

How to Read a Book: A Study of Rudolf Steiner's *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*

by GEORGE O'NEIL and GISELA O'NEIL

Even the long-time anthroposophist may occasionally ask himself: How well do I know this basic book? How thumb-worn is my copy? Do I know my way through the text, the "map" of the book? How much of an exerciser am I? and how rhythmic? Am I sure that the exercises are done correctly? What are their goals? Have I experienced any fruits of such work? What are they, and which exercises do I need in order to become more effective in my work and in my relationship with others? to become more creative as an anthroposophist? Shouldn't I take up work with this book again (and again and again)?

Rudolf Steiner's Expectations

Contrary to the widespread attitude that the basic books are for beginners and the more esoteric material for advanced students of anthroposophy, this was not Rudolf Steiner's intent. Intensive work with the basic books was to provide the schooling, the basis, for becoming creative and effectively carrying the message to others:

Books that are written in the domain of anthroposophy are usually not read with the necessary attention. They really are not, for if they were it would have been possible, after *Theosophy* and *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* were written, and perhaps *Occult Science*, for people other than myself to have written or given all the lecture cycles. Everything is contained in these books. Only this is not generally believed." (Rudolf Steiner, Oct. 6, 1914, Vienna.)

What Hinders Us and What Could Help?

Passive reading is a universal problem. We remember what we have read, or try to, the way we may be able to hum a melody after listening to a piece of music. The difference between listening to music and producing the music oneself on an instrument is the same difference as between ordinary reading and active study. Diligence, practice, and commitment are needed equally in both, as indeed in every human endeavor.

We are aware of all the outer obstacles, but there are also inner hindrances. Rudolf Steiner spoke repeatedly of *Bequemlichkeit*, love of ease, as the main culprit. Then there is the problem of becoming lax in our original enthusiasm and good intentions, even our decisions forgetting all about them after a few days of initial effort. Such inner hurdles can be avoided through commitment to an active study group. Having to prepare for each

meeting—no matter how we feel at the moment—seems to be one safeguard against slipping into passivity, of becoming an anthroposophist with merely good intentions to one's credit. (Remember: the road to the nether-world is still paved with those good intentions.)

Some would-be active Members have observed that study began for them in earnest only when they had taken on the formidable task of conducting a study group. Avoiding the dilemma of "the blind leading the blind," we can no longer excuse our passivity with the circumlocution, "Steiner says thus and so . . ." We ourselves must say it. We have to understand and represent these anthroposophic ideas as our own.

Experience gained over many years of working with study groups has led us—the writers of this study—to the conviction that no one outgrows the need to return repeatedly to the basic books. As we mature, so grow our grasp of their content and our mastery of it, our capacity to experience these truths in daily life, and eventually our ability to present anthroposophy to the world.

The Book Today

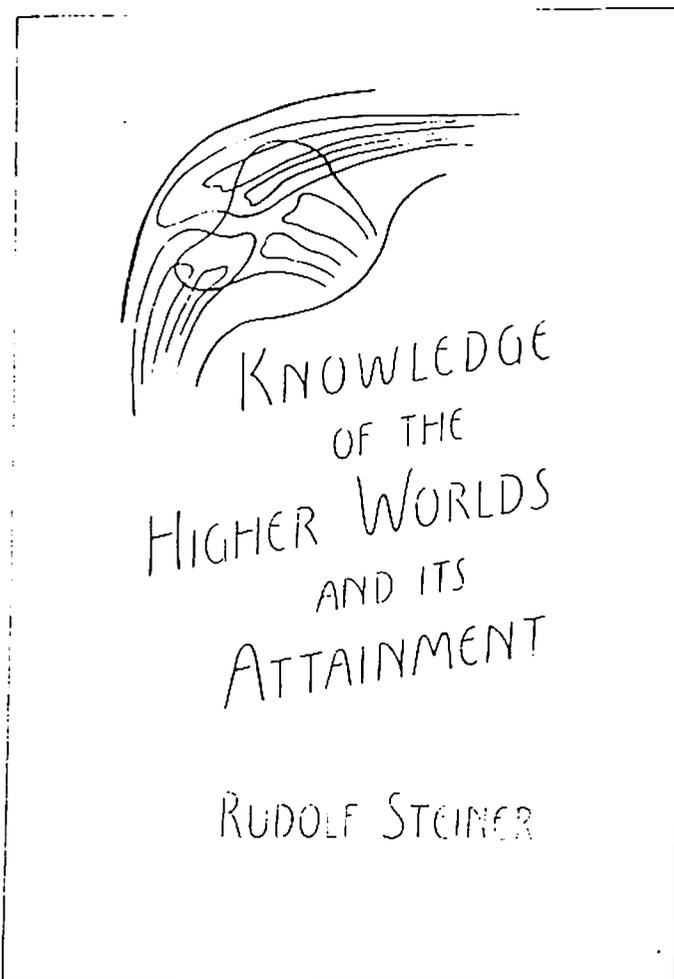
Written at the beginning of this century, first in the form of articles for the journal *Lucifer-Gnosis* (printed in England in *The Theosophist*), the text was published in English in 1908 as two books, *The Way of Initiation* and *Initiation and Its Results*. Revised thoroughly by Rudolf Steiner several times, it has become his most widely bought book. Many of its themes, generally unknown at the beginning of the century, are now of widespread concern. To name a few: out-of-body experiences, threshold encounters, the Being of Light, dangers of quick paths and shortcuts to spiritual experience, abyss experiences, experiences of one's double, identity crises, split personality, etc. In addition, themes often talked about in our circles, at times without sufficient grasp of their implications, are systematically developed here, such as: the new heart thinking (which has little to do with "feelings"), the birth of the higher self, or mankind crossing the threshold.

Frequently the view has been expressed that *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* is such an "intimate" text as to be unsuitable for group study. This may be true of merely reading it aloud or discussing it in conversational talk circles—"Goethean" or otherwise. We, however, have experienced the opposite. We found it an ideal text for beginners and for experienced students of anthroposophy, provided the study is done in a disciplined way, with each participant speaking on the text, not about other things. (Thorough work with just one chapter, e.g., the fifth, is ideal for a shorter study.)

It is our hope, and the purpose of this article (and those to follow on the same theme) to encourage Members who are presently not active in a study group to take up Steiner's text and commit themselves and a few

friends to start working together on this path to higher knowledge.

Unfortunately, the English title (American edition) is a misnomer. This is not a "what" but a "how" book. The original German title was a question, ending with a question mark, *How is Knowledge of the Higher Worlds Achieved?*



The New Edition

The Anthroposophic Press's 1983 edition provides a new contents page, restoring the original composition of the book's eleven chapters (all earlier editions listed only ten), and a new cover design in gold on indigo by Peter Stebbing, using a motif by Rudolf Steiner. These are both cause for cheer. This is one of those rare events where the cover fits the content, "the shell fits the kernel."

Why eleven chapters? What does this signify? Let's look at the graphic design of the cover. The central form is made up of nine interweaving gestures: three (as a unit) from below, three from above, and three mediating between. An artistic gesture-language for the ninefold being of man emerging out of body, soul, and spirit. Two additional lines, to the upper left and lower right, enclose

these nine as though protecting them. Likewise, nine chapters embody the substance of the path developed in the text. These are framed, as in the drawing, by an opening and a closing, chapters one and eleven. The artistic, dynamic composition of the book with its eleven chapters corresponds within to this outer graphic form.

Rudolf Steiner used "eleven" as a compositional element in some lecture cycles with esoteric content. And the fifth chapter of *Occult Science*, related in content to this book, is composed of eleven sections.

The Question of a Personal Teacher

Certainly the friendly counsel of others is a help to keep the will-fire burning and the determination alive to go the path. Yet today, the book as symbol of freedom, of I-can-do-it-myself, is the safe and healthy guide especially when the author has proven his teachings in his own life's work.

In the Appendix, written in 1918, Rudolf Steiner speaks of the intimate quality of this text and of its completeness:

Let the reader take this book as a conversation between the author and himself. The statement that the student needs personal instruction should be understood in the sense that this book itself is such a personal instruction. In earlier times there were reasons for reserving such personal instruction for oral teaching; today we have reached a stage in the evolution of humanity in which spiritual knowledge must become far more widely disseminated than formerly. It must be placed within the reach of everyone to a quite different extent from what was the case in older times. Hence the book replaces the former oral instruction. It is only to a limited extent correct to say that further personal instruction is necessary beyond that contained in this book. No doubt someone may need assistance, and it may be of importance for him or her; but it would be false to believe that there are any cardinal points not mentioned in this book. These can be found by anyone who reads correctly, and, above all, *completely*.

The Story of "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds" The Eleven Chapters

Ninefold man is the compositional key for the nine chapters that unfold the path to higher knowledge (chapters two to ten). The first and the last chapters enclose the development of this path as a prelude and a finale.

The story, what does it tell? It is all about a school. To simplify and make the story vivid in this first approach, we will use the analogy of a campus of higher learning.

Chapter One: In the opening chapter we have, as it were, an interview, a personal conversation with the teacher. He describes the conditions of this school, the nature of higher knowledge and the disciplines of the path to it. New soul qualities must be acquired so that the soul itself becomes the organ of higher perception. The student is then left free to choose: to go or stay.

Chapter Eleven: Here a closing drama takes place after the schooling has been accomplished successfully. It is the valedictory ceremony in which the graduate harkens to the awesome graduating address, given not by the teacher of the school but by the teacher's teacher, the Greater Guardian, that Being of Light whom every man is to meet when crossing the threshold at the moment of awakening to higher life. He dismisses the graduate with a stern warning, the choice between two paths: either to place what he has achieved selflessly at the service of mankind (the white path) or to pursue personal inclinations leading eventually to perdition (the black path).

Now to the body of the book, its nine central chapters. As in the graphic form of the cover, as in the ninefold human being, three times three chapters unfold the story. Man is the key. Using the campus analogy, we are now taking a look at the nine departments of the school.

Chapter Two: The first department leads us to the physical world of nature, the hidden mysteries of the sense world. The five sets of exercises, all starting with sense perception, center on the thought: the invisible can become visible. The soul must develop organs of activity, see and hear selflessly, develop new thoughts and feelings and control over them.

Chapter Three: This second department, called "Initiation," which implies beginnings, has to do with life, really with biography. Trials of life and circumstance happen to everyone. For him who goes the path, however, life experiences are accelerated, those of several incarnations of striving are pressed into one. The student's readiness and heightened awareness are tested by trials of fire, water, and air. The "temple"—self-responsibility—stands as final goal.

Chapter Four: And now catharsis: we come to the purification of the astral body, the subconscious, as it is called today. The "sanitation department" teaches us the fine art of cleansing away the natural hindrances. Those raw-material forces of impatience, vexation, anger, vanity, ambition, etc. need to be transformed into energies of virtue.

Chapters two, three, and four described the path from three aspects, those of physical, life, and astral bodies. The following three chapters lead to advanced study in psychology. The psyche, the soul of man is threefold. The concerns here are aspects of the sentient soul, rational soul, and spiritual soul: the realms of experienced memory substance, of ordered understandings, and of insight and realities.

Chapter Five: Seven basic conditions are developed for esoteric schooling of the sentient soul, turned outward to the world. There is a beautiful description of the ethics of young idealists: striving for health and well-being, feeling oneself part of life, experiencing thoughts and feelings as realities, realizing the essential being of

another person, being steadfast, practicing gratitude, and finally the harmonizing of all these practiced ideals.

Chapter Six: "Some Results of Initiation" is the modest title of this longest and by far most complex chapter. We here enter the domain of the rational soul, and the call is for full understanding and awareness. This chapter becomes for many readers a maze. Numerous sets of exercises and tasks are given, required to develop spiritual organs of perception (metaphoric lotus flowers with two, sixteen, twelve, ten, and six petals). Depicted is the descent of the center of spiritual consciousness from the head, to the throat, and finally to the heart organ. This distinguishes the modern path from the ancient yoga which rises from below. In addition, detailed descriptions are given of all the techniques involved, the gradual functioning and synchronizing of the higher organs. It is no simple process. The chapter is difficult, involved, and, to begin with, a challenge to our rational grasp. This is the center of the book and for many readers the hurdle that brings them to a halt—like the thicket hedge in the fairy tales.

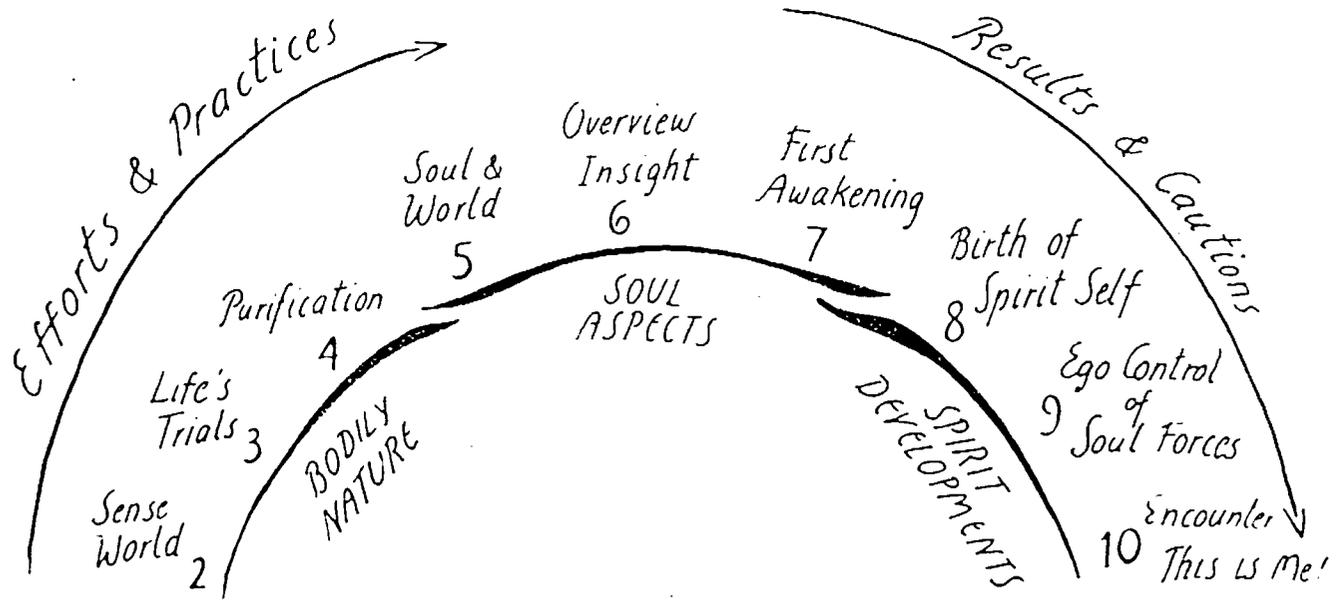
Before proceeding, it should be mentioned that up to here (chapter six) the reader could have chosen any one of the chapters to begin his study. Each describes the path, each from a different aspect. And, using again the campus analogy: each department has a program of exercise, each has a gym attached!

