typical Dangers during Development

Experience that is strongly one-sided such as the loss of supporting religious belief or discovery of the material, manageable world of perception can mask a tendency to illness. Feelings of loss that underscore the prevailing moods of resignation, aggression, or depression can be determining factors in all further stages of life and can lead to serious clinical patterns, so-called endogenic depression, with a complete loss of initiative and the danger of suicide.

If an adolescent is ruled by feelings of his or her desire to discover new things, a hunger for adventure, or greed for experiences that involve intoxication, then, in the end, this instability can increase until there is a psychotic-loosening which could lead to drug abuse and the resulting schizophrenic psychosis.

During this stage of human development, a person is at the mercy of countless influences from our self-made civilization and societal norms which make reorientation difficult. Models such as Rambo, Batman, Hitler, James “007” Bond, black magic cults, and rock-and-roll culture attest to the psychological hardening lead to egocentricity, selfishness, and lust for power. On the other hand, the proffered substance abuse, comfort, and convenience (for instance as followers of a guru) can cause us to create illusions vis-à-vis the world and the avoidance of challenges.

Both tendencies carry within them the danger of fanaticism and both can push a person into dependence. Precise observation shows that both directly lead away from the true needs of adolescent children. Both can lead to the “I,” the ego, not learning to master the mental soul but rather becoming enmeshed in the swirl of influences with the result that the spiritual-individual self with its formative, health-maintaining ability of balance can not find the strength of the middle ground and can not take on a position of control.

During the course of the adolescent years crisis can be overcome and a breathing, individual balance attained between action and thinking, experimentation and ingrained habits. Oftentimes a riotous, unrestrained, “day-to-day” life “cures” itself later by developing an affinity for a habitual way of life and limited areas of interest. Somewhat later in adolescence, a person can blunder further and further into illnesses resulting from inner doubt (neuroses).

Children often have a dim foreboding of the dangers that await them during development of earthly maturity. Fear of this new stage of development and its resulting increase in burdens can cause a person’s sense of responsibility and incapacity to become so overwhelming that relapses into long-forgotten stages of child development appear which can even go so far that biological development and growth comes to a standstill (for example, so-called adolescent anorexia).

We are also familiar with the opposite case: carefree, pleasurable striding into the future and throwing off all conventions and obligations; searching for absolute freedom and everything natural even to becoming animal-like. We call this extensive degeneration. The one is imprinted with fear, the other with “high-spirited arrogance.”

Often, one or the other extreme does not appear alone, but rather, one psychological state swings into another like a pendulum. A yearning aspiration comes up as a mirage that can never be reached; that tips over into disappointment. Self-perceived afflictions and feeling sorry for oneself arise

and awaken new illusions. Neurotic psychological problems appear, doubts in the mental soul which keep the middle ground inaccessible.

A person suffers endless torments from the leavings of their emotional experiential faculty. They perceive the prison of their loneliness, the constraints of life, or superficiality, or lack of soul/spiritual food which calls forth feelings of deep-down emptiness or unbearable tension. The reaction can be an attempt to either break out or to blanket it with sensations and pseudo-experiences.

The deep, inner need is to *identify* with the world and others, to feel in harmony with an ideal, to penetrate the appearance of the world with comprehension, and to learn to act in the world in a sensible manner.

Society's Role in the Adolescent's Stride toward Earthly Maturity

Puberty in itself is no disease. Problems occur because of civilization and mistakes in education.

Whether the child's move into adolescence and its crises will be successfully overcome or decisive foundations for illness created, very much depends upon us as a society and also upon each of us personally as educators and people who influence culture and civilization. Parents, teachers and everyone who takes part in the development of our children in the widest sense, surely can not deny that the crises our children experience are cries for help directed at destiny, society, and individuals. These young people realize they are not independent. They are asking for our experience which we have gathered thus far on this side of life! What we impart to our children, and to all the children of our time, as mental/spiritual food for their future, healthy development, is up to us.

Can we say, as leaders, if the help we have given our children has been beneficial or harmful to their development? Where is the help that we could now be giving? What can we do to continue to be of help? At the present time, our way of life seems to be the background from which some crises of our adolescents will transition into illnesses. Here is the place where we can take on a position of positive influence. We must bring ourselves to the point of feeling such personal concern that we can clearly perceive our responsibility to the children as well as the possibilities to help them. We must not simply appeal to institutions or other people, professionals, to bring our young people out of a crisis or illness.

From the day a child is born, our principles of upbringing are crucial to her development. The mother has a heightened perception of her newborn in the days after birth, a "sixth sense" which she uses to perceive what her child needs: if she is hungry or thirsty, full or tired, if she should let her sleep or pick her up, and so forth. This ability can be cultivated if one consciously

pays attention to it and lets it help one build inner confidence. This ability can carry us over many rocky crags during a child's development and upbringing. It does not protect us from making mistakes, but we will be unafraid of them and can look at our mistakes self-critically in order to gather experience and learn from them. Over anxious shepherding of the child, that might lead to insecurity about his or her perceptions and not developing his or her own psychological gauge, would thus be avoided. Parents can learn to identify and take action against the dangers and possible abnormal developments of their children by positively interacting with them and having confidence in their own childrearing abilities, instead of suppressing their fears.

Parents who practice level-headedness and loving firmness in their decision-making, who make consequential judgments in the first years of their children's lives, lay a foundation that will help them later to help their children through crises. Their children will regain a new inner order and, consequently, the health of their soul bodies. This is part of a "wholesome world" that children desperately need to experience in their childhood in order to find certainty of soul later, an inner gauge to survive everything, including adverse conditions in life. Even if these requisites are only partially present, there are possibilities still of helping a young person create new, inner orderliness.

Development is a process—crises are the forerunners of development. If someone is surprised by them, then either he or she has not followed the development, or did not recognize it, or wanted to deny it. Here are a few examples showing that where there is continuous one-sidedness present in childrearing, crises and pathological developments can mushroom.

I would like to name one style of childrearing the *explaining* or *intellectualizing* style. Often, the parents are well-educated. They know a lot and they try to spare the children having to experience some things by approaching them through their intellect. They talk about morals with their children and often present abstract concepts ("you do this" and "you do not do that"). Through intelligent explanation a person can level with the child about factual matters and possibly make him or her problematic. Most children who grow up under this influence have great difficulties assessing themselves and life situations. They are uncertain and fearful. Knowledge about context and correlation does not necessarily signify reality. At this time, experiences encountering things must take place. Often, such children are advanced in their ability to express themselves verbally and are sometimes precocious, but they are unsure of themselves when interacting with others and are fearful when faced with concrete demands. After their move into earthly maturity, they often develop *angst*, or fear of life, they are critical of the "bad other people," and they can not master the demands of daily life.

A Case Study

R.P. was raised with that kind of anxious, explanatory style of upbringing. He became quite a challenge for his parents because he would only discuss things and was much better at it than his parents. They complained that he did not follow their advice or prohibitions but would threaten them, be impertinent to other people, bully other children, and run away if things became serious. As a consequence, he was threatened by other children and he could not establish relationships with others, not even his classmates. He used his considerable intelligence to explain his situation in life and to justify his behavior to himself. He began to provoke others by writing threatening letters, abusing good friends, and declaring his intention to commit suicide, just so that he could make contact with others. At the same time, he would shun that contact. Finally, his behavior took on terrorist-like characteristics and he was viewed as a criminal in the eyes of society.

Another style of childrearing we can call the *soulless style*, in which often, a raw, masculine-imprinted form of interaction rules within the family. There are rigid standards of behavior that are imposed by the authority (usually) of the father. There is no mutual understanding or listening. Each person is considerate of his or her own advantage. Derogatory judgments, lack of interest culminating in contempt, and an atmosphere of resignation are the norms. A child who grows up in such an environment experiences the disdain of others, numbs his or her perceptions, and suffers from feelings of boredom. After earthly maturity has been reached, these traits transform to inner torpidity, “coolness,” and brutality. A case study: At this point, at age of fourteen, a girl, C.L., became conspicuous. She had completely adopted the role of a boy, and argued that this was the only way possible for her to assert herself. She very coolly audio-taped her parents’ arguments and physical fights and had many outbreaks of rage until, one day, she was criminally charged because she had slashed the tires of several cars in a parking lot with a knife. She explained that she always felt such overwhelming anger inside of herself that she simply had to hit something or find somewhere to let out her “frustration.” She never learned to laugh or cry and she longed to do both. She had already felt something like love but it quickly turned into brutal sex and now she had no more desire for a boyfriend and kept herself to the other girls.

A third style of childrearing I call the *overprotective and preservation style*. It is seen often in families with a high standard of living where there are few outside demands. From the time the child is very young, his or her every wish is fulfilled and every need is met. People in the family act according to the pleasure principle and become accustomed to having “good fortune.” Perhaps the child lives in a family where he or she is admired by parents and grandparents. Often, it is clear as early as kindergarten that the child has problems integrating into a group of children: The child does not

“feel like it.” During the school years it is obvious that the child can not take even the slightest disappointment or the smallest deprivation. Challenges that require effort can not be met. During puberty this transforms into a lack of initiative and loud protests when some important task must be completed. Another case study: Carsten P. grew up in such an environment. He increasingly feels his psychological/emotional shortcomings. He can not pull himself together for anything and is unhappy. He blusters around and seeks to distract himself with hard rock, horror movies, drugs, and pornography. He comes home from school and sees that dinner is not ready. He throws open the refrigerator and kicks the door with his foot because the Coca-Cola is not in its usual place. He can not resist the allure of drugs and he suffers terribly within himself. The family is shocked and nobody sees how to help.

The case studies presented here have certain typical characteristics and show extremes that can lead to the transfer of those characteristics to the mental soul of the adolescents. This can be avoided if parents and educators learn to recognize their own unbalanced behavior! Perhaps they notice something is not right and they suffer from this knowledge without knowing what can be changed. It is not enough to change your “behavior” by bringing more “feeling” into your style of upbringing, or not forbidding anything, or “once really cracking down.” First of all, it is important that parents and educators understand the young person not only as a thinking individual, but also as someone who feels and acts, if you want to give that young person the tools to master his or her life on earth.

