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Renewal

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Why Faust?

The Generational Shift in Waldorf Schools



A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION

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Over the years, *Renewal* has featured on its cover examples of the “space arts,” particularly the visual arts. Most covers have presented examples of student painting and drawing. With last issue’s cover, which honored the role of music in Waldorf Education, and with this issue’s cover photo of eurythmy, we are giving these “time arts” their long overdue nod of appreciation.

Waldorf Alumni Forum

Colyn Cameron, Vancouver Waldorf School

Colyn Cameron was born in Berkeley, California, in 1989 and the following year moved with his family to San Diego. In 2000 Colyn's family moved from Southern California to the "cold North" of British Columbia. Colyn attended the Vancouver Waldorf School until 2008, when he graduated from high school. Colyn has spent the last two years attending the biodynamic agriculture training at Emerson College in England and working on different farms in England, Germany, Chile, and Canada. Colyn's passions include music—he plays the guitar and handbells, sings, and writes songs—biodynamic farming, and writing.

Biodynamic (BD) farming is based on indications given by Rudolf Steiner in 1925, less than one year before he died. Steiner envisioned an approach to farming that would produce nutritious, organic food crops and would also "heal the Earth." BD farming uses natural methods of fertilizing crops and controlling weeds and pests, as well as specially produced "preparations" to enrich the soil. The ideal BD farm is a self-sufficient organism that grows a wide variety of food crops—grains, beans, vegetables, fruits, nuts—and also supports farm animals such as cows, chickens, goats, and geese. There are hundreds of BD farms all over the world.

—R.E.K.

Biodynamic Agriculture: More Than a New Agriculture

Indeed, not many people know that during the last few decades the agricultural products on which our life depends have degenerated extremely rapidly. In this present time of transition from the Kali Yuga to a new Age of Light, it is not only human moral development that is degenerating, but also what human activity has made of the Earth and of what lies just above the Earth.

—Rudolf Steiner

*Agriculture: Spiritual Foundations for the
Renewal of Agriculture (1924)*

When I first encountered biodynamic agriculture, I was enrolled in a creative writing program at Capilano University in Vancouver, British Columbia—I wanted to become a poet. I had decided to work on a small BD farm (C-Dar Biodynamic Farm in Squamish, BC) for the summer. I thought it would be a great place to have the space and inspiration to write. Well, things changed a little. As the summer progressed and heated up, I found myself engaged more with the daily rhythm of the farm and less with my writing. I found the farm community there to be rich and unique, as we practiced new ways of living together with common interests away

from the mayhem of urban life, discovering what is possible when people come together, gathered around the soil in spiritual awakensess. This is really the modus operandi of BD agriculture: together working with the Earth, to consciously take part in its healing—which becomes our healing—but with a new kind of spiritual awareness, spiritual presence.



For young Colyn Cameron, biodynamic farming is a way to heal the Earth and to discover what it is to be human.

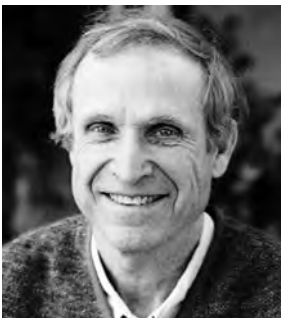
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From the Editor

Cell Phones, Wi-Fi, Electro-smog: The Asbestos and Secondhand Smoke of 2020?

BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PhD

When the first Waldorf school was founded in 1919, Rudolf Steiner asked Dr. Eugen Kolisko (1893–1939) to be the school physician, responsible for the health of the students. Steiner felt that the physical well-being of children is critical for their healthy emotional, intellectual, and social development.



The Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland, is the center for the international anthroposophical movement and for Waldorf Education. Through its Medical Section, it regularly sponsors conferences

named in honor of Dr. Kolisko. These gatherings focus on the relationship between medicine and education. One such International Kolisko Conference was held in Honolulu in February 2010. Over 200 Waldorf teachers and health professionals from Hawaii, the U.S. mainland, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, and India attended. The theme was “Meeting the Needs of Children Today.” The keynote speaker was Dr. Michaela Glöckler, for many years a school physician in Germany and now the head of the Medical Section.

In the morning lectures, Dr. Glöckler dealt with topics such as the healthy development of the child, the assessment and timely diagnosis of problems, and the use of holistic medical therapies and pedagogical interventions. She also spoke of the many factors in modern life that threaten the well-being of children. In her final lecture, Dr. Glöckler warned about “electro-smog” (e-smog) as a major health concern for children—and adults.

E-smog is the atmospheric soup of electromagnetic energy that is created by cell phone towers, cell phones, home and public Wi-Fi systems, portable phones, and the other electronic devices that have become ubiquitous in modern life. She said that

people today are using these devices neither thinking about nor knowing their short-term and long-term effects on human health.

Later, in private conversation, Dr. Glöckler said:

Each cell in the human body has its own living electromagnetic system. Life is based on biochemical electric activity. It is well known how we can measure our electric brain activity through electroencephalography (EEG) and that of our heart with electrocardiography (EKG). We could even measure the electrochemical potential of each cell and represent its particular rhythm of electrical activity in the form of a curve. However, what is noteworthy here is that the electrical activity in living systems has a unique breathlike rhythm. In our breathing, the cycles of inhalation and exhalation are not exactly the same length. They vary in terms of fractions of a second. In the same way, the pattern of the electrical activity in the cells is not exactly repeated.

Electromagnetic energy generated by cell phones and Wi-Fi and the like is, relative to the electrical activity of our body's cells, extremely exact. Its rhythms are “dead”—they do not breathe. We are filling our homes, workplaces, and even schools with electromagnetic radiation, and we have no idea of the effect on our children and ourselves.



Wi-Fi—a non-necessity?

Children, since they are growing and developing very quickly, are much more susceptible to possible harmful effects. In ten or twenty years, we may discover and regret the harm we have done. E-smog is the asbestos and secondhand smoke

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I was so artistically engrossed with the work of the farm, the effortless chores, such as feeding animals, cleaning their living areas, weeding, harvesting, making and spraying the BD preparations, that it became a kind of “writing of poetry with Nature.” The experience became a creative-rhythmic process belonging to Nature and to me. It brought into being a subtle, spiritual awakensness in me, both for the Earth and for myself. This was when I realized

lectures to practicing farmers, gardeners, and veterinarians based on the conditions of the time, including soil depletion, crop failures, and unhealthy livestock. But there is more to it than that. Steiner was not merely a scientist who had studied agroecology and by deductive measures created some eccentric remedies for Nature. He was not simply looking to create the most efficient food production system. He was not only anticipating global warming.

Biodynamic agriculture must remember its essential nature as an art, a creative work involving body, mind, and soul.

that what I was doing was more than just farming. This realization gave me the beginning of a true relationship to what Steiner was trying to enkindle in us through his lectures on agriculture.

By midsummer I was reading all the BD literature I could get my hands on, including *Secrets of the Soil* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, Wolf-Dieter Storl's *Culture and Horticulture*, and, of course, Rudolf Steiner's *Agriculture*. I was lucky to come across a wonderful documentary film on Peter Proctor's work with biodynamic agriculture in India—*One Man, One Cow, One Planet*. This film was eye-opening for me as it linked my longtime interest in the spiritual traditions of India to the soil. It showed how people can be actively and wholly engaged with the land, with the soil, while retaining the spiritual striving of their ancestors, and do this while making a transition away from destructive chemical agricultural practices. Wow!

By the end of the summer, I had stirred and applied preparations 500 and 501 on numerous different occasions, eaten fresh BD eggs, harvested a field of potatoes by hand, dropped a water pump in the river (oops!), sat in Native American sweat lodges, and had many other memorable experiences. I had been a participant in a process of engaging with ancient wisdom, modern insight, and real living, all in the context of a biodynamic farm. In September, I was not at university studying creative writing, but at Emerson College in England studying biodynamic farming. How things do change!

Why is biodynamic agriculture more than just a new agriculture? Rudolf Steiner gave the agriculture

Rather, Steiner was creatively engaged with consciousness and with spirit, and this engagement led to intuitive insights that would awaken the Earth, that would awaken the human being. We cannot remove biodynamic agriculture from the context of Anthroposophy to understand it as a way of farming.

Today many young people like myself want to work with and develop Anthroposophy in a new way, free from the dogmas that can gather around it. Biodynamic agriculture, to stay true to its original impulse and to become a true impulse in minds and souls of people today, must remember its essential nature as an art, a creative work involving body, mind, and soul. It cannot be understood and practiced only as a solution to the chaos of the present agricultural Armageddon. BD agriculture is an answer to the food and climate dilemmas of our time. But we must not lose our ability to recognize and experience its essential spiritual task, which is to enlighten consciousness through the interface with our Mother Earth.

There is a beautiful, subtle way of being totally engaged with something practically—as a real solution and work—and yet maintaining the experience of the innate whole reality to which we belong. Through biodynamic agriculture, we can use the context of the farm, the interface between what is human, animal, plant, and mineral, to strengthen our meditative life, the attention to consciousness. Biodynamics is not only a new agriculture. It is a new method of discovering what it is to be human, but to be human in a relationship with the Earth and the cosmos. ☺

Background illustration by Bianca Jarvis

From the Association One at a Time

BY PATRICE MAYNARD

The smallest thing in its rightful place can lead to the highest goals.

—Rudolf Steiner
Rosicrucian Wisdom

One seed at a time: This is how seeds must be planted and how seeds must grow. At the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, community members are seeking support so that the children, teachers, and parents of the Lakota Waldorf School, a small Waldorf kindergarten, can have a vegetable garden. Already, High Mowing Seeds of Vermont has offered to provide the seeds. From these seeds will grow tomatoes, carrots, watermelons, cucumbers, onions, corn, and squash. From these seeds may also grow, in the hearts of the children, ideas about the Earth, food, and community. The seeds may teach them how steady work leads to miracles and how good food, grown locally in good soil, makes us strong.



One crayon at a time: This is how the Stockmar beeswax crayons used in Waldorf schools are produced at the company's plant in Kaltenkirchen, Germany. On the factory wall is a world map indicating where the best beeswax is found. The areas where beekeeping has been industrialized are not marked. Stockmar buys only from beekeepers who use traditional methods. It does this to support sustainable apiculture and also to be able to produce high quality crayons. The beeswax from commercial hives is inferior in quality. Only premium beeswax gives the crayons the solid, consistent



The Stockmar beeswax block crayon—a Waldorf staple

texture that will afford a child a continuous experience of color.

The production process is carefully monitored by skilled technicians. Using thermometers as well

as their own practiced judgment, the workers fill the crayon molds and empty them at just the right moment. Variations in temperature might create air pockets in the crayon that could compromise the child's experience of color. The aim is to produce an artistic tool that helps in the education of the child, that nourishes and integrates the senses, and leads to a genuine experience of the colors and the soul moods associated with them.

One child at a time: This is how human beings come into the world and learn to live in it. Each child puzzles out the mysteries of standing, speaking, walking, thinking, and playing for herself. Each brings her special gift into the world. Every child has to be recognized as a unique individual and watched and tended with care to ensure healthy, well-rounded development. A good teacher watches one child at a time and, like the technicians at Stockmar, strives to do the right thing at the right time.

One school at a time: This is how Waldorf schools are born and flourish. Like a vegetable growing from a seed, a child going through the stages of development, or even a beeswax crayon waiting to be sprung from its mold, a growing school is something unique and fragile that must be carefully watched and tended. The miracle of organic growth must be complemented by wise husbandry. Sometimes growth must be encouraged, sometimes pruning is in order, and sometimes providing a brace or support is needed.

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America offers itself as a resource to its members as well as to new and aspiring schools to help in the growth process. It also makes available the resources—the experience and expertise—of its established member schools to young and/or struggling Waldorf schools. The Association, comprised of all independent Waldorf schools, has the desire and the capacity to support every Waldorf school. The motto “Strength Through Collaboration” expresses this aspiration and the ability to realize it. ☺



The Lakota Waldorf School was founded in 1993 by Sioux/Lakota parents concerned about the education of their children.

Experiencing Natural Dyes in the Kindergarten

BY LINDA GRANT

Sitting by an outdoor fire on a grey November day, with five pots of colored fleece simmering, and with a group of kindergarten children gathered close around me, I felt warmed through. I felt warmed by the fire's radiant heat and by the children's close attention to all I was doing. The life process of warming was palpably at work.

The small wood fire burning out of doors was archetypal. As one child reminded me: "This fire is ancient." Working with the elemental forces of fire and water and with the alchemy that happens when these are combined with plant materials and sheep fleece is a deeply warming and enlivening experience. The feeling that lingered after a morning spent with the children dyeing fleece on an outdoor fire was of inner calm, mellow warmth, and clear perception. I became aware of a deep and even rhythm in my breath. There was a feeling of physical strength and of being fully present.

Living forces are at work here. The plant materials are live substances—leaves, berries, or bark. They hold the pigments and are expressions of the plant's etheric or life force. These are the living substances that yield the color. Decayed plants produce no pigment. The water, too, must be "alive." Fresh soft

water with a strong life force produces the best colors and can be found in a flowing stream, well water, or clean rainwater. Chlorinated tap water, lacking this life force, gives inferior results. The kindling and logs gathered, sawed, and dried are transformed through fire into heat and ash. Choosing firewood from the log pile each day brings one into relationship with wood through the senses of touch, sight, and smell. One also enters into an unconscious relationship with the fleece, getting to know its qualities as one would a new friend. These living relationships dwelt in me during the weeks spent working on plant dyes and for some time afterwards.

For the children to have a close experience of these elements and processes is very nourishing. It is life-enhancing. It strengthens the etheric body, which in turn builds the physical body. This strengthening of the etheric body is the quintessential work of the kindergarten.

The element of time, present in any process, was particularly noticeable. Sheep fleece has a sensitivity to sudden changes in temperature, so the dye pot must be brought to temperature slowly and, later, cooled slowly before the fleeces are rinsed in cold water. The fleece needs to rest in the dye pot. A fire that blazes too quickly will damage the fleece and produce poor color. Learning to let the process take its time while still fitting the work within the kindergarten's daily rhythm became a valuable lesson.

For the children, waiting by a slowly simmering pot sometimes alternated with creative play in the garden. One child wondered aloud if it "would work at all" as the chestnut dye pot simmered and simmered and simmered! But the slowness of the process is ideally suited to kindergarten children, allowing them to breathe into the process and stay within the dream consciousness appropriate for them. It is not a hurried activity that might "wake them up." Often, stirring small sample dye pots was enough to engage them, while the main pot simmered on the fire. Tending the fire by bringing more firewood when it was needed also kept them connected to the process.



Elderberries impart a reddish-purple hue to wool fleece.



Kindergarten girls press fleece into dye pots containing horsetail and elder leaf prior to simmering.

When the dyed fleece was cooled, there were many children eager to rinse it, to hold it, and to see the transformation brought by the color. Teamwork and leadership skills developed in the children as they decided whose turn it was to fill the watering can with fresh water, who would rinse and squeeze the fleece, and who would empty the basin after the rinsing.

The rainbow of colors that emerged over the weeks was a joy to behold. The colors shone with light, yet held a harmony of their own, like a musical scale. From the gathering of the leaves and other plant material, to the drying, then soaking; to the simmering and straining of the dyes; then finally to the simmering of the immersed fleece, the children took a journey through an outer landscape and an inner one. They followed the path of a very old craft, which led them

to a new reverence and awe for the world of nature and their relationship to it. ☺



Chestnuts produce a warm, brown color.

Elderberry Dye Recipe

The following is a recipe for an elderberry dye bath. Since dyeing is an art, all weights are approximate and can be varied according to the mood and intuition of the dyer.

When using fresh dyestuff, the weight ratio of dyestuff to dry fleece is 2 to 1.

When using dried plant materials, the weight ratio of dyestuff to dry fleece is 1 to 2.

1 ounce dried elderberries (*sambucus nigra*)
2 ounces fleece

- Soak the berries 12 hours before use, preferably in river water or well water.
- Bring the dye bath to boiling and simmer at least 30 minutes.
- Allow to cool.
- Strain through a muslin bag.
- Add a teaspoon of vinegar to the dye bath.
- Add wet fleece to the dye bath and slowly bring to a simmer.
- Simmer for at least an hour.
- Let the fleece cool in the dye bath.
- Rinse till the water runs clear.
- Dry the fleece in the shade.

This use of elderberries yields warm grays to soft purples.



LINDA GRANT is a professional artist and trained Waldorf kindergarten teacher currently working in An Grianan Kindergarten, Raheen Wood Steiner National School, Tuamgraney, County Clare, Ireland. She leads workshops in puppetry, felt-making, and plant dyes. She has published articles in Waldorf journals in Ireland and the U.K. Linda Grant will be traveling in the United States in July 2010 and is available to give workshops on plant dyeing. Her e-mail address is: ldagrant@yahoo.com

Helping the Young Child Develop Good Eating Habits

BY ESTER DELHOOFEN, MD

Education does not begin when a child enters kindergarten. It begins much earlier. The experiences of the child as an infant and toddler have a major effect on later development. Hence Waldorf educators and their collaborators, particularly physicians practicing anthroposophically extended medicine, are increasingly concerned about the preschool years. “Mom and Tot” groups have proliferated at Waldorf schools throughout North America. These groups help mothers and fathers develop parenting skills that are in harmony with the Waldorf understanding of the healthy development of the child.

Ester Delhoofen is a pediatrician and also a Waldorf parent. Here she gives practical advice to help parents foster healthy eating patterns in their children during the second and third years of life. Much of the advice pertains to older children as well.

—R. E. K.

The young child’s experiences around food and eating are extremely important. These experiences can provide the foundation for sound nutrition that will be the basis for good health in later childhood. They also create attitudes and habits that will continue through life.

One of the great challenges in parenting the young lies in developing healthy eating habits. Problems often arise around food and eating. A child may fuss with his food and refuse to eat. Or he may balk at eating his vegetables. Parents can minimize these problems and provide the basis for a healthy approach to food by following a number of simple principles.

A Predictable Daily Rhythm

It is healthy for active young children to eat three meals and two snacks a day. These meals and snacks should be at predictable, set times. In fact,

also stimulates good functioning of the digestive and other internal organs, all of which function according to regular, cyclical rhythms.

The following is an example of a healthy daily schedule for two- and three-year-old children:

Breakfast / Play inside / Snack / Play outside /
Lunch / Nap / Snack / Play outside / Dinner

If the child asks for his snack of fruit before it is time, the parent can say, “Yes, you can have your fruit, but it is not yet fruit time.” Playing outside before lunch and dinner—an hour or two if the weather is fine, even ten minutes if it is cold—will give the child a good appetite.

