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A READER'S JOURNAL

**Becoming the Archangel Michael's
Companions, GA#217
Rudolf Steiner's Challenge to the Younger
Generation**

13 lectures in Stuttgart Oct. 3-15, 1922

by

Rudolf Steiner

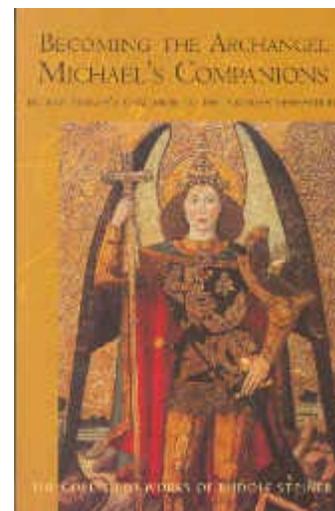
Introduction by Chris Bamford

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Published by SteinerBooks/MA in 2007

A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2008

Chapter: Spiritual Science



Who is the Archangel Michael? Why does he appear in sculptures with his foot on a snake or a dragon? Why is he sometimes called St. Michael? Is he the same person as San Miguel, San Michele, or Saint Michelle? What is his relationship to St. George, who also is shown slaying a dragon? And, lastly what is the correct pronunciation of his name in English?

These are some of the questions which puzzled me when I first began to study Michael the Archangel. He is certainly a being whose legends and myths have proliferated over the centuries and over many cultures. San Miguel is his name in Spanish, San Michele in Italian, and Saint Michelle in French. In English we pronounce his name My-Kull, but it is better to separate his name into three syllables, Mi-cha-el, to remind us that he is *Micha* of *el* (Micha of God) — *el* is the last syllable of all various archangels, Gabriel, Raphael, Samael, etal.

There is the city Archangel in Russia named after him, there are various cities, counties, islands, etc named San Miguel, there is a museum in Italy named San Michele, there is a fortress Mont St. Michelle on the coast of France, and there are many churches in America named St. Michael. Many churches, with other Saints' names, have a statue honoring Michael the Archangel prominently displayed. In many cultures we encounter this powerful archangel in many names. Somehow, in England, his legend got merged with that of St. George and the dragon — Michael is usually shown standing on a writhing dragon with one foot and applying his spear to it, whereas St. George is usually shown on horse back applying his spear to the dragon.

What is the meaning of the dragon which appears ubiquitously with Michael the Archangel? Note that the dragon is dark skinned and it is always portrayed alive and squirming, trying to escape, but held firmly with a spear poised overhead ready to dispatch it. This represents the function of Michael the Archangel in our world, and each of us must grab hold of that spear to assist him to kill the dragon. He appears with the sword and we must help him complete the job, each in our own way. We are, rightly understood, companions of Michael and he needs us to complete the job he is charged with. The evil represented by the dragon is alive and writhing, striving to unleash itself upon the world and our lives, and we must take hold of Michael's spear and apply it to the dragon in each of our lives.

What is the evil represented by the dragon? How do we become companions of the Archangel Michael? These are among the many questions answered by this book(1). First, the question of evil — evil is something we all recognize when we see it, but few have ever created a better definition of evil than

Rudolf Steiner when he said, "Evil is a good out of its time." A person's death is not evil, unless by homicide or suicide it is precipitated out of its natural time. The dragon wishes things for us that are not in their proper time and these things become evils, no matter how attractive they may be to a majority of humans. Sustaining truths whose time is past is another evil which is often overlooked. Our teenagers today, as in Steiner's time, recognized that many of the things they are being taught have expired shelf-lives, are stale, tasteless, and in fact harmful to them, to the future that only they will be able to achieve. As Louis Armstrong admonished parents about their children, "They'll learn much more than you'll ever know(2)." One answer to the second question of how we become companions of Michael is we do it by "Michaelic thinking" — as described here from the Introduction by Chris Bamford:

[page xviii] Rudolf Steiner speaks of this process in many ways — above all, perhaps, as "Michaelic thinking," that is, the thinking of the enchristened heart that allows us to think (cognize) the invisible in the visible so that we realize that we, too, are invisible, supersensible beings. He also stresses that it is Michael's task and nature to reveal nothing to us unless we bring to him something of our own earthly spiritual work. In this sense, Michael is a mediator: bringing knowledge of the spirit in return for our work, he ensures that we can properly (consciously) appropriate what we are given, rather than opening ourselves to the risk of being overcome by it.

In basketball, if one takes a shot at the basket and misses the net, the rim, and the backboard, we call that an "air ball". Steiner discusses in Lecture 1 at Stuttgart, three kinds of air balls: 1) air ball of the soul, 2) air ball of human connecting, and 3) air ball of action. The air ball of the soul is the cliché or "empty phrase" — which generates a lack of thought, principles, and will. (Page 4) "Where the empty phrase begins to dominate, the inner soul-experiencing of the truth dies away." With that human beings cannot connect with each other as they did before. People pass by each other without understanding taking place. That is the air ball of human connecting. You become aware of this disconnection when you hear someone talking about their point of view as being the right one. One's standpoint is like a look at a tree from one spot on the ground. Until one has moved completely around the tree and observed it from multiple standpoints, one cannot demand that one's viewpoint is the right one. One's viewpoint is a map, and the map cannot represent all the territory as Alfred Korzybski rightly noted — the fullest view is the multi-ordinal view, taken from many standpoints as possible. Even then it is only a map, but a much fuller one upon which to base one's judgments and decisions to act.

The third air ball of action is the development of the weakened will, "weak-willed in the sense that thought no longer unfolds the power to steel the will in such a way as to make human beings, who are thought-beings, capable of shaping the world out of their thoughts." (Page 6)

Here is Steiner talking directly to the youngsters of his audience and summarizing the three air balls for them. One can almost feel their heads nodding in agreement as he says this:

[page 6] Now let me tell you, from an external point of view, what is living in your souls. You have grown up and have come to know the older generation. This older generation expressed itself in words; you could only hear clichés. An unsocial element presented itself to you in this older generation. People passed each other by. And in this older generation, another thing to present itself was the inability of thought to pulse through the will and the heart.

If this seems as fresh and new today as describing the world our current high school graduates face, then it must be because every new generation faces these three air balls, and feel an urge to get on the court, get their hands on the basketball, and show the old folks how to hit the baskets and score. The teenager hears the older generation say some "empty phrase", e. g., "This is how the world is" and they feel an encrustation of ice form which only the warmth in their heart can break through. The teenager today, as in Steiner's time, wants to throw open the shutters of the past breathe freely of the future flowing in.

Steiner worked on the Goethean archives in Weimar and should be in a position to speak with authority on Goethe's last words which are often misinterpreted as "More light".

[page 10] You know that among the many cliches which became current in the nineteenth century, it was said that the great pioneer of the nineteenth century closed his life by calling out to posterity, "More light!" As a matter of fact Goethe did not say "More light!" He lay on his couch breathing with difficulty and said, "Open the shutters!" That is the truth. The other is the cliché that has connected itself with it. The words Goethe really spoke are perhaps far more apt than the mere phrase, "More light." The state of things at the end of the nineteenth century does indeed arouse the feeling that our predecessors have closed the shutters. Then came the younger generation; they felt cramped; they felt that the shutters, which the older generation had closed so tightly, must be opened. Yes, my dear friends, I assure you that, although I am old, I shall tell you more of how we can now attempt to open the shutters again. We shall speak further about this tomorrow.

As a child I wanted to know all about the world, how it works, and thus I began at an early age taking apart things to figure out how they worked: clocks, radios, and numerous other devices which people had discarded. As a boy of ten in 1950, I was able to find the first discarded television sets and take them apart and use their parts to build crystal radios and vacuum tube radios. Back then a TV set lasted only a couple of years in the days before transistors came into general application in electronics. I decided to study physics because of my interest in how the various things I took apart worked. I didn't have any interest in building these things as an adult, so engineering wasn't for me. By the time I took all that college could give me, I walked away into a world in which all the magic was gone, into the cold world of the intellect, and I wondered why I found the world so empty. New things such as computers came along to excite my imagination, so I programmed, helped design new computers, built large gas pipeline control systems with them, and soon the world grew cold again. What was this phenomenon that kept arising? I would learn something new and it would lose its magic? Till I studied Rudolf Steiner I did not understand the deceptive nature of what was happening to me or why it happened. This next passage will summarize what I learned from him.

[page 20] Certainly, in the sphere of the intellect, tremendous progress has been made since the fifteenth century. But this intellect has something dreadfully deceptive about it. For people think that in their intellects they are awake. But the intellect teaches us nothing about the world. It is, in reality, nothing but a dream of the world. In the intellect, more emphatically than anywhere else, a human being dreams, and because objective science works mostly with the intellect, which it applies to observation and experiment, science basically dreams about the world. It all remains a dreaming. Through the intellect, a human being no longer has an objective relation with the world. The intellect is the automatic continuation of thinking after one has been long cut off from the world. That is why human beings of the present day, when they feel their soul within them, when they get a feeling of themselves in their soul, are again seeking a real link with the world, a return to the world. Here one makes a peculiar discovery. If, up till the fifteenth century, human beings had positive inheritances, now they are confronting a "reversed" inheritance, a negative inheritance.

Nowhere in my extensive education in various colleges was I taught about the basic emptiness of the intellect — I felt it in my soul, but I had been taught to distrust my feelings as something that was not real, only an illusion, learning that from the very people most deeply stuck in the empty illusion of the intellect. I was feeling the "negative inheritance" of humankind, and I earnestly sought to discover the reason for it, how that essential part of my being worked. I know now that if I had been fortunate enough to attend a Waldorf School, this negative inheritance would have been neutralized. Instead of experiencing the world through the polarized glasses of the intellect which filtered out its feeling reality, my teachers would have opened the shutters of the world to me and encouraged me to learn to experience the world directly

through its phenomenon. Only then would I have been interested in learning to apply the intellectual concepts which science provides. I would have had a positive inheritance and a jump start into humanity.

[page 23, 24] Only the spirit can open the shutters, for otherwise they will remain tightly shut. Objective science — I cast no reproaches and do not mistake its great merits — will, in spite of everything, leave these shutters tightly closed. For science is only willing to concern itself with the earthly. But since the fifteenth century, the forces that can awaken human beings no longer live in the earthly. The awakening must be sought in what is super-earthly within the human being. This is actually the deepest quest, in whatever forms it may appear. Those who speak of something new, and are inwardly earnest and sincere, should ask themselves, How can we find the unearthly, the supersensible, the spiritual, within our own being? This need not again be clothed in intellectualistic forms. Truly, it can be sought in concrete forms; indeed it must be sought in such forms. Most certainly it cannot be sought in intellectualistic forms. If you ask me why you have come here today, it is because there is living within you this question: How can we find the spirit? If you see in the right light what has impelled you to come, you will find that it is simply this question: How can we find the spirit which, out of the forces of the present time, is working in us? How can we find this spirit?

As I entered my thirties, I became interested in psychology and psychotherapy, basically how the human being worked. And I existed inside of a working model. As I did with clocks and radios, I studied broken ones, humans with problems of various kinds, in an effort to learn how normally operating ones operate. I soon learned to shun therapists who insisted that I be broken in ways I wasn't broken before I could work with them. I found amazing insights in [Freud](#), [Jung](#), [Milton Erickson](#), [Virginia Satir](#), [Paul Watzlawick](#), [Richard Bandler](#), and [John Grinder](#), among many others, insights which revealed to me a whole world that existed outside of our waking day-time consciousness. These all helped me to expand my understanding of the human being, but it wasn't until studying Rudolf Steiner that the spirit struck me like a lightning bolt (Page 33) and enkindled my deepest understanding of what it means to be a full human being. The word, anthroposophy, as coined by Rudolf Steiner for his spiritual science means knowledge (*sophy*) of the full human being (*anthropos*). It is a word that, rightly understood, one should not stumble over in pronouncing, but should use its syllables as stepping stones into understanding of the spirit which exists in every human whether they deny its existence or not.