How can we acquire an understanding of the inner nature of a child, especially during this time of upheaval on the way to earthly maturity? We observe young people with their particular soul compositions and see that they are like infants that must be nourished but they can not tell us what they need! The first effort we can make must be to try and feel our way into the inner nature of a child even though that nature can be puzzling and volatile. Children expect something from parents, teachers, and educators, even if they loudly, or not so loudly, declare their independence. These expectations are very real and stand in stark contrast to the rejection that we often experience. Trying to “get inside” the mind of a young person, to empathize with what is going on within him or her, requires thorough, in-depth work! It does not require the study of behavior, but rather getting to know the person the way he or she is, and accepting him or her as a spiritual being. The statement of a disappointed father, “My son is the biological result of an unfortunate act of procreation,” is certainly in no way helpful.

In early adolescence, young people need and expect adults to:

1. *Act as guideposts:* They want us to stand there, clearly, articulately, and unalterably pointing toward their destination and the estimated time of arrival: giving advice, pointing out pitfalls, and orientating them, but please, no giving orders, coercing, or moralizing. Often, you will notice that your own goals and expectations must take a back seat and that ambition, power, and striving for prosperity do not nourish the adolescent soul! They are searching for guiding ideas, ideas that will give meaning to their lives.

2. *Listen empathetically:* We must learn to see through the tumult of the adolescent soul and try to understand! What does a hate-filled argument signify? A challenge! It means, for example: “I have a very intense relationship with you!” Why does that always throw us parents out of balance? It is because our own disappointment, insecurity, pride, or lust for power is bigger than our ability to listen, the relationship gets stuck and the adolescent misunderstood.

3. *Examine our capabilities and actions:* Together we can look at the standards of our actions, the credibility of our motives, the reliability and inner logic of our activities. This could be very empowering for adolescents! Forcefulness, egoistic motives, and untruthfulness are hindrances to our being of help to young people. In action, the consequence must be apparent: One does what one says! Walk the talk!

If we are successful in recognizing and correctly meet these demands of young people appropriately, then we will see that everyone is capable of helping. If young people see us making efforts in this regard, observe that we continue to work on ourselves, then a spark ignites within each young person seeking orientation from us. That is where the nurturing of the mental soul really begins. Hard disappointments and obscurations are in opposition to it: lies, obscurities, unclear thought processes, and inconsequential actions. Those things build up barbed wire for the soul. Children who are improperly attended to will seek out and latch onto pseudo-gratifications and stimulations in their desperate attempts to experience the world. They will easily be at the mercy of all influences, even those that are anonymously directed, including manipulations of awareness that stand in hostile, destructive opposition to a healthy spiritual life. They will be unable to use their own mental stability to differentiate and judge what is good for them and what is harmful. When this happens it is not humanization that progresses forward, but rather dehumanization.

What Can We Do?

Concretely, what can we do to stand by children during times of crisis or illness? We must ask ourselves if we can initiate self-change, starting today? In view of the psychological condition of the large majority of our adolescents there is no time to lose. Even those who have no problems today with their own children or other's children, tomorrow may find them in a position of being able to help. We must not withdraw ourselves from the upcoming generation. We must be there for them!

If we look closely at our own lives, we see that often we exist in a state of ill-humor, reluctance, inherent necessity, lust for power, or vanity. In secret, we can admit this to ourselves. We exhibit the prison in which we are living. As human beings, all of us have something special, something vitally humane that sets us apart from the animals: Freedom in how we comport ourselves in respect to our tasks and the demands made upon us.

We can become either exasperated with our conditions and let ourselves drift and degenerate, or strive for the inner control in self-conquest, effort, practice, and gradually develop a human culture. For instance, we have the freedom to seek help in the anthroposophical study of the human being (Waldorf education), study it, and make practical applications in our lives. Whoever takes these fundamentals to heart will keep in mind that they must not become fanatic about it all, but will ascertain that it requires strength and courage to change something and to answer for being different. Above all, we must become consciously aware of the meaning of our aim.

We have the freedom to take part in initiatives that enlighten us about all possible questions of life, such as active support of anthroposophical healing, farming, and education. Our young people will see that adults are taking part in re-formation, or new formation, of conditions on earth. In this manner conversations, questions, or initiatives can become a family way.

If you have the desire, or are required, to gain the skills necessary for helping our growing children and adolescents, you have to do exercises that can develop capacities within us.

1. First of all, practice *clear, comprehensive thinking*. If you can successfully think of a self-chosen concept in logical associations, pulling out only what is essential, for just one minute every day, with regular practice you can gain the skill to *formulate thoughts clearly*. For example, you could imagine how a book is created, step by step, from printing to the bookshop.

2. Practice the *ability to love* and *to not hold preconceptions* by developing a genuine interest, asking real questions, taking part in what the children do, and listening for what they are experiencing. Practice, in spite of a bad mood, so that you finally are able to give a child two minutes daily of undivided attention. For instance, take the time to be interested in

homework, not to correct it or criticize it, but to learn something yourself, discover something.

3. Practice *consequential action*, means to do that which, according to your discernment, lies within your own possibilities. Even if it turns out to be wrong, it is very important that you *practice feeling secure within yourself*. You can gather important experience even from your mistakes. Often fear makes us feel insecure about our actions. For instance, I have to write a letter. I told myself I would do it and so I will write it now even though it could be that I can not say everything I want to say in the way I want to say it and finish it in the amount of time I have allotted.

Even these apparently small efforts are an enormous help for adolescents in crisis. They see that adults are working on themselves through their own initiative. We adults will see that something new can develop from this because we are doing things out of our own freedom that are important and essential in the sense of our being role models without becoming moralizing. It becomes possible to overcome habits, to go without things, and it helps develop a love for what is recognized as meaningful. When I am able, for instance, to overcome a habit, not just want something for myself, I can realize the potential of doing something for another. When I learn to do without things, I will be able to forego some luxuries in life. And when I am successful in developing love for that which is truly meaningful, I will gain the courage to stand up for something! Not only is this a gift for the one practicing these things, but you can sincerely thank your son or daughter for the crisis that became your task and was mastered.

This newly-acquired, inner attitude can open us more to life and to the children. It does not make the task of mastering life easier, but we can continue to gather new experiences. Life has a new, deeper aspect and perhaps we will our understanding of the children on their search. Such inner changes are difficult for parents and educators even though they are outwardly trivial. They loosen our ingrained characteristics and make us insecure, but they are almost the only effective means for actually helping. Do not underestimate them! As many examples prove, changes in relationships are possible within a few weeks.

There are other “psychological” exercises that are important when we encounter our adolescents. Perhaps we do not like many things about their behavior and we notice that we become angry and that our anger increases the difficulties in our relationships with young people. We have long known that this is a point of contention. Again and again we have these same kinds of destructive disputes because we have not learned to maintain our composure. We should practice retentive observation of everything that our young people show us and address our welling-up feelings very consciously.

We could look back on the situation in the evening, recalling the encounter in every detail, without making judgments. Perhaps we would discover something amazing that might allow our interest in the adolescent to increase, even if it is only making the astounding observation that we have neglected our child, without being judgmental about that observation. We can even go a step further to look at the special way in which the young person presents himself and dresses as something deserving of wonder; even if it is only being in awe of the fact that Claudia or Daniel worked on their hair for two solid hours.

A further step seems important: Open yourself up for the “unbelievable” and let it affect you without reacting. Gather information with a lively, inner interest and allow yourself to be “taught.” Humor is an essential tool; not irony or sarcasm, but an inner smile. It prevents us from immediately feeling existentially threatened by the otherness of our children. In this way our relationship can be loosened out of its tense rigidity and a new breeze of change and new impulses to come inside. Psychologically, it is not possible to proceed according to rigid rules. Flexibility, ideas, strength, and compliance are all necessary elements in the essence of the soul’s constitution.

One very decisive, apparently “very easy,” but really very difficult exercise should never be missing from our repertoire: I call it the “evening exercise.” It lasts only a few minutes and requires deliberate focusing on another: Every night, before bed, try to call to mind, precisely and clinically, a visible part of the body of your son, daughter, or student. It is not necessary in this step to have sympathy or antipathy for the form of an ear or an eyebrow. This concerns a methodical, scientific process. You will be shocked to realize how little you know your own child with whom you are perhaps so engaged on a daily basis and for whom you are so concerned. At the very least, try to visualize the form of an earlobe, for example, and then, the next day, discreetly study its actual structure. It will take about three weeks of study before you are so familiar with the form of an earlobe that you can draw it. Once that is accomplished, a hand or an eye or the mouth can be studied. It is clear that your relationship will change very quickly if you are successful in overcoming perturbing feelings and forming the relationship on a new level, that is to say, an “objective” level. Something completely new comes about from your daily renewed interest in your child and your evening efforts, a relating from “I” to “I” that opens up the essence of the other without regard for his or her behavior. If there are not negative circumstances that have existed for years to act as obstructions, then, soon the child will feel supported, understood, and also seen-through, without ever having to speak with the child about these questions. You will notice that you interact with your child differently regarding matters of upbringing and education and that you are more secure and act in a more humane manner. Instead of money and possessions, you have lovingly, carefully, and with understanding, directed your intensity of

will toward the other without your own emotions and drives having clouded the relationship. Your pedagogical skills will grow because you are able to put yourself in the child's situation and develop pedagogical ideas for how to handle the situation. You will stay away from instigating hearings taking harsh, corrective actions. As you continue to view the child in a worthier manner, you are more relaxed, and interaction with the child will bring you joy in the sense of "the art of education and upbringing."

In this way you can say goodbye to moralizing and intellectual criticism. You will turn away from accepting only that which is visible in behavior, which has always been a hindrance to your having understanding attitude towards our children and others. The help that our adolescents need in order to find themselves is our interest in the incomprehensible part of their budding individuality.

What is to be done when there is psychological illness, when long-time, chronic, behavioral disturbances occur? Very often one notices that even though the relationships are very close, they have taken on a double nature, like love/hate, for instance. A love/hate relationship is tortuous; one feels constantly misunderstood but maintains a wistful desire for the relationship even though all efforts and discussions bring about no solutions. Almost always in cases of this nature, the only help is in the form of a separation. Under certain circumstances that would mean in a clinic, a boarding school, or even a foster family where efforts to heal the long-festering wounds are handled with understanding and finesse.