There should be at least two hours between a snack and lunch or dinner. The child should not be tired at dinnertime. If the family is going to eat dinner late, the child can eat earlier but then can sample what the others are eating at the family dinner.

Children do best when all the events of their day are predictable.

children do best when all the events of their day are predictable. Adults may think that a predictable day is boring. Boring for adults is not boring for young children. For them, knowing what comes next is reassuring. Predictability helps children develop an inner clock that they can trust. A recurring schedule

A child should not eat more than five times a day. Children’s digestive organs require time to rest. Besides, each time a child has something sweet, a cookie or a glass of apple juice, the body produces insulin to regulate the blood sugar level. If a child snacks often, the body produces insulin often. When there is no food, the body may produce insulin

anyway. This creates a low blood sugar condition and the accompanying feeling of fatigue and hunger. Therefore, five regular times for eating give the digestive organs the right amount of nourishment and stimulation. Five meals a day are also good for the child's teeth.

Some children benefit from a cup of milk in the evening before bed and before brushing their teeth. This sixth meal is okay. A pattern of four meals a day, every three and a half to four hours is another good rhythm.

If a child wants to skip a meal, that is not a problem. He will no doubt be hungry and ready to eat at the next mealtime. Try to stick to your schedule, and do not worry if the child skips a meal.

Do not give the child the opportunity to say "no" when it is time to eat. For example, do not say, "Do you want a snack?" Rather say, "Come, it is snack time. Sit at the table. We are going to have a piece of melon. You see that I am peeling and cutting the melon." If the child resists and runs away, use humor. Pick him up and put him in his high chair. The transition from playing to eating can be jarring for the child. When the child is in the middle of playing, you can join him in a round of what he is doing and then walk to the table together, holding hands and talking. The child appreciates boundaries and is grateful for your being the decision maker. Such limits and you as an authority together create a feeling of safety.



Although in a high chair and thus not about to leave the table, this young man seems to be having other problems.

Have your child sit in his high chair at the table as long as possible. This way he can't walk away from the table, and staying at the table for the whole meal will become a habit.

Young children should watch no television before dinner. They will tend to eat less after watching television, because they are

still "digesting" what they have just seen.

Involve the Child in Preparation

Cooking a meal using fresh foods takes time, so it is important

for the child to be wholesomely occupied while you are cooking. A child will have special interest in a meal or snack she has helped prepare. She can help with washing the vegetables, or set plates on the table, or put the rice on her own plate. Or the child can sit in her high chair near where you are working and watch. You can give her a carrot or a piece of cucumber and tell her what you are doing. Your speaking will keep her attention. Or, she can play with her own little pots and pans and toy stove nearby or even outside. I always had a sandbox near the kitchen door, so that my child could play safely under my supervision while I cooked.

Eat Together

Small children copy the people around them. They also copy eating habits and usually want to eat the same foods as their parents. Therefore it is important to eat together. After a period of eating with their hands, children will imitate adults and learn to eat with a fork or spoon.

Make Eating a Ritual

On cold winter days, your lighting the candle on the table means it's time to wash hands and sit down for the meal. You can also light the candle when everyone is already sitting. Washing hands can be fun if you sing a song about washing hands. If you all start eating after singing a song or saying a prayer, the child sees eating as something special and something for which to be grateful. Small children often protest if you skip an established ritual. A child under three probably will start to eat as soon as his food is in front of him, so give him his plate when you all start together. Rituals help children eat their meal. Try to create a quiet atmosphere around the meal or snack. Eating joyfully and allowing sufficient time to eat aids digestion.

If you need to feed the child, do so after you yourself are finished, and not the other way around.



Having a young child help prepare a snack predisposes her to enjoy what is served.



In a Waldorf kindergarten, a lighted candle and a blessing give meals a ritual quality.

Often after a few minutes the child will imitate the others at the table and start eating by himself. While feeding the child, you might play a little game. For example, you can imitate airplanes flying into her mouth or animals making different noises while walking into the stable. Sometimes it helps to distract a child with a song or story.

Deal Calmly with Crises at the Table

Do not become irritated if your child plays with the food on his plate or spills his drink. Playing with his food this way is normal, a kind of experimentation. Relax and don't ask too much of the child. Let him eat by himself, and if he chooses, let him eat with his hands.

Tantrums at the dinner table can often be resolved by a hug or distraction. If you need to send a child



If a child balks at eating something, don't force her to eat it.

away from the dinner table, let him return after two or three minutes. He won't learn anything if he is sent away for a longer time and will only feel more miserable.

Around the second birthday, the child becomes more conscious of himself as an independent self. Saying "no" to things is an expression of this budding independence. Sometimes children show their independence at the

dinner table and start saying "no" to food. This can happen suddenly. Do not overreact. The child feels it if you get worried or irritated. Then refusal becomes exciting. Often the result is that he says "no" more strongly to the food.

You do not need to negotiate with a child under three. The child does not need a choice. That means there is no discussion. You decide what to put on her sandwich or whether she gets an apple or a pear. When parents decide, it feels safer to the child than when she herself must decide. If a child doesn't want to eat what is put in front of her, just let her be. Don't make the common mistake of offering something else instead. The child will understand this very quickly and will use refusing one food as a means of getting something else and is more likely not to eat at mealtimes.

Toddlers eat only when they are hungry, and they normally eat small amounts. A two-year-old child eats less than a one-year-old child because he needs less. He grows less quickly. If he refuses to eat, let him watch you eat. If you are done and try to feed him and he still doesn't want to eat, you can just skip the meal and try again next time. Never force a child to eat.

Give a compliment when the child does eat. "You ate all of your carrots! Well done. You liked it, didn't you?" Ignore the fact that she didn't touch the broccoli. Some children fear new foods and do not want to try them, but put the food on her plate again the next week and compliment her when she tastes it—even if she spits it out.

Compliment the person who has cooked the meal. When an adult compliments the cook about the food—even if it is only the other parent—the child will become curious and be more willing to try it.

Some parents say: "You only can have dessert after you finish your vegetables." This often doesn't work for children under three.



Provide Simple Meals of Wholesome Foods

A healthful diet for a young child is a lacto-vegetarian one including good whole grains, gently boiled or steamed vegetables, fruit, and whole milk products.

Whenever possible, use organically grown food. Conventionally grown foods contain residues of

herbicides, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers. Also, organic foods often taste better.

Use fresh vegetables and fruits. Cook from scratch. Packaged foods, frozen foods, and canned foods—in fact, most processed foods—are less healthful than freshly prepared food. Use fruits and vegetables of many different colors. A colorful and beautiful plate of food will increase a child's interest and appetite.

Simple meals with a few wholesome dishes are best. Simple meals are not boring for young children. Not only the taste of food but the texture too is an adventure for them. Green beans, a boiled carrot, and blackberries have different textures.

The most important meals of the day are breakfast and lunch. The digestive system can digest more easily in the afternoon than in the evening. You can therefore give the warm meal with cooked grains and boiled vegetables at midday. Most children eat less at dinner; therefore dinners can be relatively simple.

Grains

Whole grains such as brown rice, millet, oats, and barley are excellent foods, providing an optimal balance of protein, carbohydrates, and fats. Some children (and adults) have trouble digesting wheat because of the gluten content. A stool that is too soft, skin rashes, and even behavior problems can be signs of gluten intolerance. Spelt is easier to digest than regular wheat because it has less gluten. Most natural food stores have breads and pastas made from spelt.

Vegetables

Research has shown that most small children eat too few vegetables. Serve at least two vegetables at each meal. Be patient with the child's response, especially to new vegetables. Some days he will eat the carrots, and on other days he won't touch the carrots and will eat the cauliflower. Sometimes the child does not eat the vegetable the first two times it's on his plate, but eats it the third time.

Offer vegetables twice a day. With lunch you can offer, for example, small carrots or a vegetable soup.

Plants have three main parts: 1) roots; 2) leaves; and 3) flowers, fruits, and seeds. For a harmonious feeding pattern, provide all three parts to your child over the course of each week. Good vegetable choices

are carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, pumpkin, zucchini, peas, and green beans. Spinach and celery are also good when you give them a maximum of twice a week. Raw vegetables except cucumber are harder to digest than boiled vegetables.

Minimize the use of cabbage, leek, onions, mushrooms, and brussels sprouts for the young child. Tomatoes, eggplants, bell peppers, and potatoes are all members of the nightshade family and are best not given to young children.

Fruits

Fresh seasonal fruits such as apples, pears, and melon are fine for the young child. In lesser amounts, bananas, oranges, and berries are also good. Dried apricots, dates, figs, and raisins are fine, especially in the winter.

Wait with pineapple until after the third birthday.

If you want to give fruit juice, give a maximum of one cup a day. Fresh fruit juice, rather than juice from concentrate, is preferable. Dilute the juice with an equal amount of water.



Oils/Nuts/Butter

Research has shown that toddlers generally eat too little fat. Too little fat can cause diarrhea. Fatty foods taste good. They give a full, satisfied feeling and provide warmth. Sunflower and olive oil, whole milk, cheese, and even small amounts of butter are good sources of fat. You can also give ground up nuts, such as almonds, hazelnuts, and walnuts, but not peanuts.

Milk Products

Fresh, whole milk is important for a young child. Give your child a minimum of one cup and a maximum of two cups of whole milk or yogurt a day. More than three cups of milk influences the appetite and increases the risk of infections. Yogurt is easier to digest than milk. The bacteria in yogurt have a good effect on the digestive system. You can give yogurt every day as a snack or as a dessert. You can add cheese to meals of grains and vegetables. Goat's milk is easier to digest than cow's milk. However, it

Children nowadays eat far more sugar than in the past. Minimize or eliminate white sugar.

doesn't contain folic acid, part of the vitamin B complex. Consider goat's milk especially if your child has allergies, eczema, or behavioral problems.

Legumes

Lentils are very good and easy to digest, especially red lentils. Minimize the use of brown, black, and white beans, garbanzo beans, and soy products.

Eggs, Meat, and Fish

Eggs, meat, and fish are not yet necessary for a child under age two. If you decide to give eggs or fish, give them in small amounts. If you want to give meat, start with small amounts of organic poultry, such as chicken and turkey.

Sugar and Salt

Minimize or eliminate white sugar. Children nowadays eat far more sugar than in the past. Sugar has a bad influence on the digestive system and the immune system. If you want to sweeten the food, use a little honey or maple syrup. Salt should be given in small amounts.

Herbs and Spices

You can start herbs after ten months of age. Start with fresh herbs with the largest leaves. After age two you can introduce cinnamon, coriander, cumin, anise, dill, and fennel. Some spices, such as garlic, can stimulate the bowel too much and cause cramps or a weak stool.

Drinks

Research has shown that most toddlers drink too little. They need to drink at least four cups a day of water, milk, or juice. The drinks should not be too cold. At each meal and snack, offer the child something to drink. If the child tends to eat only a little, give the drink at the end of the meal. On hot days when the child needs to drink more often, it is best to have only water or herbal tea in between meals or snacks. Water is an excellent drink. It prevents excessive weight gain and dental cavities. Show the child that you are drinking water yourself.

A Healthful Breakfast

A good, nutritious breakfast is very important for young children. Do not give sugared cereals for

breakfast. A good option is oatmeal. Oatmeal is a fatty, protein-rich grain and fills the child. You can add dried fruit such as raisins and apricots. You can sweeten it with maple syrup or honey or add goat's milk, whole milk, rice milk, or almond milk. You can also mix in ground almonds or hazelnuts. For a change, you can make whole grain pancakes with maple syrup and fruit, or bread with milk or yogurt.

A Healthful Snack

A healthful snack is a bowl of fresh fruit. Small children often like fruit cut in small pieces that they can eat with a small fork. A few big pieces of fruit or a cup of plain yogurt with dried or fresh fruit are fine as well. Smoothies, too, are an option.

A Healthful Dinner (or Midday Main Meal)

A good dinner might consist of pieces of steamed or lightly boiled vegetables mixed with spelt macaroni, topped with a mild cheese.

Eating healthful food is very important for small children. Their organs are still growing. If children eat well at a young age, they will be healthier later in life. It is important that we as parents provide wholesome food at regular mealtimes and snack times, that we make eating a ritual imbued with gratitude and joy, that we react well to the inevitable crises around food, and that we, ourselves, model sensible, healthful eating. All of this takes time, energy, and patience, but is well worth the effort. It is an investment in our children's health and happiness. ☺



ESTER DELHOOFEN, MD, has extensive training in anthroposophically extended medicine and many years of professional experience with children 0 to 4 years of age. Ester and her family recently spent three years in Minneapolis. During that time she established www.floweringchild.com, an Internet-based company, which provides natural soft wool and silk undergarments and woolen sleeping sacks for children. Ester is now back in the Netherlands. She, her husband, and three children live in Maastricht, where Ester has resumed her work as a well-baby physician.

Book Review

Developing the Observing Eye Teacher Observation and Assessment in Early Childhood Education

BY CYNTHIA MURPHY-LANG

REVIEWED BY RONALD KOETZSCH

The stereotype of the Waldorf early childhood/ kindergarten teacher is a maternal, matronly woman in a long gingham dress, carrying a wicker basket full of angel puppets, rag dolls, and whole wheat muffins, playing circle games with her charges, letting the children imitate her as she does household chores, and telling them sweet stories about gnomes and princesses.

But there is steel beneath the flounce. This book makes it clear that the effective Waldorf early childhood teacher has a deep understanding of child development and of the nature of the human being, is a keen and careful observer of children, can work well with parents for the good of the child, and is able to carry out a detailed and comprehensive child assessment.

Observation and assessment of children is an important part of the Waldorf kindergarten teacher's work. Each six-year-old must be evaluated to determine readiness for first grade and the rigors of intellectual learning. The book contains an excellent "Kindergarten Transition Report"—an extensive checklist that covers physical characteristics; speech and language; the senses of balance, movement, life, and touch; and behavior in the various kindergarten activities.

Waldorf educators, however, have shied away from assessment of young children. The common practice in mainstream education of doing such assessments can result in a negative label being put on a child at an early age. Murphy-Lang argues that, in the case of a difficult child, an assessment that seeks the root cause of the child's behavior is advisable and certainly is better than just removing the disruptive child from the class. To guide this evaluation, she provides a detailed form for an observation-based assessment: "Guidelines for Observation—Retained Early Movement Patterns Report." This checklist can help determine if the child has developed normally and replaced early patterns of physical reflex with more mature ones. Murphy-Lang writes:

A healthy and reasonable assessment of the child using observation and an imaginative process in a protective

classroom environment, performed by a teacher and perhaps an educational support teacher [is] supportive of the child's healthy development.

The book has three sections. "Components of Human Development" explains the view of the human being and of child development on which Waldorf Education is based. It deals with topics such as the four bodies—physical, etheric, astral, and Ego; the three soul activities of thinking, feeling, and willing; and the sense organs.

"The Beginning of School" describes the process by which a child is taken into an early childhood class. It covers the teacher's in-depth interview with the parents, her meditative consideration of the child and related circumstances, a visit to the child's home, and the carefully orchestrated first day of school. Here one gets a sense of the deep respect and care with which the Waldorf early childhood teacher relates to each child.

The final section, "Observation and Assessment," includes a chapter on general guidelines for observation, several assessment checklists, and advice on record keeping.

Developing the Observing Eye is an essential theoretical and practical guide for Waldorf early childhood educators. But since it gives a full picture of the challenging work done by these teachers, it is a book that Waldorf parents of young children and other Waldorf teachers also will find illuminating and useful.



While going about her classroom duties, the effective Waldorf kindergarten teacher is carefully observing her students.

AWSNA Publications, Ghent, NY, 2010
114 pages • \$10.00

To Play or Not to Play

Recent and Not-so-recent Research Sheds Light on an Old Debate

BY THOMAS POPLAWSKI

Should young children, those of kindergarten age and younger, be introduced to academic learning—reading, writing, arithmetic—or should they be allowed to do what seems to come naturally to them—engage in imaginative play? This question is the subject of an ongoing debate within the field of early childhood education. In recent years, the pressure of required early academic standardized testing coming from federal No Child Left Behind policies has swung the pendulum toward the pro-academic approach. In the face of this, a small group of determined educators, including Waldorf educators, has continued to maintain that a play-based curriculum best meets the needs of the young child. Their persistence has led many other educators and psychologists to take another look at reasons not to push young children into academics.

The Magical Years

Over fifty years ago, psychologist Selma Fraiberg wrote a best-selling book about early childhood—*The Magic Years: Understanding and Handling the Problems of Early Childhood*. Fraiberg described the wonderful inner world inhabited by the child from the toddler years to early elementary school, a world filled with rich fantasy and imagination, not subject to the constraints of time or of everyday reality. This magical world is different from the one in which adults live. It is full of wonder but is also sometimes frightening. Experiencing this world, Fraiberg maintained, is essential to the healthy development of the child.

In recent years, a child's experience of these "magical years" has, at least in our North American culture, changed radically. The changes are so radical that they might be called an attack on the young child's magical state of consciousness. Many researchers are concerned about the effects on the consciousness and development of our children.

In his book *Children at Play: An American History*, historian Howard Chudacoff describes how, for

most of human history, children spent their early years roaming in packs, more or less unsupervised, and engaged in freewheeling, imaginative play. They improvised their play, making their own rules and regulating themselves.

In North America and other parts of the so-called developed world, the nature of children's play began to change in the 1950s. Television, a powerful new entertainment and advertising medium, became a fixture in millions of homes. The big toy companies, Chudacoff observes, used television to aggressively market their products to children. In a short time, play became an activity that depends on things, on objects, rather than on the imagination and fantasy of children. Chudacoff blames the co-opting of children's play by the toy industry for reducing children's experience of the world of imagination.

Chudacoff feels that another culprit has been parents' growing concern about safety. Children roaming around outdoors by themselves became unacceptable. Play environments had to be safe from the dangers of the outside world and usually involved adult supervision. Parental anxiety about children acquiring skills necessary for future achievement led to the popularity of yet more structured venues in classes and camps devoted to activities such as gymnastics, karate, and art. Parents asked themselves, why should my child waste his time just playing when he could be learning a useful skill?



In the past, exploring the outdoors together was a typical way for children to spend time

Direct adult supervision is not always possible, but the electronic media, first television and, later, video games and computer games, have filled the breach. Marketed to parents as essential to academic development, product lines such as “Baby Einstein” tied younger and younger children to the electronic apron strings. Today the average child, including the very young child, is “plugged in,” connected to some electronic gadget—television, computer, cell phone, video game console—an average of seven hours a day. This amount of exposure, combined with the countless powerful digitally generated visual images and auditory experiences, shrinks the self-generated “imaginative space” of the magical years.

