Collegial Collaboration
Becoming Receptive to an Emerging Future

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Of the many aspects of "The Foundations of Human Experience" ("The Study of Man") that energize and engage Waldorf educators in the United States,[1] I would like to focus on one in this essay. I do this in part because it reveals an aspect of "the American soul" that is largely hidden behind the image that appears of the U.S. in the world press, but more importantly, because it relates to something in the "American way of life," which is of particular importance in the context of collegial working in Waldorf schools. The latter represents the potential for a higher level of collaboration than has yet to be fully realized in many of our schools.

In his opening address to the "The Foundations of Human Experience" (Aug. 20, 1919), Rudolf Steiner speaks of the Waldorf school as a cultural deed that must be organized collegially without external supervision through a school board (or executive) from above. The next morning, he spoke to the teachers of a higher form of community, the "College Imagination,"[2] where the impulses living in each individual are carried from one to the other, enhancing these and creating a vessel open to the spirit of our time, one that can enable the community of teachers to recognize and meet the educational tasks called for in the current historical epoch.[3]

In this short essay, I will explore a few indicators of the pertinence these opening words have for Waldorf schools in America. In the United States of today, one is faced with an increasingly divisive and morally vacuous political atmosphere, one that is strongly influenced by the interests of immensely powerful corporations and a thin layer of very rich individuals ("the 1%"). Starting in the late 1970s, a growing cynicism and distrust toward many of the basic institutions within the United States—government, corporations, big banks, media, police, etc.—has made itself evident. There is a widespread sense that the system as a whole no longer functions in the way it was intended to. Whether liberal or conservative, a sense of mistrust and dissatisfaction is pervasive. The man elected president in 2016 (and who shall remain unnamed) is not the cause of this dissatisfaction, but is, in many ways, emblematic of things that have gone awry in the past half-century.[4,5]

Although America is a land of great contrasts and conflicting tendencies, if one looks behind the very visible worlds of Coca Cola, Disneyland, McDonald's, and Hollywood, beyond the issues of racism and extreme poverty, of gun control and senseless violence… it is possible to discover the seeds of "a higher self," the presence of qualities that resonate strongly with the task of Waldorf education as described in "The Foundations of Human Experience." Goethe, as he often has, had put it best:

> Two souls reside, alas, within my breast,
> And each one from the other would be parted.
> The one holds fast, in sturdy lust for love,
> With clutching organs clinging to the world;
> The other strongly rises from the gloom
> To lofty fields of ancient heritage.[6]

It is to this second soul that we turn when looking for the American affinity for collegial working in anthroposophy and Waldorf education. Indeed, if one looks more deeply to the historical origins of the United States of America, one finds impulses of a very different nature than those that appear on the surface of today's society.

Legacy: The Magic of True Listening

To understand the potential kinship Americans have to Rudolf Steiner's idea of collegial leadership, it helps to look back at the human interactions that allowed for the *uniting* of the states of America in the 18th century. After the Revolutionary War (1775-83) that had freed the American colonies from the influence of the British crown, there was anything but unity in the land. As free and independent colonies, there was no structural relationship strong enough to bind them together beyond ties of immediate expediency. That they

1 In this article, the terms "United States," "U.S." and "America" will be used interchangeably, as is ordinarily done in the English language.

2 In America, the Imagination that Rudolf Steiner presented on the morning of August 21, in which he describes the possibility of our collaboration with the 3rd Hierarchy, is referred to as "the College Imagination."

3 These opening words of *The Study of Man* have been the subject of considerable reflection in Waldorf circles in the US. An excellent expression of this is the recent book published by the Pedagogical Section Council of North America: R. Trostli, ed., *Creating a Circle of Collaborative Spiritual Leadership* (Chatham, 2014).

