

Renewal

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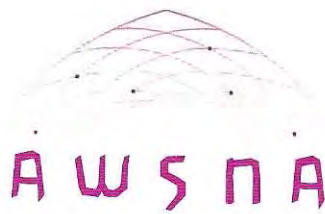
Stories and Fairy Tales

Chores, Work, and Community Service

Circus Education



A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION

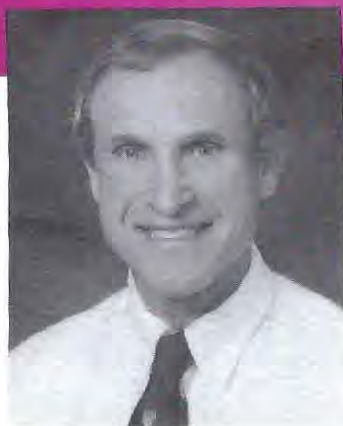


We can give children a moral training. We start, in the teaching of morality, from the feeling of gratitude. Gratitude is a definite moral experience in relation to our fellow human beings. Sentiments and notions that do not spring from gratitude will lead at most to abstract precepts regarding morality. But everything can come from gratitude. From gratitude we develop the capacity for love and the feeling for duty. And in this way morality leads to a [spiritual life].

—Rudolf Steiner
Lecture, August 24, 1922, in
The Spiritual Ground of Education
(Collected Works, Number 305)

CREDITS:

The cover painting, "Red Castle," is a watercolor by James Arnold, grade two, of the Shepherd Valley Waldorf School in Niwot, Colorado. *Renewal* also thanks Anne Riegel-Koetzsch for her illustrations on pages 9 and 10; Christina Stroniarz, a Waldorf school graduate, now living in Kelowna, British Columbia, for her painting "The Frog Prince" on page 11; Larry Canner and the Baltimore Waldorf School for the photos on pages 12, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, and 29; Rumi Kobayashi-Gant and her children Nigel and Willow for the photographs on pages 14 and 17; Sacramento Waldorf High School student Francesca Lohmann for her drawing on page 22; Larry Canner and the Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital for the photo on page 24; Aubyn McDaniel, grade two, of the Shepherd Valley Waldorf School for his painting on page 27; Richard Clark and the Pine Hill Waldorf School for the photographs on pages 30, 31, 32, and 33; and Highland Hall Waldorf School for the photographs accompanying Christine Meyer's article.



From the Editor

BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PH.D.

This past summer I participated in the Fifth Kolisko Conference, held in Lahti, Finland. The Kolisko conferences are held every four years and focus on the role of the medical doctor and of medical therapists in the life of a Waldorf school.

Almost nine hundred people attended, coming from forty-five countries, including India, Japan, Thailand, Tanzania, Peru, Spain, Colombia, Brazil, Korea, Mexico, South Africa, and Romania. There were large delegations from Russia, the Baltic countries, and Finland, as well as about thirty people from the United States and Canada. The plenum meetings were translated simultaneously into six languages.

The participants included Waldorf teachers from regular schools as well as from schools for children in need of special care; anthroposophically oriented physicians and nurses; curative eurythmists; speech, movement, and art therapists; teachers of the remedial Extra Lesson; and concerned parents.

A verse by Rudolf Steiner was the theme for the week-long gathering:

*Once in ancient times there lived powerfully
In the souls of the initiates the idea that all men
Are by nature born ill.
And education was thought of as a healing process
Through which the child in its maturing
Is given the capacities to become
A true human being.*

Each morning this verse was recited in the original German and in several of the thirty-eight languages represented at the conference.

This verse—which can take one aback, perhaps, on a first reading—was explained by Dr. Armin Husemann, an anthroposophical physician from Stuttgart, Germany, who was the conference keynote speaker.

Dr. Husemann explained that the physical body of the human being in all its structures and processes is the manifestation of cosmic and spiritual patterns and principles. The human body is the creative masterpiece of the spiritual hierarchies working through eons of time. The incarnation of those ideal spiritual patterns into the physical world, into flesh and blood, necessarily involves imperfections that in time manifest as illness.

In the lectures and in over sixty workshops, the therapeutic resources available to the Waldorf educator were presented. These include curative eurythmy; speech, painting, and movement therapies (Bothmer gymnastics and Spacial Dynamics™); the Waldorf curriculum itself; tone and color therapy; therapeutic massage; horseback riding therapy; the potentized, natural remedies prescribed by anthroposophical physicians; and so on. In the next issue of *Renewal* there will be an article dealing with information presented at the conference.

The participants were as remarkable as the conference itself. Though coming from many different lands and cultures, all had somehow found their way to Anthroposophy and to Waldorf Education and had discovered in these something to which they could devote their lives. They were remarkable too for their dedication and self-sacrifice. Two Russian women, Julia and Vera, who had traveled two days by train from the Ural Mountains to reach Finland, are typical. Living “on the edge of Europe” and beginning several years ago with nothing—no money, no schoolroom, no equipment, no training—each has created a Waldorf learning environment for handicapped children. “If we don’t do what we do, these children will sit at home in front of the television all day,” Vera explained with a smile.

On the final morning, Dr. Michaela Glöckler, head of the Medical Section of the Goetheanum, stood on the concert stage of the magnificent Sibelius Hall, where the

please turn to page 8

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From the Chairman of AWSNA

BY DONALD BUFANO

Reflecting on my first year as chairman of AWSNA, I note an inspiring time for the association and for the Waldorf movement. I visit schools and find healthy students and striving faculties and parents. Yet the national and world situation is one of conflict, intolerance, misunderstanding, war, and oppression. Does the Waldorf movement have anything to offer?

Waldorf Education seeks to help each child develop into a human being capable of living in peace. Such a person must have a clear sense of his own higher self and also the ability to perceive and acknowledge the higher self of every other human being. Much conflict stems from individuals and groups failing to acknowledge the humanity of others. In a Waldorf school the higher, noble self of the child is acknowledged and nurtured. Every day, the teacher meets and affirms that nobler essence by greeting each student in the class with a handshake and a caring look in the eye. Also, Waldorf teachers consciously look beyond the manifest shortcomings and the problematic behavior of the students to their true nature. The children are encouraged and helped to think and act out of their noble and higher selves. And they are consciously guided toward dealing positively with each other. The curriculum itself and the way it is presented assume and develop social skills. The students are schooled to perceive and appreciate the humanity of others.

A person capable of peace also requires a sense of security. This security—out of which grow love and freedom—is an inner and personal confidence. It is not the product of external safeguards. Waldorf Education develops this intangible security in children through a predictable rhythm of life—daily, weekly, yearly; through caring and attentive teachers; through the recognition of talents and developing capacities; and through an experience of the world as ultimately beautiful and good.

The adults in Waldorf school communities—teachers, administrators, and parents—strive to develop this same inner sense of security and sense of shared humanity in themselves. And they try to manifest these in the functioning of their schools. Tolerance, flexibility of thought, the encouragement of various points of view, and love for all humanity and for the world are values that Waldorf communities seek to realize.

Of course, in our educating of our children and in the running of our schools we do not always realize our ideals. But still our active interest in the concerns and aspirations of the wider culture can motivate us to offer in humility our way of education and our way of working together.

I have experienced that our fellow teachers, parents, and administrators outside the Waldorf schools want to hear what we are thinking about, what we are working on, what innovations we have developed and put into practice. When AWSNA participates in the broader educational community, the reactions are instructive:

"We are glad you are [finally] here."

"I am pleased to see Waldorf is taking an interest in us [outside your own walls]."

"This is interesting; can you tell me more?"

We need to bring the ideas and ideals of Waldorf Education into the broader cultural arena. Ideas about the spiritual nature of the human being, the interconnectedness of society and nature, and the importance of social awareness—ideas that are the heart of the curriculum—can nourish a hungering world, can help bring progress.

AWSNA is working collaboratively with like-minded individuals and organizations to effect change in the educational and social spheres. Individual school



Waiting on the Silver Moon

Bedtime Storytelling for the Tired Parent

BY MARK MCGIVERN

I always thought of the true storyteller—one who can make up a story as he tells it—as a special person. To spontaneously create and tell a tale surely must require some kind of shamanistic training, a special gift for knowing what children want to hear, or simply inexhaustible creativity. Through my experience with my own children, though, I discovered that none of these are prerequisites for being a good storyteller. One needs only a loving desire to share the world of imagination with one's children, plus the help of a few simple techniques.

For about five years, I told my son and daughter stories made up on the spot almost every night before they went to sleep. This gave both my children and me a rich store of shared memories. I am convinced that every parent, even those with busy schedules that leave them spent at the end of the day, can do the same. Every parent can participate in the crucial task of nourishing his or her child's imagination. In my efforts with my children, I developed an approach that nurtured my creativity without overtaxing my energy at the end of a long day. It is an approach that every parent can use.

We assume that a creative activity requires a lot of energy and that if one is tired, is lacking energy, one should rest. From this point of view, doing something creative at bedtime with your children is unrealistic. But the opposite is true. Bedtime is underrated as a time for parents and children to do something meaningful together.

Children are especially receptive at bedtime, and their mood then can be quite different from that generated by their more active and outward daytime energies. The end of the day and the end of the familiar routine of getting ready to go to sleep allow for a mood of stillness, or at least the opportunity of cultivating such a mood. In this stillness children feel the possibilities of imagination more readily, as if the world of images were a bridge to the world of sleep and dreams.

At bedtime, parents can make an important contribution to the soul life of the whole family by taking time to cultivate and participate in this mood of stillness. For a time, at least, the often excessive stimulation and the hyper-fast pace of our culture can be kept at bay. If we can create a series of beautiful images that can be taken into sleep and digested by the inner being of our children, we have made an important contribution to their emotional health.

Our journey began when I discovered a special character who seemed to embody something ordinary and everyday, as well as something enchanting. We had just read *Grandfather Twilight* by Barbara Berger, and the old man who lives quietly in the forest and carries to the ocean the pearl that turns into the silver moon became for us "Mr. Binkey." Every story I told began with Mr. Binkey in his house in the Green Forest. The reliance on one main character

was in time balanced by a number of secondary characters who provided variety both of the ordinary kind and of the magical. The animal characters often had problems to solve or knowledge to be gained from living in the natural world. I made the human characters more magical. The Star Prince, the Moon Princess, and the Sun Princess were linked with the natural world but had special powers.

I discovered that characters become more distinct when they are given just one or two unique characteristics.

The light of the stars, sun, and moon were the special responsibility of the two princesses and the prince. Mr. Binkey had "finder machines" that he used to locate things that were lost, hidden, or stolen. He played a special song on his recorder that he used to summon particular friends. The mouse who lived under the house—Mr. Binkey Mouse—usually came along with Mr. Binkey on his walks by sitting in his shirt pocket.

Once I had begun, the richness of this nightly experience motivated me to continue it. But what enabled me to be creative at the end of the day was that I didn't think about what was going to happen in the story. What made these spontaneous stories possible night after night was beginning each story with the same main character in the same setting. This minimized the amount of energy needed for the process of invention. To invent new characters and settings each night or even each week requires too much thinking. The tired parent doesn't want to think that much at the end of the day. That is why reading stories from books is common. But if stories are told with a sense of seriousness and care, then this main character becomes a beloved figure whom children will want to hear about again and again.



**Bedtime storytelling
became a gift I
gave to myself as
much as to my son
and daughter.**

With all these characters in place in a familiar setting, I discovered lots of possibilities for spontaneously generated content. The ordinary rhythms of life lived alongside moments of wonder and adventure. Some stories involved a simple cup of tea with Mr. Binkey Mouse, a visit to the garden where gnomes were busy, or a walk to the river bridge to hear news about forest life. Other stories involved dangers of cosmic proportions. Once, for example, Mr. Binkey and the Star Prince and Moon Princess went into battle on their flying horses against a mischievous space dragon that had run amok in a star field.

I discovered that as my children got older they were more eager for either humor or adventure. The stories became longer and more complex. I then began to tell stories in segments, often with only an inkling of what was going to happen next, sometimes not even that. Complexity varied according to my own energy level and the possibilities that emerged as the story unfolded. I found that I had much less energy when bedtime was late. During periods when the children went to bed at the same—early—time, the stories came more easily.

Content for the stories also came readily when the rhythm of the year was used to provide a context. In this case also, the time and energy needed for creating the stories were significantly reduced. Seasonal changes and seasonal festivals were always reflected in the stories and provided a setting for obvious things to occur or for signs of the new season, such as the turning of the leaves, to be simply described.

Every year, Mr. Binkey went to Christmas Town, where he helped the elves build toys and met with the Snow Queen of the North Wind. A snowy owl would sometimes bring a message from Father Christmas. Spring was a time when the animals of the forest needed all kinds of help. Fall migrations always opened up the possibility of new characters, good and evil, to enter Mr. Binkey's world.

The daily rhythm of Mr. Binkey's life often provided a starting point for the stories. Many opened with his daily walk through the forest, where encounters were likely to happen, or with his taking a morning cup of tea, when someone would arrive at the door or window. Some stories happened at night with owls and glowing night-fairies. My children and I soon came to love this old man and his forest friends as if they were members of the family.

Rarely did I try to embed morals or messages within my stories. Doing so would have required more prepara-

tion and might have interrupted the flow of the story. The soul nourishment of bedtime storytelling lies in the special way that a told story stirs the picture-forming imagination. The intensified engagement that the teller has with a story being created in the moment can give the tale a warmth and intimacy. For the child listener, simply picturing a beloved character and entering into how that character experiences and discovers the world is both reassuring and exciting. Because the parent is not intellectually trying to invent a story with a point, the story can unfold naturally. The spontaneous flow of events follows feeling rather than logic.

Soul nourishment also comes from the warmth and cadence of a familiar, live human voice. I can't remember the content of the "Mowgli" stories of Rudyard Kipling that my mother told to my brothers and me, but I distinctly remember her voice and how it reflected her deeper engagement with a story that was told rather than read.