Crises can also occur because of long-time, excessive demands made upon the child, in school, for example. The adolescent becomes increasingly aware of his or her weaknesses and may experience feelings of inadequacy, uselessness, and the meaninglessness of life. Usually a person tries to compensate for inadequacy by strengthening his efforts in learning the difficult subjects, but it hardly ever works. Therefore, it is most important to track down the causes of such difficulties so that the appropriate help can be given.

Interferences with movement which, today, have been traced to so-called "functional brain damage," are often the background of such crises. Balance will not be achieved again through conversations or tricks. There must be significant relief and reliance upon other resources that usually involves separation from familiar educators or parents.

Psychological illnesses, which often gradually become more distinct during adolescence, can occur independently from any outside catalyst. They are often triggered by minor mental or physical stresses, and it requires special experience and schooling to recognize the tendency to these illnesses already years before adolescence. The real causes are often not found in the child's development and possibly stem from before birth and conception, perhaps heredity or a particular structure of the organizing, individual essence of the child's being. It is inevitable that medical help is required in these situations. If

crises can not be overcome during adolescence, then psychological illnesses are usually determining factors in the person's ensuing biography. Very often, it depends upon the prudent, sometimes painful, decisions of parents and educators to seek timely advice and to take action to prevent pathological developments.

Conclusion

Development to earthly maturity can be viewed as encountering the conditions on earth. However, it simultaneously signifies the birth of the independent soul and a departure from being supported by the spiritual/religious and often also by familial bonds. The physical, mental and spiritual cataclysms that are connected with this development bring a person's entire being into a state of openness to positive as well as negative influences with all their life-determining possibilities and dangers. As a breathing process, the psychological aspect of a human being must re-order itself during this time. During this process of reorganization it experiences crisis whose root causes lie in this developmental step, the child's own biography, and in the effects of civilization and education. The tendencies toward isolation or scattering oneself to the world create the pathological deviations which can lead to crisis or illnesses.

Attempts to point out crisis tendencies that can be triggered or prefaced by particular attitudes on upbringing and education have been made by school physicians and psychiatrists specializing in adolescence. Help that can be given by parents and teachers has been discussed and exercises and advice presented on gaining capacities in education and upbringing in connection with adolescence. Often, these are determining factors in helping adolescents orient themselves. Above all, concrete and effective exercises have been offered to help mitigate acute crisis situations. Comprehensive experience is required to determine if a particular situation is in association with a crisis or the beginning of a psychological illness. The appropriate help depends on that determination. Looking at crises as a knot in development and overcoming them is an urgent task today which everyone must take on through self-education. That, alone, is the genuine, natural remedy for mastering such life challenges as raising and educating our children.

In every case, parents and teachers who immerse themselves in these problems of puberty are the best "therapists" because they are living and working on a daily basis. Let us take small, loving, careful steps toward our adolescents, our children. We can have a healing effect on the courses of their lives.

Drug Addiction

The Wake-up Call of Our Times

by

Felicitas Vogt

*Life requires of all of us
That we fulfill our task:
Coming from love,
To live with love.
Drug addicts are burning torches;
A warning to a society,
without love.
Do they burn in vain?*

Encounters

Benjamin

His mother brought him to therapy for drug abuse. He was seventeen and had been using hashish regularly for the past two years. He came willingly. He was interested in what the counselor had to offer. At first Benjamin told of his positive experiences with drugs. Yes, hashish gave him a lot; he felt enriched. He was so intelligent that he could handle the stuff sensibly and creatively. You could keep all the psycho-babble about drugs, he only wanted to know something about the physical effects.

After listening to a long list of possible negative physical effects that could occur later, he politely thanked the counselor. Yeah, all right, he wanted to think about it; he would have to investigate more on his own.

When asked if he planned to give up hashish, he reacted with charming indignation. "No. The stuff gives me too much. I do not want to willingly give it up. Why should I?" The counselor said that Benjamin could come back anytime if he had burning questions or was really in trouble. He said a friendly thank-you. The leave-taking was courteous, non-committal, smooth, nice.

Marcus

After an intense discussion between high school students and a drug counselor about drugs and the fascination drugs call forth, a teacher asked this question: “What kind of defining experience must a young person have in order to stop taking drugs?” The counselor told the following story:

A German youth named Victor Frank had been inhumanly treated, abused, and tortured. He could only hang on to his will to live by distancing himself from the bad experience. He turned his consciousness to his beloved students in the auditorium and reported to them, as if it was happening in the moment, what was taking place right then. At his lowest point, when he was totally powerless, he experienced the human will for freedom: “My own ego alone is what defines me and not something on the outside. There is something in me, and in every person, that cannot be humiliated, insulted, injured, or snuffed-out.”

Marcus, age seventeen had lived a life permeated with drug experiences, came up after the discussion: “I had a defining experience. I learned what it means to want freedom.” Silence followed, then: “I know there are consequences!”

Tobias

He is seventeen years old and has been taking drugs for the past four years. During the week he is unwilling to go to school or take any interest in life. The weekend is a permanent party with ecstasy, speed, or cocaine. His parents and teachers pressured him to come to a counseling session. He sat down and was silent. After endless minutes, his question: “Do you know how ecstasy works?”

“Yes.”

There was tortuous silence again. Then he went away without a word.

Six months later a telephone call: “This is Tobias. Do you remember our conversation? That gave me a total surprise that you didn’t totally lecture me back then; I had to decide for myself. I’m not out yet completely, but I’ve stopped doing the hard stuff.”

Drugs — What do they have to do with us?

Drug consumption: There is probably no other modern phenomena that is discussed with such controversy. The polarization of positions into “for” and “against” means that most of our contemporaries fall into two groups.

The distinguishing characteristics of one position are complete rejection and judgment based upon inflexible, fixed assumptions. The other position is thoughtless acceptance under the assumption that all modern phenomena in existence must also be good simply because they exist. Even though these

two positions are polar opposites, they do have two essential aspects in common. Both of them avoid confrontation with the phenomenon, and neither leads to knowledge or understanding.

The drug problem will not be solved as long as we do not comprehend why drugs have such a strong influence on the human soul in our time and where their powers of temptation lie.

I cannot hope to give complete answers to these complex questions in this short article. It should simply serve to contribute to our knowledge of the drug phenomenon by bringing up various aspects and questions around these areas: human development, drug consumption, practiced therapies, and preventative education.

We should reflect on what parts the times and we, as contemporaries, play in today's drug consumption. Only when we experience our own inner shock of realization can we develop viewpoints that lead us further; viewpoints that occur only through individual confrontation with ourselves and that can lead to a new level of consciousness. Away from every polarization is a willingness to understand.

The short sketches of encounters presented herein should give an indication of how individual and multi-layered are the states of soul of youthful drug abusers. If we wish to take their gesture of escape seriously, then we must also use an individual, multi-layered approach when interacting with them. If this article encourages us to do that, then it has fulfilled its purpose.

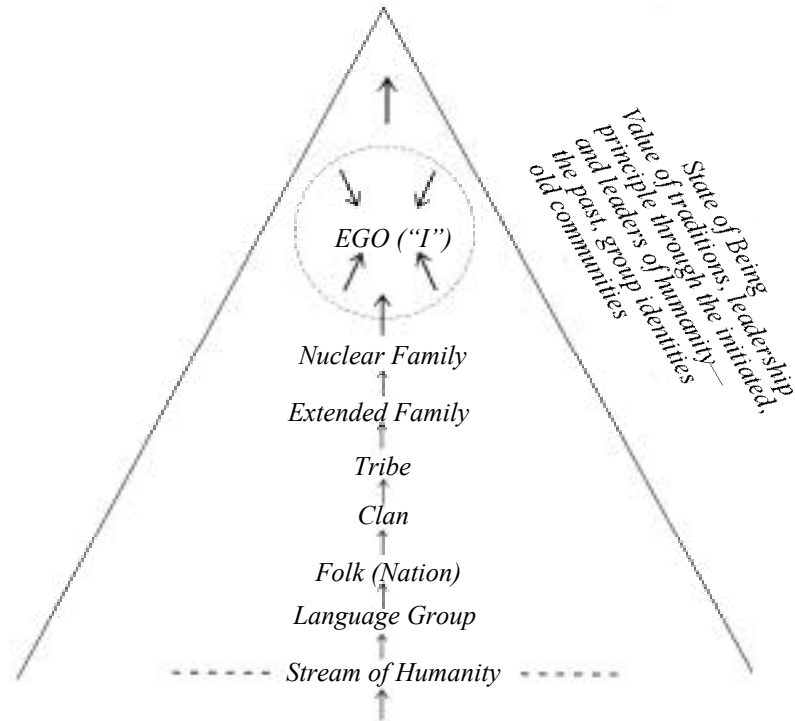
The Situation Today

Development of Humanity

Drug abuse runs throughout history. Why is it that today it has become such a huge problem? What makes the difference between our times and previous eras?

In earlier times people experienced themselves as members of a community that gave them support and security. They identified with the community and felt responsible for it. The further back we go in history, the larger the communities were in which individuals felt themselves to be protected. In the very earliest times souls incarnated into the entire stream of humanity and that gave them their secure identities and futures. A little later, it was language that offered this security. Wherever the individual's language was spoken one felt spiritually at home. Next was identification with one's own people, later with the clan or tribe, and finally into the family group. Here, for awhile, there was the extended family, but now we are left with just the nuclear family unit. And, today, even this identification rarely endures much past childhood.

The following drawing should make clear this development of human identification:



Hallmarks of Our Times

The narrowing at the top of the triangle illustrates the situation of humanity today: increasingly, isolated and lonely people stand only for themselves and represent only their own individualities (egos) without any social connection. The traditional forces carried over from the past are exhausted; they have hardly any strength. Today the individualities meet each other exposed and unprotected. So, it is understandable that our particular era is, for the time being, full of egoism, lust for power, and self-assertion.¹

The horror of the many wars upon our earth that are broadcast uncensored by the media; the increase of unscrupulousness made clear by the permanently-occurring corporate and political scandals; the growth of people's willingness to commit violence, even in children; the tendency to follow en-masse illustrated by international trends, fashion slogans, musical directions, and so forth; manipulation by the media, especially television; the looming threat of a loss of outside reality due to electronic advances

such as computers, high-tech gadgets, and cyberspace; the Internet with its pallet of synthetic, experiential worlds that is standing on the threshold of conquering the nursery; the threatening loss of inner reality by constant, frightening, increasing substance abuse—these are all significant hallmarks of our time.