Chapter Seven: The spiritual soul (consciousness soul) aspect brings the transition from being a student to a man of inner vision, an onlooker in spirit. We now go strictly within. Our seeing-consciousness reaches deeper. This begins first at night. Dreams, losing their former chaos, now become ordered. The etheric heart organ becomes active, through which then the higher ego can work into the ordinary self. Astral perception, Imagination, begins gently during day consciousness.

Now there follow three chapters on the spirit level: from the aspects of spirit self, life spirit, and spirit man. Our own inner world slowly opens wide.

Chapter Eight: The spirit self aspect, here called "Continuity of Consciousness," extends the newly gained higher consciousness to yet profounder depths. Eventually, with tender experiences at first, consciousness is not lost even during the period of sleep. And now the magical birth of the higher self occurs in the utter silence of the night (although dangers of "miscarriage" can threaten).

Chapter Nine: The life spirit aspect brings descriptions of higher existence. With the newly gained spiritual maturity and self-responsibility, however, harmonizing powers withdraw their former guidance. The soul forces of thinking, feeling, and willing, which in ordinary life—and especially through a successful education—are interwoven, now separate at the threshold. Dangers arise of pathological one-sidedness: cold, loveless striving for



1 Prelude

Interview -
 Reverence for Truth
 Ideas & Ideals

Finale 11

Representative
 Ideal
 Selflessness

wisdom; sentimental emotionalism or religious fanaticism; or violence of will. Splits of personality can occur, verging on insanity.

Chapter Ten: Here we face the great and final examination of the school, the meeting with "The Guardian of the Threshold." It is a soul-shaking encounter with a "truly terrible specter," woven out of each one's life record. True self-knowledge is the final test. It comes last, long after we see all the weaknesses of the world and of others. the specter is yourself—as you are! This encounter shows one vividly and illusion-free the stuff one is made of, how far one has come and has yet to go. Would that all schools ended in such self-knowledge: "My God, this is me!"

This encounter with Lesser Guardian is then followed in the great finals of the "school" by the meeting with the "sublime luminous being," the Greater Guardian (chapter eleven, described above).

Seeing the book as a whole, knowing its "map" can help us in finding our way more consciously through the text. As Goethe might have said, see the whole before becoming enamored of the parts.

The "map" of individual chapters will follow in subsequent articles.

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II

CHAPTER ONE:
HOW DOES ONE ATTAIN KNOWLEDGE
OF THE HIGHER WORLDS?

Last time we developed in an overview the story of the whole book. We described Chapter One as a conversation between the teacher and his student: an intimate counsel to one intending to go on the path.

Some observations regarding this introductory chapter: The text seems so misleadingly easy, with apparently little intellectual challenge, that it is usually read quickly, also in study groups. The opening sentence ("There slumber...") and the closing (Ideas are to become ideals) have been quoted and requoted in our circles. The message of the chapter itself is seldom discussed.

The Inner Life in the West

Yet these counselings are crucial, crucial to modern man, crucial especially to Westerners. Cultivating the inner life, achieving inner stillness, does not come easily here. All the forces of nature, all the tendencies of our culture pull us in the opposite direction. British Novelist D.H. Lawrence described our situation so well in a letter, written in 1922 (we'll substitute here "Americans" for the original "Australians"):

You never knew anything so nothing, Nichts, Nullus, niente, as the life out here. Americans are always vaguely and meaninglessly on the go. That's what the life in a new country does to you: it makes you so material, so OUTWARD, that your real inner life and your inner self dies out...

In our culture today, millions depend daily on chemicals, on—note the word—"tranquilizers," to induce a modicum of tranquillity. To fill the inner void or to subdue any inner stirrings, the masses routinely use external agents—background music, radio, TV, alcohol, and drugs. Others, also in the millions, have practiced passive "meditation" (in its various forms) to reach some peace of mind. By getting absorbed in rhythmic chanting or in "mantra-repetition," they can create a spell of aloneness, of protection from the outer and inner din of modern life.

Achieving "inner tranquillity" for Westerners seems like the proverbial needle's eye for the camel—something metaphorically absurd! Yet inner stillness is the prerequisite for any genuine anthroposophic work, the starting

point of the modern path to the spirit.

Almost every European anthroposophist visiting the West will observe how difficult it is here, how virtually impossible, to meditate. We can read, we can study, we can listen to lectures, attend meetings, talk, discuss, have conversations, do things alone or together—yet the most challenging task on this continent seems practicing a genuine contemplative life. Perhaps Pascal's dictum that "the sole cause for man's unhappiness is that he cannot stay alone in his room" has a wide range of application for Western man (and for Western Members).

From this aspect—the plight of man's inner life in the West—spending some time with this first chapter seems very worthwhile.

The Message in Brief

Five main themes emerge for the cultivation of the inner life.

ONE: Concerning respect for truth and knowledge, we are to cultivate feelings of wonder and awe, of reverence for the wise and the true. (This sense for truth makes us wary of distortions and half-truths that are often worse than the lie.) We practice looking up to—not down on—others. Strivings, efforts, growth potentials—not shortcomings—are to receive our active attention.

TWO: An intensified learning process then commences. We work over our own experiences, those we have enjoyed or suffered. We think things over seriously. What did this all mean? we ask, what is the lesson learned? the message implied? (We spare ourselves and others hashing over details of undigested experiences. Total recall brings no learning.)

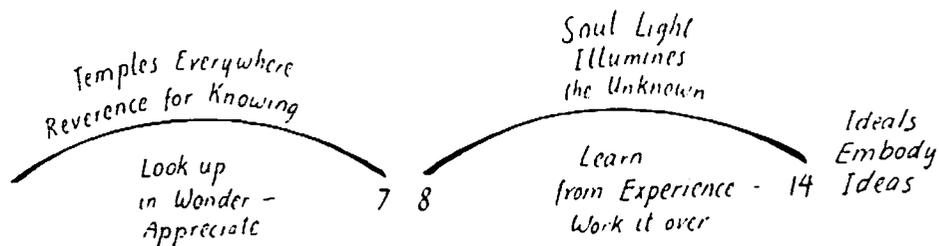
In the text, these two tasks are called "conditions." The concern here is to activate the soul life, its feelings and thoughts in relation to OUTER happenings. With the chapter's second part, under the heading "inner stillness" (or tranquillity, quiet, calm, peace, etc.) we are turning within.

THREE: We come now to those quiet moments of reflection midst busy lives, those proverbial five minutes many of us "can't find." We practice evaluating ourselves, our actions and experiences, the way we look upon others: from outside. (We may even try calling ourselves by the last name.) This is an exercise in detachment from immediate concerns of circumstances, daily affairs, health, job, or family. Achieving this onlooker view brings actually a loosening of the ties between body and soul, something we do normally only when asleep. These are the first moments of liberation from the world that is too much with us.

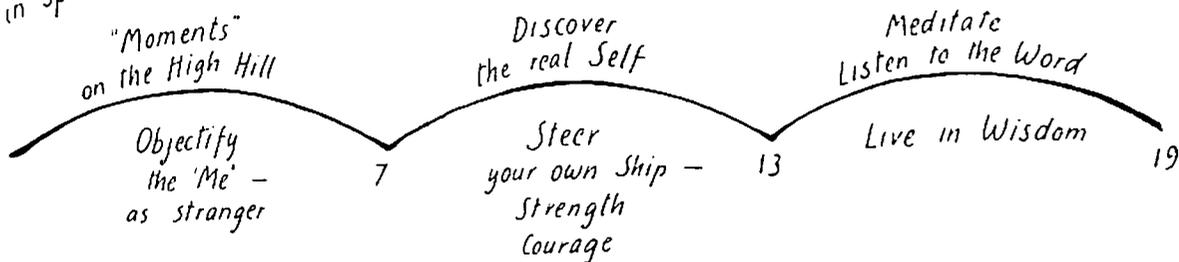
FOUR: This will lead to the discovery: I am I, an independent being, enwrapt of course in a drama of earthly destiny, yet capable of self-direction, of managing things instead of being driven by circumstances. Calm, strength, certainty, stability, and courage—these are signs of this power-phase. I am now, for a moment at least, captain of my fate.

The 1st Chapter: Counsel

1. OUTER CONDITIONS -- The World Teaches Venerate and Reflect



2. INNER STILLNESS -- Active in Spirit -- Alone.



FIVE: The challenge is to get beyond the personality, to reach moments of genuine freedom. (We assume that some serious study work has accompanied this inner development.) If the inner silence has been achieved to a degree at least, we are really then alone, surrounded by an actual spirit thought-world. And with courage and trust we listen, we ask, we converse with the weaving thought beings. A whole new world does gradually open up. We hear, we partake. We sense the harmonies. The inner Word begins to resound.

This life in purest thought, in the utter silence, free from sensory memories, has been spoken of as meditation. Therein men participate in world-creative processes—when we bring to the guiding Angeloi, as our wee gift and offerings, the bits of wisdom we have discovered here and there. Remember, becoming a co-creator is everyman's secret will.

Thus, in summary there are five admonitions, five goals:

- 1) Cultivate a sense of wonder and love for truth and knowledge.
- 2) Be diligent in learning from your experience.
- 3) Practice daily moments of seeing yourself as a stranger.
- 4) Seek to discover the higher self, responsible for your actions.
- 5) Be rhythmic in active work with the wisdom of humanity.

The diagram was drawn by Peter Stebbing.

him: "...It's true, isn't it, that the phenomena of elevation, or throwing the books around in the bookshelf of a far away friend—why, that's nothing! But to endure the others (he was referring to actual spiritual experiences) well, one has to have a lot of humor." And Rudolf Steiner added that this remark was so "profoundly true" that one could discern from it how far Oskar Simony had penetrated into the world of the spirit.

At this point, I would like to conclude the brief notes of my memories of Rudolf Steiner. Whoever reads them must take into consideration that I became acquainted with Rudolf Steiner when I was twenty-six, and I can only report about the last few years of his life, but perhaps they serve a purpose too. I believe that many more such personal sketches should be given by those who were allowed to experience Rudolf Steiner in some connection, perhaps even if only for a short while. The image of this unique, world-encompassing personality can thereby only gain in richness and color.

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III

CHAPTER TWO: THE STAGES OF INITIATION

The world is a far more interesting place than most of us have ever dreamed. Seeing more, hearing and feeling more is oh so simple if only we find the will to try.

Example: To a teacher, utterly perplexed at the request to tell the dominant temperament of each child in her very large class, Rudolf Steiner gave this simple key: As you shake hands with your students every day you will notice, the hand is either warm and dry, warm and moist, cold and moist or cold and dry. Pay attention, and you will know the temperament of each child.

Pay attention! Subtleties are all about us. Out of the wealth of impressions how little we take in, how little we see and hear, and how little we remember. Unlike the very young child who seems to be all eyes and ears, most of us have lost the early gift of enveloping attentiveness. Regaining it when adult, calls for seemingly arduous but most rewarding practice on the path to higher knowledge.

This brings us to our theme: the study of Chapter Two. We have five sets of comparative exercises, all dealing with direct observation (although the last set only in retrospect). Through diligently repeated daily practice we

awaken those "slumbering faculties" to see and hear more. We learn gradually to envelop these sense impressions with our soul forces—through the intensification of our will, and enhanced thought and feeling.

The Goal and Some Early Fruit

It is significant that this path begins with the world of the senses. Ancient mystery paths were different, as are the monastic paths of bygone centuries of faith. Man himself is now to probe the secrets of the natural world. We are to break through the barriers and protections that are safeguarding our ordinary consciousness. No longer are we to depend on the dictums and dogmas of holy men and saints. We ourselves are to discover the mysteries of the kingdom.

The initial experiences will be those of forces, leading eventually to the inner perception of colors, tones, even beings—the seeing, hearing, and knowing of the hidden—all these are to become accessible. From later texts we know that this is also the realm of the Ahrimanic. Experiences with fear and with danger are to be expected, hence the need for courage and steadfastness. The great frontier calls for the noblest of virtues.

Most of us will not make it all the way, at least not in this life. Nevertheless, devoted work with these exercises will bring undreamed of benefits. Some of these are soon noticeable to one in need of enhancing his creative powers: the artist, the writer, the teacher, or the mother. For anyone in desperate need of lifting himself out of the weight, the lumpiness, of daily existence within a world that is too much with us, so that we can reach into the realm of creative life—what better archetype could there be than the seed? Hard and lifeless to the eye, yet it is filled with the promise of growth and new creation! Practicing the seed exercise, for example, can loosen the fantasy and stir the inner seeing. This can become a lifeline for one in urgent need of "inspiration": the teacher groping for ideas for the next day's lesson, or the person suffering from writer's block and seemingly unable to answer a letter, write a report, or that promised article.