Bedtime storytelling became a gift I gave to myself as much as to my son and daughter. It was an opportunity to cultivate my imagination and also to combine and transform my various mundane feelings into living images and memories of enchantment. Revisiting the same beloved characters gave depth and familiarity. Weaving the ordinary with the magical reflected my own feelings about the world. By trusting in myself to enter Mr. Binkey's forest home and to follow my feelings, I came to trust in life more. I now experience more fully that the images and ideas that grew into stories are realities in the world.

I hope that the exercise of imagination and feeling that my children encountered in these stories will nurture this same trust in life—trust that life has gifts to offer and we have gifts to give. When I think back to those days when our storytelling adventures began, I can't help but see Grandfather Twilight on his ritual evening walk through the forest to the sea with the pearl growing large in his hands and the world waiting on the silver moon.

MARK MCGIVERN *recently graduated from the Waldorf Teacher Training Program offered by the Rudolf Steiner Centre in Toronto, Ontario. In the fall of 2002 he took over the sixth-grade class at the Nelson Waldorf School in Nelson, British Columbia. Mark now goes to school every day with his son, Nicholas, and his daughter, Annika.*

The Winds of Change Touch Renewal

In recent months there have been several changes in the *Renewal* staff.

Since the magazine's founding more than eleven years ago, **Marianne Alsop** as managing editor was in charge of design and production and also took care of circulation and advertising. Marianne was very dedicated to *Renewal* and did much that contributed to its success. This past summer, Marianne left *Renewal*. We thank her for all that she did for the magazine and wish her well in her new work.

Hallie Wootan, for many years chief graphic designer for Rudolf Steiner College and the Rudolf Steiner College Press, has joined the *Renewal* staff. Hallie will oversee the design, layout, and production of the magazine and also be in charge of advertising and circulation. We welcome her enthusiasm, experience, and creativity.

Anne Riegel-Koetzsch joined *Renewal* as copy editor eight years ago, having previously done copyediting for Shambhala Publications and the Anthroposophic Press. Anne, who is also a painter and graphic artist and who teaches at Rudolf Steiner College, has assumed the additional role of artistic consultant for *Renewal*.

James Pewtherer served on the editorial advisory board with enthusiasm, insight, and dedication from the inception of the magazine. James, who is AWSNA eastern regional chair and has many other posts and responsibilities within the North American and international Waldorf movement, reluctantly has left the board. We thank him for his long and distinguished volunteer service.

Joining the editorial advisory board is **Shyla Nelson** of Burlington, Vermont. Until last June, Shyla was the administrator of the high school of the Lake Champlain Waldorf School but has since returned to her career as a professional singer and to her academic studies. Shyla's two young daughters attend the Lake Champlain school.

Also joining the board is **John Wulsin**. John has been teaching English in the high school of the Green Meadow Waldorf School in Spring Valley, New York, for some twenty-five years. Along with his wife, Jane, a class teacher at the school, John has been a respected and beloved leader, not only in his own school community but in the Waldorf school movement in North America.

Shyla and John join **Patricia (Patti) Livingston** and **Vivian Jones-Schmidt** on the board. Patti taught handwork at the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City for many years. Active now as a consultant to Waldorf schools and initiatives around the country, she lives in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Patti has served on the editorial board since the founding of *Renewal* and has greatly contributed to the magazine's success.

Vivian Jones-Schmidt joined three years ago when charter member **Henry Barnes** stepped down. She lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, is a class teacher at the Charlottesville Waldorf School, and has written two articles for *Renewal*.

As editor, I am grateful to all those who have given and who will give of their energy and talents in helping the magazine serve Waldorf Education.

Ronald E. Koetzsch

From the Editor *continued*

conference was held, and read the keynote verse in German. Then thirty-eight participants, arrayed around the third and uppermost balcony of the hall, recited in turn and in a different language the same verse.

It seemed that this global chorus sounded out as a consolation and promise to children in need everywhere that somehow their needs would be met.

From the Chairman *continued*

communities are striving to manifest the fair ordering of responsibilities, opportunities, and privileges. They are trying to demonstrate that human dignity, mutual respect, and equal rights can inform a community's shared life.

But each individual involved with Waldorf Education can be an "Ambassador-at-Large for Waldorf Education." The duties include:

- Sharing one's experience—the challenges and the breakthroughs
- Taking an interest in the whole world—as we ask our children to do
- Bringing the fruits of one's Waldorf experience to others and
- Returning to one's school community with insights and ideas gained outside it

I earnestly hope all of you who are involved in Waldorf Education choose to accept the post of ambassador. You will benefit many near and far.

Pedagogical Stories

Tales Made and Told with a Purpose

BY VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT



Children seem to know when a story has been created just for them, and they especially love just such a story. Mark McGivern (see page 5 of this issue of *Renewal*) writes about making up stories for one's children as a satisfying exercise of the imagination that provides soul nourishment but does not intend to instruct or edify.

But stories can also be for teaching purposes. Such “pedagogical” stories, a stock-in-trade of the Waldorf teacher, can be instructional or therapeutic in nature. Stories, as part of the science curriculum in the early grades, can illustrate phenomena from the natural world. They can also depict and illumine the inner challenges that come to all of us: loneliness, inadequacy, fear, anxiety, lack of confidence, seeking for a friend, and so on.

In the early grades, a teacher can create characters from the world of nature whose behavior parallels that of the children in the classroom. My students delighted in the misadventures of a lively group of squirrels who attended school at the base of a nearby oak tree. The days and lessons of the children were filled with details of the lives of the squirrels and of the seasonal changes going on outside our windows.

In addition, the squirrels grappled with social challenges like those faced by young children. These little creatures had only the best of intentions. Yet Chitter, in his agitated and constant motion, often failed to recognize the hurt feelings of a companion. And Sprocket, who always acted before she stopped to think, trampled over anyone in her way. Sprocket liked everything to remain the same as it had always been, so she was uncomfortable when new squirrels moved into the neighborhood. Chitter was always ready for anything new but often rushed ahead without pausing to include his comrades.

When told in the early grades to illustrate a truth—scientific, social, or existential—these stories can become the seeds of lessons that will be explored more fully, and more consciously, as the children mature. When my class reached fourth grade, they studied squirrels as part of the “Human and Animal” block. Other elements touched upon in these stories will appear again in lessons in botany, geology, physics, and history.

In fact, every element of the Waldorf curriculum is not only instructional but also potentially therapeutic—for particular children or for the entire class. There is frequently a need to meet a challenging situation with an appropriate but nonconfrontational response. Often, I awake realizing how I can use the day’s lesson for the intervention I’ve been seeking.

For example, I once took my eighth-grade class to a Civil War battlefield. The students became rowdy and disrespectful. I lost my temper. That evening I realized that both they and I had been affected by the grim memories that haunted the site. I pondered what I could do to transform our experience into something positive. The next morning I asked the students to imagine that they were soldiers who were involved in that battle and to write down their experiences, reactions, and thoughts. As they began to write, the atmosphere of the classroom changed from one of challenge and anger—carried over from the day previous—to a thoughtful, almost reverential one. What they wrote was extremely poignant.

Stories can be an invaluable tool during developmental transitions, when children need to grow beyond a particular comfort level, to push themselves into learning a new skill, a new approach, a new way of being. These can be painful times, but a story is an effective but subtle healer. The listener hears what she needs to hear or is able to take in. The story works from the inside, helping the child through whatever part of the challenge she is ready to work on.

Because in a story the teacher presents the child with images of invented characters and adventures, rather

than with questions and attempts to engage in dialogue, the child is left free to choose to engage in the process of growth or healing. And if he does so choose, he is free also to choose what aspect of his behavior or personality to involve. A properly told story is a noninvasive healing tool.

Parents, who know their children better than anyone else, can learn how to use invented stories therapeutically. What is needed is relatively simple: a general awareness of the developmental challenges faced by a normal child at the various stages of growth and careful observation of one’s own child. (If the child is in day care or school, regular and frequent conversations with the teacher will be helpful.) Small children love stories featuring animals; children of nine years or older need human characters.

Imagine a setting and take the time to describe it to your child in terms of the senses, painting word pictures with similes and metaphors. A woodland path winds like a ribbon through the trees; the leaves feel as soft as the child’s fuzzy blanket; the sound of the wind is like a lullaby; the forest floor smells of cinnamon and apples. Choose a place to start, and a place to wander through. Even better, give the character a mission. Children love to participate in a meaningful task with a clear goal. Perhaps create a situation in which an adult needs a child’s help. The children will find this irresistible. Once the setting and characters have been established, the plot usually readily emerges. The imagination somehow gains a life of its own, and the story almost tells itself.

One of the simplest and most therapeutic of all plot lines can be summarized as: character goes out into the world, encounters challenges, with help overcomes each challenge, reaches goal. As a parent and a teacher, I find myself returning again and again to this outline. Of all the gifts we give our children, surely one of the most important is the understanding that, although we will face many obstacles in our lives, other people will offer us help and comfort, we will develop the capacities to meet and overcome the obstacles, and, in the end, we will endure.

As adults, we meet much in life that can engender cynicism and hardness. But children come into the world ready to trust the people and experiences they meet. This trust is as essential for growth as are milk and bread. With the stories we tell our children, we can nourish their souls.

VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT is a class teacher at the Charlottesville Waldorf School in Virginia. Vivian is also a member of the editorial advisory board of *Renewal*.



Fairy Tales

Soul Nourishment for the Growing Child and the Growing Adult

BY THESA KALLINIKOS

Fairy tales are like classical music. The more we listen to them and the better we understand them, the more we can appreciate their beauty and grasp the profound truths they carry. Fairy tales are nourishment for the soul, both for children and for adults. They set the soul in motion. Good psychologists know this and use stories therapeutically for people whose inner life is frozen. Fairy tales communicate basic truths about human life and about how the world is. They are archetypal stories present in virtually every cultural tradition and a source of deep wisdom about the world and about the human condition.

There was a time when reading or telling fairy tales was disapproved of because of their apparent lack of realism. Bruno Bettelheim, a twentieth-century psychiatrist and author, courageously wrote of the value of fairy tales and gave us permission to read and tell them again. More recently, Robert Bly, in his book *Iron John*, and Clarissa Pinkola Estes,

in *Women Who Run with the Wolves*, have used fairy tales and myths to illuminate hidden longings deep within the soul of the “wild”—archetypal—man and woman.

Fairy tales stimulate the imagination, awaken the powers of listening, feeling, and understanding, and nourish the inner person to unfathomable depths. These stories originate in a distant past when the consciousness of the human being was different than it is today. Before reading, writing, science, and history, the human consciousness was similar to what today we call dream consciousness. Elders and leaders whose power of intuition was especially developed had access to cosmic wisdom and embodied this in stories.

These tales were transmitted orally over centuries and millennia, at the fireside, in hut and castle, in the spinning room, in the open field. Peoples in different cultures tapped into the same store of cosmic wisdom. Hence certain themes, characters, and situations are found in the stories of widely separated cultures. Fairy tales are in part allegory, in that the characters and situations stand for something larger than themselves. But they also portray the mundane aspects of life and the possibilities for the future.

Fairy tales shine on the path of human development and prepare youngsters for the coming of particular stages in the journey of their own lives. A child at six or seven begins to leave the safety of home and to meet the world. Little Red Riding Hood leaves her home and goes into the forest where she is faced with distractions and dangers.

Between the ages of twelve and sixteen, the “no-longer-a-child-not-yet-an-adult” adolescent begins to develop the capacity for abstract thinking. Sleeping Beauty at age fifteen goes into the tower, in other words, into her head, and there finds the spinning wheel of thinking.

What an evocative image! The spinning of thoughts that follow one after the other is like the spinning of thread on a spinning wheel. And just as the adolescent can become confused and lost and can fall asleep to his or her inner voice, Sleeping Beauty becomes lost in sleep. She is awakened only by the kiss of the prince. This tells us that love and the noble ideals can help us through such a time.

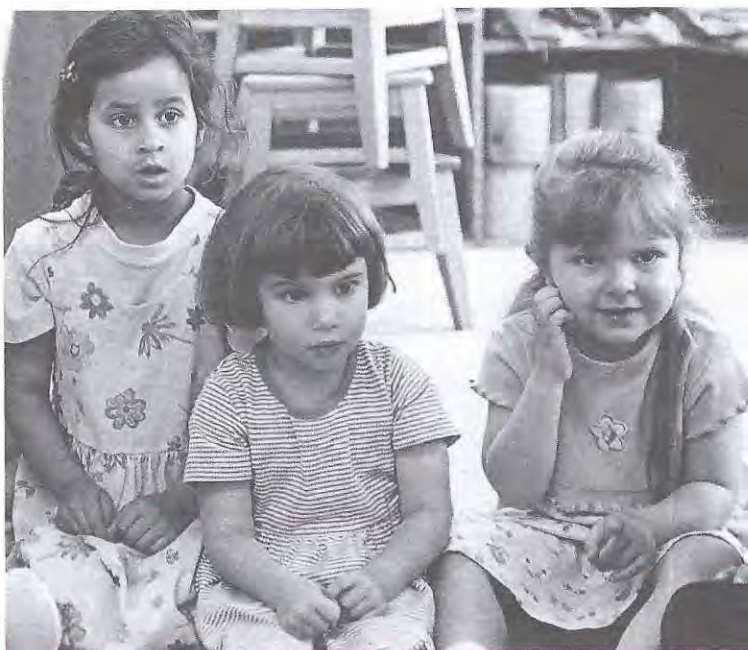
There are many fairy tales that portray inner struggle and initiation, among them the twelve labors of

Hercules, the stories of Odysseus, of Iron John, and Vasilisa the Beautiful. Such stories depict the evolution of humankind. In “The Little Tailor and the Giant,” for example, the giant cannot think for himself. He is in a dream state, and thoughts and images pour into him. Deeply intuitive, yet intellectually dull, he meets the little tailor, who embodies a new awakened consciousness. The tailor is thin, sharp, small, and pointy, as are the tools of his trade. He uses his analytical intellect to cut and piece material

together and then to stitch together his suit. The tailor has what the giant has not, the capacity for abstract thought, and in the end triumphs.