Separation from Others

Let us consider what kind of interpersonal relationship is characteristic in the present day. We are forced to recognize that our relationship to our fellow human beings has gotten out of balance. One hears the term “social nosedive.” There are fewer taboos. Other people are seen only as objects with which to fulfill one’s own desires and needs. Self-realization and the highest possible gain are often given equal value.

A fundamental separation from fellow human beings is not the only experience. The separation from one’s self is the most painful effect of this stage of humanity’s development.

Separation from Self

The far-reaching loss of connection to our own physical bodies, brought about by our technical, media-saturated environment, robs us of our trust in the physical sphere that surrounds us.² Children are especially endangered. They are chauffeured in the car more often than they move under their own power. This takes away the natural learning process of movement that occurs during a child’s tireless experiences of falling and standing again. This has been replaced by “child-safe arrangements” that prevent falling and therefore do not allow for any development of the will or for a relationship to nature, the elements of life like earth, water, air, and fire. Children are not given any room for experience. Immunizations take away the experience of overcoming many childhood diseases, thus removing an important tool for helping a child individually take hold of his or her inherited physical body. The heavily consequential interventions in our relationship to our own bodies (and, with that, our environment) result in a fundamental weakening of our perceptual and sense abilities.

Loss of natural habits is a complaint heard more and more. People no longer know how to sensibly educate and arrange their lives according to natural rhythms and spans of time.

The importance of having a daily rhythm is being increasingly ignored. In many families there is no longer even the daily recurring point of contact that is known as a meal together. The qualities specifically experienced in the mornings or evenings no longer have a place in our daily lives. Our appointment-filled days equalize the hours of the day so that we only evaluate them according to their suitability for getting things done. Even the yearly

rhythms through the seasons and festivals are becoming increasingly lost. Stores stocking pumpkins in September and chocolate bunnies in February are only symptomatic of this loss. Children experience less and less often the range of excitement of the whole process: preparation time, celebration, and calm aftermath of festival celebration. Festivals and rituals are disappearing and with them the experiences of time and social togetherness in which children can feel themselves warmly embedded.

Loss of connection to our own life forces through hectic, non-rhythmic lifestyles robs us of our trust in the times and its qualities, resulting in experiential poverty.

Loss of the relationship of ourselves to our own soul forces through deficiencies in enthusiasm, sympathy, and love robs us of our trust in interpersonal relationships.

Already in early childhood a storytelling mother is often replaced by a tape or CD, and connections that could potentially produce and solve conflicts are reduced to a minimum. Television is a main culprit in this scenario, (In Germany children under six years of age view, on average, two to three hours of television per day), and cyberspace and the Internet are responsible for an enormous rise in media consumption by children. A survey was taken in the USA of suicide candidates under age eighteen who halted their suicide attempt and it shows just how endangered young people are when they experience little or no supporting, emotional relationships. In answer to the question about what persuaded them to not go through with the suicide, most of them replied that it was remembering someone with whom they had a deep relationship.

If such a relationship does not exist, life loses its meaning. The resulting attitudes of soul are: non-committal attitude, relativism, arbitrariness to the point of becoming weary of life.

Loss of one's relationship to one's own ego ("I") through the loss of identity robs us of our trust in the power of the spirit. When there is no more contact with one's own inner being, a person becomes susceptible to manipulation and open to forceful access from the outside.

Children and youth do not yet have mastery over their own ego forces. Therefore, they experience the negative effects of this loss when there are no adults who can exemplify this very important spiritual orientation.

This loss is certainly a significant cause of the increasing influence of trends. If someone perceives his own self as a ball bouncing around according to the whims of outside forces, then he must necessarily lose his trust in destiny, development, and the future. Biographical crises, burnout syndrome, and acts of escapism into addiction of all kinds are all general signs of an experienced loss of meaning in one's life.

So, an extreme characterization of our modern contemporaries would be that they stand in life as prisoners within themselves, weakened in their sense

perceptions, experientially poor, non-committal, and increasingly spiritually disoriented. We can probably all recognize tendencies to these in ourselves.

The more strongly developed these antisocial characteristics become, the more difficult our living together with others will become. Communities which do not strive for social growth are quickly paralyzed within outdated forms.³ Let us look at three typical community forms to illustrate this point:

In a *dogmatic community* the opinions of one individual or a small group rule. The group or individual exercises power and authority over all other members because it is believed that they have true knowledge.

A *sectarian group* is defined by its fear of insignificance and its own weaknesses. Elitist structures are created and strictly followed. Members stick together against perceived enemies in the outside world and their objective is to isolate themselves from it.

In a *compromising group* there is a predominant fear of their own judgments, of clear, basic principles. Everything possible is done to avoid conflict, to conserve energy, and to have pleasant experiences.

These community forms that are stamped with fear and power have one thing in common: true, human encounter is not possible. Instead of interacting openly with each other in a spirit of freedom, individuals try to exercise power over others or renounce themselves. In any case, the tragic result is prevention of ego (“I”) development.

Having been pushed into a corner in so many ways, people today are increasingly motivated by a desire for freedom and expansion. The pivotal, determining issue is *how* a person goes about fulfilling this desire.

Gestures of Addiction

If the path to achieving that desire is characterized by an increasing compulsion to stifle discomfort, conflict, and emptiness in the wake of outside stimulation—no matter what kind—by replacing them with something comfortable and richly pleasant, without the desire to put in any effort, then the path can lead to addiction. Let us examine ourselves in all honesty. I think we can all recognize a tendency to this within ourselves. Every time we sit in front of the television, every time we take pleasure in sweets, or in criticism of others, every time we overwork ourselves, these are all avoidance behaviors. If we do not determine for ourselves, with the active participation of our “I,” the way out of today’s typically narrow way of life and its pressures, we are on our way to becoming influenced, manipulated, and collectivized from the outside.

A hallmark of our era is that this applies to everyone:

“Decide for yourself or someone else will do it for you!”

The Fascination With Drugs

Effects of Drugs

A yearning for certain kinds of experiences drives ever more and ever younger people to take drugs. The fact that through these drug-induced experiences a person is being manipulated and consumed appears to make no impression on the drug user.⁴

The following is a short overview of recreational drugs, how they work and what kinds of experiences they cause. Basically, the effects can occur because the drugs release life forces from human organs. This process takes the form of experiencing perceptions of color, form, and sound.

The various drug substances are divided into three groups according to their effect on the body organ areas:

Drugs which predominantly assault the *life forces of thinking in the head area* are known as amphetamines. *Cocaine* is in this group. The life forces thus released are experienced as activation of thought, stimulus of thought, all the way to explosion of thought.

Drugs which predominantly rob the *life forces in the middle, rhythmic organ region* are the hallucinogens. *LSD* and *hashish* are the most well-known in this group. Activation and stimulation of the feeling life is experienced, the illusion of a warm connection with others and the world.

Drugs which predominantly attack the *life forces in the metabolic-limb system* belong to a group known as opiates. *Heroin* is this group's best-known representative. Forces released out of this area are experienced as will stimulants, as the illusion of an intensive power of the will.

Every drug has its method of attack on the life-force organism. Wherever these forces of life-function are working unconsciously, they become bound to the drug substance with its intake, causing a process of excarnation that, in turn, causes a so-called spiritual experience. However, the experience takes its course forcefully. It is not an experience achieved in freedom.

Drugs in Earlier Times

In earlier cultural epochs drugs were not taken for purposes of the individual but rather given by initiates and priests to people after years of preparation, only to those who had proven themselves to be morally strong enough to work through the effects of the drug in such a way that they could receive spiritual insights that could then be imparted to their tribe or nation. Intention and attitude about consuming drugs were completely different than is the case today. Today, drugs are taken mainly for individual pleasure, and consumed in this way, they can impart only the illusion of spirituality. A drug addict cannot handle his or her experiences independently and consciously. A person is, more or less, very much at the mercy of the drug.⁵

For this reason we have drug *problems*. At this point, instead of “I” activity unfolding, it is only the effect of the drug.

In our children’s world the ever-present availability of drugs is on the increase. What the attraction is can be made clear by statements from drug addicts themselves.

Motive for Taking Drugs

When asked about their motives for taking drugs, users often speak of reaching their goals for desired experiences, or recapturing those experiences, as the case may be. The experiences they describe can be summarized into four areas:

1. An intensive, fulfilled experience of another reality
2. Warmth, comfort, acceptance, and transparency in relationships⁶
3. Meaningfulness of one’s own activities, protection while looking through to one’s own motives in life
4. Religious experience, the spiritual dimension of existence

All four areas have this characteristic in common: they are all only illusory experiences because they are forced by the effects of a drug and are not achieved through individual effort. That which is desired is experienced only in a state of being “high” without the slightest relationship to reality.

It can be seen from the motives for drug use where deficits in the biographies of children and youth have occurred, but also where unconscious visions of life have yet to find the possibility of becoming reality.

Anthroposophical Therapies for Drug Addiction

Recaptured Experiences of Reality

Anthroposophical therapy centers have developed a concept for healing from the knowledge that many addicts have had a lack of deep experiences, feelings of warmth, and meaning in their lives. The task of the various phases of therapy is to replace the desired, passive, fake experiences from drugs with true, reality-infused experiences. The development of the therapy phases came about through the insight that the experiences sought by addicts are characteristic of the first three seven-year phases of childhood and youth.

In the *first seven-year phase*, healthy development of individuality requires a lively contention with one’s own physical self. Sense activities, which are more body-oriented, should be encouraged and promoted so that the natural desire for imitation within a child is given enough healthy, real examples worthy of imitation. Sensibly modeled activities and daily rhythm

are especially significant during this time of physical development. These phenomena affect the organs and bodily functions even in their formation. That is how the will of a child is trained in a healthy way.

The second seven-year phase is the phase of lively development of feeling. Adult examples play a definitive role in this. It is now important that children learn to orient themselves to the adult world of feeling that has been formed. Additionally, a child should be encouraged to enliven those senses that bring him or her in contact with the outside world. At this age children need an orderly and beautiful environment. The world must become a space for experience, full of promise. The possibility of bonding to one's environment through one's feelings, to feel accepted and loved, is critical for a child of this age. Only in this way can a child find orientation and develop a healthy feeling life.