School and Imagination

The increasing restriction of childhood fantasy has also occurred in formal education. Children are going to school—preschool—at ever younger ages and are also being involved in academic learning at ever younger ages. Academic preschools have brought the first-grade curriculum down to kindergarten and, in some cases, are introducing formal reading and math instruction even earlier. Some research indicating improvements in academic performance, especially for children from deprived backgrounds, has encouraged this trend. There is, however, also much research that points to the harmful effects of early academics.

Waldorf schools have consistently stressed the primacy of play and the imagination in their curriculum. In his book *A Modern Art of Education*, Rudolf Steiner wrote:

Although it is highly necessary that each person should be fully awake in later life, the child must



Today, many children spend what used to be free time in organized classes.

be allowed to remain as long as possible in the peaceful, dreamlike condition of pictorial imagination in which his early years of life are passed. For if we allow his organism to grow strong in this nonintellectual way, he will rightly develop in later life the intellectuality needed in the world today.



Products such as this walker purport to help pre-toddlers develop their intellectual capacities.

Today, though, Waldorf early childhood educators are swimming against the prevailing pro-academic tide.

The debate is not new in the field of early childhood education. Back in 1942, British researcher Dorothy Gardner tried to settle the question whether the academic or instructivist approach—adults instructing the child—is better than the nonacademic or constructivist approach—the child actively constructing knowledge with adult support. Comparing nursery schools, Gardner found that those using the nonacademic approach better met the needs of the children.

In the 1980s and 1990s many longitudinal studies revisited the question and again ruled in favor of the constructivist approach. These studies, like Gardner’s, discovered that the children, especially the boys, in the nonacademic schools fared better in school in the long term. They also suggested that the early gains made in the academically oriented schools do not last more than a couple of years.

This theme was taken up most recently in a very large study in England, where in the last years early academics have been enthusiastically embraced. An independent review of British education was conducted through 28 research surveys, 1052 written submissions, and 250 focus groups. It was undertaken by 14 authors, 66 research consultants, and an advisory committee of 20 led by educational expert Robin Alexander at Cambridge University.

Released in October 2009, the *Cambridge Primary Review* indicated that children should not start

academic work until at least age six and that play-based learning was optimal before that time. The study also concluded that early academics could be damaging, especially for those boys not yet ready to learn to read or write. Children who struggled with academic learning in their early school years often were put off school for life. One school director was echoed by others when he stated that the combination of an early start, testing, and pressure

to reach government standards was creating a generation with mental health problems. The study noted that many other countries, including Finland, Germany, and Sweden do not start academic lessons until children are six or seven and that most children in those countries as they get older perform as well academically as children elsewhere who have received early instruction.



Should this enthusiastic boy be doing arithmetic drills instead of doing whatever it is he is doing?

In recent years, research has begun to explain why old-fashioned, imaginative “child’s play” may be

the best route to academic success. These studies focus on a group of nonacademic preschools using an approach based on the work of Lev S. Vygotsky (1896–1934), a Russian psychologist. Researchers found that children in these “Tools of the Mind” schools develop skills through their make-believe play—skills that enhance later learning. In particular, play helps them to develop an essential thinking skill that teacher-centered instruction does not encourage, a skill that psychologists call “executive function.” The core of executive function is the ability to self-regulate—to control emotions and behavior, resist impulses, and exercise self-discipline. Executive function also includes flexibility in thinking and strong memory.

Researchers know that the ability of children to self-regulate has decreased. A recent study, which replicated one done in the 1940s, involved children ages three, five, and seven doing a number of exercises.

One of the exercises requires a child to stand still without moving. In the original study, a typical three-year-old could not stand still at all, a five-year-old could stand for about three minutes, and a seven-year-old could stand for as long as the researcher requested. In the newer study, a five-year-old, like the three-year-old of sixty years ago, was unable to stand still at all. A seven-year-old was barely able to match the three minutes managed by a five-year-old in the earlier study.

This degradation of executive function is unfortunate. Poor executive function is a major factor in attention deficit disorders, and, in later life, it is associated with drug use and high dropout rates. Executive function is a much better indicator of later success than IQ, because children who are able to manage their feelings and pay attention are better able to learn.

When a child is deeply engaged in play, there is a total immersion, a concentration of attention that builds cognitive capacity. Today, however, many children lack this capacity to enter totally into the fantasy of their play. A child who is overstimulated by media images or too intellectually active may find free play difficult. He has never had the opportunity to develop self-control or his individual creative imagination. Furthermore, such a child, not used to interacting with other children—because of solitary hours spent staring into a television or computer screen—does not have the social skills to work in a dramatic play scenario with others.

Guided Play in the Vygotsky Schools

In the Tools of the Mind schools, the children as much as possible direct their own play. But the teachers do not just let the children run around and freely play. As necessary, the teachers facilitate

and guide the play of the children. Each day the teacher has the children plan the nature of their play and then makes sure that they follow through with the plan. Vygotsky teachers feel that social pretend-play has little value if the



Lev Vygotsky—proponent of make-believe but guided play—and friends

child is free to abandon a play scenario after a few moments or if the child is not held accountable for staying within a chosen role. The teacher observes the children at play and will occasionally intercede to move the narrative on or to clear up difficulties. Even recess is planned. Before going out, each child is asked, “What do you want to do and how do you want to do it?”



In a Waldorf kindergarten, the teacher models household activities, such as bread baking, for the children to imitate.

Because Vygotsky was especially keen to develop the thinking of the child, the method sometimes utilizes skill-teaching games that are intended to develop memory and impulse control. This does not go into academic work, however. Play is always the core of the Tools of the Mind preschool.

Waldorf Preschools

The Waldorf approach to play in the preschool and kindergarten is much more laissez-faire than that of the Tools of the Mind schools. However, Waldorf schools have young children who do not easily enter into free imaginative play, and Waldorf educators have their own methods to cultivate the child’s capacity to play freely. They take great care in creating a time and a physical space in which true play experiences can occur. An adult in the classroom involved in meaningful activity that the children can imitate is considered essential. While the teacher or her assistant prepares food or sweeps or does gardening or laundry or doll repair, the children experience the focus and the inner creativity of the adults. These modeled activities of the teachers can create a template for the children’s play. Some children may imitate the activity, while others may use it for a scenario that goes off in another direction. The

Waldorf teacher strives to create an environment that supports healthy play for both small groups and individuals, with assistance given where required.

The story told by the teacher each day during circle time can be an inspiration for the children’s independent play. A tale about a tortoise and a rabbit might give rise later to a roomful of children acting out scenarios involving one or both of these creatures. Nature activities such as a walk to observe a stream in the forest can also stimulate the children’s play.

Waldorf preschool educators usually will discourage children from bringing in scenarios and characters taken from television and other electronic media. If children want to play with guns, they may be gently moved in another direction.

Dorothy Singer, a psychologist and researcher at Yale University, laments that despite evidence of the benefits of imaginative play, nonacademic preschools are in decline. She feels that schools are so nervous about the required testing that they feel driven to drill the children in academic basics earlier and earlier.

The pendulum may be swinging back, however. The Waldorf and Vygotsky schools are demonstrating the long-term benefits of play in the development of the child. They show that play-based preschool and kindergarten help develop creativity, imagination, concentration, thinking, and self-control. Also, there is an international organization of prominent educators and researchers—The Alliance for Children—which is working to honor and preserve the magical world of childhood.

For children today, what is perhaps most important is that they learn how to have healthy fun. After all, what is a life without play? ☺



THOMAS POPLAWSKI, staff writer for *Renewal*, is a psychotherapist, a trained eurythmist, and the father of two sons who attend the Hartsbrook School in Hadley, Massachusetts. His wife, Valerie, is a kindergarten teacher at the school. Thomas’ book, *Completing the Circle*, is a collection of articles on parenting and education.

Color, Painting, and Soul in the Waldorf Classroom

BY LAURA QUAYLE

As its title suggests, this article deals with the effect that color and painting have on the soul of the child. The generally accepted definition of soul is the “non-physical, immortal, spiritual aspect of the human being.” In anthroposophical and Waldorf parlance, however, the word has a different meaning. Rudolf Steiner spoke of the human being as consisting of body, soul, and spirit, with spirit being the immutable, immortal essence. Soul lies between the physical body and the spirit and is the realm of the activities of thinking, feeling, and willing. In the seven- to fourteen-year-old child, the feeling dimension of the soul is particularly active and important. The emotional life and aesthetic sensitivity are developing and becoming more differentiated and refined. Please keep this in mind when the writer mentions “soul development.”

—R. E. K.

A visitor to my fourth-grade classroom on a Wednesday morning would see children seated in rows, quiet and still, save for the subtle movements of arm and hand as they direct painting brushes upon the papers lying before them. The room is silent except for the gentle tinkling of brushes being rinsed in glass water jars. All eyes are focused on the paintings, and the children are absorbed in the colors before them. They have been transported by the colors to a level of consciousness and reality beyond what normally prevails in the classroom.

Watercolor painting holds a unique place among the arts in the Waldorf curriculum. It brings children into a direct, powerful connection with color that deeply affects their feeling life and soul development. While it is difficult to measure the long-term effects that painting has on children, my research during the fourth-grade year revealed that painting has immediate observable results. Painting has improved the social

harmony of the class as a whole, has helped develop the focus and academic skills of some children, and has contributed to the emotional healing of others.

In the Waldorf elementary grades, wet-on-wet watercolor is the primary painting medium. This involves applying liquid paint onto a paper that is already saturated with water. The children are given a limited array of colors—which they may mix to create other colors—and apply these with a wide, flat brush.

The children are guided through specific painting exercises, which are usually demonstrated by the teacher. Free-form individual expression is not the point of painting sessions, especially for children in the earlier grades. The painting exercises emphasize color, the interplay of colors, and the soul moods that these engender. The colors that the children experience with wet-on-wet are ethereal and translucent. Color is purest as light—in a rainbow, for example—but color in the medium of water is the next best thing and the best we can do in the classroom. Watercolor is much less condensed than the color of crayons or chalk. Nevertheless, watercolor provides a deep experience of color and brings children into its soulful realm. Until the third or fourth grade, the exercises are concerned solely with color. After that, some exercises introduce forms and figures.

This type of painting with color has a profound effect on the inner life of children. In their book *Drawing and Painting in Rudolf Steiner Schools*,



In the fourth grade, watercolor painting begins with color exercises and moves to depicting forms in nature.

Margrit Jünemann and Fritz Weitmann write of the soul's experience of color:

The living nature of color expresses a soul quality, belonging both to the world outside us and to the world within our own selves. We always experience colors as having a soul quality whether consciously or not; we connect a soul experience with them. (p. 2)

Rudolf Steiner also is clear that colors are deeply connected with the feeling life of children. In *Education of the Child*, Steiner mentions the effect that colors in a child's environment can have on mood and behavior. The colors of the color wheel that the children work with hold cosmic forces that are active in both the human being and in nature (Hauschka-Stavenhagen, p. 49). Each color of the color wheel represents a soul mood and evokes a distinct emotional response in the child.

In her book *Light, Darkness and Colour in Painting Therapy*, noted painter Liane Collot d'Herbois writes that "the color yellow is associated with a light-filled atmosphere and the soul mood of joy" (p. 101). Carmine red has a "gentle soul-warmth that is deeply connected with the faculty of will" (p. 87).

In their book *Painting in Waldorf Education*, Dick Bruin and Attie Lichthart argue that the effect of color on children's feeling life translates ultimately into soul development:

The soul world, in which the three soul qualities of thinking, feeling, and willing function independently

yet together, is still a small world in the young child. The soul expands as it processes more experiences. Through new actions, feelings, and thoughts the soul matures. In the thinking and willing field the tension lies between distance and repetitions, between creativity and training. When the natural lively interaction taking place in the

soul is brought to a standstill causing the three soul qualities to become isolated, stress and fear will take possession of the soul. ... In contrast, a healthy development of the soul always creates unity. .

.. Art gives us the opportunity to support and stimulate soul development, for it is in this field that all three soul qualities are addressed by means of creativity. (pp. 24–25)

Painting works not only on a child's feeling life. It also brings the child into a realm that Steiner likens to "that world in which we linger between going to sleep and awakening—the spiritual world which spatially encircles us" (quoted in Hauschka-Stavenhagen, p. 8). Typically a painting session brings a quiet, meditative mood to a classroom as the children work with intense focus, as if lost in the world of colors. To the observant teacher, it is clear that the act of painting brings the child into connection with a realm of higher, invisible forces.

Most fourth graders have recently gone through the change of consciousness that takes place around the age of nine. They have begun to experience themselves as entities separate from the surrounding world, and they take in the environment with more observant and, at times, critical eyes. With this transformation, children "discover that images and forms, which up to now they had experienced inwardly, can be found in the realm of nature" (Bruin and Lichthart, p. 81).

The Waldorf fourth-grade curriculum as a whole addresses this changing consciousness and the development of a new relationship to the surrounding world. In the painting sessions, the central theme shifts from soul mood to nature mood. In their main lessons, the children are studying the world of animals and also local geography. It is appropriate for them to move from abstract color exercises to paintings that depict landscapes and animals.



Deer at Twilight: As a complement to their study of zoology, the fourth graders paint familiar animals in their habitats.



This watery color wheel depicts, in a light-filled way, the interactions of the colors of the spectrum.

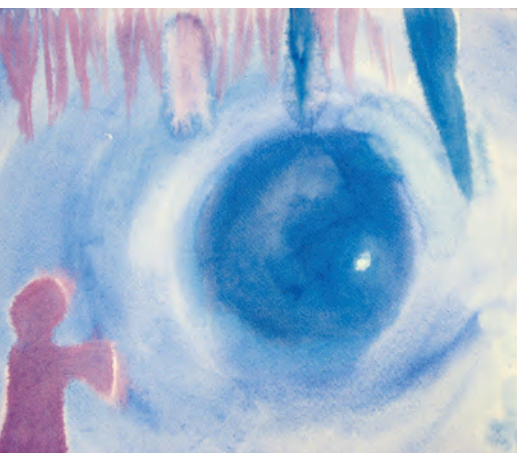
However, the paintings should not be too naturalistic and detailed. Rather, they should allow the child to “build a bridge between the earthly manifestation (image) and the creative forces within it” (ibid., p. 82).

Bruin and Lichthart point out that it is important for children to connect with the earth element, which has taken on a heightened importance in their consciousness (pp. 80–83). The children have a new appreciation of and interest in the colors of the earth and soil. They enjoy creating and using dark hues of brown and gray, especially in paintings of nature moods.

During its fourth-grade year, my class, composed of fifteen children aged nine and ten, painted each Wednesday in the period directly following the morning main lesson. With time spent preparing supplies and cleaning up, the children had about thirty-five minutes to quietly work with the colors.

We began the year with two color wheel paintings, in which we focused on the skills of blending colors and allowing colors to fade away with a gradual transition. After the color wheel exercise, most of the paintings explored main lesson themes. Generally, these paintings began as color exercises, and form was brought in during the second half of the painting lesson.

Several simple landscape paintings complemented the local geography block, including two paintings of the nearby Ipswich River. With all of the landscape paintings, the focus was on the interplay of color.



Having heard stories of the Norse gods, the children depict the eye of Odin, the supreme god.

We began with light colors, creating a color mood, before deepening the colors and adding form. During the Norse mythology block, we painted the contrast between icy Niflheim and burning Muspelheim as well as several scenes of gods from the stories. A highlight for many of the children was a painting with a

deep blue and purple mood that portrayed Odin and the Fountain of Wisdom with his eye at its center. During the main lesson block on the human being and the animal, we painted an eagle and a deer in exercises that focused first on the background—creating a color mood and exploring the animal's habitat—before the animal was formed.

Focus and the Power of Purple

Early in the school year, I allowed the children to do a free painting with purple and its complement, yellow. One of the boys, who struggles with ADHD, dyslexia, and low self-esteem, was from the outset of the session transfixed by the purple color, smiling and radiating joy. While he painted, swirling purple upon purple, he stood quietly and focused on his work as I had never seen him do before. By the end of the class, his page resembled a large puddle of purple, but everyone in the room could sense what this meant to him. Another student walked purposefully across the room to the boy's desk and gave him a rare compliment: “That is really beautiful.”

For the rest of the day, the boy was a remarkably relaxed and peaceful presence. He was focused and well behaved. When we began to read our class novel, he quickly volunteered to read aloud. This surprised me, because he reads haltingly and never volunteers to read in front of the whole class. That day, he confidently picked up his book and began to read fluently—needing help only with the word *generously*. I almost fell off my stool.

Painting and Emotional Healing

A bright and talented girl in the class had been suffering from depression because of upheavals in her home life. In painting, she seemed afraid to surrender to the world of colors and perhaps to show her soul on the page. Her paintings were so light that they often dried white. She gradually responded to my encouragement to paint with more pigment and stronger colors. During the course of the year, she gradually healed emotionally. Of course, the girl received much loving attention from me and from others, but I suspect that opening herself to the experience of painting also helped her to find peace and to heal.

Painting and Social Harmony

To test the immediate effect of watercolor painting on the children, I did a research project in collaboration with Tyler McDonald, the school's gym teacher.



In painting the eagle, the children have an opportunity to imaginatively enter the realm of light and air.

The class had gym twice a week, typically on Wednesday immediately after painting and on Thursday right after snack. I interviewed Tyler after each class for eight weeks. He reported on the students'

level of engagement and focus and their ability to perform complex movements. He also reported the number of injuries and social issues among the children requiring adult intervention after each class. Occasionally I switched the painting day, so that Tyler's observations would not be unconsciously biased.

On painting days, the average level of engagement was 3.81 out of 5 while on non-painting days it was 3.69. The ability to perform complex movements on painting days was 3.67 while on non-painting days it was 3.96 out of 5. The average number of injuries per gym class on a painting day was .5 (4 total) and on a non-painting day was 0. Over the eight weeks, there was only 1 social issue in gym class on a painting day and there were 6 social issues on non-painting days.

The higher level of engagement suggests that after the hour of focused painting the children were more able to be present and focused in gym class. The lower ability to perform complex movements, though statistically slight, suggests that the children may not have "awakened" completely after the time spent painting. The high incidence of injuries after painting indicates more strongly that the children did take a while to "re-enter their bodies" after the excarnating experience of painting. This finding supports Jünemann and Weitmann's view that, during painting, children are transported to a distinct spiritual realm.