As parents, grandparents, and teachers, we can pass on the wisdom contained in fairy tales to our children for their benefit and our own. In doing so, we can keep several things in mind.

To tell a story “by heart,” rather than read it, brings the storyteller into a deeper relationship to the story and helps him bring it more to life. Memory, feeling, and imagination—all aspects of the soul activity of the heart—are brought into play. A fairy tale, when told with a reverence and earnestness, bespeaks the deep truths embodied in it and conveys images and meanings that penetrate to the depths of the listener’s being.



Children have the ability to enter fully into the rich and imaginative world of the fairy tale.

Such opening phrases as "Once upon a time," "Long, long ago in another time," and "When was it, when was it not," remove the story from the present time and make clear that the story has no direct relationship to the listener. The listener can thus relax and enter unencumbered into the world of the story. Also, this "out of time" beginning tells the listener that he is about to enter a subtle and obscure realm.

The storyteller always keeps in mind that all the characters in a fairy tale are in fact different facets of each individual human being. Each character reflects an aspect of our own human personality. The story is really about us as human beings, each archetypal character reflecting an aspect of ourselves. I know a little girl who, when she first heard the story of Hansel and Gretel, began to eat, drink, and speak like a witch. That powerful character in the story had resonated with and aroused part of her personality. Fortunately, the phase passed in a month.

Because each character is really part of us, the storyteller presents all, even the not-so-nice ones, as old and familiar friends. We know we have reached a proper connection with the characters when children ask to hear the same story over and over again. It means the characters have been given life by the children's imaginative power and have become their companions.

A wise storyteller will accentuate the good in a story. "How good was the mother goat? She was good, good, good, good, good!" Not much needs to be made of the evil or the lower nature of characters in a story, because the children grasp those very readily. One need only say, and in a monotone voice, "The wolf was waiting behind the tree to see the good mother leave."

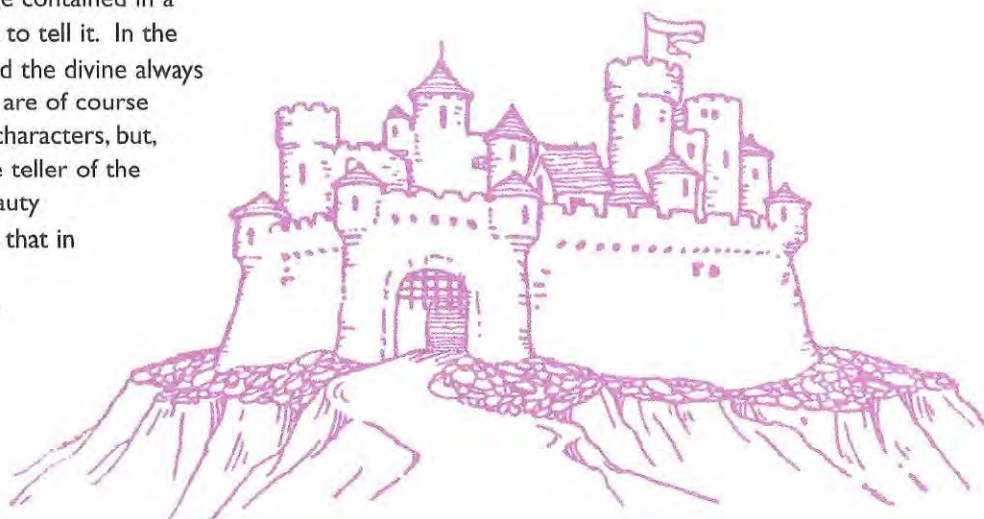
The teller of a fairy tale must be able to enter fully into the tale and to accept and affirm it in its entirety. Thus if a story frightens you or repels you, it is better not to tell it. If you think the central image contained in a story is not a truth, it is better not to tell it. In the world of the fairy tale, the good and the divine always triumph. Greed, cruelty, and death are of course present and are manifested in the characters, but, in the end, the good prevails. If the teller of the tale is to convey the truths and beauty contained in it, he needs to believe that in life ultimately the good prevails, because, in truth, it does. Children know this. They have a natural understanding that in the end, through the operation of spiritual laws, good and justice win out. And they

have an innate, intense love for the good, the true, and the beautiful. They sigh with relief at the death of the villain and rejoice when the good triumphs.

Regardless of how well we tell the tales, sooner or later the child will ask, Is the story true? Are the characters real? And we can answer that there is in fact truth in these stories. They use fantasy and magic to communicate the reality that, next to and behind the material world of strict natural law, there is an invisible spiritual world, which is our true home. This is a world where goodness triumphs. The prince and princess who live happily ever after are within us, and their story is our own story of finding inner balance and of awakening our higher self. Even in our everyday world, there are kings and queens who wear invisible crowns and whom we recognize because they bless us with their love, generosity, and wisdom.

To tell fairy tales is to show children the heavenly kernel of our human nature and the way to live in the world. It brings these delicate young souls the richness of the inner life, the images and eternal truths of cosmic memory, the preparation for life's journey, and the opportunity for betterment, both personal and universal. We do well to keep the stories and their characters alive, since as the tales in closing say of their heroes and heroines, "If they are not gone, they're living there still!"

THESA KALLINIKOS is Greek and South African and did her Waldorf teacher training at Emerson College in England. She has been a class teacher for twenty-five years, in Honolulu and in Colorado. Thesa is now a class teacher at the Denver Waldorf School and has just graduated an eighth grade, a group of students acclaimed for their vitality and creativity.



Involving Children in Household Chores



Developing the Will

BY BARBARA KLOCEK

New parents can be challenged to find the patience for and a purpose in the time-consuming daily tasks of feeding and caring for a new baby. This is an opportunity, though, for transformation of soul as parents learn to give freely of themselves and their time and energy. In the end, it is love for the child that brings meaning and joy into the unending repetition of these tasks.

As children grow, however, and become more capable of taking care of themselves and their environment, the tasks that parents continue to do can lead to parental resentment. This is especially true if it seems that they—the parents—are doing all the work and the children are becoming spoiled. It is important for children and for parents that all who are old enough work together in caring for the home.

When my three sons were four, six, and eight years old, I took my first trip of any length away from the family. The experience of being away made me realize that I was running a country club for my children by trying to do all the housework by myself. I sensed that there was a growing resentment in me and that change was needed.

One of the major tasks with three active, imaginative boys was

just keeping the house tidy. I wanted them to have fun playing, but I also wanted them to participate in cleaning things up. The boys, however, resisted my asking them to pick up. If I persisted, i.e., began to nag, everyone's mood soon turned sour. Sporadic threats and warnings of consequences had little effect. I had to figure out a way for us to work together harmoniously and to get the tasks done.

I came to see that the boys needed a rhythm in their chores. After some thought, I realized that if we did one good cleanup after dinner, before the boys went to bed, the house would stay tidy and clean for at least twelve hours. This would be a major advance, even though we would be sleeping for much of that time. Waking up to a clean living room promised to be and, in fact, proved to be especially wonderful.

Doing chores after dinner worked well, because we could all work together. It went especially well when my husband and I were able to take part with enthusiasm. Children easily intuit their parents' inner states. When I was able to bring joy into my voice and gesture, the boys picked up my positive mood and we all worked together as a team.

Having the chores after dinner involved some built-in consequences. If the chores weren't done on time, then the bedtime snack would be lost. If chores still weren't completed at bedtime, the bedtime story was also lost. Having an unavoidable consequence helped put the responsibility on the children rather than on the parent. I found that with practice I could remain calm and objective in my observations. "Oh dear, it's almost time for snack. I hope you'll get finished in time." This approach depends on being consistent in allowing the consequences to unfold. Bargaining with children tends to backfire. They usually are more willful and persevering than we are.

Soon this after-dinner activity became part of our evening pattern, and very little resistance was encountered. One challenge for my husband and me was to summon up the energy right after dinner to lead the work with enthusiasm, but it was a wonderful training. We all find ourselves in the course of life having to do things that we do not really want to do. It is a gift to ourselves and our children to learn to cheerfully step

over the inner resistance and find on the other side inner strength and the satisfaction of a job well done. Over time, this practice builds inner perseverance and confidence.

Establishing rhythm in activities is an important tool of the parent. Rudolf Steiner said that rhythm can take the place of strength and will. If we do the same thing at

Bargaining with children

tends to backfire.

**They usually are more willful
and persevering than we are.**

the same time each day or each week, it soon becomes an intrinsic part of our life. We do not need to summon up the energy needed to initiate it each time. In the realm of chores, rhythm is a magical and effective tool. If one can establish a specific, consistent pattern for doing chores, the children's resistance and the parents' need to nag will largely disappear.

As the children became older, we had morning, evening, and Saturday chores. After much experimentation, we developed a pattern. Each morning, one child would wash the dishes, one would feed the animals, and one would hang out the clothes to dry. After dinner, one would do the dishes, one would clear the table and sweep the kitchen, and one would vacuum. On Saturday morning, I would make a list of chores, and everyone would do between thirty and forty-five minutes of work. These chores included cleaning the bathrooms, washing windows, mowing the lawn, helping clean the garage, and so on. As my sons moved into adolescence, they also began cooking one meal a week. At first the meals lacked love and attention. However, over the years, they all became fine cooks, and one of them would treat us to chicken pot pies made from scratch.

With two or more children, it is good to have a rotation of chores so that there is no danger of perceived unfairness. Chores and their assignment can be discussed at a family meeting at which each child's voice and each parent's is heard. A younger child, of course, should have simple tasks that he can manage. Otherwise, he can work with a parent or older sibling on a more complex or daunting task, such as cleaning up his room.

It is important than an only child also be involved in chores. I have seen that an only child, even of kindergarten age or younger, is happy to become a contributing member of the family. This becomes more important as the child becomes older. If everything is done for the only child, she will soon consider herself the princess of the world. When out in the world, this princess—or prince—will expect royal treatment from others. What a hard lesson it is to learn from classmates, roommates, or from a spouse that one is not royalty but just an ordinary person.

Establishing a pattern for doing chores greatly benefited our family. My resentment at running a country club vanished. The boys learned many new skills. They also learned about the joy of meaningful work and the satisfaction that comes from working together. My sons are now in their twenties and are known for their strong work habits and an ability to work well with others.

Inevitably there is the question: Should children be paid to do chores? I feel strongly that paying children undermines their experience of the joy of a task well done. It also takes away the sense of community that can develop in a family when everyone is helping, working freely for the good of all. In one family in which there was pay for chores, the children developed the attitude that they really didn't need to work unless they wanted the money. Therefore they never learned the joy that can come from the activity itself and from working together.

I found it easier to separate chores and paid work. On Saturday the boys received a reward of ice cream when they finished their chores. As they grew older and were

Another important and challenging issue in a family is allowances. Parents must deal with a number of questions:

- At what age should children begin to have their own money?
- How much should they get?
- Are they to buy necessities out of that money? Presents?
- What is the best way to help them learn to manage money?

When my sons were very young, I felt they did not need the challenge of counting, saving, and spending. But when each started first grade, he received his first allowance. Each week I gave each boy ten cents for every year of his age until he was ten. I never gave out more than \$1.00 per week for allowance.

I did not expect the boys to buy presents out of that money. It was their own mad money to spend on themselves. I decided they could spend their money when we went to the grocery store. It was interesting how each of them reacted. One of my sons would go and look, then save his money until he had enough for what he wanted. Another son had to spend all his money as soon as he received it. They learned much from each other. I did put restrictions on what they could buy. This was not so easy for me, but it was good practice for setting boundaries as the boys grew.

If the boys wanted extra money, I encouraged them to do baby-sitting and other work for the neighbors. My goal was that they would not look to their parents to supply their extra needs but would be motivated to

earn what they wanted. This bore good fruit during adolescence, since they began to seek out jobs at a relatively young age. Having this tension between what they wanted and what they could afford was a good experience for them. I was thankful that I was not in the middle of it. It was also a great experience for them to work for many different people doing many different jobs. One son's first summer job was helping a

landscaper. He told me later that he decided if he did not die during the first week, he would quit. By the end of the first week, he was enjoying the work and had

Establishing rhythm [a regular schedule] in activities is an important tool of the parent. Rudolf Steiner said that rhythm can take the place of strength.

wanting to earn money, I would sometimes find larger jobs, such as painting, for which I would pay them.

begun to develop calluses of which he was very proud. Throughout their adolescence, the boys had many jobs, from working at Starbucks to trimming trees. They learned from every experience and came closer through these experiences to finding what they wanted to do for their lifework.

I found one of the best ways to help them learn to manage money was to give them a clothes allowance in high school. At that age, they were not growing so fast and were becoming clothes-conscious. I kept track of how much I spent in six months. Then in August I gave each what I would spend on him in three months. At the beginning of every season, another clothing allowance was paid. The boys learned much from buying extremely cheap socks as well as from spending a whole allowance on a fancy jacket. They learned also about impulse buying and about quality in merchandise, and over time they learned to plan ahead. I was amazed at how each chose a different way to spend his money, but after four years, they all were confident about what they needed and where to get it.

For college expenses, I used the same system. It seemed that there should be a fairness about the amount of money each received. I was clear about what that amount was. If one boy chose an expensive lifestyle that caused a shortfall, he needed to work to make up the difference. As a consequence, they had various jobs while in school, and these often led to other opportunities. The boys became very comfortable applying for jobs and going through job interviews.

Achieving fairness within a family around housework and money is a constant learning experience. It is an opportunity for parents to teach their values to their children. Holding a family meeting in a regular rhythm provides a place to bring issues and to build trust and fairness. It is important to create a forum in which each parent and child has a voice but in which the parent retains the role of adult. This time can also be used to play games together, enjoy a treat, and to plan family trips.

The challenges of being a parent bring much growth, and the rewards include some of the richest relationships in one's life.

BARBARA KLOCEK is an artist, kindergarten teacher, and art therapist in Fair Oaks, California. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Temple University and studied Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education at Rudolf Steiner College. She often travels and does workshops with her husband, Dennis Klocek. Their three sons all graduated from the Sacramento Waldorf School, where Barbara teaches.



