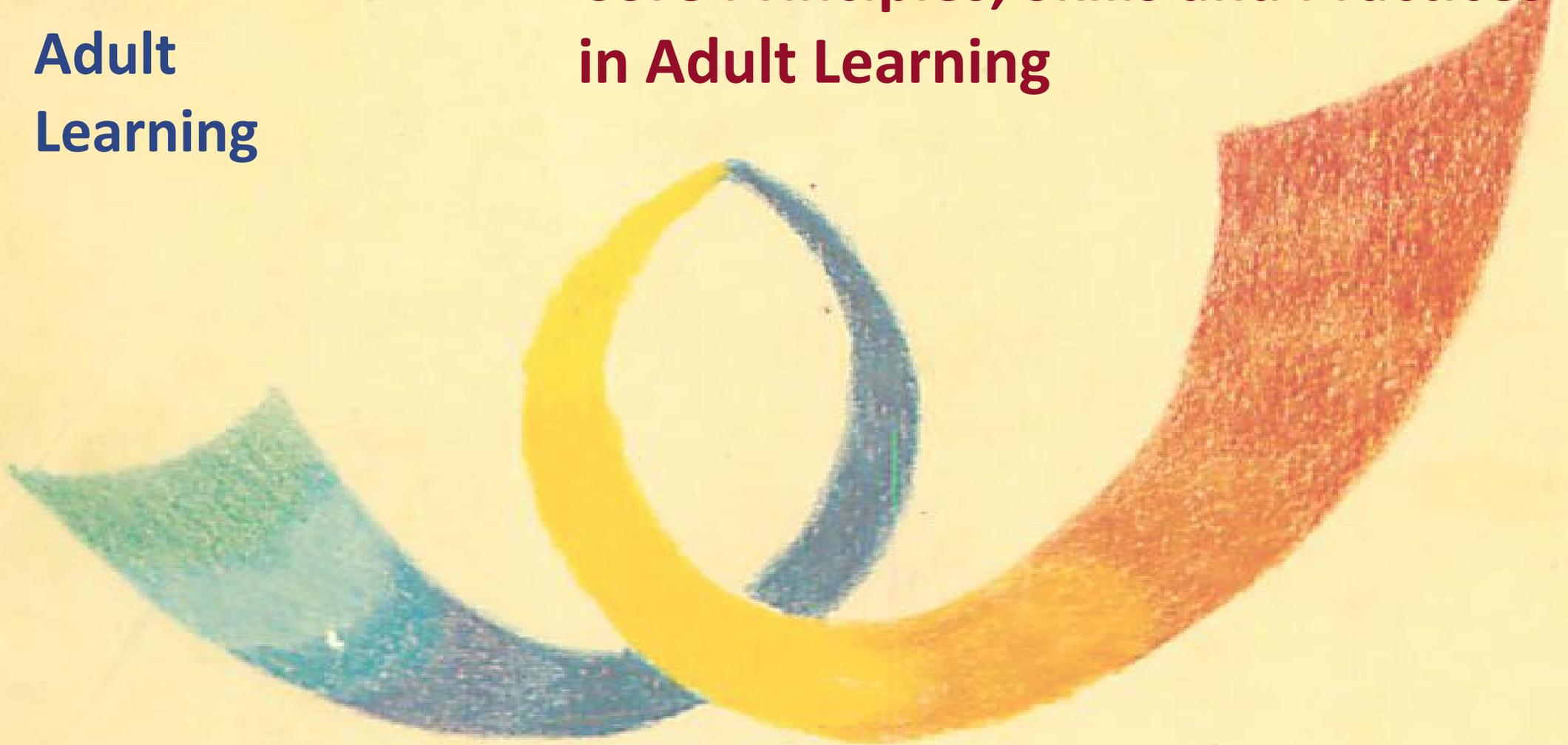


**Holistic
Adult
Learning**

**Core Principles, Skills and Practices
in Adult Learning**



Karl-Heinz Finke & Laura Summerfield

Holistic Biography Work ... bringing spirit to life



Cover design by Sylvia Collins, from Coenraad van Houten's 1995 book: *Awakening the Will – Principles and Processes in Adult Learning*.

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Format of Study Guide

This *Study Guide* has a formal structure or format which allows you to move quickly between different parts and to any part of it.

This format becomes visible if you open the Bookmarks of the PDF. The Contents list then appears on the LHS of your screen. This list of Contents uses formatted headings. Clicking on any visible Heading will take you to that section of your *Study Guide*. This makes it easier for you to navigate through the learning materials.

Useful information about Study Guide

- **The Readings** – These are divided into Expected and Optional. They deepen the content you will find in the *Study Guide* and in the Lectures. They provide background information. You are not expected to work with them in depth. Use most of your time to engage with the learning materials provided in the Lectures, their Visuals, and the suggested activities within the *Study Guide*.
- **Groupwork preparation** – For most group-work sessions, preparation should be started well before the online sessions for the course. Allow time for reflection and digestion related to the information, questions and issues, and what you are willing to share. The more you have reflected and digested, the more you will get out of the group-work sessions.
- **Colour codes used in the groupwork** – These will help you distinguish:
 - Background information
 - Individual preparation and reflection
 - Online Group-work processes



Welcome

Welcome to this introductory course in Holistic Adult Learning:

ADL-70 Holistic Adult Learning: Core Principles, Skills and Practices in Adult Learning

This course introduces essential content that is a prerequisite for all three of our adult learning courses:

ADL-71 Guiding Groups: Creating and Holding an Open Space

ADL-72 Holistic Adult Learning: Awakening the Will to Learn

ADL-73 Designing Integrated Programs: Learning with Head, Heart and Hands

These courses are specifically designed for consultants, educators and facilitators working with adults in learning, personal development and therapeutic processes.

They draw on the rich experience of the Centre for Social Development, the NPI, the Anthroposophical Schooling Course and Coenraad van Houten. They explore the underlying theory and methodology of adult learning and developmental processes, including Inner Path or Spiritual Development. Adults learn differently from children and young people; therefore the education of adults must be designed differently.

The courses may be undertaken in any order – they throw light on different aspects of working with adults.

This course, ADL-70, is an essential part of each course, and includes the following:

Core Skills and Practices

- *Self-reflective work* for the learner – *Learning Journals*.
- *Daily Review* of insights, challenges and takeaways in a learning process.
- *Night Echoes* – tuning in to ongoing imagination, inspiration and intuition.
- *Non-reactive listening* – maintaining an open mind and heart.
- *Collegial Inter-vision* process – building supportive networks for learning.

Core Principles of Adult Learning

- How do adults learn? Self-reflection processes. Building on existing knowledge and experience. Applying the 7 learning processes.
- Growth and development of the individual learner. How is adult learning different from that of children and young people? How do we develop from Reactor to Learner to Researcher in our life journey?
- How do we develop the witness in us for inner growth and development.
- Qualities of the self-guided learner. Maintaining our inner motivation and sense of personal mission. Relationship with the 'True-I' during the learning process. Examining expectations – what to develop and what to let go of.

Maximise the learning during this course – with different tasks

- Listen to Lectures from Karl-Heinz Finke, located within the Learning Pack online. Associated Visuals and Links are in this *Study Guide*.
- Expected and Optional Readings – located within this *Study Guide*.
- Practical work tasks which are shared within group-work sessions.
- Activities, including Creative activities and Self-reflection.
- Additional resources – such as film clips, websites, quizzes, etc.

Work through this *Study Guide* and you will start to understand more about adult learning and education from a holistic approach, including yourself as a learner and as an educator.

We wish you all the best with your studies,

Karl-Heinz Finke & Laura Summerfield



Chapter 1 – Core Principles, Skills and Practices in Adult Learning



Part 1 – Core Principles: From Knowledge to Wisdom

Quote – Anthroposophy is ...

Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge, to guide the Spiritual in the human being to the Spiritual in the universe. It arises in the human being as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling; and it can be justified only inasmuch as it can satisfy this inner need. They alone can acknowledge Anthroposophy, who find in it what they themselves in their own inner life feel impelled to seek. Hence only they can be anthroposophists who feel certain questions on the nature of the human being and the universe as an elemental need of life, just as one feels hunger and thirst.

Source From Rudolf Steiner, *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*, 1929, GA 026

About Part 1

In the Young Doctor's Course Lectures Steiner gives guiding images regarding the exoteric and esoteric elements of personal and professional development in a professional field. He indicates that a future physician needs to study the state of the art of medicine of their time. In addition, all what can be learned from ancient and esoteric traditions. And finally, Steiner indicates a meditative path which can enable the transformation from practitioner to healer.

Lecture 1 – From Information to Wisdom

- Using Steiner's indications to build an archetypal picture of developing a holistic approach in a vocational field.

Visual 70.01.01 – From Information to Wisdom – From a Physician to a Healer

Visual 70.01.02 – Core Practices– From the Spirit to the World – From Theory to Practice

- You find these Visuals in this Part 1 of this *Study Guide*.

Reading 1 – Core Principles

- Reading 1:** *Core Principles of Adult Learning*, Laura Summerfield. See Chapter 3, *Reading 1*.
This Reading outlines some of the main principles underlying adult learning and looks at the ways in which they are implemented within this course.

Reading 2 – Plant Observation – a 4-level process

- Reading 2:** Examples of an Observation Process – Plant Observation, Karl-Heinz Finke. See Chapter 3, *Reading 2*.
This Reading provides an example of an Observation process that can be used: to understand observation on 4 levels of being (Physical, Etheric, Astral and 'I'-Being levels), and to improve observational skills.
Nature Observation is strongly recommended in the *Young Doctors Course*. This example gives an insight into and experience of a *Plant Study*. The four levels introduced here are used with child and patient studies.

Optional Reading 5 – Course for Young Doctors

- Reading 5:** Rudolf Steiner, *Course for Young Doctors*, GA 316, Lecture 4, Dornach, 5 January 1924. See Chapter 4, *Reading 5*.
This Reading is optional and summarises the Esoteric Development that is helpful or necessary in taking hold of a vocation/profession.

Activity Sheet 70.01.03 – Harvesting learning

- Reflect on your learning in this **Part 1**.
- Create a *Mind Map* to summarise your current understanding and learning about these Core Principles of Adult Learning. Draw upon your own experience as a learner and educator, as well as any new insights you have gained from the Lecture and Reading in this Part 1.
- If you have not tried to create a *Mind Map* before, then spend some time learning about *Mind Maps* online, and attempt to draw your own by hand. It is well worth the effort to have this skill.
- You find this *Activity Sheet* in this Part 1 of your *Study Guide*.