4 Cf. Robert Reich, *The Common Good* (New York, 2018), pp. 4-5.

5 Although he may, in the end, serve as a much-needed wakeup call for hitherto lethargic reform movements!

6 Goethe: *Faust I, Scene 2,* lines 1112-1117.

even came together to re-examine their relationships is quite amazing in light of the tremendous differences to be bridged: between large states and small states, between supporters of a strong central government and federalists, between the very different economic interests of the northern and the southern states, between advocates of slavery and abolitionists, and so on.[7] During the Constitutional Convention, these and countless other issues were considered through long, arduous hours of discussion. Meeting daily over several months in the extreme heat and humidity of midsummer Philadelphia,[8] the danger of dissolution was great—which would have led to the breaking apart of the colonies, or at best, a weak set of ineffectual agreements.[9]

What, then, were the forces that enabled these colonies to unite in a way that transcended mere military, political, economic, and religious interests in order to form a union so strong that it has survived over centuries that have seen the demise of countless other governments? How was the creation of the colonies-unifying Constitution of the United States of America possible?[10]

During the four months of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, issues were discussed for days and weeks with the goal of reaching unanimity. At a certain point, groups were then mandated to draft plans and propositions. These were then opened up again for reconsideration. Delegates were encouraged to express their sentiments openly. Opposition was not considered a hindrance, but willingly received and considered. In this way, those who harbored reservations were not excluded from further developments and felt that their contributions would be welcomed as the process extended into the future.[11]

Jacob Needleman, widely acclaimed author and Professor of Philosophy at San Francisco State University, describes the true magic of this process as follows:

> What enabled the Constitution as we know it to come into existence? Is not the answer to this question to be found in the nearly superhuman struggle of individuals to listen to each other? If we are to discern a spiritual resonance in the founding of America, will it not be seen mainly in the effort of individuals to open their minds to each other when almost everything is pulling them into isolation? … This group was not a collection of spiritual aspirants. Nevertheless, we can take this "miracle" of the formation of the Constitution as a great external sign of a process that can take place when individuals come together to seek understanding and right action […]. There must lie within the process of its formation lessons that we shall need to learn as the modern era spills into the new millennium. *The art of the future is the group.* The intelligence and benevolence we need can only come from the group, from associations of men and women seeking to struggle against the impulses of illusion, egoism and fear…[.][12]

This kind of process took place during that blistering Philadelphia summer—the process of a group of ordinary human beings *listening* to each other, not as people usually listen, but as people *can* listen: from a source deeper in themselves which opens them not only to the thoughts and views of their neighbor, but to something wiser and finer in themselves and, perhaps, in the universe itself. The Constitutional Convention is our specifically American symbol of the *art and power of the community.* It is the community which can bring what no individual can bring, what every individual desires, and what, today, we all despair of finding: moral vision and moral power.[13,14]

7 It was the issue of slavery, in particular, that was not resolved and would come back to haunt the new nation in the future.

8 The convention met from May 27 to September 17, 1887.

9 Luigi Morelli, *Legends and Stories for a Compassionate America* (Bloomington, 2014), p. 52; Luigi Morelli, *Visions for a Compassionate America (Bloomington 2015),* pp. 44-45; Jacob Needleman, *The American Soul* (New York, 2003), pp. 62, 65.

10 Needleman, *The American Soul, p. 65.*

11 Morelli, *Legends and Stories for a Compassionate America, pp. 53-4.*

12 Needleman, *The American Soul,* p. 66.

13 *Ibid.* p. 70.

14 It would also be possible to look even further back in "American history," to a time long before the arrival of the Europeans, in search of roots for the potential to develop community that lives in North America. One thinks, in particular, of the laws and customs of the Native American Iroquois League that represented a radical departure from the idea of monarchy existing at the time of its formation in the year 1451. This confederacy of five northeast Native American nations is considered to have had a significant influence on the forming of the American Constitution. Benjamin Franklin, for example, was very familiar with the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) traditions. As Needleman (p. 196) describes, in the view of these peoples, to live at peace within a country or between nations requires an "intelligence of the heart." This, in turn, requires an effort of individuals working together, who are able to respect each other's fragment of truth "until an objective, all-inclusive truth descends into the community from above—from the 'Great Spirit'." It is also known, for example, that the custom of "sleeping on an issue" comes directly from the Iroquois Grand Council, which made no important decisions on the same day in which a proposal was brought to discussion. To "bury the hatchet" after a conflict is also a common American expression that originates from the founding of the Iroquois Confederation, when the member nations stood before a great pit under the "Great Tree of Peace" and cast their weapons of war into it. See Bruce Johansen, *The Iroquois* (New York, 2010); Jacob Needleman, *The American Soul;* Luigi Morelli, *Hidden America (*Victoria, Canada, 2002).