Even a three- or four-year-old child can help care for animals and pets.

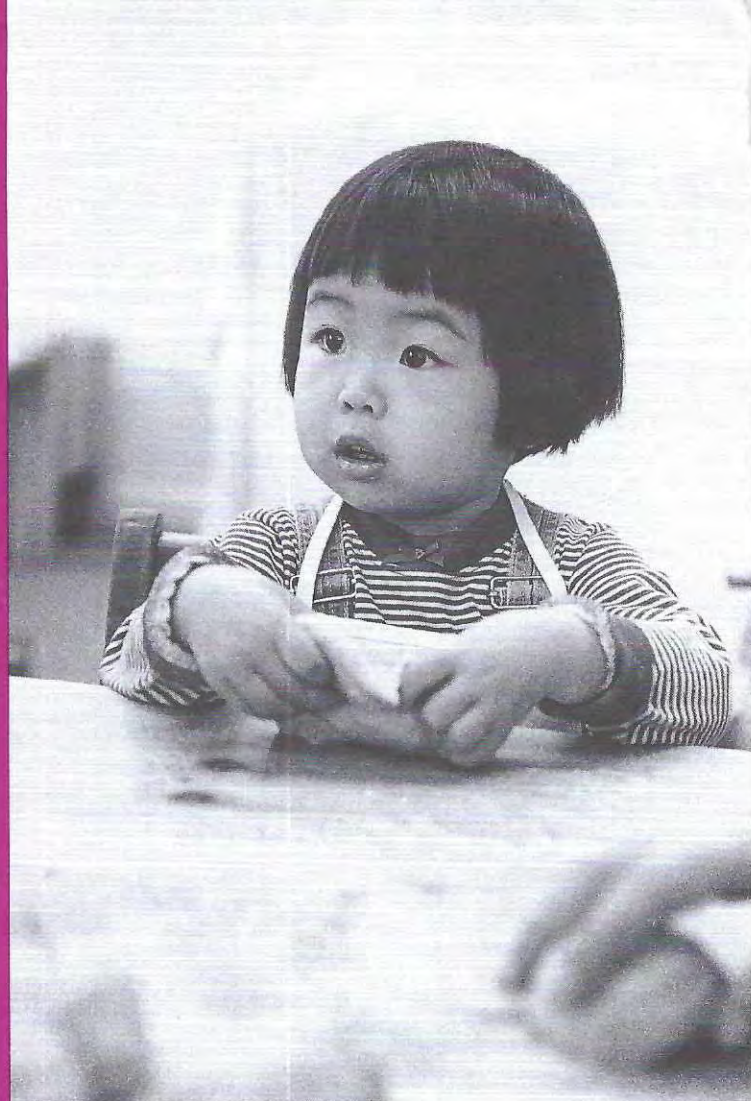
Throughout their adolescence, the boys had many jobs....

They learned from every experience and came closer through these experiences to finding what they wanted to do for their lifework.

Children and Work

Learning to Mix Joy and Necessity

BY PATRICE MAYNARD AND
DEBORAH ENRIGHT



The word *work* is a tiny, strange word that has many different meanings, forty-five in one modern standard dictionary. These include “physical or mental effort or activity directed toward the accomplishment of something,” but also “labor,” “drudgery,” and “travail.” Work can be a necessary evil, the annoying and painful expenditure of time and energy, the legacy of Yahweh’s curse upon Adam that he eat his bread in the sweat of his brow. Or it can be something positive and even joyful, the creative forming of the substance of our daily lives. Work, requiring a knowledge of physical materials and processes and involving the transformation of matter, can help us become one with the world. How we define work, of course, affects our experience of it.

The habits and attitudes we have concerning work deeply affect the quality of our lives as adults. These habits and attitudes are largely formed during childhood. Hence we must do what we can to help our children develop positive patterns regarding work. A child who is a willing worker, who is enthusiastic about lending a helping hand, who can experience the satisfaction of a job well done, will have quite a different experience of life, both as a child and later as an adult, than



the child who feels that work is something forced upon him and who resents it.

Deborah Enright is a teacher at the Hawthorne Valley School in Harlemville, New York, assisting in the kindergarten and teaching bookbinding in the high school. She and her family have what is today an unusual relationship to work because they have chosen to live without electricity from any source. Their home has no gasoline generator, no solar panels. Deborah, her husband, and their two teenage sons are perceived in our community as willing workers. Hence Deborah was invited to speak at the school about an aspect of parenting and chose as her topic "The Art of Work." What follows is an, alas, incomplete précis of her remarks.

Patrice Maynard

Living without electricity is a simple, truthful way to live, a way that brings endless discoveries. Within this limitation there are rewards and beauty. One remains connected to the rhythms of nature, experiencing directly the true length of a day and the passing of the seasons. One learns to echo nature in one's life rather than resist it.

Household appliances and machines—vacuum cleaners, blenders, hairdryers, washing machines, chainsaws, and so on—help us do our work. They save us time and energy and make our life easier. These conveniences are based on the assumption that there is something more important than the apparently menial tasks of everyday life that we should be doing. And they raise questions. For what is life supposed to be made easier? What are we supposed to be doing with our extra time?

These conveniences demand a price, sometimes hidden, sometimes not, beyond the purchase price. They are, for example, noisy. In the quiet that one enjoys in their absence, one realizes that simple tasks well done are an end in themselves and not something to be avoided. In the not-so-distant past, the daily rituals of work involved real community activity, the collaboration of many hands, problem solving without talk, the use of the limbs settle the soul. Machines take the process out of work, providing an instantaneous end result. They also take away the opportunities for community.

Children are shaped by their physical environment. Thus, in Waldorf schools, attention is paid to classroom design, the colors of the walls, and so on. These affect the child's very being. In a similar way, the attitude of a child toward work is shaped by the way work is done in the child's surroundings. If adults desire to work and experience satisfaction and joy in everyday tasks, children will develop a similar attitude.

The view of child development that underlies Waldorf Education gives clues about how to approach children and work. Good habits around work can be begun in the very early years and can be developed as the child grows to maturity. During the first seven years of life, children need to be surrounded with adults who work and who love to work. The more physical effort involved in the work we do, the larger and broader the movements we make, the better it is for the children who watch us and who move alongside of us. (The young child does not perceive an adult tapping at a computer keyboard as doing real work.) Children's work at this age is play, and they play at our work, be it sweeping, baking a cake, or fixing a flat tire. If children are with us when we are working, they will learn how to

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In gardening, children have a direct experience of the earth, of growing plants, of weather, and of where our food comes from

Work, requiring a knowledge of physical materials and processes and involving the transformation of matter, can help us become one with the world.

play. The more devoted we are to our work and the more we love our work, the more satisfying will be the play of our children.

Young children are imitators, and they will copy our physical movements, but on a deeper level, they also assume the inner attitude we bring to our work. Thus, if we do our work with love and attention, we provide children with the foundation of a moral approach to the world.

In the latter part of the first stage of life, from about age three to age five, children begin to resist following us in our work and to say, "I don't want to." We should ignore this, and bring even more attention and inner warmth into our work. Our continuing work makes children play industriously. We need only smile and keep working.

If we enjoy the process of work, the children also will enjoy the process. In every task there is involvement with the elements of nature—the earth in gardening, water in doing the dishes. In washing dishes, we can enjoy the water and its warmth, enjoy the clean dishes, feel the satisfaction of a necessary job well done. We can do the dishes just to do the dishes, relishing the process as well as the end result. We can take our time, dispense with hurrying.

Including children in our work is very important. It forms the basis of their relationship to work for their whole life. When we include children, a task will of course take longer than it would otherwise, and we need to consider this when planning our day.

To praise with a few well-chosen words work that is well done cultivates satisfaction. To praise the work and not the child also cultivates objectivity and a self-confidence that does not depend on external approval.

Perseverance is an important part of our inner discipline as parents. The will of the grown-up develops the will of the child. Skills need to be taught and retaught. Complaints are part of work sometimes, too, and we do well to ignore rather than to react to them—finding in this another discipline! Calmness is also subject to imitation.

The rhythm of the year can help us cultivate in our children a positive attitude toward work. The seasons and the festivals have their particular tasks—mowing the lawn, raking leaves, shoveling snow, stacking wood, making jams with the fruits of the season, preparing food for the Thanksgiving meal, preparing for festivals with shopping and cleaning, making handcrafts that will enhance a festival and make the home more beautiful. Children, included in these tasks, will feel that they, too, are an important part of this annual rhythm.

Around age seven, children leave the world of imitation and are ready to participate in real work. Also, becoming able to think on their own, they can take part in the planning of a task. They need to experience that doing a task properly means taking it from the planning stage right through cleanup. If we as adults gather and organize our tools for a task in advance and put them away afterward, this provides an important lesson for the children accompanying and watching us. Our inner discipline leaves a deep impression on them. When we structure our work, we imitate the starry heavens, where everything is interconnected and ordered. The children have just come from this celestial home, and order, quiet, thoroughness, and the rhythm of repeated activities make them feel safe and secure.

After age nine, children are entirely down on Earth and out of paradise. Tools begin to play a role of increasing importance for them. They love tools and love to care

for them, use them. And they love to see others care for and use tools.

In the Waldorf curriculum, woodworking begins at age ten or eleven. Wood is a wonderful material for children at this age. They should have opportunities to whittle it, chop it, carve it, stack it, and burn it. Learning how to shape and transform wood builds the child's confidence that she too can shape and transform the world.

Once puberty begins, new muscle growth takes place, and children, now approaching adulthood, need efforts of will to stimulate muscle development. Rites of passage, observed in most traditional cultures, challenge young persons of thirteen or fourteen physically and mentally and teach them that the ability to do work is a reflection of inner development and self-mastery.

It may take many demonstrations of the correct way to do a task for a child to master it. Progress may be slow and by small increments. There will be moments of lethargy, reluctance, and the need to relearn. Adults need to set a standard of good work and patiently bring the child up to that standard bit by bit. Find an entry point, no matter how small, for a child to connect to work. Reteach sweeping the floor, for example, with care and attentiveness. Sweep just one corner of it, but concentrate on how it is really done.

Work is an intrinsic part of life and as sacred and full of meaning as any other part. Doing our work with joy, care, and attention creates a feeling of abundance, of having plenty of time, of being able to fix what is broken and to make something out of nothing. Work can be a refuge and balance in a world that goes too fast and where there is never time. As parents and teachers, we can love work and love the challenges of enabling our children to work. We can work actively in peace in their midst and, doing so, show them the way to be glad to work, actively in peace.

PATRICE MAYNARD is a class teacher, now teaching fourth grade, and a music teacher at Hawthorne Valley School in Harlemville, New York.

DEBORAH ENRIGHT is a kindergarten assistant at the Hawthorne Valley School and is also teaching bookbinding in the high school there.

BOOKS

in Brief

Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching From the Inside Out

BY JACK PETRASH

Gryphon House, Beltsville, Md., 2002
160 pages \$19.95

Jack Petrash, a veteran Waldorf class teacher, has written an excellent introduction to Waldorf Education. His attractively designed and illustrated *Understanding Waldorf Education* is a clearly written and cogent presentation of its principles and practices. The book is accessible to those new to this education yet also instructive and interesting to those with experience of it.

Early on, Petrash writes of the true aim of education, observing,

Educators should prepare children for life, not just graduate school or future employment. Teachers should be concerned with children's human development and with children's ability to give their own lives direction (p. 21).

He then describes the view of the human being that underlies Waldorf Education (including the three basic soul activities of thinking, feeling, and willing) and also the view of childhood development that informs both the curriculum and the pedagogy.

Petrash explains in turn the Waldorf preschool, grade school, and high school. He shows how, in each, the curriculum and the teaching methods are appropriate for the children at that time and help nurture those human capacities that are ready to unfold. Petrash does an excellent job presenting the rationale for the many aspects of Waldorf Education that go against current mainstream practices—the emphasis on play and fantasy; the central role of music, art, stories, and the spoken word; the integration of physical, artistic, and intellectual activity; and so on.

The book concludes with chapters on the role of the parent in the educational process, on the teacher as a source of guidance and inspiration to the growing child, and on the moral and spiritual dimensions of education.

Jack Petrash presents Waldorf Education lucidly and in its totality and, in doing so, does a service for all those wishing to learn about it.

R.E.K.

Community Service in a Waldorf School

BY BONNIE WILNER



For the past several years, the Pasadena Waldorf School has had a community service program. From the early grades, the children participate in some service program each year. Seventh graders spend an hour and fifteen minutes every other week in some activity that benefits the school or the larger community. Eighth-grade classes are involved each month in a service project. Parents often ask about the place of community service in a Waldorf school and the relevance of this nonclassroom activity in the education of their children.

Community service is rooted in the origins of the Waldorf movement. In 1919—just months after the end of World War I—Emil Molt, owner of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, Germany, asked Rudolf Steiner if there were a way of

educating children so that they would be able, as adults, to help create a peaceful world. Rudolf Steiner replied in the affirmative, and Molt asked him to found a school based on such a pedagogy. The school was to be for the children of his factory's workers. Both Steiner and Molt were interested in the welfare of all humankind and recognized the need for social renewal. The founding of the first Waldorf school was a philanthropic deed in service to the world community. Rudolf Steiner and Emil Molt's initial motivation and their work for the first Waldorf school are an example worthy of our own aspiration.

Parents in every Waldorf school show great generosity and altruism. They make financial contributions beyond the necessary tuition payments; they contribute time and energy in fund-raising events, for school festivals and class plays, in school maintenance, and so on. The children daily see parents modeling community service in their support of the school. And this service makes Waldorf Education possible. Without it, the schools would not exist.

Rudolf Steiner said that Waldorf Education should be available to all children regardless of their economic and social background, and all Waldorf schools are committed to ethnic, social, and economic diversity. As independent schools without government support, though, and relying on tuition income, most Waldorf schools in North America find this ideal difficult to realize. Children in Waldorf schools tend to come from affluent families and at school have little contact with children from deprived backgrounds.

