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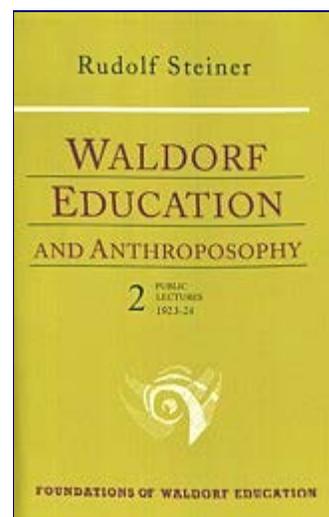


A READER'S JOURNAL

**Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy 2
GA#218 & 304a, 9 Lectures, Various Cities
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**Introduction by René M. Querido
Translated by Nancy Parsons Whittaker,
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by
Rudolf Steiner**

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Anthroposophy is not some metaphysical hogwash, but rather a practical approach to life. If you are interested in your existence as a human being, continue reading, as Steiner will help you to understand how the spiritual world becomes a part of all material events.

[page 1] When we look at a living human being, we are faced not only with what we see, what we understand through speech, and perhaps everything else that person's being expresses that we can perceive with normal consciousness; we also confront the spiritual being living in that person, the spiritual, supersensible being that continually affects that individual's material body.

Few places else in human existence is this awareness of a spiritual being living in a human being more obvious than when we confront a baby or a small child. A baby absorbs everything we experience in our soul and reacts immediately to us. Smile at a baby and it will absorb and reflect back at you the feeling in your soul which led you to smile. Pretend to smile when you don't feel like it and the baby will also reflect that inner feeling back to you. Move a camera between you and the baby and you'll see a troubled look on its face immediately. If you understand this process, you'll appreciate the job that parents, caregivers, and teachers have when dealing with young children. Everything they feel will be absorbed by their charges, and echoed back at them. Going back to the baby example: Yes, we can perceive the changes in the baby's face with our sensory perceptions, but it is reacting to changes within our soul directly when it smiles so that, if we move the camera in front of our face, the baby acts puzzled by the soulless object we have confronted it with.

[page 2] We can never comprehend very much of the world through the knowledge we gain through normal sense perceptions and the intellect connected with those perceptions. People delude themselves into thinking that, when we someday perfect conventional science, we will comprehend more of the world through our intelligence, sense perceptions, and experiments.

It will not happen because each new abstract logical construct will build on the set of older ones like a large house of cards which the simplest breeze can knock over. We exist in a time-being similar to the way we exist in our physical-being, our body, and what's important to teachers et al is that this time-being

is very active during childhood and remains active for the rest of our lifetime, reflecting back to our mature selves the results of our early learnings.

[page 3] The time organism is particularly active in early childhood, but is continually active throughout life in much the following way: Suppose someone has an opportunity at age thirty-five to enter a new situation. If that person meets the situation by doing what is right, then such a person may become aware that at around age twelve important things were learned that now make it possible to move quickly into this new situation.

Around the age thirty-one I encountered a situation when doing what was right was crucial to me. A guiding principle came to me: I was *to make decisions in such a way that the outcome would be best for all the people concerned*. The principle allowed me to move quickly into the dramatically new situation exactly as Steiner explains above. I cannot attest how that learning came to me, to what might have happened to me, what teacher may have influenced me around the age twelve, but at age 31 I found the exact guidance I needed to sort through the morass of possibilities in a joyful mood and make healthy and effective decisions. Looking back from my present age of 76, I can attest that the decisions I made were best for all concerned.

[page 3, 4] A certain kind of joy occurs at age thirty-five that arises from the interaction that person had as a child with a teacher. What occurred in that etheric body [RJM: time-body] of eight or ten years old, due to the teacher and the instruction given to the child, acts exactly the same way that our treatment of an organ far from the head acts to cure the headache. Thus, the experiences of a young child affect the thirty-five-year-old person later and create a joyful mood or depression. The entire disposition of an adult depends on what the teacher developed in the etheric body of that adult as a child, in just the same way that one organ of the human spatial body depends upon all the others.

In the "Sound of Music" we hear Maria sing this line, "Nothing comes from nothing; nothing ever could. So somewhere in my youth and childhood, I must have done something good." As a child if we do something good, it is because we imitated the behavior of a caregiver or teacher doing something good. Thus the verse above points to a childhood teacher that influenced Maria as a child in such a way that now in adulthood, she experiences a joyful moment marking the beginning of the rest of her lifetime as Baroness von Trapp leading her family in joyous singing.

How do we teach our children to do something good? We do something good in their presence. We teach them to hold good thoughts in their mind by holding good thoughts in our minds. We ensure our inner and outer actions match, what in psychotherapy is called "being congruent". When we tell an untruth we are automatically incongruent because our inner and outer realities do not match. A child maintains a spiritual connection with us and so it is always aware of our inner realities because it shares that inner reality with us. If our words and action do not match our inner reality, the child gets confused, and something that is not good happens in the child. It's the "not good" that can return at age thirty-five as a full-blown depression as Steiner says in the above passage.

If you do not believe this spiritual connection is true, is your belief due to a lifelong indoctrination in believing that sensory data is the only means of transmission between humans? It may be so between two adults, especially adults who have been carefully taught it is true, but children arrive un-taught and their reality is much different than most people are taught, up until now. You can instruct child under the age of seven in good and evil, but what is inside of you they will receive more powerfully than anything you can say.

[page 8] If we believe we can achieve anything by instructing the child about good and evil, we only delude ourselves. We can educate very young children only when we present them with examples they can imitate, including thoughts. A subtle spiritual

connection exists between children and those who raise them. When we are with children, we should be careful to harbor only thoughts and feelings they can imitate in their own thoughts and feelings. In their souls, young children are entirely sense receptors and perceive things so subtle that we as adults could not dream they even occur.

After age seven the child sees the teacher as a model to imitate, both the good and bad aspects of what they do.

[page 8] At this point children are just as devoted to what the teacher says and develops within the children as they were earlier to the gestures and activities around them. Between seven and fourteen years of age, an urge arises within children to devote themselves to natural authority. Children thus want to become what that authority is. The love of that natural authority and a desire to please now become the main principle, just as imitation was earlier.

When I was nine and ten years old, I read a lot of comic books, *Superman*, *Captain Marvel*, the *Blackhawk* flying squadron, *Nancy*, *Henry*, *Heckle and Jeckel*, and so on. I couldn't afford to buy comic books, but my Uncle Frank bought a lot of them, and put them into a box at my Grandma's house when he was done. When we went there, I'd pull out the box and read a two-foot high stack of comic books in one afternoon under a pecan tree. I learned all I needed to know about good and bad from these comic books. In *Superman* and *Captain Marvel*, I found models of a moral person who corrected injustices. My parents to their credit left me alone in my comic book reading.

[page 13] When children have reached age nine or ten, we may begin to present pictures that primarily stimulate the imagination. We may present pictures of good people, pictures that awaken a feeling of sympathy for what people do. Please take note that I did not say we should lecture children about moral commandments. I did not say we should approach children's intellect with moral reasoning. We should approach children through esthetics and imagination. We should awaken a pleasure or displeasure of good and bad things, of just or unjust things, of high ideals, of moral action, and of things that occur in the world to balance incorrect action. Whereas previously we needed to place ourselves before the children as a kind of moral regulator, we now need to provide them with pictures that do no more than affect the imagination living within their sense nature. Before puberty, children should receive morality as a feeling. They should receive a firm feeling that, "Something is good, and I can be sympathetic toward it," or "I should feel antipathy toward something bad." Sympathies and antipathies, that is, judgments within feelings, should be the basis of what is moral.