Visual 70.01.01 – From Information to Wisdom – From a Physician to a Healer A Path for Study and Development indicated by Rudolf Steiner in the Young Doctors Course

Level / Practices	Description	Result
Physical Level Collecting, Observing Phenom- ena	Exoteric – Study all scientific resources and observe outer world phenomena. <i>Study Outer:</i> Observe outer world. Observe sense perceptible phenomena. Collect incidents, items, specimens, pieces of Data . Results – Outer: Collections, data storages, encyclopaedia, libraries. Develops a methodology for natural science, applicable for inanimate natural phenomena. Results – Inner: Can develop Principles for enquiry and research as used in scientific research: Unbiased observation, true and clear noting and reporting, objectivity, transparency, repeatability. Steiner: " <i>Spiritual Science following the methodology developed for natural science.</i> "	Data collections lead to: Theories Thoughts Inner: Principles
Etheric Level Synthesising Phenomena Observing and Expe- riencing Processes in nature	Exoteric – Study esoteric resources (related observed phenomena) & processes in nature <i>Study – Outer:</i> observe vigorously processes, rhythms, nature, and natural phenomena. Study – Inner: become aware of inner experiences related to observation practices or to observed life phenomena in general. Steiner: <i>immerse yourself into real life and reflect (meditate) on your experiences.</i> Inner & Outer: become aware of patterns, interconnections, and interactions. Synthesise – try to make sense. Move from insight to hypothesis. Results: true images, Imaginations , can emerge. Take note of them, they are transient. Journal -thoughts, words, images, visions, sketches. Digested, contextualised Data transforms into Information .	Digesting, synthesis- ing data leads to Information Inner: True Images Imagination
Astral Level Applied phenome- nology Meditating Phenom- ena Awareness for After- Images	Esoteric – Study and follow a path of inner or spiritual development. Acquaint yourself with esoteric traditions: Meditate. Study – Outer: study presenting phenomena with heightened (meditative) awareness. Practice deep listening and empathy. Study – Inner: become aware of the Inner After-Images related to meditated phenomena observed outside. Inner & Outer: make yourself an instrument of enquiry and perception. Hold back, let the phenomena speak. Results: the phenomena "start to speak". The listeners change, they develop Qualities or Attitudes , e.g.: open-mindedness, focussed thinking, inner balance, non-judgemental ... Meditated information transforms into wisdom. Leads to insights, Inspirations , the phenomenon speaks, reveals its secrets, its message. Steiner e.g. <i>child study, plant study, study of an illness ...</i>	Individualised Infor- mation leads to Knowledge Inner: Inspiration Qualities Attitudes
Being Level 'I' -Organisation Tuning in, Being in tune with Phenom- ena and Spiritual World	Esoteric – Develop Spiritual awareness. Develop yourself as an organ of perception. Tune in, receive. Outer, instrument development: Tune in, become the instrument, receptacle of your research question. Inner, development: Develop esoteric or spiritual awareness. Take note of what comes from the sub-conscious: of images, dreams, inspirations, hunches, coincidences, synchronicities, premonitions, and intuitions. How do they relate to questions, phenomena you meet in life? What is the essential message? Distil insights, wisdom by holding both exoteric and esoteric in balance in your awareness. Results: Leads to Intuition . In healing contexts, in healing intervention. Steiner: The will to heal. Or: An insight or a creative intervention. Requires inner integrity, ability to tune in with the spiritual world. Leads to the art of healing, teaching ...	Distilled knowledge & being in tune lead to: Wisdom Inner: Intuition – The will to heal. Vocation be- comes an art.



Visual 70.01.02 – Core-Practices – From the Spirit to the World – From Theory to Practice

For the Art of Vocations based on Interaction with People and Nature. Developing the Will to Heal, Educate, Farm, etc ...

Two Core Assumptions

1. Holistic

- Living ideas, experienced as thoughts, precede manifestations in form, process, or quality.

2. Interconnectedness

- The Microcosm, the individual and the Macrocosm, the surroundings (people, place, earth, universe) are interconnected.
- What is done to the outside – reflects back to the doer.
- What is changed on the inside – influences the outside.

Core Principles or Attitudes

1. Be Interested and Wonder

- Start any enquiry with wonder, marvel – not knowing, openness.
- Let go of preconceived ideas, pre-judgements, prejudices ...

2. Observe and Witness

- Apply phenomenology, develop the Witness/Observer capacity on the outside. (e.g. through observation)
- Become non-reactive. Overcome the Reactor.

3. Immerse and Reflect

- Experience and reflect on experiences as a self-developmental activity.
- Actively learn for any experience and encounter. Become a Life-long Learner and Self-developer
- Apply the Witness on the inside and clear self-reflection in both directions, inner and outer.

4. Tune in and Apply

- Develop yourself as an organ of perception.
- Engage in *Presencing* from letting-go to letting-come.
- Apply developed imaginations, inspirations and intuitions in everyday life, to –
- imbalances, challenge, crisis, opportunities, encounters, social demands, illnesses, etc.

5. Co-create and Accompany

- Strive to work in harmony with the Evolutionary Spirits.
- When working with others accompany them on their developmental path.



Activity Sheet 70.01.03 – Harvesting Learning – Create a Mind Map

- Reflect on your learning in this **Part 1**.
- Create a *Mind Map* to summarise your current understanding and learning about these Core Principles of Adult Learning. Draw upon your own experience as a learner and educator, as well as any new insights you have gained from the Lecture and Reading in this Part 1.
- If you have not tried to create a *Mind Map* before, then spend some time learning about *Mind Maps* online, and attempt to draw your own by hand. It is well worth the effort to have this skill.
- Here is a website for further reading:
<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/writingcentre/sites/default/files/docs/learningguide-mind-mapping.pdf>
- Here is a software to assist with Mind Mapping:
<https://miro.com/mind-map/>



Part 2 – Core Skills: From Reactor to Researcher

Quote -- We shall not cease from exploration

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

*And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
When the tongues of flame are in-folded
Into the crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.*

Source These are two extracts from T.S. Eliot's poem
'*Four Quartets: Little Gidding*' (1942)

About Part 2

In his book *Phases – The Spiritual Rhythms in Adult Life*, Bernard Lievegoed introduces **nine Archetypal Developmental Phases** which also depict the development of self-awareness and consciousness in human biographies. From the perspective of adult learning, we start our journey dependent on outer support and reacting to outer stimuli. With the development of self-reflection around 18 years, we develop the ability to witness before we react, and take the step from ***I am angry*** (identified with my emotions) to ***I feel anger*** (partially or fully detached from my emotions). This step indicates the birth of the **'I' function**. Further development leads to the ***Independent Learner***, able to learn from every life situation and finally to the ***Researcher***, following a mission or inner quest independent from outer stimuli.

The Lecture and reading material support the understanding of this concept, developed by colleagues of the *Anthroposophical Schooling Course* under the tag line: ***Taking myself on as an Adult Learner***.

Lecture 2 – From Reactor to Researcher

- Developing the life-long independent Learner. See the Visual in this Part 2 of your *Study Guide*.
- This Lecture by Karl-Heinz Finke illustrates how our personal and spiritual development go hand-in-hand with our capacity to observe, listen and learn on all levels of our being, deepening our encounters with others.

Visual 70.02.01 – Reactor – Witness – Learner – Researcher

- You find this Visual in this Part 2 of the *Study Guide*.

Reading 3 – Reactor, Learner, Witness, Researcher

- Karl-Heinz Finke and Angela Youdale. See Chapter 3, *Reading 3*.

Activity Sheet 70.01.03 – Harvesting learning – Continuation

- Reflect on what you have learnt so far about Adult Learning – add to your *Mind Map* and use your *Learning Journal*. Continue the Mind Map.
- This **Activity Sheet** is in Part 1 of your *Study Guide*.

Activity Sheet 70.02.02 – Self-audit

Use your *Learning Journal* to do a Self-audit of your current skills.

- Observation skills – Thinking, Feeling, Will
- Communication skills – Deep listening, Non-judgemental responding, Asking clarifying questions – Where are your strengths and challenges?
- This **Activity Sheet** is in this Part 2 of your *Study Guide*.



Visual 70.02.01 – Reactor – Witness – Learner – Researcher

Developing the attitude of life-long independent learning. Learning from every life situation.

☆ Maturation of Physical-Body 21 20 Years to Learn Data/Information Learning via Individualising Meeting world facts and concepts	22 Soul and Social Development 42 20 Years to Fight Knowledge Learning via Socialising/Encounter Meeting people and situations	43 Mental and Spiritual Development 63 20 Years to Gain Wisdom Wisdom Learning via mental exploration Transforming information into wisdom
LY.1 Unfolding of Physical-Body Phase 1 ▼ Nerve-Sense-System – Thinking ▼ Trust (I) – Boundaries (O) LY.7 Learning by imitation.	LY.42 Consciousness/Discerning-Soul Phase 6 ▲ Integrating Physical Body experiences ▲ Integration (I) – Discernment (O) LY.36 3 rd person perspective on self emerges	LY.63 Spirit-Human – Elder/Co-creator Phase 9 ▲ Metamorphosis of Phases 1 & 6 ▲ Wisdom (I) – Essence (O) (Seed) LY.57 Co-creating in tune with evolution Spirits
LY.8 Unfolding of Etheric/Life-Body Phase 2 ▼ Rhythmical-System – Feeling ▼ Belonging (I) – Relating (O) LY.14 Learning by following role models.	LY.35 Intellectual-Mind/Sensing-Soul Phase 5 ▲ Integrating Etheric Body experiences ▲ Equilibrium (I) – Balance (O) LY.29 Developing Empathy – Sensing	LY.56 Life-Spirit – Tuning-in/Resonator Phase 8 ▲ Metamorphosis of Phases 2 & 5 ▲ Harmony (I) – Perspective (O) LY.50 Tuning-in with Evolutionary Spirits.
LY:15 Unfolding Astral/Emotional-Body Phase 3 ▼ Metabolic-Limb-System – Will ▼ Identity (I) – Authenticity (O) LY.21 Learning by forming own judgements	LY.28 Sentient/Experiencing–Soul Phase 4 ▲ Integrating Astral Body experiences ▲ Interest (I) – Attentiveness (O) LY.22 Self-learning from Life Experiences	LY.49 Spirit-Self – I am of Spirit/Striving Phase 7 ▲ Metamorphosis of Phases 3 & 4 ▲ Striving (I) – Direction (O) LY.43 Realising that my core is of spirit nature.
Adult Learner Stages: REACTOR <i>Birth of 'I' : Self-reflection awakens</i> WITNESS	to LEARNER or INDEPENDENT LEARNER : <i>by "Taking myself on".</i>	to RESEARCHER and CO-CREATOR – ELDER : <i>by "Realising my spirit nature".</i>
Transformative process – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From Reacting to Witnessing to Responding. ● From being educated to self-education ● From rebelling against, to standing for ... Recognition of freedom leads to responsibility.	Witnessing, self-reflection & self-observation Lead to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-education – Self-knowledge ● Internalisation and transformation of outer experiences to inner abundance 	Recognition of own spirit nature leads to – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Freeing oneself from outer guidance and to self-guidance: Following one's inner compass. ● Realisation of interconnectedness of self, earth, and cosmic development ● Becoming a contributor and co-creator beyond self or self-interest.



