



The Seven Cosmic Artists

An Artistic View of Child Development

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What power expresses itself through imagination? To understand this, let us look at childhood. . . . Free, creative imagination does not yet live and manifest in the child. . . . [I]magination lies hidden in the child; he is actually full of it. . . . In the shaping of his own organism the child is inwardly the most significant sculptor. . . . The child is also a musical artist, for he tunes his nerve strands in a distinctly musical fashion. To repeat: Power of imagination is power to grow and harmonize the organism.¹

— Rudolf Steiner

Waldorf education, education that follows the understanding of Rudolf Steiner, has its origin in a particular view of a human being as a being of body, soul, and spirit. In many of his lectures to teachers, or prospective teachers, in Waldorf schools, Steiner emphasized that we cannot understand Waldorf education unless we look at the human being from the viewpoint of spiritual science. We need to look at human beings as living before birth in spiritual worlds, and as having lived previously a life on earth incarnated in a human body of flesh and blood. Moreover, after death, human beings will again sojourn in realms of spirit, and work on their future lives and future tasks. They will do this both with the human souls with whom they share a destiny and with angelic beings, beings who are more highly developed than are human beings at this particular stage of earth evolution.

These views lead to a view of child development that is different from a traditional one. Processes that we may observe in early childhood, elementary school years, adolescence, and early adulthood gain a changed emphasis. Encouraged by several of Steiner's remarks, I would like to pro-

pose one particular way of considering the process of development.

In a lecture of December 29, 1914,² Steiner brings the arts into relationship with each part or body of the essential human being, including those parts or bodies that are already developed and those that are in preparation for future development:

Art	Respective Human Body
Architecture	Physical Body
Sculpture	Life Body (Ether Body)
Painting	Consciousness or Movement Body (Astral Body)
Music	Ego (Eternal Self)
Poetry	Spirit Self (Not fully developed)
Eurythmy	Life Spirit (Not fully developed)
The 7th Art	Spirit Human (Not fully developed)

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Steiner also discusses, in this lecture, how one part of the human essence, for instance the ether body or life body, works down into the more perfected part, in this case the physical body, and that a mode of the respective art is used in that interaction. For example, the life body works into the physical body using sculptural principles. Life principles of the ether body transform the art of sculpture into the physical body of a living entity. The physical body itself,

through architecture, uses the materials and structural laws—such as gravity—of the external, physical, natural world. When we look at the higher constituent parts of human beings, however, much development lies far in the future. Steiner declares at the end of this lecture that, in the future, yet other arts, at present not yet imaginable, will come into being.

The above schema provides signposts for understanding children's development. I will elaborate on how this is so in the following pages.³

Developmental Periods

Steiner frequently mentions developmental periods of about seven years in length, but he also mentions divisions of each of these seven year periods into thirds of roughly two-and-a-third years each.⁴ I propose that in the middle period of each of these seven year cycle there is an event of great importance, one that manifests in the possibility of acquiring new faculties.⁵ The middle period of each seven year cycle invites a Cosmic Artist to begin working toward the incarnation of a child into her or his body. Each such event marks the gentle beginning of an essential aspect of human development. These new faculties in human life inspire artists and, when seen in the light of child development, they hint also at the broadening and deepening of human capacities and perception in general. During these middle periods, as well as at the beginning of each seven year cycle, a new feeling quality, a balancing quality—essentially an artistic quality—arises.

Cosmic artistic forces that accord with the art and artistic quality at work become effective every three-and-one-half years, and last in initial impact for seven years. These cosmic artistic impulses continue on in life, of course, and, in some cases, also manifest in a simple form earlier than we might predict. They set faculties in motion, initiated at certain points of a child's or adolescent's life, and impart specific capacities. Once born, these are now up to the individual to foster and develop.

