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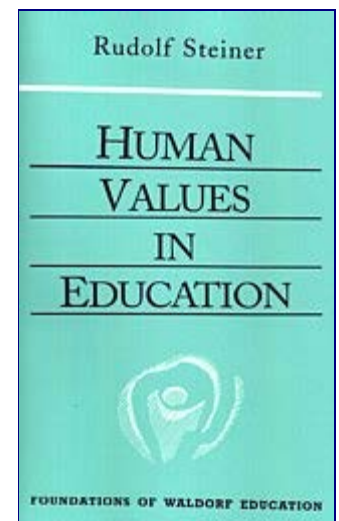


A READER'S JOURNAL

Human Values in Education, GA#310
10 lectures in Arnheim, Holland on July 17-24,
1924
by
Rudolf Steiner

ARJ2 Chapter: Spiritual Science
Published by Anthroposophic Press/NY in 1998
A Book Review by Bobby Matherne ©2016

While reading through this book, I began to summarize various pages with stanzas of a poem.



Read this poem as a whole and hold any unanswered questions which arise, allowing them to be answered at a later time. These stanzas are inspired by passages in these lectures, sometimes paraphrases, sometimes direct quotes of Steiner's words. See the endnote from each stanza to find the quoted material as it appeared in the original text and my own expansions on the material as well.

A True Teacher

A teacher with abs of steel
with indications, not edicts
with individuals, not grand theories
with impulses, not fixed doctrines
Deals with the absolute humanity,
the body, soul, and spirit,
of each child.[\(1\)](#)

A teacher with a Macroscope
views the spiritual in each student
through the lens of the physical,
adjusting its focus
by a deepening of feeling,
Adapting the physical
to a right basis for the spiritual
in each child.[\(2\)](#)

A teacher with materialistic views
does not understand the spiritual in each student —
but even worse
does not understand matter itself —
which fully reveals itself only from a spiritual aspect.[\(3\)](#)

A teacher with materialistic views
gives a kindergartener cut-out letters

to assemble into words —
and never sticks around to see the ossified skeleton
the child grows into fifty years later. (4)

A teacher with true understanding
does not need the spiritual perceptions of
Imagination Inspiration, and Intuition
because what these reveal can be found
expressed in each student's physical body. (5)

A true teacher sees no diseased minds,
only the results of a release of spirit
from the physical body. (6)

A school doctor must thus be a school teacher first,
must know each child deeply,
and not just diagnose child
after a cursory meeting and medical examination. (7)

From soul to soul
wordless meaning flies —
Transceiver to transceiver
Tuned to the same frequency. (8)

A true teacher cannot give math exercises
as punishment in detention
without the whole class
wanting to stay over to do them, too. (9)

A true teacher does not decide
educational matters intellectually
but allows them to develop
in the experience of teaching. (10)

A true teacher learns educational matters
by reading the book of music
which opens in the child
and educates by touching the harp of its soul. (11)

A true teacher avoids dry concepts of education
which dessicate teachers who hold them. (12)

A true teacher presents children
with the gift of unanswered questions
which life itself will answer for them in due time. (13)

A true teacher ensures that good pleases children
and bad displeases children,
knowing that duty grows out
of pleasure and displeasure. (14)

A true teacher knows from Goethe
that Duty comes when we
Love what we demand of ourselves. (15)

A true teacher recognizes in the pale child
an overused memory system
and in the red-faced child
an underused memory system.(16)

A true teacher sorts children by temperament,
placing together like with like
so they may understand
and learn from each other directly.(17)

A true teacher understands a child's
etheric body as a Greek sculptor and
astral body as an Italian musician.(18)

A true teacher presents the whole to a child
and allows them to move to its parts
to move from subtraction to addition,
and from division to multiplication. (19)

A true teacher allows a child to learn by doing
so they may grow into a full human being
instead of a small professor.(20)

A true teacher receives seeds of destiny
and nurtures them into Eurythmy
and Waldorf Education.(21)

Rudolf Steiner was a true teacher and the Waldorf School systems which are today spread around the world stand as a testament to his abilities as a teacher. In the last year of his life, he focused his lectures on Waldorf Education, seeing it as a tree upon which the fruits of anthroposophy can prosper and be made real in the world.