In the *third seven-year phase*, young people need a lively contention with the spirit. Their intense and often dramatic contentions with the sensory world must now orientate on ideals and love of the truth. Young people must deeply experience the difference between truth and error, reality and illusion. It should include increasing areas of responsibility in which they can interact with their environment.⁷ They must be allowed to make mistakes. At the same time, it is now that they need suggestions, stimulation, and experience through the world and their fellow human beings. Enthusiasm and engagement have a quickening effect on their spiritual abilities, just as resignation and negativity have a paralyzing effect. During this time, adults are especially challenged to constantly exemplify an ever-renewing process of uplifting encouragement and to offer young people areas of activity that can enhance their knowledge and social skills.

So, we see how the human ego ("I") develops within loving activity, soul activity, and spiritual activity in the first three seven-year periods of life. As yet bound to these areas of activity, the ego is not yet able to freely confront the world as an "I-individuality." This becomes possible only when the "I"-activities reach their first point of completion sometime between the ages of eighteen to twenty-one years. With that in mind we can understand that every premature confrontation robs energy from the actual "I"-activity. This can lead to the "I"-force not being available later in its completeness for use in facing the outside world.

The different phases of drug addiction therapy try to take the patients through a recovery of the first three seven-year stages of life in such a way that they can balance out the deficiencies of experience in their development which, among others things, led them into addiction.

For years Anthroposophical therapeutic centers have worked to bring these challenges into reality. The therapeutic path is made clear when we

see how the therapists co-experience the process within a community of patients. The basic form this therapy takes has four stages:

1. *During the first stage*, the therapist must take a warm interest in the patient with this internally-stimulating question: Who are you? The point here is to understand the patient in his or her being as well the affliction.

2. *In the second stage*, by showing perceptivity and dedication, the therapist creates a bond that will allow him or her to accompany the patient, both internally and externally, through the steps of healing, largely disregarding his or her own personal desires. That means that the therapist frees himself or herself from all preconceived notions of how the patient is or should be, and concentrates completely on perceiving reality, with loving attention to the smallest detail.

3. *The third stage* is accompanying the patient in a meaningful way through the crises that are necessary to the healing process. A quick fix for a crisis, reinforcing sympathy, or knowing consolation cannot be of help during this process. The patient must get through the low point of a crisis alone if he or she is to be helped to a true, internal turning point. To know that there is a loving guide by one's side, sharing the adversity, is by itself a meaningful help to the patient. At this stage of therapy the patient is led through painful discussions of his or her biography. The point of these discussions is to seek out and recognize the reason for a patient's egress. Now the patient should experience a desire to search independently and actively for his or her entire, individual task in life. Striving for one's own life's motive balances the ego-deactivating effects of drugs.

Individual Life-Motives

If a life-motive is found with the help of an active ego in the last stages of therapy, then he or she will be able to continue his or her life at a level that is more suited to his or her being than was possible within the gesture of addiction. If a patient can develop his or her "I"-force to this point, then it must be carefully tended and every temptation quickly met by an alert consciousness. If this consciousness is allowed to be dimmed for even one moment, there is immediate danger of backsliding into addiction. This rule is as rigorous as the effects of the drugs themselves.⁸

4. *The fourth stage* requires the utmost selflessness from the therapist in that he or she loosens the bond that has been created according to the degree of growing independence of the patient in order to allow the former drug addict to reach a new level of connection to the world, one that he or she can now enter into with a sense of personal responsibility and newly-gained or regained self-confidence.

New Forms of Community

For the recovering drug addict, this is a path to finding one's self. For the therapist, it is a path of selfless dedication to the patient. The therapist must find the needed strength by constantly striving to overcome selfish desires and egoistic feelings. Each success at overcoming these desires and feelings gives new energy for the task. One person alone is not capable of confronting himself and his weaknesses, as well as the demons of addictive substances. To reach a successful outcome, this fight must only be taken on by a community in which individuals draw their strength from the same source. For this reason, at regular intervals, in these therapeutic communities, work is done on gaining a deeper understanding of drug addiction through comprehensive research. Together, the therapists make an effort to tap into the necessary spiritual resources of knowledge. If individual, spiritual exercises are practiced in order to achieve the fulfillment of the community's task, then the strength and help required to overcome drug addiction in a way that is appropriate for our time will be gained.

Prevention – A Question of Education

Knowledge about the reasons for drug addiction is not only fundamentally helpful for therapy, it is also helpful in preventative education. The modern phenomenon of drug addiction is a warning appeal to us to create education that can prevent our children and youth from derailing into addiction.⁹

Just how important the composition of the first three seven-year-periods is can be clearly seen in the overview sketched above. When we are successful in appropriately challenging our children so that all of their inherent abilities can really fully unfold at each age level, then they will have at their disposal the will-forces that they need for our present time. When we help our children through this time in their lives when they are most easily influenced by paying attention to the conditions they require for their development, helping them achieve inner security and form a solid foundation for their lives, then we give them the opportunities to realize their own life-motivations.

As educators, we must ask questions that shed light on the laws of development associated with the three seven-year-periods:

Have we designed the lives of our children in such a way that they can develop an indestructible relationship to reality, one which later can stand against every temptation to lose themselves in a world of illusion, whether through television, or, especially in the future, through cyberspace? Are we making it possible for our children to be meaningfully and creatively active in an environment worthy of imitation? Are we creating and maintaining enough room for them to freely exercise their imaginations, for instance

through appropriate furnishings in children's rooms and toys that stimulate the imagination?

With our own enthusiasm are we awakening in our children a love for other people and their surroundings from which they learn to develop strength to overcome selfishness, resulting in the warm experiences of giving and receiving? From our concentration on what is essential and in our enthusiasm for our actions, can young people today develop trust in life which makes a future possible for them? Are we able to cope with their questions about death, life after death, and threshold experiences? Where do we stand with these questions and experiences that characterize our millennium?

If we try living with these questions in the educational sphere, we can strengthen the souls of our children and youth so that they are able to contend with their times without losing themselves. The questions that have arisen in regard to drug addiction can lead us, as educators, to a conscious, preventative pedagogy.

We cannot dismiss the fact that drugs are a major issue of our era. It is therefore no longer possible to protect our children from coming in contact with addictive substances. Nicotine and alcohol, for instance, are offered to them from all sides, and not only through advertising. Even hashish is often already in the picture in the sixth or seventh grade. Even good upbringing and education will not prevent drug use in every case. Just how impossible that is can be seen when one considers how individual all the numerous causes are for someone to get involved with drugs. Besides the young people who do not take drugs in spite of a significant lack of pedagogical attention, there are just as many who do take drugs even though they have had a careful, sensible upbringing and education.¹⁰

Therefore, the goal of education can be only to strengthen the will of our children and youth so that they have the capability of clearly differentiating between illusion and reality; that they are strong enough to say no to drugs. Then, even if an encounter with drugs takes place, they will soon recognize that it has to do with forced spiritual experiences over which they have no individual influence. If such forced experiences awaken in them the desire to actively strive for their own spiritual experiences without the aid of outside stimuli, then education has fulfilled a poignant task.¹¹

Tasks For Our Times

In earlier times the human ego was embedded in a group consciousness. Now it stands naked and alone, freed from every group norm but, at the same time, abandoned by every form of group protection. This "I"-experience, as tentative as it may be, is connected with experiences of

loneliness crisis. It is a stage of development that should be welcomed as a necessary transition, even with all of its darkness and pain. If this process is not lived through with a certain amount of acceptance of suffering, then there is the temptation to avoid it with narcotics. However, in that case, expansion of consciousness based upon the distress of this I-experience takes place in an area that lies outside independence and ego-awareness of the individual. Ron Dunselman hit the mark with his characterization of this experience in the title of his book about drugs, *An Stelle des Ich (In Place of the Ego)*.

Gestures of avoidance that come out of the loneliness and narrowness of this developmental situation can be accompanied in other ways than drug use:

In the realm of consciousness, media consumption also contributes to an apparent expansion of consciousness when it is connected with the illusion of being informed on a world-wide scale, co-experiencing the destinies of others, and bringing life to where one is sitting by pressing a button.

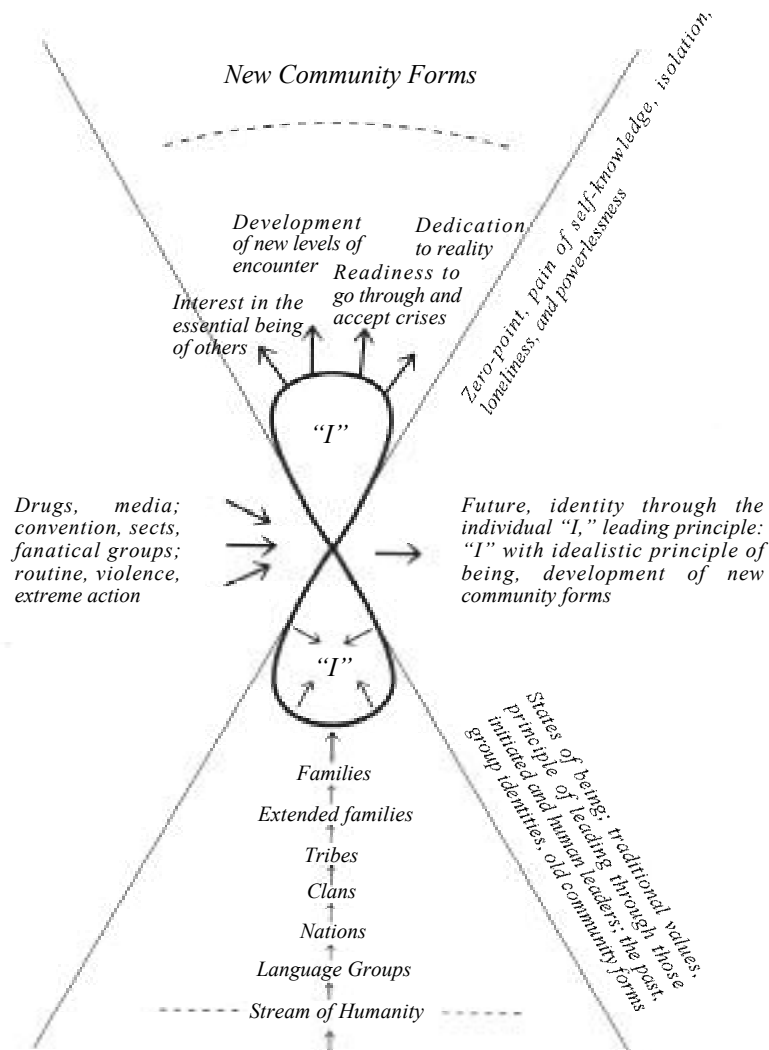
In the realm of feeling, gestures of avoidance take place when release from loneliness is sought in communities where every responsibility of the individual "I" is given over to others. It is a hallmark of sects and other fanatical groups. However, the same gesture appears anywhere that interpersonal encounters take place without benefit of the "I"-forces.