Freed From the Fetters of Tradition

If we look at the continuing development of that young nation, we find countless souls streaming to America in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.[15] Writer Dorothy Thompson gives us this description of what a typical American might look like: "An American is a fellow whose grandfather was a German 'forty-eighter,' who settled in Wisconsin and married a Swede, whose mother's father married an Englishwoman, whose son met a girl at college, whose mother was an Australian and whose father was a Hungarian Jew, and their son in the 20th century right now is six feet tall, goes to a state college, plays football, can't speak a word of any known language except American and is doubtful whether he ever had a grandfather."[16] Such a heterogeneous mix led to an openness toward many different ways of life. There was no "one right way" to do many things in such a cultural mosaic.

We find a tremendous force of will at work in this new land: the will to religious freedom, to economic independence, to exploration of the unknown—all of this freed from the fetters of tradition. Informing these years that "birthed a new nation" was the kind of optimistic attitude that is normally found only in young people. "Anything is possible if you put your heart into it" is an expression many Americans grow up with.[17] Pragmatic experimentation and improvisation were frequently the way to success in the new world. This is evident even today in the uncomplicated openness often viewed as typical of the "American personality."

The Dutch psychiatrist and anthroposophist, F.W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, observed the following after several extensive journeys across America: "Every visitor to the United States is immediately struck by the warm, friendly humor which, at least on the surface, prevails everywhere … One quickly notices, however, that … the many friendly words do not possess the same depth of meaning to which the European is accustomed. They are sooner to be regarded as an expression of the cheerful, optimistic and, above all, magnanimous way of life … In travelling throughout the country as a lecturer, one experiences this magnanimity of spirit to a very high degree in one's audiences. There is no European country in which I have found such a warm attitude and accommodating spirit as in America, whether it be by students, intellectuals or artists."[18]

I had a very similar experience upon returning to the United States after living in Europe for seventeen years. This generally positive picture of the "American soul" is not the whole story, of course.[19] But such predispositions, even when taken as broad generalizations, are of significance when it comes to working together collegially in a Waldorf school.

Following on America's first century of "rugged individualism" came the gradual development of modern capitalism. By the early 20th century many small enterprises had been consolidated into large national corporations where the dominant form of organization became the so-called administrative pyramid—a clearly organized form of top-down management.[20] Mergers then led to a small number of dominant firms in many industries, to conglomerates and to multinational corporations. The "art and power of community" was largely forgotten in this world of intensely competitive capitalism.

Forgotten, but not completely gone! In the concluding decades of the 20th century, corporate ways of managing and governing America's organizations began to break down. The unprecedented challenges facing dominant organizations like General Motors and IBM revealed that their governance forms were not well suited to the increasingly turbulent, "permanent whitewater" of the rising 21st century.[21]

"Dia-logos" and "Metanoia"

Whereas the growth of corporate America was built around strong, decisive managers, who were "in control" of their areas of responsibility, management experts now began to emphasize the importance of collaboration within organizations. One key player in bringing about this significant new perspective was Peter Senge at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Organizational Learning Center. As Senge and others observed, traditional ways of managing and governing organizations in the U.S. were breaking down. This led to a new openness for research into the value

15 The United States had a population of 3 million in 1782, grew to 6 million by 1804, reached 12 million by 1828, and 50 million by 1880. In the mid-20th century, the U.S. population was 150 million. http://npg.org/facts/us_historical_pops.htm.

16 Cited in F.W. Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *America and Americanism* (Spring Valley, 1986), p. 8.

17 Unmentioned in this description is the ancient spirituality and interwovenness with nature that lived in the Native Americans who had populated the continent for centuries before the colonies formed. Also unmentioned is the enslavement of countless African Americans until mid-19th century and their continued struggle for equality.

18 Zeylmans van Emmichoven, *America and Americanism,* pp. 25-6.

19 Many less positive aspects could be added, such as the strong emphasis on "self-interest" in the economic realm, where the ideal of "fraternity," as found in Steiner's idea of the threefold social organism, lies far beyond the horizon of most Americans.