The mildly competitive nature of gym class often raises social issues. Hence the nearly complete absence of social issues in the periods after painting classes is notable. This supports the argument that painting helps to harmonize children's feeling life and positively affects soul development. On non-painting days, discussions about the fairness of teams,

whether a child was actually "tagged" or not, and the pace at which the class would walk to the park often led to conflict. On the painting days, with the children presumably in a calmer and more harmonious state, these issues never became problematic.

The effect of classroom painting on a child's ability to focus, on dealing with emotional problems, and on social behavior are topics that merit more research. My observations and experience indicate that painting has a powerful and beneficial effect in each of these areas. Painting deserves a place in the elementary school classroom, a place that in Waldorf schools it already has. ☺

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Paper Boats

Practical Advice for Launching Our Children onto the Seas of Life

BY HELENE MCGLAULIN

The day my children walked to school for the first time on their own is permanently embossed on my heart and mind. We went together to the sidewalk, I kissed them goodbye, and they began the mile-long journey to their elementary school in our small New England town. They were proud and excited and did not look back. I watched their silhouettes grow smaller, their backpacks bobbing, as they navigated a few blocks, then disappeared down a side street.

I was left with an array of thoughts and feelings that haunted me until they returned to my harbor later that day: nagging anxiety about their safety, doubt about their ability to find their way on their own, and a feeling of parental emptiness and loss. Could these seemingly fragile paper boats I had carefully folded and made sturdy stay afloat amidst currents, winds, and countless hazards? Would my encouraging breath launching them from my shore sustain them until they found other winds to carry them? Must I always be left standing on the shore, full of emotion?



'Bye, Mom!

The answers to these questions were hidden from me then. Today, some twenty-three years later, my children now young adults, the answers are clear—"yes," "yes," and "yes."

That day I began to develop an inner attitude that would help me through the ensuing overnight stays, sleepaway camps, driving permits, proms, out-of-state colleges, boyfriends/girlfriends, and apartments. This inner stance continues to guide me as my children, now twenty-three and twenty-one, head north to appropriate independence.

My first, startling, and crucial realization was that my son and daughter each has a unique life journey to experience, distinct from my own. When my children were young, this insight required letting go of expectations that they would be like myself or my husband in their interests, temperaments, and talents. An important part of my work as their mother was instilling values and steering them toward healthy choices. Equally important, but more challenging, has been supporting them as they made their own choices. This was easy when they chose unexpected things that I deemed worthy. It was more difficult when they lacked interest in what I wanted for them—swimming lessons, Little League, learning to play a musical instrument. I have had to accept their individual selfhoods, with a genuine respect for their unique feelings, inclinations, and views.

Being aware that their journey is their journey, not mine, has enabled me to establish appropriate emotional boundaries with my children as they have grown. My love is so great, my interest in their development so strong, that it has been tempting to completely absorb myself in their lives and direct every step they took. Yet long before their teenage years, the time to stand on the shore and wave had begun. I realized that my emotions, reactions, and agendas could inadvertently and negatively influence the children's experiences and growing independence. Showing excessive enthusiasm about my

son playing the trumpet interfered with his natural ambivalence about taking on a new, difficult task. My not concealing my anxiety about my daughter's first solo bicycle ride caused her growing confidence to flicker. I learned to read and respect the children's attitudes toward each new step and to express myself with care. I found adopting an attitude of calm and sympathetic support—whenever humanly possible—communicates the love and confident encouragement they need.

At some new points of development, the children, my “paper boats,” hugged the shore and needed my guidance and protection. More often, they were ready to launch before I felt ready to release them. I did not feel ready for the first overnight, the middle school, the driver's license, or the boyfriend or girlfriend, but my children were. What they needed of me was to match their readiness with discernment and to ask the question: What do they need and not need from me at this moment?

With each milestone of my children's growing up, I experienced a bittersweet reluctance—a natural parental response to children growing up and away. At some transitions, my children shared, poignantly, the weight of the moment. At others, they waved goodbye with unhesitating excitement, turned, and did not look back. At yet others, their reluctance was greater than my own. In each case, I quietly tried to contain my own feelings and to offer what they needed in that moment—empathy, firm resolve, a willingness to let go.

The milestones toward the independence of their children are difficult for parents. The first day of school, the initial going away to camp, the first departure for college each arouse excitement, pride, hope, anxiety, fear. We can reassure ourselves by being aware that our children have what they need,

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professional journals. She lives with her husband in Bath, Maine.

What are we doing to our children?

The March 2010 issue of *Harvard Magazine* contains an article about life at Harvard College. The writer describes the typical undergraduate as obsessed with filling every free moment with extracurricular activities. In part this obsession is out of real interest in the sport or activity or cause, in part out of a desire to create a compelling résumé for admission to graduate school. The compulsion to be always busy is also attributed to highly supervisory parents, who, from the student's early years, filled each day with play dates, music lessons, organized sports activities, and the like.

The Harvard dean of freshmen, quoted at length in the article, observes that many students are still very much influenced by their parents. One-third of all undergraduates are in daily communication with their parents, via e-mail, Twitter, or phone. It is suspected that some—perhaps many—students e-mail their written assignments to their parents to be corrected and edited before they turn them in. Parents routinely communicate with professors or administrators if their child is experiencing difficulty and try to solve the problem.

These of course are signs of “helicopter parenting.” The article also cites “snowplow parenting,” which involves a desire that one's child succeed at all costs and a willingness to clear out of the way any obstacle to that success.

The result of these approaches to parenting is young men and women who are so busy that they seldom have time to think about what they are doing and why they are doing it, who are afraid of free, “unorganized” time, who expect the university to help organize activities for them, including social life, and who are used to others—Mom, Dad, the college dean—stepping in and solving their problems.

In the adjacent article, “Paper Boats,” Helene McGlaufflin offers an approach to parenting that is an alternative to helicopter/snowplow parenting. Intended as it is to help children develop into independent, free-thinking, self-motivated, confident adults, this approach to parenting is quite in harmony with Waldorf Education.

—R.E.K.

Eurythmy Unveiled

Understanding a Subject Unique to Waldorf Education

BY THOMAS POPLAWSKI

Waldorf eighth graders typically go through a “Question Authority!” stage. They berate their teachers with questions such as: “Why do we have to study German? I am never going to Germany” and “What’s the use of algebra? It is never going to help me in real life.”

The strongest reaction, however, is often reserved for the subject of eurythmy. This is not surprising. The eighth grader, entering adolescence, is going through a growth spurt and the process of sexual maturation. These changes often result in physical awkwardness, even clumsiness, as well as extreme self-consciousness and emotional vulnerability. At this point, eurythmy asks the student to move in a graceful and controlled way and to express sensitively the often tender feelings of a poem or piece of music in front of critical peers. The resulting howls of protest often lead Waldorf schools to reduce eurythmy in grade eight to occasional blocks or to abandon it entirely for the year.

Problems with eurythmy also occur in earlier grades. Younger students also can find it discomfiting, and their parents may find this very distinct art of movement mystifying. Hence, a closer look at eurythmy, its history, and its place within the Waldorf curriculum is in order.

Origin of Eurythmy

In the early part of the last century, Rudolf Steiner was active as a spiritual teacher in Europe. Leader of the German branch of the Theosophical Society, Steiner was interested in developing the various arts as means of personal and spiritual growth. He wrote and directed plays and also commented on the drama and dance of the day. Steiner wanted to bring a new impulse to the art of movement, an alternative to the “modern dance” popular in Europe at the time, with its emphasis on personal self-expression. Steiner wanted to connect dance with its original impulse as a sacred art form

inspired by the Muses. Rather than looking back and recreating the temple dances of ancient times, as Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis strove to do, Steiner wanted to bring an art of movement suited to the needs and mentality of modern humanity.

In 1912 Steiner was approached by a woman whose teenage daughter was interested in dance. The woman asked Steiner if there were a type of dance that had a true spiritual dimension. Steiner replied in the affirmative and soon, working with Marie von Sievers, an actress who later became his wife, began to instruct young Lori Smits in the art of eurythmy.

Eurythmy was at first a stage art used to enhance the performances of the “mystery plays” that Steiner had written. When the first Waldorf school was founded in 1919, Steiner felt strongly that eurythmy, in a modified version, should be part of the curriculum. He once said that eurythmy and gardening are two absolute essentials in a true Waldorf school.



Lori Smits, the first eurythmist, circa 1913

Visible Speech

As an art of movement, eurythmy is perhaps unique in that it accompanies speech as well as music. Eurythmy seeks to make speech visible. Primarily with gestures of the arms and hands—though also with movements of the feet and the entire body—the eurythmist manifests the individual sounds of speech.



*Martha Graham (1895-1992),
pioneer of modern dance*

The movements in ballet and other forms of dance are the inventions of human beings. According to Steiner, the eurythmic gestures for the vowel and consonant sounds are neither arbitrary nor accidental but inherent in nature. They reflect the way

the larynx moves in shaping the current of breath so that one or another sound is produced. There are remarkable stop-action photos that show the larynx doing exactly this. Speech eurythmy thus shows in three-dimensional movement the key expressive sounds of a verse or poem. This is done in an artistic fashion, so that the beat, the meter, the stresses, and the pauses are also made visible.

Visible Music

In modern dance, the movements accompany the music, and the dancer seeks to portray his own response to and particular interpretation of the piece. Eurythmy done to music—tone eurythmy—seeks to make the music manifest in a more objective way. It makes visible the several elements of the music according to certain fixed principles set forth by Steiner and von Sievers. Particular movements of the arms and hands show the pitch, the intervals between the notes, major and minor modes, and even individual chords and notes. The feet can emphasize staccato notes or other aspects of rhythm. In the “form”—the pattern of movement around the stage—the eurythmist expresses the meandering of the melody and its stresses. Individual eurythmists will present the same piece in different ways, but each will aim to manifest the intrinsic elements of the music rather than his or her own feelings about or reaction to it.

An Elevated Art

Eurythmy as an art of movement seeks to develop the higher and refined aspects of the human being rather than to express more instinctual impulses. One can consider eurythmy in terms of the hierar-

chy of the seven chakras or energy centers in the human body. Ballet and other forms of modern dance are centered in the solar plexus or third chakra. The martial arts of East Asia, including tai chi, use a lower center, three inches below the navel, termed the *dan tian*—meaning “the cinnabar or red field.” The focus of some forms of popular contemporary dance is yet lower, at the sexual chakra.

In contrast, the center of movement for eurythmy is at the level of the collarbone. This elevated center, along with eurythmy’s emphasis on upper body and arm movements, draws the focus upward and away from the physical and mundane and from the realm of everyday consciousness. The eurythmist seems to float across the stage with grace and dignity and without the acrobatic movements and dramatic gestures typical of other forms of dance.

In modern dance, the performers wear tight-fitting costumes that accentuate and draw attention to the physical and even the sexual aspect of the human being. In contrast, eurythmists wear loose-fitting, flowing gowns that emphasize the higher, soul-spiritual dimension of the human being. This is appropriate for an art of movement that is an experiment in rediscovering the sacred in artistic movement.

An Art of the Etheric

All forms of movement work to some extent with the life forces of the human being. Rudolf Steiner termed these “etheric” or “life-formative” forces, invisible energies that give form and function to the physical body. In the Asian martial and healing arts, the term chi or ki refers to these same forces. Traditional Asian dance and drama are based on an ancient understanding of these etheric forces. Eurythmy is perhaps the only modern Western approach to dance that works with the etheric forces in a conscious and systematic way. This connection to the invisible dimension of reality gives to



*In eurythmy the movements
originate in the energy centers of
the upper body.*



In eurythmy class the children work with the rhythms of both poetry and music.

eurythmy its beauty as a performing art. It also allows eurythmy to be used as a healing or therapeutic modality. In therapeutic eurythmy, the art is used to treat physical, psychological, and other disorders.

In speech eurythmy, a verse, poem, fairy tale, or story is spoken, and at the same time the eurythmist amplifies the piece through movement, making its images and insights more clear and more deeply experienced. Tone eurythmy does the same for a musical piece. As a performance art, eurythmy seeks to elevate and refine both the performer and the onlooker. Psychologists have discovered an interesting phenomenon that occurs strongly in children and in adults as well. When we observe another person moving—engaged in a sport, or dancing, or even just skipping along—we replicate that movement within ourselves.

Neurologists have recently attributed this phenomenon to what they have termed “mirror neurons,” which cause us to inwardly mirror intentional movement taking place outside of us. One can say that our own etheric body copies the movements of those we are watching. Thus if we see someone fall or move in a pained way, we inwardly, empathetically, have the same experience. When a eurythmist artistically makes a poem visible, the onlooker is replicating those movements and feelings within himself. By manifesting the sound and meaning of the poem, the eurythmist allows the viewer to experience the work of art deeply in body and soul.

Eurythmy and the Child

Rhythm lies at the core of eurythmy, and the study of eurythmy helps the child understand and experience in a positive way this basic component of life. Rhythm is not just an insistent musical beat. Rhythm is a predictable, harmonious recurring pattern that

is a signature of life and health. Harmonious rhythm plays an important role in both the growth of the child and the development of good health. It is a key factor in Waldorf Education. Rhythm is used to support learning and emotional balance, especially in the hands-on or “will” classes, such as handwork, sculpture, form drawing, and also eurythmy. These classes all involve physical movement, and in them the child learns to work and move in a balanced and rhythmic way.

In eurythmy class, the children work with the rhythms present in great poetry and music. The children step according to the meter of a poem, perhaps the anapest of the trotting horse (short–short–long) or the sad trochee of the wounded warrior (long–short). When doing eurythmy to a musical piece, they will take a strong step on the stressed note, even if it be only an eighth note, to accentuate it. Meanwhile, the movement of the arms may reflect the movement of the pitches of the melody. In eurythmy, the form or pattern that one moves reflects the rhythm of the line of verse or the beat of the musical piece.

Working with rhythm in eurythmy and in the other subjects helps the child fully and properly incarnate into his physical body. The ability to move gracefully and with a good sense of rhythm indicates that there is a resonance between the soul-spiritual being of the child and the physical body.

Doing eurythmy allows the child to experience with her entire body the building blocks of language and of music. The children learn the physical and etheric gestures for all the consonants and vowels, for the



In the upper grades, the children move according to complex patterns.

notes of the musical octave, and for other musical elements. The intense experience of speech and music through eurythmy also refines the child in body and soul. Playing a musical instrument has a similar effect, but in eurythmy the child's body itself is the instrument, and thus the experience is much more powerful. Through speech eurythmy, the child can experience a poem of Keats or Robert Frost with her whole physical and soul-spiritual being, not only through her intellectual understanding. Through tone eurythmy, she can internalize the music of Mozart, imprinting its harmony and beauty into her character and soul. This art of movement, then, can help the student move toward that goal, central to Waldorf Education—the realization of her humanity in its highest form.

Neurology might speak of eurythmy as creating a rich network of synaptic connections. Psychology might praise the art for its engagement and development of several of the multiple intelligences. Eurythmy can also be described as allowing the child to deeply experience the greatest impulses of our civilization, though this experience is completed only if the child continues eurythmy through the Waldorf high school years.

Pedagogical or educational eurythmy is also used to develop specific mental abilities. In eurythmy class, the children walk to concentration exercises involving counting. In one such exercise, the children step four beats but take a backward step on one of those beats. In each series, the backward step is on a different beat, that is, on beat 1 of the first series, then beat 2 of the next series, then 3 and then 4 and then back to 1. After learning the sequence, the children do it more and more quickly. Then one group of children will do one pattern and another group of children nearby will do a different pattern. These exercises, particularly the one involving a second, possibly distracting group, require tremendous focus.

An important part of eurythmy in the schools is the visualization and the movement of geometric forms. This is a spiritual practice known from ancient times in many different cultures around the world. In eurythmy, the children move in invisible, inwardly visualized circles, squares, triangles, and five-, six-, and seven-pointed stars. Moving these shapes not only helps the children in their study of geometry but also serves with centering and mental concentration. When done together with copper rod exercises,



Eurythmy teaches students to move in harmony with others.

these exercises develop the children's physical and emotional posture or "uprightness."

Eurythmy as a Social Art

From kindergarten on, children in a Waldorf school learn through eurythmy to move together with others. Because most of the eurythmy work takes place in a circle, the children learn that they can move right or left only if their neighbor is moving at the same time. They learn to move into the circle together with their neighbors and to take these neighbors with them as they move outward again. As the eurythmy curriculum becomes more complex through the years, the children learn to move around seven-pointed stars and other complicated patterns, always with "the other" in mind, progressively more in harmony with the movements of their fellow students. The students develop a sense of where they are in space and how their position and movements relate to those of others. They learn to move as part of a group. Many Waldorf schools, despite their relatively small number of students, field very successful basketball teams. This success may be attributable to the students' ability to move harmoniously in a group, an ability that the girls and boys have developed in eurythmy class.

Each of the arts helps the children develop in various ways. Eurythmy deepens the children's experience of great poetry and music. It helps them acquire an inner and outer grace, an aesthetic sensibility, and a feeling for social harmony. Eurythmy's work with rhythm and geometry can aid the children in their study of mathematics and in the development of focus and concentration. Eighth graders may find this all hard to grasp, but perhaps they will appreciate eurythmy when they are older. ☺

THOMAS POPLAWSKI is the author of *Eurythmy: Rhythm, Dance, and Soul*, published by Floris Books, Edinburgh.

Learning to Live in Nature

Nine Waldorf High School Students on a Rite of Passage

BY KEITH BADGER AND STUDENTS OF HIGH MOWING SCHOOL

High Mowing School in southern New Hampshire is a day and boarding Waldorf high school. The school has an interdisciplinary offering called the Naturalist Program. The elective, four-year program incorporates natural history, humanities, and manual arts with wilderness survival skills and rites-of-passage experiences. The program helps young people overcome the alienation from nature characteristic of modern life. Also, the program aids them in wrestling with the archetypal basic questions of the adolescent: Who am I? What is my place in the world?

In the autumn of 2008, the eleventh-grade students in the program worked with Tom Elpel's article "Metaphors for Living." The following passage from the article sums up what this group was seeking:

In today's complex world, primitive living is a metaphor . . . a metaphor we participate in and act out of. Life is simplified down to the bare essentials such as physical and mental well-being, shelter, warmth, clothing, water, and food. We go on an expedition to meet those needs with little more than our bare hands. As we quest to meet those needs, we learn to observe, to think, to reach inside ourselves for new resources for dealing with challenging and unfamiliar situations. We build up our personal strengths, and at the same time we interact with and learn about the world around us.

The nine students—seven boys and two girls—wished to plumb the depths of this statement. They and I worked to create a meaningful experience for themselves that would be consistent with traditional rite-of-passage experiences. In late autumn they took the skills learned and applied them in the field. They spent a long weekend in New Hampshire's White Mountains making fires using a bow drill, building shelters, foraging for food, and making clothing and other items necessary for survival. The following essay is their collective reflection on the experience.