When I say that comic books shaped my early moral judgments, I mean that sincerely. My parents did not lecture me on morality, except for terse statements such as "You do that you go to jail" about stealing and such.

[page 13] You cannot make a plant's root blossom; you must wait until the root develops into the plant and then the plant blossoms. In the same way, you must, in a sense, tend the moral root in the feeling and develop sympathy for what is moral. You must then allow children to carry that feeling into their intellect through their own forces as human beings. Later in life they will have the deep inner satisfaction of knowing that something more lives within them than just memories of what their teacher said was right or wrong. Instead, an inner joy will fill their entire soul life from the knowledge that moral judgment awoke within them at the proper time. That we do not slavishly educate children in a particular moral direction, rather, we prepare so that their free developing souls can grow and blossom in a moral direction, strengthens people not only with a capacity for moral judgment, but also gives them a moral strength.

When I studied psychotherapy, a wise teacher told me about a farmer who would go out at night to check on his new seedlings and give each one a tug to help it grow. All of his plants died before long. Children are like seedlings, are they not?

[page 15] If you tend plants as a gardener, you certainly do not make the sap move from the root to the flower. Rather, you prepare the plant's environment so that the flow of sap can develop. As teachers we must be just as selfless so that the child's inner forces can unfold. Then we will be good teachers, and the children can flourish in the proper way.

The third stage of life is puberty, which is the flowering stage of children and its fruit is morality.

[page 16] The capacity for intellectual moral judgment awakens in the third period of the child development, which is oriented toward the spirit. This occurs as surely as the plant in the light of the Sun blossoms and fruits. Morality can only take firm root in the spirit if the body and soul have been properly prepared. It can then freely awake to life, just as the blossom and fruit freely awaken in the plant in the light of the Sun.

Steiner likens being a caregiver for a small child to that of being a painter. I did not master the first step of painting because I was lashed to a theoretical understanding of color and painting. I never raised myself from my early childhood coloring book stage and later paint-by-numbers stage. Late in life, I took a short workshop in painting with the Sufi Artist Verna and she helped me to see colors directly, and paint what I saw, but it was too late for me.

[page 22] Painters or other artists must learn two things in order to practice their art. In the case of painters, they must first learn a particular skill for observing form and color. The artist must be able to create from the nature of form and color and cannot begin with some theoretical comprehension of them. The artist can begin only by living within the nature of form and color. Only then can the artist learn the second thing, namely, technique.

My parents were artists in raising children. They did not try to push me in any direction, but stood aside and allowed me to choose my life's path. I absorbed their parenting skills and deftly applied them with my own children, raising four of them from the time I was twenty-five years old. Luckily I had no time to acquire a "theoretical understanding", and simply proceeded on what I felt in my soul was the right thing to do. There were speed bumps, but I am very happy with the way all four have turned out.

In the next passage, Steiner emphasizes the importance of nurture over nature, something I heartily agree with.

[page 28] Contemporary understanding overvalues way too much what is call "heredity." When people see the characteristics of some adult, they often say such traits are inherited by purely physical transfer from one generation to another. Those who truly understand human beings, however, see that children's muscles develop according to the impressions from their surroundings. They can see that — depending on whether or not we treat a child with tenderness and care, with love or in some other manner — the child's breathing and circulation develop according to the feelings experienced. If a child often experiences someone approaching with love, who instinctively falls into step with the child will, in subtle ways, develop healthy lungs.

One can understand if someone approaches a child with a forcible attitude, such a dentist trying to get a young child to open his mouth, the resulting effect on the child can be a lifetime of asthma problems.

[page 29] To the extent that a person's physical body is strong or weak, that the physical body can be depended upon, gratitude or blame for the way one walks through life —

even in old age — is due to the impressions made on a person as a small child.

From the science of doyletics we learn that these impressions on children before teeth change can be stored as physical body states (doyles) which can be recapitulated indefinitely for the rest of the child's life. One episode in a dentist's office is enough to create asthma, a mother screaming because her child's playing with a roach can create a lifetime fear of roaches, etc.

[page 30] Everything that occurs in the child's presence before the change of teeth penetrates the depths of the child's being.

Steiner reveals an understanding of the basic principle of the science of doyletics. This science provides individual ways to undo the deep penetration of a human being by onerous events which occurred in their childhood(1).

The only instruction valuable to me as a young child was my mother or father telling me, "Here's how you do it" followed by my doing it and matching what they did.

[page 30] Children do not learn what they for any reason found in the instruction itself. Children learn because they see what an adult knows and is able to do, and because an adult who is the child's accepted educational authority says this or that is something appropriate to be learned. That goes right into the child's moral foundation.

Definitions are soul-killing! Give one to a child between teeth change and puberty and it's like putting shoes on a child at age seven and leaving the same pair on until age 14. Children need inwardly flexible concepts which can grow as they grow. A good unanswered question is more valuable to a child than a stultifying definition, rightly understood.

Games and activities also affect a child's health. Give a daughter a beautiful doll all dressed-up and the child's blood becomes thicker. Better to give her a sock and allow her to see you draw eyes on it. This activity will liven the child's blood and breathing system. A melancholic girl should not be given bright colors to cheer her up, but rather tints of blue and violet. "Otherwise the bright colors could overstimulate such an inwardly active child." (Page 36) I was such an inwardly active child, with a melancholic temperament, and the color violet has always appealed to me. Our first bedroom set, I chose because of its violet-colored headboard and matching dressers.

[page 37] Throughout the kind of education we are discussing, it is always important that the teacher have a good sense of what lives within the child and can, from what is observed within the child's body, soul, and spirit, practice every moment what is right through the teacher's own instinct for teaching.

If it sounds difficult, maybe that's only because it is so novel for teaching to be intimately concerned with each pupil. And yet that is the guideline for a Waldorf School and is at the core of its success in drawing the best out of each student. Rightly understood, *educare* means to draw out and includes the root of the word *ductile* which is the quality of a metal which allows it to be drawn out into a wire. Waldorf teachers, however, do not draw things out of a student, but provide the environment in which what is present in the student as a seed can grow, flower, and be fruitful.

[page 37] In this way, the teacher can see the pedagogy needed for the children. In the Waldorf School, we discover the curriculum in each child. We read from the children everything we are to do from year to year and month to month and week to week so that we can bring them what is appropriate and what their inner natures require.

One thing a child requires is to learn things it cannot yet understand through its thinking. A teacher does best when the child learns what it will only come to understand fully later in life. This theme comes up in many Steiner lectures on the Art of Teaching and it bears repeating.

[page 40, 41] If I have already comprehended everything as a child, then I could never have the following kind of experience. Suppose something happens to me around age thirty-five that reminds me of something I learned from a beloved teacher or a loved authority, something I had learned from that authority through my desire to believe. However, now I am more mature and slowly a new understanding arises within me. Returning in maturity to things we learned earlier, but did not fully comprehend, has an enlivening effect. It gives an inner satisfaction and strengthens the will.

There were two dicta atop the Temple of Apollo in ancient Greece: Know Thyself and Everything in Moderation. Steiner's anthroposophy is devoted to the first dictum, as it enables us to know the human being in body, soul, and spirit, a full knowledge which one can only find in earlier times when religion, art, and science were a unity and we felt ourselves to be part of the divine spirit pervading the world. In accordance with the dicta of moderation, each of the three parts of the human: body, soul, and spirit were deemed equally important, as were each of the three areas of religion, art, and science.

