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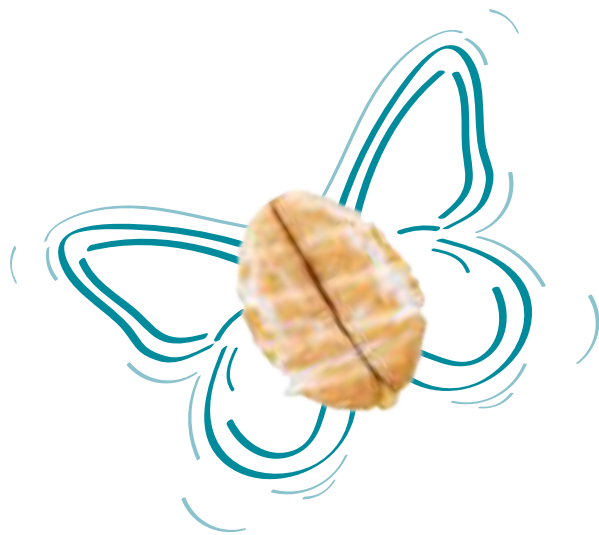
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ISSUE 88 VOL. 22, Summer 2017

Soil, Culture & Human Responsibility • Truth & Lies




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dear readers



Welcome to our summer issue that's filled with plenty of art and color to lift your spirits. Many would agree that we are in uncertain times, so more than ever, we need to be there for each other, but we also need to be there for ourselves too.

I can't be prescriptive, but I can share a couple of recent experiences that have helped me stay grounded and optimistic. I grow a lot of flowers, and each day I spend time with them. I enjoy their colors and the bird and insect life they attract. Our daughter gave us a wildflower seed packet last year, and from that we have many volunteer poppies that grew up red and pink and tall. I am amazed at the fragility of their tissue paper-like petals, the way the colors fade from pink to white, and the penetration of the red. I watch them waffle and dip when the breeze comes from the sea nearby. This is an antidote for me.

Recently, our study group gathered to stir biodynamic horn manure, the preparation that helps build soil. We gathered on St. John's day, shared verses, and took turns splashing and stirring. We came in

and shared some cheese and fruit and crackers before reading the last chapter in the book we have been studying, Rudolf Steiner's lectures on honey bees. Gathering with people around a common aspiration is another remedy that renews my sense of purpose and direction.

Speaking of remedies! We are bringing back our *Holistic Wellness Guide* (see page 6) this fall. If you are a subscriber, you will receive this as your Fall issue. A team of anthroposophic doctors and nurses helped us do a thorough edit of the ever-so-useful A-Z Guide of common ailments and home health-based solutions. New articles on public health, vaccinations, anthroposophic nursing, and osteopathy will be side by side with how-to instructions on compresses, soaks, poultices, inhalations, and therapeutic baths. Pre-order copies at www.lilipoh.com.

As always, I think you will find that this issue of LILIPOH is a tool kit filled with tips and insights to help us navigate life's chaos and stay connected to the wonder and beauty that still thrives around us.

We always love hearing from you—send your comments to editor@lilipoh.com or find us on Facebook.

Christy Kourou

LILIPOH stands for Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Life can mean the quality of life, inner life, consciousness; in other words, living a life enhanced through understanding; liberty may mean the freedom to choose how one lives; pursuit of happiness is a high term which has often been used superficially; it can mean the joy of helping each other along the road of inner and outer health, and toward a better world.

LILIPOH

LILIPOH is a quarterly publication featuring an anthroposophic approach to health; encompassing holistic therapies, preservation of childhood, education, the arts, community, agriculture, nutrition and social.

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Room to Grow

how *female friendships* can help or hinder personal growth in the office and beyond

HABIB SADEGHI, DO

The differences between typical female and typical male relationship styles are important to understand for overall mental health, and as you'll see here, for physical health as well. As Dr. Habib Sadeghi explains, the way those relationship styles play out in the workplace, where many of us now spend the majority of our waking hours, appears to affect women more profoundly than men. Generally, women are more affected by the health of their social relationships, including those with their coworkers. Below, Dr. Sadeghi outlines how to be sure your relationships are contributing to your well-being, rather than detracting from it, causing distress and even disease.

Not long ago, a young woman walked into my medical practice desperate for help. She'd been to no less than seventy-three physicians before me, and none of them had been able to solve her problem: At the age of twenty-three, she'd lost more than 95 percent of her hair.

Alopecia is a difficult experience for anyone, but especially for someone like my patient, Amanda, a young, single woman and former model who now worked in the fashion industry. Appearance was a crucial factor in how she defined herself, how she made her living, and the social environment she was a part of every day. Her confidence, self-esteem, psychological well-being, social well-being, even her standing at work were on the line. Amanda was at

her wits' end every time she looked in the mirror.

I see a lot of patients who have been unable to find lasting solutions to the conditions they suffer from, no matter how many doctors they've visited. This is a common complaint about the way Western medicine is practiced today: physicians treat symptoms, but far too often don't help cure the root cause of their patients' conditions. I like to think of myself not as a physician, but a metaphysician, someone who can help even after traditional medicine has failed, and who looks not just at an isolated set of symptoms, but at the total functioning of my patients, mind and body alike.

There was a time in human history when the link between mind and body was well understood,

FEMALE FRIENDSHIP [continued from page 9]

particularly in relation to a person's health. Socrates said, "There is no illness of the body apart from the mind." The term **psychosomatic** comes from ancient Greek, with *psycho* meaning mind and *soma* meaning body. Healers then believed that all illness was psychosomatic—a mind-body event requiring treatment on both fronts. Sadly, today the term is used to suggest that an illness is only in your head.

I, too, believe the vast majority of disease is psychosomatic, and has its origins in the mind.

the office, so her workplace relationships were her primary ones. Many people don't realize that social relationships, whether among colleagues at work or friends in their personal lives, can be a tremendous source of stress, particularly for women.

women versus men in friendships

Research has shown that women and men tend to approach social situations very differently. A 2013 study that looked at the different ways in which male and female brains are wired concluded that women

“There was a time in human history when the link between mind and body was well understood, particularly in relation to a person's health.”

So the first thing I did when Amanda walked into my office was talk to her. I would do a physical examination as well, but first, I wanted to know as much as I could about who she was and what was happening in her life.

As we talked, Amanda came across as a competent and ambitious young woman. It was when we began discussing her work that I got my first clue about what could be contributing to her hair loss. "I like my job," she said, "but it's not the ideal environment for me. The people I work with on a day-to-day basis are all women, and I really prefer working with men."

The statement caught my attention; I wanted to know more about Amanda's workplace. She told me that she typically worked from 7am to 7pm. Her time away from the office consisted mostly of eating, sleeping, and getting ready to go back to

are more likely to be social than men, hanging out with peers and doing more activities in groups. On the other hand, it's rare to see four, five, or six men in each other's company unless they're playing some kind of sport. A separate study tells us that, on average, men tend to be more productive working alone, while women thrive on collaboration and work better in groups. Yet another shows that women are more likely than men to be users of social media. Obviously, not all women and all men show these tendencies, but such studies are important to be aware of, nonetheless.

Because they often have the gift of social connection, women tend to be more profoundly affected by the health of their social relationships. Any group of people who associate regularly with one another creates their own kind of culture or environment, made up of elements like the language they use,

their personal history, and preconceived notions about themselves, each other, and life in general. This happens in much the same way that different generations share commonalities in the way they talk, dress, or view the world; think of hippies with their “flower power,” or the new language of texting invented by millennials. If the environment that a group co-creates becomes toxic, it can have a negative impact on the psycho-spiritual health of each member of the group.

As I questioned Amanda further, I began to understand how her social environment was impacting her. Because women are inherently social, they tend to fight that way, too. When a woman disagrees with a member of her group, she might try to get others to take her side and then begin to exclude that member from the club. This usually results in one being the odd girl out. This isn’t to say that women are inherently crueler or cattier than men; just that women and men tend to express their dislike or anger for people in different ways.

These different social dynamics between women and men start early in life, according to research. In school, when girls bully one another, they tend to use what’s called “relational aggression”—for example, name-calling, ostracizing, spreading rumors, and gossiping—while boys are more likely to resort to physical bullying. This same contrast follows us into adulthood: Men usually handle things one-on-one, offering to “take it outside” and settle an issue physically. While certainly not all adults bully, when they do, women are more likely to use the community to shame or shun someone with mostly behind-the-back verbal abuse, rather than physical abuse. And many people don’t realize how painful it is to experience social bullying.

Amanda described a culture of backstabbing and undermining in her workplace; it became clear that she felt like the “odd girl out” and was suffering because of it. For the odd girl out, the result

is often self-hatred and doubt. When any group singles someone out through negative attention or ostracizing, it can take a heavy toll on that person’s self-esteem. Chronic stress like this always has an impact on physical health. As we discussed it further, Amanda realized that she had started feeling targeted at work about the time that she started losing her hair.

autoimmune diseases

Amanda’s hair loss turned out to be the result of an autoimmune condition triggered by stress. Her body had become confused and started producing antibodies that attacked her own hair follicles. That describes what was happening to her, but it doesn’t explain why her body turned on her in this way. Because I believe in the mind-body connection, I’ve often suspected that stress and low self-esteem play a part in autoimmune diseases, in which the immune system sees the body as the enemy and attacks its own tissues. Most people don’t realize that of the 23.5 million Americans who suffer from autoimmune diseases, 75 percent are women. When we look at specific diseases, the ratio between women and men is even worse: Hashimoto’s thyroiditis 10:1, Grave’s disease 7:1, and lupus 9:1. In 2000, a study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* revealed that autoimmune disease had become the tenth leading cause of death in women between the ages fifteen and sixty-four. The reason these statistics aren’t more widely reported is because of the limited way cause of death is determined. Other autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis are considered to be only contributors to death, never the actual cause.

Fortunately, it’s possible to protect yourself against social stress and the physical suffering that can result. Friendship for all of us can be a mutually fulfilling and supportive experience as long as

FEMALE FRIENDSHIP [continued from page 11]

we're aware of the kind of culture or environment we're creating with our social cohort—and just how important it is to maintain a healthy one. To do this, it helps to understand how relationships evolve.

the four relationship phases

Any relationship between two or more people is considered a symbiotic association. *Sym* means together, while *biosis* means life: two lives converge and relate to each other in a way that affects their existence. I call this a symbiotic constellation.

Relationships always begin in the parasitic

from its mother, thinking only of its comfort and safety, while not contributing much to the mother's well-being.

Once a baby comes into the world, the baby's relationship to the mother transitions from parasitic into competitive symbiosis. As a separate being, the baby now competes with the mother for the same food, time, attention, and so on. In the same way, as friends become more familiar to us, we move into competition with them. This competitive attitude can be overt, but more often it's a subtle yet tangible undertone in a friendship. Getting stuck here leads

“The primary relationship we have is always with ourselves, and how we treat others is always a reflection of how we are treating ourselves.”

phase. (Keep in mind that these normative terms are neither good nor bad—they just are.) In parasitic symbiosis, we tend to take from the other person without any real thought of giving back. This is true in romantic relationships as well as friendships. When we meet someone new, we're largely concerned with how fun they are, if we enjoy being around them, if they are willing to go places with us so we don't have to go alone, and so on. We're always thinking about how others can enhance or benefit our lives and not necessarily how we might contribute to their experience. People who get stuck in this phase become “takers,” never allowing themselves to grow and mature in the relationship, keeping it in a sort of infantile phase. In the same way, a baby in the womb takes nutrients

to resentment, jealousy, and antagonism, and if the competition continues to increase, possibly the end of the friendship itself.

If the need to compete dissolves, the relationship moves into commensal symbiosis, a sort of live-and-let-live association where, while we may not be giving anything to the other person or competing with them, we're not taking anything from them either. We're simply allowed to be ourselves and live our own lives. Think of it like a barnacle that attaches itself to a whale: While it's not giving anything to the whale, it's not taking anything from it either. It's just coexisting with it, going along for the ride. There is a kind of an uninvolved apathy where neither party is fulfilled.

The final phase of relationship is mutual

symbiosis. I invite everyone to strive for this kind of structure in their relationships. Here, we mature beyond the selfishness, insecurity, and apathy of the parasitic, competitive, and commensal constellations and move into a mutually supportive and fulfilling relationship. Giving is equally as satisfying as getting, and we celebrate the success of others knowing that our joy on their behalf elevates the group dynamic and contributes to everyone reaching their highest potential.

Each relationship phase has its own energy and dynamic, as well as its own effect on the physical and spiritual well-being of both the individual and the group. If we are conscious as we enter new relationships, we can pass through these initial phases rather quickly and avoid a lot of trouble for ourselves and our circle of friends. We can also use this knowledge of how relationships evolve to examine our current relationships—including those in the workplace— and better understand how they might be impacting our lives, and even our health.

This is what happened with Amanda. Over time, she realized that her work environment was stuck in the competitive phase and was far too corrosive

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...the flower is really our longing for the light-filled spaces of the universe. —Rudolf Steiner



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FEMALE FRIENDSHIP [continued from page 13]

to be saved—so she quit. It was amazing to see the level of antibodies in her blood drop consistently over a period of six months after she left, and watch her hair grow back as a result. For her next job, she was careful to examine the social environment before determining if it was the right fit for her, and she spent more time establishing positive relationships once she got there. Eventually, she even went

That's why I encourage everyone to examine the challenges they face in their relationships, then explore how they might be judging, neglecting, deceiving, or hurting themselves in similar ways. At the end of the day, in order to be a true friend, you've got to be your own best friend first. How are you treating you? 

“Because they often have the gift of social connection, women tend to be more profoundly affected by the health of their social relationships.”

on to start her own business, where she had even more influence on not just the work she did, but the environment in which she did it. She wanted to go to work every day in a place filled with mutually symbiotic relationships, not the competitive kind that had so adversely affected her health.

your relationship with yourself

The interesting thing about competitive consciousness is that it's really ourselves we're competing with. It's when we compare ourselves with others that we feel we're not good enough, beautiful enough, successful enough, rich enough, admired enough, or that we fall short in some other way. We then compete even more to compensate for our internal inadequacy. The primary relationship we have is always with ourselves, and how we treat others is always a reflection of how we are treating ourselves.

This article was first published in actress Gwyneth Paltrow's holistic fashion, health, and lifestyles newsletter, goop. It appears in LILIPOH by permission of the author. The views expressed in this article intend to highlight alternative studies and induce conversation. The article is for informational purposes only, even if and to the extent that this article features the advice of physicians and medical practitioners. This article is not, nor is it intended to be, a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, and should never be relied upon for specific medical advice.

HABIB SADEGHI, DO, provides a comprehensive knowledge of integrative, osteopathic, anthroposophical, environmental, and family medicine, as well as clinical pharmacology through his practice based in Agoura Hills, CA. He is the author of many books and teaches around the world.

He has served as an Attending Physician and Clinical Facilitator at UCLA-Santa Monica Medical Center and is currently a Clinical Instructor of Family Medicine at Western University of Health Sciences. He is a member of the Physician's Association for Anthroposophic Medicine (PAAM), an active member of the Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation and American Holistic Medical Association, he is regularly sought after as an expert in the fields of nutritional therapy, dietary supplementation and detoxification for chronic conditions such as heart disease, cancer and auto-immune diseases at venues around the world.

For more health and inspirational insights from Dr. Sadeghi, please visit **Behiveofhealing.com** to sign up for the monthly newsletter, as well as his annual health and well-being journal, *MegaZEN*. For daily messages of encouragement and humor, follow Dr. Sadeghi on Twitter @Behiveofhealing.