Activity Sheet 70.02.02 – Self-audit

Observation skills – Thinking, Feeling, Will

- What are you aware of as your strengths?
- What are your current challenges?

Communication skills:

- Deep listening
- Non-judgemental responding
- Asking clarifying questions
- Where are your strengths and challenges?

- Consider how these skills have affected your encounters and relationships with others.



Part 3 – Core Practices

Quote – The wishes of the Soul

*The wishes of the soul are springing,
The deeds of the will are thriving,
The fruits of life are maturing.*

*I feel my Destiny,
My Destiny finds me.*

*I feel my Star,
My Star finds me.*

*I feel my goals in life,
My goals in life are finding me.*

My soul and the great World are one.

*Life grows more radiant about me,
Life grows more arduous for me,
Life grows more abundant within me.*

Source Rudolf Steiner, *Peace Dance – Destiny, World and Man*
It is from the collection: Verses and Meditations.

About Part 3

Based on Coenraad von Houten's work we introduce three 'drives' motivating learning and development: the will to learn, to develop, and to contribute. Rudolf Steiner states that *the human being is always in becoming*. The German poet Goethe writes in his drama about the developing human *Faust: When I say to the Moment flying; | 'Linger a while—thou art so fair!' | Then bind me in thy bonds undying, | And my final ruin I will bear!*

Human development hinges on –

- Our capacity to observe - outer observation and inner self-observation, supported by seven outward and five inward directed senses.
- Our ability to encounter: Cosmos, people and environment, and Earth.
- Our willingness to contribute to something beyond ourselves.

Lecture 3 – From the Spirit to the World

Applying the principles of Adult Learning.

- This Lecture by Karl-Heinz Finke expands on the principles of Adult Learning. The related Visuals are in this Part 3 of your *Study Guide*.

Visual 70.03.01 – From the Spirit to the World – From Theory to Practice

Visual 70.03.02 – Core-Practices – From the Spirit to the World – From Theory to Practice

- You find these Visuals in this Part 3 of this *Study Guide*.

Reading 4 – Steiner's 6 Subsidiary Exercises or Basic Exercises

- See Chapter 3, *Reading 4*.
- In this Reading, Karl-Heinz has used Steiner's writings and summarised his indications for these essential exercises. How we put them into practice within our daily lives has been left to us to explore and evaluate. Try to build a picture of these exercises and their importance for the development of the Educator (and the life-long Learner).

Activity Sheet 70.01.03 or 70.03.03 – Harvesting learning

- *Self-reflection exercise* – use your *Learning Journal* or the Activity Sheet to take stock of what you have learnt so far in this course.
- Update or re-do your *Mind Map*.
- You can either continue on Activity Sheet 70.01.03 or recreate the Mind Map on Activity Sheet 70.03.03.
- Integrate your answers to the questions posed in Activity Sheet 70.03.04.

Activity Sheet 70.03.04 – Questions in relation to learning

- Overall – What was important? What do I really want to take hold of out of this learning experience?
- Use the questions posed in Activity Sheet 70.03.04.



Visual 70.03.01 – From the Spirit to the World – From Theory to Practice

Applying Principles of Adult Learning – Learner’s Perspective – Three Drives: to learn, to develop, to contribute

Observation		1. An inherent "Will or drive to learn and make sense" uses Inner and Outer: Inner Encounter – Self-reflection and Integration
	Outer Observation	7 Outer Senses: (1) Taste (2) Sight (3) Warmth (Temperature) (4) Hearing (5) Word Sense (Language) (6) Sense of Thought (Concept) (7) 'I' -Sense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● these are windows to people, nature, cosmos, and – ● windows to the spiritual world which creates and maintains nature.
	Inner Self-reflection	5 Inner senses: (8) Smell (9) Touch (10) Balance (11) (Self-)Movement (12) Life Sense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● These are windows into our soul, body, and – ● Windows to the spiritual which created our Instrument (body, soul, spirit)
	Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The more we are able to observe, the more learning opportunities are presented to us. ● The more we are able to witness – reflect and self-reflect – the more our 'I' -activity is able to integrate and make sense of learning experiences.
Encounter		Encounter is universal. We live in an Interactive Universe, are part of a Developmental Community
		2. This helps an inherent "will or drive to develop".
In the quote:	Star Destiny Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relation to the Cosmos, the Spiritual World ● Relation to people, places, situation we meet in life ● Relation to life on earth, Gaia
	Significance	We are not separated; we are always part of something. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We belong, and ● We contribute, or influence ● We contribute to each other's development on all levels: Earth, environment and spiritual world
Contribution	Mission	3. Reflected in an inherent "will or drive to contribute".
	Significance	Striving for meaningful contributions, in tune with – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● My inner impulses (Direction or Mission Karma) ● Needs of my social environment ● Needs of my natural environment ● Impulses of the Evolutionary Spirits



Visual 70.03.02 – Core-Practices – From the Spirit to the World – From Theory to Practice

For the Art of Vocations based on Interaction with People and Nature. Developing the Will to Heal, Educate, Farm, etc ...

Two Core Assumptions

1. Holistic

- Living ideas, experienced as thoughts, precede manifestations in form, process, or quality.

2. Interconnectedness

- The Microcosm, the individual and the Macrocosm, the surroundings (people, place, earth, universe) are interconnected.
- What is done to the outside – reflects back to the doer.
- What is changed on the inside – influences the outside.

Core Principles or Attitudes

1. Be Interested and Wonder

- Start any enquiry with wonder, marvel – not knowing, openness.
- Let go of preconceived ideas, pre-judgements, prejudices ...

2. Observe and Witness

- Apply phenomenology, develop the Witness/Observer capacity on the outside. (e.g. through observation)
- Become non-reactive. Overcome the Reactor.

3. Immerse and Reflect

- Experience and reflect on experiences as a self-developmental activity.
- Actively learn for any experience and encounter. Become a Life-long Learner and Self-developer
- Apply the Witness on the inside and clear Self-reflection in both directions, inner and outer.

4. Tune in and Apply

- Develop yourself as an organ of perception.
- Engage in *Presencing* from letting-go to letting-come.
- Apply developed imaginations, inspirations, and intuitions in everyday life, to –
- imbalances, challenge, crisis, opportunities, encounters, social demands, illnesses, etc.

5. Co-create and Accompany

- Strive to work in harmony with the Evolutionary Spirits.
- When working with others accompany them on their developmental path.



Activity Sheet 70.03.03 – Harvesting Learning – Continue or recreate the Mind Map – Further questions on next page

- *Self-reflection exercise* – use your *Learning Journal* or this Activity Sheet to take stock of what you have learnt so far in this course.
- How has it resonated with you?
- You may want to use the questions suggested within Reading 1 (see next Activity Sheet) to reflect on what you have learnt about your own learning strengths and challenges during this course.
- Update or re-do your *Mind Map* – so that you have a summary of what you have learnt in ADL-70 – Core Principles, Skills & Practices in Adult Learning.



Activity Sheet 70.02.04 – Questions to consider in relation to learning

Overall

- What was important?
- What do I really want to take hold of out of this learning experience?

Learning points

- What did I learn?
- What were the main learning points?

Confirmations

- What was confirmed for me?
- What did I already know within this learning experience?

Development

- What new questions have come to me?
- What new insights have I gained?

Continuous work

- What do I need to keep working on?
- Where are my learning challenges?

Decisions

- What decisions/choices have I made?
- Is there something I need to do in relation to this learning?



Chapter 2 – Group-work – Preparation for Group Sharing



Introductory Thoughts

In the context of Biography Work, what is adult learning? You have made a start in learning and reflecting on this question.

In the Group-work for ADL-70, these are the Topics that will be covered:

ADL-70

- Topic 1** Baggage exercise – self-reflection and sharing on what you bring with you to this course
- Topic 2** Postcard exercise – increasing awareness of your observational skills
- Topic 3** Steiner's 6 Subsidiary exercises – becoming conscious of how to use these exercises in daily life

Prepare Art-work

- Look again at any Art-work you completed during this course, for example in creating your Mind Map. Artistic activities are a way of exploring thoughts and feelings, and awakening the will to learn. Photograph them ready to share in the group-work sessions.

Individual preparation for group-work

- Read the questions and complete the tasks related to the Topics for each group-work session. This is particularly relevant for Topics 1 and 3.
- Take notes in preparation for sharing in a small group.
- Brief sharing of your experience and group discussion is part of the group-work sessions.

General guide-lines for the group-work

- Each person shares only what feels appropriate in this workshop situation, about their personal experience related to these topics.
- Remember: Confidentiality related to any sharing is of prime importance.
- If you take any notes, do not use any actual names for people or places.
- Where possible describe outer facts first, and then inner experience.
- When indicated, enough group time should be allocated to discuss and summarise the learning in each session. More details are given within each group-work Topic.
- When needed, allocate one group member to keep notes and report in Plenum on the learning. Sometimes Activity Sheets are provided to help summarise.



Part 4 – Group-work 1 | Baggage Exercise

Purpose

A self-reflective exercise, making conscious what is being 'carried' as 'baggage' in connection to a course. Enables course participants to take greater responsibility for their contributions to and learning within, a course.

Summary

Participants reflect on what they are 'carrying' when beginning a course and respond individually to a series of questions. Their responses are noted in their *Learning Journal*. At the start of the online sessions for the course, participants share their responses with a 'Study Buddy'. They do so again, at the end of the course.

Group Size

2 (or max 3) participants, depending on the number of participants in the course.

Process

Individual preparation

Take notes in your *Learning Journal* in response to the following questions –

- **Past:**
What have I been preoccupied with and would like to let go of?
- **Present:**
How is it to be here with these people now?
What anxieties am I carrying?
- **Future:**
What are my hopes and expectations for this course?
What question am I carrying that would I like this course to address?
- **What do I want to achieve?**

Start of course – sharing with Study Buddy.

- Each person shares something that touched them at the start of the day.
- Each person shares what they noted as their 'baggage' (past, present and future) while the other listens.

Note:

This Study Buddy can also be someone to talk to if anything comes up during this course that you want to discuss.

End of course – sharing with same Study Buddy.

- How do I now regard the various matters that concerned me before the course? What relationship do I now have with them?
- How have my attitudes to the course and other people on the course changed? How would I now rate my present condition?
- To what extent have my expectations of the course been met and not met? To what extent have my expectations of myself been realised?
- What have I gained from doing this process?

Outcome

A more conscious engagement in the learning process.

Harvesting as Self-reflection

Reflect and note in *Learning Journal* your experience of this exercise and its effect on your learning during this course.



Part 5 – Group-work 2 | Postcard Exercise

Purpose

An observation exercise to increase awareness of individual strengths and challenges related to observation.

Summary

Each participant has a picture Postcard which they will describe as well as they can to the rest of their group. They will then share the image on the Postcard. Other participants describe how they formed a possible image for the Postcard, and what would have helped them to gain a clearer image.