In the realm of action, constrictions can be avoided through violence and acts of destruction which can also be directed at one's own person. The expansion thus experienced is not ego-determined, but rather has only a paralyzing effect on the "I"-forces.

How can the constriction of our current stage of development, which is so painfully experienced by us all with its loneliness, its fears, and its feelings of powerlessness, be expanded in a way that makes use of our I-forces? The courage to stand fast in the face of this zero-point experience and to not try to evade it is the prerequisite for further development. Only when we are ready to give up old securities and supports and make it through the associated feelings of powerlessness can we create room for new beginnings; only in this way can we choose directions that are not determined by the past.

If the ego can achieve new spiritual impulses this way, then the old ego-fixation can be dropped. Guided by this new impulse, the "I" can now consciously and actively open itself to the world and our fellow human beings.

The self-limited experience of self shown in the lower triangle, which is necessary but one-sided, stands vis-a-vis an expansion shown in the upper triangle that allows for the ego to have a new and unselfish connection to others and to the world. It is, however, not a stage that can be achieved in a single try. It is a living process of swinging back and forth between the two poles of the lower and upper triangles which are filled with antisocial and social forces.



If we do not gain the ability to hold-up through meaningful dying-processes at the soul-spiritual level in the face of dissolving, old conditions, drugs will always prove to have the stronger attraction. Then these dying-processes will not be gone through at the soul-spiritual level through era-appropriate zero-point experiences, but rather will take place in the realm of the physical. In the physical, drugs are destructive to the life-forces in the body, which is how they transmit the illusionary experience of reaching beyond and going further.

Conclusion

What drugs offer, even though it is illusion, through the experience of relaxation, release, warmth, feeling of well-being, connection to everyone and everything, love for all, must become our social task.¹² It is this experiential quality; in a lively process of encounter with its resolution of conflicts and overcoming of selfishness, that should be made possible. This could be a life-filled counter-balance to the destruction and death processes of drugs. Let us understand the consumption of drugs by our children and youth as an appeal to us adults. Exemplifying a striving for meaning in our lives and finding joy in our being can cause the fascination of drugs to pale in comparison.

Help for young people in finding their orientation can grow out of real, human encounters. What an adult *thinks* or *feels* does not reach a young person's deep, inner self, but only that which an adult *does*; what he or she *really is*. Such an encounter can leave a young person feeling obligated to peel off the habitual, non-committal attitude and wake up to independent responsibility.

In order to make this kind of encounter possible, conventions and routines must be overcome again and again. Young people must be made to understand by observing adults how they strive, and try, how they fail and suffer, and how they then courageously step into new learning.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Rudolf Steiner made it clear that, in our era, human encounters would become increasingly more difficult.¹³ A birth of new soul qualities, with all the pain that it entails, must be experienced.

If we, as adults, can bring ourselves to overcome our own limitations and reach out to young people, if we can bring ourselves to self-confrontation, then we have achieved a real step on the threshold to the spiritual. Then young people can "test us out" on a soul-spiritual level with confidence because something will be there for them to find.

Only when the spiritual dimension of human beings is recognized as a reality and this aspect is brought into the confrontation with drugs will it be possible to reach beyond the mere treatment of symptoms. The outer gesture of avoidance that is drug consumption will then become an innermost call for knowledge and support one's being.

Awakening others to this task is the goal of this article. It should not be considered a handbook for the practical treatment of drug addicts, but rather as presenting certain viewpoints for thought-filled contention with drugs that have come about from years of practical experience with drug counseling.

Let us summarize the task of our time as the task of ego development that is inseparably connected to its shadow, the tendency to addiction. We must summon all our strength and direct it toward self-education, education, and therapy in order to make it possible for our children to become individual human beings. The future is possible only if the younger generation can realize its inner task.

Footnotes:

¹ It applies to our present time that the people's egos (I) stand before each other without protection. No one describes the phase of human development taking place in our time without pointing out that this interaction between human egos in an unprotected way is something totally new that has come into human development. (Rudolf Steiner: Complete Works 217; October 14, 1922)

² Taken from a graduation speech given by a nineteen-year-old German student in 1995: The "Age of Me" is proclaimed with cymbals and trumpets. One could also say: Self-criticism is put in its grave. I tolerate the rubbish in myself. In some cases, gone especially far, one's own mistakes are no longer seen. I project the garbage of my soul onto others in order to appear all the more impeccable and to sooth my conscience.

³ Those powers that have accompanied human beings unconsciously throughout their development so that humanity could move forward are now nearly exhausted. By the middle of the twentieth century, approximately, they will be completely gone. New power from the depths of the soul must be called forth. And, a person must come to recognize how he or she is connected to the roots of spiritual life in the depths of his or her soul. (Rudolf Steiner: Complete Works 194, December 14, 1919)

⁴ Benjamin (see "Encounters" at beginning): "Stop smoking weed? No, I get too much out of it!" (Age seventeen; smoking hashish for two years)

⁵ Maria: "Life sucks and it's a lie. But with drugs, it lies a lot better!" (Age eighteen; takes hashish and ecstasy)

⁶ Moni: "I would not give up for anything that feeling of being totally accepted; of being loved by everyone and everything; from the wall, the ceiling, the lamp. You totally melt into everything!" (Age sixteen, regular ecstasy user for the past year)

⁷ Tobias (see "Encounter" at beginning): "That gave me a kick that you didn't totally lecture me back then. I had to decide for myself." (Age seventeen, trying to stop taking drugs after four years)

- ⁸ Michael: “The drug is a lie. Every lie jerks me into the abyss again.” (Age sixteen, after four years of drug use. He died at age eighteen.)
- ⁹ Rudolf Steiner: “Everyone knows that, at the present time, there are an extraordinarily high number of broken people who cannot cope with their lives. They cannot look back upon experiences they should have had in their education, in their childhoods. Certain forces can be developed only during childhood and then one can cope with life.” (Complete Works 193, September 14, 1919)
- ¹⁰ Karin: “Nothing in the world could have stopped me from taking heroin. I needed it!” (Successful drug therapy after spending six years in the heroin scene. Today she is a biodynamic farmer.)
- ¹¹ Marcus: (See “Encounters” at the beginning) “I learned what it means to want freedom. I know there are consequences!” (Age seventeen; constant hashish smoker who has decided to quit)
- ¹² Felicitas Vogt: “Through illusion, drugs promise what we have not achieved in social reality.”
- ¹³ Rudolf Steiner: “It will become more and more difficult for people to bring themselves into a right relationship with another because this requires the use of inner development and challenges them to inner activity.” (Complete Works 168, October 10, 1916)

Education Seen as a Problem Involving the Training of Teachers

Lecture given by Rudolf Steiner on August 15, 1919

by

Rudolf Steiner

From our last lectures you will have seen that the problem of education is the most important of all the questions that now occupy our minds. We have already emphasized that the whole social problem contains as its chief factor the problem of education. A week ago I gave you certain indications for the changes which are needed in the whole system of education so that you will easily understand that the most important sub-question in this problem is that of the training of teachers themselves.

If you study the character of the epoch which began in the middle of the fifteenth century, you will gain the impression that throughout that time a wave of materialistic probations swept through the whole evolution of humanity, and in the present time we must realize that it is necessary to work our way out of this materialistic wave and to find our way back to the spirit. The spiritual path was known to humanity in past epochs of culture, but in those olden times men trod this path more or less instinctively and unconsciously, and they lost it in order that they might re-discover it through their own impulse, out of their own freedom. The path leading to the spirit must now be sought consciously, in full consciousness.

The epoch of transition through which humanity had to pass since the middle of the fifteenth century is what we may call the materialistic probation of humanity. If we submit to the influence of this materialistic epoch and then observe, with the insight thus gained, the development of culture during the last three or four centuries up to our present time, we discover that the training of teachers above all has been seized and claimed more intensively than anything else by this wave of materialism. Nothing impresses us so deeply than the way in which pedagogical-didactic conceptions have been permeated by materialistic ideas.

It suffices to observe with some understanding a few details in our modern system of education in order to realize the difficulties connected with a real and fruitful progress. Consider that particularly people who believe they are authorities on modern education assert that every form of instruction, beginning with the elementary classes, should be “intuitive” or what they mean by intuitive. I have often pointed out to you how they wish, for example, to objectify the teaching of arithmetic, namely by introducing calculators in the elementary schools! They attribute great importance to the fact that the child should see everything and form his or her own thoughts through the things s/he sees. This intuitive direction in education is undoubtedly justified in many pedagogical spheres, but it nevertheless forces us to envisage the problem: How will a child develop if s/he passes through only such an intuitive education? If the child passes through only this kind of training his/her soul will become completely parched, his/her inner soul-impulse and soul-force will gradually die and the whole being will become connected exclusively with the sphere of external observation, and the forces which should grow out of the soul’s inner being will gradually perish. Modern teachers, of course, do not know that they are killing the souls of children, but they actually do this. And we see, as a result, the symptoms, which now appear in so many adults. How many modern adults have problematic characteristics? How many of them are, at a more mature age, unable to draw out of their inner being the forces which give them comfort and hope in difficult times and which enable them to cope with different life situations? We come across many shattered natures, and we ourselves may at certain moments be at a loss in regard to the way in which we must face life. All this is connected with the deficiencies of our educational systems, particularly with the deficiencies connected with the training of teachers.

What should the future aims be in regard to the training of teachers? You see, what a teacher generally knows when s/he passes through his/her examinations is of secondary importance, for generally s/he is asked things which s/he can easily read up on before his/her lessons in any manual, things which s/he can prepare beforehand whenever the need arises. But what these examinations do not take into consideration is the general soul-constitution of the teacher—that spiritual essence which must incessantly pass over from his or her own being to that of his pupils.