Liquid Color

flower essences and colored light elixirs for healing

DEBORAH CRAYDON

The best known vibrational waters are flower essences, first developed by Dr. Edward Bach in the 1920s in England. They are made in a simulated dew process, by placing flower blossoms in a bowl of spring water exposed to early morning sunlight. Dr. Bach's original repertory of thirty-eight flower essences address prime emotions in need of harmonizing, such as denial, anxiety, depression, anger, and fear. Now there are many flower essence companies

“Colors have ‘virtues,’ or specific healing qualities.”

world-wide, which address a wide range of specific of emotions that can be balanced using flowers from various regions of the world.

Working with clients over the years as a flower essence practitioner, I found a need to develop three kinds of essences to address the three-fold body, soul, and spirit. Flower essences harmonize soul forces, our thoughts and feelings; gem elixirs align our

newly harmonized feelings with the physical body via the various crystalline forms in gemstones; and a new kind of essence, **colors in water**, infuse the various subtle layers of the system with pure colors, enhancing the spirit.

The Waldorf schools, initiated by the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, use color on the walls of their classrooms as a way of cocooning children and teens in environments that reflect their stage of consciousness. Peach-blossom pinks are for kindergarten children, red for first grade, and so on through the rainbow of colors until high school, when the rooms become shades of higher consciousness in lilacs, magentas, purples.

Other initiatives inspired by Rudolf Steiner use color as well. The painting therapist Liane Collot d'Herbois, in *Light, Color and Darkness in Painting Therapy*, describes twelve colors that are lightly painted (veiled) over one another, helping a patient to re-balance the body. In *Fundamentals of Artistic Therapy*, Dr. Margarethe Hauschka gives seasonal color painting exercises using flowing color and water, the wet-on-wet technique that is also practiced by Waldorf school children. (I myself practiced this curative painting technique with the elderly and dying in convalescent hospitals for nine years.)

Other Steiner-inspired initiatives that use color for healing are puppetry; the various colored veils

of the eurythmy dance movement; and colored light after-image therapy developed by Dr. Ita Wegman and used curatively in Camphill communities. There are the various arts and crafts of the Waldorf school movement; painting, drawing, form drawing, and handwork projects all use the therapeutic power of color.

After nine years of asking, “What is a natural way of delivering color to the body, beyond the use of electric light?” I developed a series of twelve colors in water. The liquid colors work directly on people, animals, and environments. Sprayed around gardens and home exteriors, landscapes reveal renewed life force, drawing in birds and animals. Called Colored Light Elixirs, they are proving to be helpful with children and teens, as well as adults.

Marla Hanan (of Blue Lotus Family Wellness in Hopewell, New Jersey) says:

The Flora Corona Colored Light Elixirs are colors projected into water using sunlight. Calibrated 30 degrees apart, it is the specific

“Colors in water
infuse the various
subtle layers
of your system
with pure colors,
enhancing your
spirit.”





Children mixing all twelve colors to make rainbow spray.

LIQUID COLOR [continued from page 17]

tone of each color that makes them work accurately with the human energy system. They are a wonderful match for children, because they give the child the rare opportunity to determine the colors they need by simple attraction to the colors shining through the transparent bottles. They may be taken internally (from a dropper bottle just like Bach flower essences), applied topically, or misted from a spray bottle.

Marla has some wonderful stories of working with the colors and children including a ten-year-old girl who was having a hard time separating from her mother before school in the mornings:

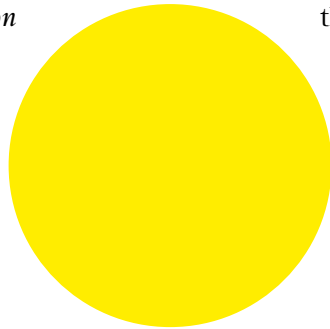
We set up a session and on the appointed day and time, I arrived with twelve bottles of colors at my friend's house. I was truly humbled and amazed at the reaction of this little girl to the bottles. She announced that she could "feel the forces of all of them." She picked turquoise, yellow, orange, and violet and was surprised: "These are not even my favorite colors but they have a good feeling to them." She articulated a deep knowing of color and said that the colors "are all in each other."

Here are the words of my friend, as she described her impression of the session and of what transpired afterward: "My daughter loved the colors. She picked several individual colors but then she insisted that she couldn't separate them and loved the whole rainbow. Marla kindly mixed up several bottles, one with the whole rainbow in it, and we began to use them. She asked if she could take the remedies herself, whenever she wanted to. It's been over a week now and my daughter happily goes off to school in the morning. My daughter got to decide what colors she needed, not me. Then she decided how she wanted to take them, not

me. Perhaps allowing her to decide on how best to heal and move on made all the difference.”

Alyss Thomas, psychotherapist and flower essence practitioner from Devon, UK introduces the twelve color bottles to her clients to get an idea of their needs. She says: “Using color as the basis for diagnosis is a very valid approach within flower essence work. It cuts through complexity. If you ask the client to select a color using the bottles, it brings about a coherent sense of direction to the treatment.”

I have found this as well. Through my flower essence practice, I have learned that all ages can self-diagnose flower essences that they need by choosing photo cards of flowers. Most interestingly, their choices reveal their inner soul conditions according to the colors of the flowers: gardeners often



than complementary colors in pigments). To see a color’s complementary color in light, gaze at this yellow spot for a full minute. Then look at a white page or wall. What you see is the after-image or complementary color of yellow.

Colors have “virtues,” or specific healing qualities. Here are some over-lighting qualities of the twelve colors, each shown with its opposite or complementary color. (Flowers and gems in these colors also share these qualities, although each flower and gem have further signatures connected to their shapes, growth patterns, mineral content, and so forth):

RED: Creativity, Enthusiasm, Play, Passion, Vitality

BLUE: Soothe, Calm, Breathe, Trust, Release

ORANGE: Abundance, Warmth, Joy, Communication

INDIGO: Intuition, Imagination, Inspiration, Manifestation

“Dr. Bach’s original repertory of 38 flower essences address prime emotions in need of harmonizing: denial, anxiety, depression, anger, and fear.”

pick a spectrum of green flower and tree essences; children in need of love often pick pink flowers; while those in shock often pick white flowers that feed and nurture the soul.

after-images and virtues

Each of the twelve colors is paired with its complementary or opposite color in light (which are different

YELLOW: Light, Courage, Wisdom, Hope, Rebirth

VIOLET: Peace, Silence, Forgiveness, Serenity

LIME: Cleanse, Clarity, Transformation

PURPLE: Grace, Tenderness, Solace, Gentleness

GREEN: Love, Health, Healing, Nature, Equanimity

MAGENTA: Birth, Bliss, Gratitude, Generosity



Fiery young Domingo chooses red!

LIQUID COLOR *[continued from page 19]*

TURQUOISE: Repair, Rejuvenate, Renew, Immunity

CARMINE: Beauty, Flower, Grow, Fruitful

rainbow

Children pick specific colors but also often want all twelve colors. A rainbow combination bottle containing all twelve colors is having helpful effects with children as well as adults who use it.

Nozomi Sakata from Japan says: “My kids added all twelve colors, making rainbow spray. My older son told me he can drink a whole bottle because it tastes sweet to him. And he did. That’s why he’s making the spray again. Kids are drawn to these colors.”

Karen Eastham, nurse, psychotherapist and animal healer from Lancashire, UK, uses the rainbow combination: “I use this combination with my clients and their horses, and take it myself. I totally trust and believe in it. I feel that there is no end to what this combination of twelve colors can do.”

healing by touch

What’s interesting is that often a child or an adult will just hold one of the color bottles and experience a shift in their emotions. A mother who encourages her children pick the colors when they need help, says:

When my son started to have a meltdown, I told him to pick a bottle and hold it. He chose red, rolled it up in his tee shirt and stomped away. I heard him whisper something to it, and less than two minutes

“In observations of the effects of using the colors environmentally in landscapes, it appears that the colors also give nourishment and restitution to elemental forces.”

later he walked over to me and handed me the bottle and said, “I’m better now.” And he was a happy camper from there on out. Amazing. Working with children with these elixirs is my favorite. They absorb the energy in amazing ways.

Clare de Ruiz has also found that her little boy Domingo, who attends the Del Mar Waldorf kindergarten in Cancun, Mexico, chooses colors that match his constitution: “Domingo (opposite) played with the color elixirs, settling on magenta and red at the end. He is one fiery little boy...”

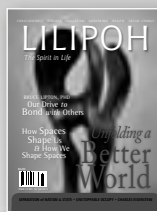
the living nature of color

Case studies from many years of use of liquid colors suggest that the elixirs provide the human energy system with a kind of spiritual nutrition beyond the more specific effects that flower essences have on the emotions and gem elixirs produce on the body. In observations of the effects of using the colors environmentally in landscapes, it appears that the colors also give nourishment and restitution to elemental forces. Like the virtues listed for each color, their use reveals their living nature—an angelic counterpart—that elevates people, animals, and environments. 📖

DEBORAH CRAYON CFEP is a Certified Flower Essence Practitioner/ Producer and the co-author of *Floral Acupuncture: Applying the Flower Essences of Dr. Bach to Acupuncture Sites*. She is founder/producer of Flora Corona-Hawaiian Flower Essences, Gem Elixirs & Colored Light Elixirs. She can be reached via the contact at floracorona.com



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The Sustainable Future of Thurston County

Hope for Washington State's Capital City

GABRIELLE KORROW

It's a rainy Thursday afternoon in Northeast Olympia, Washington, and local resident Tanner Milliren is bundled up in a communal woodshop where his new tiny home is well under progress. Milliren had worked in construction for many years when he began to see tiny homes as a means of living a sustainable life. As an individual committed to living out his values, Milliren is finding ways to locate sources of high quality, sustainable material to construct his home. He explained, "I want to live smaller and I want to live simpler. Progressive

cities are realizing that this is a movement that isn't going away."

Thurston County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Washington and is projected to continue on this trajectory in decades to come. The Thurston Regional Planning Council projects that by 2040 there will be more than 400,000 residents living in the county. This means that individuals and institutions coming together, working toward common goals of practical sustainability, is only becoming more important.



“There are many paths and models of sustainability. All of them involve action, creativity, and at times, some sort of sacrifice.”


How do you want your community to look, function, and feel in 2035? How can we improve our livelihood while minimizing our footprint? These were the questions at the heart of a long-term plan crafted in 2001, called Sustainable Thurston. Initiated by the Thurston Regional Planning Council, the project offered a platform that allowed thousands of community members to come together to construct a regional vision of sustainable development. The Sustainable Thurston plan defines a sustainable community as a community that “...will enhance quality of life, foster economic vitality, and protect the environment while balancing our needs today with those of future residents.”

Michael Burnham, Senior Planner for the City of Olympia, has played an important role in creating Sustainable Thurston. Burnham explained, “We’ve tried to reach that delta of social, economic, and environmental sustainability. You have to think about all of the different pieces at the same time, and not in silos.” He added: “The question is, how do you sustain growth and still be sustainable?” Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater have all begun to integrate parts of Sustainable Thurston into their city’s long-term plans. Keeping downtown and residential areas compact, so that farmland and wilderness can be preserved, is one example.

Thurston Thrives is another initiative showing how local organizations are taking bold steps to make our region more sustainable. A grassroots organization of community members, Thurston Thrives works to build collaborations within the community to create a more healthy, happy population. They have created

eight action teams that cover various aspects of health and wellness in the community, with focuses ranging from Public Safety and Justice, to Environment (including Climate and Clean Energy), to Community Design. Thurston Thrives is adamant about individuals getting involved, and they emphasize the value of taking simple steps like attending a school board or city council meeting. When individuals take a local stance on issues that matter to them, often it is on this smaller scale where they can make the biggest impact.

What would our community look like in 2035 if more citizens were taking steps to embrace sustainability? In a cold woodshop, sitting next to his partially constructed tiny home, Milliren explains, “Being able to downsize enables people to direct their finances, time, and energy toward things that are more meaningful.” There are many paths and models of sustainability. All of them involve action, creativity, and at times, some sort of sacrifice. The involvement of both institutions and individuals is critical. Burnham says that we should “not only look at what your city or county can do to help the region become more sustainable, but think about what actions you and your neighbors can take to become more sustainable.”

Visit thurstonthrive.org, www.trpc.org, for more information and to become educated on the efforts of your community. Look for Tanner Milliren on Tiny House, Big Life, HGTV coming soon! 

GABRIELLE KORROW is an artist and student currently studying journalism, mindfulness, and positive psychology at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. Illustration also by Gabrielle Korrow. This article first appeared in the periodical, *Works in Progress*, and is reprinted here with permission.

To Tom McGrath in Heaven:

A Letter from the Ark

For forty days and forty nights,
dollars rained down.
Banknotes choked the rivers
and backwatered into the cornfields.
Quarters washed out the gullies
and the hillsides were gouged by rivulets of small
change.
It rained cancelled checks, money orders, stocks,
bonds, letters of credit, IRAs.
It rained certificates of deposit, debit cards, entire
ATM machines.
It rained toaster ovens, second cars, iPods,
things you never heard of, my friend.
It rained SUVs, Hummers, all-terrain vehicles.
It rained cell phones and digital cameras,
hand-held electronic games,
and all manner of cheap plastic toys.
A day-long, night-long greenback rain
that eroded the farms of the Dakotas,
washed out the forests of Oregon,

doused the fires of every steel mill on the
Monongahela,
and flattened the mountains of West Virginia,
stripping them down the naked stone.
The rain clotted the floodplain with silt,
black water, Styrofoam, ranch houses,
home entertainment centers,
and the lacerated bodies of young soldiers.
And still it rained, until
we could see nothing but water
horizon to horizon.
It's been hard, my friend,
to see the green waters rise to take everything we
knew.
It's still hard
and I'm deadly scared.
But we float on these waters in an ark of hope.
Cubit by cubit, we built it together
and two by two we staggered up the gangplank.
It's crowded and it stinks
and the nocturnals won't let the diurnals sleep
and it seems this trip will never end.
But you taught us well, my friend;
We're still here, plugging the leaks and patching the
sails.
Day by day, we scrape the bat shit from the rafters.
Day by day, we stop the lions from devouring the
lambs.
Day by day, we send out the little dove of a poem.
Day by day, we watch
for that little sprig of olive
that tells us
the blessed land is near.

— MICHAEL HENSON

First published: The True Story of the Resurrection and Other Poems by Michael Henson, Wind Publications

MICHAEL HENSON is author of four books of poetry and four of fiction. His most recent is *The Dead Singing* from Mongrel Empire Press. His collection, *The Way the World Is: The Maggie Boylan Stories* won the 2014 Brighthorse Prize in Short Fiction.

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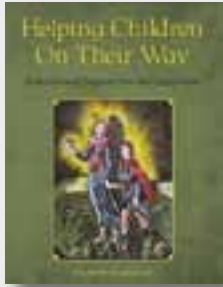
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SUMMER ADHARA

*“Massage will replace
the knife of the surgeon.”*

— RUDOLF STEINER TO ITA WEGMAN, MD

Within the realm of anthroposophy (the study of the freedom of human and spirit) there lie extensive medical studies; and within those studies lives the great gift of Rhythmical Massage Therapy (RMT). There is now a brand new impulse from this gift in the world within the hearts of ten graduates of a three-year intensive program!

The wisdom of this healing art form originally came through the work of Rudolf Steiner, Ita Wegman, MD, and Margarethe Hauschka, MD. In

in regard to the healing therapies of massage as they existed in those times, and to her as a massage therapist and doctor.

Ita Wegman spent twelve years as an experienced physician, developing the foundations of RMT. She worked alongside Margarethe Hauschka, who became her intern in 1928. Margarethe Hauschka carried the impulse forward to Irmgard Marbach.