1. The Cosmic Being of Architecture: Cosmic Morphology

From whence does the newborn child receive its human form? From whence come imperfections

and gifts?⁶ Whence comes the matter that builds up a human body? An individual prepares his or her particular form—not without help from the spiritual world—before birth. As Steiner indicates:

Here on earth we carry a body made of bones, muscles, arteries and so forth. Then, after death, we acquire a spiritual body, formed out of our moral qualities. . . . For what lies inside of man is the whole spiritual cosmos in condensed form. In man's inner organism we have an image of the entire cosmos. . . . The human being, who has undergone after death all the states described by me previously, now becomes manifest to the vision of Man himself. The human being is a spirit among spirits. Yet, what he sees now as his world is the marvel of the human organism itself in the form of the universe, the whole cosmos. Just as, on earth, we build machines, keep books, sew clothes, make shoes or write books, thus weaving together what is called the content of civilization, of culture, so above, together with the spirits of the higher Hierarchies and incorporeal human beings, we weave the woof and weft of

mankind. We weave mankind out of the cosmos. Here on earth we appear as finished products. There we lay down the spiritual germ of earthly man.⁷

Steiner's views, considered impartially, can help our understanding of a child's first moments, weeks, and months after birth. From the moment of birth, many influences bear on us, including influences from our physical and psychological environments. A child's own forces, however, hidden deeply within her or his being, take hold of the body and form it to its purpose.

Spiritual forces shape our physical being. The Cosmic Being of Architecture helps human beings to shape the houses within which they will lead their lives. Just as a house or a place of business or worship has particular structures—such as windows, doors, plumbing—our body, as the temple of our soul, also has particular features.⁸

For this reason I regard the cosmic forces that underlie architecture as the first formative forces for human beings. I deliberately use the word cosmic because these forces are active prior to birth. Architecture makes use of physical building materials, but architecture also requires detailed plans in order for builders to construct a building. The work that human souls undergo and in which they participate in spiritual worlds between earth lives may be seen as the making of architectural plans. We find elements of the physical world in the human body, but they are placed organically, marvelously, according to a plan. In the words of Rudolf Steiner:

Hence the body, the envelope of the soul, which clothes the ego, which is inhabited by the ego, is described as the temple of the ego within, the temple of the divinity dwelling in man, the temple of God. When, therefore, you form this body, you are building a future temple, that is to say, the new incarnation of the Earth.⁹

2. Perfecting the Human Body: The Cosmic Sculptor

Children don't merely grow, they also perfect the forms of their bodies. These forms become ever more capable of fulfilling human capacities, such as upright, balanced posture; speech; and personal memory and thinking. Steiner says:

. . . [A] supersensible contemplation of man will reveal to us, apart from his physical body, another finer body which we have called the ether body or the body of formative forces. From this ether body spring not only all the forces sustaining nourishment and growth, but it is also the source of the faculties of remembering and of making mental images, of ideation. It becomes an independent entity only during the change of teeth, at which time it is born in a similar way in which, at physical birth, the body is born from its mother. This means that up to the change of teeth the forces of the ether body are entirely working in the processes of the child's organic

growth, whereas after that time – though still remaining active in this realm to a great extent – they partly withdraw from these activities. . . . If we observe the gradual withdrawal of some of these ether forces until approximately the seventh year, we can see how in the first two-and-a-half years after physical birth the ether body frees itself from the head region, how in the following two-and-a-half years it frees itself from the chest region and finally, up to the change of teeth, from the child's metabolic and limb system.¹⁰

What might Steiner mean when speaking about an ether body that “frees itself from the head region, . . . from the chest region and finally, . . . from the child's metabolic and limb system”? Once a region is free, then that region's inherent forces and capacities come into play in a different form from that in which they existed previously. Although the sequence mentioned here occurs from the head down, that is not always the case.

In the case of the ether body of formative forces—the domain of the Cosmic Artist of Sculpture—the fact that it finishes first with the head region means that some of the finer formations of the brain, of the larynx, and of some of the sense organs are sculpted and near completion according to the requirements for this particular life, this particular individual.¹¹ A bit later, between two-and-a-half and five years of age, during the time when the ether body is working on the heart, lungs, and rhythmic system, the child opens itself to the next Cosmic Artist. Finally, during the last two-and-a-half years of its primary sculpting activity, the ether body finishes details of the limbs and the metabolic or digestive organs.

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ensure that all organs work the way they need to work to provide for the physical health of the incarnating human being. Anyone who observes carefully the growth of physical capacities, and also the concomitant awakening of mental capacities, will recognize, by direct observation, this fine-tuning activity of the ether body. Once the

ether body has finished its tasks in the head region of the infant, then mental capacities of language and, particularly, memory become possible.