Never during my academic career would I have thought of talking about spirit in a concrete way — that would have seemed quite paradoxical to me. Concrete was sensory-based experience only. Little did I suspect back then how little concreteness there was to the way that I had been taught to think. How could I get a feeling for the spirit when I had been to ignore my feelings about everything? Oh, I still had them, but I kept them hidden and out of sight for fear of doing or saying something unscientific. To me the chemical of salt, mercury, phosphorus, etc, were simply a combination of the properties described in my 3500 page Handbook of Chemistry and Physics, 41st Edition, and nothing else.

In Lecture 3 Steiner strives to help the youngsters understand the concrete reality existing in the nature of the spirit.

[page 25] Today, to lay a foundation for the next few days, I shall speak about the spirit in the most concrete way. I must call on you to try to develop a real feeling for what is meant here by spirit.

What is taken into consideration by a human being today? People attach importance only to what they experience consciously, from the time they wake up in the morning until they go to sleep at night. They reckon as part of the world only what they experience in their waking consciousness. If you were listening to the voice of the present and had accustomed yourselves to it, you might say, Yes, but was it not always so? Did human beings in earlier times include anything else in what they understood by reality than what they experienced in their waking consciousness? I certainly do not wish to

create the impression that we ought to go back to the conditions in earlier epochs of civilization. That is not my intention. The thing that matters is to go forward, not backward. But in order to find our bearings we may turn back, look back rather, beyond the time of the fifteenth century, before the age I attempted to describe so energetically to you yesterday. What people of that time said about the world is looked upon today as mere fantasy, as not belonging to reality. You need only look at the literature of ancient times and you will find that when people spoke of "salt," "mercury," "phosphorus," and so on, that they included many things in what they meant that people are anxious to exclude today. People say today, Yes, in those days people added something out of their own imagination when they spoke of salt, mercury, phosphorus.

Another thing I was taught, not directly but by inference, was that the way humans experience the world today was the *way they always experienced the world*. Therefore the alchemists who wrote about salt, mercury, sulphur, phosphorus in strange ways were simply imagining things out of their ignorance, not out of some ancient wisdom that we have since lost. What was it that people in those days saw?

[page 26] We do not want to argue about why this is so fearfully excluded today. But we must realize that human beings saw something in phosphorus, in addition to what is seen by the mere senses, in the way modern people see color. It was surrounded by a spiritual-etheric aura, just as around the whole of nature there seemed to hover a spiritual-etheric aura, even though, since the fourth or fifth century C.E., it was very colorless and pale. Even so, human beings were still able to see it. It was as little the outcome of fantasy as the red color we see today. They actually saw it.

Why were they able to see this aura? Because something streamed out to them from their experiences during sleep. In the waking consciousness of that time, people did not experience in salt, sulfur, or phosphorus any more than they do today, but when the people in those days woke up, sleep had not been unfruitful for their souls. Sleep still worked over into the day and their perception was richer; their experience of everything around them was more intense. Without this knowledge as a basis we cannot understand earlier times.

Sleep still worked upon humans during their daylight consciousness, but soon that era passed as human consciousness continued to evolve. Soon those direct experiences of chemicals were treated as abstractions by so-called modern scientists whose daylight consciousness gradually lost the attributes of sleep.

[page 26] The spirit continued as an abstraction in tradition, until, at the end of the nineteenth century, one could not grasp the spirit in one's thinking, or at least one could not sense it. External culture, which alleges such great progress, naturally attaches the greatest importance to the fact that human beings act upon it with their waking consciousness. Naturally, with this they will build machines; but with their waking consciousness they can work very little upon their own nature. If we were obliged always to be awake, we should very soon become old — at least by the end of our twentieth year — and more repulsively old than old people are today. We cannot always be awake, because the forces we need to work inwardly upon our organism are experienced within us only during sleep. It is of course true that human beings can work on outer culture when they are awake, but only in sleeping consciousness can they work upon themselves. And in olden times, much streamed over from sleeping consciousness into the waking state.

These insights into the nature of the evolution of consciousness inspired [me](#) to write this poem:

Waking Consciousness

**With our waking consciousness
we can build a bridge to Paris
But we cannot build a bridge to our soul.**

**With our waking consciousness
we can fly a plane to Rio
But we cannot fly within our soul.**

**With our waking consciousness
we can work upon the natural world
But we cannot work upon
the inner nature of our soul.**

**Only with our sleeping consciousness
can we work upon
the inner nature of our soul.**

**With our waking consciousness
if we were to strive to stay awake
We would soon grow very old.**

**With our waking consciousness
we can work upon the natural world
But only while asleep
can we work upon our soul.**

**With our waking consciousness
we can read a book
and learn about the world
But with our waking consciousness
we cannot learn about our soul.**

**With our waking consciousness
we can have clever concepts in our head
But we cannot understand our soul
because these concepts are stillborn dead.**

From pondering these thoughts, over time it became clear to me why the great physicist, Isaac Newton, gave up the study of physics at middle age and spent his waning years studying the spiritual world. This is a fact which one cannot find an explanation of in any current history of physics, other than Newton went crazy with old age.

[page 27] Read any current history of physics and you will find that it is written as if everything before this age were naive; now, at last, things have been perceived in the form in which they can remain permanently. A sharp line is drawn between what has been achieved today and the ideas of nature evolved in "childish" times. No one thinks of asking: What educational effect does the science that is absorbed today have from the point of view of world-historical progress?

Books were read in a deeper fashion in earlier times, almost in a ceremonial fashion and that process of reading "drew something out of the depths of people's souls."

[page 28] The reading of a book was actually like the process of growing: productive forces were released in the organism, and human beings felt these productive forces. They felt that something real was there. Today everything is logical and formal.

Everything is assimilated by means of the head, formally and intellectually, but no will-force is involved. And because it is all assimilated only by the head and is thus entirely dependent upon the physical head-organization, it remains unfruitful for the development of the true human being.

What is the effect upon one's soul of concentrating solely upon the "logical and the formal"? I think this is nowhere better put than this quatrain by [Samuel Hoffenstein](#). I was only 19 and a freshman in college when I encountered this poet which had an enormous impact on me, especially this four-line stanza which I promptly memorized, memorizing not something that came neither naturally nor easily to me. For 30 years I wondered, held as an unanswered question, why was this stanza so important to me? The answer came as I began to read Steiner and realize that, even at 19 — the age of the young group these lectures are directed to — I was feeling the loss of soul and spirit in my nascent college career, I was remembering the future — experiencing a time-wave from the future of a time when I would come to understand the importance of these lines.

**Little by little we subtract,
Faith and fallacy from fact,
The illusory from the true
And starve upon the residue.**

Do you ever feel a tingle or a tinge of excitement while you are thinking? Chances are during those times, you are not thinking logically or rationally. Logical and rational thinking deals only with dead concepts and can have no invigorating effect upon the living soul and spirit. What was it like to have living concepts back in earlier times? Something like having an anthill in one's brain.

[page 28] With regard to modern thinking, materialism is quite right, but it is not right about thinking, as it was before the middle of the fifteenth century. At that time people did not think only with the brain but with what was alive within the brain. People had living concepts. The concepts of that time gave the same impression as an anthill; they were all alive. Modern concepts are dead. Modern thinking is clever, but dreadfully comfortable! Human beings do not feel the thinking, and the less they feel it, the more they love it. In earlier times, they felt a tingling when they were thinking, because thinking was a reality of the soul. Now people are made to believe that thinking was always as it is today. But modern thinking is a product of the brain; earlier thinking was not.

Computers are the latest form of machinery to which today's thinkers compare our brain. They say that the computer is a metaphor for how our brain correlates and outputs thoughts. In Steiner's day, he said they would say that the millwheel was a metaphor for how the brain worked. But notice that both the millwheel and the computer are dead things, not living. And either one can only snatch and manipulate dead things. A millwheel turns living grains into dead meal and flour, and a computer manipulates dead data, even if the data comes from external sensors from the living world — once it arrives in the computer, it is dead data stored formally and logically in data banks, but dead nevertheless. This data can be displayed to show the semblance of life, but it is only a semblance, not life. Even a sonogram of a living baby in the womb is merely a dead map giving only a semblance of the living baby.

[page 29] Westerners love dead thinking, where they do not notice at all that they are thinking. Today, not only when someone is talking nonsense but also when they are talking about living things, Western people confess that a millwheel is turning in their heads. They do not want what is living. They merely want to snatch at what is dead.

Think about this whenever you hear someone talk about computers learning to think — they mean dead thoughts, but never say so because they do not realize what a dead thought is because it is the only type of thoughts they are capable of generating, up until now. I wrote a poem once about computers generating

poetry. I said that would not surprise me at all, but if computers were able to select a great poem from a bunch of mediocre poems, that would greatly surprise me! It would be like expecting a computer to be able to have picked out Picasso's first cubist painting and proclaim it to be a wonderful new work of art.

I don't consider myself an expert on living thoughts, having spent my early decades years focused mostly on logical and formal thinking which deals with dead concepts. About thirty years ago, I began to sense the power of holding an unanswered question. I noted how so often when I asked people a question, they had a ready answer, usually an answer they heard from someone else. They would toss off this superficial answer as if it were the God's truth — apparently it was to them — and go on to talking about something else. For myself, I would hold such questions in my mind as unanswered, and wait for an answer to arrive. I would go to bed sometimes wondering about the question. The answer would not come the next morning, maybe weeks, months, or years later, but it would arrive and I would recognize as arriving in a form which was unique to the question I had held. I believe that my process of holding unanswered questions is a way of stimulating living thoughts in myself. Perhaps some of you, dear Readers, have noted a similar process in yourself.

[page 30] Living human beings, however, demand a living thinking, and this demand is in their very blood. You must be clear about this. You must make your head so strong again that it can stand, not only logical, abstract thinking, but also living thinking. . . . The earlier thinking could be carried over into sleep. Then one was still something in sleep. Human beings were beings among other beings. They were something — real entities — during sleep, because they had carried living thinking with them into it. They brought living thinking out of sleep when they woke up and took it back with them when they fell asleep. Modern thinking is bound to the brain, and this cannot help us during sleep. Today, therefore, in accordance with modern science, we can be the cleverest and most learned people, but only during the day. We cease to be clever during the night, when we face that world through which we might work upon our own being. For this reason, human beings have stopped working on themselves. With the concepts we evolve from the time of waking to that of sleeping, we can achieve something only between waking and sleeping. We cannot accomplish anything on the human being. People must work out of the forces with which they build up their own being. . . It is out of sleep that people must bring the forces through which they can work upon their own being.

Everywhere we see commercials for body working machines which guarantee you a better body in 30 days — many people must be buying these machines to work on their bodies — but how many people work on their own being? Have you ever met a large imposing man, but when you talked to him all he could talk about was bank business? Or met a small slight man and found his narrow frame supported a boundless spirit? The presence of mere intellect does not nourish the spirit, it merely enlarges it by dilution, leading to what Steiner calls a "thin-soul skeleton" in the spiritual world.

[page 31] What happened when people of earlier times passed with their souls into sleep? They were still somebody, because they had within them what hovers around things — what we call today a "fantasy." They bore this into sleep. Human beings could still hold their own outside the physical body in the spiritual world. Formerly they were somebody in the spiritual world between going to sleep and waking up. Today people are less and less of a real entity. They are nearly absorbed by the spirituality of nature when they leave their bodies in going to sleep. In true perception of the world, this is at once evident to the soul. You just must see it, and you will be able to see it when you acquire for yourselves the necessary vision for these things. Humanity must attain this vision, for we are living in an age when it can no longer be said that it is impossible to speak of the spirit as we speak of animals or stones. With such faculties of vision you will be able to see that even though Caesar was not very portly in physical life, yet when his soul left his body in sleep it was of a considerable "size" — not in the spatial sense, but its greatness could be experienced. His soul was majestic. A person today may be one of the

most portly of bankers, but when his soul steps out of his body in sleep into the spirituality of nature, you should see what a ghastly, shrunken framework it becomes. The portly banker becomes quite an insignificant figure! Since the last third of the nineteenth century humanity has really been suffering from spiritual undernourishment. The intellect does not nourish the spirit. It only distends it. That is why human beings take no spirituality with them into sleep. They are nearly sucked up, when they stretch out into the world of spiritual nature between sleeping and waking, as a thin soul-skeleton.