The form of Rhythmical Massage Therapy addresses the human being as a whole cosmos within him- or herself. It offers levity and invites people back into the divine rhythms of their own unique individuality, which were given while in embryo.

The process is described by Hendrik van Heek in *Vade Mecum: A Handbook of Anthroposophic Medicine*:

*“ Rhythmical Massage Therapy
is musical by nature ”*

the 1920s, Steiner appointed Dr. Wegman to be a leader alongside himself in the medical section of anthroposophy. She was a Doctor of Medicine and a Swedish Massage Therapist. She set up a clinic in Arlesheim, Switzerland that is still thriving today, known as the Ita Wegman Clinic.

In Wegman's lifetime, she experienced many trials, including taking great risks to help the wrongly persecuted and disabled during World War II. Yet she persevered in her abilities as a gifted individual who worked with so many in the medical field and left us with many great contributions. One of these gems is the therapy of Rhythmical Massage. At the time when Steiner spoke the above words to Wegman, Rhythmical Massage Therapy did not yet exist. He spoke that

Rhythmical Massage Therapy is musical by nature. Every treatment is like a composition. It has a theme (usually with variations), pauses, repetitions, crescendos and decrescendos, rhythms, beat, an overture, and a finale. The intervals occur between the therapist's hands. The musical key is the concentration on one of the patient's bodies. We might also say that the human organism is like a four-stringed instrument (the four aspects of the human being), and when one string is played the others vibrate.

The four aspects of the human being are physical, etheric, astral, ego (in anthroposophic terms); or earth, water, air, fire (in alchemical terms); or body, mind, spirit, soul (in metaphysical terms). No matter

RHYTHMICAL MASSAGE *[continued from page 29]*

which terms resonate with you, the art of RMT takes into account the vast and never-ending possibilities of the human form and story!

The work of Ita Wegman and Margarethe Hauschka carved a beautiful pathway of healing for this century and future generations. It is an honor to explore this work and bring it to the world with great enthusiasm. There are now ten new therapists in the world coming out of the first training to be held in North America in many years.

The training was a three-year intensive held at

Patricia Dickson brought earth in the form of clay, creating a complete cycle of embryonic development. Pamela Whitman showed light and color by way of veil painting and harmony.

We practiced eurythmy every morning under the wonderful guidance of Margaret Kerndt. We crossed into Goethean observation of the plant world in Harold Hoven's Raphael Garden, with Marlies Schade. Marei Blitz brought the complex lessons of Functional Morphology in a clear, concise, and prismatic evolution.

“Rhythmical Massage offers levity and invites a person back into the divine rhythms of their own unique individuality that were given while in embryo.”

Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California. The group met twice a year in the spring and autumn for three weeks at a time. We learned the forms, qualities, theories, and lawful sequences of healing touch through Rhythmical Massage Therapy under the guidance of four mentors: Marlies Schade, Margaret Kerndt, Kathy Strutz, and Marei Blitz.

Along with studies in the foundations of RMT, we worked with Dennis Klocek in areas of Embryology, Projective Geometry, Alchemy, Warmth, Freedom, Meditation, and more. Brian Grey offered gifts in Cosmic Evolution and the forming of the Divine Human and biography. Physicians Philip Incao, James Dyson, Kenneth McCallister, and Susan Johnson offered courses in healing pathologies and meeting the patient with both science and art.

Artists gave us training in looking at the healing forms and ideals of RMT in creative new ways.

We attended the American International Post-Graduate Medical Trainings each spring, led by physicians Alicia Landman-Reiner, MD, and Adam Blanning, MD. We were led into the path of healing metals with a very entertaining and enlightening presentation by pharmacist Albert Schmidli. Keith Gelber graced us with his knowledge of the mysteries of the bees. We were blessed with a beautiful, deep, and multi-faceted training!

From the roots of RMT given by Rudolf Steiner, Ita Wegman, and Margarethe Hauschka stemmed blossoms of their work in the world. Two of these blossoms provided the four teachers for this current endeavor to come forth. A European stream brought us the teachers Marlies Schade and Kathy Strutz, who completed their studies at Hibernia College in Stroud, England under the guidance of Aoine Landweer-Cooke who was trained as a therapist and teacher

class of 2017

*The group that graduated on April 28, 2017,
alphabetically by state:*

Colorado

Judy Lucas in Denver, Colorado
www.heartthroughhands.com (303) 523-0077

India

John Miller in Channai, India
The Michael Center for Healing

Kentucky

Sabrina Ford in Louisville, Kentucky

Maine

Maggie Churchill in Camden, Maine
71 Elm Street, Camden, Maine
maggiechurchill@hotmail.com (207) 230-4184

Minnesota

Conradine Sanborn in St. Paul, Minnesota

New Mexico

Jung-Sook Marceaux in Las Cruces, New Mexico
(575) 202-6887

New York

Susan Guida in West Hempstead, New York

Oregon

Summer Dawn Adhara in Portland, Oregon
www.summerarnett.com (503) 575-5555
or
www.wholenessinmotion.com with Israel Sostrin

Donna Patterson-Kellum in Portland, Oregon
www.healthbridgeinc.net (503)331-7393

Washington

Robyn Jones in Whidbey Island, Washington
tone@whidbey.com (360) 579-2430


If you are interested in learning

more please contact the RMTA: www.rhythmicalmassagetherapynorthamerica.org

“These new therapists are walking forward with deep gratitude toward the founders of the work and their many splendid mentors.”

with Irmgard Marbach. Marlies Schade is a practitioner in Fair Oaks, California; Kathy Strutz is a practitioner in Seattle, Washington. Kathy and Marlies are both active on the board of the Rhythmical Massage Therapy Association of North America.

A second stream comes from the last North America training (The School of Rhythmical Massage) founded by Barbara Cavanagh, Kathleen Lazare, Eileen Bristol, and Tim Young in 1996. They were mentored by the master teacher Heidrun Marx of Marburg, Germany. Two groups of students completed the training before the school closed. Margaret Kerndt and Marei Blitz completed their studies there in 1998. Margaret Kerndt is a practitioner in Portland, Oregon; Marei Blitz is a practitioner in Ontario, Canada.

The therapists now recognized in these great streams of healing are walking forward with deep gratitude for the founders of the work and all of their many splendid mentors. It is an honor to carry Rhythmical Massage Therapy into our lives and the lives of those we meet. We have great hope to keep it breathing in the world, in the present and for future generations to come! 

SUMMER ADHARA LMT, RMT, is a rhythmical massage therapist, student of astrosophy, painter, and actor who practices her art and shares her heart in Portland, Oregon.

autumn orchard work

Biodynamic Tree Paste

ABIGAIL PORTER

Biodynamic tree paste is applied once or twice a year, in late fall after leaf-drop, or in late winter before the sap flows and buds break, when the temperature is above freezing. It is used to provide a protective covering primarily on the bark of fruit trees to enhance the vitality, to help protect the bark from splitting, to discourage insect breeding and infestation, to heal injuries, and to cover wounds made during pruning. It may also be applied to fruiting bushes, vines, and roses. A coating of the tree paste

fine clay and cow manure, and one unit of stirred #500, containing enough water to make a paste the consistency of heavy cream or paint. To this, sufficient equisetum tea is added so it is one percent of the total volume.

The tree bark should first be gently brushed or scraped to remove moss, lichens, and dead, loose bark, which provides breeding grounds for insects. Backyard gardeners can use a whitewash brush or paintbrush to apply the paste by completely covering

“Tree paste is recommended for newly planted trees to give them a good start and it is also helpful for ailing or stressed trees.”

may slow blossoming so there is less danger of early frost damage. It is recommended for newly planted trees to give them a good start, and it is also helpful for ailing or stressed trees.

One of the original recipes contained equal parts of sticky clay, cow manure, and fine sand. Later, early biodynamic researcher Dr. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer modified it by adding one stirred unit of BD#500 (horn manure) and .5 to 1.5 percent BD#508 (*Equisetum arvense*) tea for its anti-fungal properties. Another recipe contained equal parts of

smaller trees, and the trunks and lower branches of larger trees. For small trees it is easier to apply a thicker, less diluted paste with your hand.

Care needs to be taken that you do not break off buds as you are brushing the paste on. The paste may be further diluted and strained to use as a spray to cover the upper branches of tall trees. Hand application is impractical for large orchards and the spray is used to cover the whole tree.

Over the years practitioners have developed their own variations according to their needs. Josephine



“Care must be taken not to break off buds as you are brushing the paste on.”

Porter Institute (JPI) currently makes available a version that contains bentonite clay with the Pfeiffer BD Field and Garden Spray and fermented BD#508, which can be ordered at: www.jpibiodynamics.org/product/biodynamic-tree-paste. You may also make your own; a recipe with exact measurements for a

few larger trees or several small trees appeared in the Fall 2004 *Applied Biodynamics*, Issue No. 46. You may download it free on the JPI website under Education > Using and Making Preparations. Or you may contact the JPI office for a copy of the recipe. There are also recipes in *The Biodynamic Orchard Book* by Ehrenfried Pfeiffer and Michael Maltas. 📖

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ABIGAIL (ABBY) PORTER grew up with biodynamics; she helped her mother make the biodynamic preparations on the family dairy farm in northeast Pennsylvania and attended biodynamic conferences—and Dr. Pfeiffer’s lectures—with her. After a thirty-year career in jewelry design and craft, Abby returned to her roots twelve years ago when she moved to the eastern panhandle of West Virginia and started growing her own food on her rural town property. She became active in the local food movement through the farmers market, farm-to-school, biodynamic workshops, and other local initiatives. In 2011, she started writing for *Applied Biodynamics*, the quarterly newsletter of the Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics (JPI) and joined the JPI board of directors. Abby is enthused by the recent interest and growth in biodynamics, especially among young people.

REFERENCES:

The Biodynamic Orchard Book, Ehrenfried Pfeiffer and Michael Maltas *Biodynamic Sprays*, H.H. Koepf (based on a pamphlet of the same name written by Evelyn Speiden Gregg), currently out of print. *Using the Biodynamic Compost Preparations and Sprays in the Garden, Orchard, and Farm*, Ehrenfried Pfeiffer



Truth and Lies

impacts on self *and* other

DAVID TRESEMER, PH.D.

*“George! Come here! Now tell me the truth:
did you cut down that cherry tree?”*

“I cannot tell a lie. I cut down the cherry tree.”

Thus every school child learns about the virtue of the truth from our first President of the United States, George Washington. The story didn’t happen; it was fabricated by an early biographer. This complicates the moral of “tell no lies,” but that doesn’t affect

the story’s continued popularity as a teaching tool.

Another teaching tale for children: Pinocchio whose nose grows longer if he tells a lie. Pinocchio must learn to face the consequences of the truth about something he had done. In these tales, and in many others for both children and adults, truth is set up as a virtue in itself. In some way, you are better off when you tell the truth.

Let’s go right to the anthroposophic view: when

you tell a lie, it sets off an explosion in spiritual worlds. Spirits who are working to assist humanity to grow up are aghast. The explosion destroys things. What does it destroy? Delicate structures that assist energy to move toward maturation. Other things are overly hardened, in defense, including your etheric body. You can verify this yourself. Watch closely when a lie is uttered. Start with your teenage child: you can watch the unseen but strongly felt explosion. Silent to your ears, the “ka-boom” rocks inner worlds. You can watch the aftershocks as the personality in formation tries to recover and mend the damage, actually over-hardening both physical and energy (etheric) bodies.

We all know the situations in which trust was exploded. We all know the long road of rebuilding. Trust can't be magically restored, as much as the liar (and even the listener) would like it to be simple. “I won't do that again” does not repair; it only starts

mainly the province of thinking, peering through the fog of not-knowing and making sense of whatever we can find out. Thus it is a love for pure science that explores the unknown. An attack on truth through lying is actually a deed of poisoned will; an intentional lie is an action, a manifestation of will; in this instance, a hate crime. The first victim of a lie is feeling: the first consequence is a pulling away from the other and a diminishment of mature love. An immature love can unite with a lie, as in people who immaturely love a lie because they can sense its power. Thus all three soul powers—thinking, feeling, and willing—can be engaged in a negative vortex, imploding upon each other, mutually undercutting each other, until an individual becomes a knot of confused nastiness.

Then a miracle happens. Every human being has become a knot of confused nastiness here and there in life. The miracle is that a wellspring arises

“When you tell a lie, it sets off an explosion in spiritual worlds. Spirits who are working to assist humanity to grow up are aghast.”

the process of repair. Trust must be earned anew, and it can take time. The gift to another is to permit repair of a wrong to occur, rather than holding the grudge of “what you did to me, to our trust, to our relationship—I'll never forget it!” By hardening, a grudge actually holds the mangled pieces in place, and prohibits healing.

Trust is built on a mutual love of truth.

Let me translate this statement in terms of the helpful understanding of human beings as threefold: thinking, feeling, and willing. Or cognition, affection, and volition. Or head, heart, and hands. Truth is

into every part of one's being, an unending source of brilliance, compassion, and nobility: the positive forms of thinking, feeling, and willing. This miracle involves soul and spirit in ways that I describe here; and ways that many have discovered by just having to work things out, and which we analyze in the anthroposophic psychology work. “Trust is built on a mutual love of truth” becomes a positive goal for all of humanity.

We can see the lying by those who have power in our society, in politics and economics; actually, in every realm. We observe an intentional distortion



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TRUTH & LIES [continued from page 35]

of fact, an attack on truth. It deeply affects our hearts, and inserts painful daggers of separation between all of us. Some people watch the news to learn what new outrage has occurred today, at great cost to their own feeling life. We can say that the liars are young souls who don't realize, as George Washington and Pinocchio did, that these attacks upon true-truth are so destructive to everything. But we shouldn't have to endure the impacts of their toxicity while they are growing up.

The first step is to become clear in oneself about truth and lies, because many activists have become, in reaction to a barrage of lies, feeling-depleted knots. Individually and as a culture, we struggle with Pontius Pilate's question, "What is truth?" Was that question cynical, coming from one who wielded power and who heard many sides of any question? Or was it sincere? You don't have to know what is "true" about every situation, but you do need to know to what force or spirit or angel you align with for your sense of the truth. Then, when lies are thrown like darts and bombs, you are protected against destruction, and can reaffirm what is true, what is beautiful, and know what to do. 🏹

DAVID TRESEMER, PH.D., teaches in the certificate program in Anthroposophic Counseling Psychology (www.AnthroposophicPsychology.org) which is starting up a new seminar series. He also presents on relationship (www.IlluminatedRelationships.com).

Bay Songs

Late summer, and a pod of
humpback whales made a stopover
in the little bay near our home.

For weeks we all lingered at its seams,
the crumbling bluffs, the break wall, the pungent
kelp-strewn beach, to point and watch,

thrilled by the sight of glistening
backs arcing, split seconds of small dorsals
slicing the surface, the little blow

of salty spray. And as a reward
for the very patient, for those willing
to tirelessly scan the gunmetal waves,

the black, barnacled, vast wedge
of a head, bursting upward through
a foamy array of startled seabirds

gathered to nab a bit of that same bloom
of sardines, anchovies, shrimp, squid,
driven closer to shore by our warming seas.

Soon they will move onward, continue
their hungry crawl down the coast from
well-stocked Alaskan summer homes

to the warm, winter love nests of Mexico,
and we will be left, shaking our heads
fondly at our departed guests.

Telling stories of their antics, smiling at
their memory—but secretly glad they left
before familiarity soured our wonder.