When, in the course of human evolution, our direct experience of the spiritual world began to wane, the cold, hard facts of science came to prominence and "Know Thyself" became an exertion. One scientist, Du Bois-Reymond, came up with an anti-Know Thyself cry, *Ignorabimus* — "we cannot know ourselves because we are fated to ignorance". Yes, we can know ourselves, he claimed, but only through the science of the senses which has allowed us to see so far into the reality of the world. But this sensory reality is only material reality and the real essence of the human being hides out of sight from our sensory-world experience, leaving us in the state of *Ignorabimus*, unable to know our true selves.

We have telescopes to see far out into the cosmos and microscopes to see deep into the material, but we as human beings each contain the instrument we need to see into and experience the essence of the human being, and I call that instrument the *macroscope*. We are the only instrument which can probe humans, beings of body, soul, and spirit. To do so, the *macroscope* requires us to use the full abilities of body, soul, and spirit as Steiner teaches in his anthroposophy or *spiritual science*.

[page 49] Two things must be understood fully about spiritual science: First, it is impossible to fathom the secrets of human nature by knowledge gained exclusively from natural science; second, it is possible to penetrate the spiritual world in the same fully conscious state that so-called empirical research uses in the sense world, and with the same clarity. However, I must quickly add that the importance of what has just been said can be appreciated and confirmed only through personal, practical experience in matters of spiritual knowledge.

If we use only our natural scientific tools, we can perceive only the bones of our skeleton, and the pieces of our flesh. We can make a complete inventory of the human body in a dissection lab, but what we miss is the enlivened soul and spirit which activates the human being. One needs a *macroscope* to fully realize the complete human being.

[page 49] People who try — and this has been done again and again — to apply the methods of experimental laboratory research to the investigation of the human being will not succeed, for the essence of human nature must be experienced in one's own self to be experienced at all in a living way. It is well known that, in the absence of self-knowledge, one remains always at the periphery of the human being, and I would like to make the following paradoxical statement: If a researcher were to apply the natural-scientific research method to the study of the human being, and then to verify the findings, applied them to his or her own being, believing this to really be what true humanity is about, the following would happen. Precisely when such a person felt most enthusiastic, the following realization would jump up in front of the soul: When I experience myself through the natural-scientific method, applying all my senses and all my powers of knowledge, I still feel the way one would feel looking at one's own skeleton.

The experience of such natural-scientific investigation would in fact be devastating. Human beings would "skeletalize" themselves. To experience this feeling is to touch on the impulse that gave rise to spiritual science. We must bring the essence of the human being out in ways other than through bringing forth lifeless nature.

In his Philosophy of Freedom, Steiner wrote: "To fully understand the human being, an artistic appreciation of ideas is needed, not merely an abstract comprehension of ideas." He explains what this means:

[page 52, 53] A real enlivening is required to make the leap that transforms the abstraction of concepts we use to understand nature into artistic display. This is possible. It requires that knowledge be allowed to flow into art, which leads to the development of the artistic sense. As long as we remain within the boundaries of natural science, we have to acknowledge that we will never understand how consciousness is connected with matter; but the moment we allow anything to flow naturally from the realm of ideas into an artistic view, the scales fall from our eyes.

There is a philosophic conundrum called the "hard problem of consciousness" which says we cannot know how consciousness is connected to matter (our brain). Steiner continues the above passage and shows us that problem can be solved.

[page 53] Everything in the realm of idea and concept is transformed into an artistic seeing, and what we see in this way spreads over the essence of humanity, just as the colors conceived by the eye spread their hues over the outer appearance of plants or other natural phenomena. Just as the physical organ of the eye, in the process of conceiving color, merges with the essence of color phenomena in nature, so the artistic sense grows inwardly in conjunction with the nature of the human being as a whole. We need to have seen colors with our eyes before we can think them. Likewise, only after we have had a vision of the nature of the human being through this artistic sense, can our abstract concepts and ideas fully encompass it.

This is what is necessary to keep us from "skeletalizing" ourselves with our physical world instruments. Let us pull our eyes from the microscope and open our eyes to the macroscope.

[page 53] If science thus becomes an art, then all our knowledge of the human being, and all our deliberations about first forming an artistic picture of the human being, will not turn to a bag of bones in the soul; instead, we will be at one with our own concepts and artistic ideas about the human being, and they will flow into and through the soul just as blood and breath circulate through the body. Something will reside in us that is as full of life as our sensations are when our breathing and blood circulation function normally and give us a sense of health and well being.

What does all this mean? How is it connected to educating our children?

[page 54] The crown of human life, the power of love is expressed in the healthy human being. Ultimately health and all healthy soul forces stream together into a feeling permeated with love, enabling me to acknowledge the person next to me, because I acknowledge the healthy human being in myself. . . . Such knowledge of human nature does not become the theoretical instruction given to a technician who then applies it mechanically; rather it becomes a direct inner experience leading immediately into practical life. For in its transformation it flows into the power of love and becomes an active form of human knowledge. If as teacher and educator, I meet a child through my knowledge of what a human being is, then an understanding of the child will blossom within my unfolding soul and spiritual love. I no longer need instructions based on the example of natural science and on theories of child development. All I need is to

experience the knowledge of the human being, in the same way that I experience healthy breathing and healthy blood circulation as bases of my general health. Then the proper form of knowledge, correctly stimulated and enlivened, will become a pedagogical art.

Steiner in this lecture on "Education and Art" is systematically developing the principles of the macroscope which teachers in the Waldorf School will use in the course of teaching children.

[page 55] Our knowledge of the human being must be transformed into an inner attitude where it is alive in the form of love. This is the most important basis for teaching today. Education must be seen as a matter of one's own inner attitude, not as a matter of thinking up various schemes, such as how to avoid training the child's intellect exclusively. We could constantly reiterate this tenet, of course, and then go about it in a thoroughly intellectual way, taking it for granted, for example, that teachers should use their intellects to think up ways to protect their pupils from intellectualism!

He reveals his sense of humor above as he uses it to wipe intellectualism in the teachers.

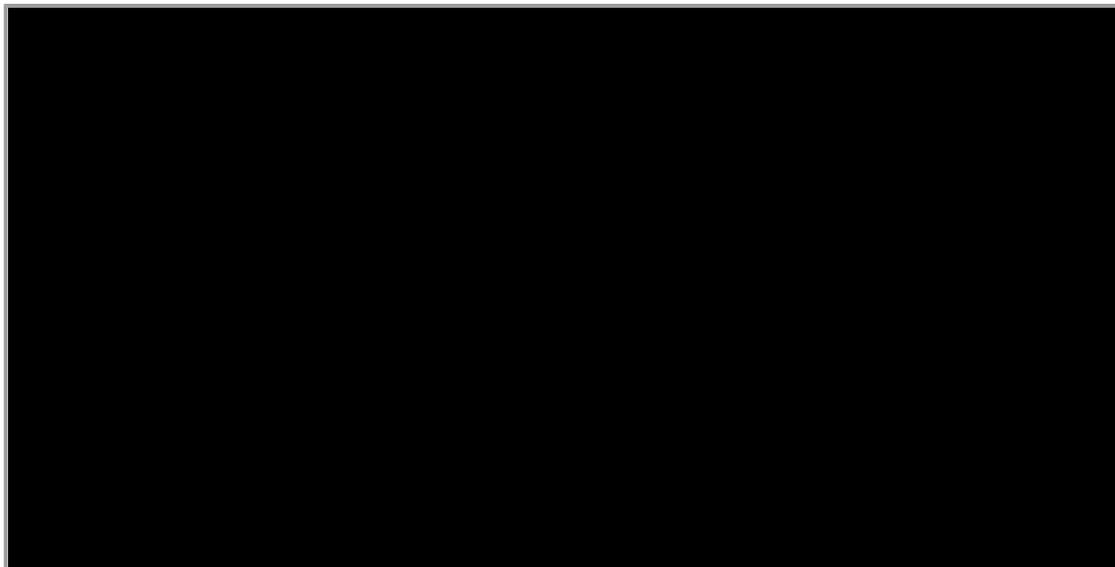
[page 55] It goes without saying that our work must begin with the teachers. We must encourage them not to fall back entirely on the intellect, which, by itself, never has an artistic nature. Starting with the teachers, we will create the proper conditions for the theory and practice of education, based on our knowledge of the human being and given in a form suitable for nurturing the child. This will establish the necessary contact between teacher and child, and it will turn our knowledge of the human being, through the working of love, into right education and training.