When I first came to understand the spiritual world, it amazed me to find that many organizations and individuals who were writing about the spiritual world were actually materialists. The biggest surprise was to find this mode of thought among prominent members of the Theosophical Society, for example, those who talked about spirit as being very diffuse matter or talked about the "permanent atom which goes through all our earthly lives". Matter is still matter, however attenuated it is.

[page 32] Now, I really do not find any very great difference between those people who call themselves materialists and those who, in little sectarian circles call themselves, let us say, Theosophists. For the way in which the one makes out a case for materialism and the other for Theosophy is by no means essentially different. If people want to make a case for Theosophy with thinking entirely dependent upon the brain, then even Theosophy is materialistic. It is not a question of the words one uses, but whether spirit is in the words spoken. When I compare much of the Theosophical twaddle with Haeckel's thought, I find the spirit in Haeckel, whereas the Theosophists speak of the spirit as if it were matter, but only diluted matter. The point is not to speak about the spirit, but to speak through the spirit. One can speak spiritually about the material, that is to say, it is possible to speak about the material in mobile concepts. That is always much more spiritual than to speak un-spiritually about the spirit.

In my early reviews of Steiner's books and lectures, I would form tables to help me and my readers remember certain categories, such as the physical, etheric, astral, and I of the human being. This use of tables was a carryover from my scientific training, and I was surprised to find that Steiner did not approve of the use of tables. I stopped my practice of tables, but was not really sure what Steiner's objection to their use was until I read this next passage.

[page 33, 34] In what I intend here and have always intended, the important thing is not merely to speak about the spirit, but to speak out of the spirit, to unfold the spirit in one's very speaking. This is then the spirit that can have an educational effect upon our dead cultural life. The spirit must be the lightning that strikes into our dead culture and kindles it to renewed life. Therefore, do not think that you will find here any plea for rigid concepts such as the concepts physical body, etheric body, astral body, which are so nicely arrayed on the walls of Theosophical groups and are pointed out just as, in a lecture room, sodium, potassium, and so on, are pointed to with their atomic weights. There is no difference between pointing at tables giving the atomic weight of potassium and pointing to the etheric body. It does not matter at all. That is not the point. In this sense, this kind of Theosophy — or even Anthroposophy — is not new, but merely the latest product of the old.

Unless one uses it as a metaphor for an ineffable experience of the spiritual world, even such innocent comments such as "there are good vibes in this place" can be seen as pointing to physical vibrations and expressing a materialistic bias towards life. Only with a living education, such as that provided by Waldorf Schools, can we come to speak of material discoveries in a spiritual way using living thoughts.

[page 36] We need a living evolution and a living education of humanity. The fully conscious human being feels the culture of the present day to be cold and arid. It must

be given life and inner activity once again. It must become such that it fills human beings, fills them with life. Only this can lead us to the point where we shall no longer have to confess that we ought not to mention the spirit. It can lead us to where good will flows into us and develops within us the inclination, not for abstract speaking, but for inward action in the spirit that flows into us—not for obscure, nebulous mysticism, but for the courageous, energetic permeation of our own being with spirituality. Permeated by spirit, we can speak of matter. We shall not be led astray when talking of important material discoveries, because we are able to speak about them in a spiritual way. We shall shape what we sense darkly within us as an urge forward into a force that educates humanity.

After discussing the depressing view of Spencer who strove to prove with the "crushing weight of material" that moral intuitions cannot arise from the human soul, Steiner explains how his classical work, [The Philosophy of Freedom](#), was sent specifically to counter that view, that feeling extant in society at the time.

[page 38, 39] Into this mood of the age, my dear friends, I sent my *Philosophy of Freedom*, which culminates in the view, with the end of the nineteenth century, the time has come when it is eminently necessary that human beings contemplate how they will be able to find moral impulses more and more by going back to the being of the human soul itself. Even for the moral impulses of everyday life, they must resort more and more to moral intuitions found in the soul, all other impulses will become gradually less decisive. This was the situation I faced. I was obliged to say that the future of human ethics depends upon the power of moral intuition becoming stronger with every passing day. Advances in moral education can only be made when we strengthen the force of moral intuition within the soul; when individuals become more and more aware of the moral intuitions which arise in their souls.

Steiner's goal for humanity to have moral intuitions arising in their souls seems, on the face of it, too amorphous, too idealistic to ever happen. How can people who are not perfect, who have their own selfish desires and goals, ever find morality, on their own, one individual at a time? Wouldn't it be great if there were some process we could put people through which would turn them into moral persons from then on? Some educational process which would convert immoral or amoral people into moral people? Steiner book pointed out that such a process was necessary, but only pointed to the goal and did not give specific directions for achieving the goal. Any educational process has the difficulty of reaching everyone, since not everyone will submit to the process. One despairs at the possibility of success in such an endeavor. I did. Until I met the ideas of Andrew Joseph Galambos, who, in the 1960s, began to lay down his original ideas for attaining the kind of freedom which entails moral intuition which Steiner pointed to some sixty years earlier. His ideas are like a *vitalus* — a virus which creates a positive result in those it infects. Once these ideas infect one, one is no longer able to act reasonably without morality in every area of one's life. One begins to respect other people's lives, other people's thought and ideas, and other people's material possessions — never violating either their lives or any derivative of their lives, using them only with the other person's permission. Like Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*, not everyone will study Galambos's volitional science, so how can such ideas permeate to the average person on the street? At the point when I began to despair myself at that possibility, along came a brilliant work by Robert Axelrod, [The Evolution of Cooperation](#), which showed how the seeding of cells of cooperators (moral people) in a population of cells of defectors (immoral people) will eventually result in the population becoming all cooperators. He produced with computer simulation, something which Galambos said in his V50 course in volitional science, that "Freedom, once built, will never be destroyed." Freedom, rightly understood, cannot be fought for, but only built, and built one person at a time, and each person understanding freedom rightly and acting out of that moral intuition will encourage others to operate morally or not prosper. They will discover the profit of morality as they begin to discover the morality of profit. And they will discover it individually, one person at a time.

[page 41] You see, real experience of the spiritual, wherever we meet it, always becomes individual. Definition, however, inevitably becomes generalization. In going through life and meeting individuals we must always have an open heart — an open mind for the individual. Towards each single individual we should be able to unfold a completely new human feeling for every individual we meet. We do justice to a human being only when we see in the person an entirely new personality. For this reason, every individual has the right to expect of us that we should develop a new feeling for that person as a human being. If we come with a general idea in our heads, saying that a human being should be like this or like that, we are being unjust to the individual. With every definition of a human being we really put up a screen to make the human being invisible.

The definitions of Galambos which form the basis of his volitional science(3) create the kind of respect for individuality which Steiner strives for. If we respect a person's life, thoughts and ideas, and possessions, then we cannot treat them as slaves, workers, or place them in any demeaning category whatsoever. They are individuals and like you and I, they are entitled to their lives, thoughts and ideas, and possessions, and you and I cannot infringe upon those items, only arrange to use or share them with the individual's permission, in other words, by cooperation. One can see it by these few words of mine — which summarize years of study and thousands of dollars of expenses on my part to acquire the knowledge upon which I base these words — but these ideas of freedom will eliminate all the negative aspects of capitalism from the world and bring the kind of moral intuitions to the masses of humanity which Steiner so earnestly desires. A natural society will arise from these individual moral intuitions.

Galambos brought forth exactly what Steiner intended his book *Philosophy of Freedom* to inspire: "the founding of the moral life of the future."

[page 50] In other words, through my book, I wanted to show that the time has come in which morality can continue in the evolution of humanity in no other way than that an appeal is made to the moral impulses which each human being is able to call forth individually from his or her innermost being.

In the natural society of Galambos the problems which Steiner refers to in the next passage will not arise, or when they do, their appearance will be damped out in a culture which rewards moral intuitions, rewarding those activities that are beneficial to all concerned and not rewarding those beneficial to only one person or group which as its action infringes upon another's benefit or harms another person.

[page 43] Individual human beings, when they become active, come up against others. Certain of these activities unfolded toward the outer world, happen to suit other human beings to their benefit; other activities may be harmful.

We will, in effect, learn to act as Nietzsche describes, "I dwell within my own house and have imitated no one". (Page 45) In one's own house, one does not resort to "intellectualism" which materialistic sea spume splattered upon our life by logical and rational thinking devoid of spirit. It dries upon our skin causing irritation, but does not bring us the living spirit of the sea of life.

[page 47] For unless the human being today honestly admits: I must grasp the living, the active spirit, the spirit that no longer has its reality but only its corpse in intellectualism — unless I come to this, there is no rescue from the confusion of the age. As long as one believes that one can find spirit in intellectualism, which is merely the form of the spirit in the same way as the human corpse is the form of the human being, human beings will not find themselves. . . . They get nothing but a dead thing, a dead thing that can wonderfully reflect what is dead in the world, just as one can still marvel at the human form in the mummy. However, in intellectualism we cannot get what is truly spiritual any more than a real human being can be made out of a mummy.

This was the task that Dr. Frankenstein attempted to do in Mary Shelley's classic horror story. Her story taught humankind that whenever we strive to create something living out of our intellectualism, we create only a horror. This theme has since been reiterated in many classic stories, every one of them which falls into some category of horror story. Intellectualism is filled with what Steiner called the "empty phrase" — the clichés which reveal themselves to be but "a revival of old concepts overreaching themselves." Instead Steiner tells us "we need an intensively developed feeling for the truth." (Page 48) This undoubtedly resonated strongly with the young people in his audience.

[page 48] What we need is truth, and if any young people today acknowledge the condition of their own souls, they can only say: This age has taken all spirit out of my soul, but my soul thirsts for the spirit, thirsts for something new, thirsts for a new conquest of the spirit.

My own summary of Lecture 4 took the form of this short poem, "The Empty Phrase":

**The empty phrase
overreaches itself**

**The empty phrase
seeks to make a mummy
into a man.**

**The empty phrase
seeks to make a movement
without a plan.**

If we go back in the evolution of humankind, we find a time when moral intuitions rose up within people naturally, in the same way as it does in our children today who represent for us this earlier form of humanity. It is why children are so attractive to adults — there is an unconscious knowing that children represent a form of knowing and moral intuition we have lost in our modern world, but what was once the natural ability of every human being. People did not argue about the existence of God, they simply said, "He stands there."

[page 51] Before the fifteenth century, people did not speak in indefinite — the indefinite was already the untruthful — terms as was current later. When speaking of intuitions, also of moral intuitions, people spoke of what rose up within their inner beings, of which they had a picture as real as the picture of reality they had when they opened their eyes in the morning and looked at nature. Outside they saw nature around them, the plants and the clouds; when they looked into their inner beings, there arose the spiritual, which included the moral as a given. The further we go back in evolution, the more we find that the rising up of an inner existence in human experience was a matter of course. . . . Had anyone during the first centuries of Christianity spoken about proofs for the existence of God, as Anselm of Canterbury did, no one would have known what was meant. In earlier times they would have known still less! For in the second or third century before Christ, to speak of proof for the existence of God would have been as if someone sitting there in the first row were to stand up and I were to say, "Mr. X stands there," and someone in the room were to assert, "No, that must first be proved!"

This is the challenge each of us face today: to learn to let the spiritual arise from nature with the moral as a given, as if we were children on the beach of life, as my poem inspired by Page 51 summarizes:

Children on the Beach

**Let our lips be moved by Spirit,
not by decadent dogma,**

**Like children on the beach of life
who make castles out of sand.**

**Let our lips announce, "God stands there"
and declaim the call for proof —
Like children on the beach of life,
kneel in churches made of sand.**

**Let the Spirit rise from Nature,
the moral as a given,
Like children on the beach of life
dancing gladly hand in hand.**

**Let our lips be moved by spirit
not by empty creeds,
Like children on the beach of life
whom the ocean feeds.**

As Steiner has remarked in several other places, "Discussion begins when knowledge ends." One can discuss things endlessly to no effect or study the knowledge of the past and learn to experience the spiritual realities in one's present time. If we do not achieve that, we will be left with the strictures of religious dogma and the dried remnants of moral intuitions in our so-called "conscience."