He closed out these lectures on July 24, 1924 with this message.

[page 198] Even if anthroposophy is still seen today as an absurd fantasy, it will gradually dawn upon people that it is based on absolutely concrete foundations, and that it strives in the widest sense to embody and practice life. And maybe this can be demonstrated best of all today in the area of education.

In many places anthroposophy is still seen as an absurd fantasy. What it has done for education via the Waldorf Schools, for nutrition via Bio-dynamic Gardening, for healing via anthroposophic medicine, for arts via Steiner's contribution to sculpture, architecture, and eurythmy, among many other things, is no fantasy but a living reality which has enriched the lives of thousands of people around the world.

----- ENDNOTES -----

Endnote 1.

Page 11, 12: The phrase "abs of steel" refers to teachers whose force is so strong that they deal with both the physical and spiritual side of reality, not just the materialistic side, not just with the dry abstract side of definitions, edicts, and educational theories. Instead such teachers deal with the unfolding of the child in body, spirit, and soul before them, allowing each child to inform teacher how to provide what they need to develop into a full human being, someone who can learn from reality by doing things, rather than learning them, i.e. learn how to live in process instead of content, to become a full human being, not a miniature professor stuffed full of data and knowledge — a dried skeleton of a human being.

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

Endnote 2.

Page 22 and Page 34: What is a Macroscope? It is an instrument that only a full human being can use to view both spiritual and material side of reality. It allows one to see the spiritual in the material and the material in the spiritual, basically, to see and comprehend how each is revealed in the other. The teacher sees the spiritual aspects of each child revealed in its behavior, in its physical appearance, in the sound of its voice, the posture of its body, the complexion of its face and skin, among other things. Each of these areas becomes a channel of communication by which the child reveals to its teacher what its strengths and weaknesses are. A teacher without a Macroscope is as helpless as a microbiologist without a Microscope or an astronomer without a Telescope.

Steiner spoke about a Macroscope in the following passage:

[page 92] If we wish to observe children, in their true being, we must acquire a psychological faculty of perception. This sort of perception includes not just a superficial kind of ability to observe individual children, but, above all, the ability to appraise their capacities correctly.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 2.](#)

Endnote 3.

Page 89: Steiner said that materialists can learn nothing really useful about matter:

[page 89] Materialism has become sick, mostly because materialists understand nothing about matter. They want to limit themselves to matter, but they cannot reach any real knowledge of what matter is.

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

Endnote 4.

Page 90: Steiner said:

[page 90] For example, I see the tendencies of certain methods that are applied to little kindergarten children. They are given the usual cutout letters and then asked to pick them out of a pile and assemble them into words. By busying children this way at such an early age, we bring them things with which they have absolutely no connection. When this happens to them, it's as if we were to say, I was once a person with muscles, skin, and such, but now I am only a skeleton.

About the result of early dry abstract training, Steiner says it will lead to hardening of the arteries by the age of forty-five:

[page 88] If we look at these two people in relation to their physical fitness, we find that the first person will have sclerosis by the age of forty-five, whereas the second will have remained more flexible.

He gave an example of how the more flexible man was accused of being inconsistent versus the one who remained consistent suffered from hardening of the arteries. Spiritual realities do indeed reveal themselves in physical form, rightly understood.

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

Endnote 5.

Page 94: Steiner explains it clearly here:

[page 94] Everything perceived through Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition can be examined and assessed by simply observing the physical organization of a child, because it is always expressed in the physical body.

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

Endnote 6.

Page 96: In his Agriculture Course, Steiner explains that "there are no plant diseases, only bad soil." If you treat the soil properly, the so-called plant diseases will disappear as they are the result of deficiencies in the soil. In this lecture, he tells us that there are no mental diseases in human beings, only an interference in the release of the spiritual from the physical. Find a way to remove the interference and the mental illness will disappear. He first discovered this while working as a tutor with a mentally retarded young man with "water on the brain." Over time his brain size returned to normal and the young man went to medical school and became a respected doctor.