Once the fine-tuning activity of the middle region of heart and lungs is accomplished, the possibilities for more detailed memory pictures arise; more on this to follow. And once the fine-tuning activity has been completed for the rest of the body, physical capacities of movement, endurance, and strength are enhanced. When the ether body has touched on all internal organs, checking their function and their life-sustaining capacities, after the approximate age of seven, certain childhood illnesses may arise. Steiner discusses these childhood illnesses as crucial experiences for the awakening personality, in that, through these childhood diseases, hereditary traits may be discarded. The child begins to come into its own, assuming its own body as a tool of its own individuality. Vaccination and other medical intervention to prevent these childhood diseases, then, may be seen as preventing the development of strong personalities.

The ether body, touching all parts of the physical body in sequence, enables a child to become a perfect imitator. (Steiner speaks on one occasion of the achievements of the first three years, of the first deeds of physical existence—uprightness, language, and thinking—as given to human beings through the Christ.¹²) As adults, when we sculpt, we use the qualities of the ether body, its inherent imitative capacity, to bring our ideas to life. From classical sculpture up through recent times, the human body was the main object of the sculptor. When, in the course of the twentieth century, sculptors began to make abstract sculptures, many individuals found these peculiar and inexpressive. We appreciate sculptures based on the human body because our ether body is an imitator, and we recognize universal human forms. Because of this imitative capacity, adults who work with, or spend time around, small children must act and speak morally:

Therefore education during these first two-and-a-half years should be confined to the self-

education of the adult in charge who should think, feel and act in a manner which, when perceived by the child, will cause it no harm.¹³

The apocryphal gospels mention an incident in which the Jesus child makes twelve sparrows of clay on the Sabbath, makes them live and fly forth. Such a story relates sculptural activity to life, to the ether body.

3. Picturing Capacities: The Cosmic Painter

Around the age of three young children develop the capacity to picture inwardly what they experience and observe in their surroundings. This capacity, as is appropriate for the age, relies to a large extent on imitation. When small children play, they often imitate, or mimic, the adult world.

Three- and four-year-olds who are having a tea party in the sandpit; imitating bus drivers or daddy driving the car; imitating the dog chasing a squirrel; imitating mother cooking; imitating father painting the house. This imitation takes place when a child imitates, repetitively, movements and words that adults use in performing their actions. These motions and words are usually fairly exact copies of the adults' words and actions. Sometimes, these are quite amusing, but often they are irritating to adults, who do not

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understand the need of these young children to instill what they observe into their own memories, and so strive, through their repetitive actions and words, to engrave visual and verbal memories ever more deeply. In imitating, young children are practicing memory. When young children imitate their

elders, they carry memory pictures away from the location of the actual occurrence, transplant the imaginary event to another location, and then continue to re-live, re-experience, re-construct, and thus re-member the event. They place themselves in the center of this living memory picture. In other words, they are able to have an inner picture, one that they carry with them.

This new capacity to picture the world around them may be attributed to the inspiration

of the Cosmic Painter. His gift enables children from the age of three or so on to picture, in their minds and their souls, either a physical event or object, or an imagined event or object. Dreams reveal a similar process—an often jumbled concoction of real events or objects thrown together with imagined events or objects. Small children often have vivid recurring dreams or nightmares at this age.

According to Steiner's description of the arts, the astral body—the movement and consciousness organization of the human being, an entirely non-physical part of the human makeup¹⁴—works into the life organization to express itself in the art of painting. A picture is not a reality. Artists, at least the great artists of the past, designed their paintings in accordance with the artistic traditions of their age in order to bring a particular content to the viewer. This content is an intention, living in the astral organization, that imprints itself into the life organization.

This life organization of the human being, like all living entities in nature, obeys laws in its functioning, experiencing rhythms in time and in space. The life organization is also related to the liquid element, to water. Consciousness working into a plane of liquid—that is the painter's art.¹⁵

The capacity to have visual memories enables a child, at a later stage of development, to pull or form precise memories from a flexible, one might say, fluid, pool of memory.¹⁶ Young human beings begin to paint, as it were, into their fluid organization their memory pictures of observed events. Human understanding is intimately bound up with this memory pool. Throughout life, we rely on accurate memory capacities. We cannot learn to read, write, or do arithmetic without an accurate memory pool. The best preparation, then, for later academic learning is to develop visual and aural memory through the natural tendency of children to imitate their environment. The environment, however, must be worthy of imitation. An environment immoral in action and attitude defiles the essence of humanity; small children are forced to imitate what will hinder their development as worthy members of humankind.