[page 52] Human beings began to "prove" the existence of the divine only when they had lost it, when it was no longer perceived by inner, spiritual perception. The introduction of proofs for the existence of God shows, if one looks at the facts impartially, that direct perception of the divine had been lost. However, the moral impulses of that time were bound up with what was divine. Moral impulses of that time can no longer be regarded as moral impulses for today. When in the first third of the fifteenth century the faculty of perception of the divine-spiritual in the old sense was exhausted, perception of the moral also dried up, and all that remained was the traditional dogma of morals, which people called "conscience."

Lacking the experience of the spiritual realities, the religious communities strove to provide their followers rules, commandments and catechisms as replacements.

[page 53] There is a good deal of truth in certain contemporary religious philosophies when they allude to a primal revelation preceding the historical age of Earth. External science cannot get much beyond, shall I say, a paleontology of the soul. Just as in the earth we find fossils, indicating an earlier form of life, so in fossilized moral ideas we find forms pointing back to the once living, god-given moral ideas. Thus we can come to the concept of primal revelation and say: This primal revelation dried up. Human beings lost the ability to be conscious of the primal revelation. And this loss reached its point of culmination in the first third of the fifteenth century. Human beings perceived nothing anymore when they looked within themselves. They preserved only the tradition of what they had once beheld. Religious communities gradually seized upon this tradition and turned its externalized content, this purely traditional content, into dogmas which people were expected merely to believe, whereas formerly they had living experience of their truth, as coming from outside of the human being.

We have heard philosophers telling us that "God is dead" and now Steiner tells us that "Science is dead" — I wonder if people will get as nervous about Science being dead as they did over the thought that God was dead. Here is his full statement:

[page 58] Science is dead. Science cannot make what is living flow from the mouth. And

without this, one cannot build upon it. One must appeal to an inner livingness, and so one must really begin to seek. The divine lies precisely in the appeal to the original, moral, spiritual intuitions. But if one has once grasped the spiritual, then one can unfold the forces that enable one to grasp the spirit in wider spheres of cosmic existence. And that is the straight path from moral intuitions to other spiritual contents.

What can we do if science is dead? It is not a necessary condition for science to be dead, it has only become so by the bad habit of logical and rational thinking operating on cold, abstract concepts rather than the living reality which surrounds every scientist if she but look. Here is a scientist who teaches people to look directly at the living phenomena, Stephen Edelglass. His book is [The Physics of Human Experience](#) and shows us how to deal directly with the living phenomena. It is this kind of scientific approach that Steiner talked about in this next paragraph. If we could trace back what brought Edelglass to understand physics using the phenomenalist approach, we might find its origin in this very lecture given to youngsters in 1922.

[page 59] We must proceed as follows. On the one hand, we must acknowledge that outer science by its very nature can only comprehend what is material; hence, the view of the material must be not only materialism, but also phenomenism. On the other, we must work to bring life back into what has been made into dead thinking by natural science.

Steiner warns us that with mere words, we cannot grasp the living, especially the words of dead philosophies which have replaced real philosophies in recent centuries.

[page 59] Why is it that we no longer have any real philosophies? It is because thinking, as I have described it, has died. When based merely upon dead thinking, philosophies are dead from the very outset. They are not alive. And if people, like Bergson, seek something living in philosophy, nothing comes of it, because, although they struggle for it, they cannot lay hold of the living. To grasp the living means first to attain vision.

Here is Steiner revealing how the maturation of the individual today correlates to the maturation of the human being over the centuries of evolution of consciousness. To get rid of dead thinking we must seek to think in the way that youngsters below the age of fifteen think, in living concepts not bothered by the moribund intellect, which corresponds to the way humankind thought before the fifteenth century.

[page 59] What we need to reach the living is what can be added out of what worked within us before our fifteenth year. This, from before our fifteenth year, is not disturbed by our intellect. We must carry what works within us, as spontaneous, living vision, over into the dead thinking. Dead thinking must be permeated with forces of growth and with reality. For this reason, and not out of sentimentality, I want to refer to the words from the Bible, "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

How are we to become children? Is not the boy the father of the man, the girl the mother of the woman? Somewhere in us, submerged under an avalanche of dead thinking, is that boy and girl struggling for air, pleading for, as Goethe did with his last breath, "More air!" If we would throw open the shutters for others, we must first open them for ourselves, and become like "children on a beach", as my poem above urges as it expresses what I feel as what Steiner exhorts us to do.

[page 60] . . . we must return to childhood and learn a new language. The language we learn in the first years of childhood gradually becomes dead, because it becomes permeated by dead intellectual concepts. We must quicken it to new life. We must find something that strikes into what we are thinking, just as when we learned to speak, an impulse arose in us out of the unconscious. We must seek a science that is alive. We should consider it a matter of course that the thinking that reached its apex in the last third of the nineteenth century silences our moral intuitions. We must learn to open our mouth by letting our lips be moved by the spirit. Then we shall become children again,

that is to say, we shall carry childhood on into our later years. And that is what we must do.

Most of all we should learn to treat our children as reincarnated human beings who have lived many earlier lives and help them to uncover what their plans are for this new life upon Earth. We focus so much on un-dyingness (immortality), but neglect the aspect of un-bornness, up until now. We must learn to think of our children, not as a chip off the old block, but as cornerstone for a new block. Remember, if there is a world-riddle to be solved, it is the riddle of the human being which is always new and all ways evolving, never to be fully solved, but to be lived through, one day and one night, one life in the body and one life in the spirit at a time. As Steiner spoke it:

[page 64] Man himself, moving as a living being in the world, is the solution to the world's riddle! Let us gaze at the Sun and experience one of the cosmic mysteries. Let us look into our own being and know that within myself lies the solution to this cosmic mystery. "Man, know thyself and thou knowest the world!"

There was another author I read earnestly when I was eighteen years old, Ralph Waldo Emerson, reading especially his essays. The essay which most resonated with me, and which I have re-read many times is, "Self-Reliance." Here is a quotation from that essay which hints at the passage from Steiner which follows: "There is a time in your education when you arrive at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that you must take yourself for better, for worse, as your portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to you but through your toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to you to till. The power which resides in you is new in nature, and none but you know what it is, nor do you know until you have tried." Every human has a power that is new, a power which can change our own moral intuitions, setting the world's moral intuitions on a new course.

[page 65] But in the same way as the old moral intuitions have lived themselves out in historical evolution, to which we were obliged to call attention yesterday, so, too, the impulses mentioned no longer contain an impelling force for the human being that they once had. They cannot contain it if the self-acquired moral intuitions, of which I spoke yesterday, appear in human beings; if, in the world evolution, single individuals are challenged, on the one hand, to find moral intuitions for themselves by dint of the labor of their own souls, and, on the other, so awaken the inner strength, the inner impulses to live according to these moral intuitions. And then it dawns upon us that the old moral impulses will increasingly change, taking a different course.

Emerson and Steiner both understood individualism and supported it against the claims of those who saw only the bad side of individualism. An individual who respects the life, thought and ideas, and possessions of others, following Galambos' volitional science precepts, can certainly express individualism without any bad side effects. Individualism which respects others in all ways is infused with a beneficial moral intuition and can certainly be considered ethical.

[page 67, 68] As humanity is developing in the direction of individualism, there is no sense in saying that ethical individualism destroys the community. It is rather a question of seeking those forces by which human evolution can progress; this is necessary for human evolution in the sense of ethical individualism, which can hold the community together and fill it with real life.

Emerson also wrote about love and friendship, "We will meet as though we met not, and part as though we parted not." We can do this with each person we meet if we but keep in mind that each person is a "walking world riddle." A riddle, we can only pretend to solve, but whose solution seems to drift further away the more we learn about the person. We do best if we treat each person as an unanswered question, a walking riddle, and hope glimpse from time to time small unfoldings of a solution, unfoldings which

develop over time into confidence.

[page 68] We must meet the human being in such a way that we feel each to be a world riddle, a walking world riddle. Then we shall learn in the presence of every human being to unfold feelings that draw forth confidence from the depths of our soul. Confidence in an absolutely real sense, individual, unique confidence, is the hardest to wring from the human soul.

Steiner directs our attention to the concept he calls "responsive tiredness". Unless we work enough to become tired, we live an unhealthy existence.

[page 73] Responsive tiredness, I call it. In ordinary life organic existence requires not only activity but also the accompanying state of tiredness after the accomplished work. We must not only be able to get tired, we must also from time to time be able to carry tiredness around within us. To pass our days in such a way that we go to sleep at night simply because it is customary to do so, is not healthy; it is certainly less healthy than to have the due amount of tiredness in the evening and for this to lead in the normal way into sleep. So too, the capacity to become tired-out by the phenomena meeting us in life is something that must be.

In a contrary view to that expressed by the old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Steiner tells us, in effect, "All play and no work makes a dull boy." A child educated by play will have fun, but learn nothing from it.

[page 73] The right thing is for teachers to be able to handle what does not give the child joy, but perhaps a good deal of toil and woe, in such a way that the child, as a matter of course, submits to it. It is very easy to say what should be taught to the child. But childhood can be ruined by learning being made into a game. For it is essential that we should also be made tired in our soul by certain things; that they should cause toil and exertion. One must express it thus, even if it sounds pedantic.

As a lesson for adults, he suggests his own cure for insomnia: work harder. He doesn't need to tell me — I learned that on my own. I have not been beset by insomnia, but there have been times when I woke up in the middle of the night or early morning about 3 am and instead of tossing around on the bed, I simply got up and did some work. Sometimes I worked all day, sometimes only a hour or so, but every time the experience seemed a beneficial one to me. It helps one's sleep patterns to always have work that is waiting for your attention to fill these occasional bouts of sleeplessness when they arise. Steiner directed his comments to the young adults in his audience, but it would seem to apply equally as well to older adults, who need to provide their own guiding line, while the younger get their guiding line mostly from their elders.

[page 74] . . . what permeated the young, at the turn of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, derived a quite special character — the character of the life force in human beings who go to bed at night, who are not tired and keep turning and twisting about without knowing why. I do not want to imply anything derogatory, for I am not of the opinion that these forces, which are there at night in human beings when they turn and twist about in bed because they are not tired, are unhealthy forces. I am not calling them unhealthy. They are quite healthy life forces, but they are not in their proper place; and so it was, in a certain sense, with those forces that worked in the young at the turn of the nineteenth century. They were thoroughly healthy forces, but there was nothing to give them direction. The young had no longer the desire to apply these forces to what was told them by their elders. Yet, forces cannot be present in the world without being active, and so, at the time referred to, innumerable forces yearned for activity and had no guiding line.

We meet people whose writings fire us up and others whose writings leave us completely cold. Steiner contrasts two such writers for us, Albertus Magnus and Johann Friederich Hebart. Magnus was hot and Hebart was icy. He uses these two writers to show how the style of thought and expression changed dramatically between the Middle Ages of Magnus and the nineteenth century of Hebart.

[page 75, 76] When Albertus Magnus devotes himself to knowledge-something that lights up in him or becomes dim-we feel him as it were in a fiery, luminous cloud, and if we are gradually able to enter into such a soul, we come into this fire ourselves. Even if for the modern soul it is antiquated, we feel that it is not a matter of indifference, when we steep ourselves in what is moral, write it down, speak about it, or even just study it, whether or not one is sympathetic or antipathetic toward a divine-spiritual being. This feeling of sympathy or antipathy always plays a part.

On the other hand, if we steep ourselves in the way Herbart objectively and scientifically discusses the five moral ideas: goodwill, perfection, benevolence, rights, and retribution, we do not have a cloud that encircles us with warmth or cold, but something that gradually freezes us; it is objective to the point of iciness. And that is the mood that has crept into the whole nature of knowledge and reached its climax at the end of the nineteenth century.