How We Go About It

For those who yearn for "experience" there is no better way to start out than by obtaining a plant. Set it on the window sill next to the working desk (don't forget to water it), and make a time commitment of five minutes daily (regular timing is advisable, so that habit can reinforce the will). Later on, add a crystal to your possessions. Then obtain some living seeds (sunflowers are best, provided you know how they burst forth and unfold their splendor, given the right conditions). You still will need an animal nearby. Lacking a pet, or birds at the feeder, there are always pigeons in the city, or try a goldfish. That's all we need for a world of new experiences—plus commitment.

It will be best to start with one, the first, exercise. And read the directions carefully. Checking the text repeatedly will help prevent derailment. There are numerous ways of trying out an exercise the wrong way round. As study groups on this theme have shown: people seldom read instructions precisely enough. The purpose and goal of each exercise should gradually become vivid in one's mind.

To illustrate: let us take the work with the seed, step by step.

1. Describe: precisely what you see.
2. Picture clearly: the plant that will grow out of this seed.
3. Reflect: light and earth will entice this plant out of the live seed; out of the artificial seed nothing will grow.
4. Think: something invisible is hidden in the seed.
5. Concentrate: on this "invisible something."
6. Ponder: the invisible will become visible. Feel intently as well as think it. Let it bore into the soul!
7. An inner force will be felt eventually. A luminous cloud seen. Colors lilac and blue. The physically invisible reveals itself. Many cautions. No revery but sobriety. Control.

The Overview

Let us now turn to the overview of the whole chapter, and practice *anschauung* (a Webster word!) a seeing-thinking so that the chapter's four themes can stand before the soul: Source, Preparation, Illumination, and Control. The first one, by this time we surely recognize. The second one we realize as the basis of all achievement, be it violin or marathon, those years of devoted effort in shaping up the faculties, the organs needed to perform. The third brings the dawning light and joy of awakening. And the fourth: mastery, the "I am in control, the responsibility is mine."

As an aside let it be said here, repeated study of the text is essential, the *sine qua non*. Mark the margin of the last page with the date you read it. Seven times seven readings should do it. That's a Pentacostal rhythm.

With the neighboring chart, a kind of blackboard work, we have tried to bring together the themes of this chapter. Rudolf Steiner had a genius with blackboards, with *anschauung*, great sweeps of color-motions, with a word or two or three. Here we have been more pedestrian, many words and picture-ettes.

Note that each exercise contrasts two experiences. We learn to compare, to sense differences, to sensitize our awareness, to distinguish this from that. This is ego-activity, otherwise called thinking—obviously very important.

Certain joyful discoveries, little ones at first, should occur from time to time. These are the Angel's incentives that keep us going. With blooming and fading we begin to "see" health, whether the child or friend is radiant or dullish. With sounds, little by little we hear "soul," those imponderable qualities of voices—not what they say but the overtone, how they say it. And we grow ever more sensitive to the ubiquitous electronic clatter and chatter, all that mechanical aping of what is human, that pollutes the soul and numbs our awareness. (Think of what it does to children.)

An aesthetic joy over crystals is a sure sign. We look at animals differently, their innerness takes on "color" somehow. As to the wonder of potentials in a seed: a child is certainly all "seed," imagine what the future holds. And people: remember how Rudolf Steiner used to stand back and look at an approaching visitor. What was he seeing? Try it sometime. You'll see more than you expect.

In our strivings, those two beacons—courage and self-confidence—should never grow dim. Crossing the threshold, the great frontier today, is full of surprises. Frontiers are always beset with dangers, masked bandits, frightening illusions. Courage must shine brightly; self-confidence never slacken. The Angel is ever with us.

And let us not forget the "golden rule" given in this chapter. We may call it "the anthroposophic waltz": three steps of moral growth effort—striving for truth, beauty, and goodness—for every single step in intellectual know-more.

Fearlessness in the depth of thought-life, think heroically! Take failures as matter of course. Expect them. Carry on. The inexhaustible fountain head of strength can be ours. The time shall come when the real names of things shall resound, the Word that calls all things into being.

The diagram was drawn by Peter Stebbing.

CHAPTER II - THE INVISIBLE WILL BECOME VISIBLE

Five Sets of Comparative Exercises



SOURCE □



ILLUMINE △

CONTROL ○

5

PREPARE ~

2

3

4

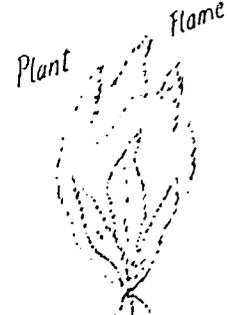
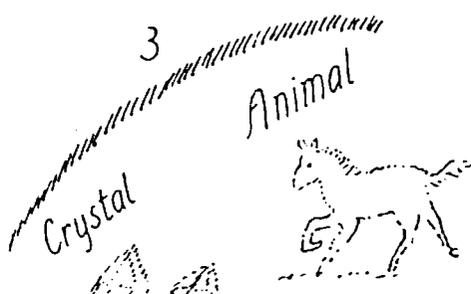
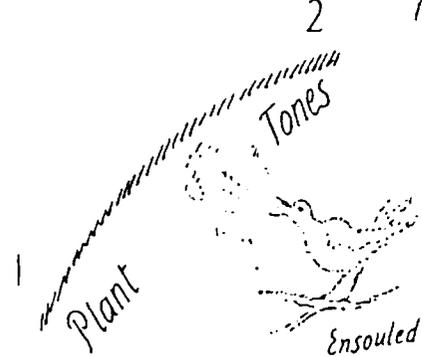
Man

(In Retrospect)

Desire



Satisfaction



Color



(Electronics)

Beings
Converse!
(Threshold Dangers)

Inner Light
Nature Revealed!
(Organs Active)

Two Beacons
Courage
Self-Confidence

Lines & Figures
See-Hear with Soul!
(Faculties Formed)

Try-Try-Again

Golden Rule: 3 Steps

Patience - Perseverance

Fearlessness -
Find THE Strength!

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IV

CHAPTER THREE:
INITIATION

Testing Our Maturity—Life's Trials

"These are the times that try men's souls" wrote Tom Paine in the first American best seller, *Common Sense*. And from early childhood on, long before there was any knowledge of what was in store for us, we have learned about trials and testing through fairy tales. The hero, as tale after tale relates, must undergo three horrendous trials, testing his metal—his courage, steadfastness, and wit—to win castle and princess (to live happily ever after).

Chapter Three, called "initiation," happens to be the archetype of all those tales we listened to long ago: three trials and an awesome goal—the "temple." But here it is for real. The "hero" is the brave little anthropologist, prepared to have his maturity tested. Ordinarily it would take him several more incarnations—and the older we get the more do we appreciate the volume of trying experiences one lifetime brings—to reach the necessary level. Here, a kind of "equivalency testing" has



to occur: whether his work on himself will be equal to, and make up for, the learning experiences of several lifetimes not yet traversed.

To be sure, life is a mini-initiation for everyone, forming us from outside. Its various phases indeed bring with them a sense of being tried. If we don't change from within, life will do it eventually from outside.

The Three Tests of Readiness

They are called "Fire," "Water," and "Air" trials, obviously metaphorical terms, not experiences in the actual Elements. Each of us can, and should, draw on a pool of life experience to illustrate the quality and impact of these trials. Let's approach them first from this aspect.

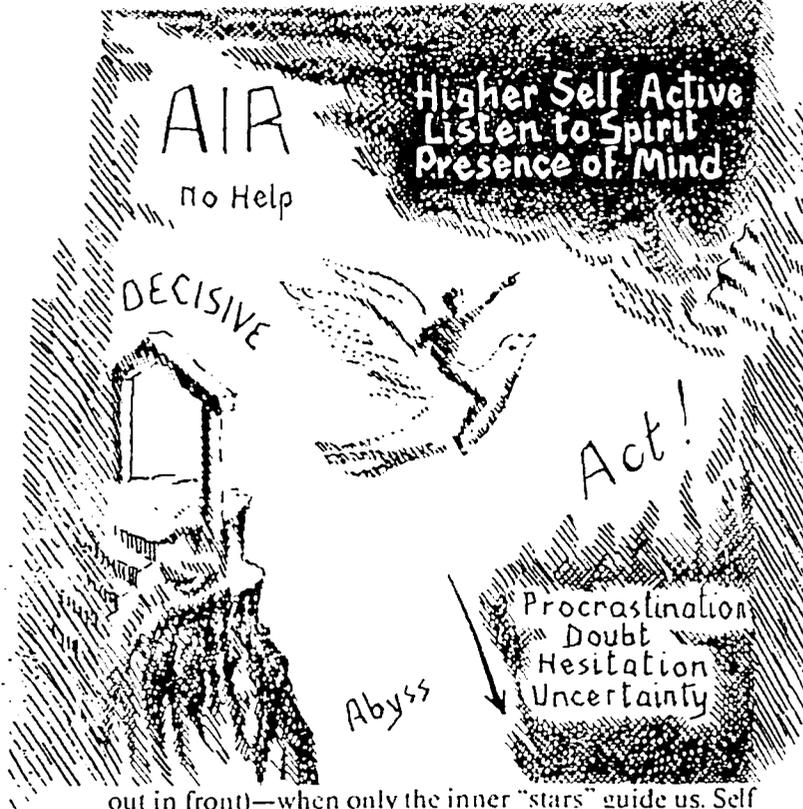
THE FIRE TRIAL brings the burning of the veil of illusions that ordinarily fog our relation with nature and people. We come to see the true nature of things and humans: from the sciences of nature through Goetheanism to spiritual discernment. On the way we



perceive more. The teacher or the doctor becomes more effective. With the burning away of illusions, with the new clarity, however, there are times when we see too much, such as the foibles and weaknesses in others (not yet our own which comes later). Disillusion brings the threat of critical, loveless attitudes. A variation on one of the blessings from the Sermon on the Mount can help here: Blessed are those who see and still love.

THE WATER TRIAL: the sailor of old, navigating by the stars, is perhaps the best illustration. In our daily life we tend to "navigate" guided by external obligations

and chores, the human will responding to one task after the other set for us from outside. The inner "stars" become dimmed for our consciousness. We are enmeshed in the sense world and life obligations. Now imagine that, independently, inner tasks arise—on the simplest level: one's daily study, exercises, and meditation. We all know how difficult it is obeying oneself! As we mature we perceive that certain things need to be done—not tied to position, title, duty, but free from the rewards that goad on the immature (no carrot dangling



out in front)—when only the inner "stars" guide us. Self mastery, achieved on a lower level, will be tested to the hilt in such situations.

THE AIR TRIAL is more difficult to visualize. There, all guidance and support vanish. We are left entirely on our own, prey to procrastination and indecision, unable to run to others for advice, be it doctor, priest, lawyer, or a how-to book. Can we visualize perhaps the teacher in the classroom facing bedlam (as it can happen), the doctor in an emergency, or even a novice lecturer on the podium facing an audience, his knees getting soft, losing his line of thought? Decisiveness, presence of mind, the strength to act wisely at the spur of the moment are the virtues needed in emergency situations. Wisdom must become second nature.

All three trials can be illustrated for people who drive a car, especially in unfamiliar circumstances. They face constantly dire consequences unless they "pass" all three tests. Fire—no illusions about other drivers or one's own bravado; water—read the signs and signals

TEMPLE

Converse with Angels
Remember The Truths!

FOR
MANKIND



and follow them to the letter. And don't doze off or be distracted; air—presence of mind and instant decisions save one's life and that of others.

The Temples—Ancient and Modern

As the goal of spiritual work, the modern "temple" is invisible. It is a state of achieving communion with one's higher self and the guiding spirits of mankind. In the past, before the event of Golgotha, the temple was a place, a physical setting wherein the neophyte attained initiation.

Eleusis was such a temple. It was surrounded by what today is called (in German) "Haderstadt"—a city of quarrel, dispute, and strife. A circus of fakirs, jugglers, clowns, and magicians. The temple priests are reported to have encouraged this very ring of confusion surrounding the temple. It spared them the task of having to weed out the immature, the merely curious. Those not ready for the rigors of initiation were thereby distracted by the sideshows; those ready, ignored them, going straight to the sanctuary.

Such a ring of confusion surrounds the modern "temple" today. In other forms, of course, but experienced by everyone attempting to reach "the Temple" by way of his daily work at study, exercises, and meditation. Everyday chores, human problems, the non-essentials in meeting after meeting, and proliferating distractions left and right—these act like the fakirs of old, absorbing our time and energy, paralyzing our will to pursue the path. Every anthroposophic meeting, every study group, every sitting in circles, every lecture, communication or article that does not, in some form, strengthen the individual in his strivings, belongs to this distracting "ring of confu-

sion" surrounding the modern "temple."

Recognizing this is part of the fire trial: a burning of the veil of illusions.

"Initiation" as a Theme of a Third Chapter

Why would Rudolf Steiner bring a description of ultimate achievements so early on in a book of eleven chapters, rather than at the finish? Aside from etymology, initiation does imply beginnings! Is not perspective important, a knowledge of where we are going? Morgenstern's poem, "Knowing not the goal, who can find the way?" (*Wer vom Ziel nicht weiss...*) points to an answer. A profound sense of purpose, of step-by-step objectives, of development in time, of accelerated life experiences, is what emerges here in the beginning. The chapter is the second in the composition (Chapter One being an introduction). It unfolds the theme on a life level.

Interesting also, the chapter appears so complete in itself. There is little mention of previous and no inkling of following themes. And yet the sequence has necessity. This is true of every chapter. Such is the nature of an organic style. One must do more than read the words, the logic of the thoughts. Pictures must arise, sequences stand before the soul. Thinking is to become a seeing: of totalities, of relationships, and of context.