20 Richard Edwards, Michael Reich et al, *The Capitalist System* (Englewood Cliffs, 1978), pp. 120-125.

21 Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York, 1995), p. xii.

of collaborative learning. The pivotal insight that Senge and colleagues reached centered on the significance of dialogue—in contrast to conventional leader-led discussion and analysis-based planning. Senge used the term dialogue in reference to its Greek roots "dia-logos," which brings to expression the free flow of meaning through a group. This involves the capacity to suspend assumptions within the group and to begin "thinking together," which can lead to insights not attainable by individuals on their own. At MIT they referred to processes taking place in this way as "Metanoia" (Greek: meta–above, beyond; nous–mind), as a fundamental "shift of mind." This shift refers to a form of learning that is open to a deeper level of meaning than is found in conventional decision-making.[22] Very significant in the further evolution of this approach was the decision of Claus Otto Scharmer to leave Germany's Witten/Herdecke University and move to America to join the team at MIT. What enticed Scharmer to America and MIT was the *action research orientation* of Senge and others at MIT.[23]

In his books *Theory U* and *Leading from the Emerging Future* (co-authored with Katrin Kaufer—also from Witten/Herdecke),[24] Scharmer points to another level of leadership that involves "learning from the future as it emerges," which Scharmer also termed "presencing." As a student of Rudolf Steiner's work (and also a Waldorf school graduate, whose parents were biodynamic farmers), Scharmer was able to formulate and develop in manifold ways what could be called an exoteric version of the theme with which Rudolf Steiner opens the *Study of Man.* Rudolf Steiner tells the teachers-to-be in his opening address that they must learn to lead and develop the Waldorf school through an openness to the impulses that stream to us from the spirit of our time, impulses that seek to emerge in a culture deeply entangled in impulses stemming from the past. What Senge, Scharmer, Kaufer, and others describe as "true dialogue," "metanoia," and "presencing" are modes of collegial working that speak, I think, to a nascent potential in the American soul that seeks—to use again the words of Goethe—"to strongly rise from the gloom" of conventional education and open itself to the spirit of an emerging future.

Many other American researchers have since shed light on the significance of collaboration for modern organizations.[25] MIT's Michael Schrage, for example, sees collaboration as "shared creation," where individuals with complementary capacities reach a common understanding that none could have reached by themselves. The mix of questions, insights, comments and ideas are the critical components that lead to new insights. The necessary basis for this is mutual respect, tolerance and trust that each participant has something to contribute in the right context, which allows for successful collaborators to look beyond the oddities and irritating quirks of their colleagues. The focus is on each other's strengths. To be successful, multiple perspectives are needed—a repertoire of different "languages."[26]

Jamming

In my experience, such ways of working are well-suited to the kind of openness in Americans that Zeylmans van Emmichhoven observed. One manifestation of this can be seen in the dynamic of a particularly American genre of music: jazz. In the words of jazz musician (and Waldorf teacher) Tom Dews: "What distinguishes jazz and bluegrass from other folk/popular music of the world? In both jazz and bluegrass there is a strange and fragile democracy at work among the members of the ensemble playing together. Each member supports the others, careful to complement but also dedicated to leading innovatively when soloing. A subtle communication must be operative between players; the "conductor" is the spirit among them. The social and musical achievement manifests in sound, so if the sounds are good, we say the music is 'moving.' As with all good music, the right balance of melody, harmony and rhythm is present…"[27]

That the qualities of interaction living among jazz musicians has not gone unnoticed among students of organizational development is evidenced by Professor John Kao, head of the Managing Innovation Program at Stanford University. Kao has written extensively about the similarities between the interaction found among jazz musicians and the kind of dynamic needed for creative collaboration in organizations. In Kao's words: "When I get together with other musicians for a jam session, the group starts with a theme, plays with it, and passes it around. Suddenly the music lifts off, flies. We all fly with it. This is not formless self-indulgence or organizational anarchy. The music follows an elegant

22 *Ibid.* pp. 10-14.

23 The attraction was so strong for Scharmer that he was willing to take on a postdoctoral project for which he would receive no funding (hiring freeze at MIT!). But his heart was in it, so after moving to Boston, he worked on the MIT project during the day and completed his dissertation for Witten/Herdecke in the evening—all the while "living happily on maxed out credit cards." C. Otto Scharmer, *Theory U* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), pp. 55, 408.

24 Scharmer, *Theory U; C.* Otto Scharmer & Katrin Kaufer, *Leading from the Emerging Future* (San Francisco, 2013).

25 A survey of some of these collaboration-emphasizing perspectives can be found in Michael Holdrege, *From Creative Ideas to Innovative Practices* (Saarbruecken, 2010), pp. 66-98.