One purpose, then, of community service is to bring the children into contact in a helping role with people less fortunate than themselves. This broadens their understanding of the realities in our society. More importantly, it helps them develop empathy and compassion for others and also a desire and will to help.

A service project for a class also helps build a community spirit within a class. Working together for a common goal, especially one that serves others, helps develop skills in cooperation and in working together. This is one reason why service projects even in the early grades are important. The children learn to work with and to trust each other. For young children, of course, service projects should not expose

them to the harsh realities of life. Taking care of and beautifying a corner of the school property or making a contribution to a school festival celebration are appropriate tasks for an early grade class. That can be enough

Community service is rooted in the origins of the Waldorf movement. . . .

The founding of the first Waldorf school was a philanthropic deed in service to the world community.

to introduce them to the satisfaction of doing something that benefits others.

Another purpose of community service is to counteract the self-concern and egocentricity that is often very strong in the early teenage years. At twelve or thirteen, the child begins a process of radical change—physical, emotional, and mental. Adolescents can become obsessed with themselves, the changes they are going through, their place in the world, and so on. Being put in a situation where they need to address and serve the needs of others helps to temper this self-absorption. It may also teach them that one way of dealing with one's own problems and of lessening one's own suffering is to help others.

Seventh graders sometimes work in the school office as their service activity. There they get to know and appreciate the people who help to run the school and the many jobs these people do. Seventh graders also work in the school's garden. Tending plants even in just a small area can give children an experience of stewardship for the Earth. They often proudly show others what they have accomplished in the garden. They also help out in the kindergarten, playing with and taking care of the younger children. The thirteen-year-olds are reminded of their own early childhood, and they experience that it is still all right to be spontaneous and childlike. One often sees smiles of pure enjoyment on the faces of both the seventh graders and the kindergartners as they play together.

The older children also participate in various service projects in the local community. Our students have worked serving food at Union Station, where the homeless of Los Angeles can come for a daily meal; sponsored

a toy drive for children in foster care; helped host a Christmas party for 150 foster care children; and performed musical concerts for senior citizens. Others have worked every other week throughout the school year at the Altadena Library, at a nursing unit in a home for the aged, and at the Altadena Senior Center. Through these projects, our students have come to know children and adults different from themselves, learned to work with older people, and experienced the satisfaction of helping others.

It takes only one or a few individuals dedicated to the idea of community service to establish a program in a school.

Toy drive: Participate in a schoolwide toy drive at holiday time, collecting toys to be given to children who would otherwise be without.

School beautification: Improve the school grounds by planting flowers, growing vegetables, or picking up trash.

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

Toy drive: Participate in a schoolwide toy drive.

School supplies: At the end of the year, send slightly used school supplies to schools on Indian reservations or to needy Waldorf schools.

Meals on Wheels: Make tray favors—such as beeswax sculptures, decorated candles, felted hearts, or wax paper stars—at holiday times or throughout the school year.

Sixth Grade

Recycling for the school: Collect the blue containers of recyclable trash and empty them into the recycling bin.

Toy drive: Participate in a schoolwide toy drive.

After the sixth grade, the children have a maturity that allows for regular and varied service activities.

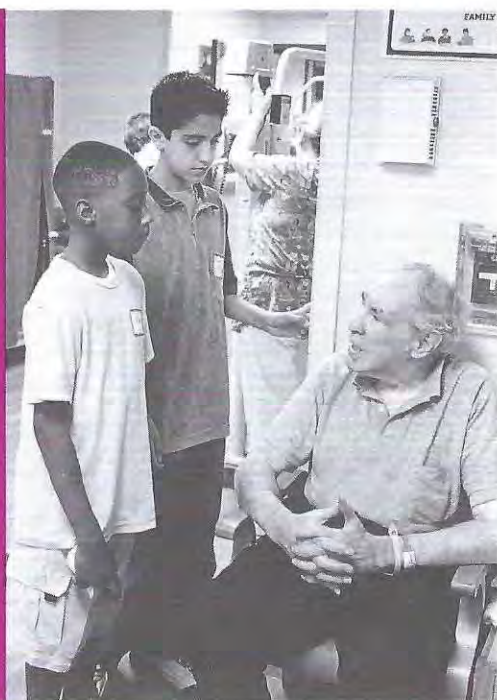
For **seventh graders**, bi-weekly service stints work well. These may include work in the school office, the kindergarten, in the gardens, and off-campus work in the public library, a home for senior citizens, and a senior community center. The students should discuss the various service opportunities, the qualities needed in the different situations, and who should serve where.

Eighth graders might participate in a community service activity each month. This can be work at the school—gardening, work on the grounds, helping in the office, and the like—or an activity in the community. Possibilities for outside service include organizing events for underprivileged children, performing music for senior citizens, cleaning up the neighborhood with the local fire department, feeding the homeless, and organizing a schoolwide toy drive.

A community service program greatly benefits each child, each class, the school as a whole, and the surrounding community. It serves the aims and ideals of Waldorf Education and has a place in every Waldorf school.

BONNIE WILNER is a former rock 'n roll performer and holistic healing arts practitioner. Her work in these fields helped lead her to Waldorf Education. She graduated her first eighth-grade class in June 2002 and is currently enjoying a sabbatical year.

Service within the larger community can bring young people together with senior citizens and with others with whom they might not ordinarily have contact.



They will need to ask faculty and other staff where in the school students are needed to serve. Also, they will need to go out into the community to find areas of need where the school might help.

Service projects must be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children. Following is a list of the activities that have been done at the Pasadena Waldorf School. Each school will have many other possibilities in its own area and community.

First and Second Grades

Martinmas (November 11): Donate winter coats to charity, as St. Martin gave away his coat.

Santa Lucia Day (December 13, celebrating the patron saint of light who is crowned with evergreens and candles): Take second graders along with an older student, costumed and crowned as Santa Lucia, to a nursing home, offering the residents songs and treats.

A Junior Circus Club

Meeting the Developmental Needs of First and Second Graders

BY SUSAN JONES

The Extra Lesson is an approach to remedial education developed by Audrey McAllen, a remarkable Waldorf teacher in England, and founded on Rudolf Steiner's understanding of the development of the child. The Extra Lesson is based on the idea that certain physical exercises and patterns of movement can ameliorate the neurological dysfunctions that are one cause of learning disabilities. Waldorf teachers in North America and in other parts of the world have observed the positive effects of the Extra Lesson, and many have taken a special training in the method. In this article, a class teacher in the Santa Cruz Waldorf School in California describes how she organized an after-school "Junior Circus" for first and second graders, so that they could have the benefit of the Extra Lesson exercises.

R.E.K.

*T*oday in North America, virtually all schools, Waldorf schools among them, face a common problem—the growing number of children in need of remedial education. In my school, fully one-third of the students have difficulty acquiring



During the Junior Circus, the children follow the directions of the ringmaster.

basic skills (in reading, writing, math, and so on) through the traditional Waldorf approach. The school does not have a remedial specialist on staff, so some parents bring their child to an outside tutor. This often involves taking the child out of class and into settings where the educational philosophy and techniques are not harmonious with what the child experiences in school. Waldorf schools need to meet the special needs of these children and to do so in the early grades when the foundations for later learning are laid.

When Ingun Schneider, a remedial specialist from Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California, did second-grade screenings for my class, she discovered what I had already suspected. Almost every child had problems with auditory processing and short-term memory. Over half had some problem with balance and/or sense of self-movement. A colleague trained in the Extra Lesson work had shown me several of the Extra Lesson exercises to address these needs, including the developmental movements known as the "zoo exercises." I began to work with the movements in the morning circle, but there was not enough time for the children to do the movements one at a time nor for me to really observe them. At my mid-year conferences with parents, I shared the results of the second-grade screening, demonstrated the exercises, and asked that they be done at home. My request was unrealistic, not one that most parents could easily follow through on.

Pondering this problem, I had an inspiration: Begin an after-school club focusing on remediation. Divide the children into small groups and give them enough time to really experience the movements. Involve the parents. Call it . . . the Junior Circus Club! Our school Circus Club is much beloved by the older children. And I realized that unless my students developed their senses of balance, movement, and touch, they'd never be able to do what would be required of them later in the Circus Club. So a Junior Circus seemed a natural preparation for what lay ahead.

A colleague experienced with the Extra Lesson helped me organize a training session open to all parents of grades one and two. We felt the program would have the greatest impact on children in these early grades. More than thirty parents attended, and all were enthusiastic about working with their children in this way. We gave an introduction to the Extra Lesson and explained its aims and methods. We spent much time presenting and practicing the various exercises with the parents. We then asked for volunteers willing to lead small groups of children in the exercises.



In an exercise in body geography, each child identifies a place on his or her body as directed by the adult leader.

We formed groups of children—no more than six per group—paying attention to the social makeup of the groups. There were separate groups for grade one and grade two. We wrote a script that included complete descriptions of the movements to be practiced and went over the exercises with the parents one more time, in detail.

Each group met once a week for an hour after school. The groups met on different days, so that on four of the five weekdays Junior Circus groups were meeting. The children who were to meet had a short break after the end of the regular school day, and then they gathered in their small group with the parent volunteer. For the first several weeks, the class teachers sat in on the sessions, both to help refine the movements and to observe the whole process. After this, a parent created a progress report form for the parent volunteers

to fill out after each session, charting the development of each child. Class teachers observed when possible.

Both children and parents were enthusiastic about the Junior Circus Club. It was fun for all. The children were able to interact with each other and with the adults in a new way. After about six weeks of the once-a-week sessions, some of the children seemed more coordinated and better able to control and use their bodies. At the end of the school year, parents and children requested that the program continue during the following year, and the parent leaders agreed. The program was extended to include the third grade, so that the second graders could continue.

The script for the Junior Circus Club meeting provides an imaginative context for the children to do the various developmental movements. Parents are the ringmasters, and the children are the circus animals. This is appropriate for the grade-two children for whom it was first created. Of course, each group of parents and teachers can create their own fantasy and images to guide the children through the movements. If space is limited, the children can do the exercises one at a time or two at a time. The movements should be done very slowly.

Following is the script we used along with the movements the children did. Most of the movements used are described in Audrey McAllen's book *The Extra Lesson*. Parents and teachers who want to do this work with their children should study this book carefully, particularly the sections having to do with early movement patterns and the integration of above/below and left/right. Also they should seek help and advice from a person specially trained in the Extra Lesson.

The children and the supervising parent gather, seated in a circle, for greetings; then all stand as the ringmaster says, while saluting, "Ships to the outer harbor, captains and crews!"

The children respond, "Aye aye, sir (or ma'am)!" and move tables and chairs to the periphery. The children return to a circle, this time sitting on the floor.

With a flourish, the ringmaster announces, "The Junior Circus Club is now beginning!" The children respond by standing up. "First we must get ready for the circus. Let's go into the upside-down world!" Children put their heads upside down.

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The ringmaster says, "I am the ringmaster, and I'll give you directions for things to do. For these exercises, if I say 'Ringmaster says,' you do what I say; if I don't say, 'Ringmaster says,' you don't do it!"

The ringmaster gives body geography directions (cf. *The Extra Lesson*, chapter 5) but does not do the movements herself. With first graders, she asks them to touch—using their right hands—different parts of the body on the right side (e.g., right knee, right big toe) or in the middle (e.g., nose, stomach, forehead). Then using the term "other," she asks them to touch different body parts with the left hand without crossing the vertical midline. With second graders, the ringmaster can use the term "left" and can repeat these instructions gradually faster and faster. She can give a sequence of two, then three instructions at a time, having the students perform the movements at a given signal. She can involve more and smaller body parts (e.g., "Touch the back of your right knee with your right wrist; touch the top of your right ear with the tip of your right thumb.") This can go on for several minutes.

The children, in touching their toes, knees, calves, have been moving in and out of the "upside-down world." The ringmaster calls them back to "this world" to experience the ocean waters at a beach.

She says, "An ocean wave comes in, trying to push you back!" The children, standing straight with feet together, lift all their toes into the air.

"Another wave comes and pushes you back again. Now a bigger and stronger wave comes, and you rise up onto your toes to lift your head above water." The children

alternate lifting toes and then rising onto toes, staying upright while doing so.

Then as the ringmaster says, "And, oh, see the fish in the water?" the children individually or two at a time "swim" by slowly inching forward on their stomachs, arms along their sides, from one side of the room to the other. And when she says, "When they tire, they roll, and the waves just carry them," the children, like the fish, slowly roll over.

The session continues with the children doing various movements (most of them described in chapter 5 of *The Extra Lesson*) in response to the imaginative cues of the ringmaster. They crawl and then wriggle like lizards; roll over and push themselves forward like seals; scuttle along like crabs; soar like eagles in the sky; curl up in a ball like sleeping cats, then creep slowly on elbows and knees like stalking ones; they put their hands on the floor and kick their heels up like donkeys; then, in the same position, they scratch the floor with one foot at a time like chickens; lumber along like elephants, by moving right foot and hand, then left foot and hand in the homolateral crawl; and wriggle and hiss like snakes.

At some point the group can go outside, and each child can become a tree sloth, hanging by the hands from a crossbar and (carefully supervised by an adult) upside down by the knees. Having a child lie on his stomach on a swing and be gently pushed helps the vestibular system of the inner ear (related to the sense of balance) and is a preparation for later trapeze work.

Finally, the children lie on their backs and inch along like caterpillars on a leaf. At this point the ringmaster says, "Then the caterpillar builds a cocoon," and wraps each child in a blanket. Touching the child down the back in different ways, she adds, "Along comes the sun, wind, rain, moonlight, starlight, hail, storms . . . Time goes by, and the cocoon opens up."

The children unroll the blankets, emerge, and dry their wings. Each child, feet together, leans with one hand against the wall, with the other hand on his waist. He

turns to look at the bent arm—one drying wing—and then reverses position. Then the children do the "grand crawl" (cf. *The Extra Lesson*, chapter 5) and fly away as butterflies with gently waving arms as wings.