The hard problem of consciousness tells us that materialistic science by itself cannot understand how consciousness works in the human body. Why not?

[page 55] Because it cannot comprehend how the artistic experience occurs and how it is formed. Knowledge of the human being makes us realize that consciousness is an artist whose material is the material substance of the human being.

And it is only with the consciousness of an artist that we can learn to use the macroscope to examine and understand the full human being, especially that of an evolving child. He says, "If the evolving child is viewed from this perspective, with insight stemming from an artistic sense and carried on wings of love, we will see and understand very much." For example we will understand the importance of child's play, and never again use the phrase "child's play" in a demeaning manner. See the short video clip below for an example of child's play.

**[page 56]
Compared
to the
activities of
the adult,
which are
dictated by
necessity,
the child's
play is
connected
with a
feeling of
well-being
and**



happiness.

You need

only observe

children at play. It is inconceivable that they are not in full inner accord with what they are doing. Why not? Because playing is a liberating experience to children, making them eager to release this activity from the organism. Freeing, joyful, and eager to be released — this is the character of child's play.

It comes as a shock when a child becomes an adult and its daily activity turns from liberating to burdensome. Within an educational system that incorporates art, the oppressive nature of work takes on an expressive nature accompanied by the liberating feeling of child's play.

[page 56, 57] If we follow the child's development with the artistic understanding I spoke of just now, we will find such a bridge in the role art plays at school. If applied properly as an educational tool, art will lead from the child's liberating play activity to the stage of adult work. With the help of art, this work no longer needs be an oppressive burden. Unless we can divest work of its oppressive character, we can never solve the social question. Unless the polarity between the young child's playing and the adult's burdensome daily work is balanced by the right education, the problem of labor will reappear again and again in different guises.

Why do I continue my work on writing these detailed studies of Rudolf Steiner's lectures? Because my work is expressive, creative, and fills me with as much delight as I took in my childhood play. Every person desires such a work activity, and to the extent that they form such an activity for themselves, they will be happy. If they struggle under a burdensome work situation, they find leisure activities like fishing, golf, and other sports to recover this childhood joy of play.

[page 58] Play is fun for an adult, an enjoyment, a pleasure, the spice of life. But for children, play is the very stuff of life. Children are absolutely earnest about play, and the very seriousness of their play is a salient feature of this activity. Only by realizing the earnest nature of child's play can we understand this activity properly. And by watching how, in play, human nature pours itself in complete seriousness into the treatment of external objects, we can direct the child's inborn energy, capacity and gift for play into artistic channels. These still permit a freedom of inner activity while at the same time forcing children to struggle with outer materials, as we have to do in adult work. Then we can see how precisely this artistic activity makes it possible to conduct education so that the joy of engaging in artistic activities can be combined with the seriousness of play, contributing in this way to the child's character.

Under the delicate guidance of a teacher, the relationship of a child to the spiritual world, from which they recently arrived at birth, will be revealed. A teacher who brings music, poetry, and eurythmy will find the child awakening before long.

[page 60] Having brought the children into close contact with the plastic, poetic, and musical arts, and having brought eurythmic movements into their bodies, having awakened to life through eurythmy what would otherwise be the abstract element of language, we create in the human being an inner harmony between the spirit-winged musical and poetic elements, and the spirit-permeated material elements of modeling and painting.

True art, Steiner says, has healing powers: "The ancient Greeks spoke of Phidia's statue of Zeus as 'healing magic'." This is why materialistic teachers, denying the existence of magic, can have no possibility of understanding how art can grasp one's soul and spirit and produce a healing as if by magic.

[page 61] Educators and teachers who have the proper love for art and the necessary

respect for human nature will always be in a position to implant the artistic element as a magic healing into all their teaching. Then training the intellect, which is a necessary part of schooling, as well as religious teaching and training the heart forces, will be permeated by an element that is inextricably connected to human freedom and human love.

True teaching happens when teachers do not restrict themselves to doing art in art classes, but let art flow out of them into every area and discipline they teach — they make no distinction between this for the intellectual side and that for the artistic side of their children. They teach so that their children feel the need for the artistic side, and then later feel curious about the intellectual side. The children achieve both spiritual knowledge and sensory knowledge. Through this approach, a teacher brings warmth to the otherwise cold, abstract realm of pedagogy.

[page 61] Art and the esthetic sense place knowledge of the human being at the meeting of purely spiritual knowledge on the one side, and the external sensory knowledge on the other. It also helps lead us most beautifully into the practical aspects of education.

Rightly understood, art is a knowledge which can permeate a child and all the physical substances it touches with a spiritual light glow.

[page 62] Art can collect in itself the light of the universe. It can also permeate all earthly and material substance with shining light. This is why art can carry secrets of the spiritual world into the school and give children the light of soul and spirit; the latter will allow children to enter life so that they do not need to experience work as just a negative and oppressive burden, and, in our social life, therefore, work may gradually divest its burdensome load.

No form of pedagogy is true education unless it enlivens the entire future of the child. To achieve this would seem like magic to some teachers, and they would be exactly right, as Steiner says in his wrap-up to Lecture 3.

[page 62] Today I only want to show that the spirit needed in schools can be magically engendered through art. If done properly, this light-filled art can produce a radiance in children that allows the soul to integrate into the physical body, and thus into the world, for the person's entire life.

Moralizing to one's students is the most demoralizing thing any educator can do. It removes a necessary sense of inner freedom in the adult stage of their students. How do teachers do this no-no? They attempt to pass onto their students their own brand of morality. The healthiest students (and later adults) will be the ones who rebel against any attempt by teachers to force their own sympathies and antipathies on them. Clearly morality is something that must arise freely within students and not something like biology which can be force-fed to them.

[page 64] This requires that educators approach moral teaching so that, when later in life the students have passed the age of formal education, they can feel free as individuals in every respect. What teachers must never do is to pass on to developing students the relics of their own brand of morality or anything derived from personal sympathies or antipathies in the moral realm. We must not be tempted to give our own ethical codes to young people as they make their way into life, since these will leave them unfree when it becomes necessary that they find their own moral impulses. We must respect and acknowledge the young person's complete inner freedom, particularly in the realm of moral education. Such respect and tolerance truly demand a great deal of selflessness from educators, and a renunciation of any self-interest.

A parent who is a doctor or lawyer may violate a child's inner freedom by insisting their child becomes a

doctor or lawyer, unable to renounce their own self-interest in being proud of their child only if it embraces their own occupation. So many movie scripts have dealt with the attempts of parents to force their child into medical school against their will. Great music composers have entered a medical college to please their parents and spent all their time learning music. Petrarch dropped out of law school, saying, "I did not want to make my mind into a machine." Such attempts to force children rarely work out in the long run. If you try to force your child to want something, it will learn an ineffective way to force its own child to want something when it becomes a parent.

Like in the case of a fostering a vocation for their children, a parent does best to avoid forcing morality upon them. The best transfer mechanism of morality to one's children is providing a good example. Do so, and your children will absorb morality seamlessly and make it part of their being.