All learning from school age on needs this picture-forming capacity. Without it, the imagination of a child will not become active; with it, truly remarkable creations of imagination may take place.

4. Rhythm, Number, Voice, and Harmony: The Cosmic Musician

Steiner repeatedly discusses music in his pedagogical lectures. According to Steiner, the human astral body—the consciousness and movement organization of the human being—is built up primarily by musical elements, beginning in a child's seventh year:

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. . . [C]ertain of these forces begin to work more in the child's soul and spiritual realm, affecting especially the rhythmical movement of heart and lungs. . . . It [the child] has a real longing for this interplay of rhythm and beat in its own organism.

Consequently the adult must realize that whatever he or she brings to the child after the change of teeth, has to be given with an inherent quality of rhythm and beat. . . . If, at this stage, the rhythm of breathing and blood circulation is not treated in the right way, the resulting harm may extend irreparably into later life. . . . At this stage the child's muscles vibrate in sympathy with the rhythms of breathing and blood circulation, so that the entire being of the child takes on a musical character. . . . [N]ow the inner musician begins to work, albeit beyond the child's consciousness.¹⁷

Music demonstrates a threefold division—rhythm and measure; harmony; and melody. The Cosmic Sculptor works down from the head, through the rhythmic system, and into the metabolism and limbs. The Cosmic Musician, by contrast, whose function is to establish the nervous system as servant of the human mind, as servant of an individual's will, feeling, and thinking, works from the limbs and metabolism upward toward the head. As teachers, we are faced with the necessity to aid the development or perfection of the nerves of the limbs of a child from approximately seven to nine years of age. The first com-

ponent of music, rhythm and measure, is of vital importance beginning roughly at age seven. Teaching must engage students appropriately with rhythm and measure, which are best experienced through movement of the limbs. Fundamental facts of math, for example, may be memorized effectively via rhythmic movements. Every subject taught during the first years of elementary school needs to be taught, not in an abstract vacuum, but through engaging movement.

On a personal note: In 1975 I had the privilege as part of a year-long sabbatical from Michael Mount Waldorf School in Johannesburg, South Africa, to travel to many schools in Europe. In many locations I saw students even in Waldorf schools seated during main lessons, not moving, listening to the instructions of their teachers, but not experiencing the content of the lessons through their own movements. At that point I resolved to become a missionary of movement.

I further based this on the following teaching experience: Inspired by Max Stibbe, a Waldorf school pioneer in South Africa, I had begun to teach primary subjects first of all through movement; I followed this with artistic and feeling-emotional expansion, and, finally, toward the end of the subject block, by stimulating intellectual conclusions. I had practiced this for the elementary grades, although in the higher grades the movement portion became shorter. I intended to prove to myself that an initial experience of movement would form the basis for awakening the intellect, as Steiner describes.¹⁸ I concluded that, indeed, when introducing subjects through movement, students are engaged, memory is strengthened, and thinking capacities are aroused.

During the second seven-year stage of development, the soul capacities of will, of feeling, and of thinking develop from their home in the human astral body, making it apparent that music will help us best to guide our students.¹⁹

If people work physically, they move their limbs. That means they swim totally immersed in the spirit. This is not the spirit dammed up in that person, it is the spirit outside. . . . Rather, what is important is the extent to which people are purposefully active. Purposefully active—these words must permeate us if we are to teach children.²⁰

Purposeful activity may include not only dance and eurythmy, but also the enactment of a usually abstract subject or process, such as arithmetic. It depends on the ingenuity of the teacher to transform such an abstract subject into a movement experience—so that education is experienced, is enlivened.

Melody is, in its purest form, a single voice. A melody is like a sentence or a statement. Our inherent musical capacity enables us to complete a melody even if we hear only the first two or three bars. In this relation of melody and sentence we see the work of the next Cosmic Artist.