Looking at the style of this chapter, one cannot help but marvel at the simplicity of words and imagery. How much more Steiner knew of this theme, how much he restricted himself here: the artist at work, shaping one theme on a "life level," the second within a composition. His dictum, "*man kann nicht an jeder Stelle alles sagen*" (you can't say everything in every instance), derives from his profound artistic sense for context, and a feeling for the limits of what can be grasped.

The student would be well advised to focus here and plumb the depth of this brief chapter, instead of ranging far and wide, reading up on everything Steiner said about initiation—the perennial temptation of the intellect, some go even so far as to display such learnedness. Our task is to experience something of the actual meaning of key concepts, such as "common sense."

"freedom from prejudice," "decisiveness," and "for mankind." These are the four banners under which the new man will be born. Yet think of the number of words and illustrations needed—as well as diligent study—to make these banners come alive in the souls of readers.

Biography—Image of the Trials

It is especially the central period of the human life—when the three aspects of the soul unfold—that trials and testing hold sway.

The fire trial: In young adulthood, period of the sentient soul, Lucifer is mightily at work (also in a good sense), bringing adventure, striving, enthusiasm, excitement and thrill, and illusions galore. All can come down crashing, around 30. Yet this awakening to the way things really are, and seeing the shortcomings of others, need not entail cataclysm or shock. The newly found sobriety, instead of criticism, a danger of the early 30s, can be channeled into a sense for good and evil, a feeling for what brings health or is unhealthy, also in the soul realm. The motto here is certainly "common sense," the dispeller of illusion.

The water trial: In those early 30s, as we begin to look around, wonder and evaluate, we find that all is not what it seemed to be. We take stock, reckon with the facts of life, with circumstance, with personalities, their make-up. We wise up to the subtle symptoms and signs providing the keys, and get attuned to "signals." (If we fail to watch it, this can degenerate into play for power and political maneuvering.) A knowledge of our own limitations dawns. We learn to control ourselves.

What we eventually realize is that our own personality is but the scaffolding of acquired habits, a product of upbringing and opportunities. These habits must be toned down or sharpened up or overcome, adapted to usefulness, and in many ways simply transformed. For what is our scaffolding but our bag of preconceptions. All human misunderstandings, discord and strife—so common especially during the 30s—arise out of fixations, hardenings, rigidities. (In passing we might note that this also applies to the human fracas world-wide

Biography: Image of Initiation

Prepare!

COMMON SENSE!

JUDGMENT!

ON YOUR OWN!

FREE!?

- Don't be Fooled -

- Think -

- Act -

Illusions

Fixed Notions

Dependence

Produce

Youth Forces

today.) Here the lord of prejudice rules and destroys. If only the motto of the second trial, "sound judgment," were king.

The air trial: After we have passed the midway mark in life the scenery changes and becomes arid. Illusions are gone. The lures have subsided. Battle scars attest to learning situations. The process of deflation continues onward. No longer are we so great and so important as we once thought we were. Outer incentives have fallen away. All guidance stops. These are the years when we are on our own. Alone. Nothing happens unless we will it so. Initiative is the thing, and purposiveness. Unless a higher self-awareness takes charge, burn-out threatens. The virtue here becomes "decisiveness," the motto of the third trial. This is the form of immediacy of insight, breaking the spell of doubt and of uncertainty that tend

to paralyze the will.

The "temple": The creative years that follow in the mid-40s, if all goes well, are perhaps the best mirrored image in the stream of life of the goal achieved through initiation. We are in touch with inner sources of inspiration and strength. Our strivings take on a new objective character, the aptitude of the consciousness soul—even humor. The earlier concern with oneself can now be "umgestulpt" (turned inside out), expanded into selflessness enveloping others. The banner eventually will read: "for mankind!"

The diagrams were drawn by Florin Towndes

The Light in the Age of Light

Rudolf Steiner's Communications Concerning the Events in the Etheric World

by FRITZ GOETTE

*This article appeared in the Easter 1966 issue of "Mitteilungen aus der anthroposophischen Arbeit in Deutschland." Fritz Goette was for many years the editor of this German Newsletter. His essay is published here by permission and was translated by Maria St. Goar. The first half was printed in the previous issue (Autumn 1983); the second half, following here, was slightly shortened.**

III

What can we in the Anthroposophical Society do to heed Rudolf Steiner's admonition to work for the com-

prehension of the Second Coming of Christ? To appear in lecture halls and merely announce these supersensible facts would be a grave misunderstanding of what must be done. We would run the risk of being discredited as one of those many sects that deal with powerful aspects of Revelations in order to make converts to their own form of salvation. Rudolf Steiner appealed to insight, and if we wish to be effective among our fellow men, we can proceed in no other way. In presenting anthroposophy, it is important that our thoughts have been lived with intensely and have at least begun to take hold of one's feeling and will. "One only knows the Christ when He unfolds all His power within one's own being. He can work there only when this force comes to expression in the human 'I'" (Feb. 20, 1910, Duesseldorf).

Rudolf Steiner's whole life was dedicated to the task of making humanity aware that "in every human being there slumber faculties." He already began work on developing these faculties—faculties of the human "I"—when he wrote and published his early epistemological-philosophical works. Through them, man can rid himself of the temptations that would direct him to the spirit in ways other than through thinking, through his own ego-controlled spirit. Without the scientific attitude of

*Members who for any reason did not receive the Autumn 1983 issue may obtain a copy from the editor.

this, however, only after first leading a discussion in which all participants share their own images of the lecture's form verbally. The reason that we meet only six times is that the seventh life-process, "reproduction," cannot be practiced in a group. After the sixth session each member takes his or her "imagination" home and lives with it meditatively. He then offers it up to the spiritual world as a vessel. If he is deemed worthy, the vessel may be filled and insights come to him as the world of spirit molds new organs of perception into his being. At this level the work with the seven life-processes in the "cultural" side of the etheric organism can confirm in deep experience of the world of thinking what Goethe describes in the following words: "Man knows himself in as far as he knows the world, which he perceives only in himself and himself in it. Every new object, well contemplated, opens up a new organ within us."(4)

This method of group study thus seeks to make a conscious contribution to our individual efforts gradually to unfold organs of higher cognition through systematic inner development proceeding from thinking. The acquiring of anthroposophical thoughts as "information" is only an initial step in this process.

In closing I should like to emphasize that this approach to the study of anthroposophical texts is but one method among many. It must be developed gradually and it demands a high degree of sustained intense work on the part of every participant. It may not be possible to work along these lines, for instance, in a situation in which some persons are not able to attend every session. The methods one uses are an expression of one's own interests and life situation, and there is room for many different forms. I also wish to stress that group study of the kind described here is in no sense intended to replace individual study and self-development. On the contrary it has been my own experience that working in this disciplined and organic fashion not only builds a strong sense of community but also serves to stimulate one to more intense individual work.

(1) "Die Vernunft ist auf das Werdende, der Verstand auf das Gewordene angewiesen..." *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*, "Betrachtungen im Sinne der Wanderer," no. 116 *Goethes Werke*, Hamburger Ausgabe (5th edition, Hamburg, 1961) VIII, 300.

(2) Rudolf Steiner, *Anthroposophie, ein Fragment* (1910), Bibl. no. 45, Ch. IV.

(3) The role of the twelve senses in such a process—here in particular the role of the word-sense and the thought-sense is of course also of great interest. This opens up another area of discussion, however, and will not be pursued further here.

(4) Goethe, "Bedeutende Foerdernis durch ein einziges geistreiches Wort," HA XIII, 38.

How to Read a Book: A Study of Rudolf Steiner's

Knowledge of the Higher Worlds

by GEORGE O'NEIL and GISELA O'NEIL

PART V

CHAPTER FOUR: SOME PRACTICAL ASPECTS

Practical Aspects? This chapter heading in 1908 read: "The Higher Education of the Soul." Whatever the reason for the change, the topic and its treatment is truly a "practical" one, in the sense of being generally useful for everyone, whether he goes on the Path or not.

Other chapters depict specific virtues and skills to be acquired; the approach here is different. Stress is laid on overcoming imperfections, those self-inflicted obstructions to our progress, which also mar our relations with people.

Looking at the long list of negatives—those blemishes, flaws and stains to be cleansed—are we not reminded of a laundry list? (All the linen to be washed and rendered spotless once again!) Pursuing the metaphor: this portion of the path to higher knowledge can be pictured as the "practical" cleaning or purifying department and, certainly for the would-be neophyte, a first step toward higher education of the soul.

KATHARSIS OLD AND NEW

The need for purifying the astral soul began when gods no longer walked the earth among men, when the old visions faded and re-union with the divine became a human goal.

The means thereto assumed increasing severity as earthly entanglement spread. Legends speak of heroic tasks, of cleaning the Augean Stables or finding the Golden Fleece (the purified astral body) and of ordeals endured in temple secrecy.

In monastic life, katharsis was achieved through mortification of the flesh. By subduing bodily instincts, urges and desires through rigorous disciplines imposed from outside, the soul proportionately gained in strength, peace and harmony. Seclusion from worldly life was a necessary condition.

Today all this has changed. The old devices no longer work. How then shall purity of soul be achieved? The individual today must take himself in hand. Outer molding forces give way to the inner, self-shaping Will. It is no longer the bodily nature that must be weakened, but the soul activity itself must be strengthened.

Let's reflect a moment. What is it we mean by these forces of the soul or astral body? Their appearance and dynamics when pure, their expression when no longer

Chapter IV PURIFYING THE SOUL BODY

THE OUTER

Open yourself
to the world!

Clear the way

Part B

- 5 Environs: big city? vs. country quiet
Vision: whom? where?
- 4 Inner silence, subtle attention! Someday I shall attain!
(Avoid dark paths)
- 3 Be gentle in speech, listen to others! Add what helps!
- 2 Obstacles:
 - ambition
 - vanity
 - pride
 - prejudice
 - superstition
 - timidity
 THE ZOO:
 - curiosity
 - compulsive talk
 - generic judgments
- 1 Anger, vexation clouds vision - walls you off
Spirit sunlight ripens organs

THE INNER

See yourself
as you are!

Use the mirror

Part A

- 7 Karma research (who was I) give it up!
Study and learn
- 6 Educate Desire-Life Wish when you
Knowledge guides know what's right!
- 5 Curiosity - morbid - questioning (sensational) Ask only what serves
- 4 Observe Self - be honest - excuses are stones in the way
Recognize limitations - the only way to overcome them
- 3 Patience, composure, calm under stress: meet the insult
Impatience paralyses! Work and wait
- 2 For all - a higher education of soul and spirit
- 1 The astral or soul body: chaos: cloudy spirals
TASK: ordered structure
brightened colors

so? Haven't we all experienced the radiance of the infant child? Or the Aphrodite look, the Adonis gleam of certain adolescents when first the astral body is freed? Don't we speak of "charm," that lovely seductive force?—snaky indeed when displayed by con-men who gain our confidence with blarney, their smooth talk!

Of course there is charisma, that personal aura, and also fan fever. Star quality is spoken of among theater people. Who in that realm without the help of Lucifer can succeed?

And then there are the saintly endowed, the Mother Teresas, the St. Francis types with magical healing powers, or a way with birds and the animals! Some have it and some don't, yet for everyone it has been promised. Born in innocence we are, yet the radiance of the "beautiful-soul" is soon lost and buried in the melee of life, spoilt from within and sullied from without. It is the price we pay for making our way, achieving success as earthly I-men. And too, it is a challenge to redeem, that in time we may become truly I-men in spirit.

Katharsis is such a universal theme today. How evident the need, wherever people assert themselves in twos or threes or multitudes. How otherwise the world would be did not hardened human natures collide.

That great god *DIS*—the astral deity—rules among people today spreading discord, dissension, disorder, and dismay. They disagree, get discouraged, disillusioned, and disband. The end: disaster!

HOLDING UP THE MIRROR

Man, by nature has limited self knowledge. The Lucifer in us directs our attention to the outside world, obscuring awareness of our own imperfections. Keen observation, a modern skill, is directed usually toward those about us, laying bare their failings. Among discordant couples, for instance, as the adage goes, he knows all her foibles, she knows all of his. Neither is aware of his own!

Self observation dawns when others begin to assume the role of mirrors for us. What is it really that irritates me in others? Were these not my own traits, wouldn't I just be amused? Startled perhaps but unaffected? What do I pick out and label as "his shortcoming"? Ambitious, maybe. Couldn't that just be my own condition, glaring at me as in a mirror?

Also, watch out for sermons, exhortations. All those "shoulds" we hear: should meditate, should study, should be kind and helpful, etc. Who indeed is preaching here? Isn't it often just that better-self admonishing its lower-self, preaching to others my own specific need for moral improvement?

Looking squarely into one's own mirror precedes improving others or setting right the ills of the world. Between lies the strenuous work of ordering and shaping up one's own personality.

BEN FRANKLIN'S LIST

Learning about the struggles of others can give us courage. Autobiographies illustrate that inner achievements don't come easily. Read (or read again) the account Benjamin Franklin gives in his autobiography of practicing to "be virtuous." How infinitely more difficult it was than assumed at the outset. Read how he took stock every evening, horrified at the accumulated transgressions. He gave himself a black mark for each and every one. By week's end this had smudged his page. For its sobriety and practicality, its vividness and pathos, we'll quote him here, telling of his struggle with just one "vice," that of pride:

"My list of virtues contain'd at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly inform'd me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride show'd itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overhearing and rather insolent, of which he convinc'd me by mentioning several instances; I determin'd endeavoring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly among the rest, and I added *Humility* to my list, giving an extensive meaning to the word.