—Keith Badger, founder and director of High Mowing School's Naturalist Program



In the wilderness, building a shelter from the materials at hand is a first priority.

We human beings have a natural instinct for adventure. When reflecting upon our education and the adventure we were proposing, we realized that around the world and throughout history there have been civilizations that have had rite-of-passage events for their young people, from the Masai of Africa to the Native Americans in North America. Yet the rite of passage is absent in contemporary American culture.

Nine of us felt a need and a calling to fulfill that human instinct for adventure. The response to this calling took shape during the autumn months of 2008. We studied numerous survival skills and planned to apply these skills in the field under primitive conditions.

Before going off to the woods, we spent time acquiring the skills we would need. We learned to start a



Making a fire with a bow drill was one of the most difficult skills to learn, but the most fulfilling.

fire using a bow drill; to make tools from stone, bone, and wood; to fabricate rope and string out of plant materials and animal sinew; to make clothing out of animal

hides and furs; and to fashion containers and baskets out of bark cut and peeled from trees. We collected acorns and boiled them down to an edible flour. We scraped the fat off a deer hide and went through the whole process of tanning to the final stages of breaking (softening it by rubbing it on a straight edge) and smoking the hide.

Using the primitive technologies was something very natural and humanizing for us. Once we started with the skills, we couldn't stop. We really enjoyed working with our hands. The things we made were simple, yet when finished they were beautiful and looked intricate. This experience of learning introduced us to new levels of the natural cycle and the world of the naturalist.

This work also made us appreciate our hands. Our hands are beautiful things and are capable of creating objects that are useful and beautiful.

We also came to appreciate the resources of nature. A tree contains so many useful materials, it is amazing. It provides us with fire, food, and shelter.

Making birch bark containers, we learned how the bark becomes pliable and bends and moves when it is heated, and also how easily it can burn. We made the containers using only materials from nature, sealing them with the pitch from pine trees. When we finished, it was exciting just to hold the containers in our hands. We had made something that we could eat from, drink out of, and store food in. It made us feel very independent.

Learning to create shelter out of the materials at hand was our number one priority, and for good reason. Shelter provides a place to escape from the elements, from the wind, rain, snow, and cold. If we built a good, warm shelter, we would most likely get a great night's sleep!

A good shelter is also a place where one can feel at home, secure, and comfortable. Part of feeling com-

fortable is knowing and understanding our surroundings. Learning to construct a good shelter kept us focused upon those surroundings and on learning to understand that environment.

Being aware of weather patterns across the landscape and realizing the potential and the appropriate uses of the materials at hand helped us forge a deeper connection to the land. There is the physical side of comfort involving keeping out the wind, rain, and snow, making a comfortable bed, and keeping a warm fire going through the night. There is also the mental side of comfort that is just as important. We found that when we understood how we could live in healthy relationship with nature, we were more comfortable.

Making the things we needed from simple materials helped us see that we can do things ourselves, that our minds have the ability to think of beautiful things, and that we are not entirely reliant upon the rest of the world to do our thinking and our making for us. We realized that these thoughts and experiences in themselves were a rite of passage.

We planned a weekend in the late fall during which everything would be accomplished by utilizing primitive skills. Using ancient skills would force us to think for ourselves and allow us to learn through doing. We believed that this would be an effective learning path and would lead to a deep sense of fulfillment. We realized that our usual dependence upon cell phones, iPods, and computers is equal to our culture's reliance upon drugs and alcohol.



*Standing: Brian Schmidt, Dillon Badger, Jacob Broadhurst, Matthias Fuell, Martin Schuster, and Aidan Blansfield
Kneeling: Matt McLean, Fana Takahashi, and Shea Vaccaro*



Using primitive techniques to render natural materials into useful and beautiful articles is a satisfying educational experience.

Going into the woods gave us time to think, to be by ourselves, and to feed that natural instinct for adventure. In the end, the adventure, for us, became a joy-filled state of mind that we realized many human beings have experienced throughout their existence. Everything we do in life makes us who we are, and every moment we fully experience can change our life.

Going into the woods also taught us to be at peace in the moment and to live without other things

getting in the way of that moment. A great friend of one of us once told him that “the most happiness can be found when we become at peace with the now and with what we are doing in that moment, rather than thinking about what we would rather be doing, or about what happened in the past.”

In our modern society, adolescents have no test or challenge that they must pass or overcome in order to pass over into adulthood. The young men and women of the next generation have become so dependent upon technology that they can't survive without it, and are thus rendered unable to exist without comfort. But discomfort can become an exciting challenge.

Since our lives are based on schedules and technology, it is very hard to imagine living without electronics. But going into nature, living within its cycles, and



Tanned deerskin hides transformed by the students into bags to carry necessities into the wilderness

using our own skills to survive can be fun and exciting. An adventure in nature can be “food for the soul” if we open ourselves to it. This is the key concept that we joyfully learned and came to understand. ☉

that we have done all we can to prepare them, and that they have good sense. This will obviate the fruitless nagging and inane warnings (“Be careful now!”) that only convey that we are anxious and unsure of their ability to take care of themselves. Once one has survived these milestones, their iterations—the second day of school, the return to college after Christmas vacation—are easier for both parent and child.

It is fruitful to allow children to find their own way through turbulent waters. Although as a mother I have wanted to spare my children every difficulty, they have learned important things on their own that they would have missed had I stepped in or interfered with the natural order of experience. Thus I have stood aside during the struggle with shoe-tying, allowed a first poorly attended scrambled egg to burn, and thought twice upon being informed of a far-off car accident involving the need for police and for a ride home.

My guiding principle has been to pause before going to the rescue, to carefully consider what the children might learn through the challenge, and to convey a belief in their ability to solve the problem—even when I may harbor doubts. The fruit of this is their readiness, in a crisis, to say: “I’ll figure it out.”

Letting go of children as they grow in independence is essentially a grieving process. Every milestone toward independence is a departure from the safe harbor that the mother and father have created. This grief is a valid reality. It is not sentimental that parents experience this process of separation physically and emotionally. It is natural and healthy that we as parents grieve. Working with this grief makes us freer and stronger. Our choosing to spare our children our grieving, a grieving they may neither share nor understand, allows them to follow their own dreams more freely.

Our children may seem like fragile paper boats when we set them afloat on the seas of life. But, if we have done our job as parents, they will prove themselves to be vessels of much stronger stuff, able to find their way and to reach their destination. Then we can stand on the shore—joyful, proud, and sad—waving and wishing them well. ☉

Why Faust for High School Seniors?

BY WENDY BRUNEAU

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) was a poet, novelist, dramatist, scientist, government minister, and man of the world—one of the giants of German and of world culture. Goethe strongly influenced Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf Education, and the phenomenological, participatory approach to natural science used in Waldorf schools is based on Goethe’s work.

Goethe’s crowning literary achievement, the two-part drama Faust, is the story of the archetypal seeker after truth and meaning. Faust, a learned man past his prime, is weary of life and of useless knowledge, to the point of considering suicide. He makes a pact with the devil to regain his youth. Faust falls in love with a beautiful young woman, Margarethe (Gretchen), whom he gets with child. Faust kills Gretchen’s vengeance-bent brother in a duel. She drowns her infant and, despite Faust’s efforts to save her, is executed for her crime. Faust survives all this and in his later life becomes a great scientific researcher and benefactor of humanity.

Waldorf high school teacher Wendy Bruneau here considers the relevance of Faust to high school seniors. The article provides an insight into an essential element in the Waldorf high school curriculum. It also demonstrates that above all else Waldorf Education seeks to help young people become self-aware, independent-minded, moral human beings.

—R. E. K.

Goethe’s *Faust* is a standard college text, but in many Waldorf high schools it is the focus of a twelfth-grade study block. Each day for three weeks, the students work intensively with the play and its meaning. Every year as I hand out the books, a student asks, “Why are we reading this?” I’ve had to face this question in order to stand before the students and feel confident that they will know the answer to this question at the end of the three weeks. Why do we bring this play, published almost 200 years ago, to our seniors? What does it have to say to them?

The essential question for twelfth-grade students is Who am I? As they prepare themselves to go out into the world, young people ask themselves several questions:

- What kind of person do I want to be?
- What is my place in the world?
- What am I here to do?

Woven in with such concerns are the related questions of the role of good and evil in the world and the foundations of moral action.

The twelfth-grade Waldorf curriculum includes study blocks on human evolution, world religions, and the Transcendentalist poets. These topics each relate to the question of the self and what it means to be a human being. *Faust* speaks to these central ques-

tions of twelfth graders, although from a different perspective than these other studies. It does this in two ways—through the story itself and through the biography of Goethe.

In the previous year, the students have studied the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the tale of the ancient Mesopotamian hero. That story addresses the question that concerned the people of the earliest civilizations: Why is there death?

Modern human beings accept death. As Goethe wrote, we have moved beyond that question to the conundrum of the modern world: Why is there evil? How is it that human beings are the most benevolent and altruistic creatures on the planet—as John



Faust making his fateful pact with Mephistopheles



The aged Faust and the ever-youthful Mephistopheles

Steinbeck wrote, “the only species willing to die for a cause”—but also the most cruel and evil? The catalog of horrors of the last century, of world wars and genocides, calls us to understand evil and to face the ultimate question of what it means to be human when human beings are capable of such extreme behaviors.

Goethe gives us in *Faust* the splendid character of Mephistopheles, who struts onto the stage in a way that brings to mind both Milton’s extraordinary Satan in *Paradise Lost* and the Rolling Stones’ song “Sym-

pathy for the Devil”: “Please allow me to introduce myself, I’m a man of wealth and taste.” This wise-cracking character is instantly intriguing to students. Mephistopheles takes no guff from anyone; he has the answer to everything; he makes fun of education; he argues with God; and he looks down on the mass of humanity as insects who stick their noses “in every piece of dung.”

The students are fascinated by this character. They too have developed a swagger as the big kids on campus! But this is the devil. Are we supposed to like him? What a surprise to learn that God, as presented in *Faust*, needs the devil. God wants human beings to strive, achieve, and develop. But the confrontation with evil is necessary for the ongoing evolution of which only human beings are capable.

Seniors are almost ready to step out into the adult world, and they feel quite proud of themselves that they have come so far, are quite grown up, and are preparing to leave the sheltered world of high school. But at the same time, they are afraid. They want the rights and freedom that come with adulthood, but they don’t want to lose the qualities that make childhood magical. They don’t want to become cynical or jaded. They don’t want to lose their imaginations and live a life of dulling routine. They may worry about becoming like their parents—or at least blindly repeating what they perceive as their parents’ lives.

Mephistopheles touches the core of this fear. Here

he is, laughing at humans because—in his view—their lives are pointless. They keep doing the same things, generation after generation, trying to achieve something. Mephistopheles tries to stop them, but they keep on, and it all comes to nothing in the end.

As for that scum of beast- and humanhood
There’s just no curbing it, no quelling,
I’ve buried them in droves past telling,
Yet ever newly circulates fresh blood.

Through the play, Mephistopheles appears in two different costumes, one red and one black, each representing an aspect of evil. In red, he presents the active, passionate side of evil—the violent, the rash, the angry. In this guise he goads Faust to kill Gretchen’s brother. In black, Mephistopheles represents the colder side of evil—the calculated, the neglectful, the unfeeling. In this costume, Mephistopheles introduces himself to Faust as representing the void that came before creation, stating that his ambition is for the world to go back to that void of darkness and nothingness. He prefers the “Eternal-Empty.” Ultimately, what he represents is not active evil as we usually think of it, but rather the evil of simply not caring, of finding life hopeless, pointless, and not worth pursuing.

What has this constant doing ever brought
But what is done to rake away to naught?

When we explore these two aspects of evil and discuss where we see them in the world, it becomes clear that it is not only what we do that may cause harm, but what we allow to be done. What an important idea for the students to encounter as they consider who they want to be and how they want to live!

When we meet Faust himself, we find a disappointed, middle-aged man grousing about in his dusty study. He is a professor, a



Two manifestations of Mephistopheles attacking the lily and the light as symbols of goodness

learned man, but feels fragmented, unfulfilled. He has wasted his life in secondhand book learning, never made much money, never been loved by anyone. No teenager can identify with such a character. He is precisely what they don't want to be. They don't want to go out into the world and become complacent, boring adults who never achieve what they set out to do. They want to change the world.

But then we see Faust have an epiphany. After a miserable night in which he contemplates suicide, he walks through the town on Easter morning and passes through the crowds of common folk. They talk about drinking, about who is handsome, who is going with whom. From Faust's educated point of view, this is all silly and pointless chatter. But these people are happy and smiling, and he is miserable. Is it better to be superficial and ignorant? Is that what brings happiness? If not, why is that? It would be easy to be like a cat snoozing on the bed all day, but would it be satisfying for long?

Through his association with Mephistopheles, Faust puts aside his musty books and sets off into the world of sense experience, to find things out for himself, to really live. Under Mephistopheles' tutelage, he starts with bars, skirt-chasing, and visits to satanic dens—all very unsatisfying. He has a tragic affair with the beautiful and innocent Gretchen which leads to the death of her brother, of her and Faust's child, and of Gretchen herself.

But later Faust goes on to grander things: an imperial court, a science lab in which life is created in a glass jar, a massive building project, marriage, and fatherhood. By the end of the play, Faust has quite literally changed the world. And—contrary to popular misconception—he doesn't have to sell his soul to the devil to do it. Goethe leaves us with the extraordinary idea that redemption lies not in refraining from doing bad things, but in doing things, getting things done, exploring and learning, even if terrible mistakes are made along the way. It is human action and effort that are the antithesis of the void that Mephistopheles would prefer. As Goethe wrote, "How can you come to know yourself? Never by thinking, always by doing."

Faust ultimately brings the students the message seen on many T-shirts: "Life is good." It also tells them that they can choose the kind of adult they will be.

Goethe's biography also relates to these issues. Like

the play itself, his life story can be presented as something vital and relevant, with something important to tell us today. Like his characters, Goethe is intriguing to students, someone with whom the students can identify. Goethe burnt himself out as a teenage law student, overdoing coffee and alcohol and staying up all night madly writing poetry. He was a lovesick youth, hopelessly in love with his best friend's wife. What teenager has not suffered the pain of unrequited love? Goethe's coup, however, was to turn this experience into a best-selling novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, which made him the toast of Europe. He was then hired to be a companion and mentor to a young nobleman and had many adventures, some on galloping horses and involving close encounters with the law. But the wild living was always tempered, in Goethe's case, by responsibility and achievement. He had an important post in government and was responsible for major public projects.

Goethe is the anti-Peter Pan. For those students who aren't quite sure if they are ready to step out into the world, his life says: "It is good to grow up; it is exciting and rich with possibility." Goethe was a bureaucrat for much of his adult life. But he was also a celebrity novelist, a scientist, a great dancer, a writer of poetry in praise of intimacy with the love of his life. There's that message again: You can choose what kind of adult you want to be, and—in spite of its many difficulties—life is good. "Nothing is worth more than this day!"

Now out into the world with you! ☺



Goethe, at age twenty-six, contemplating the image of his beloved at the time



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Boomers, Gen Xers, Millennials

The Generational Shift in Waldorf Communities and How to Survive It

BY DAVID SOHIGIAN

There is a shift happening now in the generational makeup of Waldorf schools in North America. New teachers, parents, and students, all with particular generational values, attitudes, and patterns of behavior, are changing the nature of Waldorf school communities. Understanding these shifts can be a useful tool in maintaining the economic, social, and spiritual health of Waldorf schools.

The most comprehensive and widely accepted theory of generations is that of Neil Howe and William Strauss, first set forth in their book *Generations*, published in 1993. Howe and Strauss describe the generations in the context of modern United States history and show how the cycles of history can be used to predict the values and behavior patterns of future generations.

According to generation theory, societies go through a repeating four-stage cycle. The stages are called “turnings,” and the first turning is called a “high.” In America, the period from 1946 to 1964 was a high, a period of cooperation, growth, and a stable, if somewhat bland, society.

The second turning is referred to as an “awakening,” which involves a questioning of and reaction against the prevailing values and patterns of the high. The consciousness revolution that took place between 1964 and 1984 was such an awakening. It was characterized by social and political protest, the erosion of shared societal values, and the emergence of a viable counterculture.

The third turning is an “unraveling.” We are currently at the end of an unraveling that manifested in the culture wars between 1984 and 2005. That period was characterized by extreme individualism, widening social and economic inequality, distrust of social and political institutions, and battles between segments of society with differing beliefs and values.

The fourth stage in the cycle is called a “crisis.” The previous crisis occurred between 1929 and

1946 and included the Great Depression and World War II. It was a time of economic and political chaos and all-out war. We have now entered a new crisis period, and the current economic downturn, America’s military involvements abroad, and ballooning budget deficit are symptoms of it.

According to generation theory, the prevailing social, economic, and cultural conditions of the turning during which people grow up and in which they come of age are very formative. These shared experiences predispose persons born within a certain time frame to have distinctive patterns of thought and behavior. For example, the GI generation (born 1901–1924) grew up in the unraveling that included WWI and came of age during the ensuing crisis. They were a “hero” generation that won the war and established the peace and prosperity of the postwar high.

There are currently six living generations. The GI generation is slowly dying out. The Silent generation (born 1925–1942) is now a grandparent generation, and the Homelander generation (born since 2004) includes the children now entering school. The three other generations, the Baby Boomers (born 1943–1960), the Gen Xers (born 1961–1981), and Millennials (born 1982–2003) com-

prise almost all of the faculty, staff, parents, and even students in Waldorf schools and are particularly relevant to the changing situation in the schools. The following sections give an outline of the character of these important generations. Not every individual in a generation conforms to its character, but the concepts apply when large groups of people or large organizations are considered.



Colin Powell
(born April 5, 1937)

Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers grew up in the stable and conformist '40s and '50s, when the television program *Leave It to Beaver* embodied the American Dream. They were indulged as children but were expected to stay in their place and at least have the appearance of obedience. The Baby Boomers were raised with a sense of idealism that has defined them at every life stage. When they reached young adulthood in the late '60s and '70s, they challenged and tried to change the institutions and societal patterns that they considered oppressive. During the '80s and '90s, they were criticized for having become materialistic midlifers.

The Baby Boomers treated their children—mostly Millennials—like royalty, with the development of self-esteem as a focus. They are the original “helicopter parents” who hovered over their children and wanted to make sure that they were provided for with the best that money could buy. Since Baby Boomers are in their fifties and sixties, they are less present as parents in Waldorf schools, although many are now high school parents.