Steiner describes a society he knows very well, the Theosophical Society, which produces a lot of books and educational material. I tried reading some of their material before I found Steiner's works, and my eyes glaze over and I would become immediately sleepy. To [me](#) , it should have been named, the Theosoporificial Society, for the sleep-inducing quality of its written materials.

[page 78] For what is contained in Theosophical literature is to a great extent a sleeping potion for the soul. People were actually lulling them selves to sleep. They kept the spirit busy, but look at the way in which they did so. By inventing the maddest allegories! It was enough to drive a sensitive soul out of its body to listen to the explanations given to old myths and sagas. What allegories and symbols were thought up! Looked at from the biology of the life of soul, it was all sleeping potion. It would really be quite good to draw a parallel between the turning and twisting in bed after spending a day that has not been tiring and the taking of a sleeping draught in order to cripple the real activity of the spirit.

Several years ago, I was taking a graduate course called "College Teaching" and it gave me a chance to study and ponder the question of how teaching and learning happens in the presence of a live teacher. So much of today's teaching takes place over the Internet or by use of recorded audio or video lectures that this question is an important one. What is added by having the teacher present? The obvious answer is you can ask the teacher a question if one is present, but even if you don't ask a question, what is happening that is important to learning, which cannot happen through pre-recorded lectures? The answer I came up with was surprising to me. I came to understand that true learning takes place directly between the teacher and the learner, in both directions, and non verbally. It happens if the teacher has fully assimilated the material being covered and is used the words to track through the ideas which are going on inside her head. The ideas are transferred directly to the learners' mind and the words she used act as a way of recalling those ideas later. This is a quick summary of my insight, which can be read in detail in my term paper, [Teaching and Learning in the College Classroom](#). It is clearly applicable for all levels of teaching and learning, and its implication for our methods of education are important. One cannot depend solely upon pre-recorded lectures to accomplish education — there must be live teachers present in the classroom, and not just to answer questions, not just for discipline, but for truly deep transmission of ideas and processes to take place.

This insight also brought me a new understanding of what happens during lesson plan preparation by a teacher. By poring over the material in preparation for the next day's lesson, the teacher begins to form the ideas which he will be thinking of while going through the material the next day. It is those ideas which

will be communicated using his words as a carrier wave, if you will, a carrier wave which also acts as a route to be taken through the important ideas that need to be transmitted directly from the teacher's mind while he is talking. If a teacher is so poorly prepared as to have to talk about material he doesn't understand, the pupil's eyes will glaze over and their attention will be anywhere else, out the window, on a beach date for the weekend, whatever, but no teaching or learning will take place. Enough of that happens to pupils who are not interested in the material, but this will also happen to those who are *actually* interested in the material which is supposed to be covered. Steiner gives us an example of the attitude of such students:

[page 77] They say of those teachers: "They are wanting to teach me something that they first have to read. I should like to know why I am expected to know what they are reading. There is no reason for me to know what they are only now reading for themselves. They do not know it themselves, otherwise they would not need to stand there with the book in hand. I am still very young and am expected to learn what they, who are so much older, do not know even yet and read to me out of a book!"

It is not the book in hand that is the problem, rather it is that the teacher does not know the material, and the students feel empty during the reading because nothing comes forth directly from the teacher's mind! In earlier times, this kind of teaching by reading out of books would no have been tolerated. The feeling for the direct transmission of learning received from the teacher was experienced as a fire within and was as real as anything received by the eyes or ears of the students.

[page 81] In olden times people understood the experience of having something kindled within them in mutual interaction with another human being. They counted somebody else's telling them what they themselves did not know as among the things they needed in order to be able to live. It was reckoned so emphatically as one of the factors necessary for life that it was considered equal to perception through the eyes and the ears.

Can we understand at all today that there are divine spiritual beings who walk through our world today, leaving footprints on our minds which we call thoughts? I recall the wonderful question that Jane Roberts asked about our thoughts, "Where is the tree from which fruit drops into mind's basket?" She and Seth knew about the reality of the spiritual world from which thoughts percolate into our minds and steep into our brains(4).

[page 86] There is a divine weaving streaming around the Earth just as in the physical world the atmosphere streams round it; and in this streaming, beings, the thoughts, remain behind and reveal themselves to human beings. They are, so to speak, the footprints of the divine world surrounding the Earth, which are buried in human beings as thoughts.

Unless and until we rise out of the immured passive thinking encouraged by our times, unless and until we enliven our thinking as befits our current incarnation on Earth, we cannot understand freedom nor develop true freedom in our lives. The message is there in Steiner's classic work, [The Philosophy of Freedom](#), but it requires work by all readers to remove the insulation of passive thinking and allow the sparks of spiritual insight to infuse and enliven their thinking.

[page 93, 94] In what I have named anthroposophy, in fact in the foreword to my Philosophy of Freedom, you will meet with something that you will not be able to comprehend if you give yourself up only to the passive thinking so specially loved today, to that popular godforsaken thinking that was already godforsaken in the previous incarnation. You will only understand it if you develop, in freedom, the inner impulse to bring activity into your thinking. You will never get on with spiritual science if that spark, that lightning, through which activity in thinking is awakened, does not flash up.

Through this activity, we must re-conquer the divine nature of thinking.

Steiner creates a metaphor for passive thinking: a man is lying motionless in a ditch. When asked why, he says he doesn't want to move and even resents the Earth's forcing him to move as it revolves. This is the attitude of an immured passive thinker, walled on all sides by passive thinkers from an early age, she resents or ignores anyone who attempts to move her to active thinking. I have known both men and women who were passive thinkers and had no clue as to existence of active thinking — and if one attempted active thinking with them, one would be derailed or ignored before completing a single sentence. Their entire world of thought and conversation comprised repetitions of what they saw or heard others do or say. Passive thinkers can be very active in conversation, but not in thought. Holding a real conversation with a passive thinker is like having a tug-of-war with someone who won't pull the rope, only follow its tug.

[page 94] This is how people appear who do not wish to bring activity into thinking, the power that alone can bring back, out of the human being, a connection between the human soul and the divine-spiritual content of the world again. Many of you have learned to despise thinking because it has met you only in its passive form. This, however, is only head-thinking in which the heart plays no part. But try for once really to think actively, and you will see how the heart is then engaged. Human beings of our age enter with the greatest intensity into the spiritual world if they succeed in developing active thinking. For through active thinking we are able to bring hearty, courageous forces into our thinking again.

What is the meaning of the word intellectualism which Steiner uses frequently in these lectures to his young audience? He uses the word to refer to the abstract logical way of thinking which pervades so much of extant thought and science today. To understand how changed we have become from the ancient Greek times, one need only read the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey's* opening words, "Speak to me, O Muse, . . ." — clearly showing the words of the two tales were coming from the spirit. Homer's epic existed for hundreds of years before being written down, and so almost a thousand years or more could have passed before in Roman times Virgil penned his *Aeneid*, which begins, "Of arms and a man I sing. . ." Clearly an evolution of consciousness had occurred between Homer's time and Virgil's. Homer spoke the words of a Muse and Virgil wrote out of himself.

[page 96] Among the Greeks, concepts, ideas, were bestowed by the spirit. Because of this, their intellect was not so cold, so lifeless and dry as ours is today, which is the result of being worked out by ourselves. Intellectualism has first arisen through the special development of the consciousness soul.

In Steiner's time, the early twentieth century, educators were already experimenting with the use of gadgets such as calculating machines to keep the teaching as objective as possible. We have gone even further in the ensuing ninety years, replacing live teachers with programmed instruction, classes over the internet, standardized textbooks, lesson plans, and achievement tests, etc.

[page 100] Today when we speak of visual or object teaching, we keep the teaching quite apart from the personality of the teacher. We drag in every possible kind of gadget, even those dreadful calculating machines, in order that the teaching may be as impersonal as possible. We try to separate it entirely from the personal. Such a separation is not really possible. The endeavor to keep the teaching entirely apart from the personal only leads to the worst sides of teachers coming into play, and their good sides are quite unable to unfold when so much objectivity is dragged in.

How can we correct this trend to overweening objectivity? We could stop striving in education to fill a human being with knowledge as if we were dropping coins into a piggy bank, and instead seek to understand the human being, the full human being.

[page 104] All this is symptomatic of the incapacity of the age to understand the human being. For, firstly, if one seeks to understand the human being, the power of intellectualism ceases. The human being cannot be understood out of the intellect. One may choose to adhere firmly and rigidly to intellectualism, but then one must do without knowledge of the human being. However, for that one would have to tear out one's mind and heart, and that is impossible. If we tear it out, it withers away. The head can indeed renounce knowledge of the human being, but the mind and heart become stunted. All of our present culture is expressed out of a withered life of mind and heart. And secondly, understanding of the human being is not to be achieved with concepts that direct us in the domain of outer nature. However much we may achieve outwardly with these concepts, they cannot lead us even to the second member of the human being, namely, to the etheric body, or body of formative forces.

What's that? Some fantasy that Steiner has about an etheric body which science can't reach with its sensory apparatus? How foolish! Surely science will discover such a body if it really exists? How can we give weight to the existence of a body in the human being which science cannot prove exists? Note the presupposition that the etheric body is discoverable by sensory apparatus and the materialistic metaphor of "giving weight". See the problem? All evidence proclaimed by science against the existence of the spiritualized etheric body is null and void because it is purely materialistic evidence for something which is non-material — important, but non-material. Note how we are accustomed to equating importance to materiality in our time of rampant intellectualism.

[page 105] Yet, even were I to assume that science had reached its highest peak, it would still only be able to understand the physical body of the human being and nothing at all of the etheric body. It is not that the knowledge of the etheric body is based upon fantasy. That is not the case. It is a real perception. However, the stimulus to acquire the faculty for perceiving this most subordinate of the supersensible members of the human nature can arise only out of an artistic experience of the soul. Art must become the life blood of the soul.

The more people wish in our objective science to carefully avoid everything of the nature of art, the more are they led away from knowledge of the human being.

In talking about ancient times, Steiner makes an interesting statement which reveals a truth about human evolution, "What exists today only in earliest youth existed then for the whole evolution of humanity." If we wish to find evidence for native clairvoyance in human beings today, we need look no further than our children. For example, my wife had twin boys and when they were about three, they shared an imaginary playmate, "Plum-dee-dol." My wife said that one day she heard one of them pointing out the window saying, "Look there's Plum-dee-dol." The other said, "There. In the car with his father." Both boys were seeing some reality that no one else could see, at least no adults could. For myself, I can recall fairies existing when I was a very early age. As I learned more about the material world, I discounted those experiences as due to a vivid imagination, but I suspect now that those memories were of actual fairies during the early years of my life.

It seems that humans evolve by becoming more and more precocious, i. e., what would have been, in earlier times, considered precocious becomes now the norm. What we can do at later stages of our life becomes a capability at younger and younger years as evolution proceeds. The highest capabilities we had in the springtime of evolution are available now in the springtime of the individual. Generally stated, one could say that the evolution of the single individual recapitulates the evolution of the human being.

As I work my way through these lectures of Rudolf Steiner, I find it to be as difficult as physics lectures or textbooks I had to work my way through. As soon as I learned one aspect of physics, the next course taught some completely different aspect and built upon the knowledge I was supposed to learn in the previous course. Every course began by introducing me to mind-boggling new concepts. Studying physics was like walking uphill on a continuous treadmill. It never seemed to get easier, only more difficult. Same

with spiritual science. If I were to do nothing but read the book, I would be like those simply read Steiner's lectures. In my reviews I share my working with the concepts so as to help others consider how they would work in their own way with the concepts revealed in Steiner's lectures.

[page 112, 113] The only way spiritual scientific lectures, as they are meant here, can be heard is for those present to work continually along with the speaker. But today that is not to people's liking. They flock to meetings or lectures with slides so that they can sit and do as little thinking as possible. Everything just passes before them. They can remain perfectly passive.