[page 64] Nor is there, as is the case in all other subject matters, the opportunity of treating morality as a subject in its own right; as such, it would be very unfruitful. The moral element must be allowed to pervade all of one's teaching.

Such teaching must begin with the child's first breath, Steiner says, and he quotes Jean Paul Richter who stresses the importance of the first three years of a child's life. As parents are the primary teachers during this period, they should take heed of Steiner and Richter's advice.

[page 64, 65] These difficulties can be overcome if we have truly made our own and imbued with spiritual science the knowledge that we bring to the pupils. Such knowledge, by opening one's eyes to each individual child, is all-important, particularly in this moral sphere. Ideally speaking, moral education would have to begin with the first breath taken in by the newborn, and in a certain sense, this really is what must be done. The great pedagogue Jean Paul (who is far too little recognized⁽²⁾, unfortunately) said that a child learns more of value during the first three years of life than during the three years spent at university.

Steiner examines three stages of the first period of a child's life: walking, talking, and thinking. In the first stage the child learns all the movements a human being can make and achieves a balance in doing them. In the second stage of talking, the child integrates itself into the human environment via speech, which leads it directly into the third stage of making internal mental images and sharing them verbally with others. Note that each of these three stages before teeth change are driven by imitation. But there lies a deeper level of imitation during which the soul of the child imitates the soul of the parents and caregivers around it before teeth change. This corresponds to the meaning which flies from soul to soul on the wings of words which I elaborated a decade or so ago in my [essay](#) on the importance of a live lecturer. At any age we humans absorb the meaning which lives in a teacher's soul while the teacher discusses a subject. Teachers who read lectures without understanding the meaning transmit nothing to their students, losing the students' interest in the process.

[page 67 *italics added*] This truth needs to stand before the soul's eye, not just superficially, but with real psychological impact. For remarkable consequences follow when one is sufficiently aware of the child's adaptation to its surroundings. I will discover how surprisingly the little child's soul reverberates with even an unspoken thought, which may have affected my facial expression only fleetingly and ever so slightly, and under whose influence I may have slowed or speeded up my movements, no matter how minutely. It is astonishing how the small details that remain hidden within the adults soul are prolonged into the child's soul; how the child's life is drawn into the physical happenings of the surroundings, but also into the soul and spiritual environment. If we become sensitive to this fact of life, *we will not permit ourselves even one impure, unchaste, or immoral thought near young children, because we know how imponderable influences work on children through their natural ability to imitate everything in their surroundings.* A feeling for this fact and the attitude it creates are

what make a person into a real educator.

When I read this next passage, I thought about my 2 parents, 4 grandparents, 40 aunts & uncles, and 80 first cousins I grew up among as a child and young adult. Their impressions on my soul helped me to raise my four children and pass those moral and ethics impressions on to them.

[page 67] Impressions that come from the company of adults around the child make a deep, though unconscious, imprint in the child's soul, like a seal in soft wax; most important among them are those images of a moral character. What is expressed as energy and courage for life in the child's father, how the father behaves in a variety of life situations, these things will always stamp themselves deeply into the child's soul, and will continue their existence there in an extraordinarily characteristic, though subtle and intimate, way. A father's energy will energize the entire organization of the child. A mother's benevolence, kindness, and love, surrounding the child like an invisible cocoon, will unconsciously permeate the child's inner being with a moral receptivity, with an openness and interest for ethical and moral matters.

Steiner explains how anthropology observes the human body abstractly, psychology observes the human soul and spirit separate from the body, and only anthroposophy observes the human being in body, soul, and spirit. Materialism is stuck in a fallacy of its own creation. A person we might call a "stick in the mud" is undoubtedly a materialist at heart, if they even have a heart.

[page 69] Materialism believes it can observe matter wholly externally. But only if one can see how soul and spiritual processes are everywhere streaming and radiating their forces into material processes, does one really know what matter is. Through spiritual knowledge, one learns to know how matter works and what its real nature is. One could answer the question, "What is materialism?" by saying, "Materialism, is the one worldview that does not understand matter."

As parents we cannot be in our children's presence at all times to ensure that they do not experience horrible scenes. These episodes will change a child's life, and we require teachers who are sensitive to the impacts such scenes have on a child and know how to transform the negative impact into a positive one. Teachers in a Waldorf School are specifically selected and trained in the ability to turn these character flaws into positive attributes.

[page 71] Now let's assume that a child has witnessed in the surroundings repugnant scenes from which the child had inwardly recoiled in terror. The child will carry such experiences into school life in the form of a characterological disposition, affecting even the bodily organization. If such a trait is left unnoticed, it will continue to develop according to what the child had previously absorbed from the environment. On the other hand, if true insight into human nature shows how to reorient such negative characteristics, the latter can be transformed into a quality of purity and a noble feeling of modesty. . . .

In school we have an immensely important opportunity to correct an unbalanced disposition through a genuine, intimate, and practical sense of psychology, which can be developed by the educator who notices the various tendencies of character, will, and psyche in the students. By loving attentiveness to what the child's nature is revealing, the teacher is in a position to divert into positive channels what may have developed as an unhealthy or harmful influence from the early environment. For one can state explicitly that, in the majority of cases, nothing is ever so negative or evil in an ethical predisposition that the child cannot be changed for the better, given a teacher's insight and willing energy.

My parents were sensitive to the tone of voice I used when I spoke. "Don't use that tone with me!" was the

phrase which let me know that I had gotten off-base in my moral character.

[page 73] It is extremely important, therefore, that we understand the fine nuances of character expressed in the ways students bring their speech and language into the classroom. The general directions I have already presented regarding the observation of the pupils' moral environment now sound back to us out of the tone of their voices, out of the very sound of their speech, if we are sensitive enough to perceive it. Through the way children use language, they present us with what I would call their *basic moral character*. Through the way we treat language and through the way students speak during lessons, every hour, even every minute, we are presented with the opportunity as teachers to guide what is thus revealed through speech, into the channels we consider appropriate and right. Very much can be done there, if one knows how to train during the age of primary education what, until the change of teeth, was struggling to become speech.

We are lucky if we had teachers who shared with us their picture of the world colored by their own sympathies and antipathies, their likes and dislikes; we can accept or reject theirs freely, but they guide us in forming our own likes and dislikes. We are not so lucky if we had teachers who shared nothing of themselves and cast us adrift to learn likes and dislikes from our own observations *sans* any authoritative model and guidance.

[page 75] People who say that children should learn intellectually and through their own observations, free from the influence of authority, speak like flagrant amateurs; for we do not teach children merely for the years during which they are under our care, but to benefit their whole lives. And the various life periods, right up to the point of death, are mutually interrelated in very interesting ways.

What is the necessity, the power of authority, when exercised by a teacher? It allows children to accept learnings not yet fully comprehensible to them, but which will be grasped intellectually at a later stage of their development, and the very unanswered questions they held at this early stage become a powerful source of understanding at the later age.

[page 75, 76] If, because of the their teachers' natural authority, pupils have once accepted subject matter they could not yet fully comprehend with their powers of reasoning — for the intellectual grasp belongs to a later stage of development and works destructively if enforced too early — if they have accepted something purely out of love for their teachers, such content remains deeply preserved in their souls. At the age of thirty-five or forty perhaps, or possibly even later in life, it may happen that they speak of the following strange experience: Only now, after having lived through so many joys, pains, and disappointments, only now do I see the light of what I accepted at the age of eight out of my respect for my teacher's authority. . . . A sensitive and empathetic psychology tells us that such events give off life-invigorating forces even into old age.

In eurythmy — an art form, a dance developed by Rudolf Steiner which makes speech visible — our body, soul, and spirit flow together in a unity of motion. For this reason, children in Waldorf Schools learn to do eurythmy at an early age.