It is not a matter of indifference whether this or that teacher enters the classroom. When one teacher enters the room the children of his class may feel a certain connection with him; in another case they do not feel any connection with the teacher, and sometimes they may actually feel a gulf between them and the teacher, accompanied by a whole range of feelings passing from indifference to those sensations which express themselves in making fun of the teacher, in scoffing and jeering at him. There is a whole

range of feelings, which lies between the pupils and the teacher, and often this can be the ruin of real instruction and education.

In the first place, there is a burning question which we must face: How can the training of teachers be changed? It can only be changed if the teachers absorb the truths concerning nature and the essence of the human being that come from spiritual science. A teacher must be filled with the conviction that the human being is connected with the spiritual world. In the growing child he should see a testimony to the fact that through conception and birth this child came down to the earth from the spiritual world, that his spiritual essence became enfolded with a physical body, and that here in the physical world he must learn things which he cannot learn during his existence between death and a new birth. The child learns these things with the help of his teacher.

Every child should stand before the teacher's soul as a question asked by the supersensible world to the physical world. A teacher cannot read this question in a complete and encompassing manner unless he calls on the aid of the spiritual-scientific truths concerning man's being.

Over the past three or four hundred years, humanity has gradually acquired the habit of observing man in a purely physiological way, I might say, of studying him only in regard to his external bodily constitution. Such a conception of man is harmful above all to teachers who wish to educate children. It will therefore be necessary that an education of the future should be based upon an anthropology that is derived from anthroposophy. This can only be reached if we contemplate the human being from the aspects that I have so frequently explained to you, those aspects that characterize him as a threefold being. We must be willing to have a real inner comprehension of this threefold being of man.

I have often explained to you that the human being, such as he stands before us, may be distinguished first of all in regard to his nerve-sensory structure. This may be expressed by saying, in a more popular form, that he is, in the first place, head; we distinguish in him his head structure. From an external standpoint, we then take as the second part of the human being the one which is pre-eminently the seat of rhythmic processes, the thorax, and then, as a third part, the one connected with the whole metabolic system, the limbs, the metabolic structure in which the metabolic processes take place. The physical form of the active human being is comprised externally of these three parts.

Let us now observe more closely these three parts which constitute the whole human nature: the head or the nerve-sensory part, the thorax or the rhythmical part, and the limbs or, more broadly, the metabolic part.

It is now essential to grasp the different character of these three parts of human nature. For a modern scholar who loves schematic classifications this is not easy. When we say that the human being consists of head, thorax

and limbs, some scholars like to draw a line dividing the head from the rest of the body and to say: everything above this line is “head.” Then they would like to draw another line separating the thorax from the limbs, so as to have all these parts neatly side by side. The modern scholar does not like to consider anything that cannot be classified in this manner.

But in reality this is not possible: such dividing lines. do not exist in real life. The human being is indeed chiefly head, or chiefly nerves and senses in that part of the body that lies above the shoulders. Yet his nerve-sensory system is located not only in the head, above the shoulders, for the sense of touch, for instance, or the sense of heat, are spread over the whole body. The head, therefore, stretches over the whole body. We may therefore say: man is pre-eminently “head” in his head. The head also exists in the thorax, but there its activity is weaker. And it exists in a still weaker form in the limbs and in the metabolic system, but nevertheless we may find also there the activity of the head. Consequently we must say: Though the activity of the head may be found in the whole human being, though the whole human being is “head,” it is the head which is preeminently head. In our blackboard drawing we would have to indicate the head-part of man as follows (indicated in white on the blackboard drawing).

The thorax-man is not only localized in the thorax, though he chiefly lives in the organs which exist in the chest, in which the circulation of the blood and the breathing rhythm chiefly find expression. Yet respiration continues in the head and in the limbs, so that we must say: The human being is pre-eminently thorax in this region of the chest, but the activities of the thorax may also be found here and here, though in weaker measure (indicated in red on the blackboard drawing). Again we find that the whole human being is thorax, though the thorax exists chiefly in this part of the body, the chest.

Similarly the limbs and the metabolic structure are chiefly located in the lower abdomen (indicated in blue on the blackboard drawing), but the limbs also exist in the thorax region in a weaker measure, and their weakest expression is to be found in the head.

Consequently, though we may say the “head” is head, we must also say that the whole human being is head. Similarly, though the thorax is thorax, the whole human being is also thorax, and so forth. In reality, these things are intermingled. Our intellect likes to differentiate these parts, to set them side-by-side. This shows us how poorly our thoughts are connected with external reality. For there, in the real world outside, things intermingle. Whenever we separate head, thorax, and metabolic structure, we must also bear in mind that these different parts must at the same time be thought of as forming a whole. In reality, we should never think only analytically, but at the same time synthetically. A thinking person who only analyses resembles one who only breathes in and not out.

This shows you to some extent what should be included in the thoughts of teachers; in the future they must absorb this inner mobile way of thinking, this way of thinking which is in no way schematic. This alone will enable them to approach the reality of the world and of man. This reality cannot be approached unless one can grasp it from a certain wider standpoint, as a phenomenon connected with our epoch. The predilection for details that has developed in the present time, whenever scientific facts are contemplated, should be overcome; we must instead reach the point of connecting these details of life with the great problems of life.

There is one question that will become more and more significant for every spiritual development in the future, and that is the question of immortality. We must bear in mind how the great majority of men now looks upon this question of immortality, particularly in view of the fact that so many people have now reached the point of denying immortality.

What is it that lives in the minds of men who still wish to know something of immortality upon the foundation of traditional religion—the impulse to know what takes place with the human soul when the human passes through the portal of death? If we inquire what interest people have in the question of immortality, or better, in the question of the eternal kernel of man's being we find that their chief interest in man's eternal life is connected with the question: What takes place with the humans being when he passes through the portal of death?

Man is aware of the fact that he is an Ego. Within this Ego live his thinking, feeling and willing. He cannot bear the thought that the Ego might perish. The question which interest him above all is whether he can carry his Ego through death and what fate awaits him after death.

This course of development is the result of religious systems speaking of eternity and of man's eternal being by bearing in mind above all the question: What happens to the human soul when we pass through the portal of death?

Now you must feel that when we thus envisage the question of immortality it has a very strong flavor of egoism. It is really an egoistic impulse that leads us to ask what happens to the human soul when it passes through the portal of death. If modern people were to practice self-knowledge to a greater extent than is actually the case, if they were to study their own selves and not fall prey to illusion, they would realize how greatly their egoism is connected with the question of what happens to the soul after death.

This soul-mood has grown particularly during the last three or four hundred years, during the time of mankind's materialistic probation. Yet theories or doctrines of a purely abstract kind cannot overcome this inner habit of thinking and feeling which has taken hold of the souls of men. We should ask instead: Can things remain as they are? Should egoistic impulses in human nature be the sole inducement to ask after man's eternal being?

If we bear in mind everything connected with this problem we must say, this soul-mood has arisen because religions have neglected the other standpoint: Namely, to consider the human being when she is born, to watch her wonderful growth from her first cry, to see how the soul gradually penetrates into the body; Religions have neglected to observe man's pre-natal essence, that essence which lived in the spiritual world before birth and which gradually comes to the fore in the child. Do we ever come across the question: What continues from the spiritual sphere in physical man when she is born? Instead, we continually come across the question: What continues when she is born? Yet few people ask: What continues in man when she is born?

For the future this standpoint must have our chief attention. We should learn to listen to the manifestation of the soul-spiritual essence in the growing child, such as it existed before birth or conception. In the growing child we must learn to discover the continuation of the spiritual being which lived in the spiritual world before birth; then our relation with man's eternal being will gradually become unselfish. For we are inwardly selfish if we are not interested in that which continues in physical life from the spiritual world and direct our attention exclusively to the question of what continues after death. The observation of that which continues from the spiritual world in physical life is, as it were, based upon an unselfish mood of the soul.

Egoistic minds do not ask whether physical life is the continuation of a spiritual pre-natal life because they know the certainty of man's existence on earth, and they are glad of this existence. What they are not sure about is whether the human being also exists after death and so they would like to have a proof for this. Their egoism leads them to this search. But true knowledge does not come from egoism, not even from that sublimated kind of egoism that has just been characterized as producing the interest in a continuation of life after death. Can it be denied that religions speculate with this kind of egoism? This attitude must be overcome. Those who have an insight into the spiritual world know that this overcoming will not only bring with it truths, but it will also change man's whole attitude towards his environment. People will have quite different feelings towards the growing child they will face a child differently if they know of that eternal essence which always continues from life to life, and which no longer remained in the spiritual world when the child was born.

Consider how the problem would change if viewed from this standpoint. One can say: The human being lived in the spiritual world before he descended into the physical world through conception and birth. The spiritual world must no longer have given him that for which his soul was striving. He must have had the impulse to come down to the physical world, to enfold himself once more with a body, in order to seek on earth what he could no longer find in the spiritual world.

Life acquires a far deeper meaning if we contemplate it from this standpoint, but feelingly. Whereas the egoistic standpoint makes us become more and more abstract and leads into theoretical conclusions, inclining us more and more to intellectual thought, the unselfish standpoint gradually induces us to understand that world through love, to comprehend through love.

This is one of the elements which must be included in the training of teachers, to look upon pre-natal man, to experience in regard to life also the riddle of birth and not only the riddle of death.

We must then learn to raise anthropology to the stage of anthroposophy by acquiring true feeling for the forms that come to expression in the threefold human being. Recently I placed the question: Is not the human head, or that which chiefly constitutes the human head, spherical and simply set on top of the remaining part of the human organization? And again, if we take the thoracic part of man, how does this appear to us? It really appears to us in such a way that we might take a piece of the head and enlarge it, so that the spinal column would be here (he pointed to a drawing). Whereas the head's central point lies in the head, the central point of thoracic man lies very far away from the thorax. And if you imagine this as a kind of large head, this large head could belong, as it were, to a man lying in a horizontal position. Thus, if we consider the spinal column as an imperfect head, we obtain a human being horizontally and one standing up vertically. Matters become still more complicated if we bear in mind metabolic man, so complicated that we could not even draw them in a two-dimensional plane.

In short, a form-study of the plastic forms of the human being's three constituent parts would show us that each one of them presents an entirely different aspect. The head is, as it were, a totality; the thoracic part is not a totality, but a fragment; this is still more the case with the metabolic part of the human being.