At last, the animals go back to the animal kingdom, and the ships sail home. While saluting, the ringmaster calls,

"Ships to the inner harbor, captains and crews!" The children reply, "Aye, aye, ma'am (or sir)." Chairs and tables are brought back into the middle of the room; goodbyes are said; shoes put back on; lights turned off; and the door closed after the children exit. The Junior Circus Club meeting is over.

With these guidelines, a full session takes about sixty minutes. If less time is available, the sequence of movement can be divided into two parts and these done on alternate days.

A Junior Circus Club is a viable way to bring the seeds for a remedial program to a school that does not as yet have one. It is a way also for parents and teachers to learn about movement development and to work together in bringing the benefits of the Extra Lesson to the children. And it is fun.



At the end of the zoo exercises, a little girl, transformed from a caterpillar into a butterfly, flies away with delicate movements.

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SUSAN JONES is the fifth-grade class teacher and a member of the Care Group at the Santa Cruz Waldorf School. She is currently in the Remedial Training Program at Rudolf Steiner College. She is happy to report that many of the former Junior Circus Club members have become Circus Club participants as they've gotten older, and that the Santa Cruz Waldorf School is initiating formal remedial classes this year. Susan is grateful to Ingun Schneider and Howard Schrager for inspiration and help with the Junior Circus Club.



Circus Education

What Adolescents Can Learn Swinging from a Trapeze

BY JACQUELINE DAVIS

The term "circus education" may seem an oxymoron. But the ancient arts of the greatest show on earth, with their shimmer and shadow, can provide a valuable learning experience for adolescents. And circus education, when carried out in a way that engages the new and maturing capacities of the adolescent, may point to a more cooperative and creative way of educating young people in their middle school and high school years.

In these turbulent times, Waldorf educators are asking:

- What are the needs of today's youth?
- How can our curriculum change to meet these needs? [and ultimately]
- How should we be educating the children that now stand before us?¹

To answer these questions, we must look at the students, the curriculum, and the teacher, and the dynamic interplay between the three. Their interplay determines whether teaching and learning are effective, or not, and joyful, or not. The adolescent is passing from the usually comfortable realm of childhood into the new and complex world of adulthood. Nature prepares the adolescent to meet this world by triggering a growth spurt in the prefrontal cortex of the brain. This radical change begins at around age eleven for girls and twelve for boys² and, according to author Joseph Chilton Pearce, reaches its peak at age fifteen.³ In the anthroposophical picture of the human

being, development takes place in seven-year cycles, and thus the age of fourteen is a significant one. Adolescence, though, is not a point in time but a process, during which significant neurological changes necessary for adulthood take place.

The prefrontal cortex of the human brain is sometimes referred to as the “angel lobes.” It is the locus of the “higher human virtues” of love, compassion, empathy, and understanding, as well as of our advanced intellectual skills.⁴ It is also the seat of the uniquely human capacity of volition and, as “captain of the ship,” coordinates mental and emotional life—human reasoning and feeling. The prefrontal cortex is part of the physical body, a mass of specialized brain cells with countless neurological connections. But in its function as angel lobes it is connected to aspects of the human being—the mind,⁵ soul, and spirit—that transcend the physical and do not exist only within the cranium. The development of the prefrontal cortex gives the pubescent child new cognitive and affective capabilities that will help him interact with the world in new ways.

Though this neural development is part of normal human development, the prefrontal lobes may or may not grow as they are designed to. Prefrontal development is experience-dependent. For an adolescent to develop his potential, the environment must provide models of the latent capacities. Joseph Chilton Pearce writes that the prefrontal cortex “must be stimulated by the child’s interaction with the actual expression of the capacities they imply at the time when those

capacities within the child are ready for development.”⁶ The young adult can only develop higher human virtues and advanced intelligence if he is involved in experiences that specifically foster these.

This is precisely where education today often falls short in meeting the needs of youth. The way that young adults are educated is usually unrelated to the challenges of real life.

In school, teenagers typically encounter “deterministic” questions that have only one correct answer. For example: *John is driving to New York, which is 400 miles away. His gas tank holds 15 gallons and gets 29 miles per gallon. How many times will John have to stop for gas?* This kind of question involves what can be called veridical—or truth-telling—decision making.

In everyday life, however, the problems one faces are ambiguous and have no clear, correct answer. For example: *Which dress should I wear to the restaurant, the purple one or the teal?* This type of question involves adaptive decision making.⁷ Neuropsychologist Dr. Elkhonon Goldberg writes of education today:

Aside from high school exams, college tests, and factual computational trivia, most decisions we make in our everyday lives do not have intrinsically correct solutions. The choices we make are not inherent in the situations at hand. They are a complex interplay between the properties of the situations and our own properties, our aspirations, our doubts, and our histories. It is only logical to expect that the prefrontal



In the various circus disciplines, virtually every student can find something that meets his or her physical abilities and temperament.

cortex is central to such decision making, since it is the only part of the brain where the inputs from within the organism converge with the inputs from the outside world.⁸

Many middle school and high school students, even successful ones, become bored and frustrated with traditional deterministic teaching. Yet students do respond to teachers who not only bring content but who also stimulate the students' individual response to it.

Actor-centered decision making has . . . been ignored by educators. Our whole educational system is based on teaching veridical decision making. . . . Strategies of actor-centered, adaptive decision making are simply not taught. Instead, they are acquired by each individual idiosyncratically, as a personal cognitive discovery, through trials and errors. Designing ways of explicitly teaching the principles of actor-centered problem solving is among the most worthy challenges for educators. . . .⁹

A circus arts program in which the students play an active role in planning and decision making provides just this type of learning. The students, as individuals and as a group, must solve a series of ambiguous problems and in doing so create a final performance. A circus program for elementary school children can be very effective. But children in the seventh and eighth grades and high school students, because they are going through the profound general and neurological changes of adolescence, can especially benefit. At this stage, they need actor-centered problem solving.

A circus involves various special skills. "The circus artists represent archetypes for overcoming gravity (acrobatics, pyramids), flexibility in dealing with objects (juggling and other hand manipulations), overcoming fear in finding balance (balancing, trapeze), and the optimistic mastery of life's adversities (clowns)."¹⁰ Initially, the students try each of the activities and are drawn to one or more of them. They choose the skill or skills on which they will focus and which, in time, they will master.

According to one expert, "Mastering movement is the first step in mastering oneself."¹¹ While the prefrontal or angel lobes are growing, there is a corresponding growth spurt in the brain's cerebellum, where muscle coordination and physical movement are controlled. Joseph Chilton Pearce points out that the cellular makeup of the cerebellum and that of much of the prefrontal cortex are similar and that "very strong neural links exist" between the two.¹² Hence, movement and the development of higher human virtues and intelligence may have a correlation. Pearce even suggests that the best way to foster healthy development in the adolescent is by stimulating the central motor system and the emotions, not by focusing on the intellect, which is the norm. He writes that "movement must be involved."¹³

Once each young person is comfortable with his new skill, students with like abilities form groups. They work collaboratively to combine their skills into an act and the various acts into one production. They practice

A youth circus involves many of the elements of an athletic event—team effort, an enthusiastic and cheering crowd, displays of strength and daring—yet no one ever loses the game.



adaptive decision making: *What is the overall theme of the show? What tricks can we do? How can we correct our timing? How should we artistically link the skills together? What do we want for music, for lighting, for costumes?* Yet there are also questions that require veridical decision making. *How many more practices until dress rehearsal? How many yards of fabric are needed? How many measures of music? How much will popcorn sales earn?*

Throughout this process, the students negotiate with each other, practice delayed gratification, set goals and assess how close they are to meeting those goals, and call up the willpower to get up and do their routines again and again. Each rehearsal requires that the young person activate his power of volition. This gradually becomes easier, since the teenager himself has created the routines he must practice. The upcoming public performance requires that the tricks and acts take a final form and be mastered. The teenager, perhaps for the first time, needs to focus and to exercise self-control. Through the physical movements of the circus activities—which require consciousness and coordination—and through the entire individual and group process of creating a circus show, the adolescent can begin to tame impulsiveness and to channel potentially destructive energies into discernible achievements. “When the higher incorporates the lower into its service, it transforms the lower into the nature of the higher.”¹⁴

The circus arts include something for everyone. Most physical activities for teenagers are competitive sports that favor the strong, the quick, the tall, the aggressive, and the fleet of foot. In the various circus disciplines, however, virtually every student can find something that meets his physical abilities and temperament. Circus arts are open equally to males and females, and the virtues of each gender are wholesomely celebrated. In human pyramid building, size differences are converted from liabilities into assets. A stable pyramid requires both larger-bodied bases and smaller-bodied fliers, regardless of their gender. Also, an older or more experienced student can learn mentoring skills in working with a novice. Older performers are looked up to as role models in the school—wholesome alternatives to the animated heroes children encounter on television and in video games.

Finally, educational circus is truly noncompetitive. Team and individual sports, despite their many benefits, require that for one team or individual to win, another has to lose. A youth circus involves many of the elements of an athletic event—team effort, an enthusiastic and cheering crowd, displays of strength and daring—yet no one ever loses the game. Even when a juggling club is dropped or a trick is missed, the lapse is absorbed into the whole. Success for one equals success for all.

Creating a circus is not inherently a cooperative venture. It can be done using a hierarchical and authoritarian model of the teacher-student relationship.



The best way to foster healthy development in the adolescent is by stimulating the central motor system and the emotions, not by focusing on the intellect, which is the norm.

Thus, in order to create a more collaborative process, in which teacher and students help each other, the teacher must consciously put aside conventional, deterministic teaching methods. The teacher needs to acknowledge and incorporate the students' contributions in order to create the whole. Furthermore, the teacher needs to put aside preconceptions and present a curriculum that has open spaces for the students to fill.

This way of working with students may evoke anxiety in the teacher. The young people can generate so much energy and vitality that an adult will feel uncomfortable. She has to develop a new view of what constitutes "control." Yet the process is not anarchic. The circus teacher has a master plan but allows for the new and unexpected elements brought by the students. Thus, the end product is neither the teacher's preconception nor the students' vision, but a merging of the two.

Today's young people need more opportunities to explore adaptive reasoning. They need a curriculum that is open and subject to their suggestions. And they need teachers who are willing to embrace ambiguity and to grapple with adaptive decision-making powers, and who will be role models for them. Providing young people with these elements will help them develop the intelligence and abilities they will need as adults in the world.

A circus arts program for adolescents can create this interplay between student, curriculum, and teacher. But the pedagogical model used in a school circus, one of cooperation between the teacher and the students, of student involvement in the defining of the curriculum, and of the students taking ultimate responsibility for their own learning, can be applied more broadly in the middle school and high school curricula. It is a model that can be used productively in many, perhaps most, of the learning situations in which adolescents, teachers, and parents come together.

ENDNOTES

1. AWSNA conference registration pamphlet "Ascending the Developmental Staircase," 2002.
2. The Web site: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/work/adolescent.html> is one such source. Many other Web sites on the subject have similar information.
3. Joseph Chilton Pearce, *The Biology of Transcendence: A Blueprint of the Human Spirit* (Rochester: Park Street Press, 2002), 42.
4. The term "angel lobes" and the quote are attributed to neuroscientist Paul MacLean in Pearce's *The Biology of Transcendence*, 41.
5. Elkhonon Goldberg, *The Executive Brain: Frontal Lobes and the Civilized Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 80.
6. Joseph Chilton Pearce, *The Biology of Transcendence*, 47.
7. Elkhonon Goldberg, *The Executive Brain*, 77.
8. *Ibid.*, 77-78.
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10. Rudi Ballreich, "Soziales Lernen in Zirkusprojekten." Taken from an unedited version of the article that appeared in *Erziehungskunst*, vol. 9, September 2000, translated by Christa and Detmar Straub.
11. Professor E.J. Kiphard, speaking at the Festival/Kongress Internationaler Kinder- und Jugendzirkusse, Berlin, Germany, July 2000.
12. Joseph Chilton Pearce, *The Biology of Transcendence*, 42.
13. Joseph Chilton Pearce, phone interview, April 2002.
14. Attributed to Meister Eckhart, in Pearce, *The Biology of Transcendence*, 49.

JACQUELINE DAVIS teaches movement education at the Pine Hill Waldorf School and directs the school's annual Hilltop Circus, a circus education program for seventh and eighth graders. Jackie also works with high school students in The Flying Gravity Circus, a touring company whose mission is to assist Waldorf schools, through performances and daylong workshops, to create their own circus programs. Jackie is a founding member of the American Youth Circus Organization and an assistant instructor at the North American trainings of the Spatial Dynamics Institute. She lives with her husband and two daughters in New Hampshire.

Building Bridges to the Broader Community

Most Waldorf schools operate on tuition revenues. Very few have income from an endowment. Even if operating expenses are met, money for a capital program—to create an endowment, build a new building, renovate an existing structure, buy land for a garden, and so on—must be raised in a capital campaign. This means development or fund-raising is an important element in the life of every Waldorf school.

Until recently, most Waldorf schools were little interested in development in the early stages of their life. They were too concerned with surviving from month to month, year to year. When the need to finance a major new step in a school's life arose, then the school began to think about a capital campaign and what is involved in it. Today, sophisticated pioneer schools, realizing the importance of development, have a fund-raising program in place as soon as possible.

Eventually, every school—be it a pioneer or a well-established school—encounters the need for capital funds. Raising these funds requires that the school go out into



Development in the Waldorf School

BY BARBARA SHELL

the broader community. This is sometimes hard for faculty, staff, and parents. Everyday life today challenges our patience, courage, and imagination. A Waldorf community often serves—both for its children and its adults—as a place of refuge, a haven of safety and security within a daunting, unpredictable, less-than-comfortable wider world. People are perhaps hesitant to venture out into this world to raise money. But the ideals of Waldorf Education ask that we adults, as also our children, pursue a path of self-development.

Building a relationship with the larger community is like preparing untilled land to plant a garden. It takes effort and the right tools to break through the many years' growth of tangled weeds that cover the surface and to reach the fertile but hidden topsoil. Fertilizer and compost must be put on the soil and given time to work before planting can begin. We need to choose the right seeds for the site and for the soil and perhaps ask the help of an expert.