[page 92] Eurythmy feeds back into the child's cognitive faculties, endowing them with greater mobility, causing a keener interest and a sense of truthfulness; it feeds back into the human emotional disposition, which lives between the faculties of cognition and a persons will capacity. It is tremendously important that the human being, with the aid of eurythmy, be able to keep hold of the self as a whole, instead of living in the dichotomy of soul and spirit on one side, and human physical existence on the other.

People who ask, "How is the body related to the soul?", will never get an answer because they are asking

a truly bad question. A better question would be, "How does the body and soul work together in harmony?" In eurythmy we can experience the answer to this question directly.

[page 92, 93] One could keep asking forever, "What is the relationship between body and soul?" It is downright comical to see the question coming up again and again! There have been no end of attempts to construct theoretical explanations of how the one side affects the other. But if this matter can be experienced directly — which happens when one does eurythmy — the question immediately assumes a different character. The question then becomes: How does an intrinsic unity composed of body, soul, and spirit come to work in separate ways, on the one side as soul element and on the other side as physical element? Getting hold of these interactions completely forces one to reshape the question altogether. Then, there is no need for theorizing, for everything is founded on practical experience and in accordance with reality. Some people have the opinion that anthroposophy deals with "cloud-cuckoo-land," whereas in fact, anthroposophy aims at working directly into practical life.

We mentioned earlier that materialists cannot understand matter because they try to analyze matter as if it were devoid of spirit. Similar to a color-blind artist who is not able to understand the whole range of colors, a materialist cannot truly understand the whole range of matter which includes spirit within it. They cannot understand any *thing* unless it is sensory-perceptible, so they cannot perceive the human process of *will* and how to create a *will initiative* in children.

[page 93, italics added] Nowadays, the spirit in matter is no longer perceived; as a result, the nature of matter is no longer understood. This nature can be comprehended only by *doing*. This may suggest how eurythmy affects the child. One can say that, when doing eurythmy, children, through the *will*, gets hold of the inner harmony between the upper more spiritual side of the human being and the lower more physical side, so that *will initiative* is being created. And *will initiative* is the very thing that needs to be cultivated in today's education.

The title of Lectures 6 and 7 poses a great Unanswered Question (UAQ)(3): "Why Base Education on Anthroposophy?" One answer is that anthroposophy allows us to meet each other soul to soul, and this is something a true teacher(4) must do with their children: they must meet each child as an individual soul and know how to read from its facial expressions, from its demeanor, from its complexion, from its behavior with others in the classroom what this little person with a full-blown soul is here to achieve in its present lifetime.

We have arrived at a time when it is common for educators to utilize objective experiments to determine what to do with an entire category of children. Notice how such an approach is antithetical to the Waldorf approach of a teacher directly experiencing each child by making soul to soul connections. Steiner does not disparage the use of experiments, but he sees the tendency that such experimenters express about our time: they eschew soul and spirit and the only path they have left is to experiment on the body of the child.

[page 101, 102] . . . such external experiments are necessary because we have lost touch with the inner human being. People can no longer meet and mingle with their fellow human beings, soul to soul, and so they try to do this through experiment, to read from bodily reactions the expressions of the soul that they can no longer approach directly. Today's experimental pedagogy and psychology are living proof that our science is powerless when it tries to approach the whole human being, who is spirit, soul, and body, all in one.

Only true knowledge of the human being in body, soul, and spirit can help us make real progress in pedagogy. But, outside of Waldorf Schools, most teachers are exposed only to theories of the human body, and few acquire the knowledge human body, soul, and spirit, knowledge which is the essence of

anthroposophy. This gives us the answer to the eponymous question, Why Base Education on Anthroposophy?

[page 102] The theories we have today deal only with the human physical body, and whenever we try to approach the human soul and spirit, we fail despite all our frantic efforts. Soul and spirit must be investigated by ways other than the recognized scientific methods of today. To gain insight into human nature, we must follow a different path from the one commonly upheld as the standard of scientific exactitude and accuracy. The task of anthroposophy is to approach the true human nature, to search for a real knowledge of the human being, which sees spirit, soul, and body as a whole. Anthroposophy sets out to know again not only the physical aspect of the human being, but also the whole human being.

The physical aspect of the human body allows us to think in a matter-of-fact way in our everyday lives, exactly as materialistic thinkers aver. But when we move into creative activities, our human etheric body with its soul functions begins to take over(5).

[page 106, 107] But if I switch to imaginative creation, let us say to poetic creation, the physical body sinks a little into the background, while human ideation, using the etheric body, grows more mobile and active during this process. The various viewpoints are joined together in a more living way, and the whole inner being acquires a mobility greater than in the exercise of ordinary, matter-of-fact, everyday thinking. . . .

Science of the spirit becomes a knowledge that flows from the whole human being. Theory takes hold only of the head, but knowledge of the human being involves the human being as a whole. Anthroposophy gives us this knowledge, which is really more than just knowledge.

What exactly does anthroposophy teach us? We learn to recognize the formative-forces of the etheric body and how to eschew (shoo out) the rigid definitions of the physical world. If we can do that, then amazing things happen.

[page 108] All our concepts begin to grow mobile. Then a person who looks at the world of plants, for example, with this living, mobile knowledge, sees not merely fixed forms that could be rendered in a drawing, but living forms in the process of transformation. All of my conceptual life grows inwardly mobile. I feel the need for a lively freshness, because I no longer look at the plant externally; in thinking of it, I become one with its growth, its springing and its sprouting. In my thoughts I become spring in the spring, autumn in the autumn. I do not just see the plant springing from the soil and adorning itself with flowers, or the leaves fading, growing brown, and falling to the ground; not only do I see, but I also participate in the entire process. As I look out at the budding, sprouting plant in the springtime, and as I think and form ideas of it, my soul is carried along and joins in the sprouting and budding processes. My soul has an inner experience as if all concepts were becoming sun-like. Even as I penetrate deeper and deeper into the plant nature, my thoughts strive continually upward to the sunlight. I become inwardly alive.

People who have felt flashes of such enlivening experiences know intuitively that this is part of being a full human being. Note how different this is from any computer or theoretical scientist.

[pae 108] In such an experience we become human beings whose souls are inwardly alive, instead of dry theoreticians. When the leaves lose their colors and fall to the ground, we go through a similar experience, through a kind of mourning. We ourselves become spring, summer, autumn, and winter. In our innermost soul, we feel cold with the snow as it falls on the earth, covering it with its veil of white. Instead of remaining in

the realm of arid, dead thoughts, everything is enlivened within us.

What happens when a human being feels love? Does anyone deny the existence of love? It is a real experience, not some theoretical concept, is it not? Steiner explains that we cannot understand love if we deny the existence of an astral body. Forget the name. How it works in us to enrich our lives is what is important.

[page 108, 109] When we speak of what we call the *astral body*, some people become scornful of the idea, thinking it a crackpot theory, a figment of someone's imagination. But this is not the case. It is something observed as is anything in the real world. If this is really understood, one begins to understand something else too. One begins, for example, to understand love as inner experience, the way love weaves and works through all existence. As the physical body mediates an inner experience of cold or warmth, so the experience of the astral body grants an inner perception of whether love or antipathy is weaving and working. These experiences enrich our whole lives.

When I came home from studying physics in college each year, my head was full of ideas, but I couldn't share them with anyone and expect an effect on them like the simplest artwork might create. I felt full of ideas, but hollow of humanity. This was the reaction of my astral body, an antipathy to my chosen field of study, even though it would be decades before I understood that I had an astral body.