Group Size

3 (or max 4) participants, depending on the number of participants in the course.

Roles

Speaker, Listener, Witness (who is also Time and Process Keeper)

Process

Individual preparation.

Each participant selects or is given a Picture Postcard which they will describe to a small group of participants. They have an image/photo of the Postcard and will share this with their group only after it has been described.

Small group sharing – Roles are allocated for each sharing process.

- The **Speaker** describes their Picture Postcard as well as they can (5-7 minutes).
- The **Listener** forms an image of what is being described.
- The actual image of the Postcard is then shared by the Speaker.
- The **Listener** gives feedback on – (5-7 minutes)
- How well they could picture the image,
 - o what was helpful to "see" the image,
 - o what would have been helpful to get a clearer image,
 - o what was the biggest difference between their vision and the image.
- The Witness, as Timekeeper, announces the 5 min mark in the sharing process, and stops the process after 7 minutes.
- Every group member then notes down what they learnt about their observational skills and about themselves from doing this (5 minutes).

And so on ...

- This process continues, with participants taking on the different roles, until all members of the group have described their Postcard, shared the image, and reviewed.

Outcome

- More awareness of the strengths and challenges within individual observation.
- A strengthening of observational skills.

Harvesting as individual reflection

- What have you learnt overall about listening, communication, and observational skills? What have you learnt about yourself and your own skills?
- Make notes in your *Learning Journal*.



Part 6 – Group-work 3 | Steiner's 6 Subsidiary or Basic Exercises

Purpose

Sharing the practice of the 6 Basic exercises recommended by Steiner for developing essential attitudes to support personal and professional development.

Summary

Participants read Steiner's indications for the 6 exercises and work out ways to apply them in everyday life situations with the support of a small group.

Group Size

4 or 5 participants, depending on the number of participants in the course.

Process

Individual preparation.

- Read Steiner's various descriptions of these 6 exercises in Chapter 3, *Reading 4*.
- Note that at the end of *Reading 4*, there is a summary of the way that these exercises may be applied in a specific situation – a regular meeting.
- Then read the summary of these 6 exercises in the *Table* below.

Exercise	Description
#1 Thinking Mastery of Thinking	Clear, objective thinking. No 'will o' the wisp' thoughts. Directing the sequence of thoughts. Cultivating clear thinking. Being objective. Able to focus.
#2 Action Mastery of Will	Deliberate, attentive action. – Willing activity and being able to hold back as well. Logical consistency into actions. Taking initiative. Control over actions.
#3 Equanimity Mastery of Feeling	Balanced emotions. Cultivate equanimity, perseverance, endurance, steadfastness. Regulate emotions – tranquillity. Even-tempered.
#4 Positivity. Patience and active Tolerance	Thoughts into Feelings. Tolerance and understanding for every being. Positive attitude – noticing the good. Freedom from prejudice.
#5 Open-mindedness Trust, Faith	Will into Thoughts. Openness and impartiality toward all phenomena of life. Faith or trust. Open-minded receptivity. Openness toward what comes to meet us (without judging) – allow for learning.
#6 Harmony Balance in Life, Inner balance	Balance of Thinking, Feeling, Will. Working together of the other 5 exercises – through regular practice. Balance in life (or serenity). Inner harmony. Inner and outer Balance.



Process

Small group sharing

- In the small group, discuss each of these exercises and the way in which they may be applied in different circumstances.
- Each person shares which ones may be more challenging for them and which ones may be more natural to them.
- Each person selects 3 exercises to work with during this course. Consider which exercises could balance individual one-sidedness. The 3 exercises chosen are shared with the group. On each day of the course, a different exercise can be 'silently' practised.
- Each person also selects one exercise to practise for the next month and works out a way to do that. This is shared with the group.
- Find a way to evaluate whether the exercise is working. Rate yourself before beginning, and after practising for 4 weeks.
 - Is the outcome what you anticipated?
 - Or different?
 - Or did nothing happen?

Outcome

Other group members act as a 'brains trust' to assist with the design of the exercises and as Witnesses to the intention to practise. This supports the practising.

Harvesting as individual reflection

- What did you learn from the group-work process?
What was helpful and what was not so helpful?
- Keep notes to evaluate the process and outcome of doing the chosen exercises during the course.
- Continue the one chosen practice after the course ends and monitor how it goes.
- Note if you become aware of any expectations (as these may affect your experience of the exercise).
- Try to have a wide 'radar' for anything that occurs which may be related to your practice – in day-time experience, and from the night. Include dreams and night echoes.
- Note your insights and observations in your *Learning Journal*.



Chapter 3 – Expected Readings



Reading 1 – Core Principles of Adult Learning

By Laura Summerfield. These reflections are based on my experiences as a student, my experience of working with adult learners onsite and online, my education studies and reading, my understanding of anthroposophy, and my conversations with Karl-Heinz Finke.

The Backward Review or Ruckschau

To be able to look upon all experiences that come to one in life, all joys and sorrows, in the very same way as one looks upon those of others, is a good preparation for spiritual training. The pupil will find they can gradually attain the necessary ability in this direction, if every evening when the day's work is done, they let pass before their mind's eye pictures of the day's experiences, watching themselves go through them. ... This beholding of our experiences in backward direction has a special value for spiritual training: it helps us disengage our thinking from its accustomed habit of holding on to the outer, material and sense-perceptible events. ... The pupil needs this liberation if they are to make their way into the super-sensible world. They will find too that by this freedom their thinking and ideation are strengthened, and in a thoroughly healthy manner.

Source Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science* GA 013.

The Adult Learner

The adult learner brings many qualities, attitudes, and prior experiences to a learning task. When faced with new information, they may seek to add it to what they already know. If they are motivated to understand this new material, they will want to approach it with an open mind and an open heart.

The ability to take in new information, new perspectives, and come to a new understanding, depends on many individual factors. It is helpful to understand our own strengths and challenges as adult learners.

We can ask ourselves the following questions, undertake a kind of self-audit:

- How do we best take in new information? This relates to our individual learning style – whether that be visual, auditory, and so on. Which senses do we rely on? What kinds of material do we need to have, find, create to assist our learning?
- Do we have the will to learn this material? Is it interesting, relevant, meaningful to us? How will we use it? How will it change us? Can we awaken our enthusiasm to learn this material, even if it is not immediately engaging?
- Are we willing to take responsibility for our own learning? Ask the questions. Reflect on the learning process. Summarise our learning and understanding. Fill in the gaps. Make it relevant.
- Can we live with the uncertainty of not knowing everything, but willing to engage in a process of learning? What supports do we need to put in place to enable us to do that?
- What do we regard as our learning strengths? Can we draw upon these? What do we know about our learning challenges? Can we overcome these?
- Are we on a self-developmental journey? Are we willing to be a life-long learner? Able to reflect on our learning journey – learning from life, from experience?

I will discuss some of the principles that make adult learning more effective.



Recognising Equality between adult learner and adult educator

Whereas the young child requires a warm empathic caregiver to assist learning, the older child a caring authority and the young person a respected and authentic teacher, the adult learner seeks to form a relationship with their educator of equality. Coenraad van Houten called it a '*co-human relationship*' – the individuality of one person is relating to the individuality of the other. Both benefit from this learning connection. They become companions on the learning journey.

Both bring their own capacities, knowledge, experiences, expectations, growth to the learning enterprise. There is human equality and professional guidance, as the educator has the task of observing the learning journey of the learner and facilitating the learning process. In that sense, the adult educator becomes a '*midwife*' of the learning process. However, the adult learner retains responsibility for their own learning.

I remember being very excited when I started my *Masters in Education* at the University of New England at the prospect of doing more modules of study with the Course Coordinator, Paul Rubens. I had enjoyed his Steiner Education modules within the *Graduate Diploma in Education*, and so decided to complete a Masters as well, with a focus on Steiner Education. For each of the 4 Modules that he supervised he asked us for 3 assignments: (1) To keep a reflective journal of our learning, including our responses to what we read, discussed and wrote. (2) To read and write specifically on topics that he selected as being very important. And (3) to nominate a written Project on a topic related to the module content that we wanted to explore further ourselves, and to submit this as our major assignment.

In retrospect, I can see that Rubens was well versed in Adult Learning not only through his many years of experience as a tertiary academic, but through his reading of Steiner and his knowledge of Coenraad van Houten's work. In fact, he edited the first publication of van Houten's book, *Awakening the Will*. The way that he guided me through these post-graduate modules was definitely as an equal '*co-human*' and '*midwife*' – he was always ready to discuss my learning, and was able to listen deeply to my own explorations of and reflections on the material, and respond to it sensitively out of his own greater

knowledge. It was the best learning experience that I had in my 8 years of tertiary education, and I still value what he was able to offer me, especially in relation to the self-confidence he inspired in me as a writer and thinker on challenging topics.

Encouraging Observation - Of Self, of others, of our environment

Our willingness to self-reflect, to be able to 'observe' ourselves or use our 'Witness' capacity, is very helpful in our development as adult learners. Our capacity to observe ourselves is strengthened through regular conscious practice. We can become aware of the way that our individuality is 'tuned' and resonates, like an instrument is tuned and resonates – through the fruits of our learning from past lives, the experiences we had between death and re-birth, as well as the experiences we have after our birth on earth.

Observation of both the outer world and our inner world can be developed. In relation to the outer world, we can develop our nature observation on a deeper level, recognising the 4-levels of observation that was introduced by Rudolf Steiner based on Goethe's approach of '*delicate empiricism*'. Immersing ourselves in the observation of processes in nature we are developing and fine-tuning ourselves as an instrument of perception. This prepares us to start sensing into the spiritual world that exists all around us.

We can also become more sensitive to others in a way that encourages deeper listening and appreciation of the individuality, the 'I' of the other. An open, non-judgemental approach to another not only leads to better communication and connection with others, but also progresses projects and team-work. When we work with others, it is helpful to 'hear' or rather 'sense' what they are really saying, not only with their words, but also in relation to their feelings, their intentions or will, their temperament, their soul qualities, their hopes, and expectations. Deep listening is an essential skill to develop as an adult educator and facilitator of developmental learning processes. Deep listening not only improves our observation skills, but also the quality of our encounters with others.

We can learn to ask clarifying and open questions in our encounters, relation-



ships, work groups, so that we learn more about the other's thoughts and feelings, without triggering unhelpful reactivity in others. We can develop a 'Question Culture' and even live with questions, instead of craving quick fix answers. We can engage in true dialogue, rather than superficial discussion of issues.

We can strengthen our observation skill by doing regular reviews of life events, or sections of our lives (for example, a morning or afternoon, or meeting, or encounter). We can review our life regularly and consciously harvest our learning from life's experiences. Steiner notes that in such moments of self-reflection or 'inner tranquillity' we can *learn to distinguish between the essential and non-essential (Knowledge of Higher Worlds GA 010)*. Such discrimination supports our spiritual development.