Every member of a school community—a new parent, the maintenance man, the veteran faculty member—is an ambassador for the school. Aware of it or not, each is part of the outreach and public relations program. Each time a parent, teacher, or staff member speaks about the school—to an acquaintance on the sidelines of the local baseball field, to a friend over lunch—a message is given about the school, an image is created. Persons not familiar with the school may form an opinion based on only a few casual comments.

All members of the school community need to be aware of this, especially as the school grows. A good exercise for a school community is to formulate in a clear and concise way what a Waldorf school is and what it stands for. A paragraph or two made available to staff and parents can be very helpful for the purpose

of giving a five-minute explanation of Waldorf Education to a neighbor or grandparent—an explanation that can be difficult for the unprepared. Parents, board, faculty, and staff need to be able to speak about the school clearly and without Waldorf jargon. There needs to be a

consistency in what they say about the school for the school to become respected in the wider community.

Once this basic message about the school is developed, it can be incorporated into the school's literature, into presentations at open houses and other school events that are open to the public, and in press releases to the local media. Building a positive image in the larger community and relationships with individuals and organizations in that community takes time.

In today's contracting economy, most nonprofit organizations are struggling financially. The demands placed on government funding agencies and on foundations and corporations are great. In some Waldorf schools, members of the board of trustees and of the development committee hold to the myth that the school can raise the money it needs with a large grant from a foundation or corporation. In real-

ity, a foundation almost never rides forth on a shining white steed with a velvet pouch filled with gold to fund the seeds, the gardener's salary, or the tool shed in our Waldorf development garden.

In the world of philanthropy, about 90 per cent of all money donated comes from individuals. Schools must therefore look to individuals in the school community—parents, grandparents, and alumni—but also to persons in the wider community. With people outside the school community, there needs to be a long-standing and warm effort to build a relationship. A school can't expect donations from strangers. Even an

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excellent case statement and convincing presentation is unlikely to elicit a response unless a relationship has been created over time.

Schools can reach out to persons who are not current parents in various ways. Invitations to events such as plays, festivals, and fairs, sending information about the school, and asking for help in an area of expertise can provide a comfortable initial contact and the basis for an ongoing connection. A relationship with a donor over time is the key to support in the future. And every gift, however small, is important.

Schools can make friends and find supporters in the community by offering services and also by seeking help. Many Waldorf schools have a community college, college, or university nearby. School faculty members might give a presentation on Waldorf Education for a philosophy of education or educational methods class. A school also can offer opportunities for classroom observations by college education majors.

At the same time, the school can seek volunteer help. Many high schools and universities require that students do service-learning. Also, senior citizens in the community are often happy to do volunteer work, especially if it involves contact with children. Possibilities include helping at a school fair, working in the school garden, accompanying a class trip, and also providing help in the office, designing brochures, creating a business plan for a school initiative, and so on. Volunteers from outside the school community can bring new vitality and strength and a breath of fresh air into our school garden of development.

Schools can also participate in local community organizations, becoming a member of a local chamber of commerce, for example. Faculty members and

members of the board can join community service organizations such as Rotary and Kiwanis. A school's becoming a member of an association of independent schools or of a nonprofit organization, be it community-, state-, or regionwide, has the obvious benefit of

providing opportunities for networking. Such organizations are also a valuable source of advice and services for every nonprofit organization, including Waldorf schools.

The metaphor of the garden really does apply to school development. Three years ago, I received the gift of a very tiny peony plant for my birthday. I planted that peony in my garden and have carefully tended it. In the past two years, the plant sprouted only a few stems and some green leaves. This year one glorious peachblossom-colored flower opened and two more buds appeared. If I continue to nurture it, it will become a glorious bush. Tending this peony is much like nurturing potential community support. The groundwork of development is time-consuming and labor-intensive. A wise school realizes that this is an investment in the health of the school, plans ahead, and hires a development director years before a capital campaign is to begin.

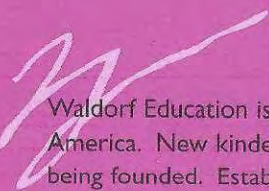
Every member of a school community—a new parent, the maintenance man, the veteran faculty member—is an ambassador for the school. Aware of it or not, each is part of the outreach and public relations program.

BARBARA SHELL has been involved in Waldorf Education for over twenty years. She helped found—in 1984—the Emerson Waldorf School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and has been on the faculty since then. For the past several years, Barbara has been working to strengthen the development work of the school and is currently the school's full-time director of development. She is the southeast coordinator of DANA, the Development and Administrators' Network of AWSNA, and consults with Waldorf schools and initiatives throughout the southern United States.

Anthroposophy, Philanthropy, and Making Ends Meet

The Exciting World of Waldorf Finance

BY AMY MARSH



Waldorf Education is growing rapidly all over North America. New kindergarten and school initiatives are being founded. Established schools are expanding and renovating their facilities, and many are adding a high school. In virtually every Waldorf school community, there is a need for substantial operating and capital funds.

As independent schools, Waldorf schools do not have state funding and thus depend primarily on tuition income. In very few schools does this cover operating expenses, let alone capital expenditures. Not surprisingly, finances are often a discomfiting issue for administrators, faculty, and parents.

Most Waldorf teachers must live on salaries far below those of public school teachers and often inadequate for the area in which their school is located. Administrators struggle with perennial budget shortfalls. Parents often face annual tuition increases. They also give much time and energy in fund-raising events: school fairs, bake sales, annual giving campaigns, and so on. They raise money but may have little say about where it goes. The priorities and strategies of fund-raising in the school may be hard for them to understand. Parents may even wonder about the ability of the school to manage its finances. Eventually, even the indefatigable parent volunteer burns out. And if financial pressures on the school are great, festivals may become so dominated by the need to raise money that their inner mood and meaning are lost.



Making ends meet in a Waldorf school is often a major challenge, and fund-raising, on a small and a large scale, is an inescapable necessity. But raising money can be done in a way that strengthens the community and provides satisfaction and spiritual growth to those involved.

The Waldorf movement can acknowledge and develop its connection with American philanthropy. Waldorf schools legally and financially are counted as part of the philanthropic sector of the economy. This vibrant realm includes private schools and other nonprofit organizations, on the one hand, and philanthropic foundations, private corporations, government agencies, and individual donors on the other. The American system of philanthropy is a unique model admired and emulated in other parts of the world. American Waldorf schools are part of this system, but, oddly, seem sometimes unaware of and detached from this important segment of American economic and cultural life.

This detachment contributes to a chronic shortfall in revenue and to a loss of access to the vast resources and professional expertise available to nonprofit organizations. It results, too, in a lack of wider community recognition and support for Waldorf Education.

To overcome this detachment, all those involved in the planning and carrying out of any fund-raising campaign—the college of teachers, trustees, staff, and parent volunteers—need to educate themselves in the basics of philanthropic practices. They need a basic understanding of the ground rules set by philanthropic organizations, as well as the function of a development office. This can happen before professional development staff are hired and before a major campaign is launched.

Basic information about fund-raising can be conveyed in one or two meetings or workshops and needn't take much time away from school tasks. The workshops should cover practical concepts, terms, and tools of the trade, including:

- the development plan—an overall strategy for fund-raising;
- constituent circles—a diagram showing areas of support within the community;
- gift tables and pyramids—estimates of who is likely to give what;
- peer solicitation—a standard practice;

- major donors—their identification, cultivation, solicitation, and recognition, as well as the reasons they give;
- foundations—qualifications necessary for grants, application deadlines, letters of intent, grant proposals, accountability of the grantee;
- corporate giving programs; and
- types of fund-raising campaigns—annual for operating expenses, capital for improvements, planned giving for endowments, events, and so on.

These topics are complex, but the basics can be communicated in weekend workshops or in a few evenings of lecture and discussion. Such meetings should also cover several characteristics of Waldorf schools that can hinder success. These include:

Double Governance. Unlike most nonprofit organizations, Waldorf schools are guided by a college of teachers, while legal and financial decisions are formed by a board of trustees, the group legally responsible for the school. Waldorf administrators are only functionaries of the college and board and do not have the power of headmasters or school principals. A development director coming from the outside world may find this structure difficult. Also, grant-giving foundations are not used to this pattern of governance.

Interwoven Pedagogy. Academic subjects, the arts, and practical activities (gardening, handwork, et al.) are so entwined that it is difficult to present Waldorf Education

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“programs” in grant proposal formats required by most foundations. For example, the arts in Waldorf schools do not comprise a distinct department with a separate budget that can be presented to foundations with a special interest in funding the arts in schools.

Karma, Destiny, Miracles, and “Angels.” People facing fund-raising challenges in Waldorf schools

sometimes harbor the assumption that those who need us and those whom we need will, through the working of karma and destiny, find us. This may apply in some areas of life, and in fund-raising, to a degree, but there is no substitute for old-fashioned outreach, research, and footwork. These activities are the very things that wake up the energy that brings on the miracles and interests the "angels."

Fund-raising in a Waldorf school, then, should be informed by a sophisticated awareness of the world of philanthropy. But it will also benefit from the special resources available to it from Anthroposophy and from the ideals of Waldorf Education.

A true Waldorf teacher is a student of Anthroposophy and has an inner life of meditation and training of awareness. Those involved in financial development—professional development staff, faculty, parents—can also be involved in the study of Spiritual Science, especially those parts that deal with money and with the relationship of the cultural life to the economic life in the Threefold Social Order. This will very likely change how they view and how they do their work. They may realize and experience the fact that development is not just raising money. It is nurturing and supporting the life of a spiritual being—the being of the school—and this being is playing an important role in the evolution and destiny of all those involved in the school and of humanity as a whole. Those involved in fund-raising can also be instructed in simple techniques of meditation and inner development as a means of personal development and of coming to perceive their work in a new way.

Everyone may or may not accept the anthroposophical perspective, may or may not actually practice meditation, but it is important that these be made available. A weekend workshop or two or a study group meeting once a week for some time would suffice.

Also, it is important that there be a school mission statement that expresses goals inspired by Anthroposophy and by Waldorf Education. Rather than describing pedagogical methods, this statement of the school's reason for being should express the highest goals of Waldorf Education in relation to the individual and society. It can be as simple as this quote from Rudolf Steiner:

Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.

Those people who share these two orientation experiences—in mainstream philanthropy and in Anthroposophy—are likely then to form a team that is attuned in heart and mind and will. They will be able to sustain their energy, commitment, and enthusiasm

throughout a fund-raising campaign. Such a group will be likely to bring in major gifts and to meet fund-raising goals. Before the campaign begins, it is important to give all members of the school community a sense of involvement. One or more meetings, open to the entire school community, could discuss basic questions and issues. These might include:

- What does the school need? How badly?
- What are the goals of the fund-raising project? How are they decided? Who is responsible for meeting them? If they can't be met, what are the consequences?
- How many times have regular donors been asked for money? Should they be asked again?
- Who gives and why? Who doesn't?
- Should the school accept funding from controversial sources?
- What types of fund-raising activities are most appropriate for the school?
- Should the festivals serve as vehicles for raising money or should there be separate fund-raising events?
- Who is doing the fund-raising work? What motivates them? How can we help them?
- How do we create and maintain the shared energy and enthusiasm needed for this kind of group project?
- What can each person involved do to maintain his or her physical and spiritual vitality and commitment?
- What is the relationship of those doing this work to the spiritual world?

Informed by this interplay of outer and inner activity, by knowledge about the world of philanthropy, and by an understanding of Anthroposophy, fund-raising can become more than a way of bringing in revenue. It can be a social and spiritual activity using the diverse talents and energy of the school community and its highest aspirations. It can be an exchange of gifts and gratitude within the school and within the larger community. It can be a means to change the world.

AMY MARSH has two children who attend the East Bay Waldorf School in El Sobrante, California. In 1983 she cofounded a nonprofit organization, the Hypatia Cluster, to promote women's involvement in outer space exploration. Amy recently served as president of the Environmental Health Network of California. While earning a Development Director certificate from the University of San Francisco in 1997, Amy focused on fund-raising in Waldorf schools. She is currently studying hula and Hawaiian culture.



Parsival door at the front office, created by two graduates.

L.A.'s Highland Hall Waldorf School

Almost Fifty and Still Young at Heart

BY CHRISTINE MEYER

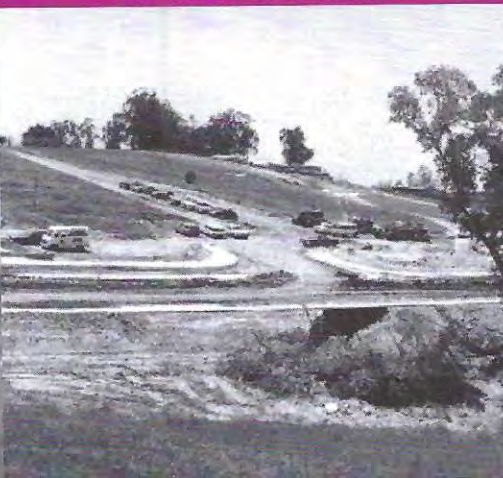
Los Angeles seems an unlikely place for Waldorf Education and the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. It is a city grown large and powerful through its entertainment industry, a city dedicated to image that often takes the place of substance and to illusion that is more enticing than reality. Furthermore, even the substance of the Earth is unpredictable here, since the area is subject to earthquakes, and the Earth's surface can shudder and sway, as unstable as the sea. Yet Los Angeles is the home of the first Waldorf school in the western United States—Highland Hall Waldorf School.

Founded in 1955, today the school, with its student body of about 390 students and a faculty and staff of about seventy-five, is located on a hill in Northridge, California, about twenty miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles in a neighborhood of elegant homes. Not an urban school in the midst of concrete and steel, Highland Hall is surrounded by mountains. The eleven-acre campus is filled with trees, flowers, and animals. There are daily sightings of hawks, squirrels, and opossums and less frequent encounters with visiting coyotes.