[page 109] When someone has internalized the essence of the astral body, the astral body also becomes a means for perceiving what is out there; it becomes an "eye of the soul." Such a person then looks into the soul of another, not in any superstitious or magical way, but in a perfectly natural way. Thus, a perception of what is in the soul of another human being takes place consciously, a perception that in ordinary situations is achieved, unconsciously, only in love. Contemporary science separates theory from practice. Anthroposophy introduces knowledge directly into the stream of life.

And you can certainly get wet if you jump into the stream of life, but not if you are wearing the waterproof suit that academic science covers your body with!

[page 113] We have the same chance of jumping into the water and not getting wet as we have of finding help in meeting the fresh souls of children within today's academic institutional teachings about the human soul and spirit. Just as certain as you will get wet if you jump into the water, so will the teacher, having assimilated the academic learning of today, be a stranger to everything that belongs to soul and spirit. This is a simple fact. And the primary concern of all who would practice the art of teaching should be the recognition of this fact in its full human significance.

Not only does academic teaching cover you with a wet suit, but it puts dark glasses on you, making human nature unseeable.

[page 114] The teacher begins to feel like one who, instead of being led into the light, is given dark glasses that almost cut out the light completely, for science manages to make even the physical nature of the human being opaque. It does not and cannot enable a teacher to reach the real being of children with their natural spirit-filled soul life.

The result is that teachers go away from each lesson they give feeling dissatisfied inwardly, and over time they become estranged from their children and the entire world, growing colder and more pedantic with each decade. All because of this very real lack of intimate contact between the teacher and the children being taught. Originally people experienced each other directly and called it thinking, feeling, and willing, but today these have become mere words lacking any life at all. We must look directly into a person's face to see the whole human being, but science teaches us to ignore faces and pay attention to academic theories.

[page 116] What does anthroposophy show us about thinking? As human beings, thinking equips us with thoughts. But the thoughts we have today in our ordinary civilized life appear as if, instead of looking at the face of someone we meet, we look at that person only from behind. When we speak of thoughts today, we see only the "rear view," as it were, of what really lives in thought. Why is this so?

When you look at a person from behind, you see, of course, a certain shape and form, but you do not learn about the person's physiognomy. You do not see the side where the soul life is outwardly expressed. If you learn to know thoughts the usual way in this scientific age, you come to know the rear view only, not the inner human being. If, however, you look at thoughts from the other side, they retain their life and remain active forces.

One can imagine teachers of today saying, "I have too many students to look every one of them in eye." Yes, you don't have to look them in the eye, dear Teachers, to tell them what to do, but is that the same as educating them? Do you feel a little dissatisfied at the end of a day? Perhaps you have spent too much time looking at their behinds instead of their faces where the light of spirit emanates from. What will happen if you look them directly in the eyes? You will experience the forces of growth or lack thereof. If there is a lack, you must experience it before you can draw the growth out of them, and educating is drawing out of students their growth forces. That's what can happen if you look at thoughts from the other side.

[page 116] What are these thoughts? They are the same as the forces of growth in the human being. Seen externally, thoughts are abstract; seen internally, we find the same forces in them by which the little child grows bigger, whereby a child receives form and shape in the limbs, in the body, in the physiognomy. These are the thought forces. When we look externally, we see only dead thoughts; in a similar way, when we view a person's back, we do not see that individual's living character. We must go to the other side of the life of thoughts, as it were, and then these same forces reveal themselves as working day by day from within outward, as the little child transforms an undefined physiognomy more and more into an expression of soul.

Steiner says clearly that "if you know thinking only from behind, only from its 'dead' side, you will understand the child only intellectually(6). If you learn to know thinking from the front, from its living side, you can approach children so that you do not merely understand them, but can also enter into all of their feelings and impulses so that you pour love into all of the children's experiences." (Page 117)

Every noun or verb has a *content* and a *process* aspect. The *content* is the flattened-out dead aspect of the word, and the *process* is the living action of the word. Steiner recognizes that when he says, "Current civilization has only the *word* for thought; it no longer holds the *substance* that the word represents." (Page 117) I suspect that by *word* he means flattened-out *content*; by *substance* he means the living action or *process* of thinking as only a full human being can. I have found this distinction of *content* and *process* to be invaluable in squeezing insights out of otherwise imponderable statements(7).

Play is serious work to children. It engages their attention fully, as any parent can attest when calling a child inside from their play! What makes their play serious is that they are always imitating things they see adults do, playing house, playing cowboys and Indians, etc. Only if children enjoy play can they grow up to enjoy working later as adults and become so engrossed in tasks that they don't even notice the offices emptying all around them at the end of the scheduled workday. This was my experience as a child and as an adult in the jobs I loved the most.

[page 126] Children truly long to develop, in their own way, the forces that adults develop. If we understand the human being and thereby also the child, we know that the child, through play, is always striving toward adulthood, except that a child will play

with a doll instead of a living baby. We also know that children experience the greatest joy when, as part of what we bring them in education, we educate the future adults in them. This must be done properly, not in the dry and prosaic way that reflects our frequent attitude toward work as an irksome and troublesome task, but so that work itself becomes second nature to the human being. In the eyes of a child, work thus assumes the same quality as its own earnest and serious play.

One can wonder why teenagers rebel as in the movie, "Rebel Without A Cause", and Steiner pinpoints the reason for this rebellion. Our civilization has lost true knowledge of the full human being, looking instead to external nature and sensory-based data to explain the human being.

[page 132] Certainly, this natural physical foundation must not be considered unimportant in the field of education; nevertheless, the human being consists of body, soul, and spirit, and a real knowledge of the human being can be achieved only when spirit, soul, and body are recognized equally.

Educators must also come to realize that their innermost thoughts and feelings fly from soul-to-soul on the wings of words when they are in a classroom. If you have rebels in your classroom, the inner feelings they received from previous teachers, parents, and caregivers are the likely problem, and you, the teacher, are the solution, if you apply the tools of the full human being. Few teachers appreciate the depths at which their young children imitate everything they do, think, and feel in a classroom.

[page 135] We must make sure that the child can safely imitate whatever happens in the surroundings. This includes — and this is important — sentiments and feelings, even one's thought. The best educators of children under the age of seven do not just outwardly act in a way that is all right for the child to imitate — they do not even allow themselves any emotions or feelings, not even thoughts, other than what the child may imitate without being harmed.

Yes, no prosecutor can bring evidence that what you thought or felt caused harm, the illness or death of a child, but somewhere inside you will eventually know full well that you were the source of the sentiments, thoughts, and feelings which entered the child.

If a teacher has trouble with their students tiring of an activity, the solution is to switch to some rhythmic activity because our rhythmic system never tires. Our heart beat and respiration goes on so long as we are alive and never gets tired.

[page 137] In Waldorf schools we appeal to the particular human system that never tires at all. The human being tires in the head through thinking, and also get tired when doing physical work — when using will forces in performing limb movements. But the rhythmic system, with its breathing and heart system (the basis of every artistic activity) always works, whether one is asleep or awake, whether tired or fresh, because the rhythmic system has a particular way of working from birth until death. The healthiest educational system, therefore, appeals to the human rhythmic system, which never tires.

By teaching writing before reading, Waldorf schools activate the entire body, soul, and spirit of the child in an artistic exercise of learning to create the symbols of the alphabet and words before the child is exposed to the strictly head function of reading these words. When the child reaches the age of ten, it feels the need for simplification and a more direct and intellectual approach is called for.

[page 138] Only after the child has been allowed to experience artistic wealth is it possible to introduce the relative poverty of the intellectual element without the risk of disturbing the child's physical and soul development.