The crisis that children may experience around the age of nine or ten is also a herald of the next Cosmic Artist. This crisis appears in the middle of the second seven-year stage when the melodic element is important. The crisis is due to a newly awakened capacity for critical discernment, and no one, not teacher, parent, classmate, other adult, or the world in general, is exempt from critical appraisal. This critical appraisal, moreover, is directed toward the child itself. The appearance of this capacity for critical appraisal signifies the awakening of self-experience, self-respect, and separation from the world at large. Parents and teachers need to understand this crisis as a vital step toward selfhood. Adult understanding of students in this transformative stage is essential, because students expect adults to understand what they undergo. Because this awakening selfhood announces itself during the melodic stage, we can say that from this age on each individual is singing her or his own song. The full expression and potentiality of the new capacity will reveal itself only when we consider the next Cosmic Artist. Social life becomes more important toward the end of the elementary school years when students' voices begin to change. Students begin to understand consciously working with others and the social context of their actions, feelings, and insights. Context—or harmony—becomes important during this last phase, approximately between twelve and fourteen years of age. This is also the stage at which students begin to gain intellectual understanding, begin to develop the rationality expected of adults.

Musical experience is, among other things, related to what Steiner often describes as the

“outside” spiritual world, the world in which the planets are related in musical ratios, the harmony of the spheres, according to Johannes Kepler. In ancient times, the strings of lyres (I suspect also of other instruments) were tuned in such a way that the bass string was related to the earth element, the next string to the water element, the next string to the air element, and the last string to the fire element—thus linking music directly to the cosmos.²¹ When we use music in our teaching or when we bring musical elements to subject matter in purposeful movement, we relate our students to the world, to the macrocosm, and to the world of the spirit around us.

5. Poetry and the Power of the Word: The Cosmic Poet

A human being is born four times. The first birth, physical birth, is obvious. The birth of the ether body, as Steiner repeatedly asserts, takes place around the change of teeth. The astral body—the movement or consciousness organization—is born at about fourteen years of age, and the ego—the eternal essence of an individual—is born at about twenty-one years of age. The first two births place a human being firmly on and into the physical world of earth, of space, of time, and of nature, but the latter two are purely spiritual. They leave the earthly physical and ether bodies behind during sleep, for example, and experience purely spiritual events while out of the physical body.

At the crisis we are considering, around age nine, human individuality turns or reorients itself. In the first years of life, when physical and ether body become established, a child is oriented toward the past—that is, toward past incarnations as well as toward her or his sojourn in spiritual worlds before birth. Around age nine, a change of direction, a turning toward the future takes place. From about the ninth year on, a child becomes alert to the physical world, enters more deeply than before into sensory experiences, begins to reason, and thus, rejecting or confirming the world around in critical appraisal, begins to assert her- or himself. In other words, the individual now begins to experience her- or himself as the center of the present incarnation. We may picture this turn-around as a yin-yang figure, with the past coming into the center, and the future radiating from it.

This critical turning point sees the influx of the Cosmic Poet, or the Cosmic Word. The power of language, the power of poetry, the power of individual expression now becomes a possibility for the student. Aspects of grammar, of writing, of spelling, of reading may have been learned previously, but the possibility of using language as a tool of individual expression, and thus of becoming creators of a new world, becomes achievable. Not every child is gifted enough to create poetry, to write potent stories of imagined events or retellings, or to write moving letters, but many do. As with the other Cosmic Artists, the Cosmic Poet endows with power the language a child uses. Circumstance determines how this power of language is grasped and utilized for individual expression.

One might also consider that the power of the Cosmic Word is a power expressly manifest in human beings. While scientists may teach apes sign language, and some animals may understand some words (or simply respond to the emotional essence), speech organs are unique to human beings. Language provides the uniquely human ability to create a commonality with other human beings; to understand and to be understood; to be social.

Human beings express their individuality in their particular language, and this gift is with them as they turn to the future, to how they will live this life, how they will bring their spiritual potentiality to physical expression. One example from a Waldorf school curriculum may suffice to illustrate this point: In fourth grade, stories are often taken from Norse mythology. The stories of gods and giants, dwarfs and men are exciting. The story of the Norns who spin the lives of men is relevant here as children confront their own destinies. The Norse myths may be used to teach the correct forms of past, present, and future verbs. They can also yield recitations of alliterative poems, which emphasize repetitive sounds. These alliterative poems give teachers the opportunity to accompany recitation with strong movements. From movement and recitation through grammar to destiny, Norse myths relate mundane and cosmic in developing children.