We can also practice the *Backward Review* exercise as suggested by Rudolf Steiner – see the quote at the start of this article to note its benefits. He reminds us that a Backward Review (or *Rueckschau*), in the evening before sleep, helps us to gain mastery of our life of soul, so that we will be able to 'regard our own concerns as coolly and quietly as if they had no connection' with ourselves. In *GA 267, Soul Exercises: Volume 1*, he describes it as follows:

In the evening, before going to sleep, one has to briefly review what one has experienced during the day. It is not important that the review is complete, but that you really look at yourself as if you were another person. One begins with the evening and progresses until the morning.

Using the Learning Journal as a 'Logbook' for self-development

I find the *Mind Map* an essential tool for noting down, brainstorming possibilities, and summarising information. It creates a visual picture that allows us to add to what we already know, expand our understanding, make new connections, and gain additional insights. Used alongside a *Learning Journal*, it provides a summary of learning in relation to new information that we want to synthesise, digest, and learn.

Along the learning journey, the *Learning Journal* (or what Social Ecologists called the *Logbook*) is an essential tool. It encourages us to capture our observations, our reflections, our insights. We can use it at designated times of the day or evening as part of a review process, as an essential tool when reflecting

on a new learning process, or as a spontaneous record of our *memories, dreams and reflections* (thank you Jung!) that occur to us as the night fades away and day-time realities take over. We can use it to remind us how we have progressed over time. We can use it as a record of our self-developmental journey.

Specifically, you can use it at each stage of a learning journey to record observations and progress – at the end of each topic you are studying; at the end of each day's learning; at the end of a course. It is an individual document, and therefore varies amongst individuals. However, here are some of the questions to consider as you write in your *Learning Journal*:

- *Overall* – What was important? What do I really want to take hold of out of this learning experience?
- *Learning points* – What did I learn? What were the main learning points?
- *Confirmations* – What was confirmed for me? What did I already know within this learning experience?
- *Development* – What new questions have come to me? What new insights have I gained?
- *Continuous work* – What do I need to keep working on? Where are my learning challenges?
- *Decisions* – What decisions/choices have I made? Is there something I need to do in relation to this learning?

Making our learning conscious, through using a *Mind Map* and *Learning Journal*, assists with the digestion of new information or experiences, and increases our understanding. We can move consciously from information to understanding, an important step in learning.

In brief, a *Learning Journal* can become an essential part of our personal and spiritual growth process.

Practices included within this course:

- *Use of Mind Mapping* – to identify existing knowledge, expand with new learning, make new learning connections, brainstorm new ideas.
- *Learning Journal* – encouraging ongoing use to observe learning processes – including insights and challenges.



- *Review processes* as part of online sessions – at the start of each day's session (Night Echo), after each group-work (Review and Harvesting), and at the end of each day's session (Harvesting – Insight, Challenges, Learning, Takeaways). The *Learning Journal* can be used to capture these reviews and harvests.
- *Self-reflective work* – for example in Group-work 1 – a self-audit in relation to this course. But it can be applied in any learning situation.
- *Observation development* – for example in Group-work 2 – an experience of strengths and challenges in relation to an Observation task. Used to increase self-awareness and improve observation skills.
- *Work on Attitudes* – for example, Group-work 3 - as part of self and spiritual development, using Steiner's 6 Subsidiary or Basic exercises. These can be used as part of the personal and spiritual development which is at the heart of self-guided learning and development.
- *Responsibility for learning* – this *Learning Pack* (Lectures, Study Guide with Readings and Activities) is provided for independent self-guided learning. There are Self-guided group-work sessions during the online sessions for this course - small self-managed groups with specific tasks outlined. Adult learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning journey.



Reading 2 – Example of a 4 Level Observation Process – Plant Observation

The **aim** of this Observation Process is:

- To provide an experiential approach to the spiritual concept of the four members of the human being: Physical, Etheric, Astral Body and 'I' Organisation.
- These we have partially in common with the natural world:
 - the Physical Body with the Minerals
 - the Etheric Body with the Plants
 - and the Astral body with the Animals.

You will learn to **discriminate** these *Bodies* by using them as *Windows* in a 4-level observation process, looking at these Bodies as they relate to a plant, namely the–

- Physical Level
- Etheric or Life Body Level
- Astral or Emotional Body Level
- 'I' or Being Level

We know from *Holistic Biography Work* that in the development of each of these Bodies in the human, the 'I' awakens or is 'born' within these bodies in four steps:

- In the Physical Body from birth to 7 years.
- In the Etheric or Life Body during the 8th to 14th life years.
- In the Astral or Emotional Body during the 15th to 21st life years.
- This 'birth' or 'awakening' is completed, around the start of the 4th Septennial, the 22nd life year.

The **development of consciousness** progresses during each Septennial and we become ever more self-aware.

During the stages of this Observation Process you will:

- Learn more about each of these 'bodies' and the stages of consciousness
- Fine tune your ability to observe them

Preparation:

- Collect a plant with a flower; complex leaf structure is preferred.
- Be aware that you may need to do some internet research on your plant.
- Have A4 sheets of white unlined paper (10 pages) & coloured pencils.
- Have a notebook handy for taking notes.





Four Level Observation Process – Plan

4-Levels

Main characteristics

Archetype

Living Thoughts
Ideas
Individuality (Person)
Plant Family

Quality

Polarity
Differentiation

Process

Development in Time
Patterns

Form

Matter
Sense perceptible

4-Bodies

'I' or Being

Centre of consciousness and identity

Astral-Body

or Emotional Body

Etheric-Body

or Life Body

Physical Body

or Body

Roots

A metaphor for heredity, the past and pre-birth influences

Spiritual World



Physical World

Indicators for Observation

Archetype

Awareness: greater (human) or lesser (minerals) extent
Contribution (to life on earth) / Mission

Quality

Polarity / Differentiation / Associations
Expression / Uniqueness / Compare with others

Process

Development in Time / Patterns / Growth Gesture
Expansion – Contraction / Metamorphosis
Levity – rising against gravity

Form

Sense perceptible: I see or sense ... / Measurable
Detailed / Repetitive ...

Evolution

of Consciousness

Human

...
Becomes self-aware in humans
▲ ...

Animal

▲ ...
Wakes up in animals
▲ ...

Plant

▲ ...
Dreams in plants
▲ ...

Stone

▲ ...
God sleeps in minerals

Quote:

Pythagoras



Level 1 Physical: Form, Matter – Window of Physical/Sense-perceptible facts Example: Plant Observation

Put your plant in front of you on a table. Take time to observe your plant, sketch it, photograph it and describe it on the Physical Level.

Drawing

Use A4 paper for sketching ... using coloured pencils, do a sketch of the whole plant ... try some different perspectives

Write down and / or share the details of your plant with a small group -

Describe the plant in as much observable sense-perceptible detail as you can. Do it as if you would be communicating with someone who cannot see the plant.

Look out for

- material aspects
- things, bits, pieces
- names
- gestalt – overall form

What does it look like? What is its form, texture ... What do you see or perceive with your senses?

size - weight - measurements - numbers / planes - surfaces - texture / curved - straight - convex - concave / lines - angles - points - edges - roundness / front - back - wide - narrow / relation to space: vertical - horizontal / compact - scattered - / volume - mass - material - density / gravity – stability / and so on ...

e.g. Observed Plant – Blue Eyed Daisy



Plant Sketch



Same Plant Species Outside – Blue Eyed Daisy



Significance for Holistic Biography Work

With our birth into our Physical Body in the 1st Septennial, we start to expand and explore the world through our senses. A crisis emerges during our Defiance phase at ages 2 or 3 leading to addressing ourselves as an 'I' and having our first glimpses of memory. We learn to say 'no' and discover our boundaries. Like the plant, we need a supportive environment, and we struggle against gravity to come into uprightness.



Level 2 Etheric Level – Vital Life Window – Processes in Time Example: Plant Observation (NB same plant used)

Drawing Do a constant line drawing. Try to catch the growth gesture of the plant. Start from the root/stem meeting point. Use a thin, soft pencil and let the plant expand and grow.

Writing and / or Sharing Ponder on its origin. If you would not be allowed to touch it, where would you look for the evidence of life? How would you make your case? Take notes.

Look out for

- processes in time
- rhythms and patterns
- old – new, last and first growth
- growth gesture

How is it created? How does it grow? Is it, or was it alive? Natural or artificial origin? How would you prove it is natural?

Look for: Development in time - old - new, becoming - dying / levity - gravity - lightness - heaviness / expansion - contraction / spacious - forming elements / tension - pressure / symmetries - patterns - repetition / balance - fluidity - flexibility / change - development - metamorphosis / radiating inner strength, energy, vitality

Exercise: Can you use your body and movement to mimic the growth gesture of your plant? What does this tell you?

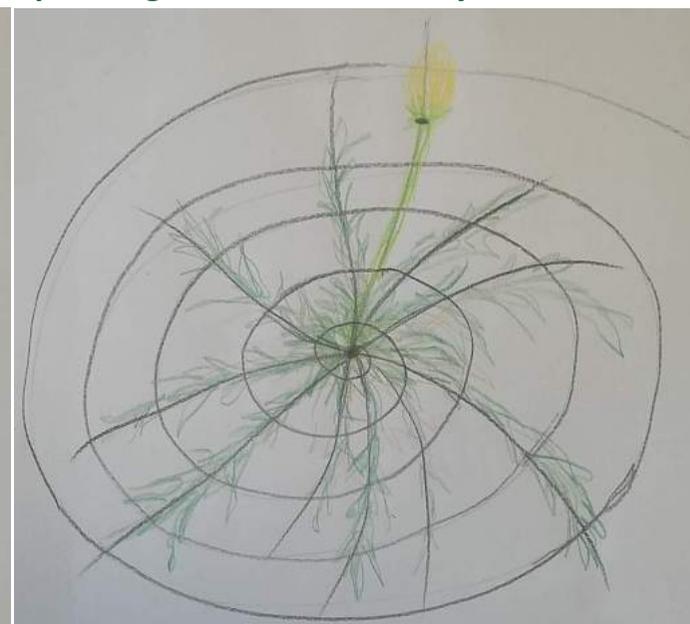
Constant Line Drawing – Blue Eyed Daisy



Branching out Gesture



Spiralling out Gesture – levity in the stem



Significance for Holistic Biography Work

With the birth into our Etheric Body in the 2nd Septennial, we develop behavioural patterns, like the plant follows patterns in its leafing process. We learn to use our body and settle into routines of doing things. We develop the continuity of memory, a basis for our learning. For the plant earlier stages of development are visible to the outside as the leaf-metamorphosis; for us the memories are stored in the organs and tissues of our body. Human development goes with internalisation and leads to individualisation. Whilst plants are moving between expansion and contraction, our temperament develops between introversion and extraversion, and between goal and people orientations.