26 Michael Schrage, *No More Teams* (New York, 1995), pp. 26-58.

27 Tom Dews, "Music and Manners: The American Experience" in John Wulsin, Jr., *The Riddle of America* (Fair Oaks, 2001), p. 89.

grammar, a set of conventions that guide and challenge our imagination. It is an explosion of inspiration within the art's given universe. No matter how high we fly, we always return with something new, something we've never heard before... Suddenly, without even realizing it, the whim has become a distinct idea; the riff becomes a tune." "That's jamming!"[28]

New Encounters: New Awakenings

Now clearly, many aspects of a Waldorf school cannot be "managed" in jazz-like fashion. Even granting the fact that we are not speaking primarily about administrative activities here, it may sound very "Luciferic" to imagine jazz-like improvisation in a college meeting—very creative and fun, but not very earth-bound or practical. And yet, to my mind, the kind of interaction found in jazz brings to expression something that Rudolf Steiner speaks of as a new kind of awakening that has become "an absolutely basic need since the beginning of the 20th century... In ordinary waking life one awakens only in meeting another's sense-perceptible aspects. But a person who has become an independent, distinct individual in the age of consciousness wants to wake up in the encounter with the soul and spirit of his fellowman… Man must become more to his fellow man: he must become his awakener… In earlier ages, souls were younger and had not formed so many karmic ties. Now it has become necessary to be awakened not just by nature but by the human beings with whom we are karmically connected and whom we want to seek."[29]

Rudolf Steiner goes on to describe how:

> [T]here is a different understanding of things among people who share a common idealistic life based on mutual communication of an anthroposophical content, whether by reading aloud or in some other way. Through experiencing the supersensible together, one human soul is awakened most intensively in the encounter with another human soul. It wakes the soul to higher insight, and this frame of mind creates a situation that causes a real communal being to descend in a group of people gathered for the purpose of mutual communication and experiencing anthroposophical ideas. Just as the genius of a language lives in that language and spreads its wings over those who speak it, so do those who experience anthroposophical ideas together in the right, idealistic frame of mind live in the shelter of the wings of a higher being.[30]

It is interesting to note that—one week after the conclusion of the *Foundations of Human Experience,* on the 13th of September 1919—Rudolf Steiner made a very significant observation about the unique kind of community that is possible in the Anglo-American world:

> The farther West we go[,] the more we find that spirit has been jettisoned out of the language itself, out of the sounds, the tone, even the grammar. Rejection of the spiritual/soul element from the Anglo-American idiom will lead to the world mission of the Anglo-American peoples. They will have to learn—though quite instinctively alongside their acquisition of world domination—as they listen to other people speaking, to hear not only the sound but to interpret the gesture of the language, to hear more than the mere physical sound, to hear something that passes from one human being to another, but reaches beyond the spoken word. This is something that works from etheric body to etheric body. This is the secret of western languages; the physical sound is losing in significance and the spiritual part of it is gaining in significance. It is the task in the West to let the spirit filtrate into language, and not only to hear physically, but to hear intuitively more than goes into the sound.[31]

We Must Become Dancers!

This does not take place without effort and inner activity, and yet, as many of us know, the productive, energizing study of anthroposophy can ebb and flow in Waldorf faculties. In fact, even in the presence of Rudolf Steiner, the desired liveliness of soul was not always at hand. As Ernst Lehrs tells us, at one point in the first years of the school in Stuttgart, Rudolf Steiner complained to the faculty that they appeared to him as if they were glued to their seats. Steiner went on to say that, yes, the ability to sit firmly was an important one, but it was not enough—they needed to be able to stand up, too! And then—with emphatic gestures—he beseeched them: "You must become dancers, my dear friends, dancers!"[32]

A wonderful image for the kind of moving dynamic needed in true collaboration can be found in Matthias

28 John Kao, *Jamming: The Art and Discipline of Business Creativity* (New York, 1996), pp. XVIII-XVIX; John Kao, *Innovation Nation* (New York 2007), pp. 132-133.

29 Rudolf Steiner, *Awakening to Community* (GA 257) (Spring Valley, 1974), pp. 154-155.

30 *Ibid.,* p. 156.