According to Steiner, whatever relates the human being to her or his higher senses, especially what expresses itself in the higher arts, is connected to the working of the time spirits—they

work into our sense of hearing; while thinking, we are connected to the working of the archangels; when exercising our capacity of memory we are permeated by the world of the angels; and when using our ego, our individuality, we make the fullest use of our physical body. . . . Simply through the human constitution we are in continuous relationship to spiritual worlds.²² It is crucial for human beings to regain the consciousness that spiritual beings give the gifts of memory, intelligence, and sense perception, gifts that allow us to become truly human.

6. Dance and the Power of Building Community: The Cosmic Dancer

The next Cosmic Artist begins working on the adolescent around the age of fourteen. At that time it becomes essential that a person learn to work with others. What better way to learn to adjust to others than to move together in a dance, in eurythmy? The success of a dance or drama depends on split-second timing; its enjoyment depends on a group-awareness; its satisfaction depends on the performers' social awareness. If students work together in practical and artistic endeavors in high school, they will develop a social conscience. The lack of this social conscience, unfortunately, is woefully obvious in today's youth worldwide.

What does the Cosmic Dancer develop? The future quality of what Steiner calls the "life spirit" working into the individual, the "spirit self." At the present stage of human development the life spirit is a distant promise, not yet a fact. It is a promise that the capacities of life sustaining processes may be controlled, ordered, and directed by individuals themselves. The natural rhythms of life that develop when working with others in harmony may eventually transform into a capacity for guiding our own life processes.

It will soon be essential that human beings demonstrate a social conscience. Today we are training for it; today's problems—social, econom-

ic, or political—provide the training ground; today, we are challenged to heed our social conscience. Materialism—and the egotism that results from it—provide challenges to the emergence of a social conscience. Nevertheless, a social conscience is needed, and its development is facilitated by the practice of dance, eurythmy, and drama in the formative years from fourteen to twenty-one.

The human ego, preparing to work into the social fabric from about eighteen years of age, also develops as it works into the astral body in these years. In contrast to the astral body, which takes hold of the physical nerves along the paths of limbs, chest, and, finally, head, the ego begins with the head. Teenagers, through intellectual rationalizations, seem to be able to disprove everything that adults state. The self, as with the ether body, again incarnates from the head downward, so logic lights up first, and with it the endless and provocative ratiocinations of adolescents.

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Then, in the middle years of this period, from about sixteen to eighteen, the battle for emotional equanimity is joined. Now it is crucial that the ship of the self is not wrecked by emotional insecurity, wild desires, or unattainable goals. Gradually, maturity of the feeling life, of the social conscience, has to be established for future well being, for future functioning in the adult world.

At this stage, adolescents are most at risk and are highly influenced by the environment. They fight a battle for balance, which, for many individuals, continues into adult life. They must find the middle ground between fear and rage, between the bestial and the arrogant, for example.

The third phase of adolescence has to do with the application of the human will. Work in the larger community, in whatever form, helps expand the reach of individual will. It is a challenge to carry out what the self desires. Another challenge is to prepare for one's future, to picture oneself in a future profession, to find a star to follow. This phase begins at the end of high school, when adolescents begin seriously to consider their

futures, and when role models become ever more important. High school teachers need to introduce worthy role models to their students as preparation for coming adulthood. In this way, young women and men prepare for the dance of life.

7. Who Are We? The Cosmic Self-Development Artist

During the years of adolescence the eternal self begins to mature in preparation for the earthly self, the ego, which is born at about twenty-one years of age. In the middle years of adolescence fundamental questions arise: Who am I? What am I supposed to do in the world? What is my mission? What is my task? These questions may arise, largely unconsciously, well before the age of twenty-one. Maturity, however, raises a corollary question: How will I go about becoming who I want to be?

The twenties yield the possibility of acquiring knowledge and expertise but do not demonstrate the assurance and certainty shown by more mature persons. This is also the period of life when, traditionally, learning takes place in universities and apprenticeships. While the self has come to a realization of him- or herself as a person active in the world at large, much fine-tuning is required during one's twenties.

From twenty-one to twenty-eight years of age, the eternal self faces the challenge of permeating as fully as possible that part of the human soul which Steiner characterizes as the sentient soul—an extension of the astral body:

The sentient soul not only receives the impressions of the outer world in the form of sensations but also has a life of its own that is fructified both by sensations from one side and by thinking from the other.²³

Now thinking verifies the tasks that the eternal self chooses as its work in the world. Often, but not always, during these years we meet those who become our life teachers or mentors. The future beckons, training ceases, we begin to make our own lives. Our own goals become the star that guides us into the future.