Metamorphosis:

Leaf Rosette to Flower – Blue Eyed Daisy



Inner leaves – Blue Eyed Daisy



Outer leaves – Blue Eyed Daisy

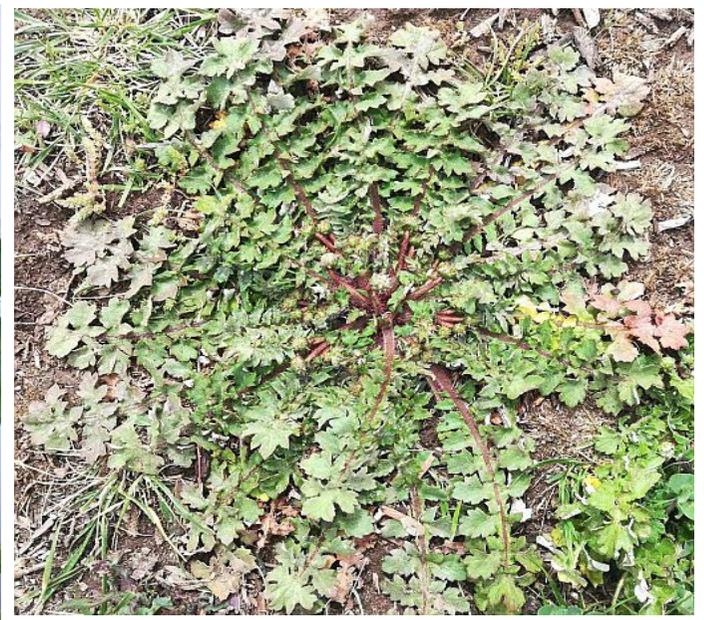


Metamorphosis:

Leaves – inner to outer



Branching out Gesture of whole plant

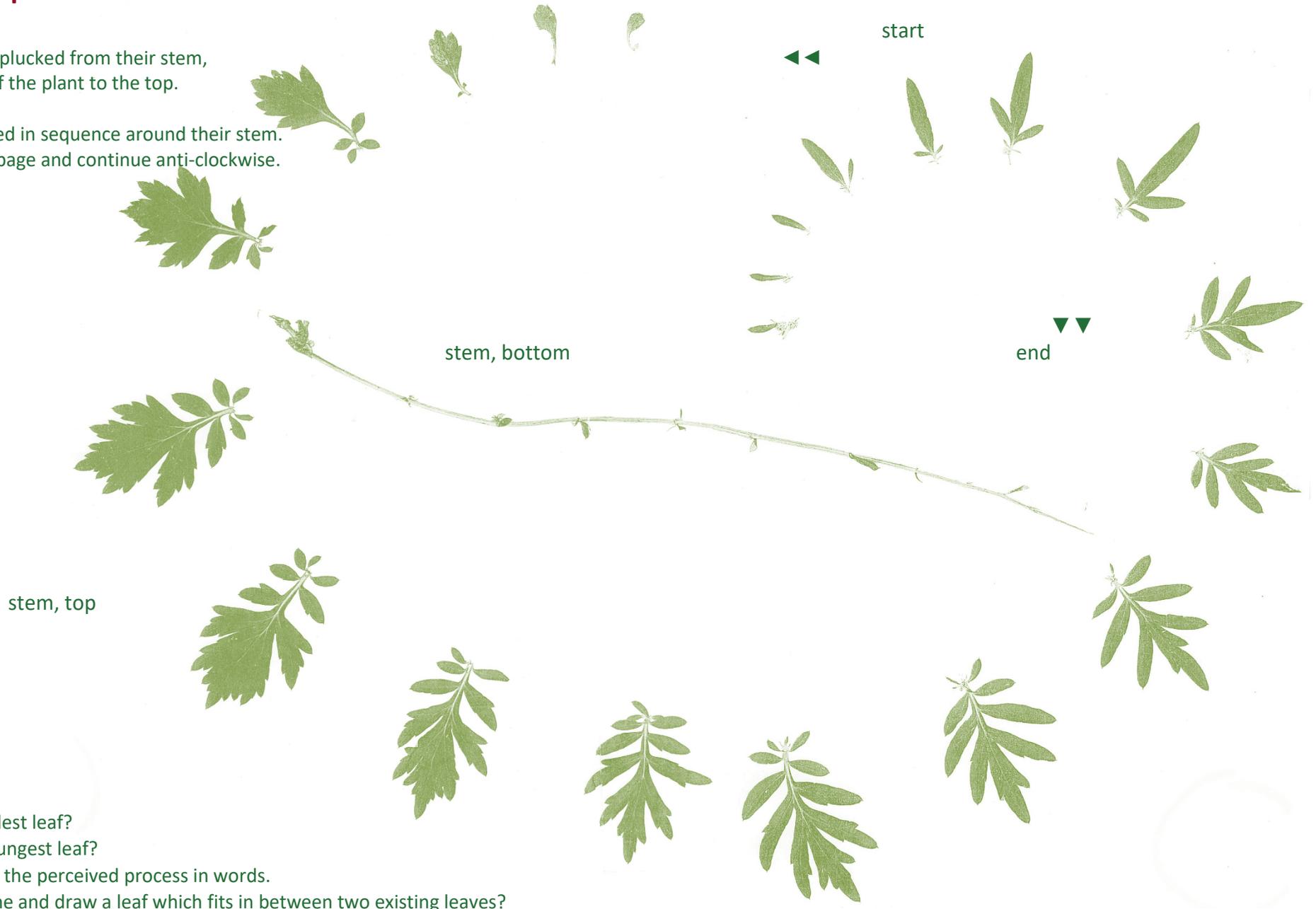




Leaf Metamorphosis

These leaves were plucked from their stem, from the bottom of the plant to the top.

Here they are placed in sequence around their stem. Start at the top of page and continue anti-clockwise.



Ponder on –

- What is the oldest leaf?
- What is the youngest leaf?
- Try to describe the perceived process in words.
- Can you imagine and draw a leaf which fits in between two existing leaves?
- Look out for other examples of metamorphosis in plants or other parts of nature.



Level 3 Astral Level – Differentiation Quality Window – Qualities Example: Plant Observation (NB same plant)

Drawing Work with colour pencils. Do a drawing of the plant's flower, filling a whole A4 page. Look for numeric or geometric laws in the patterns of the plant growth.

Writing and / or Sharing Describe to other people what is special about this plant. *From your culture:* What does this plant symbolise? For what occasion would you choose this plant as a gift?

Look out for

- characteristics
- qualities / polarities
- lawfulness
- self-expression

What are polarities and similarities? Associations? Differentiation?

Look for: Relations between the parts and the whole, the object and other similar objects, the object and its environment? / gestures - expression / geometrical and other laws - efficiency of composition / mood expressed / dynamics of movement and changeability / contrasts / relations of parts to whole, parts, environment / temperament - character -physiognomy - withdrawn - expressive - open - closed - quiet – dramatic

Exercise: Express this out loud: You are selling this plant at a street stall. Advertise it to your potential customers. This plant is the special of the day!

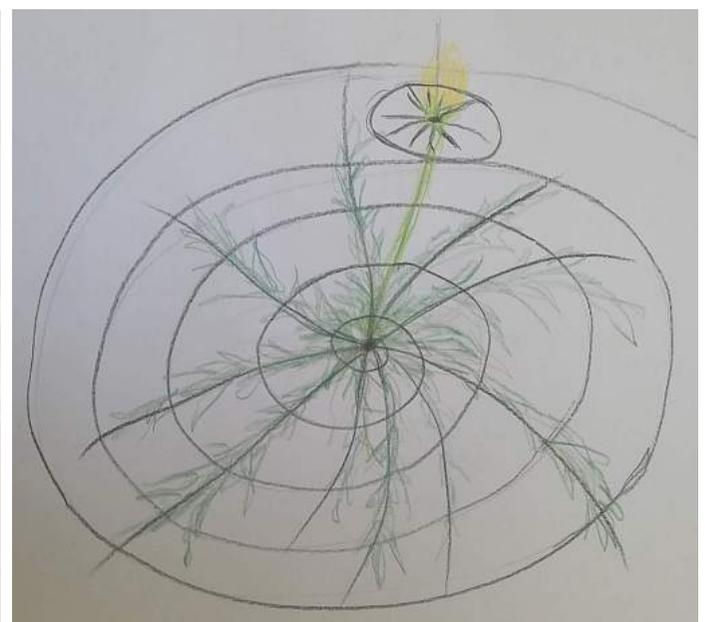
Flower drawing – Blue Eyed Daisy



Flower Picture – Marigold – different Daisy



Geometrical Laws



Significance for Holistic Biography Work

With the birth into our Astral Body in the 3rd Septennial, our development, self-awareness and self-consciousness quickens and so does our individuation. We become aware of polarising soul-qualities which will take us on a roller-coaster ride, exploring extremes to find out who we are. Our ever stronger individuality leads us to self-expression, makes us unique, just as the flower appears as an individual expression of the plant, making it different from other plants. With the flower, the organ-building of the plant comes to a peak; for us the growth and fine-tuning of our organs and physical body changes to maintenance. Now fine-tuning continues inside as soul and spiritual development.



Level 4 Being Level – Wisdom Archetype Window – Expressing Living Ideas Example: Plant Observation

Drawing Use colour pencils. Do an abstract drawing – use colour and form – to depict what you see as the Essence, the Beingness of this Plant.

Writing and / or Sharing

- ① What is the natural environment of this plant? Where does it grow best? What does this plant contribute to its environment and life on earth?
- ② If your plant could speak, what would it say about itself and its reason to be; its contribution to life?

Look out for

What does it contribute to life and its environment? What kind of being is expressed through this form?

- unique contribution to its environment and life on earth
 - reason for it to be
 - being / intelligence pressed
- Look for:** Mission - significance - reason to be - purpose / level of consciousness expressed - inner life - awake - asleep - focussed / what dominates - outstanding feature / How is the plant related to its environment, surroundings? - Is there an overall gesture or quality expressed in the plant? What kind of Being is expressed in the plant? - How is it to be this plant? - Name the Being / the character expressed.
- Exercise:** Write a poem expressing something of your plant's contribution and Beingness (see examples on next page).

The Blue Eyed Daisy Being



Withering – Containing the Essence in a Seed



Rosette gives groundcover, retains water



Significance for Holistic Biography Work

With our birth of the 'I' our true being can take charge of inner and outer energies, & integrate differences as part of our development. We learn to self-reflect which enables us to start a self-directed process of further learning & development. As an independent learner, we learn from what life brings towards us. We start to objectively witness what goes on in & around us & can build a bridge to our higher intentions or higher Self. The Being of the plant stays in its periphery and guides not the single plant but the species.