Knowing, deep inside,
the dark heart of our history
with giant gentle things,

the whales, the elephants, the ancient rising redwoods,
how we cannot seem to help but destroy them,
to mine their grandeur for mundanity,

lamp oil, billiard balls, decking,
the alchemy of gold into lead.
How sad is our relationship to immensity.

— BY RYAN WARREN

RYAN WARREN lives with his family by the sea in Northern California. His poetry has previously appeared or is forthcoming in numerous publications including *California Quarterly*, *etere*, *Page & Spine*, *Amaryllis*, *Wilderness House Literary Review*, *Firefly Magazine*, *The Mindful Word*, *Ekphrastic*, *Plum Tree Tavern* and *Your Daily Poem*. More on his published works can be found at www.facebook.com/Ryan-WarrenPoetry.



Different Time, Same Story

MARY LOU SANELLI

It's hard to explain to people today, when it seems that everyone wants to be Italian, that our neighbors once targeted my family.

We'd only lived in Connecticut a few weeks. Because, by God, my father wasn't about to raise his kids in the big, bad apple. And then, in broad daylight, someone painted "DIRTY WOPS!" on our garage door.

I think the way in which I perceived myself changed the very moment I saw those words.

My mother thought it was one of the neighbor

kids. I remember her saying something like, "kids do crazy things."

I didn't believe it was a kid at all, but I didn't argue. Not on your life. My opinion was called talking back. So I kept silent about a certain neighborhood grownup who shook his head whenever our car drove by. Even at my young age, I could detect his contempt for all the European problems he never had to face. And for all the Europeans he did.

My father has said that imagining the "American

dream” was the only thing that got him through the Second World War. But he didn’t carry the streets-paved-in-gold generic illusion. He defined the “dream” as living in a peaceful country. I’ll never forget the look that came over him when he saw the slur on our door, as if part of his dream had been ground out like one of his cigars. As if he’d finally witnessed something he’d been afraid of all along.

It was a different time then, of course, when lots of us still believed that the police always did

And today, with all the renewed discriminatory rhetoric we face, well, I hope something else my dad likes to say is true: *this too shall pass*.

It’s the little memories that have the largest effect.

I have my reasons for why I didn’t change my name once I married. But the memory of my father scrubbing our garage door is one of the strongest.

SANELLI works as a writer and speaker. Her latest book is *A Woman Writing*. She’ll be speaking at the GFWC National Conference in Palm Springs on June 25th. www.marylousanelli.com

“That night, I heard my dad cry for the first time. I felt his tears would wash me away. I buried my head in my pillow.”

the right thing, and so my father might have pretended to agree with my suggestion to call the police, but he never did. “It’s nothing,” he said, “a joke.” And then he got out the hose and a scrub brush.

And now I wonder: do we all see what we want to see, or can handle seeing, and make light of the rest just so we don’t have to turn a small but obvious cruelty into something much bigger?

That night, I heard my dad cry for the first time. I felt his tears would wash me away. I buried my head in my pillow.

My mother cried too, but I was used to that.

There was another clue that my father was a little less secure in our new neighborhood than he let on. He likes to say that everybody in this country loves to eat, but nobody wants to farm. He was proud of his garden, yet he planted it in our shady backyard, not in the sunnier front. See, all of the men in our neighborhood wore suits to work. My father left the house in overalls. He still does. 🍷



Buried machinery in barn lot, due to Dust Bowl conditions. Dallas, South Dakota, May 1936.

Soil, Culture, and Human Responsibility

BRUNO FOLLADOR

“Can you tell me where the Dust Bowl is?”

“Stay where you are and it’ll come to you.”

— A PUZZLED TOURIST QUESTIONING A KANSAS WHEAT FARMER, QUOTED IN WORSTER 2004, p. 29

Less than a hundred years ago, the bounty of the Southern Plains still seemed endless. Kansas farmer Earl Owens remarked, “Boom, all you had to do was plant, and you had a crop. It was just no problem. In the 1920s ... it was a cinch. You put the grain in the ground, and it grew.” (Riney-Kehrberg, p. 12)

Any calls to heed the delicate and complex ecology of the plains seemed ludicrous. After all, as the U.S Bureau of Soils had stated in the beginning of the twentieth century, “The soil is the one indestructible asset that the nation possesses. It is the one resource

that cannot be exhausted; that cannot be used up.” (quoted in Montgomery, p. 148)

But this was not the understanding of the U.S. Geological Survey. Citing the conclusion of the twenty-second annual report of the USGS (1900-1901), geologist David R. Montgomery wrote:

The semiarid High Plains from Nebraska to Texas were fatally vulnerable to rapid erosion if plowed: “The High Plains, in short, are held by their sod.” With rainfall too low to support crops consistently, grazing was the only long-term use for which the “hopelessly nonagricultural” region was well suited. (Montgomery, p. 148)

Farmers, however, were enticed by land speculation and competitive crop prices, and paid little

per bushel dropped and there was no longer a need for such production. In 1917, about 45 million acres of wheat were harvested nationwide. Two years later that figure had increased by nearly 70 per cent, to more than 75 million acres. (Egan, p.43)

what holds the earth together?

The Great Plains were home to several hundred grasses. There were tall grasses (some as tall as eight feet) like big bluestem, switch grass, and Indian grass. There were short grasses: blue grama, buffalo grass, wire grass, bluestem bunch grass, galleta, western wheat grass, salt grass, sand dropseed, needle grass, prairie threeawn, and others. But the apparent monotony of it all was deceiving. In the midst of grass country, one encountered many brightly colored flowers, including the pinkish-purple dotted gay

“Farming becomes a high art when farmers know and respect in their work the distinct individuality of their place and the neighborhood of creatures that live there.” — WENDELL BERRY

attention to such warnings. The value of wheat as a new commodity grew rapidly after the outbreak of World War I. When the Turkish navy blocked the Dardenelles (the narrow strait in the northwestern part of Turkey), the shipment of Russian wheat to Europe was impeded. Suddenly American farmers had a market at their disposal that could match the abundant performance of the land. Backed by the government, farmers transformed the Southern Plains into a uniform, golden monoculture of wheat.

Remarkably, wheat acreages would continue to increase in the decade after the war, even as the price

feather, the rich wine-red cups of low poppy mallow, the red-orange of Indian blanket, and the yellow of broomweed.

Directly or indirectly, the grasses nurtured a rich animal life. There were hundreds of grasshopper and locust species; black-tailed jackrabbits; mice, pocket gophers, kangaroo rats, and prairie dogs; insectivorous moles, rattlesnakes, burrowing badgers, black-footed ferrets, and skunks; soaring hawks and eagles; coyotes, wolves, and pronghorn antelopes, not to mention the astonishing numbers of bison. The American painter and author George



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SOIL [continued from page 41]

Catlin, writing about his experiences in the 1830s, told how bison congregated so thickly in some places that they darkened the prairie for many miles. "As long as the grasses flourished," environmental historian Donald Worster has noted, "the plain was no silent, empty wasteland." (Worster 2004, p. 74)

But there were few settlers who marveled at and understood the intricacies of this landscape. In the early nineteenth century the Great Plains were described as a desolate waste of uninhabitable solitude. In maps up to the end of the Civil War, they were marked as the Great American Desert. Not many settlers managed the perspective of one Texas sheepherder, who remarked, "Grass is what counts. It's what saves us all—far as we get saved ... *Grass is what holds the earth together.*" (Worster, p. 78; author's emphasis)

between earth and sky

The High Plains is a land of volatile weather. Between earth and sky, living creatures and their landscape are exposed to sharply contrasting weather patterns: hot and cold, fierce winds and uncanny stillness, unyielding droughts and torrential floods. There are also blizzards, tornadoes, and cyclones.

Grass was indeed what held the earth together. The native

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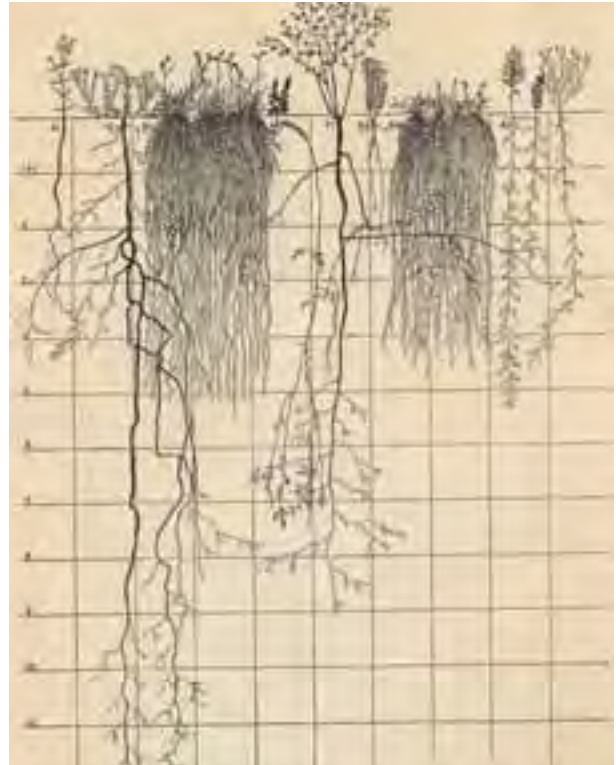
grasses, some with roots six feet deep or more, protected the soil from the scorching sun, mighty winds, erosion, and heavy downpours. The grasses were a pacifying force: unable to tame the elements, they nevertheless moderated their effect and created a more benign world for other forms of life. (Worster, p. 71)

But in the early twentieth century the grasses began to be plowed under. The living tapestry of roots, woven by buffalo grass, bluestem bunch, and other grasses, was torn apart. So thick was the sod that early accounts described the sound of the prairie being plowed as a “fusillade of pistols, the pistol-shot cracks of roots breaking.” (Manning, p. 143) By the mid-1930s, 33 million acres lay bare, ungrassed, and vulnerable to the winds. The dust storms that followed, in what came to be known as the Dust Bowl, created what Worster, professor emeritus at the University of Kansas, has called “the most severe environmental catastrophe in the entire history of the white man on this continent.”

In no other instance was there greater or more sustained damage to the American land, and there have been few times when so much tragedy was visited on its inhabitants. Not even the Depression was more devastating, economically. And in ecological terms we have nothing in the nation’s past, nothing even in the polluted present, that compares. (Worster, p. 24)

The Dust Bowl was no natural disaster caused merely by an unfortunate drought. It was prepared by a world-view severed from any ecological and social context. The fate of the southern plains was already foreshadowed by the quality of language used by the settlers and speculators. The land, instead of being cultivated, was “broken” and its sod “busted.” Wheat, once seen as a gift from the gods, became a “cash crop.” And in lieu of farmers and agriculturalists, the land was shaped by “cash-grain operators,” “grain dealers,” “sodbusters,” and “suit farmers.” The farm, as Worster put it,

Root Growth, *Prairie Studies*,
John Earnest Weaver, University of Nebraska



... became an arithmetical abstraction, a quantity identified by number instead of a personality or history: “T 28-S. R 32-W, sw 1/4,” for example, instead of “the old Briggs place” or “Maidenstone Farm.” In Haskell County [Kansas] a farm often was merely a 160-acre expanse of soil, and by that definition a man might be said to operate six or seven farms, none of them carrying any special identity or allowing much emotional attachment. (Worster, p. 143)

Haskell County itself was delineated as a perfect box—exactly 24 miles on each side—and inside this box were 580 smaller boxes, all of them full 640-acre sections of land, divided and subdivided into smaller and smaller boxes.

It was not only counties in Kansas that were so arbitrarily shaped. The U.S. Rectangular Survey, launched by the Ordinance of 1785, would eventually

SOIL [continued from page 43]

impose the same abstract and homogeneous pattern on 69 percent of the land in forty-eight states. No matter how ecologically diverse a region or landscape might be, the Rectangular Survey showed a complete disregard of the unique qualities and intricacies of each type of terrain. This enforced linearity allowed tractors to plow so unswervingly that real estate ads of the 1920s could boast: “A tractor can be driven in a straight line from corner to corner of the county.” The grid pattern and the type of farming it encouraged were the antitheses of the vision of farming described by Wendell Berry: “Farming becomes a high art when farmers know and respect in their work the distinct individuality of their place and the neighborhood of creatures that live there.” (Berry, p. 9)

The American gridiron hindered this high and respectful art. It fostered detachment from the land, making it easier to turn the land into a salable commodity. Having lost its distinctive character, the land could be worked and sold by farmers and speculators as interchangeable boxes. Perhaps nothing illustrates this detachment better than the commodification of wheat and the creation of the grain market in Chicago.

wheat

According to another leading environmental historian, William Cronon:

To grasp the changes in grain marketing ... one must understand several key features of this early waterborne trading system. All hinged on the seemingly unremarkable fact that shippers, whether farmers or merchants, loaded their grain into sacks before sending it on its journey to the mill that finally ground it into flour. As the sack of grain moved away from the farm (whether pulled in wagons, floated on flatboats, or lofted on stevedores' backs), its contents remained intact, unmixed with grain from other farms. Nothing adulterated the characteristic weight, bulk, cleanliness, purity, and flavor that marked it as the product of

a particular tract of land and a particular farmer's labor. (Cronon, p. 107)

The railroads changed all this. Compared with the water-based system, where the grain sacks had to be handled multiple times, railroad cars were faster and more efficient. Instead of thinking of grain shipments in individual sacks, traders began to treat grain shipments as “carloads” consisting of about 325 bushels each, even though at first the grain was still being moved in sacks.

The counterpart of the railroad—and the solution for the storage problem—was the steam-powered grain elevator. The efficiency of the elevator hinged on one condition: the grain had to be moved without the restraint of sacks.

Cronon states that elevator operators began objecting to keeping small quantities of different owners' grain in separate bins, because an unfilled bin represented underutilized capital. This condition severed the bond between shippers and the individual farmers whose grain they shipped. The corn or wheat would cease to act like solid objects traceable to their origin, and behave more like liquids.

To regulate this golden flow of grain, the Chicago Board of Trade (founded in 1848) proposed a system of regulations designating three categories of wheat—white winter wheat, red winter wheat, and spring wheat. This decision laid the foundation for a radical transformation that would forever change how grain was to be sold in the world.

Before 1856, the wheat one purchased expressed not only the characteristics of a particular landscape, soil type, and weather pattern, but also the fruits of labor from an individual farmer or family. The grain could always be traced back to “Farmer Tom’s” place, or to “Farmer John’s.” It would never be mixed with grain from other places.

The new regulatory system solved the quandary of the elevator operator, who otherwise had to keep track of the owner of each sack of grain. William Cronon describes how this technical solution had deep consequences:

As long as one treated a shipment of wheat or corn as if it possessed unique characteristics that distinguished it from all other lots of grain, mixing was impossible. But if instead a shipment represented a particular “grade” of grain, then there was no harm in mixing with other grain of the same grade. Farmers and shippers delivered grain to a warehouse and got in return a receipt that they or anyone could redeem at will. Anyone who gave the receipt back to the elevator got in return not the original lot of grain but an equal quantity of equally graded grain ... the changes in Chicago’s markets suddenly made it possible for people to buy and sell grain not as the physical product of human labor on a particular tract of prairie earth, but as an abstract claim on the golden stream flowing through the city’s elevators. (Cronon, p. 116)

the land’s perspective

The economic rationalization of plains agriculture might seem to have made a great deal of sense—until one looks at it from the perspectives of the land, the less successful operators, later generations, or the taxpaying public (Worster, p. 228). Only a severe drought and the resulting Dust Bowl would make widely visible the fruit of the political interests, new technologies, and economic order that took hold in the Great Plains during the early twentieth century.