What makes the human head a totality, something that is rounded off and complete in itself? It has this rounded-off character through the fact that the head is, of all the parts of human nature, the one most adapted to the physical world. This may seem strange to you, for one is accustomed to look upon the human head as man's noblest part. Nevertheless it is true that the head is the part that is most adapted to physical existence. The head expresses most of all of physical existence. We may, therefore, say: If we wish to characterize chiefly the physical body, we should bear in mind the head. The human being is most of all physical body in his head.

The human being is pre-eminently etheric body in the thoracic organs, in the organs of rhythm, and he is chiefly astral body in his metabolic organs. The Ego has as yet developed no marked characteristics in the physical world.

Here we have a point of view that is of extraordinary significance. You should envisage it by saying: When I look upon the human head (indicated

in white on the blackboard drawing), I see, at the same time, the chief characteristics of the physical body. The head expresses more than anything else the manifestation of the human being. The etheric body is more active in the thorax. In the head it is least active of all; in the chest the etheric body is far more active. Seen physically, the thoracic part of man is therefore less perfect than the head. From a physical aspect it is less perfect. Very imperfect indeed is man's metabolic part, because there the activity of the etheric body is very small, whereas the astral body is most active of all in that part. The Ego is the infant—as I have said—and it hardly has a physical correlate.

The human being can, therefore, be described by saying: Man consists of a physical body. If you wish to reply to the question: What has the closest resemblance with man's physical body, you will have to say: The spherical form of the head. The human being then consists of an etheric body. What resembles it most closely? The fragment of the thorax. Man also consists of an astral body. What has the greatest resemblance with the astral body? Metabolic man. As the Ego, there is not a part in man's physical body that corresponds to it.

Each one of man's three parts, the head or nerve-sensory man, the thorax or rhythmical man, and metabolic man, thus become an image for something which transcends them: The head, an image for the physical body; the thorax, an image for the etheric body; the metabolism an image for the astral body.

We shall have to learn to look upon the human being in a different way than is the case today, when one studies the lifeless human body in a clinic, by investigating a fragment of tissue, and so forth, no matter whether this belongs to the head or the thorax.

We must learn to say: The head, the thorax and man's metabolic part have different relations with the cosmos and are the images of different forces which stand behind them. Such knowledge will extend a merely anthropological way of studying things to an anthropomorphic study.

From a purely physical standpoint, the organs of the thorax and of the head are of equal value. Whether you dissect the lungs or the brain, both are physical substance, from a physical point of view. But there is a great difference between them from a spiritual point of view. From a spiritual aspect, you will find that when you dissect the brain you have before you plainly what you are dissecting. But when you dissect, for instance, the lungs, which form part of the thorax, these present a very unclear aspect, for there the etheric body plays a very prominent part while the head is asleep.

What I have explained to you just now has its spiritual counterpoint. Those who have progressed a little through meditation, through the exercises that are described in our anthroposophical writings, gradually come to the point of contemplating the human being as a threefold being.

You know that in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, I speak of this threefold human being from a particular aspect, namely there, where I

draw attention to the Guardian of the Threshold. But this three-partition can also be reached by a strong concentration upon one's own self; this really enables one to separate the head (indicated in white on the blackboard drawing) from the thorax (indicated in red on the blackboard drawing) and from the metabolic parts (indicated in blue on the blackboard drawing).

Then one begins to notice what really constitutes the head. You see, if you draw out of the head from the remaining part of the human organism, so that you have it before you uninfluenced by the other members of human nature, you will find that the head is lifeless, it does not have any life. Clairvoyantly it is impossible to separate the head from the rest of the human organism without perceiving that the head is a corpse.

If one separates the thorax from the rest of the body, we find that it remains alive. And if one separates the astral body from the other members, by drawing out the metabolic part of man, one discovers that one's astral being continually escapes, it never remains at the same place, but follows the movements of the cosmos, for metabolic man has within him the astral forces.

And now imagine that you are facing a human being, a child. You study its nature with sound common sense, and with the aid of truths such as those explained just now. Then you look upon the human head—it bears death within its structure. You observe the influences that go out towards the head from the thorax and notice how vivifying they are. You see how the child begins to walk and perceive that it is the astral body which is active in its walking.

Human nature now becomes clearly perceptible to you, inwardly perceptible. The head—a corpse: procreating life would come to a stop if the human being were to remain quite still. But the moment he begins to walk you can see that it is the astral body that walks—the human being can walk because the astral body consumes substances while walking, metabolic processes take place in a certain way.

How can we observe the Ego? For we have really exhausted everything within the field of our observation. When you notice the corpse of the head, the vitalizing influence of thoracic man, and all that is connected with walking, what remains in order to observe the Ego externally? I said that the Ego hardly has a physical correlate. You can only study the Ego by observing a growing child. With one year, it is quite small, with two years it is bigger, and so on. When you watch a child growing and put together what it was like in the succeeding epochs, you have a physical perception of the Ego. You can never perceive the Ego when you merely stand before a human being; you can only see the Ego by watching a child's growth.

If people were not subjected to illusions, but if they could see reality clearly, they would realize that it is not possible to perceive the Ego when they simply meet a human being and stand before him, but that they can only perceive the Ego by studying the human being in the different stages of his

life. When you meet a person again after twenty years, you have a strong perception of his Ego by noticing the changes in his expression and physiognomy, and this is particularly the case if you have seen that person twenty years ago as a child.

Please do not merely develop theoretic ideas in connection with the ideas which I have explained to you, but try to vivify your thoughts and when you observe the human being, try to consider the following: The head, a corpse; the thorax, vivifying influences walking the astral body through the growth of the child's Ego. Whereas formerly the human being stood before you like a waxen doll, the whole conception of the human being thus becomes filled with life, .

What do we generally see with our physical eyes, and even through our intellect? —A doll of wax! But this doll begins to live if you add what I have explained to you just now!

Your conceptions will, for that purpose, have to be permeated by Spiritual Science, by the forces by which spiritual science can see into human feeling, into man's whole connection with the cosmos. A running child is a manifestation of the astral body. His characteristic movements while walking and running—for every child has a unique kind of walk—depend on the configuration of the different astral bodies. And what you can see in the child's growth expresses something of the Ego.

You see, Karma exercises a strong influence on man in such cases. Let us take an example Johann Gottlieb Fichte. I characterized Fichte to you in previous lectures, once describing him as a great philosopher, and another time as a Bolshevik, and so forth. But let us now take him from quite another standpoint.

Let us suppose that Fichte is passing by while we are standing in the street; we notice that he is not very tall or husky. What does his stature reveal? Repressed growth. He plants his feet firmly while walking, particularly his heels—that is the way he walks. His walk reveals the whole Ego of Fichte. Not a shade of his character can escape to us, as we watch him walking along the street, with his broad shoulders and his way of treading firmly on his heels. One could almost hear his way of speaking, by observing him in this way, from behind!

A spiritual element may thus penetrate into the external things of life. It cannot however enter into these external things of life unless people take into their minds something which does not live in the soul-constitution of modern men. Modern people would think it indiscrete to observe their fellow men as described above. And it would not be very advisable that such a manner of observation should spread, for the great propagation of materialism has given people such a character that they refrain from opening letters which do not belong to them only because this is forbidden. So long as such a

mentality exists, it is not thinkable that everything should change in regard to human connections.

With the riddle of the fifteenth century the development of the earth has reached a stage which the human being on earth could only reach through one man meeting the other spiritually, right down in the physical sphere. The more we advance towards the future, the more we must learn to grasp spiritually all the physical things around us.

A beginning must be made in this direction with the teacher's pedagogical work in regard to children. Physiognomic pedagogy is the will to solve the riddle man, through education, in each single specimen of man!

Now you may feel how strong is the influence of what I have described to you as the probation of humanity in the present time. My explanations really tend towards an ever-growing individualization, every human being considered as a separate being. The great ideal that we should bear in mind is that no one resembles another person, that every person is a distinct and separate being, with characteristics of his own. If the earth were to reach its goal before we acquire this capacity to recognize in every person his own characteristic being, humanity on earth would not attain its goal!

Yet how far distant we are today from the mentality which strives after this goal! Today we abolish distinctions among human beings, we level them. When we observe people, we do not particularly bear in mind their individual qualities. Hermann Bahr, of whom I have often spoken, once explained how the development of the times tends to the gradual abolishment of individualization. In the 1890s, when Hermann Bahr lived for some time in Berlin, he frequented the Berlin "society" and every evening at dinner had a lady to his right and one to his left. But on the next evening, at the dinner table, when sitting again between two ladies, he could only gather from the invitation cards that they were not the same of the day before—he had never looked at them carefully, for the lady of yesterday and the lady of today were more or less the same to Bahr. Social and particularly industrial civilization levels people and discourages the development of individualization.

In the present time, we are headed for a general leveling. But man's innermost goal should be that of individualization. Modern European men tend above all to cover up individuality, whereas the thing that they most need is to go in search of that individuality.

When we teach children, we must begin to turn our inner soul-gaze fully on to the child's individuality. Teachers should be trained to adopt the mentality that they must discover the individuality in each man. This can only be reached if our conception of the human being becomes permeated with life, as described, above. We should really be conscious of the fact that man is not a mechanism that moves, but that it is the astral body that moves and draws along the physical body.

Now compare this inwardly mobile picture of the whole human being, which thus arises in your soul, with the conception of man offered by modern science! What it offers to us is a homunculus, a real homunculus! Science explains nothing concerning the human being, it only preaches the homunculus. The true essence of man is something that must penetrate above all into education. Modern pedagogy does not contain it at all.

The problem of education is therefore a question of “training teachers” and until we look upon it in this way no fruitful results can be obtained in education. Seen from a higher perspective, everything is connected, so that anything is linked up with the other.

Modern people would even like to develop side by side the human activities, the inner human activities, as subjects of teaching. One learns anthropology and then religion, but there is no connection between them. In reality our observations of the human being are connected, as you have seen, with the problem of immortality, with the problem of man’s eternal being. And the problem of man’s eternal being had to be brought into connection with a direct observation of the human being.

This mobile character of soul-experiences must above all be brought into pedagogy. From it will develop entirely different capacities than those that are now developing in teacher training centers. This is of very great importance.

With today’s lecture I wished to show you that spiritual science must really permeate everything and that it is impossible to solve the great social problems of the present without the aid of spiritual science.



Blackboard drawing by Rudolf Steiner



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