Between seven and fourteen the child moves into a growth period during which it grasps things beyond its

comprehension based on its trust in the teacher's authority. Some teachers become respected and revered, and children who experience such teachers will grow up to be people who create a mood of blessing around them. Steiner gives us a simple way to understand this:

[page 141] If one wishes to be able in later life to lift one's hands in blessing, one must have learned to fold them in prayer during childhood. Symbolically, the folded hand of prayer during childhood lead to the blessing hands of old age.

Giving definitions to the children is like putting a straitjacket on them; their concept of the defined thing will stay with them into adulthood. You can spot children taught this was because they will spout off like little professors, describing each and every thing as if they knew it intimately, hiding the reality of their superficial knowledge. Armed with these rigid definitions, the children will grow into adults with little incentive to learn anything new, adults who will say, "I know that!" with assurance whenever any subject comes up.

[page 157, 158] If we were to bind a child of five for a time in a tight-fitting garment that would not allow further growth — I am speaking hypothetically of course, for this does not happen — we would commit a dreadful and heinous crime in the child's physical life. But this is just what we do to the child's soul life when we teach definitions intended to remain unchanged, definitions that the child's memory is expected to carry, fixed and unaltered, throughout life. It is most important that we give the child only flexible ideas and concepts, capable of further growth — physical, soul, and spiritual growth. . . . We should never nurture an ambition to teach children something to be remembered for all of life, but should convey only mobile ideas. . . . Real teachers should always be aware that some of the students sitting before them may one day far outshine them in intelligence and in other ways. True artists of education never assume that they are intellectually equal to the children sitting before them.

These artists of education will draw out the genius from their students, knowing that "they'll learn much more than we'll ever know."[\(8\)](#)

[page 161, 162] Our knowledge of the human being is intended to be a practice, the aspect of real life closest to the human soul; it is connected most directly with our duty to the *becoming* human being. If we learn to educate in this way, in harmony with human nature, the following reassuring thought-picture will rise before us: We are carrying into the future something required by the future![\(9\)](#)

A new farmer had planted seedlings and was very concerned about their growing, so every night he went into his field and gave each seedling a little nudge to help it grow. The result: all his seedlings died. Teacher who try to nudge their children into growth and morality can take a lesson from the farmer.

[page 182] The hallmark of a right education is that whatever is meant to develop through inner maturity of soul out of a previous budding stage, will do so on its own. This approach is far better than grafting preconceived moral codes onto students. If we wish to cultivate morality, it must grow in the sphere of the will. This growth will occur only when we plant the seeds for it in young children. We can do this by kindling feelings of pleasure for good and feelings of aversion for evil during the stage of life when children need to experience love and sympathy for the educator.

Such an experience will give them an inner warmth and sense of security in their life, leading them to have a feeling of gratitude. (Page 185)

[page 185, 186] The feeling of gratitude toward the divine and spiritual powers is in itself a great source of revitalization for our earthly life. I would like to put it this way: *What intensifies the physical organic forces in the blood is comparable to what vitalizes the*

human soul spiritually when it develops love and gratitude toward the entire universe.

Back in 1977, I went through a long period of study and came up with this dictum, "Thus a Teacher, So Also a Learner."⁽¹⁰⁾ It contains no verbs, so the actions or process involved can be understood both ways. Teaching and Learning goes in both directions if it is true teaching. Steiner reports of a sign over the room where teachers meet for consultations which helped keep this spirit alive in the early Waldorf schools:

[page 187] All your educational endeavors should bring out in you the urge for self-education! Your self-education is the seed for everything you do for your children. Indeed, whatever you achieve can only be a product and result of your self-education.

Simply put: "Thus a Teacher, So Also a Learner."

When I was a child under the age of ten, our home did not have any books. About the age of ten, Maude Boudreaux brought over a box of ten books, children's classics, which her NAPA parts distributor had given to her PanAm gas station and auto repair shop across the street from us. This wonderful gift became my childhood treasure. I spent many afternoons reading *Gulliver's Travels*, *Treasure Island*, and many other stories. At my tender age, almost every page left me with an unanswered question or two, one I couldn't ask my parents about as they had never read these books themselves, so these became powerful forces of growth in my life. As soon as I was old enough to walk to our public library, I came home with the maximum number of books that could be checked out at one time: five. As soon as I finished those five, I came back for a new set of five. I read over 30 volumes of Dr. Doolittle books, every biography, and every science fiction book in the library. I feel like I spent more time on Mars than on Earth during this pre-high school period of my life. At age 76, people still tell me I look like 56, so I certainly did not "display signs of aging early" in my life, and I feel as enthused by my life now as when I was in grade school when I lived with fantasy in novels and with living pictures in comic books.

[page 220] We need rich, imaginative concepts, that can grow with the child, concepts that allow growth forces to remain active even when a person reaches old age. If children are taught only abstract concepts, they will display signs of aging early in life. We lose spontaneity and stop making human progress. It is a terrifying experience when we realize we have not grown up with fantasy, with images, with pictures that grow and live and are suited to the etheric body, but instead we grew up merely with those suited to abstraction, to intellectualism — that is, to death.

"Spiritual midwives" who nurture the child's development are needed today to nurture the seed planted in the child by the spiritual world, true teachers who are both teaching and learning every day of their lives. Where can one find such teachers? They might be anywhere, given that I found some in the small town where I grew up, but one can certainly find them today in the Waldorf school nearest you. They are the most practical teachers you will find anywhere — they will foster the growth of your child's body, soul, and spirit, so that as an adult your child will remain excited about the world in which they live.

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

Footnote 1.

See [The First Aid Kit](#) for removing unwanted doyles. It contains in one place all the tools you need for a simple Speed Trace — it is the answer to the question, "Can such-and-such be removed by a Speed Trace?"

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

Footnote 2.

A footnote on page 65 identifies him thus: "Jean Paul Richter (1763-1825), German writer of novels and romances; he also wrote on pedagogy (*Levana*, 1807) and art (*Vorschule der Aesthetic*, 1804)" His name appears in two books I am currently reading, on page 65 of Kevin Dann's *Expect Great Things* (2017) and with several quotations by Ralph Waldo Emerson from Sept. 1842, on page 122-123 of *Emerson Selected Journals 1841-1877*.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 2.](#)
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### Footnote 3.

See Matherne's Rule [No. 25](#) "What is the Power of an Unanswered Question?"

[Return to text directly before Footnote 3.](#)  
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Footnote 4.

See my [Human Values in Education](#) review which details 21 ways in which a true teacher in a Waldorf School deals with the education of children.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 4.](#)
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### Footnote 5.

Computers with any level of so-called "artificial intelligence" have *no* soul and spirit, and thus, while a computer can do enormous intellectual feats, it cannot create new concepts, artworks, etc. People who claim computers will become smarter than humans are merely describing the limit of their understanding of what a human being is: they see it merely as a physical machine. Computers may write poems, but, lacking soul and spirit, cannot recognize great poetry.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 5.](#)  
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Footnote 6.

A modern American teenager knows this reality and is likely to express it to a classmate using a common idiomatic expression to denote a teacher who never looks directly at her, "That teacher is an *asshole* — he never looks me in the eye — he doesn't have a clue about who I am or what I want."

[Return to text directly before Footnote 6.](#)
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### Footnote 7.

See my Essay, [Art Is the Process of Destruction](#).

[Return to text directly before Footnote 7.](#)  
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Footnote 8.

From the famous Louis Armstrong song, "What a Wonderful World."

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

Footnote 9.

What makes this thought "reassuring" is a feeling, a "time-wave from the future" as described in this Matherne's Rule #36, Remember the future. It hums in the present.

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

Footnote 10.

This came to be known as Matherne's Rule #29.

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

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