But even more fundamentally, the Dust Bowl was the result of our way of seeing, thinking, and speaking about agriculture and the world. For what we meet in the rectangular land survey, in unvarying monocultures, in grain elevators, and the sterile landscapes are not only elements of a mechanized agriculture. They are also, and decisively, an expression of human consciousness. In an essay entitled

“But in the early twentieth century the grasses began to be plowed under. The living tapestry of roots, woven by buffalo grass, bluestem bunch, and other grasses, was torn apart.”

This new cash-crop system soon proved destructive, not only to the land, but also to community life. Haskell County offers a clear example of this. “The land of Haskell is by and large as sterile and uninteresting as a shopping center’s parking lot—almost every acre totally, rigidly, managed for maximum output ... It is an environment that comes from and leads back to alienation—not a place that can stir much love and concern in the human heart.” (Worster, p. 238)

“The Mystery of the Earth,” the Dutch physician Ita Wegman wrote in 1929: “Nature is becoming a mirror of chaotic human behavior, as is evident in catastrophes and anomalies; we perceive them in nature’s mirror without recognizing them as our own reflection.”

Could other forms of thinking and speaking about the land, instead of fostering alienation and destruction, engender a contextual way of seeing that promotes responsible and conscious actions? Could

SOIL [continued from page 45]

we have a kind of agriculture and land cultivation that neither imposes on nature a preconceived plan, nor allows things simply to take their own course?

Already in 1924 Rudolf Steiner had approached this need for a renewed relationship to nature and agriculture when he gave a cycle of lectures on the *Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture*. This course became the basis for what is now known as “biodynamic agriculture.” During this course it became clear that what Steiner was offering was not simply another agricultural system and set of techniques. In this course he raised questions that still go far beyond our contemporary frame of reference. He pointed to the need for a much broader way of looking at the life of plants and animals, and also at the life of the Earth itself. He invited farmers to expand the scope of their vision to include even the cosmos.

Steiner urged the importance, for each farmer, of developing a personal relationship to everything on the farm. Far from reducing the land to abstract units

- How do I create the space and conditions for my farm to realize its perhaps unrecognized potential?
- How do I foster and contribute to the health of our soils and community?

Agriculture indeed, as we heard Wendell Berry say, can become a high art when farmers know and respect in their work the distinct individuality of their place and the neighborhood of creatures that live there.

awakening to our farms

As important as it is to describe the consequences of the Dust Bowl and illuminate current destructive practices, Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, renowned soil scientist and pioneer of biodynamic agriculture, suggested that this is not enough. “A description of possible future hardships does not induce people to change their way of life. And the change to a self-supporting agricultural life must be preceded by corresponding

“This new cash-crop system soon proved destructive, not only to the land, but also to community life.”

and unrelenting monoculture, the farmer should conceive of the farm as a self-contained individuality.

Biodynamic agriculture invites the farmer to develop new images, questions, and ideas of what agriculture could be. One might, for example, ask:

- How do I participate, inwardly and outwardly, in the development of my farm and all that lives in its landscape?
- How can I become more conscious of the different qualities of my place?

training and education, for no one can become a farmer or gardener merely by picking up a spade or putting on heavy boots. Another incentive is needed... .” (Pfeiffer, p. 29)

According to Pfeiffer the essential thing is to awaken in young people and those interested in starting to farm a feeling for the forces of growth, for the eternally creative forces of Nature. He further wrote: “The next step is to awaken in them a sense of responsibility toward these forces of growth, toward the health of the soil, of plants, of animals and of

“Rudolf Steiner urged the importance, for each farmer, of developing a personal relationship to everything on the farm.”

humanity, and also an inner sense of satisfaction in progressing toward this goal.”

A radical and inspiring initiative launched by the Biodynamic Association (BDA) in 2009 goes exactly in this direction. The North American Biodynamic Apprenticeship Program (NABDAP) helps aspiring farmers develop the skills and knowledge they need to build successful organic and biodynamic farms. An internationally recognized program of the Biodynamic Association, NABDAP combines on-farm training and mentoring with a course of classroom study to provide a strong foundation in both the practical and theoretical aspects of biodynamic agriculture. This program began with a handful of apprentices and mentor farms. Since then, the program has blossomed and grown, with mentor farms across the United States and Canada, and nearly forty apprentices currently enrolled.

Pfeiffer was one of the founders of the BDA in 1938. Today the BDA is the oldest nonprofit sustainable agriculture organization in North America. I dare say that Pfeiffer would have been delighted to see the flourishing of this agricultural training program and to read the statement made from NABDAP graduate Megan Durney, who currently is the head gardener at the Pfeiffer Center in Chestnut Ridge, New York. “I entered into biodynamics because I wanted to participate in an agricultural activity that was conscious, where farmers are awake to the true impact they have on the land and the earth as a whole.” (<https://www.biodynamics.com/nabdap-graduate-profile-megan-durney>)

What biodynamic agriculture teaches us is that we need a shift, not only in agricultural practices, but also a shift in human consciousness, out of which new ways of interacting with nature in agriculture can develop. To awaken to our farms also means to awaken to ourselves and to our personal responsibility. In this light, the renewal of agriculture is an accomplishment waiting to be achieved. ■

The author gratefully acknowledges the works cited here by Donald Worster and William Cronon, from which he drew extensively in researching and writing this article. This article originally appeared in The Nature Institute newsletter In Context.

BRUNO FOLLADOR is the director of the Living Soils* initiative at The Nature Institute in Ghent, New York. He is a Brazilian geographer and biodynamic researcher with an expertise in composting and Ehrenfried Pfeiffer's Chromatography. He has worked with farmers and organizations in Brazil, Europe and the United States. He is deeply committed to Goethean holistic approach to science as a way of transforming human consciousness so that human thought and action can re-connect with the wisdom of nature.

* The goal of Living Soils: To help farmers and others committed to sustainable agriculture and agroecology cultivate dynamic ways of seeing and understanding that can be concretely applied on farms, especially in composting, soil care, and qualitative methods for assessing compost and soils.

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A Market of Ideas for Public Education

history, crisis, choice

STEPHEN KEITH SAGARIN

If you have money, you already have school choice. You can afford to, and have chosen to live in a district with good public schools. Or you pay your property taxes to support local public schools, and then pay tuition at an independent or parochial school.

If you live in a city you have school choice: your district has magnet schools, choice schools, community schools, or charter schools. And a few of those, at least, are close enough for you to choose, even if you don't choose an independent or parochial school.

If you don't have enough money or if you live in a rural area, you have little or no choice.

Is this fair?

If it's not fair, it seems we have three paths: continue to muddle forward, "tinkering toward utopia," in Stanford professor Larry Cuban's phrase.

Cuban's phrase is ironic; the tinkering isn't getting us anywhere.

Or nationalize education, along the models of various European nations that are smaller, more homogenous, tax their citizens at higher rates, and have traditions that do not hold so strongly to the local control of schools that we in the United States have enjoyed for more than two hundred years.

Or introduce genuine school choice, a market not of dollars but of ideas. In the United States, we have always valued local school boards, teachers in classrooms, and parents who know their own children. And research increasingly supports this grassroots approach.

"School choice" today means two things: either charter schools, which are public schools that write their own governing documents ("charters") and

“Our view of education seems always to be, in part, a projection of our current fears onto the rising generation we are charged to educate.”



have their own governing boards, separate from the local school board. Or vouchers, which give a family some amount of money, usually less than the full annual cost of the education of a student, to apply to whatever school it wishes.

What we call the public school system is actually a patchwork of more or less locally controlled districts. Schools are more centrally controlled, for example, in New York, that has a Board of Regents; and more locally controlled in Massachusetts, a commonwealth that has district but not state high school graduation requirements. And *90 per cent of educational funding is from state or local sources*. The federal government and the Department of Education (which was founded only in 1979, toward the end of the Carter administration) are responsible for less *than 10 per cent* of educational funding in the United States.

There are about 55 million school children in the United States. Fifty million of them go to the roughly 100,000 public schools, including about 6,000 charter, magnet, or choice schools, in 14,000 districts. (Although there is rhetoric around “for profit” charters, *more than 80 percent of all charters are not for profit*.)

Five million students attend the approximately 30,000 independent (private) schools, of which the

largest single group is Catholic (about 7,000 schools with 2 million students). Fewer than 2 million students are homeschooled, and about one third of a million students attend online or virtual schools.

For those interested, about 30,000 students attend independent Waldorf or Steiner schools; and another number, rapidly approaching 30,000, attend charter or other public Waldorf-inspired schools. Together, one in one thousand students attends a school based on Rudolf Steiner’s educational principles. This is one tenth of one percent.

Some districts are huge, urban, and diverse. Others are tiny, rural, and homogenous. Generally, individual schools within a district are less diverse than the districts themselves. Moving from overall district organization, an apparently diverse district resolves into a patchwork of schools, each of which is less racially or ethnically or socio-economically diverse than the district as a whole.

Public school expenditures amount to about \$600 billion per year, or \$11,000 per student. Less than 10 per cent of this comes from the federal government; most comes from state and local property taxes. Interestingly, private school expenditures per pupil are almost exactly the same, on average. (Some will contest these numbers; usually they subtract from public school budgets the cost of services like

PUBLIC EDUCATION [continued from page 51]

transportation and meals that are not directly educational, and add to private school budgets administrative costs that are also not directly educational.)

In any school, public or private, most of the expense is in teachers' salaries and benefits. In almost any school or district, administrative costs will be less than 10 per cent of operating revenue.

We may infer two things from these numbers. One is that schools are structurally and functionally alike: there are teachers in classrooms with students, operating under fiscal constraints that affect schools, children, and teachers nationwide. The other is that the day-to-day experience within these schools can be radically different, having to do with what happens in those classrooms and also with the condition of the community in which the school exists.

which was designed to give us a generation of scientists and engineers, and which produced the "New Math." Starting from that time and looking backward through history, we see that in the 1950s there were the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision and *Why Johnny Can't Read*. Then earlier, there were movements to assimilate immigrants; to institutionalize manual training and vocational education; the Blaine amendments against support for parochial schools; movements to professionalize and unionize education. And earliest, a movement for compulsory schooling, starting in Massachusetts in the Colonial era. All of these were responses or reactions to perceived inadequacies of whatever then existed as formal education. Some responses may be considered conservative, others liberal. Most, if

“A good teacher, studies show, can dramatically improve the learning of students. What do great teachers have in common? Nothing, according to studies—nothing, that is, except a commitment to teaching and a knack for keeping the students engaged.”

Further, as a nation, for reasons that are unclear, we have conceived of our schools as being in crisis since the first compulsory school laws were enacted in Massachusetts in the Colonial era. Our view of education seems always to be, in part, a projection of our current fears onto the rising generation we are charged to educate.

Sputnik and the Space Race produced the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958,

not all, arose from an alignment of mixed motives.

Currently, when parents are asked, "If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?" the largest number, more than 40 per cent, would choose a private school. And only 16 per cent of parents would choose a public school. Charter schools and homeschooling would increase eight-to-ten-fold, to

“Increasing possibilities for school choice, in a way that increases all families’ access to good education, is rational and ethical, regardless of politics.”

about 20 per cent each. Regardless of any numbers, most parents in the United States send their children to schools that they would opt out of if they could. Crisis or not, this is pressure to change.

Given the field of education and its history, it’s clear that no single set of expectations, laws, guidelines, or reforms can address whatever we believe may ail the education of our children. More topically, it’s not clear that any Secretary of the Department of Education will or can have as great an impact as her proponents hope, nor as dire as her opponents fear.

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER.

First, despite movements toward centralization of school districts in the middle of the twentieth century, and toward state and national standards and accountability in the past forty years (really, since the Department of Education was created), the United States has always had, and largely maintains, local control of its schools. Public schools are largely governed by locally elected school boards, and private and charter schools by boards of trustees.

Second, as the past few months since the inauguration of our current president have demonstrated, our government is designed to make change difficult. Executive orders, increasingly popular under Mr. Obama and Mr. Trump, carry less weight than actual legislative changes. And, in an increasingly polarized politics, even when one party controls the legislature, agreement on new laws is difficult to obtain. Along the same lines, real change (like that instituted by

the Affordable Care Act) is always negotiated, and in the end, pleases almost no one. Critics on the left, for instance, want a single-payer health care system, while critics on the right bemoan the restriction of freedom and increased taxes that the new law entails. From this example, we can conclude that existing federal and state education laws will not be easy to change.

Third, the educational history of the past forty years shows little distinction between Republican presidencies and Democratic ones. “A Nation at Risk” (Reagan), led to “America 2000” (Bush I); which morphed into “Goals 2000” (Clinton); “No Child Left Behind” (Bush II); Obama’s “Race to the Top”; and the current “Every Student Succeeds Act.” All present the same basic scenario: a politically expedient nudge toward state and national standards, standardized testing, accountability, a slight increase in federal funds for public education, and the strings attached to them.

Although I call this a nudge, its effects over decades are large. Stressed districts cannot easily afford to pass up federal funds, even if they would like to. This prompted students at the district in which I live, for instance, to opt out of local state tests (MCAS) and protest, carrying signs saying, “Be a Hero. Take a Zero.” And, anecdotally but genuinely, good teachers leave the field, tired of “teaching to the test.”

All this occurs against a robust background in educational research that increasingly demonstrates

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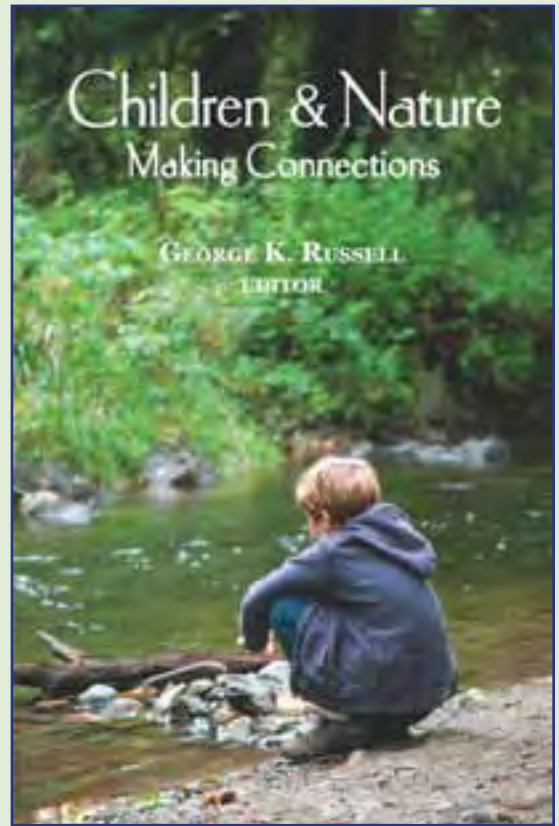
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Children & Nature

Making Connections

a collection of essays edited by George K. Russell

When I think of my childhood, I remember spring bulbs pushing up pale shoots through the dead leaves, spiders in the garden carrying tiny babies on their backs, the scent of violets and honeysuckle, and the sound of the wind rustling the leaves as I perched for hours in the branches of my beech tree. It was that magic of childhood that shaped the passion that drives me to spend my life fighting to save and protect the last wild places of the planet.

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PUBLIC EDUCATION [continued from page 53]

the value of teacher, principal, and school autonomy and initiative. “A good teacher, studies show, can dramatically improve the learning of students. What do great teachers have in common? Nothing, according to studies—nothing, that is, except a commitment to teaching and a knack for keeping the students engaged.” (Howard)

Fourth, although current perceptions associate vouchers, and school choice in general, with conservatives, just two decades ago they were championed by liberals as a way of increasing choice for disadvantaged students and families. There are now approximately 6,000 charter schools in the United States, and fourteen states have voucher programs for disadvantaged and challenged students. (Three more states have scholarship laws that mimic vouchers.) On the other hand, 38 states have constitutions that prohibit state funds from going to religious schools.