"I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the *reality* of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the *appearance* of it. I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction to the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own. I even forbid myself . . . the use of every word or expression in the language that import'd a fix'd opinion, such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive*, *I apprehend*, or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so; or it *so appears to me at present*. When another asserted something that I thought an error, I deny'd myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his proposition; and in answering I began by observing that in certain cases or circumstances his opinion would be right, but in the present case there *appear'd* or *seem'd* to me some difference, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manner; the conversations I engag'd in went more pleasantly. The modest way in which I propos'd my opinions procur'd them a readier reception and less contradiction; I had less mortification when I was found to be in the wrong, and I more easily prevail'd with others to give up their mistakes and join with me when I happened to be in the right.

"And this mode, which I at first put on with some violence to my natural inclination, became at length so easy, and so habitual to me, that perhaps for these fifty years past no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me. And to this habit . . . I think it principally owing that I had early so much weight with my fellow-citizens . . . for I was a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points.

"In reality, there is, perhaps, no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as *pride*. Disguise it, struggle with it, beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive, and will every now and then peep out and show itself; . . . for even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility."

Rudolf Steiner's Activity at the Workmen's College Berlin 1899 - 1904

Recollections by JOHANNA MÜCKE

One can't really appreciate this 18th century Franklin story without realizing its uniqueness, its newness. Here was a man who, without benefit of religious guidance, with little or no formal education, in the workaday world with simple means, had the moral strength to take himself in hand and purge himself of certain traits which would hinder his effectiveness in practical affairs and work with people. Surely the story of an individual spiritually endowed with forces of the modern consciousness-soul.

ABOUT THE BLACKBOARD SKETCH

This fourth chapter is the third in the compositional form of the book (the first chapter being an introduction). The topic concerns the body of consciousness, the astral-body, in which are reflected all the instincts and reflexes of the physical body; all the urges, drives, and habits of the etheric body; but especially the desires, cravings, sympathies and antipathies of the emotional life. The theme is *Emancipation*: clearing away the hindrances which prevent our innate potentials, our "slumbering faculties," from developing. An analogy would be the flowerbed of bulbs awaiting the power of the sunshine to call forth their blossoms. The debris of the winter, however, must first be cleared away!

In the original German—but not in the translation—the chapter is divided into two sections. Section One: the inner approach—achieving self-observation, the ability squarely to face one's own deficiencies and to be absolutely honest with oneself. Section Two: the outer aspect—clearing away the obstacles one throws in one's own way in relation to people. The Polarity of the two sections: Me and my social World. The Me-part is in seven paragraphs and the World-part in five. Also, in the original the long paragraphs are subdivided by "thought-dashes" (*Gedankenstriche*) which add *Gliederung* and readability; they are no longer considered kosher in the West, hence omitted in the translation.

Diligent readers might copy out the mottos and golden rules and pin them up (some are in Italics in the translation, some not) for individual work and discussion. Also, the list of "vices"—to talk like Ben Franklin—can be expanded. Collect their synonyms and add some of your own, the world is crawling with them just now!

The purpose of an overview such as this, laying out the sequence of thoughts of a whole chapter, experiencing the thought organism, is to stimulate moral fantasy. We must learn someday to see our thoughts before us in the mind's eye. It's called seeing-thinking. It's healthy and it purifies the soul.

Florin Lowndes drew the diagram

These recollections—very much abridged here—were originally printed in 1925 in "Das Goetheanum." The few available notes of Rudolf Steiner's lectures at the Workmen's College were published only recently in 1983 (see the review by Johannes Gaertner in this issue).

I would like to give an account of the period of Rudolf Steiner's life when he taught at the Workmen's College (*Arbeiterbildungsschule*) in Berlin from the beginning of 1899 to the end of 1904.

At Rudolf Steiner's death, almost all the newspaper reports included a passage saying that he had once been a socialist and as such had taught at the Workmen's College. For the sake of truth, one who experienced those five years from the first day to the last should state the facts.

The college was founded in the 1890s by Wilhelm Liebknecht. It was attended chiefly by members of the Social Democratic Party. At that time, however, it had not yet become a real party school preparing trade-union leaders and speakers for political activity. This change occurred around 1908.

The subjects taught at the college were: political economy, history, law, science, and elocution. Due to the worker's long hours, the sessions were held in the late evening from 9 to 11.

The instruction in history was a special problem to the committee of the college (on which I served for many years as secretary). In this subject it was our experience that at the beginning of a course (of ten lectures) the attendance was fairly good, but gradually people dropped out and the lectures fell flat. The speakers then declined giving further courses.

Thus in December 1898, the committee had to have the programs printed for the first quarter of 1899—with no teacher yet for history. Both presidents hunted anxiously to find a teacher. Thus they came to the brothers Heinrich and Julius Hart (who were in touch with a few labor circles). They refused for lack of time and referred them to the poet Caesar Flaischlen. He too had no time but said, "Go to my friend Rudolf Steiner and ask him." This they did and told me later. "We came to Habsburgerstrasse 11. There we were received by a friendly young man who replied to our request, 'Well, if you agree that I may lecture on history in my own way, then I am willing to do it.'" Thus did Rudolf Steiner become a teacher at the Workmen's College.

The programs were printed. We were all in a certain suspense—none of us knew the new teacher or

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PART VI

CHAPTER FIVE: CONDITIONS

If you are ever called upon to give an anthroposophical lecture and are in urgent need of a theme: recreate for your audience the content of this chapter. You'll never go wrong and you'll be in good company—we have a list of five names, all prominent lecturers, who did this in the auditorium in Spring Valley (there must be others whom we did not happen to hear).

Likewise, for an initial study with a new group, you couldn't find a more ideal text. (We have used it several times, each time a happy choice.)

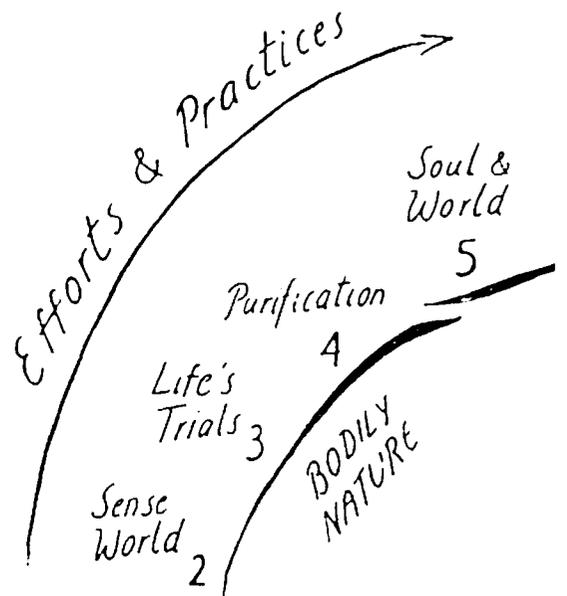
What is so unique about this chapter? Why such broad appeal? There are several answers.

The chapter is self-contained, no background is needed to appreciate it. There is no esoteric or unfamiliar terminology or intellectual difficulty. And, too, no imposing list of exercises (in contrast to the preceding and following chapters). The writing is compact—just a few pages—but lyrical in style with an almost musical quality. The development is straight forward through the seven main themes. But there is more: although only persons with searching questions will come to anthropology, Americans are often not yet awake to philosophical problems—as perhaps Europeans are—since they are more concerned with social issues and human relationships. This chapter speaks squarely to this need, and it speaks to the heart.

Another aspect, perhaps the most important: the text is so deceptively simple that it reaches all levels of understanding—the beginner and the most advanced student—because there are here layers of thoughts and meanings, as one who works with this text will discover.

OPEN TO THE WORLD THE SENTIENT SOUL ASPECT

Each of the chapters differs in content and quality. Of the eleven, the first and the last—as prelude and finale—form a frame. The remaining nine expound the path from each of the aspects of the ninefold human being. (This was presented in the opening article of this series.) Thus the fifth chapter describes the demands the student must fulfill in the realm of his sentient soul. Perhaps we can summarize the achievements to be gained so far with the admonition: Be prepared! (or expect disappointment). Boy scouts know, it's their motto. (For orientation, we repeat here the first part of the book's "map.")



1 Prelude

Interview -
Reverence for Truth
Ideas & Ideals

In the course of the human life, the soul of sentience, of adventure in the world of the senses, unfolds in the twenties, from 21 - 28. It is striking how the themes of this fifth chapter appeal to the idealism of young people. Striking too, how two decades ago, in the '60s when the youth culture blossomed, some of these themes became the banner cries of various groups, spreading their ideals to large segments of society.

Sentient-soul idealism can deeply stir one's sense of awe. If you happen to be over 28, don't assume that you might be beyond these concerns (in other words, don't look down your nose), for this portion of the soul is the vehicle for the creative spirit within the earthly sphere, opening the gateway to the wonders of the world. And without stability and firm mastery in the realms of perception and feeling (sentience), all intellectual strivings would lose their life and substance. The modern path to the spirit is in no way *welfremd* (alienated from life). It seeks to unite an understanding of both worlds.

The emphasis here is on soul-life stability. The sentient soul must become firm in itself, achieve "character," if it is to be the basic instrument for further progress on the path. Either we work on it ourselves or life will teach us the hard way. We are never finished learning, acquiring strength, polishing all those soul-windows to the world. The task stays with us through life.

RUDOLF STEINER'S STYLE OF WRITING

Unless we penetrate beyond the content to the style of each chapter, we miss half the message. The beginner, of course, has to wrestle with the content, but for work in study groups and for those wishing to get beyond the beginner's phase, concern with the "how" becomes as important as the "what."

In the lecture of Jan. 1, 1919, recently published in English for the first time (in *How Can Mankind Find the Christ Again?*), Rudolf Steiner describes his style of *gestaltendes Denken* (form-producing, shaping, sculpturing, or formative thinking) and contrasts it with the ordinary thinking we all tend to use:

The second way of thinking is a totally different process, a completely other way of thinking. . . . It is a shape-forming manner of thinking. If you look more closely, if you follow what I have tried to indicate in my various books on spiritual science, you will realize that the difference does not lie so much in the content that is imparted—this can be judged from various other viewpoints; but the way of seeing the whole world and of coordinating that knowledge, the entire mode of thought presentation, is a different one. This is shape-producing; it gives separate pictures, rounded totalities; it gives contours, and through contours, color.

Throughout the entire presentation in the printed books you will be able to see that it has none of the dismembering character that you find in modern science. This difference of the "how" (the mode of thinking) must be brought out just as emphatically as the difference of the "what" (the content of subject matter). There exists a formative (*gestaltende*) way of thinking that has been developed with the especial purpose of leading to the supersensible worlds. If you take the book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, where such a path is marked out, you will find that every thought, every idea in it is based on this formative thinking.

This is something essential for our time. For this formative thinking has a quite definite quality. . . . If you exercise creative, formative thinking (*gestaltendes Denken*), thinking that allows for metamorphosis, I could also say Goethean thinking—represented, for instance, in the shaping of our pillars and capitals [of the First Goetheanum]; used too in all the books I have tried to give to spiritual science—this thinking is closely bound up with the human being. Only the beings connected with the normal evolution of mankind can work creatively, sculpturally as a human being works within himself with thinking. . . . You can never go astray on a wrong path if through spiritual science you engage in formative thinking. . . . For the Christ Impulse stands in the direct line of formative thinking.

THE OVERVIEW: DYNAMICS OF THE UNFOLDING IDEA

Angels never make mistakes. They never think step by step. They see their cosmic thoughts—all at once! Humans some day will become angelic. Meanwhile, the practice of *Idea-Anschauung*, of living into the development and totality of a chapter idea, will bring us a touch closer to that goal—in the realm of thinking.

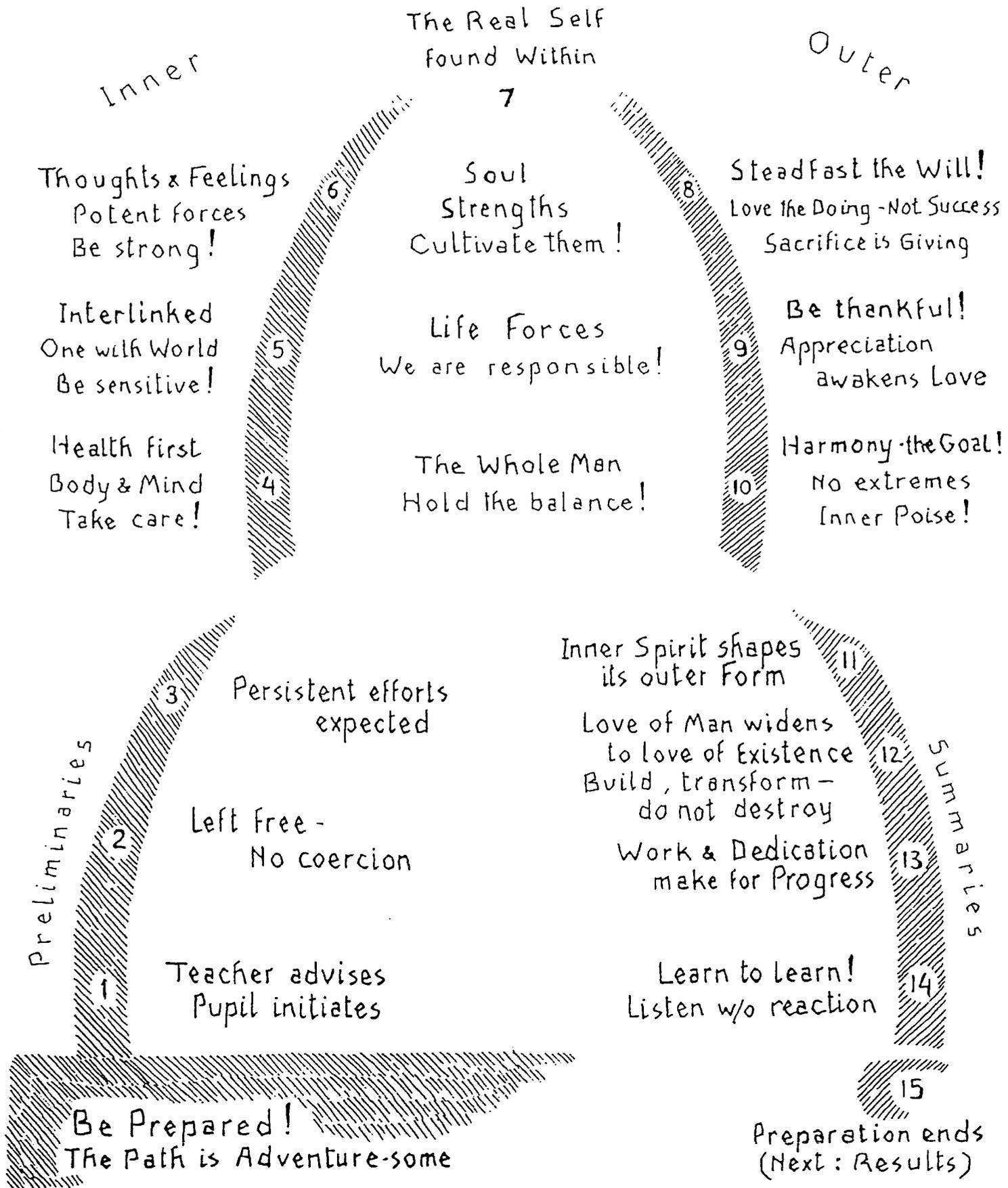
To help the reader achieve an overview, Steiner's beautiful text was reduced here (in the neighboring chart) to a series of maxims. The conscientious reader will turn to the original and verify each one for himself.