Conclusion

The Cosmic Artists continue their work after our twenties, but now they transform themselves from agents of bodily and soul development to agents of renewal and rejuvenation. We can experience this through the practice of their arts.

In his second lecture to those who would work with severely challenged children, Steiner explained that, through their own efforts, these teachers would be able to effect changes in those children whose fundamental organization is lacking, who are not able to progress in the same way, or with the same speed, as most other human beings. Steiner explains that, in order to further physical bodily development, a teacher's ether body should have a healthful effect. To further the development of a student's ether body, a teacher's astral body should exert itself in self-development. In order to ameliorate what lives in a student's astral body, a teacher's ego must work on itself. And, in order to have an effect on a student's ego, a teacher's spirit self—though not yet fully developed—is called upon. This spirit self often shows itself in all that lives in humanity at large as moral impulses.²⁴

As adults, we may work on our own development and we may learn from each other. Something that is well developed in a friend, acquaintance, or co-worker may influence a part of us. Community develops in this way. And it is in this manner that the arts may have a healing and rejuvenating effect on human beings. The Seven Cosmic Artists, who help all children to develop toward their adult lives in the service of humanity, show us by their unwavering example that as teachers and as parents we help growing children when we strive to develop ourselves, using the gifts of spiritual worlds, to the best of our ability.

Endnotes

1. Steiner, Rudolf. *The Arts and Their Mission*, Lecture 8, Oslo, May 20, 1923, CW 276, Spring Valley, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1964.
2. Steiner, Rudolf. *Art in the Light of Mystery Wisdom*, CW 275, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1970.
3. I have lectured about this particular description of child development, but here these ideas are presented in writing for the first time.
4. Steiner, Rudolf. *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, CW 303, Spring Valley, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1986, particularly chapters 7 and 9.
5. See below regarding artistic impulses related to the heart-lung rhythmic system.
6. We do not denigrate here the importance of genetics. But scientists themselves have doubted that genetics also determines the form, the morphology, of living beings. See, for instance Weihs, Thomas J., *Embryogenesis in Myth and Science*, Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1986.
7. Steiner, Rudolf. *Man's Being, His Destiny and World Evolution*, CW226, Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1952, Lecture of May 17, 1923.
8. Third grade students in Waldorf schools, when learning about houses and buildings, often express their recognition that buildings are like human bodies.
9. Steiner, Rudolf. *The Apocalypse of St. John*, CW 104, Chapter 9, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1977.
10. Steiner, Rudolf. *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, op. cit., Chapter 7.
11. Small children clearly see, hear, and experience their surrounding differently than adults do; for instance, many small children have invisible companions.
12. Steiner, Rudolf. *The Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity*, CW 15, Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1974.
13. Steiner, Rudolf. *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, op. cit., Lecture 7.
14. Steiner, Rudolf. *Theosophy*, CW 9, Anthroposophic Press, 1994, gives a detailed descriptions of the parts of a human being.
15. In the first book of the *Bible*, Genesis, the spirit of God hovers over the waters.
16. Steiner, Rudolf. *The Destinies of Individuals and of Nations*, CW 157, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1986, lecture of March 16, 1915.
17. Steiner, Rudolf. *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education*, op. cit., Lecture 9.
18. Steiner, Rudolf. *Foundations of Human Experience*, Hudson, NY: Anthroposophic Press, 1996, Lecture 11.
19. I have described these techniques in some of my other books, *The Temperaments and the Arts* and *Awakening Intelligence*, both published by AWSNA.
20. Steiner, Rudolf. *Foundations of Human Experience*, op. cit., Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, Lecture 13.
21. Paraphrased from Rudolf Steiner's *Occult Signs and Symbols*, CW 101, Lecture of December 28, 1907.
22. Paraphrased from Rudolf Steiner's *Spiritual and Social Transformations in the Course of the Development of Humanity*, CW 196, lecture of February 13, 1920.
23. See Rudolf Steiner's *Theosophy*, CW 9, Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press, 1994, Chapter 1.
24. See Rudolf Steiner's *Education for Special Needs*, CW 317, London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1998, Lecture 2.

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