Further, “school choice,” by that name or any other, has meant different things to different groups in our history. Prior to *Brown v. Board of Education*, blacks in the south used the concept of school choice to create schools that better served their children. After *Brown v. Board of Ed.*, whites used school choice to avoid integration. No solution, whether charters or vouchers, belongs to one side of the political spectrum or the other, except within a short-term argument.

One serious concern in our current configuration and debate over school choice regards students with disabilities, roughly 10 to 20 per cent of the students in the United States. (The most recent number from the National Center for Education Statistics [NCES] is 13 per cent; advocates of students with disabilities claim this number is too small.) Arguments can be made on both sides: if students with disabilities choose a non-public school, they risk receiving less support and may have to waive rights under the IDEA (Individuals with Disability Education Act). Of course, parents of children who choose a non-public school will do so believing that these risks are worth the change; that’s a definition of choice. Some worry

that if students without disabilities choose out of public schools, this will leave public schools with a higher proportion of students with disabilities. This may well be true, but public schools generally benefit financially from students who choose out. Schools lose less in a voucher or for a charter school placement than they receive in funding, and so they see a net increase in funding per pupil.

Let’s end by asking ourselves some questions about our centuries of educational change. Are our children well served by an educational system born out of and continually reformed by perceptions of failure and crisis? Who is served by the fear and foment of this mode? Is it our children and those who know them best—teachers, administrators, parents, psychologists? Or is it, more likely, politicians, textbook publishers, educational technologists, and interest groups? In this light, increasing possibilities for school choice, in a way that increases all families’ access to good education, is rational and ethical, regardless of politics or any particular Secretary of Education. ■

STEPHEN KEITH SAGARIN holds a PhD in history from Columbia University, and has taught at Columbia Teachers’ College and other colleges, as well as in Waldorf Schools. He writes, lectures, and serves as a consultant for Waldorf schools. He is the author of *The Story of Waldorf Education in the United States: Past, Present, and Future*, among other publications. His blog “What is Education?” may be found at ssagarin.blogspot.com

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Who Do We Owe?

ABRAHAM ENTIN

*St. Peter don't you call me
'Cause I can't go;
I owe my soul
To the Company Store.*

—“SIXTEEN TONS,” MERLE TRAVIS, 1947

The question of debt has emerged as the defining issue of our era. Whether it is students entering their lives burdened by unpayable loans, or countries being called upon to adopt austerity policies that cripple their populations, we all seem to be sharing the plight of the coal miner described in “Sixteen Tons”—to work hard all our lives and die in debt.

Our debts are unpayable. There is much more debt in the world than there is money; and in our system, money is created by debt. (For a short and easy technical explanation, follow this link: www.positivemoney.org/how-money-works/how-banks-create-money)

What this means is that even if we as a world wanted to get out of debt, it is impossible. And since the power in a creditor/debtor relationship seems to lie with the creditor, we feel ourselves stuck in a situation we can never escape. This debt is often

couched in moral terms. We owe because we lack impulse control or can't wait for whatever it is that we want. Our bad behavior catches up with us and we are in a terrible situation.

Putting aside the fact that our whole economic system is based upon convincing people they need whatever is being sold to them, most of today's debt has little to do with our inability to control our impulses. Young people are told that their future depends upon getting a good education, and they take on debt in order to get that education. When they graduate, the good jobs are not there. Instead, there are trillions of dollars in student debt weighing down a generation.

Similarly, we have not put into place a health care system that covers everyone and removes the profit motive from medicine. The result is that the principal reason for personal bankruptcy is medical emergency. We didn't let daddy die—is that really a moral failing? (As a dad, I hope not!) The next largest source of these personal bankruptcies is mortgages that cannot be paid, and the events of the last ten years have shown the institutional responsibilities associated with these filings.

Our economic system is based upon the assumption of these debts as an organizing principle. There are no funds to replace our crumbling infrastructure,

“And, since the power in a creditor/debtor relationship seems to lie with the creditor, we feel ourselves stuck in a situation we can never escape.”

educate our people, or generally serve human needs while we are focused upon this problem of monetary debt.

The most important institution in our economic system is the corporation. These giant entities not only dominate the economic system, but also hold our political system hostage and define what is important in our culture. The Supreme Court has established, through a long series of decisions, that the Rights formerly associated and belonging to human beings extend to these artificial economic beings as well. “Corporate Personhood” is the term most often associated with this phenomenon, and it has aided and abetted this process by allowing corporations to buy elections and have the same rights to speech as individual human beings (for a time-line of these decisions, follow this link: www.movetoamend.org/timeline). The 2012 decision referred to as *Citizens United* has become the symbol of this long-term project to elevate the rights of money over the rights of people.

Of equal importance was the 1919 decision in *Dodge versus Ford* that established the “fiduciary

responsibility to the shareholders” as the most important activity of a corporation. Making money, in other words, must be the primary goal of a public corporation. This leads, inexorably, to statements like this from the CEO of Shell Oil, that “moving too soon to renewable(s) would imperil the dividends” and therefore should be opposed. The fact that continued reliance on fossil fuels imperils the planet is of secondary concern. Indeed, the revealed history that the entire fossil fuel industry was aware of the effects of its policies and covered this up for decades calls into question whether it is a concern at all.

An essay by Ronnie Cummings, the Director of the Organic Consumers Association, asks the question “What would Gandhi Do?” in response to the signing of the so-called DARK Act, which voided the state of Vermont’s law labeling GMO food, making it even harder for us to learn what is in the food that we eat. On the one hand, Cummins points to political and economic tactics (boycotts, and so forth); and on the other hand, the support of alternative sources of food that are more in keeping with the values we hold (organic, sustainable, and so forth).

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DEBT [continued from page 57]

This points to a larger movement and phenomenon that is closely allied with a non-violent and positive response to the issues facing us as a world today. It is the recognition of karma as a reality that is deeply embedded in human existence.

People understand karma as a form of debt. This is correct. It is the debt that we *owe to each other, to the planet, and to the cosmos* for our existence and continued evolution. It is a recognition of our interdependence and of our need for each other.

to the so-called Free Trade Agreements that leave money free to race to the bottom in terms of labor and environmental regulation. Fair Trade is built upon the recognition that the people who grow and pick our food and other crops, who sew our garments and work in our factories, are our partners in these enterprises and that we must act in ways that are mutually beneficial. Fair Trade recognizes the high cost of cheap goods to the planet and to the people who grow and produce these goods. And when

“Fair Trade is a crucial step in the development of an economic system based upon Love, which has its roots in sharing and concern for the other.”


When we say “I owe you one” to a friend who has done something for us, or to make up for a hurt we have done to another, it is an acknowledgment of this reality.

The most significant place that this principle is being recognized today is within our economic life. Two primary examples of this relate directly to the example given above concerning corporate behavior.

The first of these is the emergence of Benefit Corporations, also known as B Corps. These are legal entities that specifically repudiate the single-minded attention to profitability built into the C Corp (the public corporation described above). Instead, the B Corp builds into its structure a commitment to People and Planet as being equal in importance to Profit as a goal of the company. It incorporates this “triple bottom line” into its structure.

The second development, and to my mind, the more significant one, is the fantastic growth of the Fair Trade Movement as a replacement principle

we recognize that we who purchase and use these products are also paying a steep price, then we are acting on the principle of karma.

This recognition elevates us as human/spiritual beings. It is a crucial step in the development of an economic system based upon Love, which has its roots in sharing and concern for the other. This is the next system—the one that replaces the monetary debt that chokes and degrades us, with the debt that leads us into work in service to each other. It is happening now, being born in community gardens and worker co-ops; in alternative currencies based upon service; and in the many social, cultural, and economic experiments and institutions coming into being around the world. We are establishing a world-wide web of conscious interdependence that recognizes the value of everyone. We are building the non-violent future, even in the midst of the chaos around us. 

ABRAHAM ENTIN is a life-long activist for non-violent social transformation as well as a singer, songwriter, and dancer. He lives in Western Sonoma County, CA, with his wife of forty-one years.

Inner Revolution

SARAH HEARN interviews LISA ROMERO

Sarah Hearn: In a world that in some ways can be seen to be waking up and progressing, with a greater consciousness overall than 100 years ago around human rights, civil rights, the environment, and so forth, how can we make sense of the forces at work that enable and encourage political power that runs so completely counter to progression? We can recognize, of course, that in many ways political power has worked against progressive ideals and their accomplishments throughout history, so this is certainly nothing new. And yet our current climate is quite extreme—the line between lying and telling the truth is more overtly blurred than ever before. How can the wisdom of anthroposophy help us understand our current political climate?

Lisa Romero: To begin with, this question around lying and telling the truth is an important one, because it is an experience for many people around the world, supporting the various political movements that are aligned with national self-interest and self-preservation, that those parties are being honest; and that's what they like about those leaders. The people actually perceive the leaders as being extremely honest, because they put forward what the people experience as a true voice, in comparison with the common persona of political correctness that they generally see in politics, which generally acts according to "how we should behave" and "what we should say." I think that's a very interesting thing, because this means that a lot of people believe that speaking out of this aspect of the inner being, from the un-ennobled self, the shadow self, is equivalent

to being honest. And it's quite extraordinary to see that a leader who is expressing opinions in this way is so appealing to others. But it gives us the insight that people are in fact looking for something that is real and true. This seeking actually lives in the human soul in our times in various ways. And although people are not actually finding the real and true in this leadership, we can see that they are actually looking for it on some level.

This question of honesty has an effect not only in the realm of politics, but also we are seeing people being so-called more honest about their feelings, about what they're experiencing at the level of communication between two human beings. For example, someone says, "I need to be honest with you: you make me really upset!" From the perspective of inner work, the honest thing to say would be something like "there are parts of my being that I can't control." What's honestly occurring in such a situation is that an interaction is bringing up parts of an individual's untransformed self. And the reality is that these parts are for the individual in question to consciously work with and seek to transform for themselves, rather than telling the other all about it; rather than putting that on another human being to change.

So, for example, supporters of Donald Trump speak about him as being refreshing, honest, and genuine; but that isn't actually honesty. And I think that it is important to recognize that as a humanity we don't even really have a collective sense for honesty. And because we don't have a universal experience of what honesty is, there are those who are

saying that he's being dishonest, and they generally mean this with regard to the line he is blurring between facts and false information. And on the other hand you have others saying that he is honest; and in that they are often speaking about his undeveloped self, the shadow self. This is not just a Trump problem; it lives in the collective consciousness.

Sarah Hearn: Interesting. So that's a picture of the Trump presidency—that it's revealing something that lives in our collective atmosphere. Could you say more about that?

Lisa Romero: Every community has its own collective consciousness, and this consciousness affects the inner life of each individual in that community. And each individual in the community has an effect on

However, what we impress upon the collective consciousness is not who we are in the sense of how we like to see ourselves; but rather, how we truly are in our unconscious and subconscious thinking and feeling. If we merely suppress outwardly what actually lives in us as our thoughts and feelings, it does not change the collective atmosphere, because this atmosphere will reveal what lies hidden in the human being.

We are caught up in an external picture of others that originates in the judgmental inclination of the personality. And that grows into very wide and deep divides that continue to inflict pain in the form of the collectivist sentiments of racism, sexism, and other prejudices based on outer appearances.

“...people are in fact looking for something that is real and true—this seeking actually lives in the human soul in our times in various ways.”

the collective consciousness for that community. The weight of the balance falls with the majority; so in order to bring change to the practical life, the majority of the collective must be ready for change. The collective consciousness does not develop through the “political correctness” of what we want others to think we believe; rather, the collective consciousness actually reveals to us the deeper beliefs of the community, even though these naturally do not correspond to the deeper beliefs of every individual within that community. We are all subjected to the collective consciousness, we are influenced by it; and we each impress upon it what genuinely lives within us.

Sarah Hearn: And how do we change this in ourselves, and in our work with children, in education?

Lisa Romero: Well, we can find some forward orientation in the first principle of the Anthroposophical Society, which was to form a group of individuals without differentiating on the basis of sex, race, denomination, and so forth. And that is the social attitude that we need and lack today. It's the social attitude that we need if we are to continue to evolve as a humanity, and its absence is currently reflected in a head of state in the White House whose attitude does differentiate on the basis of sex, race, religion, and so forth. So our task is not to focus

INNER REVOLUTION *[continued from page 61]*

on who stands in front of us as a mere external person embodying a certain skin color and certain sexual characteristics, a particular religion, and so forth. In every encounter we have to ask ourselves, do I bring my same self to a meeting, whether the person I'm meeting with is a man or a woman, for example? Or do I adapt and change what I bring or how I bring it, not because the individual circumstances call for it, but because this collective

behaviors, through social media, and so forth. The majority of individuals experience an upbringing that supports the development of only certain capacities in their being, or that supports the development of their capacities in an imbalanced way. This generally happens not because we want to cause disturbances, but because we ourselves are not fully awake to the new flow of consciousness now calling upon us to awaken what is individual in each child.

“We are caught up in an external picture of the other that originates in the judgmental inclination of the personality, and that grows into very wide and deep divides that continue to inflict pain in the form of the collectivist sentiments of racism, sexism, and other prejudices based on outer appearances.”

conditioning is at work. When you speak with a receptionist, do you bring your same self to that meeting as you do when you speak with a doctor? Do you hold the same quality of listening, or connecting? In this age, we will need to see each other anew. In this age, we will need to begin to treat each other as individuals; to look upon the other as an individual with certain capacities, talents, and gifts that can contribute toward an ever-progressing and evolving society. A society that is not devoid of the spirit, but that is working to reveal the spirit more fully as it evolves.

The social element of education is very important; all young people are already being educated about various aspects of life through conditioned

We have no choice but to strive to meet this with an education that supports growing young people in a health-giving way, that adds truly social pictures as a balance to the often one-sided influences of their surroundings. As educators, we are doing our task well if we are able to elicit the individuality from the student; if we're able to call it forth and make room for all that the individual truly is. Every generation that enters into the world comes with creative impulses for the future. So when we stand as parents and educators and think, “I have got to teach you,” the reality is that the young people also have something to teach us.

When human beings are not allowed to bring their individual spiritual capacities to expression

[continued on page 64]



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INNER REVOLUTION [continued from page 63]

fully into the world, the results are some form of diversion of their fundamental creative force, in a distracting or even destructive manner, onto others or themselves. All of these diversions in the thinking, feeling, or willing lead the individual toward becoming a persona, a caricature of him- or herself in the personality.

Sara Hearn: So these pictures of the untransformed in us, and also these diversions in us, certainly connect with trying to understand our current political situation. With these understandings it seems that it is in a way a symptom of an underlying illness.

Lisa Romero: Yes, exactly. So when we consider objectively an issue like our political situation, in acknowledgement of the spirit, we should be able to look at it from different points of view with clarity. So can we look at the Trump administration and say, “What’s the point of this, that’s not just the shadow forces at work? What is that point of view? What is this a symptom of? What might that be?” Because if we can see that, if we could truly find and acknowledge that point of view, we could educate that in the child, raise up that point

when they ask us questions about the political situation, for example.

And it’s important to clarify that it’s not about condoning or affirming anything. But if this is the shadow of our collective consciousness, there’s actually a point of view for us to try and recognize in it. I think the basic point of view we’re getting is that the way we’re going is not alright!