To be observed: there is an opening set of three paragraphs on the teacher/pupil relation; a closing set (four paragraphs) on the moral implications; between these unfold the guiding seven "conditions" for cultivation of soul health and vigor. Each of these seven conditions (paragraphs four through ten) describes what may be seen as a cure for a current crisis-situation in society. Each "condition" could well be expanded into a separate article. And the seventh condition includes the earlier six. It presumes that miracle of inner balance, and formulates the goal: a unified, harmonized soul life will establish the inner quiet, the poise needed for the first successful steps on the path to higher knowledge.

The sequence of the seven "conditions" proceeds from Outer to Inner: ascending from bodily health; through life-sensitivity; and reality of thoughts and feelings; to the Being of man. Then in polar descent: from steadfastness of will and creative sacrifice; through gratitude, love, higher cognition; to harmony. Together: the seven great tones of sevenfold man resound—a living thought organism. It was given thus in a form able to evoke the magical power of coming alive in the soul of the student: as totality, as *Anschauung*. Worthy of being inscribed indelibly in the soul by meditative effort, it can become the basis for conversation with the Higher Self and the Angelos.

Florin Lowndes drew the overview chart.

CONDITIONS FOR SOUL STABILITY
BASIS FOR ALL PROGRESS ON THE PATH



<i>Life Organism</i>	<i>Thought Organism</i>
Ingestion	Perception
Assimilation	Memorizing
Suppression	Analysis
Secretion	Questioning
Maintenance	Synthesis
Growth	Formation of Organs
Reproduction	Regeneration

Whether these first indications can gradually lead to a valid experience of the human etheric body depends on the way in which we employ such thoughts and observations in our own further work. And this work depends at the same time upon the "how" of anthroposophical study.

(1) The great importance which is given to this process in pedagogy renewed through anthroposophy must be studied in the appropriate works. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, "The Education of the Child."

(2) Rudolf Steiner terms the first three kinds of processes "breathing," "warming," and "nourishment" [*Atmung, Wärmung, Ernährung*], but describes something similar. In breathing he stresses the process of inhalation. Warming is the most comprehensive of the processes of assimilation, that which assimilates to the organism not only ingested nourishment but also, e.g., inhaled air. Through the process of warming the body continually assimilates even individual parts of itself to each other. By "nourishment" Rudolf Steiner clearly intends the part of this process which precedes transformation into the body's own substance. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, *Anthroposophie: Ein Fragment aus dem Jahre 1910* [Anthroposophy: A Fragment from the Year 1910].

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PART VII

CHAPTER SIX: ABOUT SOME EFFECTS OF INITIATION

(This is the first half, giving an overview of the chapter; the second half—in the next issue—will deal with the various groups of exercises.)

In his memoirs Friedrich Rittelmeyer describes his first encounter with *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* and how he came to a complete halt with Chapter Six: "Oh dear! At the beginning everything was splendid. Moral advice that wins one's heart. But then came those 'lotus-flowers': 2-petaled, 16-petaled, 12-petaled, 10-petaled these higher organs twirled in the book. Nothing turned within me. Only one big mill-wheel was turning in my head. And a great hopelessness descended upon my soul."

Does this experience sound familiar?

The sixth chapter is by far the longest, the most complex, the most demanding of the book. It is packed with the most varied material, a plethora of details, it covers so much unfamiliar ground—all in condensed form—that the reader routinely gets lost. Compared with the earlier chapters there is a change in style. It has the terse quality of a summary.

It is the central chapter, and the viewpoint is also central in relation to nine-fold man: that of the rational soul. The text here appeals to man as *knower* in distinction to man as *doer* of the earlier chapters. The numerous exercises are listed here in groups (in the original German neither in Italics nor in separate paragraphs as in the English translation) to show the effects they have as part of the total development. The magnitude and complexity of the challenge awaken awe for the achievements of the Initiate. They bring into perspective the distance of the goal for most of us—truly an astringent experience.

The theme, then, is to know the goal and to know every step on the way toward achieving it. Hence the chapter is a kind of map for the anthroposophic journey from the outset to the experience of the true Self. It describes the "technicalities" whereby a human being of our age, living an active life in the world of sense experience, can develop higher organs of perception for achieving the powers of conscious participation in the world of the spirit.

THE PATH, PAST AND PRESENT

The essence of the human path to the spirit has always been the same. It occurs in two great phases: I - new organs of the soul must first be developed; II - these later become imprinted upon the etheric body. These are the two themes of the chapter, separated (in the German text) by a break.

The imprinting upon the etheric body was different in past ages, taking place during a three-day deathlike temple sleep. It was also easier because the etheric body was less tightly united with the physical, and a loosening was more easily brought about. "Today we must work more strongly and more inwardly to influence the etheric body. It no longer suffices to take hold of half-dreamy thoughts. We must subject everything to sharp concentration, not merely to pictorial thoughts. A thought that brings about strong concentration of our whole inner being can work more powerfully upon the etheric body that is fettered to the physical." (Oct. 22, 1905, Bibl. survey #93).

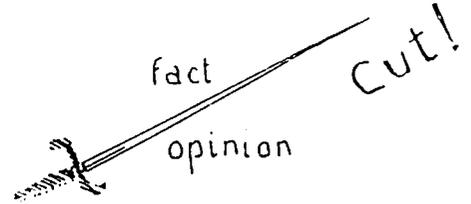
Modern man's constitution necessitates also a change in the approach to the spirit. Today man goes "head first" into the spiritual world. The activation of the higher organs must begin with the head. The thinking forces must lead the way. In the past this was reversed when the kindling began in the lower-body region. The newness of anthroposophy is its cognitive path, the *Erkenntnisweg*.

THE COGNITIVE PATH

Know effects first - Study - Read carefully

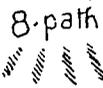
DIFFERENTIATE!

THINK
Sharp, Clear
Dispel illusions!

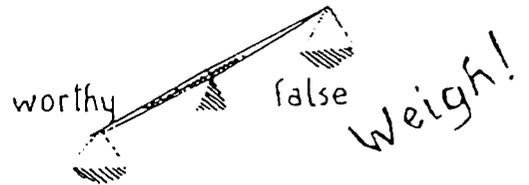


TRUTH
Feel it

Judgment
Sound!



EVALUATE!

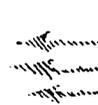


DECISIVE
WILL

Balance
3 soul forces

6 Exercises

cold-Soul-warmth



CONTROL!

GOAL:
Birth of
Higher Self
FREEDOM



(Astral Heart ~ Aetheric Heart)

CONCENTRATE-
EXCLUDE

Watch out!
(Attention)

Color Aura



ARMOR PROTECTS!

Involuntary Impressions
Sympathy ~ Antipathy
Associations
Memories



HARMONY:
Body-Soul-Spirit
Virtue No Effort
Second Soul Nature

Beings



8
4 (Other texts)

We shape Astral Sense Organs - Patience / Diligence -
Then when ready, ILLUMINATION can come.

Another difference between past and present concerns guidance. Earlier it was a guru path and the student as instrument was shaped from outside, being told every step of the way what to do. Since man has come of age, he must go the path by himself and on his own. As Morgenstern formulates it, "*Die zur Wahrheit wandern, wandern allein*" (those who travel toward the truth, travel alone). And as a wit once remarked, On the anthroposophic path there is no trolley car, no bus to carry you along—it's a steep foot path!

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP STUDY

There is a great value in well-guided regular group work and exchange. We help one another to stick with our study and our practice of exercises, and we learn from the difficulties and victories others have. We ponder together the meaning of passages and avoid the danger of mere surface reading.

We also discover that words mean different things to the older and to the younger members. Words gradually change their meanings, they grow old! (Translations should be renewed from time to time.) Take, for example the English terms for two of the four attributes to be cultivated: "faculty of discriminating" (*Fähigkeit zu scheiden*) has taken on political overtones; and "proper estimation" (*richtige Schätzung*) a bit quaint as a virtue to be practiced. That is why synonyms with their different shades of meaning can be helpful. Every one of these key terms must needs be clarified, brought to life, exemplified, and recognized in one's own life experience.

THE SINE QUA NON

Remember the section on "Inner Quiet"—the wondrous stillness which opens to another world? Here, in Chapter Six, the word occurring over and over again is "Concentration." In fact, are any meditative efforts of inner life possible without it? The invasion of our privacy, of the inner quiet, happens on all fronts, from outside and from within: unwanted sights and sounds distract us; memory intrusions haunt us; thought associations and automatic responses run away with us; percepts remind us of people and things; a "stream of consciousness," where one thought takes us to another, compels us, and so on. Thus we are battered from all sides, slaves to the senses and pawns of our memories, unless we practice a life of attentiveness: stick to the topic, don't wander off; do one thing at a time; focus fully on a task or a theme or a person; stop, look, listen; exclude actively all intrusions.

Freedom can begin where slavery and dependence end. That is why concentration becomes the gateway to any form of inner life.

THE ILLUSTRATED CHART OF THEMES

Pictures do help, especially in form of an overview, in this complex realm of relationships.

In the CENTER and as background we have the higher organs—in the regions of head, larynx, heart, and solar plexus—that one day will become seeing. On the

LEFT, the sets of exercises that will bring these organs to fruition and the kinds of perception each organ in time will bear. On the RIGHT, the four great "attributes" with their symbols of sword, scales, and helm (the fourth is the longing for freedom), that will ripen the etheric centers of head, larynx, and heart. These are the powers required on the stages of awakening, leading to the birth of the higher Self. This source of inner strength will derive from the etheric streams flowing from the etheric heart through each of the organs of soul perception, activating them.

BELOW these head, larynx, and heart organs are those subliminal regions to be harmonized and mastered. The study includes the 10-petaled and the 6-petaled organs, but only mentions those situated still lower in the body (for the modern path these have lost their earlier prominence). Of special import is the organ in the region of the solar plexus, the gateway to the underworld of the unconscious through which all manner of guiding forces work for good and for ill. To create a protective armor is especially important today, when the soul is battered from all sides by shocking impressions that sink deep. The motto here is, "From all involuntary influences, shield thyself, oh man."

(The next study will focus on the various groups of exercises of Chapter Six. Please note in the following poem Morgenstern's work with the six exercises, and how the final stanza epitomizes with each line the goal of one of the six.)

Florin Lowndes drew the overview chart.

while stressing what does seem important, casting it as best we are able in the form of our own concepts and ideas. In the process, what we have perceived becomes individualized, often to the point beyond recognition.

Although this process of individualization is related to a deeper level of our individuality, that of interest, the essence of this deeper layer does not yet become fully conscious. This occurs only in the act of posing questions. To be sure, questions arise often through what has been "ingested" and, to a greater or lesser degree, assimilated. The question itself arises, however, only when the will that lives in these thought processes awakens an "openness" to experience, which the self brings to the matter at hand. Every question of this kind is not only a bit of individual experience, but truly part of the human individuality itself.

The path that the ego (represented by the will in thinking) has heretofore traversed from without inward continues at this point by turning from within outward. This is accomplished, however, not in the sense of a simple turnabout, but by continuing upon a different level. If we attend subtly the exercise of imagining backward, we become conscious of both levels: the level of concepts and representations we have framed and, "beneath" concepts and mental representations, the level of active thought-will [*Denkwille*], which grasps spiritually that which fuses individual thoughts into a unity before we form them into mental representations. It is to the activity of thought-will that we owe the new dimension of an inner realm of images mentioned above.

As a result of this initial reflection upon our own inner nature as meditants, we see that one might compare the study of a spiritual-scientific text to practicing a piece of music, whereby the writings of spiritual science correspond to the score, the etheric body to the instrument, and the meditant to the musician, who grasps the instrument with the fingers of his inmost will in order to play it. This image was inspired by Rudolf Steiner's reference to the study of his *An Outline of Occult Science*:

Every moment that one gives oneself over to the reading of a text, one must create out of the depths of one's soul and with one's innermost will something for which the books attempt to provide the initial stimulus; only he who knows this will succeed in viewing these books as musical scores, and in creating the actual music from them in the inner experience of his own soul. Yet it is precisely this active experience of the soul that we need.(2)

* * *

(1) June 28, June 30, & July 7, 1923. GA 350.