The majority of Waldorf teachers today are Boomers, and they often hold positions of leadership in the schools. Their idealism and willingness to work for a cause and for a community led them into Waldorf teaching and has kept them there. Baby Boomer parents also are often members of the board of trustees. They are persons who can see the benefits of committing to, trusting, and making sacrifices for communities and institutions. However, Boomers can be strident in their ideology and more concerned with ideals than practicality.

The Gen Xers

Generation X was raised in the cultural chaos of the '60s and '70s. They were a generation of “latchkey kids” who were often ignored. As a consequence,

they became pragmatic and focused on survival rather than idealism. Generation X's relationship to schools and institutions of all types differs from that of the Baby Boomers. They are much more individualistic and are more likely to value their own or their child's benefit over that of the school community.

Now between thirty and fifty years of age, the Gen Xers comprise the majority of parents of K–12 children. Generation X parents are often driven to make sure that their children don't have the same experiences growing up as they did. They take parenting very seriously and value the well-being of their child over that of all others.

The Generation X parents that dominate the kindergartens and lower schools are causing serious challenges for Waldorf teachers and administrators. They tend to be demanding and less inclined (than Boomers) to volunteer and do things for the good of the school. They are sometimes focused solely on the well-being of their own child, often at the expense of other children or of the school as a whole. They are often untrusting of institutions and “group-think.” They hold individuals accountable for their actions and don't hesitate to pull their children out of the school if they perceive a problem. They are used to real-time communication and practical, immediate, problem solving. They are less interested in the mission or ideals of the school (and perhaps the entire Waldorf movement) and more likely to see Waldorf Education as a means to an end—getting a great education for their child. Gen Xers have great energy and creativity. Their “Just Do It” attitude can be harnessed to achieve great things if they are given practical and achievable goals.



*Sarah Palin
(born February 11, 1964)*



*Hillary Rodham Clinton
(born October 26, 1947)*



*Bill Gates
(born October 28, 1955)*



*Jon Stewart
(born November 28, 1962)*

There are also many Gen X Waldorf teachers. However, being focused on work/life balance, Gen Xers have been less likely to find Waldorf

teaching—involving hard work, long hours, and low pay—an attractive profession. Of those who do go into Waldorf teaching, many find it too demanding and give it up after a class cycle or sooner. Schools typically find it difficult to recruit and hold Gen X teachers. Those who are in service are less likely to follow the path of total sacrifice of time, energy, and family life that many Boomer Waldorf teachers have trod. A balance between family and work life tends to be at the core of Gen X decision making.

The Millennials

Virtually all of the children in the lower school through high school today are of the Millennial generation. The Millennials started appearing in 1982, when social consciousness shifted from the adult back to the child. That is about the time “Baby on Board” stickers began appearing on the back of family cars. With Baby Boomers as parents, the Millennials found themselves the focus of that generation’s

idealism. They were raised to excel, and their parents did all they could to help them develop self-esteem and a sense of their uniqueness. This generation is often called the “everyone gets a trophy” generation, and Millennials are often criticized because they consider themselves “special.” Millennials are usually tech-savvy, and have high expectations for themselves and a positive, can-do attitude.



Mark Zuckerberg
Facebook CEO
(born May 14, 1984)

Many older Millennials, some of whom are Waldorf graduates, have chosen to become Waldorf teachers. Particularly at younger schools, Millennials comprise a majority of the faculty. They bring with them enthusiasm, idealism, and willingness to work for a cause but also carry a need for attention. Raised by their Boomer parents with a “hands-on” parenting style, they expect the same sort of attention in their work environment. Millennials often require daily contact and affirmation to be successful.

Neil Howe’s most recent book is *Millennials Rising: The Next Generation*. When asked about the challenges facing Waldorf schools he told this writer:

The idea of a seamless community with highly involved parents and long-term relationships with the same teacher is very empowering to Millennials. This generation thrives when they can learn

in a small community where they feel special and know they will never fall through the cracks.

It’s important to create a balance where students unplug from media and technology to interact in person. But teachers and parents need to understand that Millennials see technology fundamentally differently—not as a distraction from the real world, but as an empowering tool that their generation will use to solve big problems, from world hunger to global warming.



Miley Cyrus
TV’s *Hannah Montana*
(born November 23, 1992)

The Current Generational Mix

The typical Waldorf school is now a mix, with members of three generations—Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials—making up the faculty, staff, and parent body. Many Boomers and Millennials are teachers, and Gen Xers dominate the parent body and increasingly also the board of trustees. Members of each generation tend to have different values, attitudes, and patterns of behavior. How a member of one generation thinks and feels can be inscrutable to a member of another generation. There are countless opportunities for misunderstanding and miscommunication:

- A long-serving Boomer teacher cannot understand a Gen X parent who is not strongly dedicated to the ideals of the school.
- A Gen X parent is impatient with the slow learning curve of a young Millennial teacher.
- That same Millennial teacher wonders why her Gen X colleague won’t give her more help and why her Boomer colleague is a Luddite and incapable of answering an e-mail.
- A Gen X parent and board member wonders why the Boomer-dominated college of teachers can’t decide on budget cuts.

An understanding of the generational tendencies can help lessen the more common points of friction and misunderstanding. For example, a Boomer teacher, in dealing with a Gen X parent, might strive to:

- start early in building a one-on-one relationship with every parent
- accept full responsibility for all that he does and for all that goes on in the classroom

Name	Archetype	Dates	Famous Members	Characteristics	History
GI Generation	Hero	1901-1924	JFK Ronald Reagan John Wayne Judy Garland Walter Cronkite	Outer-focused, civic-minded, confident, problem-solving, traditional, positive/upbeat	Grew up in Great Depression; fought in WWII; founded US post-war industry 7 presidents, 61-93
Silent Generation	Artist	1925-1942	MLK Elvis Presley Colin Powell John McCain Mohammed Ali	Compromising, conformist, risk-averse, sensitive, indecisive, inclusive, careful	Raised overprotected; grew up in shadow of GI's; fought for civil rights No president
Baby Boomer Generation	Prophet	1943-1960	Bill Clinton George W. Bush Steven Spielberg Candice Bergen Spike Lee Steve Jobs	Ideological, inner-focused, uncompromising, self-indulgent, moralistic, polarizing, pessimistic	Indulged as children; rebelled in the 60's-70's; tore down GI establishment; fought culture wars 2 presidents, 93-08
Generation X	Nomad	1961-1981	Tom Cruise Jodie Foster Barack Obama Tiger Woods Sergey Brin	Individualistic, resourceful, competitive, rule-breaking, risk-taking, cynical	Ignored as children; alienated slackers; independent; entrepreneurs Current president
Millennial Generation	Hero	1982-2003	Shaun White Scarlett Johansson Michelle Wie Mark Zuckerberg	Confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, achieving, optimistic	Sheltered upbringing; high expectations; grew up tech-savvy; socially networked
Homelander Generation	Artist	2004-?			

- provide clear and up-to-date information about what is going on in the classroom and how that parent's child is doing
- use language like “your child” instead of “the children” in communications

A Gen X teacher or board member, in dealing with new Millennial teachers, might try to:

- protect and mentor them
- encourage and affirm their work regularly
- create team environments for instruction

Generation theory is not unlike temperament theory. The theory of the four temperaments—choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic, and melancholic—is an important element in Waldorf Education. Teachers use it to understand their students and to develop appropriate pedagogical strategies. Temperament theory also provides a means of self-understanding and the opportunity to rise above our temperament, to develop new patterns of thought and behavior that serve us and others. Ideally, one strives to develop the best characteristics of each temperament and to freely manifest them according to the needs of a situation.

Generation theory, too, is a tool to comprehend other persons and ourselves better. On the one hand, it can give us an understanding of others and

help us act toward them with wisdom, tolerance, and patience. On the other, it can help us objectify our own tendencies, our own patterns of thought and behavior. And in doing so, generation theory gives us the opportunity to exercise our freedom as human beings to rise above the external influences that have shaped us. We can say to ourselves, “I am that, but I am also free to be something else.”

For example, a Gen X parent might decide to organize the Spring Fair when no one else

volunteers, even though it doesn't suit her schedule and will impinge on family life. Or, a Boomer teacher might get a cell phone to make herself more accessible to colleagues and parents. Or, a Millennial teacher might strive to depend less on external approval and help.

In Waldorf schools, as in the broader society, time moves us all along, and change is inevitable. One generation appears and replaces another. Generation theory can perhaps contribute to the social harmony of Waldorf schools and to the development of the parents, teachers, and staff who comprise them. ☺



DAVE SOHIGIAN, writes about generational theory on his blog www.thegenxfiles.com. He also edits and publishes the blog of author Neil Howe at blog.lifecourse.com. Dave lives in Portland, Oregon with his wife, Meta Bruner, a eurythmist, and is a proud Gen X parent of two Millennial children in a Waldorf school.

Waldorf Education in the Land of the Rising Sun

BY MEG GORMAN

Waldorf Education is a small but vital presence in Japan. There are about thirty kindergartens in the country, many of them quite large, with over a hundred toddlers and preschoolers. There are only a handful of Waldorf schools, though, due in part to the strength of the government educational system, the emphasis on competitive testing, and the cost of starting a new school.

Meg Gorman began teaching in 1968 and since then has taught in all grades from kindergarten through college. She has been teaching in Waldorf schools since 1984 and is now at the Santa Fe Waldorf High School. Meg is also a teacher educator and school consultant, active in North America and other parts of the world. The following is an account of her visit to three Waldorf schools in Japan.

—R. E. K.



Fifth-grade students at the Waldorf school in Fugino celebrate, in traditional fashion, the beginning of the Year of the Boar

In February of 2007, after a nine-hour-plus flight from Honolulu, I landed at Narita Airport outside Tokyo. I was anxious about how I would travel by train with my heavy luggage to Fugino, over three hours west of Tokyo. In Tokyo, things were relatively easy. Many people could speak English. However, the further west I traveled, the less I could communicate. Besides, no one had heard of Fugino, the small town that was the first stop in my tour of Waldorf schools in Japan. Finally, several trains later and with the help of many kind people, I arrived in Fugino. Japan is a clean, efficient culture, punctual to the minute, and the people are remarkably warm.

Rieko Hata, the school eurythmist, who in her grace and lightness reminded me of a butterfly, met me at the station. She and Mr. Sato—the school secretary,

who would chauffeur me around for the next two days—then took me to a restaurant for soba noodles. Fugino, a mountain town and an art colony retreat, greeted me with a beautiful landscape of bare winter trees. It was very cold, and the next day, at The Freie (Independent) Waldorf School in Fugino, the first graders brought me small sheets of ice from a lily pond to prove it.

There I observed Yamato Sakae, the first grade teacher, deliver a flawless main lesson. At the start of the morning, the children lined up to shake his hand and greeted him with glee. Then they had a rigorous circle time with many poems, flute playing, and singing with Extra Lesson therapeutic exercises woven in. The children were learning the Japanese syllabary. Mr. Sakae reviewed the last lesson, and then, using the figure of a woman about whom he had told a story, he drew the *kana* or letter for “O” on the board. The children then traced it in the air and on each other’s backs. Only then did they fetch their main lesson books and actually write the *kana*. Every child drew a fine *kana*. I was impressed.

After circle, chairs and desks were arranged for bookwork. Toward the end of the lesson, they pushed their desks together for a new story. The moving of furniture provided a rigorous workout and kept the students from getting squirrel-like. They certainly love their teacher, and he obviously loves them. What lucky children!

At snack time I had no goodies, so the children laid out a cloth, and each donated something from his or her own snack: a raisin, a bit of rice, a pickle, a piece of fruit. I was well fed.

In Fugino I also saw a play put on by the fourth grade and a Japanese festival during which fifth-grade students, all born in the Year of the Boar (January 31, 1995 – February 18, 1996) and dressed in traditional kimonos, threw dry beans into the audience to chase away bad energy. I gave two lectures to teachers and parents, one on Waldorf high school education and one on parenting. I also met with the students in grades eight and nine and in the pioneer high school class—a combined tenth and eleventh grade. The high schoolers had helped build the first high school building, a geodesic dome, and while they complained that it had been hard work, they were clearly proud of it.

I next visited the Yokohama Steiner School in the suburb of Aobadai. The school is located in a transformed office building with six classrooms, an assembly area, a good-sized administration office, and several meeting spaces. The school has a first grade of eighteen students and a combined second/third grade, also with eighteen students. Mami Magai (teacher for grades two/three) and Minami Kanda (grade one) and the school eurythmist, Midori Sumida, comprise the college of teachers. They are totally dedicated to their work. Two of them travel over an hour and a half each way, by train and bus, to get to the school.

The Yokohama school, like the other Waldorf schools I saw in Japan, is beautiful. The walls are stunningly lazured, and hanging silk cloths and curtains soften the corners and hard edges. Raised wooden flooring covers the concrete floor. The children's wooden desks and chairs are designed so that they can grow with the children. Wooden knobs on the side of each desk hold lunch boxes tied in handkerchiefs. Many of the overhead light fixtures are hidden by wooden forms made by the

parents. At the outside door, carefully arranged cross-sections of bamboo with clothesline loops attached to them—creating little bucket-like stilts—await the merry feet of the children who stomp around on them like small giants. (Please see photo in the table of contents.)

Many of the Waldorf schools in Japan have grown out of Saturday schools or after-hours schools. The Yokohama school has had Saturday school for fifteen years and continues to do so. All the full-time teachers work several additional hours each Saturday. Even in a small school such as the one in Yokohama, eurythmy has a central and honored place. The children love it.

Next I flew to Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island. Izumi no Gakko ("School of Spring Water") is located in Daté, a coastal city surrounded by active volcanoes and hot springs. My second day there, the wind howled, and the schools closed early, sending everyone home to prepare for a major blizzard.

At that time, the home of Izumi no Gakko was small and stretched to the maximum. Housed in temporary buildings, the school looked more like a boot camp than a school. However, inside its small classrooms there was beauty and real Waldorf schooling going on. I observed Rei Hayashi, the sixth-grade teacher, present a history main lesson that included artistic and intellectual work and that kept the students challenged and spellbound. The school has since moved to a new and spacious facility in a nearby town.

Izumi no Gakko has some challenges shared by Waldorf schools everywhere, such as fundraising, maintaining enrollment, and building the relationship between the faculty and the board of trustees. Almost three-quarters of the school families are from outside Hokkaido, having moved to Daté for the school. In half of those families, the father is absent, working in Tokyo or in some other part of the country.

Michael College, an anthroposophical center, is also in Daté. This institution was founded by Yuko Omura, who during the 1990s directed a program for Japanese students at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California. Yuko and her collaborators are working to develop an adult educational center and anthroposophically based community. They have the first purpose-built eurythmy hall in Japan, a preschool, a farm, a school for learning-challenged



The author with students of the Waldorf high school in Daté Hokkaido



Yamato Sakae, graduate of the teacher training program at Rudolf Steiner College plays the C-flute with his first-grade students.

students, several homes and cottages for visitors, students, and co-workers, and an adult education building with offices, classrooms, a gorgeous dining room, and a professional kitchen.

I spent a very busy week in Daté teaching at and going back and forth between the school and Michael College. I also had a memorable visit to an *onsen* or hot spring.

Anthroposophy is vibrant and growing in the area. In addition to the work at Michael College, many other area young people are interested and are participating in study groups. We had some fine conversations on the subject of Anthroposophy, which nourished me a great deal.

My time in Japan reinforced for me a few basic truths related to Waldorf Education:

- Waldorf teachers, Waldorf parents, and others are making great sacrifices to bring Waldorf Education into the world.
- The work with parents on the principles of Waldorf Education needs to be ongoing and welcoming to all.
- Waldorf educators in non-Western countries such as Japan are doing an excellent job adapting Waldorf Education to their particular cultures.
- The challenges that, in the short term, create crises are, in the long run, strengthening.
- Temperament is universal. There are easily identifiable choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic, and sanguine in every culture.
- Learning challenges are also universal. The grade-one class in Yokohama has a boy with autism, a boy with Asperger's syndrome, and a girl with speech difficulties, in addition to the usual restless "squirrels." And, the teachers have few therapeutic resources.
- Good Waldorf teachers are hard to find.
- Children are noisy and rambunctious on Mondays and settle better into the work on Tuesdays.
- The video game and game-boy pressure in Japan

is as intense as it is in North America. Waldorf teachers have their fingers in the dike, but there are many holes and not enough fingers.

- There is an impressive international Waldorf karmic network. In Japan I met Waldorf teachers who had trained at Emerson College in England, at various German Waldorf institutes, Rudolf Steiner College in California, and Sunbridge College in New York.

Also, I saw that, in Japan as in North America, tensions and disagreements within faculties tend to be between "old souls" and "young souls." This is not a matter of chronological age but of soul character.

Young souls—whom Rudolf Steiner described as having had relatively few prior incarnations—are filled with energy, rush ahead (often unaware of their effect on

others), can be impatient with the concerns of colleagues and parents, and frequently feel that their hard work is underappreciated. They don't do well with process and restraints.

Old souls—

who have a longer history of reincarnation—are more deliberate and more aware of what is going on around them. They understand the value of carefully tended relationships. They are sometimes a bit discouraged and "soul weary," though, and it is sometimes hard for them to summon the energy to deal with problems. Each type needs the other. A major challenge of our time and of the Waldorf movement is to learn to work together in freedom and with mutual respect, regardless of the soul condition of our own selves and of our colleagues.

I left Japan with many gifts, including a bag of unwashed sheep's wool and a bag of scallop shells, which I would divide and bring as gifts to Waldorf kindergartens in China. The good hearts of the Japanese people I met were open and committed to Waldorf Education, and these were the greatest gift of all. ☺



The Fugino high school building, constructed with the help of students

Book Review and Excerpt

Simplicity Parenting

Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier, and More Secure Kids

BY KIM JOHN PAYNE, M.Ed. WITH LISA ROSS



My local telephone company once delivered the new phone directory in a plastic bag. Written on the bag were the words “More Stuff/More Information.” That is an apt summation of our modern creed of “more is better,” today manifest not only in more stuff and information but in more electronic communication and entertainment, more distractions, and more iPhone applications—100,000 and increasing.

Of course, when something becomes more, something else becomes less. And what has become less in contemporary life includes time, time to reflect, observe, meditate; face-to-face interactions with real people in real time; contact with nature; the relaxed enjoyment of the simple things of life; and inner calm.