[page 96] In the truest sense of the word, there are no mental illnesses; they are the result of a disruption in the release of spirit from the physical.

Other diseases of the body can also have soul-spiritual origins.

[page 97] By studying the difficulties of soul and spirit that manifest outwardly in a sick body, we can come to understand how the soul takes hold of the organism when it needs to express something in particular.

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

Endnote 7.

Page 97: Steiner insists that school doctors must be trained as teachers as well as medical doctors and gives an example a Dr. Koliosko who is also a classroom teacher.

[page 97] He is completely within the school as a teacher; he is familiar with all the children, so he is in a position to understand the source of pathological symptoms that appear in the children.

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

Endnote 8.

Page 105: This short stanza discusses how true learning takes place when the teacher has so absorbed the material in a lesson plan that a wordless communication between the child and the teacher takes place during the course of teaching. I first wrote of this process in a Final Paper in a graduate course in Education titled [Teaching and Learning in the College Classroom](#). My findings are equally applicable to all level of classes, from kindergarten to college. If the teacher merely reads the words of their lesson plan, the child will be bored. If the teacher talks about the material using the lesson plan only as an outline, what the teacher is imagining at each step will transfer directly into the hearts and minds of the children and no one will be bored. In other words, the teacher must get into the area of knowledge and experience it in their soul and the children will do likewise.

[page 105] The essential substance and meaning of one's teaching material can undoubtedly be learned very quickly if you have a gift for getting right into that area of knowledge and experiencing it in the soul.

A teacher's lesson plan is a gift they give themselves and their children.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 8.](#)

Endnote 9.

Page 108: Steiner gave us an example of a new Waldorf teacher who thought children should be punished in this way.

[page 108] He told them, "You must stay in after school and do some arithmetic." But the children could not understand why arithmetic would be considered a punishment, since it gave them such pleasure. So the whole class (and this did happen) asked him if they could stay as well.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 9.](#)

Endnote 10.

Page 113: It is likely hard for teachers in our present day school systems (non-Waldorf) in the twenty-first century to imagine a school with no rules or regulations governing educational matters! Steiner needed to make his intentions explicit for Waldorf Schools which were as different from the schools in his day as they are in our day.

[page 113] In our case, everything depends on the free individuality of each teacher. Insofar as I am considered the school's director, nothing is given in the form of rules and regulations. In fact, there is no school director in the usual sense; each teacher is sovereign. Instead of a school director or administrator, we have teachers' conferences, where the teachers study and work in common toward progress. . . . Educational matters cannot be determined intellectually; they should arise only from the experience of teaching.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 10.](#)

Endnote 11.

Page 118: The inspiration for the book and the harp of this stanza comes from these passages:

[page 118] Where can you find a book that tells teachers what teaching really is? It is the children themselves who form that book. We should not learn teaching methods from any book except the one that opens before us as the children themselves.

[page 118] We can see that teachers must acknowledge something that touches the most intimate threads of one's soul life. And unless you can go into these intimate, subconscious threads, you will never gain real access to children and win their full confidence.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 11.](#)

Endnote 12.

Page 119: Why do teachers dry up and what is the solution?

[page 119] Why do teachers dry up so easily? It is because they must always bend to the level of the children. We certainly have no reason to make fun of teachers who, because they are limited to the usual concept of teaching, become dried up.

[page 119] The situation for teachers whose life is permeated with spiritual science is very different. Their perspective on the world continually broadens; their vision continues to extend further.

This spiritually living approach can engender the needed enthusiasm in both the teacher and the children, so that children will prefer to stay after school to study math even if given the chance.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 12.](#)

Endnote 13.