31 Rudolf Steiner, *Guardian Angels, lecture 4* (Forest Row, 2000), p.77.

32 Ernst Lehrs, Gelebte Erwartung (Stuttgart, 1979), p. 346. Translation: M. Holdrege.

Karutz's book, *Forming School Communities.*[33] Karutz argues convincingly that, in contrast to the traditional administrative pyramid that stands firmly on the ground, unshakable by virtue of its wide base (Δ), living collegial working requires reversing this resting, static form. This means turning it upside down like a dancing top (∇) that only remains upright through the spin-creating movement produced by our consciousness. When our active consciousness fades, the top tumbles – and with it the possibility of realizing the College Imagination.

Two Resources for Deepening Collegial Working in Waldorf Schools

I would like to conclude this essay by pointing to two valuable resources for Waldorf schools that recognize the deep significance of the College Imagination for the future of our movement. I emphasize such resources because, as many of us know, it is one thing to recognize "what could be possible" for a school; it is quite another thing to form the serious resolve "to make it possible!" I think the future of Waldorf education in America (and most other places, too) will depend greatly on Waldorf faculties developing the capacity to dialogue in a new way, in such a way that they become sensitive to "an emerging future" that the hierarchies can awaken us to. This can only happen, of course, if we are able to form, again and again, a collegial chalice that is receptive to "the drops of light" that can come from these higher beings.

Florian Osswald: Working with the Night

In Lecture One of the *Foundations of Human Experience,* Rudolf Steiner describes how children do not yet know how to carry their daytime, waking experiences into the night, into sleep. A similar observation could probably be made of many teachers when it comes to collegial working. If this is so, the critical question becomes: How can we, as Waldorf teachers, become more receptive to the "counseling" of higher beings with whom we interact in sleep?

In several lectures given to Waldorf teachers in North America, Florian Osswald offered valuable advice on how we can work more effectively with the night. These lectures, which have also been published in recent issues of the Pedagogical Section Journal,[34] begin with an exercise done each day, soon after awakening, that involves a brief review of that morning, the night, and the preceding evening. This exercise provides the foundation for a growing awareness of the "threshold of consciousness" that we cross when we fall asleep and wake up—a threshold that we normally pay little attention to. Following on this exercise, Osswald gives numerous suggestions for heightening our sensitivity to the significance of the night in human interactions. Whereas modern communication theory focuses on the "day aspect" of our conversations, Osswald points out that "the day cannot exist without the night. The night is the hidden subconscious part of ourselves. Communication—just as life—is rooted in both sides. Only if we become aware of both, if we create a complete entity, can we perceive the actual shape of a conversation and a rhythmic-polar process becomes visible." He goes on to illuminate how those who regularly practice the exercise mentioned above "will find an intimate connection between the gestures of speaking and listening and the gestures of falling asleep and waking up." Real learning, he emphasizes, takes place at night, for it is in sleep—together with our angels—that we prepare for the next day. It is through the strengthening of our night side that we evolve our capacity for the kind of true dialogue that provides ever-new leadership impulses for our institutions.[35] In this way we learn to create, again and again, "the New We"[36] that is open to insights from "an emerging future."

Marjorie Spock: "Group Moral Artistry"

Although largely unfamiliar to recent generations of Waldorf teachers, the impulse for an "awakening to community" has deep roots in the work of a number of early American Anthroposophists. The striving of one individual in particular, Marjorie Spock, has resulted in the second important resource for deepening collegial collaboration that I want to recommend here. The many fascinating details of Marjorie Spock's life (1904-2008) as a Eurythmist, Waldorf teacher, and Biodynamic farmer[37] cannot be explored here.[38] Important in this context is her painful awakening to the need for a deeper understanding of esoteric group-work: "When I joined the society, I felt it was the greatest day of my

33 Matthias Karutz, *Forming School Communities* (Fair Oaks, 2001), pp. 52-53.

34 Florian Osswald, "Given the Night" *(Parts I–IV), in Pedagogical Section Journal,* Numbers 58, 59, 60 & 62.

35 See also Rudolf Steiner's fascinating description of the way in which Goethe's ability to create the right connection between sleeping and waking—and thus to interact with the third hierarchy at a deeper level—changed through his Italian Journey, with enormous consequences for his creative capacities for the rest of his life. Rudolf Steiner, *The Driving Force of Spiritual Powers in World History (GA 222)* (Great Britain, 1972), pp. 18-22.