This next passage fills out with details what Steiner mentioned briefly in [Nutrition and Stimulants](#) about how a newborn baby experiences a sweetness filling its entire body when it drinks milk. Milk has wonderful constructive forces for the baby and its desire for milk is exactly what it needs at this point in its life.

[page 121] Human beings today still have the capacity of learning to experience the world with the whole person only at an early age. For what I have just been saying refers to the adult. Before the change of teeth children still have the faculty of grasping the world with their whole being. It would be a mistake to suppose that the baby's experience when nursing is as abstract as an adult's. When we drink milk we taste it on our tongue, and perhaps around our tongue. But we lose the experience of taste when the milk passes through our throat. People ought to ask why their stomach should be less capable of tasting than the palate. The stomach is not less, but equally, capable of tasting, but the head is a glutton, and in the grown person, the head claims all taste for itself. The child, however, tastes with its entire organism and, therefore, with its stomach. The infant is all sense organ. There is nothing in the infant that is not sense organ. The infant tastes with its whole being. Later this is forgotten, and this tasting is impaired when the child learns to speak. For then the head, which has to take part in learning to speak, begins to stir and develops the first stage of insatiability. The head, in return for giving itself up to learning to speak, reserves for itself the pleasures of tasting. Even as regards "tasting the world," the connection with the world is very soon lost.

Children under the age of five learn a lot from their parents which carries over into adulthood, in what Steiner called in his day, the subconscious. With the advent of the science of doyletics, we can see that the way of walking one gets from one's parent that Steiner discusses in this next paragraph, we attribute this to doylic transmission. Children adopt the mannerisms of their parents by mimicking them and these patterns of behavior are stored as doylic memories which are then recapitulated over their lifetime, unless traced away. If a mother sees her daughter playing with a roach and screams, the two-year-old girl will re-experience the shudder which went through her young body at two every time that she sees a roach thereafter. She will say to friends, "I'm deathly afraid of roaches(5)." What lives in the head are our cognitive memories, what lives in our bodies are our doylic memories. Doylic memories may be mute, but they are eloquent: they speak of our pre-five existence in the only voice possible: our body.

[page 122, 123] Human beings have reduced themselves to their head and have forced themselves to believe that the head is their most valuable part. But this has not made them overly happy, because the rest of human nature asserts its claims in the subconscious. Experiencing through something other than the head is lost today in early childhood with the change of teeth. If you have an eye for these things you can see the walk of the father or the mother in the son or daughter two or three decades later. So exactly have the children lived into the adults around them that what they have sensed there becomes part of their own nature.

The first half of my life I only studied science — I wanted to find out how the world worked. Then I

discovered that I had only learned about half of life, and the empty half at that. I was lost in dead, abstract thinking, which, while it was rational and logical, it was completely empty of life. With that discovery, I began my approach to the study of art, of all the arts: music, plays, ballet, opera, literature, painting, photography, etc. Slowly my life began to enliven again as I filled the portion of life I had neglected during my study of science, especially physics. I learned the hard way the lesson that Steiner gave these youngsters who were looking to become companions of Michael.

[page 123, 124] If you educate human beings through what is abstract and scientific, they experience nothing of your soul. They only experience your soul if you approach them through art. For in the realm of the artistic, everyone is individual, each one is a different person. It is the ideal of science that everyone should be alike. It would be quite a thing — so say people today — were everyone to teach a different science. But that could not be, for science confines itself to what is the same for all human beings. In the realm of the artistic, each human being is an individuality. Through the artistic element, therefore, there can come about an individual, personal relation of the child to the person who is alive and active, and this is necessary. True, one does not come to the feeling for the whole person as outer physical being as in the first years of childhood, but to a feeling for the soul of the one who is to lead.

Education must have soul, but as a scientist, one cannot have soul. We can have soul only through what we are artistically. We can have soul, if we give science an artistic form through the way it is presented, but not through the content of science as science is understood today. Science is not an individual, personal affair. Hence, during the elementary school age, it establishes no relation between teacher and pupil. All instruction must therefore be permeated by art, by human individuality, for the individuality of the teacher and educator is of more value than any curriculum is that is thought out. It is the individuality of the teacher that must work in the school.

One might ask me, "Aren't you *still* studying science in Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science?" My answer would be "Yes, but the science of the spirit is as close to an art as any science can get. It doesn't deal with just the head, but with the individual as a full human being of body, soul, and spirit." With the head one can only grasp what is on the Earth — with the human being as a physical body. Science deals with boundaries; human spirit has no boundaries.

[page 124] What grows between teacher and pupil from the change of teeth to puberty and creates the link between them? What binds them together is solely what human beings bring with them into their earthly existence from supersensible, spiritual worlds, from their pre-earthly existence. My dear friends, the head never recognizes what people bring with them out of their pre-earthly life. The head is made for the purpose of grasping what is on the Earth. And on the Earth, there is only the physical human being. The head understands nothing of what in the other human being comes from pre-earthly existence. In the particular coloring the artistic impulse gives to the human soul, there lives and weaves what the human being has brought down from pre-earthly existence; and between the period of the change of teeth and puberty, children are particularly disposed to feel in their hearts what meets them in the teacher as coming out of pre-earthly existence. Just as young children have the tendency to feel the outer human form in its earthly shape; so from their seventh to their fourteenth or fifteenth year they seek, through living together with human beings, something that does not lend itself to be grasped in concepts but is manifested in the teacher. If we wanted to find a concept for this "something," it would resist conceptual form. Concepts have contours, that is to say, external boundaries. But human individuality, in the sense described, has no external boundaries, only intensity and quality and is experienced as intensity, as quality, very particularly in the period of life referred to. It is experienced, however, through no other atmosphere than that of the artistic.

What is a teacher to do when faced with a class in which some of the children are more brilliant than she is? In any one class there may be one or two future geniuses. We cannot afford to hire a genius for every teacher so that the genius children can learn everything they can learn.

[page 126] You will say that this would not matter in the elementary school and that the child will go on to a higher school and will certainly find geniuses as teachers there. You would not say this, because experience does not bear it out, but you must admit, the case may arise that the teacher is faced with a class in which there are children predestined to become more brilliant than the teacher is. Now our task, as teachers, consists in bringing the children not merely to our degree of aptitude, but to the full development of their own potential.

As teachers, therefore, we may come into the position of having to educate somebody who will be greater than we. It is impossible to provide schools with enough teachers, unless one holds to the principle that it does not matter if the teacher is not as brilliant as the pupil will be some day. Nevertheless, this person will still be a good teacher, because the giving out of knowledge is not what is important, but the individuality and making the pre-earthly existence come to life. Then it is really the children who educate themselves through us. And that is the truth, for in reality, we do not educate at all. We only disturb the process of education when we intervene too energetically. We only educate when we behave in such a way that, through our own behavior, the children can educate themselves. We send children to primary school in order to rid them of troublesome elements. The teacher should see to it that the troublesome elements are eliminated so that the children escape conditions under which they cannot develop. So we must be quite clear that we cannot cram anything into human beings through teaching and education. What we can do is to see to it that human beings, as they grow up, should succeed in developing their potential. That we can do, not through what we know, but through what stirs inwardly within us in an artistic way. And even if the rare thing should happen that as teachers we are not particularly endowed with genius — one should not say this, but in spite of your youth movement, you are old enough for me to say it — and we have only a kind of instinctive artistic sense, we will offer less hindrance to the growth of the child's soul than the teacher who is tremendously learned but inartistic. To be tremendously learned is not difficult.

What does Steiner mean by "making the pre-earthly existence come to life"? How are we to understand that, lacking a clairvoyant capability such as Steiner possessed? Well, we each grow into adulthood finding ourselves mysteriously attracted to one person or another, and science cannot explain the reason for it. Science can explain the increased production of hormones which accompanies such attraction, but is powerless with its earth-only knowledge to explain the cause for the attraction. Sometimes the attraction lasts for five minutes, sometimes five years, sometimes fifty years, sometimes a lifetime.

[page 127] You see, the manner of feeling with which one person meets another is tremendously complicated. If you wanted to describe the whole round of sympathies and antipathies, and the interworking of sympathies and antipathies with which you meet another person, you would never come to an actual definition. In fifty years you would not succeed in defining what you can experience in five minutes as the relations of life between person and person. Before puberty it is pre-eminently an experience of the pre-earthly. The pre-earthly sheds its light through every movement of the hands, every look, through the very stressing of words. Actually, it is the quality of the gesture, the word, the thought of the teacher that works through to the child and which the child is seeking.

And when as grownup people — so grownup that we have reached the age of fifteen or sixteen or even beyond — we meet other human beings, then the matter is still more complicated. Then, what attracts or repels others in a human being actually veils itself in a darkness impenetrable to the world of abstract concepts. But if, with the help of

Anthroposophy, we investigate what one can really experience in five minutes but cannot describe in fifty years, we find that it is what rises up from the previous earthly life or series of earthly lives into the present life of the soul, and what is exchanged in the souls. This indefinite, indefinable element that comes upon us when we meet as adults is what shines through from earlier lives on Earth into the present; not only the pre-earthly existence, but everything we have passed through In the way of destiny in our successive earthly lives.

We are not attracted to every person we see, we often merely pass them by without so much as a second glance or thought. Science can't explain why this is so, and expresses its helplessness in this matter by not commenting upon it, a tactic it uses in so many of the matters which Steiner does not hesitate to elucidate for us. But not having an explanation in a matter does not stop science from criticizing severely Steiner's ability to comment on the same matter. And when science does criticize Steiner, it is not from evidence, but from the very kind of illusion-based thinking that science accuses Steiner's work of being based upon — and upon which it is not.

[page 128] Human beings pass one another by, because only what plays over from repeated earthly lives can work between person and person, and modern culture does nothing to develop a sense for this. This must also be brought into our education: that we be able to sense and feel what is in the depths of the human being that plays over from previous earthly lives. This will not be achieved unless we include in our education the whole human life as it takes place on Earth.

Del and I sensed this connection between us immediately. We met during the hug-crazy 1970s and I called our meeting later, "Love at first hug." When we came to write our marriage ceremony, we acknowledged our feeling for our pre-earthly connections in these words of Kahlil Gibran from Mary Haskell's Journal May 12, 1922:

"That deepest thing, that recognition, that knowledge, that sense of kinship began the first time I saw you, and it is the same now — only a thousand times deeper and tenderer. I shall love you to eternity. I loved you long before we met in this flesh. I knew that when I first saw you. It was destiny. We are together like this and nothing can shake us apart."

Most teachers educate children using the piggy bank process. It is the one whereby you fill children with learning like putting coins in a container from which they can later withdraw their learnings at will. But if you use that process, you keep the human beings you were supposed to educate stuck as children forever. They become like the cucumber placed in a jar while on a vine: it fills the jar and takes on the shape of the jar for the rest of its life.

[page 129] Children must be able to grow according to their nature. If you were to devise an apparatus for children that would keep them a certain size so that they could not grow, so that they would remain as they are all their lives, this would be terrible. Human beings must be able to grow.

Yet, in school we supply the children with concepts and have as our ideal that they should remain unchanged for the whole of their lives. Children are supposed to preserve these concepts in memory, and in fifty years these concepts are to be the same as they are today. Our school textbooks. work on the children in such a way that they must remain little. The right way is to educate children so that all their concepts can grow, that their concepts and will impulses are really alive. This is not easy, but the artistic way of education succeeds in doing it. And the children have a different feeling when we offer them living concepts instead of dead ones, for unconsciously they know that what they are given grows with them just as their arms grow with their bodies.

In Homer's *Iliad* there is a poignant scene when Hector comes to say goodbye to his wife wearing his war helmet with the fanned brush across its top. His son Astyanax is frightened by the plume rising from Hector's head, doesn't know it's his father, and runs to his nurse in tears(6). This short scene is noted by different professors in several lectures I have heard on the *Iliad*, even though it plays no crucial part in the story. Why so much ado about a young boy's fear of his father just because he's wearing a helmet? If you connect this vignette with the thesis Steiner offers above that "what exists today only in earliest youth existed then for the whole evolution of humanity", we can imagine that in the time of Hector, children of Astyanax's age were still able to perceive spiritual realities directly and could see emotions such as anger extending from a man's head looking very much like the plume on Hector's helmet. The boy saw only an angry man instead of his loving father coming to say goodbye. Men in Hector's time wore such plumes because they could instill exactly the same kind of fear in their enemies in battle as his did to his young son. Even today this short episode is singled out because it resonates in everyone who reads it of an ancient knowledge we all carry with us, albeit unconscious.