Page 126: Steiner explains that simply presenting children only what is already within their full comprehension removes chances for wonderful experiences of learning from life itself, even decades later. I have mentioned several salient points in my life where I encountered new situations that I was unable to ask anyone to explain to me. These remained as unanswered questions for me for a decade or two before a sudden insight came to me and I understood the meaning. One situation involved a curious look by the public librarian when I brought a book to her desk to check out to take home. I often brought four or five books at a time to check out and never had a problem until this memorable day. Mrs. Lawson knew me as her most regular customer, and, even though I was only eight or nine years old, had never before inspected the books I checked out. To me it was a book about a comic character named Spiro and his adventures through the blood stream of the human body. There were a lot of words I didn't understand, but I loved the drawings, especially the one where Spiro came out of the edge of a human eyeball. She finally allowed me to take out the book without saying a word, but the silent heaviness of her delay marked the occasion as something important. Truly an important communication had flown wordlessly from her soul to mine. Decades later a flash of insight came to me and I realized that the book was about the disease syphilis! Steiner had a similar experience of something he accepted from his teacher at age eight but only decades later he understood it.

[page 126] But when I reach thirty-five, I encounter an experience that recalls, as though from wonderful spiritual depths, what I did not understand when I was eight,

but that I accepted solely on the authority of the teacher I loved. Because he was my authority, I felt certain that it must be true. Now life brings me another experience and suddenly, in a flash, I understand the earlier one. All this time, it was hidden inside of me, and now life grants me the possibility of understanding it. Such experiences lead to a tremendous sense of obligation. One has to say that it is indeed sad, for those who have no experience of such moments in life . . . No one should be deprived of such experiences, because in later years, it is a source of enthusiastic and purposeful activity in life.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 13.](#)

Endnote 14.

Page 126, 128: Why should we not just teach moral concepts to children between the age of 7 and 14? Can't they understand good and bad? Or are such abstract concepts unable to fit into their growing minds and souls? I suspect the reason is that children will reject anything they don't understand, but they will understand something which pleases or displeases them, being attracted to the former and repelled by the latter, no concept needed.

[page 126, 127] I said that, between the change of teeth and puberty, children should not be given moral precepts; instead, we should be careful to ensure that the good pleases them because it pleases their teacher, and the bad displeases them because it displeases their teacher. During [this] second period of life, everything should be based on an affinity for goodness and an aversion toward evil. Moral feelings are implanted deeply in the soul, establishing a sense of moral well-being when experiencing benevolence and a sense of moral discomfort in experiencing malevolence.

[page 127] Then comes the time of puberty. . . . when something displeases me, it is my duty to leave it alone. The significance of this is that *duty itself grows out of pleasure and displeasure*; it is not instilled in me, but arises from pleasure and displeasure. . . . This is the awakening of true freedom in the human soul. We experience freedom because our sense of morality is the deepest single impulse of the human soul.

This is a living experience of morality in contrast to the dry, dusty death of moral instruction which most any child between 7 and 14 will reject and even make fun of when out of sight of the teacher. This was particularly noticeable to me from the way so many of my schoolmates joked about Catechism instruction.

[page 128] Moral instruction pays no attention to the right approach, and it gradually dries up human beings, makes them into "skeletons" of moral precepts, on which one's conduct in life is hung like clothes on a hanger.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 14.](#)

Endnote 15.

Page 129: Along comes Goethe to give us a beautiful description of duty as the "love of what we demand of ourselves." If we have been subjected to the right kind of moral guidance between 7 and 14 then what pleases us will be good for us. And it can guide us in a worthy path, one which we can come to love, with the result that what we call duty can rise from some onerous obligation into a sublime pleasure. Steiner gives us a pyramid in which gratitude provides the basis for love and love the basis of duty. Rightly understood, this pyramid is the foundation for success in the 12-step Alcoholics Anonymous program.

[page 129] Goethe once expressed this beautifully when he asked, "What is duty? It is when we love what we demand of ourselves." This is the goal we must attain. But we

cannot reach it unless we are guided to it by the stages of gratitude, love, and duty.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 15.](#)

Endnote 16.

Page 138, 139: Memory in young children develops out of the forces of growth and nourishment. Taxing a child's memory too much may lead to a weakened digestion and a paleness.

[page 138, 139] If this is the case, it may happen that the child's power of memory is overtaxed, with too much demanded of that liberated faculty. So the child becomes pale, and the teacher must recognize that has happened because too much strain has been placed on the child's memory. And the color returns when such a child is relieved of this burden. But teachers must understand that a growing pallor is connected with what they have done by overburdening the child's memory. It is important to see right into physical symptoms and to recognize that, when a child grows too pale, it is because the memory has been overtaxed.