*Kim John Payne is a family counselor, lecturer, author, and Waldorf parent. In his book *Simplicity Parenting*, Payne looks at how our “more is better” culture is affecting family life and how that freneticized family life is affecting our children. Payne, an expert on ADHD, maintains that our current lifestyle is extremely stressful for children and is negatively affecting their healthy development.*

Payne’s basic message to parents is, well, simple. Look carefully at the way your family lives. Consider daily mealtime and bedtime schedules; out-of-school activities such as organized sports and special lessons; toy collections; computer, video game, television, and cell phone use; and the family diet. Consider, become conscious, objectify, and then simplify and create order. This will result, Payne promises, in happier, calmer, more secure children and (presumably) parents, as well.

*Such a profound shift in lifestyle is a daunting task, but *Simplicity Parenting* is a clear, practical, and understandable guide to essentializing and resurrecting family life. Payne covers many challenges that parents today must face. One of them is toys. The following is a condensed version of the advice that Payne gives on creating a toy collection that will properly support a child’s development. It covers the material on pages 69–75 in the book.*

—R. E. K.

The average American child has 150 toys. The inevitable clutter involved in having that many toys in a child’s room and play area is stressful in itself. And, the overabundance of objects designed to entertain deprives children of the opportunity to develop imagination and creativity and to amuse and occupy themselves with few or no props.

Here is a checklist of the types of toys that can be culled from the toy pile. Some of the items on the list refer to types of toys that you probably would not want to acquire in the first place.

1. Broken toys

A treasured toy that is broken should be repaired, but a toy that you have been meaning to fix for a long time probably can be discarded.

2. Developmentally inappropriate toys

Most toys have an “expiration date,” especially those toys tied to something specific—a character, television show, or age range. Toys that your child has outgrown, as well as toys that they will “grow into” in a few years, can be either discarded or put in storage.

3. Conceptually fixed toys

These are detailed, molded plastic dolls of characters from movies, comic books, and television shows—such as Hannah Montana and Darth Vader. Such toys all beg the question: Whose imagination is being celebrated: Hollywood’s or the child’s?

4. Toys that do too much and break too easily

Complicated toys, such as the exploding lunar rocket that also collects rock samples, are prone to failure. Also,

they are unlikely to morph into anything else in play. The rigid concept of such toys takes the place of, rather than invites, the child's imagination.

5. Very high-stimulation toys

Toys that recreate a video arcade experience—with flashing lights, mechanical voices, speed, and sound effects—are designed to excite as well as entertain. They artificially create a state of stress in the child. They add to the already high level of daily sensory stimulation that children experience from in-your-face advertising and programming, movies designed for sensory overload, and exposure to adult news and media.

6. Annoying or offensive toys

These are toys that offend the senses in some way. They are often “favorite uncle” toys, purchased by someone who doesn't have children or who knows your children will be visiting him for only a short time. Such toys make an awful noise, project an offensive attitude, or may be just ugly. Toys should be pleasant to look at and to touch. They should not offend the senses. Toys that are offensive to parents, but not to the child, qualify as chuckable.

7. Toys claiming to give a competitive edge

This or that remarkable new toy will not make your child more creative, socially adept, or smarter, despite the manufacturer's claims. The development of a child's creativity and imagination is intrinsic, internal. If you feel pressured to buy a toy because you fear your child will fall behind his peers, chances are it is not a toy you should buy. Play is not a race. It is not an advancement opportunity.

8. Toys you are pressured to buy

Toy companies use aggressive advertising to make children want the latest “fad” toy. Some toys come with access to a website that offers children games with points and rewards they can get. Children are urged to invite their friends and thus become part of the company's marketing strategy.

For parents, of course, the pressure to buy comes from the child. On average, a child in pestering mode will ask for something eight times. Some children will repeat a request more than fifty times. The peer pressure

for children to get the latest toy or electronic gadget increases as they get older. You will do well to decide early that you will not play the “keeping up” game. Fads blow over. When my daughter had just turned eight, an expensive doll became the toy of choice among her friends. The pressure to get the doll was great. The parents of the “have-not” girls got together, and we decided to hold our ground. In a few weeks, the whole issue had disappeared.

9. Toys that inspire corrosive play

Boys will make sticks and other things into “weapons.” This doesn't concern me as long as the weapons are imaginary and the play does not physically harm anyone.

Fully detailed plastic assault rifles are a step beyond. Even if they don't shoot, in their convincing detail they seem to condone and even glorify violence. I have no doubt that violent video games, movies, and television shows also negatively affect children's play and their interactions with others.

10. Toy multiples

Like the magic broom in the story of the sorcerer's apprentice, toys can multiply far beyond one's intention. If a child has a single, beloved stuffed animal, a crowd of stuffed animal friends may soon appear, courtesy of well-meaning parents and relatives. And the original friend may get lost in the shuffle. Our best intentions to increase the circle of love around our child can have the opposite effect. By overwhelming a true connection with too many

superfluous ones, we can send a message that relationships are disposable.

This process of discarding some toys and putting some into storage is not an easy one. But if you persevere, you will have taken a big step toward creating a supportive environment for your child. It is a real pleasure to declutter, to see clear surfaces again. It is calming for you and your children to be surrounded by clean lines and a simple palette, rather than a riot of shapes and colors.



Multiples of a beloved toy can lead to chaos.

Book Review

The Falconer

BY CHRISTOPHER SBLENDORIO

REVIEWED BY RONALD KOETZSCH

In Waldorf schools, history is taught largely through the medium of biography. The life stories of individual human beings, famous and not so famous, good and not so good, are told by the teacher or read in books. Each life, interesting in itself, illuminates the events and conditions of the time in which the person lived.

The thirteenth century was a remarkable period in Europe. The Holy Roman Empire—notable for being neither holy, Roman, nor an empire—included much of present-day Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic,

eastern France, and northern and southern Italy. The Roman Catholic Church, believed by most people to hold the keys to the kingdom of Heaven, was very rich and powerful. The pope, both a temporal and spiritual ruler, controlled central Italy, and was often at odds with the rulers of the empire. This was the time of the building of many great cathedrals and also of Francis of Assisi—who, by example, tried to call Christians to a life of virtue, piety, and simplicity. In southern France, the Cathars and Albigensians, deemed heretical by the Church, challenged its dogmas and worldliness and were eventually destroyed by the pope and his allies.

This was a time of struggle also between the Christian and the Muslim worlds. The Saracens still controlled parts of Spain and Italy, but their presence and rule was constantly being challenged by Christian armies. Christian knights, urged on by the pope, periodically launched crusades to wrest control of the Holy Land from the Muslims. In some parts of the Mediterranean world, however, Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived together in peace and mutual tolerance.

The Falconer tells the story of Friedrich II of Hohenstaufen (1194–1250). Born and raised in Italy, the son of a German king and a Norman princess, Frederick—Federico—believed himself chosen by God to rule. As a youth of eighteen, he led an army from southern Italy into Germany to establish himself as king and in 1220 was elected emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. His entire reign was characterized by struggles with the popes and the Church. At one point, Federico was excommunicated for refusing to launch a crusade and then excommunicated again for—as a non-Christian destined for Hell—launching a crusade.

Federico was a many-talented, dynamic person with wide interests and was in many ways a visionary. He was a free thinker who rejected the strict dogmas



A page from Federico's book on falconry

continued on page 46

Book Review

Metamorphosis Evolution In Action

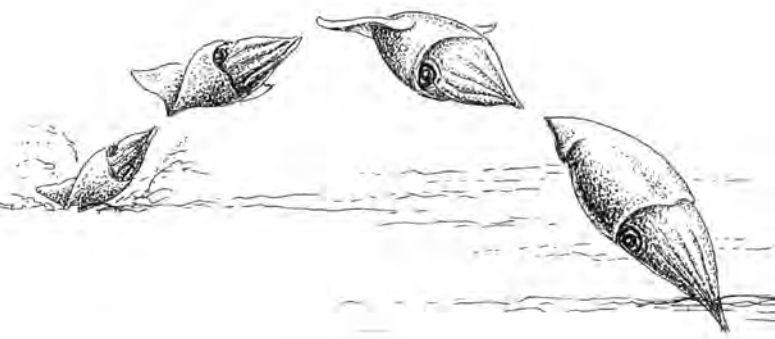
BY ANDREAS SUCHANTKE

REVIEWED BY RONALD KOETZSCH

This remarkable, exquisitely illustrated study of the plant and animal worlds contains many fascinating bits of information. For example,

- the orchid, whose blossoms are the most ornate of any flowering plant, has the smallest seed of any such plant, just 1/50 of an inch long, a seed that does not germinate unless an invasive fungus provides it with nutrition;
- the sooty albatross can glide for hours without a single wing beat, but is unable to stand or walk on flat ground because of its turned-in feet;
- the marauding columns of the African army ant, which consume everything in their path, can include 20 million individual ants;
- members of different species of butterfly in the same forest environment develop similar coloration based on the prevailing patterns of color and light and shadow in the forest;
- one species of squid, *Onychoteutis banksi*, is able to leap out of the water and to glide several hundred yards through the air, carried by sail-like fins.

But the book is not just a catalogue of interesting facts. It is an invitation to view the world of nature—plants, animals, and the human being—in a new way. *Metamorphosis* is an engaging, thought-provoking synthesis of science, art, and philosophy that will appeal to any



The *Onychoteutis banksi*, when pursued, may “fly” the length of three football fields.

reader of high school age and above—student, teacher, parent, scientist, artist—anyone with an interest in the world in which we live.

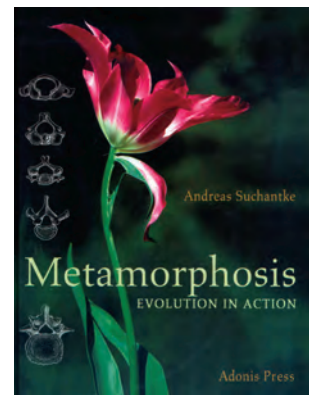
Andreas Suchantke, born in 1933, is a biologist, a teacher of science (at the Rudolf Steiner School in Zurich, Switzerland), a widely traveled observer and student of the plant and animal worlds, and an artist. (He did almost all of the nearly 200 lifelike illustrations in the book and took most of the stunning photos.) Suchantke is a proponent of the phenomenological approach to the study of nature developed by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), carried further by Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), and used in Waldorf schools today. *Metamorphosis: Evolution in Action* is the culmination of over fifty years of study and research.

Early in the book, the author laments the fact that, since the discovery of the individual cell in plants in the mid-nineteenth century, the science of biology has focused on smaller and smaller parts of plant and animal organisms. Biological science has assumed that if all the parts are understood, the whole will be understood as well.

In contrast, Goethe held that one has to observe and study the whole organism. As Suchantke expresses it, in each organism “there is a living, superordinate, self-perpetuating Whole that transcends the parts.”

Further, the study of living organisms—plants and animals—must take into account the fact that each organism is in a constant process of change, an ongoing metamorphosis of form. Organisms exist in space, but they also exist in time. To truly comprehend an organism, one must understand its metamorphosis, “the ability of nature in all its manifestations to effect transformation—to produce a flower from a leaf, a caterpillar from an egg, and a butterfly from a caterpillar.”

The true understanding of an organism also requires an awareness of the context, of the environment in which



the organism exists. Suchantke's methodology involves the careful study of the entire organism, including an awareness of its metamorphosis and of the environmental context.

This approach requires more of a researcher than objective, detached observation and measurement. True understanding of natural phenomena requires inner imaginative activity. The author points out that the process of metamorphosis, evident in differently shaped leaves on a plant stem culminating in the flower, is not visible. One sees the different leaves but not the process of change that has created the latter from the former. The researcher must train his imaginative faculty to visualize what is not visible. "True study of plants involves the imaginative, internal picturing of the transformation of one leaf form into another."

This type of scientific activity leads not only to real comprehension of the organism but also transforms the scientist. Suchantke points out that the ability to imaginatively experience and to foresee a metamorphosis is helpful in dealing with all kinds of phenomena, including a growing child.

For Suchantke, the appreciation of some phenomena requires even an awareness of one's own inner soul state. The blossom of the rose set amidst thorns is a manifestation of the intensification and higher development of soul life, as is also the lotus blossom, rising in pristine whiteness out of a muddy morass. He asserts that the "music" made by songbirds is expressive of the soul state of the natural environment and of the moment in time in which the music is made.



A peacock butterfly emerging from its cocoon

Goethe was able to "see" the *Urpflanze*, the "Archetypal Plant," which is the archetype of all plant forms. Rudolf Steiner, after many years of study and meditation, perceived the human being as the cosmic archetype from which all the animal forms have been derived. And as Suchantke relates, Steiner saw the human being as a tripartite organism. The nerve-sense system is at one pole and includes the brain and the five senses. At the other pole is

the metabolic system, comprised of the organs of digestion, assimilation, elimination, and reproduction. Between these two poles is the mediating rhythmic system, which includes the heart and lungs.

Suchantke uses this threefoldness as a tool in understanding the plant world. For plants, the tripartite human organization is inverted. Plants are polar opposites to the human being. While the underlying gesture of the human and mammalian organization is "internalization," that is, the closing off of the organism from the environment to achieve independence and adaptability, the plant opens itself to the environment. Thus, the sense system of the plant is the root system, which goes down and spreads radially into the earth. The blossom, the metabolic pole, unfolds itself upward into the atmosphere.

Among the birds, denizens of the air and light, this polarity and threefoldness are also manifest. At one pole are small birds such as the hummingbirds, absolute masters of flight, their senses active and open to the world. Some birds of this sense-pole type have a 360-degree range of vision that allows them to experience their total environment. At the metabolic pole are the huge flightless birds such as the ostrich and the now extinct moa of New Zealand, which reached a height of twelve feet. As Suchantke opines, the moa "was a purely visceral animal with an ability to build up huge amounts of body mass. Moas must have been unrivalled in the sheer dullness of their senses. They were simple, good-natured giants that knew no danger." The songbirds represent a balanced development centered in the rhythmic functions of circulation and respiration.

Mammals, whose domain is the earth, also fall into three groups. The rodents, active and nervous, represent the one-sided development of the nerve-sense system pole. The ungulates, such as cows and deer with their



The fully emerged peacock butterfly much larger after liquid has been pumped into its wings



Metamorphic sequence in a peony, from the upper leaves via the calyx to the petals, then to the part-petal, part-stamen intermediate forms, and finally to the stamen

complex and powerful digestive systems, manifest the metabolic pole. And the carnivores, such as the lion, tiger, and cat, represent the mediating rhythmic system, alternating between the totally awake hunting state and profound relaxation.

The book covers a vast range of topics, including sections on butterflies, beetles, ants, fish (living

and extinct), the dinosaurs, mollusks and their skeletons, the transition from the exoskeleton to endoskeleton (external shell to internal bones), the movement in evolution from gravity to levity, from the horizontal to the vertical. Throughout, one is reminded of the wisdom evident in every phenomenon in the natural world and in the interrelations between the life forms in a given ecosystem. Suchantke describes the work of the African scarab dung beetle, swarms of which accompany the herds of herbivores—buffalo, gazelles, elephants—on the savanna. These beetles find fresh dung, carve out a small ball, roll it away, deposit an egg in it, and bury it in loose soil. Many of the eggs hatch and many are eaten by other insects or mice. But the buried dung, in the next rainy season, becomes fertile humus much more readily than if it had been left to lie on the ground.

Metamorphosis is a challenging book. It urges us to think about and observe nature with new eyes. Also, some sections are rather technical and require active effort by the lay reader, as well as a dictionary near at hand. But for all inquiring minds, the book is a valuable scientific and artistic resource and an invitation to a new level of respect and love for and wonder at the world of nature.

Adonis Press, Hillsdale, NY, 2010
324 pages • \$50.00

The Falconer, continued

of the Church. He gathered in his court Christian, Jewish, and Muslim philosophers, theologians, scholars, mathematicians, poets, and musicians. He sought wisdom and insight into the mysteries of life from every quarter. According to legend, Federico met Saint Francis of Assisi and—after unsuccessfully tempting him with a dancing girl—became close friends with him. After defeating the Saracens in Sicily, Federico made Saracen knights his personal attendants and bodyguards. He had a deep respect for Muslim culture and learning.

Federico was deeply interested in the world of nature and carried on a lifelong study of birds, particularly of the art of falconry. He wrote and illustrated a book on this method of hunting.

As a ruler, Federico was active and innovative. He enlarged the harbors of his kingdom and established a navy and fleet of merchant vessels. He brought trade under state control and created state monopolies for certain products. He established a civil service and founded the first European state university, in Naples in 1224. Federico also founded one of Europe's first medical schools. He instituted a clear legal system in his domains and put in place a rule of law under which all persons enjoyed equal rights.

At the time of his unexpected death, Federico was seen either as an Antichrist or a savior. A legend circulated in Germany that he was encapsulated in a mountain and would return as a latter-day emperor to punish the worldly Church and bring universal peace and harmony.

The Falconer presents Federico's life and times in a clear and engaging manner. It draws the reader into Federico's world, a world where travel was slow—it might take a month for a party of knights to travel a few hundred miles; where human life was fragile—two of Federico's four wives died in childbirth; and where political and military conflict was relentless—within twenty-two years of his death, all of Federico's heirs had perished in the conflict with the papal forces. The book is an excellent read for sixth graders and above and for adults with an interest in this often neglected period of history.

AWSNA Publications, Ghent, NY, 2010
103 pages • \$10.00



of our time. At the very least, e-smog saps our physical and mental energy. At the worst, it may play a role in causing serious illness. At this point, we just don't know. The research has not been carried out. Instead, we are doing a vast, uncontrolled experiment on ourselves and our children.

Fatigue is the primary symptom of the life processes having been disturbed or irritated by continuous exposure to e-smog. The effects of the external electromagnetic fields have to be balanced out by the etheric body and by the body's self-restorative powers. This constant recuperative effort is a stress for the etheric body and the self-healing capacity. Sensitive people are most readily affected by this stress, which manifests first as fatigue. A sick person may have difficulty getting well, and a person with a weak organ may become seriously ill.

Using these devices is also a social issue. If I sit in a restaurant with my cell phone turned on, the people near me are being affected. In an office with Wi-Fi, every person in the space, every worker and every visitor, is affected.

Dr. Glöckler is not alone in her concerns. She is reflecting a view that is widespread in Europe. In Sweden, EHS or Electro-Hypersensitivity Syndrome, characterized by fatigue, headaches, and disturbed sleep—is an officially recognized disability. Frankfurt (Germany) and Salzburg (Austria) have banned Wi-Fi in their public schools. A Google search for “Wi-Fi health effects” brings up an article from *The Independent*, a British newspaper. The title is: “Danger on the Airwaves: Is the Wi-Fi Revolution a Health Time Bomb?” The article cites growing evidence that Wi-Fi adversely affects human health and warns against its installation in schools and homes.