Steiner discusses the so-called helmet of Pallas Athene (See drawing by T.F. Simon, Czech artist, 1936), the one she is usually represented as wearing (often sans plume), and calls it a "concentration of cosmic forces" working around her head which was visible to people of ancient Greece. One might expect that Athena's accepted image led to the original adoption by Greek warriors of the plumes for their helmets, which extended into Hector's time. When one understands that it is cosmic forces which draw our hair out of our head, this adds further to our understanding of how those Greek soldiers who could no longer perceive these forces directly but lived in a society who had old memories of them would have depicted them upon their helmets.

[page 134, 135] These human beings directed their gaze into what we call the world of the senses, but in the material processes, they saw the spiritual. For them, what presented itself to their senses in the material world was at the same time spiritual. Naturally, such perception was only possible because over and above what we see in the sense world, they actually perceived, in their way, the spiritual. For instance, they saw not only the meadow carpeted with flowers, but over the flowers they saw, in a vibrating, active existence, the cosmic forces that draw the plants forth from the Earth. In a certain way, they saw — it seems peculiar to modern human beings, but I am telling you facts — how human beings bear on their heads a kind of etheric-astral cap. In this etheric-astral cap they experienced the forces underlying the growth of the hair. People today are prone to believe that the hair grows out of the head simply by being pushed out from inside, whereas, the truth is that outer nature draws it forth. In olden times, people saw the reality of things which later shone through the culture as an artistic impression. Consider the helmet of Pallas Athene. We do not rightly experience this helmet if we think of it as having been put on. It is not put on. It is bestowed by a concentration of raying cosmic forces that are working around the head of Pallas Athene and densifying, so that in olden times it would have seemed impossible to the Greek to form the head of Pallas Athene without this covering. They would have experienced it just as we today would experience a scalped head. I am not saying that this was the case among Greeks of later times.



People of earlier times, such in the Old India cultural epoch, felt the need to live within numbers, but felt no need to match them to physical objects. That would only come into being with the early calculations of Galileo and those who followed him. We shouldn't ridicule those who used numbers differently than we choose to today, but rather understand that their quaint approach to numbers helps us to understand the quantum of the evolutionary change of consciousness between their time and ours. The Old India Age corresponded to the birth to 7 year-old period of growth in a human child today, seeing the spiritual aspects of the physical reality around, as little Astyanax did.

[page 136] Calculations in those days meant being able to live in numbers and magnitudes themselves and not having to attach these numbers and magnitudes to what is only densified materiality. I do not want to raise objections against the good service that densified materiality renders today, yet one must state how different the configuration of souls was in that more ancient age.

You can only understand the greeting, *Namasté*, which people of India use yet today, if you understand how the ancient Indians saw spirit when they looked upon a human being, looking as it were through the physical body or disregarding the material appearance because density of materiality was simply not important to them. *Namasté* is best translated as, "I see the part of you which when I am in that part of me, we are in the same place." One cannot interpret that greeting in any way as meaning a physical looking — "the part of you" cannot be any part of a physical body or densified materiality. It can only refer to spirit. And when we are both in the spirit world, we are truly in the same place, as all spirits interpenetrate each other in a way that densified materiality cannot.

[page 137] In a certain sense, human beings looked through the external movement, through the human being's external physiognomy, or through a flower. They looked at something that was less concrete outwardly. What they saw gradually became only a manifestation of true reality. For the first post-Atlantean epoch of civilization the whole external world was reality, but spiritual reality. Human beings were spirit. They had a head, two arms and a body, and that was human spirit. There was nothing to deter the ancient Indians from addressing the human beings they saw standing on two legs, with arms and a head, as spirit.

The next cultural period was that of the Old Persian epoch, when something of the ages 7 to 14 began to appear as humans began to experience the etheric world and see humans as containing spirits of light, It was this age which brought forth the original Zarathustra who saw the great light being he called Ahura Mazda as residing in the physical Sun. This was the earliest human understanding, so far as we know, of the Christ being who would later enter the body of Jesus, whose birth was heralded by the Magi of the Zarathustran Mystery Schools as portrayed in the [Gospel of Matthew](#).

[page 137] In the next epoch people already saw through things more. What they saw was more in the nature of a surface behind which something more etheric was perceived, a human being who was more a light-form. People had the faculty of perceiving this light-form, because atavistic clairvoyance was still present.

In the next epoch, the Egyptians began to concentrate so much on the densified aspects of our human existence that they sought to mummify their bodies so that by sustaining the human physical body, they might attain eternal life. No such thing could ever have happened during the previous Indian age. Since our current fifth epoch is a mirror image of the third epoch, we find a similar need to bury one's body whole and provide it for display during an elaborate funeral ceremony. This is a fad which will pass over time as we transit into the next or sixth epoch.

As one follows the transition from each age to the next age, one can see the concept of the "I" evolving slowly into consciousness, until one reaches the current age which we can rightly say, humans are in a position to see "I" to "I" with each other.

[page 137, 138] Imagine the ancient Indians. They did not look at a person's "I." Their language was such that it really only expressed outwardly visible gestures and outwardly visible surfaces. The whole character of Sanskrit, if studied according to its spirit and not only according to its content, is of the nature of gesture and of surface. It expresses itself above all in movement and contour. The "I" was therefore seen through the sheath of the physical body in the ancient epoch, in the next epoch through the sheath of the etheric, in the third epoch through the sheath of the astral. And the human "I" still remained indefinite, until in our epoch, it cast off its veil as it entered into human interaction.

One does not adequately describe the decisive point that entered modern evolution, unless one points out that in the relationship of "I" to "I," free from the sheaths, something totally new entered human development, albeit slowly.

While watching a scene during a large ball in the movie "Anna Karenina" recently, my wife, Del, commented that every man there seemed to be a count. I think this next passage helps answer her question.

[page 140] For in Vienna, for instance, a man who wore spectacles was known as "doctor." People did not bother about the diploma, but rather about the exterior. And anyone who could afford to take a cab was a baron. It was the exterior. There was still a feeling of wanting to live within what can be described in words.

People placed great store in how people dressed or acted and addressed them according the sheaths of appearance with which they covered themselves. Part of our learning to see eye-to-eye or "I" to "I" with people today is our learning to encounter each other without sheaths, without the accouterments of office, academy, or position, but simply as one human to another.

[page 140, 141] The great transition to this newer age consists in human being meeting human being free of the sheaths — according to each person's inner dispositions, to what the soul demands — but the capacities for this encounter without sheaths have not yet been acquired. Above all, we have not yet acquired the possibility for a relation between "I" and "I." But this must be prepared for through education. That is why the question of education is of such burning importance.

My thoughts on meeting are summed up in this short poem, "Meeting":

**Meeting without sheaths —
without crowns or emblemmed hats
or robes of office**

**Meeting without maps
in the middle of a territory**

**Meeting as two explorers
on a joint trajectory
into the future.**

A meeting between "I" and "I" is one made in complete freedom on both people — neither one wants to control the other, neither wants to use the other's thoughts or ideas without permission, neither one wants to take the other's possessions by force — that would constitute operating in complete freedom during meeting and subsequent interaction according the principles laid down by Andrew Galambos. The basis for understanding freedom this way was laid down in Schiller's *Ode an die Freiheit* (7) in which the wonderful line appears, "All men will become brothers under your soft wings (aegis)." In other words, when we allow ourselves to come under the guidance of freedom rightly, we will treat each other as kindly as close relatives. And when that day arrives, the coercive State will no longer have a function — it will

cease to exist, having lost all support of the people who formerly used it to control others against their will.

[page 142] Today these ways of thinking are lacking, but only since a little more than a hundred years. For, read Fichte or Schiller thoughtfully. You will find in their writings what seems quite disturbing to modern people.

They have spoken, for example, about the state and about all kinds of arrangements to make the state into what it should be. And they have spoken about the aim of the state, saying: Morality must be such that the state becomes superfluous, that human beings are capable out of themselves of becoming free agents, capable through their morality of making the state superfluous. Fichte said that the state should be an institution which gives over the reins and gradually becomes entirely superfluous. Today this would make a similar impression as the following incident on a troupe of actors. A play had been performed for the fiftieth time by a traveling company, and the director said, "Now that we have performed this for the fiftieth time, the prompter's box can be dispensed with." But the actors were quite terrified at the idea. Finally one of them pulled himself together and said, "But, sir, then one will see the prompter!" This is about what would happen with human beings today. They do not see that the prompter, too, can be dispensed with. The state will have found its best constitution when it makes itself superfluous. Yes, but what would all the government officials and the chancellors and the private councilors say to such a thing?

Today our world is full of prompters in the form of bureaucrats with regulations which they lash about like bullwhips and federal prisons into which they plop those who defy their stinging lashes. Indeed, with such power what would government officials say to freedom which would make the Constitution superfluous? One would have to drag them kicking and screaming to such a condition of society, however, that would not be acting in freedom, would it? But government officials are human beings when unsheathed of office, are they not? "What would bring human beings to embrace freedom?" is a better question. The answer lies outside the bounds of this review and in the volitional science of Galambos.

In this next passage Steiner compares pedagogy with dietary procedures, and today's equivalents are even worse than he could have imagined in his time. The extremes of dietary procedures in use today involves weighing not the foods ingested, but calculating the protein, fat, and carbohydrates inside of the foods we eat, not to mention so-called good and bad cholesterols, and even more. One can hardly eat without a calculator and most people have one at hand. As for pedagogy, every subject has a standardized test which ensures that a carefully weighed quantity of teaching must be administered to each student. Add to this the LEAP tests, SAT tests, etc, all the way up the academical scale — our students are subjected to standardized tests which they must pass in order to acquire the various sheaths of B. S., M. S., and Ph. D. Along the way real insight into the human being seems superfluous, except perhaps during certain oral exams for advanced degrees.

[page 143] A friend had scales by his plate and weighed the different foods, in order to take the right quantity of each into his organism. From the physiological point of view, this may be quite correct. However, picture this transposed into the realm of education. Unfortunately, it does happen, even if in a primitive way. It is more wholesome when this happens intuitively, if parents, instead of buying some special physiological work on nourishment, judge how to feed their children through the feeling for how they themselves ate as children. And so in pedagogy, we must overcome everything that lays down rules, such as how much food should be taken into the stomach, and strive in the sphere of education for real insight into the nature and being of the human being. This insight into the nature of the human being will have consequences for the whole of human life.

Whoever comes to an understanding of the human being in the way I have been describing during these days, and thereby imbues this knowledge with an artistic

attitude, will remain young. For there is some truth in it that once we have grown up, we are actually impoverished human beings. Yet, the most important thing for the human being is that we have forces of growth within us. What we have in us as a child is of the utmost importance for the human being. We are led back to this in inner experience through true knowledge of the human being. We really become childlike when we acquire the right knowledge of the human being and become thereby suited to meet young people and children in the right way.

True teachers come from those who had an active human force working on them when they were young themselves, and they allow that force to exude from them in the presence of their young charges. Just being clever does not a teacher make.

[page 144] Pedagogy is not enough, if it makes the teachers or educators merely clever. I do not say that it should make them empty of thought, but in this way, one does not become empty of thought. Pedagogy that make teachers merely clever is not of the right kind. The right kind of pedagogy makes teachers inwardly alive and fills them with a lifeblood of the soul that pours itself actively into their physical lifeblood. And if there is anything by which we can recognize true teachers or educators, it is that their pedagogical art has not made them pedants.