The opposite effect may occur where a reddish complexion may appear in a child's face, indicating that some memory forces have diverted into growth and nourishment.

[page 139] Here, we must try to require more of the child's memory. If we do this, the symptoms will disappear.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 16.](#)

Endnote 17.

Page 140: This is an amazing insight by Steiner. Put troublemakers together to cause each other trouble until they straighten each other out, for example.

[page 140] Experience shows that, after a while, the phlegmatics become so bored with sitting together that, to get rid of their boredom, they begin to interact. Choleric, on the other hand, beat up on one another, and this, too, quickly improves. It is the same for fidgety sanguines, and the melancholics get to see what it is like when others are absorbed in melancholy. Handling children in this way allows one to see how like reacts favorably to like.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 17.](#)

Endnote 18.

Page 154, 160: The Greeks were outstanding sculptors and the Italians amazing musicians. As such we can take the ancient Greek human as a model for understanding the constructive forces of a child's etheric body between teeth change and puberty. After puberty the formative forces of a child's astral body becomes like an Italian musician, concerned with everything musical in nature and life.

[page 155] Just as the ether body works to free itself and become independent at the change of teeth, so the astral body works toward independence at puberty. While ether body is a sculptor, the astral body is a "musician"; its structure is of the very essence of music. . . . if we enter the Eastern periods of culture in which even language was imbued with music, then we find a musical view of the world even in their architectural forms.

Later, in Greece, this changed, and now, especially in the West, it has changed radically; we have entered an age in which technology and mathematics are emphasized.

Our body has a built-in musical structure revealed in its bone structure, as a result the tones of the musical scale resound within our bodies.

[page 156] On our backs, where the shoulder blades meet and, from there, carried into our whole being, forming and shaping us, are the human forms constituted from the fundamental note of the scale. The form of the upper arm corresponds with the second, and the lower arm with the third. And because there is a major and minor third (not a major and minor second), we have only one bone in the upper arm, but two in the lower arm, the radius and the ulna. These correspond to the major and minor third. We are formed according to the notes of the musical scale, the intervals hidden within us.

With the hand we express the fourth and fifth and experience free movement, "we go right out of ourselves, taking hold, as it were, of outer nature. This is the source of the feeling we experience in response to the sixth and seventh, feeling that is enhanced by experiencing eurythmy movements." (Page 157)

[page 158] True knowledge of the human being cannot be attained unless medical studies are supplemented by an understanding of the role music plays in the world. During college training, student teachers should gain an understanding of music — not just externally but also inwardly — so that their inner perception sees music everywhere. Music is indeed everywhere in the world; one simply has to find it.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 18.](#)

Endnote 19.

Page 166, 167: In my study of arithmetic in the public schools, I was taught backwards to the way Steiner recommends: I was taught first addition, then subtraction; first multiplication, then division. I fought my way to understanding subtraction and division, but wondered why so many of my classmates had so much trouble with subtraction and division. Only through reading Steiner have I come to an answer to my long-held unanswered questions. They had trouble because subtraction and division were thought to be more difficult, so the teacher held it till after addition and multiplication, and the children got the teacher's unspoken message. Basically most kids hated subtraction and division, and long division, well, they would rather kneel on gravel with bare knees than do long division. Teachers were going from the parts to the whole, just putting things together intellectually to make $1+2+3+4 = 10$. Kids hated being forced to think that way. I didn't know another way, but I quickly saw the processes of addition and subtraction as the inverse of each other and managed to master arithmetic in spite of the teaching method. I can guarantee you that *no kid* in my classes would have asked to stay after school to do math exercises!