And it’s helpful to remember that in the light of progression, the shadow gets stronger. And that’s connected to this honesty piece we spoke about at the beginning of our conversation. What we think is honesty is not actually honesty. It is actually the undeveloped part, the untransformed aspect, speaking out and being given center stage.

So there is a much deeper illness process of the soul at work and we need to figure out and work with the picture of what it is trying to free us from. And that’s a point of view that we can use as a way of talking to and educating younger people. Politics is speaking to this underlying pathology; so how can we bring healing, and keep working forward?

Sarah Hearn: Many people are taking to the streets to express their objection to the current



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administration and its policies, and to seek change through protests, community organizing, petitioning elected officials. Existing forms of activism have obviously spiked because of the possibility and then eventual election of our current president. There is a powerful quote from Rudolf Steiner in your newest book (*Sex Education and the Spirit: Understanding Our Communal Responsibility for the Healthy Development of Gender and Sexuality within Society*) that comes to mind:

Every external revolution today, no matter how agreeable to whichever party or class, will only lead us into the worst of blind alleys and inflict the most terrible misery on humanity, unless it is illumined by an inner revolution

of the child only if the teachers inwardly know that this external bodily representation cannot be thought of as the totality of the individual being in front of them. The outer chatter does not change the collective consciousness; we have seen that. Nor does it transform imbalances within the collective society. Only those revelations of the spiritual reality of equality inwardly lived by the teacher can have a healing effect. It can matter what words are spoken, but what matters more is the deeper being of the one who speaks the words.

Sarah Hearn: This makes complete sense when we consider a Gandhi or a Martin Luther King. It wasn't just the words they spoke, which anyone else could have spoken, that had such a tremendous effect on

“How can we make sense of the forces at work that enable and encourage political power that runs so completely counter to progression?”

of the soul. This involves abandoning one's absorption in purely materialistic views and actively preparing to receive the spiritual wave that wants to pour down into human evolution as a new revelation. (Rudolf Steiner, How to Listen to the Spirit)

Can you say something in this direction?

Lisa Romero: We can go around and advocate and even succeed in securing certain changes with these so-called social laws, for example, along the lines of what we see as progressive. Even in schools, we can start calling the children “students” instead of “boys and girls” in order not to impress gender bias upon them. But it makes a difference to the freedom

of the world. I understand that nearly all of the Right Livelihood Winners over the years (the alternative Nobel Peace Prize) who work in different fields like peace, conflict resolution, human rights, environment, culture, science, economy, and so forth have an active spiritual life.

Lisa Romero: Right. But humanity is blocked from accessing revelations through the inner hindrances that we individually bear. Thankfully however, we are not merely left to our inner hindrances without the capacity to do something about them. We can adjust what lives in us. Just as Steiner's six basic exercises work on external hindrances, serving to block the negative effects of the collective consciousness on

INNER REVOLUTION [continued from page 65]

our own inner world, so do meditative and contemplative exercises work upon our internal hindrances, lessening their effect on our clear experience of the spiritual world and its guidance.

Many meditative exercises serve to align us with the spiritual realities we have lost touch with through material life, as well as preparing us for a relationship with the living spiritual world and the experiences that we may receive through that rela-

way by engaging with meditative and inner development exercises; but it is communities that will bring about political change. Each spiritual epoch of human evolution has its unique task in supporting our communal progression in the direction of developing love and freedom. In and through us, the world is taking shape. In and through us, humanity has the potential to become a greater and fuller participant of the living spiritual life. ◀

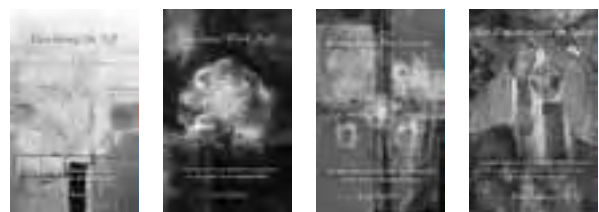
“The path of transformation is actually not so much a path of personal transformation, as it is a path of world transformation—a path toward re-enlivening the world.”

tionship. In order to do this, the soul life needs to be re-educated in that direction, through which we may commune with spiritual life and become aware of the dimensions of our relationship with the living spiritual world. We become aware of just how much is still being bestowed upon the human race. We begin to see that we are still evolving, despite the great veil of materialism. We see how the next generation is coming with a new consciousness that brings with it continued hope in the progress of humanity. We begin to grow into the awareness of how assisted we are in our striving, and how we can connect directly with those guiding forces through our deeper soul activity.

The path of transformation is actually not so much a path of personal transformation, as it is a path of world transformation—a path toward re-enlivening the world. We can work to understand these qualities and activities in ourselves in a new

LISA ROMERO is the author of several books. *The Inner Work Path* focuses on anthroposophic meditation practice. *Developing the Self* was written after years of working with Waldorf teachers to support their inner work and pedagogical understanding of child development. *Living Inner Development* offers an understanding of the inner experiences and results of various inner development exercises. *Sex Education and The Spirit* helps awaken an understanding of our communal responsibility for the healthy development of gender and sexuality within society). Lisa is also a complementary health practitioner and an adult educator who has offered healthcare and education out of anthroposophy since 1993. Since 2006, the primary focus of her work has been on teaching inner development and anthroposophic meditation. Through *The Inner Work Path*, Lisa offers lectures, courses, and retreats for personal and professional development, in communities and schools worldwide. For meditation courses and talks, visit www.innerworkpath.com.

SARAH HEARN is a complementary health practitioner working out of anthroposophy, and with *Developing the Self* (www.developingthelself.org). Sarah has a background and interest in initiatives working for social health; she co-founded Think OutWord, a peer-led training in social threefolding for young people, and has taught in high school, adult education, and community settings. With Gary Lamb, Sarah edited *Steinerian Economics*, a resource guide, and she contributes to Great Song Farm (www.greatsongfarm.com), a biodynamic CSA farm in upstate New York, where she and her partner live and work.



STILL LIFE, ROME

A purple weed among the cobblestones
 exhales spring through cigarette butts.
 The grim walls of the Vatican Museum
 brood over steps leading to the market,
 and silence is crushed by motorbikes and bells.

But in one quiet corner, among the litter
 of broken bottles, old mattresses,
 and the whisper of blown paper,
 a blossom with violet at its throat
 creeps up among the stones and stale tobacco,
 more beautiful than four miles of galleried Madonnas,
 more tender than the Child in her arms, more loyal
 than Swiss Guards a mile away, or the khaki men
 with Uzzi's in St. Peter's Square, holier than
 Bernini's saints, braver among the glass shards
 and shredded nicotine than the ghosts of martyrs.

Rome breathes the fragrance of hidden blooms,
 and somewhere among the plastic rosaries
 and dashboard Colosseums, the Pope sleeps
 in a small apartment near the Tiber, where
 magenta buds open their lavender hearts
 to the stinking cobbles. They live without regret
 on the filthy edge of life, their faces smashed
 like paper dolls on the pavement.

— DONNA PUCCIANI

DONNA PUCCIANI, a Chicago-based writer, has published poetry on four continents. Her work has been translated into Italian, German, Chinese, and Japanese and has won awards from the Illinois Arts Council, the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, and other organizations. Her seventh and most recent book of poems is *Edges*.





CAROLINA ALLEN, THE MOTHER TREE (ORG)

Go Play

NANCY BLANNING

My memories from childhood often recall my mother saying “Go play.” To us that usually meant to go outside, find a neighborhood child or two, and figure out what to do. There were a few essential toys: a doll or two, a truck, a bicycle, roller skates (the metal kind that clamped onto the toe of our substantial Buster Brown shoes); and Mother’s high heels or Father’s heavy leather shoes for clumpy-walking dress-up. There was a hand spade for digging in the garden and a beloved egg beater to crank around in soapy water and build up mountains

of suds (well, maybe what looked like mountains to us children). Also on hand were a few worn-out bed sheets and an old blanket for building forts by draping these over some discarded two-by-fours that lay alongside the wall of the garage. If the weather was too cold or wet, the building went on inside with sofa cushions and dining room chairs as our construction essentials. By today’s standard, this does not seem like much. But this was no deprivation or poverty. These items kept us endlessly busy figuring out different ways to use them. We did not know that we were creating; we were just doing. Materials were simple and the activity was satisfying. And all the while we children were playing, our parents were doing the necessary work of each day.

Fast-forwarding to today, we see many shifts in practice and attitude. Play opportunities for children are usually more structured with concerns about

“It is said that play is a child’s work.”

safety in our increasingly uncertain and unpredictable world. So we have playdates replacing the more open-ended, free-range “go play” of former times. Finding your own “what to do” is being replaced by toys that entertain, dazzle, or instruct. These toys are often limited in what kind of play they suggest to the child. With narrowed versatility, these toys offer short satisfaction to the child and are soon abandoned.


The lives of parents have also changed. Working parents have limited waking hours’ contact time with their children. They want “quality” interaction with their offspring when possible. Parents who do not work outside the home often have more open time in the day because conveniences have lightened our household workload. These parents are searching for activities to fill the day. So more and more parents are playing with their children. This can involve getting down on the floor and playing with the child’s toys as though the adult were a child. It can also mean following along behind the child to make sure he or she stays entertained and is constantly reassured of the adult’s attention and presence.

To interact playfully with our children is essential. Dressing and cradling a baby doll, having a pretend tea party, building a castle in the sandbox, racing trucks across the floor, running, dancing, tickling, and wrestling are wonderful and enjoyable as short interludes. But for the adult to become the child’s playmate as a long-term activity can be a kind of slavery for the adult and a handicapping limitation for the child. Why? Isn’t it rejecting and neglectful not to respond to the child’s request, “Play with me”?

What is play? The answer is different for the adult and for the child. One dictionary definition states that play is recreation. Adults conceive of recreation as something that gives relief from the effort and stresses of work. We often think of sports and athletics as recreational activity; media entertainment also fills a lot of down time. Through playful activities we refresh our vital energies. Adult play can help us relax our attention and escape from the responsibilities of life for a little while.

“Materials were simple and the activity was satisfying.”

For children, the process is reversed. The children’s task is to find their way into life, not escape from it. Play for them is an act of creation. Children take the experiences and impressions of the world and re-create them in a form they can manipulate and direct. Through this process, these young ones can imaginatively explore the world and make sense out of it in a way that suits their level of consciousness. It is said that play is a child’s work. When viewed as creative activity, we can see that play is serious business. In play children focus intensely, concentrating on re-creating what they have witnessed in the world, digesting the experience so it becomes their own in their emerging world construct.

It is important for us to observe and respect children’s play process. We can protect the space in which they can unfold this unique capacity of early childhood, which we adults have become distanced from. We can give models of purposeful human activity for children to imitate and explore. But when we become playmates, we are trying to imitate being a child (which we are not), and actually get in their way. They do not need us as playmates. They need us as guides into human life. When the environment is right (not narrowed by pre-scripted toys or adult fearfulness), and we say “go play,” we are releasing them to one of the most important creative activities for the young child’s present and future. 

NANCY BLANNING has been a Waldorf early childhood educator for nearly thirty years, emphasizing therapeutic and developmental support with young children. She also serves on the board of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association (WECAN) and is co-author with Laurie Clark of *Movement Journeys and Circle Adventures*, a therapeutic movement resource book for teachers. For further information on WECAN and its activities, please visit www.waldorfearlychildhood.org

Art as a Doorway to *beauty, health, and community*

An Interview with ROBIN LIEBERMAN,
Founder and Curator of the Art Hall exhibition space
at Cedarwood Waldorf School in Portland

I met psychotherapist, art therapist, and Art Hall gallery founder and director Robin Lieberman last fall when I attended a watercolor course offered in conjunction with Jennifer Thomson's Portland Art Hall exhibit. We met up again this spring in Seattle and toured the Seattle Art Museum before squeezing into a crowded café where we had the following conversation about art, color, and The Art Hall at Cedarwood Waldorf School. After you read this story, please visit thearthall.wordpress.com and read the stories of the artists who have exhibited in the past at this wonderful community art space. —Christy Korrow

LILIPOH: *Robin, will you share a little bit with us about your connection to art and where you're coming from as an artist?*

ROBIN: I've considered myself an artist my entire life. I had lost my way for awhile, then rediscovered myself and a whole new way of looking at art and color; a whole new way of appreciating and understanding it, when my children entered the Cedarwood Waldorf School. It was a new beginning for me when I encountered art from an anthroposophic perspective. The concept of form coming out of color whisked me away into another level of existence!

I discovered Liane Collot d' Herbois and her therapeutic art book, *Light, Color and Darkness in Therapeutic Painting*. Around that time, I met the anthroposophic artist, nurse, and educator

Jannebeth Röell and told her about the book I had discovered. She suggested that we study together, and begin with Rudolf Steiner's *Color Lectures*. I realized that I wanted to be able to offer painting therapy as a modality within my psychotherapy practice, as a way to combine two of my life's passions. And I asked Jannebeth to be my mentor. We continued to work weekly from Liane's seminal book for about five years; and our relationship evolved into a warm friendship where we still paint together, with others, nearly weekly...for almost ten years now.

From my early days as an artist, I always knew art was a doorway and there was something on the other side, but I didn't know how to access it or walk through it. Through studying Collot and veil painting I began to experience more of a knowingness in my

Robin Lieberman, founder and director of
The Art Hall gallery space.



“I walked into the beautifully remodeled annex
and I just saw an art gallery!”

ART HALL *[continued from page 70]*

soul about the existence of color as beings who are here for us.

LILIPOH: *When you say that there was a “doorway”—please say more about what you mean by that. A doorway from where to where?*

ROBIN: From my limited understanding of color and its existence, as we generally know it, to a spiritual understanding of art. Color became another way for me to access the spiritual world.

LILIPOH: *It’s wonderful to hear how you started to immerse yourself into this new kind of painting out of color. Tell us the story of how that led you to want to share anthroposophic art with more people and to eventually develop the exhibit space, The Art Hall. Why did you start it?*

ROBIN: With my degree in art history, having studied art exhibitions in museums and galleries,

a background in retailing, and 25 years as a psychotherapist, one of my dreams in this life was to have a gallery or community meeting place where there was art and music and good food. In some ways, The Art Hall is a manifestation of part of my destiny.

Our family came to Cedarwood on the tail end of the first year of the school’s existence. We were one of the pioneer families. As time went on, the school purchased a historic building that for more than a hundred years, was a vibrant part of the Portland community. It had been home to a school where there were May Faires and dancing around the maypole; it housed the first swimming pool in Portland, and the first Vietnamese restaurant. It is on the National Register of Historic Buildings, known as The Neighborhood House, originally owned by the National Council of Jewish Women. By the time



Community members gather at the Regional Sketch Group Exhibit.

the Cedarwood was ready to occupy this annex building, both of our children had graduated from the eighth grade.

Nevertheless, having been part of the vision and preparation for the school's extended home, our family maintained our connection to the school community. When this new building opened up, I walked into the beautifully remodeled annex and I just saw an art gallery!

I wrote a proposal to the College of Teachers stating that I would like to make a space dedicated to the future of THE ARTS (in capital letters) from an anthroposophic perspective. As you know, the Waldorf education curriculum is created out of rhythm, like that which lives in music and art. It's a healing curriculum about breathing, and that's so much of what color is and what art is. We need to keep that alive.

Churchill's words during World War II come to mind. When asked if the schools should cut the arts to help support the war effort, he is reported to have said, "If we're not fighting for art, then what are we fighting for?" It's an interesting side note that he was a watercolorist himself.