36 Florian Osswald, "Courage Initiative and the New We", in *Pedagogical Section Journal,* Number 57.

37 Spock played a central role in the genesis of Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring,* which is often seen as responsible for initiating the environmentalist movement in America.

38 In the words of Henry Barnes: "Marjorie Spock's life encompasses the history of Anthroposophy in this country from her meetings and study with Rudolf Steiner and others in Dornach to the first years in the twenty-first century when in her late nineties, she may still be found living on her farm on the Maine cost, where eurythmists, scientists, teachers, farmers, anthroposophists, friends, and neighbors come to share in her spirited, intelligent, and immensely articulate presence." Henry Barnes, *Into the Heart's Land: A Century of Rudolf Steiner's Work in North America* (Great Barrington, MA, 2005), p. 112.

life, because I felt that I was becoming part of a living organism that was the very heart and purpose of the earth… And after Rudolf Steiner's death, I really felt we could have united in one jump, and together as a unity assumed Rudolf Steiner's role in the world. What happened instead was that we did not hold together as a society, and conflict was everywhere. This became the overriding question in my life, and it became a painful wound that would not let me find peace."[39]

As the years passed, Spock began to raise her concerns about the lost opportunities caused by the ongoing conflicts within the Anthroposophical Society. She suggested that the society begin an internal study of methods that further the kind of "awakening to community" that Rudolf Steiner envisioned for active Anthroposophists. Over many years, Marjorie Spock and others formed a group that researched ways of working that could raise group interaction to a new level and lead to what they called "group moral artistry." One example of their findings (more of which cannot be explored here) was based on enhanced listening. "Where esoterics widens to include joint efforts of communities, the ear's cultivation as an esoteric tool becomes doubly vital in that it forms the basis for a new art of listening… Many ways can be found to bring about this development. Among them is the practice of eurythmy (of which Rudolf Steiner indicated that it has just this social mission). For to make speech visible the eurythmist must learn to live back into the spiritual world of meaning in which the poet's thought lived before it was uttered. The eurythmist listens not alone to words, but to the spirit which has shaped them. And this is an activity across the threshold in which every listener must engage if he is to understand another."[40]

Marjorie Spock was active in this type of research for many years and eventually published two small volumes on "group moral artistry" titled *Reflections on Community Building* and *The Art of Goethean Conversation*[41] that describe what she and her colleagues came to. These small booklets circulated widely at the time and were taken up with enthusiasm by young people, in particular. They contain many kernels of wisdom regarding the nature and necessity of esoteric group working in the context of anthroposophy.

It is time that we rediscover the work of individuals, like Marjorie Spock, whose striving helped shape the first century of Waldorf education and anthroposophy in America, and whose insights into the nature of esoteric group working are needed to support the continued evolution and renewal of Waldorf education as it moves into its second century. The key to such renewal was given by Rudolf Steiner in the College Imagination, but the growth of capacities necessary to bring that Imagination to fruition rests in our hands. Words spoken by Benedictus in Scene 10 of Rudolf Steiner's *Guardian of the Threshold*—and which are cited by Marjorie Spock at the conclusion of her booklet, *Reflections on Community Building*—describe the task ahead:

> My pupils have thrown open, each, their own souls
> Unto the spirit light, and in such ways
> As fit their individual destinies.
> What they have conquered for themselves
> Each one shall render fruitful for the others.
> This they can only do if now their forces,
> Here at this sacred place,
> In harmony of measure and of number,
> Form willingly a higher unity.
> This unity alone can waken to true life
> What singly must remain a mere existing.
> They stand here at the threshold of this temple.
> Their souls shall join themselves, one to another,
> And sound in unison according to the rules
> Recorded in the book of cosmic destiny; –
> That harmony of spirits may accomplish
> What each alone could never bring about.
> They'll carry new impulses to the old
> Which here rules worthily since earliest times.[42]

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39 *Ibid., p. 128.*

40 Marjorie Spock, *Reflections on Community Building* (Spring Valley, 1983), pp. 15-16.

41 Marjorie Spock, *Reflections on Community Building* (Spring Valley, *1983);* Marjorie Spock, *The Art of Goethean Conversation* (Spring Valley, 1983). The second volume took its name from Goethe's famous lines in The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily: "What is more precious than light? Conversation!"

42 Cited in *Reflections on Community Building, p. 33.*