[page 166, 167] Seize every opportunity to use images and tangible objects. This helps children find a way into the real world and to form everything in keeping with reality. It's simply arbitrary to place three beans before the children, add another three, and then yet another four, and then teach them addition: $3+3+4 = 10$. This is quite arbitrary. But it is completely different if I have an unknown number of beans in a small pile; this is how things are in the world. When I divide the pile, the children will quickly understand this. I give some to one child, some to another, and another portion to a third child. I divide the pile, first showing how many beans there are altogether. I begin with the total and go to the parts. The child could count the beans, since it is just a repetitive process — one, two, three, and so on, up to twelve. But I divide them into four, into four more, and again into another four. If I begin with the total and proceed to the parts, the children take it in more easily; it accords with reality. The other way is abstract — just

putting things together intellectually. It is also more real if I get them to the point where they must answer a question: If I have twelve apples, and someone takes them and returns only seven, how many have I lost? Here we begin with the minuend, then go from the remainder to the subtrahend; we do not subtract, but go from what remains as the result of a living process, to what has been taken away.

There you have it: arithmetic taught by subtraction first! What effect does this have on children?

[page 167] This affects the children and makes them bright and lively, whereas teaching arithmetic has a largely deadening effect. The children remain "dead" and apathetic. . . .

Steiner is describing what I saw happen to most of my classmates in response to arithmetic lessons. They hated them and made bad grades for the most part. I wonder if I had been taught this way if I might have had less trouble in advanced calculus when I was in college. I just could not connect with the deep abstractness of the processes I was being taught. I felt a bit like my classmates back in grade school during arithmetic lessons.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 19.](#)

Endnote 20.

Page 171, 175: Greek children were taught gymnastics as the basic element of what it means to be a human being: to move and accomplish things. This approach to education in ancient Greece shows up in German schools today which are called "gymnasiums". We no longer seek to give our children the experience of doing things, but instead give them scraps of abstract scientific knowledge. The result should not be surprising. I find it in my own grandchildren: they seem to be small professors spouting knowledge as if from the lectern of a college classroom. Since the sixteenth century we have de-emphasized gymnastic training, pushed rhetoric or speaking ability to the aside, and have focused our major efforts on intellectuality. (Page 174)

[page 174, 175] Gymnasts were complete human beings, and rhetoricians appeared in public wanting to represent human beings, but our professors have ceased to be human at all. They deny the human being and live increasingly through sheer abstraction; they are now mere skeletons of civilization. . . . And if we wish to express the difference between a Greek child and a modern child, one could say that Greek child was human, and a modern child easily becomes a small professor.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 20.](#)

Endnote 21.

Page 189 to 192: So many of the initiatives undertaken by Steiner came from questions from others: the Waldorf School from questions by Emil Molt, the Christian Community from questions about a modern ritual of worship, and Eurythmy from a widowed mother who asked an important question. To Steiner these questions were as if destiny had spoken to him. A time wave from the future had reached him and he knew the question would lead to an important answer for the world.

[page 189] In the case of eurythmy, for example, it was destiny that spoke. Today, looking at things from outside, it might be imagined that someone was struck by the sudden thought that we needed eurythmy. But this was not the case. At the time, the father of a family had died. There were several children, and the mother was concerned about them. She was anxious that something worthwhile should come of them. The anthroposophic movement was still small. I was asked, "What could develop from these

children?" It was this question that led to the first steps toward eurythmy. Our first attempts were narrowly limited, but from these circumstances the first suggestions for eurythmy were given. Destiny had spoken, and it manifested because anthroposophy exists, and someone standing on anthroposophical ground was seeking her calling. Soon (it did not take long) the first students of eurythmy became teachers and were able to carry eurythmy into the world. So, with the help of Marie Steiner, who took it under her wing, eurythmy became what it is today.

A similar time wave from the future came when after Steiner spoke on education to them, Emil Molt's employees asked, "Can we have such a school for our children here at the factory?" It was destiny speaking again.

[page 191] Then in Stuttgart, out of all these confused ideals, Emil Molt's idea emerged to establish a school for the children of the workers at the Waldorf Astoria Cigarette Factory. And Emil Molt — who is here today — had the idea of giving me the responsibility for directing the school. This was a foregone conclusion; destiny would not have allowed otherwise. The school was established with a hundred and fifty children of the factory worker, and staffed by teachers drawn from the anthroposophic movement.

[Return to text directly before Endnote 21.](#)

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