LILIPOH: *I love the concept of having a gallery space dedicated to artists working out of Rudolf Steiner's impulse. The only other anthroposophically-focused gallery that I know of is the 78th Street Gallery in Santa Fe. I know some of the branches of the Anthroposophical Society do host occasional exhibits as well.*

ROBIN: I can't define what anthroposophic art is; there's an ongoing discussion about that. But we do know that when we look at certain works of art, we experience something a little bit different. The Art Hall is also an educational tool for people in



Local artists participate in a course offered by exhibiting artist Marie-Laure Valandro.

“The concept of form coming out of color whisked me away into another level of existence!”

ART HALL [continued from page 73]

the community. It's an effort to keep art alive into the future. There is value and a healing impact it can have when you're surrounded by it. And when there's no artwork up on the walls, it really looks dead. It's so obvious now that we have the color up there, half of the year. It's quite stunning!

LILIPOH: *I am impressed by the professional presentation of the works.*

ROBIN: The Art Hall is a non-profit venture, and a labor of love. A percentage of each painting sold is donated by the artist to support The Art Hall. This has allowed us to install a professional gallery-style hanging system for the artwork and it pays for the advertising and abundant hospitality table at

the opening receptions. The professional standard is also a way to show respect for the art and to honor the artist. As a therapist, I see a person's potential and support them to experience themselves more fully.

There have been a few artists who've been shy about showing their work, but felt a lot of support and encouragement, so they've moved forward and put themselves out there. It really is a big deal to expose oneself that way and allow it to be, because paintings don't lie. The artist may be a channel for something coming through, but it's coming through that particular person; so the work says a lot about the artist as well. It takes a certain kind of courage

to say, “Okay, I’m going to mat and frame this and put it out there for people to look at.”

LILIPOH: *How do you select your art?*

ROBIN: Janebeth Röell was our inaugural artist in 2013. In addition to being my friend, colleague, mentor, and great support, she had been on the board of Cedarwood for six years, so I wanted to honor her for all that she’s given to the school.

The second exhibit came out of a faculty retreat led by Ted Mahle. The teachers created some absolutely stunning pastel works. The teachers talked about their experiences doing the work, so this added a dimension of interest to the opening of that show.

Laura Summer (who many of your readers may know as the co-founder of Free Columbia in the Hudson Valley in New York), asked if Portland might be ready for an “art dispersal.” Laura is always doing something avant garde and innovative. So this courageous woman rolled up 36 canvasses and put them in a tube and mailed them from New York to Portland, Oregon. We hung them up and had an art dispersal and it was phenomenal.

Pam Whitman, who is just about the most lovely, gracious, warm, kind-hearted therapeutic artist I know had these magnificent veil paintings. She came in and did a workshop and exhibited her work and gave a deeply moving presentation—it was wonderful!

I invite the readers to visit our blog to see many of the wonderful works of art that have graced The Art Hall. Now that the gallery is more established, I am being approached by artists who want to exhibit, which is wonderful.

LILIPOH: *Sounds like an organic process.*

ROBIN: It’s working the way a painting gets created.

LILIPOH: *That’s a good metaphor.*


ROBIN: A little bit of luck never hurts, and I have a lot of support. In a way, it’s a family affair. My beautiful son has made the flyers for workshops

TOP: Pamela Whitman, visiting/exhibiting artist, teaching veil painting workshop.

BOTTOM: Visiting artist Jennifer Thomson demonstrates veil painting at a week-long course offered in conjunction with her Art Hall exhibit.



“The economic support of the artist is so important.”



SUNSET FROM MANZANITA, AN OREGON BEACH TOWN.
Pastel by Robin Lieberman

ART HALL *[continued from page 75]*

associated with the exhibits, and my husband helped me design the blog.

LILIPOH: *What's the community response been like?*

ROBIN: Some openings have had approximately 200 people. Different artists attract different audiences, but there's been ardent support from the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society, and there's a core group of people who've been at every opening. And, of course, the Cedarwood community. We even have a bit of an international following on the blog posts!

Essentially, the bottom line is that children, teachers, parents, and guests at the school come and go through the building's Art Hall every single day and receive the healing of each of these pieces of artwork that are displayed there. When appropriate, a teacher will bring his or her students in to look at the art, so the works of art are being used as a teaching tool.

LILIPOH: *What strikes me from my very short exposure to the Portland anthroposophic community is the richness of the people working out of the artistic impulse.*

ROBIN: Yes, there are a number of artists and

painting groups working out of anthroposophy. When we can, we work with the exhibiting artists to offer a course or a workshop. We have been able to bring artists in from other parts of the country. This is a wonderful aspect of the maturing health of The Art Hall, that we can afford to pay the artists' expenses to travel to Portland and teach. We can share in the shipping costs of the art work, as well as host them as our guests.

LILIPOH: *This economic support of the artist is so important. It ties into the question of how important it is to value art for what it offers us on our inner path and for what it can bring socially. I'd like to hear your thoughts on that.*

ROBIN: During my last year in high school, my painting teacher taught an art history class and it opened up a whole new world to me. I realized that I was interested not just in the art, but also in who is creating this art, and how art is always expressive of the consciousness and creative impulse of the time. Fast-forward in time to my learning about Laura Summer, who says that each piece of artwork has its own life and work to do in the world and needs to be somewhere.

Many years ago, there was art hanging everywhere, in everyone's home. It wasn't just for people who could afford it, or an investment, like buying real estate. But Laura really brought that concept of "art for everyone" into focus to me.

It's what we were given along the spiritual road as human beings—to create art. I think it's part of our mission as human beings to trust the integrity of our creative spirit, whichever way you express it. It doesn't have to be making art, but it means expressing our creativity in some capacity. Art is a clear expression of will. If we don't have our creativity in our imagination, then we are going to die.

LILIPOH: *We are going to die?*

ROBIN: We all know that we are in this current age of the intellect and technology. We are not asking the question often enough, how do I engage my heart?

How do I engage my heart more? That's what we have to do; and one way of doing that it is through art—whether it's looking at it or creating it. In having a relationship with art, an experience with art, you have a relationship and experience with yourself in a deeper way.

LILIPOH: *And through that art can become a hygienic or a healing force.*

ROBIN: The more people whose hands touch a paintbrush, the better the world will be. It's not about whether you're a good artist or not. It's about trust and keeping alive your sense of curiosity and wonder about what can happen.

LILIPOH: *Well said. Thank you!* 📖

art hall artists for the 2017/2018 academic year

CURRENT AWSNA Welcome Cedarwood Acquisitions from The Art Hall and her artists.

FALL Jacqueline Freeman, photographs of elemental beings. *Opens Sept. 14.*

WINTER Laura Summer will offer an Art Dispersal Jan. 19 and a two-day workshop on the Gospel of St. John. Jan. 20-21.

SPRING A collaboration between Tom Klein, string art, and Martin Levin, geometric wire sculptures.

Chuck Andrade, who led a weekend lazure workshop at Cedarwood Waldorf School and beautified the Performance Space. *Tentative.*

special events

Five-Year Anniversary Exhibit & Celebration

Multi-Artistic Collaboration between musicians, eurythmists and visual artists, bringing to life Rudolf Steiner's beautiful story, *The Being Of The Arts.*



west

AUG 4–13: Portland, OR **Summer Eurythmy Conference** Rudolf Steiner's Twelve Moods with Michael Leber, Dorothea Mier and the Association for Therapeutic Eurythmy in North America. ATHENA: 206.383.7705; www.therapeuticurythmy.org

AUG 11–15: Crestone, CO **Goethe Color Circle Painting Retreat** with Jennifer Thomson, Ammi Kohn and Dr Philip Inaco. 719.937.7694, sunstudio.thomson1@gmail.com; www.jenniferthomson.net

AUG 19: Fair Oaks, CA **Biodynamic Essential Oils** Alchemical Growing and Processing Herbs for Health. Cancer/Leo:Sowing and harvesting with the star moon, the moon of the phases, and the action of lunar declination on plants. Rudolph Steiner College: 916.961.8727; www.steinercollege.edu

AUG 25–28: Crestone, CO **The Seasons: Landscape Painting** Art Retreat with Jennifer Thomson. Venture into the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to become more artistically in tune with nature. 719.937.7694, sunstudio.thomson1@gmail.com; www.jenniferthomson.net

AUG 29: Portland, OR **Mind and Body in the Womb: How Do We Exist as Embryo?** with Jaap Van Der Wal at the Cedarwood Waldorf School. Included in the four day seminar. Society for Physicians of Anthroposophic Naturopathy: span.wildapricot.org/events

AUG 29–SEP 2: Portland, OR **Embryo in Us: Understanding Ourselves as Embryo.** A workshop organized by the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society and the Society for Physicians of Anthroposophic Naturopathy at the Cedarwood Waldorf School. Society for Physicians of Anthroposophic Naturopathy: healthbridge@integra.net; span.wildapricot.org/events

AUG 31–SEP 4: West Hollywood, CA **How We Will: Threefolding Our Cultural Revolution.** Turning radical ideas into revolutionary action, and systemic change in the cultural, political, and economic realms. Urban First Aid, Kait: 323.333.0902; howwewill.blog



SEND YOUR EVENTS TO:
editor@lilipoh.com. Please submit notices in the following format: Date (month/day), city, state, title and/or short description and contact information.

SEP 16: Fair Oaks, CA **Biodynamic Essential Oils** Alchemical Growing and Processing Herbs for Health. Leo/Virgo: Principles of combustion, furnace construction, crucible choices, salt extraction and alchemical digestion processes. Rudolph Steiner College: 916.961.8727; www.steinercollege.edu

OCT 14: Fair Oaks, CA **Biodynamic Essential Oils** Alchemical Growing and Processing Herbs for Health. Virgo/Libra: Chelation of micro metals as a method for producing colloidal gem sprays. Rudolph Steiner College: 916.961.8727; www.steinercollege.edu

central

SEP 11–23: Ann Arbor, MI **Intensive Health Retreat** Designed for ambulatory individuals with chronic illnesses, or anyone seeking to restore their life forces. Rudolf Steiner Health Center: 734.633.4365, www.steinerhealth.org

OCT 19–22: Pewaukee, WI **The Foundation Stone Meditation and its Rhythms** Kolisko Institute Annual Workshop. Lili Kolisko Institute for Anthroposophic Medicine: 262.912.0970x5; info@koliskoinstitute.org; www.koliskoinstitute.org

OCT 27–28: Maplewood, MN **Unveiling Dementia, Eating Disorders & Narcissism** an Association of Anthroposophic Psychology Sampler. anthroposophicpsychology.org/event-2517147

east

AUG 9–12: Chestnut Ridge, NY **Recognizing and Working to Transform the Spirit of Ahriman in Our Times** Sponsored by the George Washington Carver Research Institute at the Threefold Education Center. Natalie Adams: natradams@aol.com; www.threefold.org

AUG 11–13: Mount Desert Island, ME **Dreams, Fairy Tales and Tarot as Soul-Making** with Rick Bouchard. Deepen your own spiritual journey to prepare for guiding others. The Alcyon Center: 207.244.1060; office@alcyoncenter.org; www.alcyoncenter.org

AUG 16–20: Mount Desert Island, ME **Walking Pilgrimage for the Soul** with Susan MacKenzie. Inspired by the beauty of the ocean, mountains, and valleys of Mount Desert Island. The Alcyon Center: 207.244.1060; office@alcyoncenter.org; www.alcyoncenter.org

AUG 25–27: Mount Desert Island, ME **The Mystery of Feeling** with Julia Polter & Cheryl McDevitt, chaplains. The Alcyon Center: 207.244.1060; office@alcyoncenter.org; www.alcyoncenter.org

SEP 16–19: Garden City, NY **Child Development:** A yearlong study for Waldorf Professionals with Connie Helms from the Association for a Healing Education at the Waldorf School of Garden City. Sabine Kully: kullys@waldorfgarden.org; www.waldorfgarden.org or 802.488.4652; conniehelms@gmavt.net; www.healingeducation.org

SEP 27: Chestnut Ridge, NY **Michaelmas Festival in the Garden** a free, child-friendly event. Pfeiffer Center garden: 845.352.5020x120; www.pfeiffercenter.org; info@pfeiffercenter.org;

OCT 3–4: Mechanicville, NY **Depression: A new Light on the Olde Blues** with Jaimen McMillan. How movements, postures and spatial habits influence feelings. Spacial Dynamics Institute: 518.695.6377; www.spacialdynamics.com

OCT 13–14: Floyd, VA **Building a Round Hive** an advanced workshop. Hands-on hive-building will be accompanied by demonstrations and lectures related to hive scent, warmth, wax, form and hive-body materials. Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary: 570.745.2153; www.spikenardfarm.org

OCT 20–22: Chestnut Ridge, NY **The Art of the Speaking Word: The Hexameter.** Sponsored by the Speech School of North America at the Threefold Education Center. Christa Lynch: 845.352.5020x122; christa@threefold.org; www.threefold.org

OCT 28: Chestnut Ridge, NY **Stand Up and Speak!** with Laurie Portocarrero. Sponsored by Threefold Educational Foundation & The Art of Acting. Bill Day: 845.352.5020x124; billday@threefold.org; www.threefold.org

international

SEP 3–10: Vršac, Serbia **IMPT International Conference of Anthroposophic Medicine** with the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: Zoran Petrov: petrov@mailcan.com; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

SEP 8–11: Dornach, Switzerland **Teach the Teacher in Teaching** Anthroposophic Medicine International advanced training for anthroposophic physicians with the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: +41.061.706.4290; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

SEP 14–17: Dornach, Switzerland **Living Warmth** International medical conference of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: +41.061.706.4290; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

SEP 29–OCT 4: Western Cape, South Africa **IMPT International Conference of Anthroposophic Medicine** with the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: Julia O'Leary: juliaoleary021@gmail.com; +27.021.7948428 or +27.076.9047632; Rebecca Sturgeon: rebeccasturgeon@gmail.com; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

OCT 6–7: Brighton, UK **HANDLE Course Levels 1 & 2** with Sean Williams at the Brighton Steiner School and the HANDLE Institute. +44.01273.558.545 sarah@seanwilliams.co.uk; www.handle.org

OCT 11–18: Bogota, Columbia **IMPT International Conference of Anthroposophic Medicine** with the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: Paola Grajales, ipmtcolombia2017@gmail.com; +57.317.3429699; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

OCT 28–31: Dornach, Switzerland **What do children and adolescents learn in sleep?** How do we work in Waldorf education with the forces of the night? International advanced training for kindergarten and school physicians, advanced training in pediatrics, annual conference of child and adolescent psychiatrists. Medical Section at the Goetheanum: +41.061.706.4290; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

NOV 15–22: Calcutta, India **IMPT International Conference of Anthroposophic Medicine** with the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: Swapna Narendra: swapnanarendra63@yahoo.com or contact. ipmtindia@gmail.com; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

NOV 15–22: Tultenango, Mexico **IMPT International Conference of Anthroposophic Medicine** with the Medical Section at the Goetheanum: ipmt.mexico2017@gmail.com or adelars@hotmail.com; WhatsApp: ++5215528531581; www.medsektion-goetheanum.org

DEC 8: Venice, Italy **Introduction to Spacial Dynamics** with Jaimen McMillan. Spacial Dynamics Institute: 518.695.6377; www.spacialdynamics.com 

classifieds

Opportunity For An Anthroposophical Music Therapist In New Zealand Hohepa School for children and young adults with very high needs is seeking a new Music Therapist to join our team of anthroposophically trained therapists.

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Maine Coast Waldorf School. Founded in 1984 as Merriconeag Waldorf School, Maine Coast Waldorf serves some 250 students from Early Childhood through Grade 12. Explore Waldorf High School the Maine way! Host families available. 207-865-3900, Ext. 103, MaineCoastWaldorf.org.

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