Eleven Words Poetry Form – one Word on each marked Line

- ① _ + _ + _ + 1_ + _ + _ + _ = keyword ② _ + _ + 2_ + _ + 3_ + _ + _ = verb plus
- ③ _ + 4_ + _ + 5_ + _ + 6_ + _ = quality plus ④ 7_ + _ + 8_ + _ + 9_ + _ + 10_ = statement
- ⑤ _ + _ + _ + 11_ + _ + _ + _ = essence

Reaching

towards light

strongly rooted earth-being

leaves covering soil moisture

Protector

Free Style ...

I am ... I am here to ... I receive ... I need ... I give ...

*Whilst I'm reaching towards the bright light
My roots are firmly weaving within sandy soil.
My leaves contain moisture and hold it in the ground.
A yellow faced blue eyed protector am I.*



Reading 3 – Reactor, Learner, Witness, Researcher

Self-reflection as a Means to meet the World with Learning and Developmental Attitudes

Source Karl-Heinz Finke and Angela Youdale

Abstract

This article discusses four aspects of self-development, self-guidance, and inner schooling. It looks at the four windows of meeting the world or, in other words, four aspects of ourselves, which are influential in our personal development, and may be termed 'Sub-personalities'.

The Reactor

The *Reactor* is that aspect of ourselves which usually responds to a stimulus automatically; it is often active with minimal self-awareness. In life, we experience that an outer or inner happening can 'trigger' us, and we think, feel, or behave in a way that seemingly we have little conscious control over.

The origins of this *Reactor* are twofold:

1. Imprinted

We bring with us memories which are part of humankind's collective unconscious or individual (karmic) memories, which cause us to react in certain ways.

2. Learned

Throughout our life, we learn to survive and succeed according to the conditions of our time, our culture, our education, our social and economic circumstances, our family influences, and many experiences which contribute to the individual way that we meet life.

These *imprinted* or *learned* responses may be summarised as reactions. They offer a two-edged sword. They are very useful in that we could not survive without them, and offer us valuable material to better understand ourselves and others. The less helpful aspect is their repetitive and habitual nature, and the restrictive influence they have on our capacity for openness to the world.

Although our reactions are only partially conscious, they are paradoxically often clearly visible as the 'image' or 'persona' we project into the world. Others often recognise us through our specific habitual responses. With growing awareness, it is possible to recognise these activities within us as a Subpersonality and to call it our *Reactor*.

Characteristics of the Reactor:

- It has very fast responses, is a good mimic, is habitual and a survivalist.
- It invests much in its self-image and does all it can to protect it.
- It has access to all our past experiences and is quick to use them to judge and justify any behaviour.
- Its greatest limitation is that it has no concept of development.
- The latter works against our best intentions to change, to shift our perspectives and to experiment with the new. It actively blocks our developmental potential.

The *Reactor* can manifest out of different levels of our constitution. It emerges from the deepest levels of the unconscious - our physical/etheric organism - as allergies, physical reactions, compulsions or drives that we bring with us or develop very early in life. It comes out of an unconsciously copied or sympathetically assimilated influence with ways of being, thinking, and feeling in childhood and young adulthood, and these are embedded in the etheric/memory and habitual body. It can also be active out of our emotions/passions and out of our 'I' -organisation or 'I'.

We recognise the activity of the *Reactor* in daily life when we become consciously aware of our 'inner busy-ness' triggered by some kind of stimuli, or of our 'outer response' to a stimulus. We can characterise some of these as:

- Shocks, strange body or feeling sensations
- Expectations, anxieties, pre-judgements
- Sympathies and antipathies, seductions, and challenges



- Activities that name, characterise, orientate, and judge and then often dismiss
- Memories, associations, inner pictures of other similar experiences
- All kinds of expressed responses - verbal, emotional, and actions

Usually, the only way to recognise that our *Reactor* has been active is after the event!

Looking back on the day, or a particular activity, with the questions: "How did I respond in that specific situation?" "How could I have responded differently?" can highlight how the *Reactor* functions. If this **Looking Back** is practised often enough, one becomes more aware of habitual behavioural patterns, and phrases used. Then one increasingly gets to know the 'image' one projects better, and finds that there is the choice to allow the *Reactor* to express itself or not. This choice releases us from the influences of the *Reactor* in ourselves, and provides an opportunity to meet life and the world with new freedom.

The Learner

The *Learner* is an aspect of our inner activity that is much more subtle than the *Reactor*. The aim of the inner *Learner* is to accumulate information and transform it into knowledge (individualised information) which, if pursued, can develop into wisdom. This quest for information and knowledge may be guided by moral or humanitarian considerations and thus can be directed towards the altruistic or spiritual, or it may be in the service of the basest of human motivations.

The degree of independence of the *Learner* in us depends on the amount of autonomy the individual has wrested from the influences of the *Reactor*. The more the *Reactor* has dominance, the more the *Learner* will be harnessed for the aims of the *Reactor*. The level of independence is gauged by the preparedness of the individual to over-ride the interests of the *Reactor*, actively working against it to discern the truth in quest for knowledge. So, the *Learner* in us can willingly undergo a shift of perspective, loss of security, and even embrace the concept of chaos leading to change and development, which is beyond the *Reactor's* perspective.

The *Learner* is often experienced as the drive to better ourselves, to be seen

as a success by others, or even justification of the lust for power. From a spiritual perspective, the *Learner* originates from an innate drive to understand truth and discover meaning. The degree to which this is active in us depends largely on karmic considerations, but no matter how altruistic the *Learner* is in us, its ultimate aim is the quest for information, knowledge and wisdom for the individual, so it has an egoistic tendency.

If we wish to actively take on and heighten the independence of our *Learner*, then we need to learn to activate the cognitive aspects of our soul life. This relates more to what Steiner calls the Intellectual-mind-soul and Consciousness-soul in the human being, rather than the experiential capacity of our Sensitive-soul.

Here are some characteristics of the Learner:

- An inner engagement related primarily to thought and sense activities.
- A questioning attitude, consciously living with questions.
- A quest for information, knowledge, insight, and meaning.
- Having interests beyond oneself.
- It is a discoverer, an explorer, a contemplator, and an initiative taker.
- It can step over the concerns of the *Reactor* to the point of valuing the quest more than personal concerns.
- It concentrates without distraction on the more objective nature of the matter.
- It can reflect on one's inner life with the same objective scrutiny that is developed and directed to the world outside.

The *Learner* has a more detached way of engagement with life and when it dominates in the individual, phenomena that are met pass through a kind of filter. This filter can recognise, categorise, connect, isolate, analyse, compartmentalise, and synthesise in new ways. It can propose, verify, and accept as accumulated knowledge the result of the process; it also has a double aspect:

1. Detached objectivity

On one side, its cool detached objectivity can lead to an intractable, ruthless and manipulative approach to what is being explored.



2. Warm interest

Whilst on the other side, it can bring clarity; and the development of humility, wonder and reverence for the subject. The motivations and attitudes of the individual will determine these.

To know and activate our *Learner*, we will need to consciously focus our attention on our thinking-sensing of the object of our own activity. Surprisingly, this is the very nature of the *Learner*, and this activity is quite possible. Such thinking needs intention, focussing capacities, and strength of will, and relies on memory. Thinking is extraordinary and unique in so far as; it can use its own activity on itself! With our thinking, we can become aware that we think, and observe what and how we think. Drawing on this capacity, the *Learner* can get to know what we learn, and how we do it. We can train ourselves to think differently; we can understand how to make our learning more effective, and we can move our learning process on with much more conscious awareness.

In this 'process oriented' learning and self-development work, we use the 'seven life learning processes' as the fundamental archetype for effective adult learning and self-development. These 7 processes are explored in depth in our *Awakening the Will* Adult Learning course.

The Witness

The *Witness* is the part of us that unlocks the door to our development via self-reflection. It can be described as a presence that watches, observes, and is conscious in the present. It can register what takes place both inside us and outside without judgement or censure; it is a quiet presence, guarding the threshold between inward and outward directed awareness and can be pushed aside by the more demanding or opportunistic beings or sub-personalities within us. The *Witness* holds or emanates *Mindfulness*. If we are ever to wrest ourselves free from the dominance of the *Reactor*, then the *Witness* has to be activated. If the insatiable appetite for self-enhancement of the *Learner* is to be reined-in, then the *Witness* is needed. If we wish to promote development of the *Researcher* in us, then the *Witness* has to be its constant companion. The *Witness* or the quality of *Mindfulness* emanated is the key to our development; it is the doorway through which our *True-I* (or Higher Self), or even our angel can make its presence felt in our life.

The *Witness* offers the opportunity to look objectively at ourselves and the world, from the third person. However, this does not happen on its own; it has to be cultivated and practised. Once the *Witness* is activated, the *Learner* in us can encourage its activity.

Regular Life Reviews

The regular practice of review – of an incident, a meeting, work done, a certain period of time, a process, etc - stimulates the *Witness*. It is very helpful to consciously focus the review through specific questions so that the *Learner* becomes more engaged and is not just confirming self-justifying impressions. Reviews may be done regularly as part of life learning.

The Backward Review or *Rueckschau* is an exercise given by Rudolf Steiner to strengthen certain soul and brain 'muscles'. Each evening we may review the day, but backwards in time, from evening back to morning. At first it feels unfamiliar to do this, but with practice, it becomes easier; one can start with short sequences out of one's daily experiences or with a clear question: e.g. *When today did I use my habitual phrase 'actually' again?*

The Backward-review helps us to realise how our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours have a considerable effect on our life's events. And that they also determine - to a much greater extent than we commonly imagine - how these events, and in fact 'the world', meets us. As a result, the part 'I' play in a sequence of events, becomes of interest to the *Learner*. This then creates a reason for placing a curb on our *Reactor*, and a change in the way that I meet the world. It can lead to grasping the concept '*What comes to meet me; belongs to me*'.

Practising the Backward Review of any Life Review helps us to be more aware that the day's events are not finished as soon as they are over; they have still more to yield when reviewed. This knowledge lives on in the person and causes a '*space*' to occur in the individual's consciousness; this space, as small as it might be at the beginning, is an open space, filled with *Mindfulness*, uninfluenced by the *Reactor*. As the practice continues, this '*open space*' becomes bigger and offers the opportunity to decide with more attentiveness how to respond to inner and outer stimuli. Steiner has labelled it a place of '*inner tranquillity*'. Gradually, the *Reactor* becomes less influential, the '*open space*' increases and becomes home to the *Witness* who takes up residence and observes without judgement or censure.



When the *Witness* has built up a strength of presence, it is not only active in memory during the Review processes, but becomes part of the presence of *Mindfulness* during daily activities, allowing part of one's awareness to **watch with clarity what is going on, whilst it is going on**. One can experience being in two realities at the same time. As the '*open space*' grows through continued practice, the individual experiences a much greater sense of freedom to be able to choose how to respond to a stimulus, and also to recognise repetitive patterns or themes in their life. As a result of self-observation, self-knowledge increases, and we can begin to develop independence and autonomy from recognised habits and behavioural patterns. The *Witness* may at first be felt as a constant constraint on one's ability to be spontaneous in life, but as the process progresses, new capacities emerge that release this tension.