(2) July 2, 1920: *Oswald Spengler—Prophet of World Chaos*. GA 198.

Editor's Note: The second half of this chapter will follow in the next issue.

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PART VIII

CHAPTER SIX: OVERVIEW — 2ND HALF A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE EXERCISES

VITA ACTIVA & VITA CONTEMPLATIVA

Not within cloistered walls but in the midst of modern active life—with all its demands and turmoil—are we destined to cultivate an equally active inner life. Is it possible? How can we do it?

"Finding" the time, "finding" the quiet, and "finding" the will for regular inner work—this becomes the daily and lifelong hurdle most of us face.

In the West we tend to be doers. It takes will to do the many things we accomplish. We attend "anthroposophic activities"—meetings, lectures, classes, conferences—but we reflect little on what we did or heard. The "active life" dominates; the "contemplative life" is not part of our nature. We take in much from the outside. But so little comes to a life of its own, within, as inner experience, as inner treasure. A soul turned out is not active but passive and receptive only. Concerning the various anthroposophic exercises: most of us have "tried" them and then turned to other interests.

In our study here we have arrived at the midpoint of the book: the last chapter with exercises. (The following chapters focus on the results of "inner work.") Before approaching the sets of exercises listed in the text, we will describe briefly—based on decades of experience with study groups—a few external obstacles we all face and how they can be overcome.

A PLACE

Old European farmhouses had a *Hergottsecke*, a nook graced by a religious statue or picture, that served as focal point for daily prayers and table graces. Wealthy early anthroposophists had their violet-painted meditation rooms. Many modern homes have as focal point the TV set. They provide little privacy and quiet. Yet it is essential for each of us to have his private nook set up—with a crystal, a picture, or whatever, and the text in use—to which he can withdraw.

If the external noise is a problem, use ear stopples. A lighted candle can help quiet the atmosphere, and curtains drawn. (Since the phone will surely ring, take it off the hook before you settle down.)

FINDING THE TIME

As the old saw goes, each of us is allotted only 24 hours per day. Would 25 hours make the difference—

giving us the extra hour needed to cultivate the inner life? We have to *make* time, we'll never be able to *find* it. Can I free myself for one hour, or even one half-hour every day? Can I schedule this time, give it firm priority? Planning a definite time slot, committing oneself first for a number of days—perhaps one week—is absolutely essential, unless our failed good intentions will help pave that proverbial “road to hell.” To start something only to drop it again is a perennial danger, the fate of lukewarm intentions. Anthroposophic resolve must be firmer than those famed New Year’s resolutions, target of countless jokes.

Economy in the use of time, firm planning, and guarding one’s priorities should make possible “free” time, “personal” time, “contemplative” time—in every life. In addition, during the day (our “active” life) most of us have unoccupied minutes—we wait, walk, sit, ride or drive—moments that can be filled with reflective thought: bringing to mind what was studied, searching for illustrations or examples from our daily experience, or practicing an exercise—patience, positivity, detachment.

GOALS LARGE AND SMALL

The newcomer to anthroposophy begins to read, book after book. If fortunate, a well-guided study group will help him find the way through some basic texts. Taking in new content nourishes the soul and fills the memory. It’s not yet an active contemplative life. And the danger of drifting arises, once the initial eagerness subsides. That’s when the setting of goals becomes essential. For example, working again, this time intensely, through one written text a year; or for a Waldorf faculty, the teachers’ literature re-studied (this implies also individual work) in the course of every ten years. Then there are the sets of exercises. They seem overwhelming at first in their multiplicity, yet each necessary for inner growth and stability. Here, small goals, daily tasks, are crucial for any degree of success.

In an earlier study we referred to Ben Franklin’s daily checklist of virtues. Something similar—of course different—can be found in Rudolf Steiner’s *Guidance in Esoteric Training*, published long after his death. It includes detailed instruction to individuals and small groups, given in the years he wrote *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. Here and in the 1984-published *Zur Geschichte und aus den Inhalten der ersten Abteilung der Esoterischen Schule, 1904-1914*, the directions for morning and evening work are specific, the daily task clearly set (this includes keeping daily tabs in a notebook on morning and evening work). It’s not that easy and not that stern for us today—some 80 years later. To succeed, each of us can become his own guide, his own taskmaster of the many small steps on the path—adding up to the great step, freedom.

THE SETS OF EXERCISES

Three things are paramount for everyone today: a vigorous cultivation of *common sense* or judgment, a wakeful and *well-ordered relation* to the outer world, and a strong *inner life* of reflection, of self-direction. In essence,

these are the spheres of the head, the larynx, and the heart organs of the soul today. The centers of the 2-, the 16-, and the 12-petaled soul organs (“flowers”).

The fourth one is *exclusion*, whereby the various goblins of distraction and intrusion are kept at bay. There has to be some “home-turf”—an inner realm exclusively one’s own for meditative life. The control organ is the one near the solar plexus (10-petaled).

The Head Organ: No specific exercises are given but throughout the book the continual emphasis is on the necessity of clear thinking. This is the new, the Western note. Clarity, logic, objectivity, factuality in the forming of thought about what we hear and see; plus a reckoning with time, growth and development; the metamorphic changes taking place all about us—this all comes within the scope of strengthening the head forces, the two-petaled organ of the head.

Nonsense should give us a headache. Every statement needs checking with facts. The world is afloat today with uninformed personal opinion, devoid of reason, ignorant of fact.

The Organ of the Larynx: Rudolf Steiner’s original suggestion, to practice these exercises on a weekly basis, has become traditional knowledge in our movement: the same exercises on the same day (Sat. thought, Sun. decisions, etc.) and the eighth daily, spread over the week.

It’s interesting that the throat organ should have to do with our relation to the world. Yet, considering all the things we swallow, and all that comes forth in “wordage”—plus the confusions and foibles arising from both—the connection becomes obvious.

It’s a fact that the soul life of modern man, the *consciousness soul*, has to mature at first in the relation to the external world. Only with time do we spiritualize it, “inwardize” it as *spiritual soul*.

Now to the exercises—their timeliness is striking, the need is obvious. We have abbreviated them here in everyday language (do the same for yourself!) and called them:

THE EIGHT RIGHTS

ORDERING THE DAY “ON THE RIGHT TRACK”

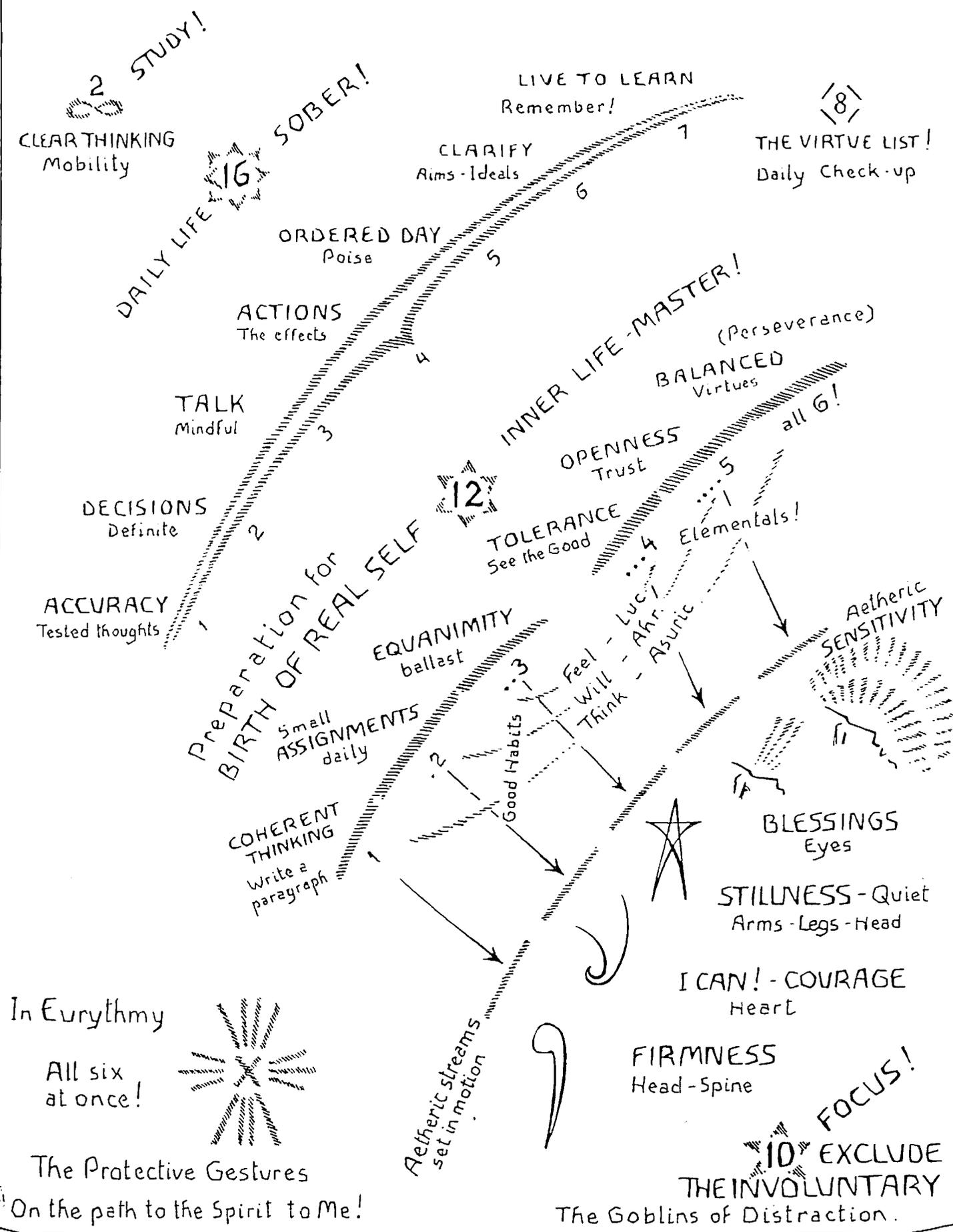
Use your mind with care: sift out the trivia, separate fact from opinion, check the sources. Listen with inner calm. Neither agree nor disagree. Think it over. (“Right Opinion”)

Deliberate the things you do: leave unessentials undone. Once you are sure, don’t flinch—stick to your decision. You made it. (“Right Judgment”)

Talk sense: shun trivia, chatter. Conversation can be golden or heavy as lead, can inspire or depress. Be thoughtful, neither long-winded nor abrupt. Listen and reflect. Silence is often an excellent choice. (“Right Word”)

What, how, and why you do things: what you think you have done isn’t always the way it appears to others. Don’t disturb your fellow man. Weigh long-range needs and

THE GROUPS OF EXERCISES



consider all the effects of what you do. ("Right Deed")
Order your life: plan the day. Avoid unessentials, don't get swamped by externals. Don't rush and don't dawdle. Pay heed to health of body and mind. You are here to grow in faculties and strength—"behave accordingly." ("Right Viewpoint")

Set your goals: within your powers do all you can but don't overdo. Look beyond. Set your aims high to make something of yourself—spiritually. Develop now the faculties to help others later: your road to excellence. ("Right Habit")

Live to learn: the world is a school. Do things better the next time, watch others, collect experiences. And don't forget them. ("Right Memory")

Do your daily check-up: keep tab on success and failure. List your purposes, principles, duties and compare your shortfall and errors. Reflect on your immediate goals. ("Right Examination")

THE SIX PROTECTIVE EXERCISES

The heart Organ: given various Latin translations, accessory, subsidiary, supplementary—with the implied meaning "of lesser importance." Rudolf Steiner's original "Neben" in context clearly means "side by side." They must be practiced along with any kind of meditative work, for protection and safety. This is how he introduced them in *Guidance in Esoteric Training*:

"In what follows, the conditions that must be the basis of any occult development are set forth. Let no one imagine that he can make progress by any measures applied to the outer or the inner life unless he fulfills these conditions. All exercises in meditation, concentration, or exercises of other kinds, are valueless, indeed in a certain respect actually harmful, if life is not regulated in accordance with these conditions."

And in *The Stages to Higher Knowledge* Rudolf Steiner even goes further. By establishing good habits, these six exercises actually protect us from serious dangers arising with higher development. Without this protection, pernicious elementals can be the cause of ill health, unsavory personal traits, even moral degeneration, when the soul begins to withdraw a bit from the body. Hence, the importance—not subsidiary, accessory, or supplementary—of these protective exercises.

But there is more: a threshold is being approached between the soul-astral and living forces. Each exercise calls forth energies that in time can be directed, and a center formed in the life organism. We speak of the Etheric Streams (cf. *Guidance in Esoteric Training*).

Indications of these in brief are here given with each exercise.

THE SIX PROTECTIVE EXERCISES AND THEIR STREAMS OF POWER

One: Concentrate on pin or pencil. Build a factual, simple thought sequence—equivalent to a paragraph of a dozen sentences or so—about some small thing. Remember in a microcosm there reflects itself a macrocosm. The power to

focus and penetrate can be yours.

This feeling of certainty and firmness appearing in the forehead, we pour through the head and down the spine. It provides a captain's sense of being in command.

Two: Give yourself a daily small task (later several tasks)—touch a button or your ear—to be carried out with precision at the exact moment set by you ("10:00 sharp"). Become master of time and learn to obey yourself. Your self-esteem, "I can do it," grows thereby.

The elation "I did it," this feeling of accomplishment, we let stream from head to heart. Lionheartedness we now know.

Three: The feeling world, like the sea, can be stormy or lull, whipped up or seemingly devoid of hope. We need ballast for storms and shocks; sails of enthusiasm to counter the hours of discouragement or gloom. Equanimity is an active force. You become weatherproof. Inner quiet ensues.