Groundbreaking for the new campus: Noah Williams III, Helen Howenstein, and Alstan Lippincott Hegg.



The hill in the mid-1960s when only the kindergarten building—at the foot of the hill—had been constructed.



The "temporary" office building in 1967.





The new high school building at Highland Hall.

The roots of the school go back to the early 1920s—the time that Hollywood was gaining its influence in the world—when one of the first anthroposophical study groups in the country began in Los Angeles. By the 1940s, members of the branch of the Anthroposophical Society were actively interested in starting a Waldorf school, but there were not enough children to do so.

Alstan Lippincott Hegg was one of the anthroposophists who wanted to bring Waldorf Education to Los Angeles. In 1953 she purchased a small private school in North Hollywood, which had originally been on Highland Avenue. (This is the origin of the school's name, which has nothing to do with the hill on which it now stands.) The school at the time was on Riverside Drive in what one observer called a "hodgepodge of wooden buildings." The prior owner stayed on with her sister and taught the upper grades in the traditional manner. Several of the younger classes, however, were taught as Waldorf classes. After one year, the unorthodox pedagogy and subjects (eurythmy, handwork, et al.) caused the sisters to leave and to start another school in the same neighborhood, taking half the students with them.

The little school survived, though. In 1955, through the work of many teachers and parents, Highland Hall was officially incorporated as a Waldorf school and acquired nonprofit status. One of those active in this undertaking was Noah Williams III, whose two sons are today faculty members at the school.

The next year, Francis Edmunds, a noted Waldorf educator, came from England to help found the college of teachers. This group, which administers and cares for the school, has

continued as a working group since that time. Two years later, Hermann von Baravalle, a German Waldorf teacher who had known and worked with Rudolf Steiner, joined the faculty. While at the school, Baravalle helped found a Waldorf teacher training program. This program, now called the Waldorf Institute of Southern California, is still in operation on the campus of Highland Hall.

A list of early teachers at the school reads like a "Who's Who" of Waldorf Education: Francis Edmunds (who went on to found Emerson College in England); Werner Glas (who founded the Waldorf Institute in Detroit, which later moved to Spring Valley, New York, and became Sunbridge College; René Querido (later the director of Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California); Noel and Diana Bell (founders and directors of the Kula Makua teacher training in Honolulu); John Brousseau (a founder and the present director of WISC); and Virginia Sease (now a member of the Vorstand, or governing committee, of the international Anthroposophical Society in Dornach, Switzerland).

The school remained in North Hollywood for thirteen years, purchasing six properties on Riverside Drive for classrooms and even for a teachers' residence. But finally there was no more room to grow. In 1964 ground was broken for kindergarten classes at the foot of the hill at the present site in Northridge. In 1967 the lower school opened in "temporary" classrooms up the hill. Shortly thereafter, in 1969, the first high school classes began, and in 1971 the first twelfth grade graduated. This was also the first year a class teacher completed eight years with the same class.

In 1954 there were twenty-five students, and today there are nearly 400. In the 1950s, the school resided in a hodgepodge of buildings on a busy street, and today it crowns a tree- and flower-filled hilltop in a lovely neighborhood. But the history of the school has not been one of steady growth. Enrollment has increased but also decreased at different times. Nor has its history been

idyllic and trouble-free. There have been problems and crises—some of them seemingly overwhelming—with which the school has had to deal.

For many years, the administration of the school was conducted by dedicated teachers who did this work as volunteers, in addition to fulfilling their classroom duties. And the school seemed always to be on the brink of financial disaster. But in the early '90s, when enrollment was rising, the school made what was then a difficult decision. It hired a

**A Waldorf school,
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“professional” administrator, despite the fact that this seemed out of place in an educational movement that had long held the ideal of faculty-run schools.

Immediately, it was clear that this had been a good decision. The person chosen was the right one for the job, and her work was soon widely appreciated in the school. Lines of communication in the ever more complex social fabric of the school community became clearer. The finances of the school became more transparent, and the budget was balanced.

Then came the Northridge earthquake in 1994. Even though the school was little damaged—those temporary buildings are basically indestructible—many people in Southern California decided to leave for more geologically stable parts of the country. The school’s enrollment declined drastically to a low of around 260. But, surprisingly, the budget—due to the professional expertise of the school administration—remained balanced. Over the next few years, enrollment increased and regained its former level.

During the past several years, the school, taking advantage of its financial health, has erected new, permanent buildings for the first time since the 1960s. There is a beautiful, new high school building, a new building to accommodate the six early childhood education classes, and more office space.

Another recent development arose from the insistence of the board of directors that teacher salaries be comparable to those of public school teachers. Salaries had been quite low, although the school would give a higher salary if someone really needed it. However, the result of this policy was that often the veteran faculty members were making less money than new teachers. After a year of deliberation, a joint committee of the board of directors and the college of teachers proposed a system wherein salary is tied to amount of teaching experience and to teaching load. The salary scale seemed remarkably high, but nevertheless the proposal caused a great deal of resentment among those who were on the low end of the scale. Questions were raised about the criteria for experience and about the way a teacher’s work load is quantified. A few teachers left the school, and some who stayed continued to grumble. One problem had been replaced with another.

Then came the challenge of holding on to teachers. For years, most class teachers had stayed with their classes for eight years and then returned after a year’s sabbatical—a fully paid benefit at Highland Hall—to take another class. But for two recent years in a row, the school, for various reasons, has lost class teachers. In the year 2000, four class teachers left, and since then



Eighth graders in front of the office in 2002, with the school store in the background.

two class teachers have had to be replaced in the middle of the year. In an established Waldorf school such as Highland Hall, where parents expect the teacher to remain with the class for eight years, such an upheaval can be considered a disaster.

For a time, it had seemed as if the school found a way to do nearly everything right. Then it seemed that it couldn’t do anything right. Neither, of course, was the case. It is not possible for any form, any structure, or any way of working to be perfect forever. A Waldorf school, just like a human being, must change and grow, or else it will die. Change and growth are painful at any stage of life. They are perhaps more painful for an institution that is nearly fifty years old and perhaps in that time should have developed viable procedures and policies.

But one of Highland Hall’s main strengths has been its flexibility, its ability to respond—perhaps too slowly at times—to the needs of the moment. Over the years, the school has changed in order to adapt to what the times demand, much the same way our “temporary” buildings ride the rolling of the earthquakes and don’t fall apart.

Another strength of the school has been its willingness to give teachers the time and the opportunity to find their voices and strengths in freedom. The school values individuality and initiative.

Also, the faculty and college of teachers work closely with the board of directors to find ways to balance the educational philosophy of Waldorf Education with the financial and legal requirements of a large institution.

Highland Hall’s challenges are the dark side of its strengths. Its flexibility and openness can sometimes lead to a lack of form and structure and of clear,

commonly held values. The school needs to continue working as a community—comprised of teachers, parents, staff, and board—to reenliven its relationship to the philosophy behind Waldorf Education and its understanding of the development of the human being. Otherwise it could slip into being merely a nice, legally and financially responsible school with lots of art and music.

Allowing teachers the freedom to find their strengths becomes problematic when this freedom leads to their developing bad habits in teaching or communication. The school's strong board of directors provides financial and legal leadership. But the college of teachers has not done as well as it should have in providing pedagogical and philosophical leadership for the school community.

In addition to meeting these three challenges, the school has yet to find a way to reflect in its enrollment the broad economic and cultural diversity of the City of Angels. The student body is largely white, and, while many children receive tuition assistance, almost all come from comfortable or affluent homes. There are relatively few children from African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and working-class backgrounds.

One problem that Highland Hall shares with all Waldorf schools is the shortage of trained Waldorf teachers. To help deal with this, the school is developing a program for "growing" its own teachers by slowly involving prospective teachers in the school as assistants, while financially supporting their Waldorf teacher training.

After forty-seven years, Highland Hall is stronger than ever, while facing new challenges every year and every day. All the founding teachers departed long ago. There are a number of teachers who have been at Highland Hall for twenty years or more, but veteran teachers are always leaving and new ones are always arriving. Yet Highland Hall still stands and will stand, because it is more than the current teachers and more than the current board of directors and administrators. It is a being of strength that has survived all the difficulties that confront Waldorf schools and that will survive the challenges of the future. It stands solid yet remains flexible enough to thrive on the shifting ground and amid the shimmering illusions of Los Angeles.

CHRISTINE MEYER *has taught at Highland Hall for nineteen years, first as a class teacher and more recently as an English teacher in grades seven to twelve. She also teaches at the Waldorf Institute of Southern California, her subjects ranging from lower school science to English to singing.*

BOOKS

in Brief

Two Delightful Books on String Games and Stories

Pull the Other One! (Book 1)

BY MICHAEL TAYLOR

Hawthorn Valley Press, Stroud, Gloucestershire, U.K., 2000

125 pages \$16.95

Now You See It ... (Book 2)

BY MICHAEL TAYLOR

Hawthorn Valley Press, Stroud, Gloucestershire, U.K., 2002

130 pages \$16.95

String games are a part of childhood and adulthood in many cultures all over the world. But these games and the stories and songs that go with them, like most traditional childhood activities, play an important role in the development of the child. Appropriate for children from about the age of five, they promote dexterity, mental flexibility, the imaginative powers, and the rhythmic use of the voice in speaking and singing. Like other activities centered in the hands, such as knitting and playing a musical instrument, they lay the basis for the later development of intellectual capacities.

Sadly, in modern times, string games and stories have largely been supplanted in the lives of children by other, more passive pursuits—television, computer games, and the like. Happily, there is a movement afoot to save and spread this traditional activity. To that end, Michael Taylor, a Waldorf teacher in England, has written two delightful, how-to books on string games.

Book 1 gives a version of the classic "taking-off" or two-person game, Cat's Cradle, and also a number of one-person patterns that challenge and reward the fingers and the mind. The figures range from simple to, well, not so simple, and all are described both in word and through line drawings.

Book 2 starts off with the simple but satisfying Monkey (or Loop) Chain with which one can make a headband or the pull cord for a lamp. It includes many other interesting figures—some of them invented by children—and some string tricks for the aspiring performer.

Both books come with a beautiful rainbow-colored loop of string, so that the reader, child or adult, can immediately try the figures and start to enjoy this delightful pastime.

R.E.K.

BOOK REVIEW

The Riddle of America

EDITED BY JOHN WULSIN

AWSNA Publications, 2001

Fair Oaks, Calif.

365 pages \$30.00

REVIEWED BY BETTY STALEY

Many writers have written about America and Americans. The topic is rich and stimulating for Americans pondering their identity as well as for visitors who are intrigued with their experiences in this land. *The Riddle of America* is a collection of articles offering many different lenses through which to look at American culture. What makes this book unique is the inclusion of the philosophical and historical viewpoints offered by Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy. These provide a new and stimulating perspective from which to examine the complex nature of America and Americans.

Editor John Wulsin, for over twenty years a teacher of English in the high school of the Green Meadow Waldorf School in Spring Valley, New York, uses a flexible definition of the term "America." Many of the articles focus on the United States of America as "America," but others represent and deal with Canada and Mexico and even Central America (i.e., with America as North America) and with the continent before the coming of the Europeans.

The articles cover a wide range of subjects, including geography, literature, the arts, immigration, feminism, and multiculturalism. The contributions vary from the retelling of myths to scholarly treatments of subjects. The authors come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and historical periods. The background of America sets the stage for the book through the retelling of three myths that bespeak the spiritual nature of America: a Hopi story describing the evolution of the world until the coming of the white settlers and the prophecy of the lost white brother; the legend of Huitzilpochtli, which describes the battle between good and evil within the mysteries of Mesoamerica; and the fairy tale of the Ramapo Salamander, which gives images of forces operating within the depths of the human soul.

The articles on geography waken us to the land forms that affect the character of the people. Philip Thatcher's "North of the Border" is especially intriguing. Thatcher describes the hold that the land has exercised on the painters and poets of Canada. He contrasts the Canadian attitude based on law and order with the lawless attitude of Americans,

using the example of the ordered and regulated approach to law enforcement of the Royal Canadian Mounties in contrast to the law-by-gunpoint in the American Wild West. Thatcher also provides insight into the identity struggle of Canadians in relation to their big brother to the south.

The sections on American (in the U.S. of A. sense) arts include articles on everything from early sacred music of New England to jazz and bluegrass, from the nineteenth-century Luminist school of painting to modern American art. Writers such as Emerson, Wilder, Dickinson, and Mary Oliver are included. A selection I found particularly illuminating was "The Birth of American Literature: The Altering of the Early American Mind," in which editor Wulsin describes influences on the American mind coming from Calvinism, Unitarianism, Congregationalism, Rationalism, and Transcendentalism. While there is much of interest in the book concerning the Transcendentalists, a refreshing perspective on Latinos, and a brief commentary on America and Japan, I missed African-American authors such as Langston Hughes, Lorraine Hansberry, James Baldwin, and Ralph Ellison.

The article "Toward an American Language" by Thornton Wilder further describes the American mind by comparing lecturing in Europe with lecturing in America. In Europe, says Wilder, the lecturer is an authority dispensing "a fragment of the truth." In America, the lecturer is a person sharing his or her point of view, fully expecting and respecting that each listener will have his or her own viewpoint. Wilder further characterizes the Americans' relationship to space and time. He points out that Americans distrust social conventions, while Europeans rely on them as a way of relating to and identifying with a place. Americans find a place meaningful only when they connect their will with it. Americans therefore feel connected with each other when they are united in will through working together on a project, are caught up in an idea. In their relationship to time, they focus on working toward the future. Wilder points out that as part of the price for American freedom there is an uneasiness and loneliness in the American soul.

The wide variety of articles in *The Riddle of America* reflects the complexity and individualism of American culture. The book offers rich food for thought and stimulating conversation.

BETTY STALEY, longtime Waldorf educator, is the author of several books, including *Between Form and Freedom: A Practical Guide to the Teenage Years*; *Hear the Call of the Griot (a collection of readings on African culture)*; and *Tapestries: Weaving Life's Journey*.

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