How did we develop our current vogue of concepts wrested solely from the world of nature? Did people always have concepts? Yes, but Steiner tells us on page 145 that these were "revealed concepts" rather than concepts dealing solely with the outside world. The change came "when human beings had wrestled through to concepts no longer springing from revelations" and thenceforth humans began to "evolve concepts from observation of external nature, and from outer experiments." From that time forth, human beings, for the most part, have "allowed validity only to what was received from outside through observation." The consequence of this transition was the rising of the dragon which Michael is depicted as having writhing under his foot as he prepares to dispatch it into oblivion, with our help.

From the passage below, we gather that the forces of Darwinian thinking about evolution, coming as they do solely from what is found in nature, are feeding the dragon and empowering it greatly, up until now.

[page 147] Previous civilizations understood the kingdoms of nature as arising out of humanity. Modern civilization grasps humanity as arising out of nature, as the highest animal. It does not grasp to what extent animals are imperfect humans. If we fill our soul with what our thinking has become through nature, there appears in the picture of the human-devouring dragon that which is the most potent factor in modern civilization. Humanity feels itself confronting a being who is devouring them.

But no force for bad arises without a force for good to counteract it, and the rise of the dragon was accompanied by the rise to prominence of Michael in our time. Even in the birth of the dragon, the birth of Michael was noted.

[page 147] This is the essential characteristic of civilization from the fifteenth century on into the nineteenth. We see it correctly only when we consider the picture of the dragon. In olden times it had a prophetic meaning and pointed to what would come in the future. However, those of olden times were conscious of having given birth to the dragon, and also, on the other side, of having given birth to Michael or St. George, to forces capable of overcoming the dragon.

How can Darwinian evolution nurture a dragon which can completely destroy all human life on Earth? People today are mostly oblivious to the implication of the positions they take on evolution. Those who naively choose creationism in place of Darwinism, at least they have a position which will not involve a heat death of the cosmos, but they are likewise depending on the sketchy text of Genesis for their understanding of how the cosmos in which we live evolved. Obviously such a basis for understanding can

be easily and often ridiculed by Darwinian thinkers. And thus both sides of the discussion about which form of evolution is the right one are mistaken! The Darwinians by taking their concepts solely from external nature; the Creationists by taking their concepts solely from the Bible.

Steiner lays out how we arrived where we are, or rather where we were at the beginning of the twentieth century when he was speaking.

[page 147, 148] But from the fifteenth century and on into the nineteenth, humanity was powerless against the dragon. It was the epoch that has gradually succumbed to belief in the material world. As a result, the inner soul life of that epoch was killed to the point that, in respect of the deepest treasures of the soul, there was no more truthfulness. An era which made the world arise out of the Kant-Laplace primeval nebula, which densifies into a globe, and in this process engenders living beings and finally human beings, could but say: Ultimately such activity must disappear into death by warmth. However, that will also be the death of everything human beings have developed in the moral sphere! Though people have ever again sought to prove that the moral world order could find a place in a world that began out of the Kant-Laplace primeval nebula and ending with death through warmth, such a view is not sincere. And by no means sincere, and by no means honest, is the view that considers moral development to originate in the evolving and dividing of the animal kingdom and to disappear when the death through warmth brings about complete annihilation.

How could this happen? Because the human being no longer understands the human being. Take for example the idea that the food we eat is killed and completely destroyed in our process of digestion before it can become part of our living inner being. If we tried to take in a living substance directly we would instantly die from the attempt. Have you ever heard that spoken of in a biology or medical course? I haven't. Each step of our digestive process, each organ connected with our digestion has a key role to play in removing every trace of livingness from our food so that it can enlivened again as an integral part of ourselves.

[page 148] What happens then in the human being? In every moment something is happening in the human being which occurs nowhere else in our earthly surroundings. Human beings take in the foodstuff from the surrounding world. They take this foodstuff from the kingdom of the living and only to a small extent from what is dead. However, as it passes through the digestive system, it is completely destroyed. We take in living substance and completely destroy it, in order to infuse it with our own life. And not until the foodstuff passes into the lymph ducts is the dead made living again in our inner being.

One can see, if one grasps the nature of the human being totally, that in the soul-and-spirit-permeated organic process, matter is completely destroyed and then created anew. In the human organism we have a continual process of destruction of matter, so that matter can be newly created. Matter is continually being changed into nothingness and newly created in us.

Our lack of understanding the human being today is part of the dragon's work in our lives, part of its endeavor to kill the human beings we are. Only with the help of Michael, can this fearful dragon be slain, but Michael can only place his foot firmly on the throat of the dragon, it is we who must grab the sword to administer the death blow to sever its neck. To do otherwise is the ultimate folly. And we cannot depend upon our religious leaders in this matter, as, rightly understood, they accept the dragon's reality and strive for cooperation alongside it. The consequence of the dragon's endeavors? A death of our Earth tapering off into warmth and nothingness, taking all humans and moral values with it.

[page 149, 150] Human beings shrinking away from this consequence is the fearful untruth that has penetrated right into the human heart, into the human soul, and has

seized hold of everything, making them untrue human beings upon the Earth. We must acquire the vision of Michael, who shows us that what is material on Earth does not merely pass through the universal death through warmth, but will at some time actually disperse and vanish. He shows us that, by uniting ourselves with the spiritual world, we can bring life again into a dead world through our moral impulses. Thus, what is in the Earth begins to be transformed into the new life, into the moral. For the reality of the moral world-order is what Michael, who is approaching, can give. The old religions cannot do this, for they have allowed themselves to be conquered by the dragon. They simply accept the dragon, which kills humanity, and by the side of the dragon, they establish some special, abstractly moral divine order. But the dragon does not tolerate this. The dragon must be conquered. It does not suffer human beings to found something alongside it. What we need is the force that we can gain from victory over the dragon.

As Walt Kelly had Pogo reveal to us, "We has met the enemy, and he is us." By accepting the fiat proclamations of King Science, such as, the heat or warmth death of the Earth or our evolution upwards from primates, to name a few, we are shooting ourselves in the collective foot, the very foot we should instead be placing on the dragon's throat alongside Michael!

[page 150, 151] First in our own epoch has the battle of Michael with the dragon become real to the highest degree. When we penetrate into the spiritual texture of the world, we find that with the culmination of the dragon's power there also came, at the turn of the nineteenth century, the intervention by Michael, with whom we can unite ourselves. Human beings can have, if they will, spiritual science. That is to say, Michael actually penetrates from spiritual realms into our earthly realm. He does not force himself upon us, for today everything must spring out of human freedom. The dragon pushes itself forward, demanding the highest authority. The authority of science is the most powerful that has ever been exercised in the world. Compare it to the authority of the Pope; it is almost as powerful. A person can be ever so ignorant and yet say, "Science has established that." People are silenced by science, even if they say something that is true. There is no more overwhelming power of authority in the whole of human evolution than that of modern science. Everywhere the dragon rears up to meet one.

"What foolish stuff!" some of you may be thinking, and you might ask me to name for you just one creditable scientist who believes that stuff. I accept the challenge: Thomas S. Kuhn, a very respected historian of science. He wrote a book, [The Structure of Scientific Revolutions](#), in which he described the overwhelming power and authority of the scientific establishment. And the dragon, you ask, where does the dragon appear in Kuhn's thought and writings? Simply put, the dragon is the scientific paradigm. It is the Dragon named Paradigm which rears its fearful head to squelch such original thinkers Barbara McClintock, Gregor Mendel, Nicola Tesla, and Ignatz Semmelweis during the past century and a half, just to mention a few.

These thoughts led [me](#) to write a sonnet about the Dragon called Paradigm:

The Dragon Paradigm

**Thomas S. Kuhn refused to play the game
of science according to its graven rules.
He saw that such rules were to take the blame
For turning the Men of science to fools.**

**He sought to derail science's Mighty Wagon,
to keep science fresh and new for all of time,
Strove to pin the tail upon the Dragon,
branding it with the name of Paradigm.**

**Dragon roars "Science has established that . . . "
and free thinkers withhold their new-born truth,
Till the truth inside grows big and fat —
fills the gap with a child's new-born tooth.**

**Let no Man bow or cower fore the power
Of Dragon's blowing, crowing: Nevermore!**

To crush this dragon, Michael needs a chariot which can roll over the dragon wherever it prowls the world.

[page 152] It is this, above all, that we must accomplish, if we want to become true leaders of the young. For Michael needs, as it were, a chariot by means of which to enter our civilization. And this chariot reveals itself to the true educator as coming forth from the young, growing human being, yes, even from the child. Here the power of the pre-earthly life is still working. Here we find, if we nurture it, what becomes the chariot by means of which Michael will enter our civilization. By educating in the right way we are preparing Michael's chariot for his entrance into our civilization.

Now we understand the message that Steiner was giving the youth of his time: they are the agents which can drive and steer the chariot of Michael. And clearly from the current state of the dragon paradigm, the youth of our current need to climb aboard and help destroy the dragon. In fact, to be more accurate, human beings are the vessels within which the spirit flows, and human beings for the chariot for Michael. This is knowledge that was once in human consciousness and its presence is solely needed in consciousness today.

[page 153] This is the fundamental impulse of all educational doctrine. We must not take up this art of education as a theory or as something we can learn. We should take it as something with which we would unite ourselves, the advent of which we welcome, and as something which comes to us not as dead concepts but as a living spirit-being to whom we offer our services because we must do so, if humanity is to progress in its evolution. This means to bring knowledge to life again. It means to call forth in full consciousness what once was there in the human unconscious.

Thus a Teacher, so also a Learner! That insight came to me during a period of deep meditation and study of Sufi teachings over thirty years ago. What does it mean? What it says. If you define one member of a dyad as a Teacher, the other is a Learner, but reverse the assignment of roles and the statement is equally true. Recently I found an optical illusion which illustrates this mutuality of roles in any pedagogical endeavor. Placing the sheath of "Teacher", "Instructor", or "Professor" on one person, and you deny thereby the reality of the teaching and learning that flows in the opposite direction. The Teacher, Instructor, and Professor are always learning from their students or you have a poor imitation of an educational process going on. Goethe seemed to have understood this reality in his time when he said, "Every giver becomes a



receiver."

[page 156] It was not for the sake of mere symbolism that Goethe sought everywhere for things that suggest a breathing — out-breathing, in-breathing; out-breathing, in-breathing — rather, Goethe saw the whole of life as a picture of taking, or receiving, and giving. Everyone receives, and everyone gives. Every giver becomes a receiver. But for the receiving and the giving to find a true rhythm, it is necessary that we enter the Michael Age.

Are you a parent, a child, a boss, an employee, a school teacher, a student, a professor, a graduate student, or simply a friend talking to another friend? Any of these dyads offer the possibility for teaching and learning to go on in both directions. Learn to recognize the direction of flow counter to the one established by the Dragon Paradigm, and you will find yourself with the shutters which formerly stifled you being blown open, speeding along on a merry ride in the chariot of Michael, blasting away the detritus of dead thinking wherever you find it, welcoming in the forces from the cosmos which will enliven you and those around you in freedom and light.

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----- *Footnotes* -----

Footnote 1. For more details on the mission of Archangel Michael over the centuries, read this book, [The Archangel Michael, His Mission and Ours](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 1.](#)

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**Footnote 2.** From the song, "What a Wonderful World".

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Footnote 3. See Galambos' classic work in volitional science, [Sic Itur Ad Astra](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 3.](#)

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**Footnote 4.** See my review of [Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts](#) (ALT) by Rudolf Steiner, in which I discuss this in more detail in connection with Leading Thought #59. Plus, apropos to the theme of this book, is this passage of page 52 of ALT: "In old teachings the Power from whom the thoughts in things proceed was designated by the name *Michael*."

[Return to text directly before Footnote 4.](#)

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Footnote 5. One-time events such as described here can be easily traced and erased by using the speed trace as described [here](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 5.](#)

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**Footnote 6.** I first encountered this scene in [Emile or On Education](#) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in a passage on page 63. See my review for more details.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 6.](#)

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Footnote 7. In English the title would be "Ode to Freedom". Schiller's ode was co-opted for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the word *freedom* was changed to *joy*. That is how the Ode to Joy came about and how Schiller's poem formed the great choral ending to Beethoven's final symphony.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 7.](#)

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