This peaceful quiet, this restfulness, we let stream from the heart through arms and hands, down to the feet, and then radiate to the head. Done once a day, balance and calm permeate us.

Four: In a world of life and death, of growth and decay, there is always the small seedling midst the rotting manure. Affirm one and learn to understand the other. Be active: discover what bears the future in it. You can help it come to be.

This feeling of appreciation, of blessing and bliss, first centered in the heart, streams through the eyes and about us. The eyes become a source of blessings to others in need.

Five: "Knowing it all" boxes us in, crab like. Hardenings and encrustings come with age. Be willing to learn. Open up again like a child. The new vibrates with life all about us.

And if we but attend we realize: our life forces can expand. We discarnate a bit when new insight carries us beyond our personal sphere. A quivering life streams into us through eyes, ears, and skin.

Six: Virtues come in circles. A single virtue is a specialized skill. Onesidedness can act like sin! (A piece of a circle isn't round, it's bent!) Well-roundedness and balance are the goal; and a well-established "maintenance program" will prevent decay and loss of what so far has been achieved. Practice what you lack, and persevere!

Florin Lowndes drew the overview chart.

through simple participation, and then decide on the basis of this understanding alone—without any preconceived program—what might constitute the next step or the beginning of new work together with those concerned.

But how do we prepare ourselves for this? More specifically: how can we heighten [*steigern*] our inner, intuitive forces—those we sought to activate earlier in the creative shaping of individual study—in such a way that they are available to us in this realm as well? One can say: by pursuing one's previous efforts further in yet another way.

The second way continues in a direct line the striving of the first. Of what does it consist? In short, of extending the exercises described to include the assimilation and inner digestion of spiritual anthropology [*Menschenkunde*] itself. Up to this point our concern was to make this understanding of the human etheric constitution fruitful for the "how" of study only; the "what" remained untouched thereby. Any spiritual-scientific topic that interested the student could become the object of study structured in such a way. Now our concern is to include this spiritual anthropology in our spiritual practice also: as a subject to be worked through; that is, to include it in our meditative work. What is the significance of such a meditatively elaborated spiritual anthropology?

In 1919, Rudolf Steiner prepared the first Waldorf School by speaking for two weeks on spiritual anthropology [*Menschenkunde*] as the basis for pedagogy; a little more than a year later, he returned to deliver four more lectures to the faculty. These lectures have a great bearing on our theme, especially as regards method. They have been published under the title *Balance in Teaching*.⁽¹⁾ In these lectures, Rudolf Steiner explains that a renewal of education out of the true spirit of the age cannot consist of this or that general rule or principle, nor this or that practical technique, etc., but rather only in the inner relationship that the teacher develops with his pupils. And that one of the most potent means of effecting this renewal is a spiritual anthropology that views the developing human being from the perspective of spiritual science. Of course the teacher does not build up this relationship to his pupils by calling forth this knowledge of spiritual anthropology from memory while teaching, but rather by working through it meditatively outside of class.

The decisive point here has already been addressed above: we described how thoughts, in this case those concerning an anthroposophical understanding of the human being, are transformed through meditative activity into organs or implements of the soul by means of which we establish a connection with the spiritual world. And this means that through this work the teacher establishes a connection with the same world out of which teacher and pupils both were born into this present earthly life. The first fruit of such a connection is however an intuitive understanding of the way in which the more subtle process of incarnation that continues after the pupils' birth can best be accompanied and promoted through teaching. "In the evening you meditate upon spiritual

anthropology and in the morning there wells forth out of you: yes, you must do this or that with Johnny Miller, or: this girl needs this and that, etc. In short, you know what to apply in each special case." Thus Rudolf Steiner summarizes a longer passage in the third of these lectures.⁽¹⁾

However, this basis for a new art of education is not all that emerges on the path leading to a meditatively elaborated spiritual anthropology. Rudolf Steiner also regarded this renewal of education as at the same time a model for a fundamental renewal of cultural life as such, a spiritual culture able gradually to permeate all facets of human life as a kind of social art.⁽²⁾ Hence this meditative understanding of spiritual anthropology represents a modern path leading to the creative element in every realm of social life. This applies also to the kind of anthroposophical group work we have been considering. Thus the discussions of spiritual anthropology in the previous chapters and in the chapters yet to come attempt to contribute to such a meditative image of the human being as it is employed in the particular field of group study of anthroposophy.

It follows that our earlier striving to transform the thoughts yielded by spiritual anthropology here confronts a further task: that of helping us to shape group work. This heightens our intuitive insight into what takes place supersensibly—for example in the etheric thought-organism of the participants in a particular study group—and gradually strengthens our ability to enter into the situation creatively on the basis of this insight. What otherwise takes place in creative thinking can in this way also become a creative, artistic deed in the social realm.

(1) Sept. 15-22, 1920: *Balance in Teaching*. Four Lectures to Teachers. Mercury Press, 1982. German title: *Meditative erarbeitete Menschenkunde* (Knowledge of Man Achieved by Meditative Work).

(2) In this regard, see *The Renewal of the Social Organism*. Anthroposophic Press, 1985

How to Read a Book: A Study of Rudolf Steiner's *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*

by GEORGE O'NEIL and GISELA O'NEIL

IX

CHAPTER SEVEN: KINDLING THE LIGHT "The Transformation of Dream Life"

We humans are indeed most curious creatures: We spend our waking hours absorbed in the world of the

senses. We have need of external light—sun, moon, or electric bulb—lest we find ourselves in total darkness. Such total darkness conceals also the world of spirit from us. Here, no external light source exists to see by. To be aware, we must provide our own illumination, become, as it were, light-bearing beings.

The soul of ego consciousness, or spiritual soul, is the promise of our age. Its higher faculties must be achieved by strenuous inner effort. Mastery of the outer world, via physical eyes and ears, is but a first and necessary phase; mastery of the inner world, by awakening a luminous perceptive force, is the second.

How this inner light is enkindled at night, when the world of the senses is blotted out, and the nature of the first spiritual perceptions—is the subject of Chapter Seven.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF DREAM LIFE

After six chapters filled with exercises, all to be done in full consciousness, all related to the waking world, we shift for a moment to a new realm, that of dreams. Spiritual vision begins at night, in the twilight consciousness of dreams.

Let's not go astray. Dreams are not important, should not be told in a study group although the temptation might be strong. What matters is to visualize the changes that will occur (once we have done the necessary preparatory work): how chaotic dream fragments take on order; how we change from a participant in the dream to an unlooker; how coherence, message and meaning will manifest.

Perhaps we can imagine how a whole fairy tale, not chaotic bits and pieces, would unfold before us. The best illustration of the change (we have come up with) is the part of the First Mystery Play (Scenes 4,5,6) that takes place behind a gauze curtain. In concentrated pose, Johannes sits in profile before the scrim. He does not watch physically. Behind the translucent curtain spiritual events unfold—all in terms of the soul configuration of people Johannes knows (e.g., Strader and Capesius encounter the Spirit of the Elements). In each scene a profound message is conveyed (more so than perhaps Johannes or the audience immediately can grasp). After each scene Johannes characterizes the persons involved; how he knows them in the physical world and how they appeared before his inner vision. He does not mix the two realms, he is awake.

THE HEART LOTUS AS ORGAN OF SPIRITUAL LIGHT

The "lantern head," vision through as loosened ether body in the head region, was lost in prehistoric times. Various atavistic forms have persisted, some into our days. These should not be confused with modern, fully conscious, developed vision. It is important for us to recognize the difference, and to know—in thought—how developed vision works. (It is spelled out in this chapter.)

In the ordinary human being the ether body is as yet without a center. Through development of the lotus organs (previous chapter) an etheric center is formed in

the heart region. A different center would not connect the spiritual vision with the physical world. Hence the emphasis on control, achieved through the "six exercises."

This heart lotus, of "radiant beauty" once fully developed, becomes the spiritual light source and the point of entry for the higher Self.

BUILDING A SPIRITUAL HOME: "A HUT" OR TABERNACLE

How can we picture such a task? A home—in everyday experience—provides a feeling of protection, security, and identity. We are surrounded by familiar objects and know how all the systems work. We live in it.

Spiritually, the beginning of a "home" is made with a thought on which we concentrate and then "dwell." It is no longer outside. It now surrounds us. We live in it. This is the first "body-free" experience. For moments, we live not in the body; we live in a thought, a sentence or an image: a little thought home.

When and if we progress, such "thought homes" expand to include a paragraph, a chapter, eventually a basic book. We no longer speak from memory of what we have read; we speak from experience; we have "lived" there. We are at home in one text. We know how it is composed. The thoughts surround us like familiar objects in an earthly home. This gives us firmness and certainty. Our home base becomes the point of reference for everything else we explore—this perhaps corresponds in spirit to "building of a hut."

Before we put down our spiritual roots, the "wanderer" phase rules (a theme in this chapter). This is true also in our studies. We go from lecture to lecture, from cycle to cycle. We read and remember or forget. We are "wanderers," footloose travelers taking in the sights, spiritual vagrants without a "home."

Valid here is Rudolf Steiner's injunction (to Emil Leinhas) that it is better to read one cycle 50 times, than 50 cycles once. To feel at home in a place—spiritually at home in a subject—takes at least 50 visits: a pentecostal metaphor.

THE FIRST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

A happy discovery can be made, reflecting on the description here by Rudolf Steiner of the first spiritual perceptions: these are the things we have been practicing all along—as exercises spelled out in the second chapter. Such a discovery confirms once again that on the modern path nothing comes of itself, everything must rhythmically be prepared and achieved.

To the familiar ones (exercises we practiced and the visions now achieved)—seeing the forces that form the minerals and plants, and the astral clouds surrounding animal and man—a few particulars are added in this chapter. The quality of the atmosphere surrounding specific places: a hospital, a dance hall, or a university town. And finally, the astral appearance of the human desire life itself (perceptions to be practiced under such severe moral injunction in Chapter Two): comet-like.

each of us must bring with him, there to all who now can see!

"SEEING MORE" IN A TEXT

In our study of "seeing more than what appears to the senses," of kindling the inner light, could we make also some efforts to "see more" in a text than what we usually see?

Like music-lovers enjoying melodies, most readers absorb only thought-pictures. The practicing musician and the active student of anthroposophy must do more. One works with a musical score, the other with a "thought score" of a composition. For the music to resound, going once or twice through "the music" is not enough. This by way of analogy.

There is, however, another similarity. The musical score is the frozen form of what the composer heard spiritually before writing it down. A written text, chapter or book, is also the frozen form of what the author conceived, saw and heard spiritually. "Form" has two meanings: it can mean the end product of a creation, or its underlying web of context and connectedness, of unfolding and metamorphosing themes, its spiritual thought organism.

The musician and the student must begin with the end product to bring to life, eventually, the composition—in its original, living form.

The following hints are for those who wish "to see more" and begin to read the underlying score.

First: consider the *position* of this chapter in the book as a whole, whose underlying art form is the ninefold nature of man (spelled out in our first essay). This position gives it its distinct quality: it is the consciousness-soul chapter. In style and approach it differs from the intricate, detail-filled preceding chapter (rational soul). In addition to positional context, the chapter's *theme* is that of the consciousness soul: the kindling of the inner light.

Second: As we know, the consciousness soul is related to the physical body. It emerges from our earthly experience. Here, in Chapter Two (physical aspect) all the exercises are related to the world of the senses: picturing the invisible is to be practiced. In Chapter Seven (consciousness-soul aspect) what was an exercise earlier is now spiritually seen. Check it. It is so.

The "musical score" of Chapter Seven itself is difficult to experience because the English translation has changed the original paragraphing. The German text has 11 paragraphs (some with several sub-paragraphs). The compositional principle is identical with that of the whole book, based on the ninefold human being. Make your own outline and observe the development:

- #1 introduces the theme (variation of dreams);
- #11 closes with the exhortation to climb higher;
- #2,3,4 give descriptive views (organs of perception, lower & higher selves);
- #5,6,7 describe soul achievements (kindling of the light organ and building of spiritual home);

... bringing the spirit aspect into the world, what we see.

This will sound dry as bone or "very intellectual"—as the sight of a musical score appears to a lover of music. There are reasons: scores and outlines can only point to an invisible reality. The reality itself must become experience through individual work.

Living with the composition of the whole, the soul is lifted into the realm of etheric forms. Composed as is the human being himself, such thought forms can take on life, and provide a source of new insight.

There is more to Rudolf Steiner's writings than at first we dreamed.

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On Poetry of the Future and The Value of Humor—Why a Satire

by RUDOLF STEINER
(Dornach, July 11, 1916. Excerpts)

The three poems described in this text have just been published in English (see the review Twelve Moods). The text is from Weltwesen und Ichheit (Cosmic Being and Egohood) G.A. 169, not available in English.

Alas, our age has blunted its sense of true poetry by producing far too much poetry. Poetry begets poetry just as unhealthy life produces cancer. For in the spiritual sphere, poetry is the same phenomenon as cancer if everyone is stimulated to write poetry by what exists today in poetry, just as when the life process is stimulated to cancerous growth. (July 4, 1916.)

... The whole impulse, the whole spirit of our spiritual science must enter the culture of our age. Poetry is not based merely on something invented or thought out given utterance, but on its being expressed in a certain form. Now spiritual science seeks to relate man to the great laws of the cosmos. The deepest impulses of spiritual science will be understood in their truest sense only when men will have grasped the actual range of this search for the relation between man and the laws, the mighty supersensible laws of the universe. What is called poetry will gradually assume a new form. Today that is still hard to understand. Nevertheless it is true.

In poetry we are supposed to reproduce—though there is little feeling for this today—what man experiences in his union with the cosmos, what is gathered from the secrets of the cosmos. This must flow also into the poetical form. When we create certain thought pictures that reproduce objects of imaginative knowledge, we can thereby discover also the laws relating to the position of