Asked about practical measures, Dr. Glöckler made the following suggestions.

Cell phones: If you carry a cell phone, do not have it on. Turn it on to periodically check for messages. Then turn it off. Also, make conversations short. Do not give a cell phone to a child under the age of thirteen or fourteen.

Wi-Fi: In most situations, a Wi-Fi system is a convenience not a necessity. Do we really need to be able to sit down anywhere in our home and access the Internet? Even in an office, if you have a computer connection for each worker and one or two for visitors, that is enough.

Back in California, I used my laptop wireless function to learn that, although I do not have Wi-Fi in my office, I was receiving four wireless signals there from nearby external sources. One of them is the library of Rudolf Steiner College where I teach.



The editor in his new anti-e-smog attire

After some hesitation—fearing that I would be seen as a crank and a Luddite—I spoke to Daniel Schoenthal, an IT consultant to the College. To my surprise, he acknowledged the validity of my concern. Schoenthal has very kindly adjusted the library Wi-Fi so that the transmitter is less strong and more narrowly focused. He has also put a timer on it so that it transmits only when the library is in use.

Schoenthal reminded me that many other fixtures of modern life generate electromagnetic fields. These include refrigerators, air conditioning units, televisions, computers, gaming consoles, alarm systems, portable land line phones, hair dryers, electric tooth brushes, cable TV receivers, electric clothes dryers, electric cars, and mass transit buses—pretty much anything that has an electric motor or uses electricity.

He said that the three principles for minimizing exposure are “Distance,” “Newer,” and “Grounding.” According to the law of inverse squares, if you double your distance from a source, the power of the field decreases fourfold. Newer appliances and grounded ones create less of an electromagnetic field.

A hundred years ago, Rudolf Steiner warned that the proliferation of electromagnetic radiation would pose a serious threat to the health of human beings. It is time to heed his warning about potential dangers and to take measures to protect our children and ourselves. ☺



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The Online Waldorf Library

is a website for parents, teachers, and others interested in Waldorf education. Included is a database of books available in English on the Waldorf curriculum, online books, articles and links to numerous national and international resources. The Online Waldorf Library is a project of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education.

www.WaldorfLibrary.org





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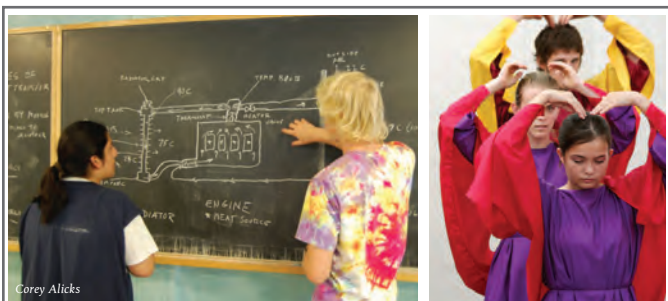
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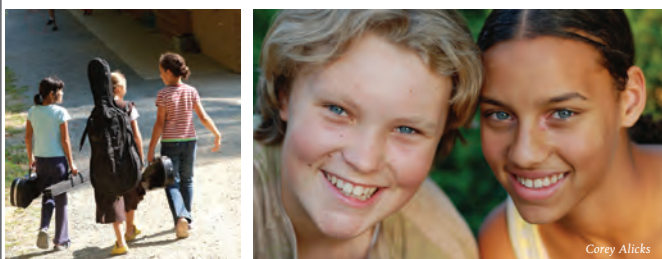
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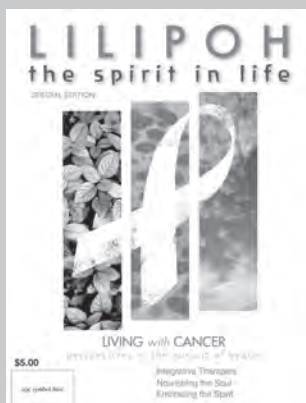
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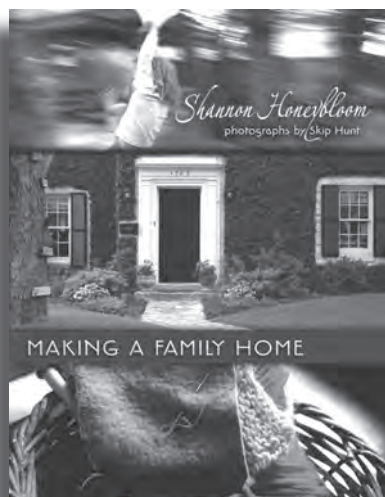
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Shannon Honeybloom was born in Florida, growing up there and in Colorado, Michigan, and New York. She has lived in France, Germany, and South Africa. After receiving a B.A. in Classics from the University of Florida, she was a Peace Corps volunteer in Niger. She has an M.A. in Literary Cultures from New York University and an M.S. in Early Childhood Education from Sunbridge College. She lives in Austin, Texas with her husband and three children. Visit Shannon’s website at shannonhoneybloom.com



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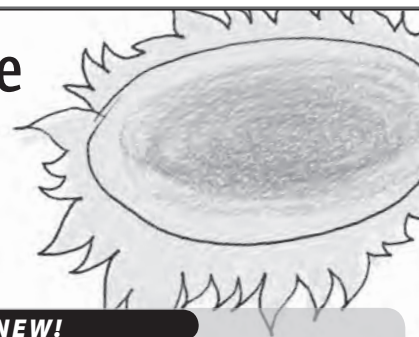
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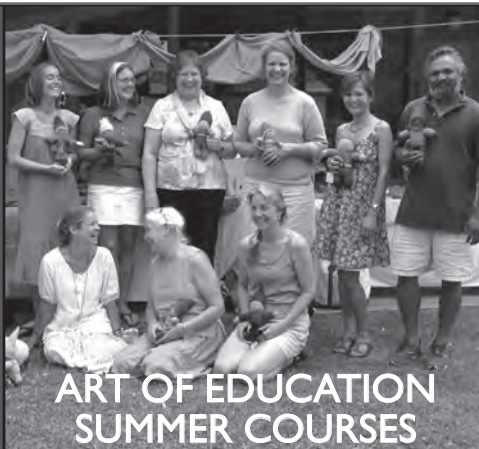
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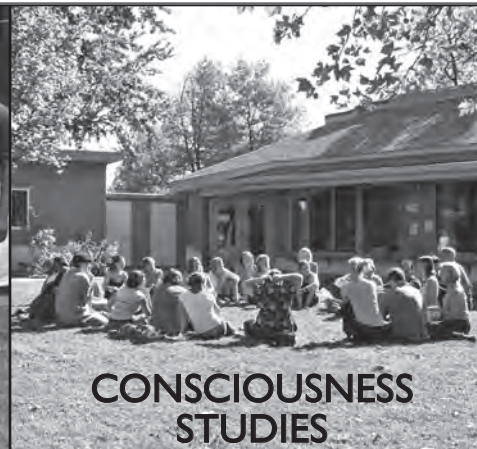
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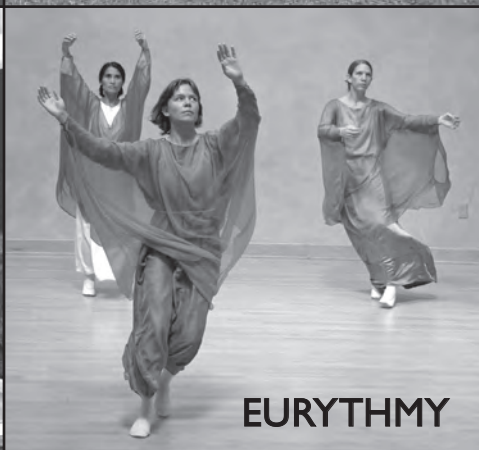
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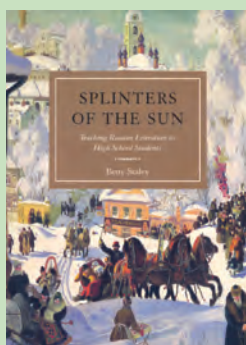


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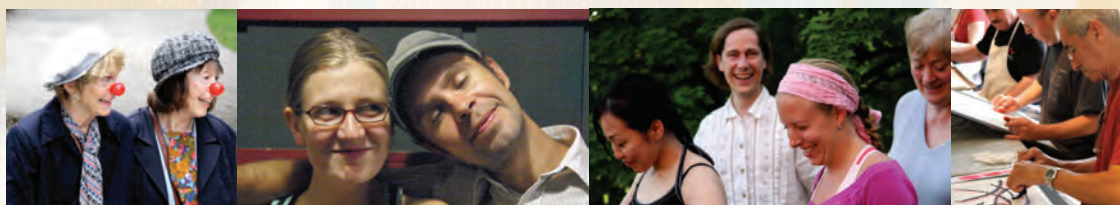
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Wilderness Adventures with heart and meaning.

www.northwaters.com

www.langskib.com

866-458-9974



Northwaters & Langskib Wilderness Programs

Teaching young people how to be with the land, water and sky, how to be with one another, and ultimately, how to be with themselves.

From our two island basecamps in the heart of the Temagami Forest Reserve, we offer separate programs for Girls, Boys and Co-ed youth:

Northwaters & Langskib

3.5 weeks, Boys, Girls & Co-ed, ages 13-17
Paddle North America's most spectacular canoe routes. Connect with the land and one another in a spirit that honors awareness, balance and trust.

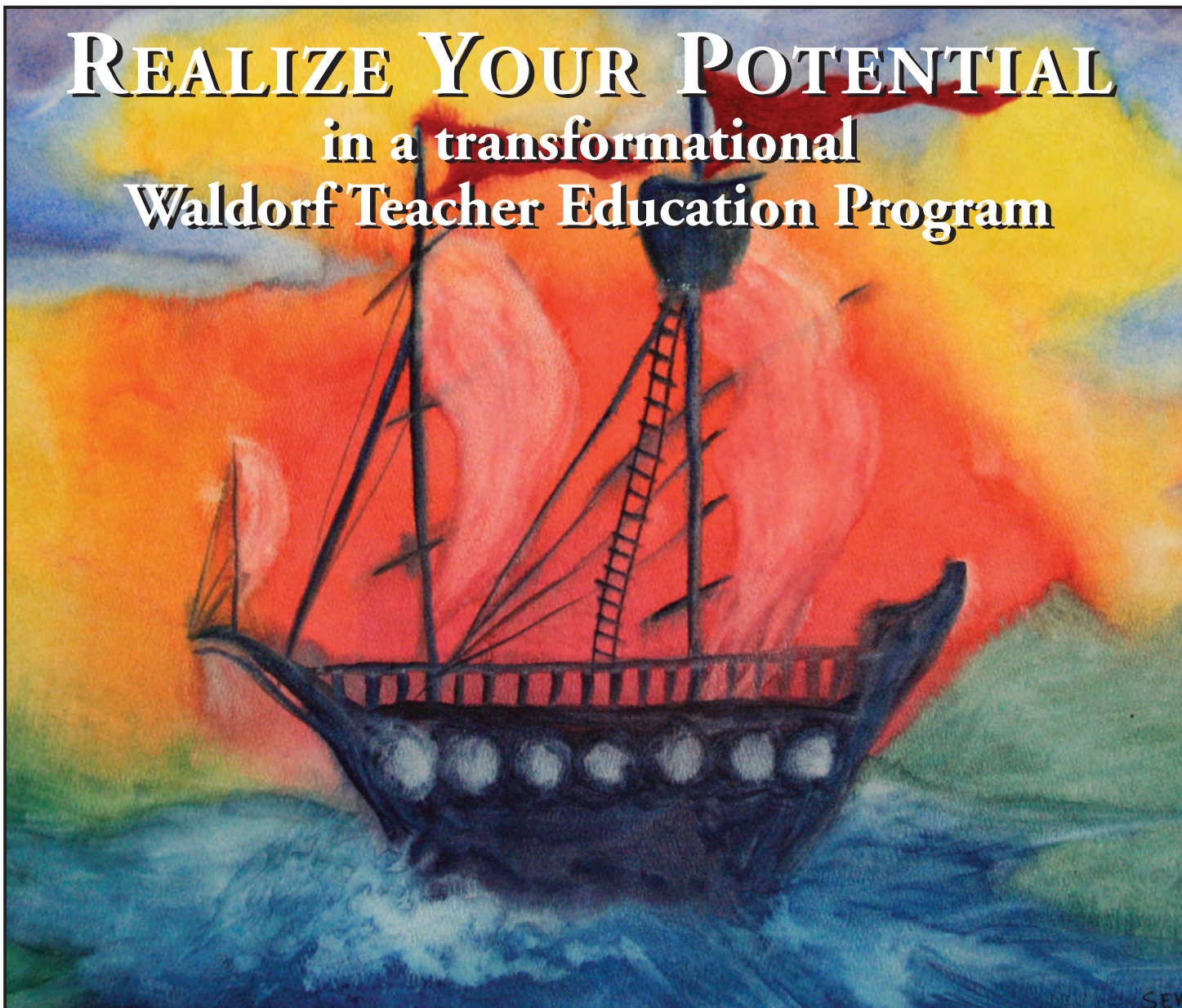
Excalibur

2 weeks, Boys, ages 10-12
A journey of self discovery that combines wilderness canoeing, searching for buried treasure, exciting adventure and mythological stories.

Northern Lights

2 weeks, Girls, ages 11-14
A wilderness adventure that weaves together challenge, creativity and confidence to help your daughter cross the threshold into adolescence and connect with her own true and unique spirit.

REALIZE YOUR POTENTIAL in a transformational Waldorf Teacher Education Program



ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY NEW ENGLAND's fully accredited, on campus and summer sequence master's and certificate programs offer lively courses in the arts, anthroposophy, and a child-centered curriculum. Learn about our new program for experienced Waldorf educators.

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(INCLUDING TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES)

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CALIFORNIA: Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training • Camellia Waldorf School • Cedar Springs Waldorf School • Davis Waldorf School • East Bay Waldorf School • Highland Hall Waldorf School • Live Oak Waldorf School • Marin Waldorf School • Pasadena Waldorf School • Rudolf Steiner College • Sacramento Waldorf School • San Francisco Waldorf School • Sanderling School • Santa Cruz Waldorf School • Sierra Waldorf School • Summerfield Waldorf School & Farm • Valley Waldorf City School of Los Angeles • Waldorf Institute of Southern California • Waldorf School of Mendocino County • Waldorf School of Orange County • Waldorf School of San Diego • Waldorf School of Santa Barbara • Waldorf School of the Peninsula • Westside Waldorf School **COLORADO:** Denver Waldorf School • Shepherd Valley Waldorf School • Shining Mountain Waldorf School • Tara Performing Arts High School • Waldorf School on the Roaring Fork **CONNECTICUT:** Housatonic Valley Waldorf School **FLORIDA:** Sarasota Waldorf School • Suncoast Waldorf School **GEORGIA:** Academe of the Oaks • Waldorf School of Atlanta **HAWAII:** Haleakala Waldorf School • Honolulu Waldorf School • Kula Makua - Adult Waldorf Education • Malamalama Waldorf School **IDAHO:** Sandpoint Waldorf School **ILLINOIS:** Arcturus Rudolf Steiner Education Program • Chicago Waldorf School • Four Winds Waldorf School • Water's Edge Waldorf School **KANSAS:** Prairie Moon Waldorf School **KENTUCKY:** Kentahten Teacher Training • Waldorf School of Louisville **LOUISIANA:** Waldorf School of New Orleans **MAINE:** Ashwood Waldorf School • The Bay School • Merriconeag Waldorf School • Tidewater School **MARYLAND:** Waldorf School of Baltimore • Washington Waldorf School **MASSACHUSETTS:** Cape Ann Waldorf School • Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School • Hartsbrook School • The Waldorf School • Waldorf High School of Massachusetts Bay • Waldorf School of Cape Cod **MICHIGAN:** Detroit Waldorf School • Oakland Steiner School • Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor • Waldorf Institute of Southeastern Michigan **MINNESOTA:** City of Lakes Waldorf School • Minnesota Waldorf School • Spring Hill School **MISSOURI:** Shining Rivers School **MONTANA:** Glacier Waldorf School **NEW HAMPSHIRE:** Center for Anthroposophy • High Mowing School • Monadnock Waldorf School • Pine Hill Waldorf School • White Mountain Waldorf School **NEW JERSEY:** Waldorf School of Princeton **NEW MEXICO:** Santa Fe Waldorf School **NEW YORK:** Alkion Center • Aurora Waldorf School • The Brooklyn School • Green Meadow Waldorf School • Hawthorne Valley School • Ithaca Children's School • Mountain Laurel Waldorf School • Rudolf Steiner School of New York City • Sunbridge College • Waldorf School of Garden City • Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs **NORTH CAROLINA:** Emerson Waldorf School **OHIO:** Cincinnati Waldorf School • Spring Garden Waldorf School **OREGON:** Cedarwood Waldorf School • Corvallis Waldorf School • Eugene Waldorf School • Micha-el Institute • Portland Waldorf School • The Siskiyou School • Waldorf Teacher Education Eugene **PENNSYLVANIA:** Camphill Special School • Kimberton Waldorf School • River Valley Waldorf School • Susquehanna Waldorf School • Waldorf School of Philadelphia • Waldorf School of Pittsburgh **RHODE ISLAND:** Meadowbrook Waldorf School **TENNESSEE:** Linden Waldorf School **TEXAS:** Austin Waldorf School **VERMONT:** Lake Champlain Waldorf School • Orchard Valley Waldorf School • Upper Valley Waldorf School • Wellspring School **VIRGINIA:** Charlottesville Waldorf School • Potomac Crescent Waldorf School • Richmond Waldorf School **WASHINGTON:** Bright Water School • Madrona School • Olympia Waldorf School • Seattle Waldorf School • Sound Circle Center • Sunfield Waldorf School & Biodynamic Farm • Tacoma Waldorf School • Three Cedars Waldorf School • Whatcom Hills Waldorf School • Whidbey Island Waldorf School **WISCONSIN:** Great Lakes Teacher Training Program • The Madison School • Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School • Prairie Hill Waldorf School • Tamarack Waldorf School • Three Rivers Waldorf School • Youth Initiative High School

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MÉXICO

AGUASCALIENTES: Colegio Waldorf Amanecer **GUANAJUATO:** Colegio Los Charcos • Colegio Yecan Waldorf **JALISCO:** Colegio Waldorf de Guadalajara **MORELOS:** Centro Antroposófico de México • Escuela Waldorf de Cuernavaca **QUINTANA ROO:** Ak Lu'um International School **STATE OF MÉXICO:** Escuela Waldorf Los Caracoles **TLAXCALA:** Centro Educativo Waldorf Tlaxcala

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