As the *Witness* develops, it becomes more available to serve the **inner Researcher**. Its power to record ever finer and more subtle nuances increases and it is able to recognise the quality of the impressions, gestures or dynamics that it observes. The *Researcher* has to be able to interpret these and make a speedy assessment in order to find its orientation. It is the ability of the *Researcher* in us to discern and choose the quality of expression, and this is usually assessed with a heightened feeling life. It is this sensitivity which instantly determines the question of spontaneity, but this does not mean that as a result of living simultaneously with two active kinds of consciousness, one has to sacrifice one's spontaneity in life. However, until the *Researcher* is functioning, we can feel that the ever-watchful eye of the *Witness* restraining our spontaneity.

The '*open space*' offers another gift; the ability to hold back our judgements, allowing us to perceive ever finer expressions of the phenomena we are focusing on. The secrets that the world holds become ever more transparent. Just as "*Loveless observation kills the ideal that lives within that which is observed*" (Steiner), so does a soul that is open and filled with wonder for all it meets, naturally generate the reverence necessary to sense the true expression of the archetype, being or spirit within that which is observed.

The *Witness* offers us a precious key to our development. When activated, its quiet, selfless, reflective and self-reflective nature is the first sign of the human being's longed-for emancipation from the guidance of the angelic realms. Until

the individual begins to take hold of his or her own development, the responsibility sits on the shoulders of guiding spiritual beings. What has been given to us as natural talents - such as to be social - needs to become a conscious cultural deed. As this begins to happen, individuals and groups become co-contributors to evolution, and co-creators collaborating with the evolutionary spirits. In this context, childhood has ended for humanity; our future task is to develop a mature relationship with the evolutionary spirits and to become custodians not consumers of Gaia, the living earth.

The Researcher

The *Researcher* activity is a dormant, germinal potential in us. Our use of this word has only a small resemblance to its common use today, for what is generally known as 'research' is regarded by Process-Oriented Learning (as described here) as the accumulation of information and its transformation into knowledge, which is the activity of the *Learner*. A better term for our use of the word, may be the **Inner or Spiritual Researcher**, but this carries connotations of an activity that seems to have little to do with the reality of our daily, physical, sense perceptible world. However, the growing sense of spirituality in our time indicates an awakening, a change of consciousness; thus, our understanding of the *Researcher* potential may be closer than imagined.

A similar leap in consciousness is required between the *Learner* and the *Researcher*, as the leap we have described between the activities and attitudes of the *Reactor* and the *Learner*.

There are some helpful attitudes or pre-requisites to activate the Researcher.

The individual needs to have:

- Achieved a degree of autonomy in respect of the *Reactor* being, which means a greater degree of self-knowledge than is commonly achieved.
- Taken on the challenge of being responsible for one's own learning - having 'taken oneself on'.
- A healthy self-monitoring 'try and prove' method, rather than relying on institutionalised forms of learning or placing oneself under the influence of a guru or spiritual teacher.

- Become aware of and studied the reality of a spiritual dimension to life; acknowledging access to this realm through either an inner experience, quite independent of an external reality, or through the external reality of the natural world, or both.
- Achieved clarity of thought, an ability to hold a balance in the feeling life, and also be self-motivated and consequential in the life of will; gained through disciplined practice.
- An understanding for the need to take three steps in moral development for every step taken towards spiritual 'powers'.
- An appreciation for the development of encounter skills, applied to oneself, others, nature, the world, and the spiritual worlds.
- A willingness to take on a journey of personal change and development.

It is not necessary that all these are fulfilled when the *Researcher* first becomes awakened. However, progress will be proportionately slow to the degree of these is missing.

Awakening the *Researcher* starts with the formulation of a question; or more truly a question and a quest. The hallmark of a true inner, individual, and transpersonal research question is that the individual is stimulated to formulate this question out of a profound, inner necessity in response to some phenomenon in the world, in distinction to a problem that has arisen from within. That is an inner necessity triggered by an outer phenomenon. It is a question dormant in the person, which is awakened by an outer phenomenon. Other inner questions may have personal, psychological, or karmic concerns that follow other processes of development.

Each person's inner or spiritual research question or quest is unique to them. It comes from a pre-birth awareness of inherent gifts that appears as a resonance between inner and outer world and is 'stimulated' by the world. The question asked by many people, "*What am I here in this life to do?*" arises out of a dim awareness of 'an intention to do something', but often finds no answer and remains open-ended. Then we must rely on following a quest that will guide us to appropriate, memory-jogging situations; a more specific question may arise that cannot be answered simply with information, but has to be carried through time on the individual's journey. It has to be lived. The German poet Rainer Maria Rilke wrote in Letters to you a young friend: "*Be patient*



toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

On our journey through life, perspectives, or attitudes to the question may change, there may be shifts in consciousness, and the question may need modifying, changing, diversifying, or refocusing. One might feel that the question itself leads the research!

If concern with the question is earnest enough, one begins to notice indications, insights, events, coincidences, synchronicities that have unexpected connections to the question one carries. With careful recording and reviewing, one can see that there is a certain '*intelligence*' at work behind these, at first sight, random connections. Experience shows that once this is recognised, it becomes possible to co-operate with a more conscious intention with this '*intelligence*'. The *Researcher* has knowledge that places such experiences in context; Goethe spoke about this "*open secret*" referring to the reality of the world as manifestation of the spirit. Briefly stated - all events, all appearances, all situations express a gesture. All gestures are the result of processes and all processes are an expression of **intelligences**. These intelligences are highly differentiated and can be identified as '*archetypes*', '*archetypal beings*' or just '*beings*'. Throughout the history of humankind, references have been made to *intelligences* that stand behind certain activities, and which could be petitioned to help humankind influence the course of events.

As late as medieval times in Europe, the great School of Chartres recognised and honoured the *beings* or *intelligences* behind the Seven Liberal Arts. In the Trivium: Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic, and in the Quadrivium: Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy and Music. It was also recognised that each guild specialising in its own field of activity (later to be designated as professions) were working together with the *beings* of their discipline.

In the same way today, the *Researcher* comes to acknowledge the *intelligence* guiding the research question and begins to nurture the connection with this *Being*. The aim is to take one's cues for a developmental journey - the quest - from the indications offered by this *Being*, *guiding spirit* or *intelligence*. In doing



so, the individual develops the capacities to understand the ever-deeper significance of the phenomenon expressed in the world which gave rise to the question, and is better able to meet its needs. The *Researcher* begins a dual existence; aware and interacting with everyday physical companions and influences, and doing the same with transpersonal, unseen companions and influences.

The quest may not always be comfortable or even pleasant as one meets influences or 'experiences' that ask for the giving up of cherished habit patterns, or demand certain disciplines, or strip away part of one's self-image. There are tests and trials to face and steps in moral integrity to take. It leads to a certain freedom from one's lower self and one's concerns and flies in the face of all that the *Reactor* stands for. To realise the *Researcher* in us means to light an inextinguishable fire in us offering a life filled with meaning and purpose that is constantly renewing and never boring!

The external practices of the Researcher are:

- To identify their unique research question.
- To be prepared for the question, embark on research, and change and modify as they shift perspective on their developmental process.
- To keep a record of the journey, so that it can be followed in thought and understood.
- To always test the relevance of insights and development in relation to the needs of the phenomenon manifest in the world.
- To be able to effectively address the original worldly phenomenon that stimulated the question.

The research question arises out of the activity of our Consciousness-soul (Steiner), which touches deeply upon existential awareness. It may be called the *Discerning-soul* and has the potential of both the greatest evil, and the greatest good; hence its fundamental relationship with the question of morality. The *Researcher* feels the responsibility (or not) for attitude and gesture in meeting the world, for this, truly affects the world.

Certain inner soul dispositions begin to take root in the being of the *Researcher* along the way. Some of these are:

- Recognition that all phenomena can express their inner nature to me if I

learn to 'listen' in the right way.

- Working towards building an effective communication with the *Being* guiding my developmental processes.
- Developing a respect and reverence for what I am asked to meet and work with.
- Development and sensitising of the feeling/sensing life as nothing can speak out of itself and be heard by a blinkered, bull-headed, deaf, inquisitor - loveless observations kill the ideal that lives within that which is observed.
- A sharp clarity and ruthless honesty of being, even when conditions really test our foundations.
- Nurturing of integrity and authenticity.
- Working towards putting oneself aside and cultivating the will to serve - not as a puppet or as a sub-ordinate, but as an autonomous, self-responsible, co-creative individual.
- Accepting responsibility for the effects of my mistakes and the karma of my misdeeds.
- Discarding the need for outer recognition, approbation, and acceptance for my views, motivations, and actions.

The central attitude of the *Researcher* is considered service. Its aim is to lead the individual towards what Spiritual Science and '*wisdom of the human being*' (Anthroposophy) reveals as humankind's destiny. This means to become, in freedom, a conscious co-worker and co-contributor with the progressive hierarchies for the future development of the earth. Humanity has developed to a point where the attitude towards the spiritual world or the sacred has to evolve from revelation, wanting or receiving, to spirit recognition, beholding and contributing.

Angela Youdale and Karl-Heinz Finke collaborated for 9 years (1996-2005) as 'Living-way' and offered 'Schooling Course' workshops in UK, Australia, and New Zealand. Angela has found a new area of work whilst Karl-Heinz continues to include Inner Schooling within 'Life Story' or 'Holistic Biography Work' courses and trainings world-wide.



Reading 4 – Steiner's 6 Basic Exercises

Notes

Steiner mentions what he calls the **6 Subsidiary exercises** for spiritual development in 5 different sources between the years 1904 and 1909.

Karl-Heinz Finke has compiled Steiner's statements about these exercises from these different sources– the original source for each statement is noted at the end of each extract.

The text has been edited by Laura Summerfield using gender inclusive language.

Here are the sources:

- (A) *Knowledge of Higher Worlds*, GA10, 1904-05, pp 91-92.
- (B) *At the Gates of Spiritual Science*, GA95, Lecture 2/9/1906, Stuttgart, pp 117-119.
- (C) *Guidance in Esoteric Training*, GA245, December 1906, pp 15-20.
- (D) *Guidance in Esoteric Training*, GA245, Lecture 6/6/1907, pp 105-107.
- (E) *An Outline of Occult Science*, GA13, December 1909, pp 245-249.
- (F) *Inner Development*, GA54, Lecture 7/12/1905.

Introductions

Developing the **twelve-petalled lotus flower** gives us profound insight into the processes of nature. Everything growing and maturing radiates soul warmth, while everything undergoing death, destruction, and decay has the quality of soul coldness. - The **twelve-petalled lotus flower** is formed in the following way. (A)

The human being's task, therefore, is deliberately to infuse some rhythm into this chaotic life, and they have available certain means through which they can bring this harmony and rhythm into their physical and etheric bodies. Both these bodies will then gradually develop such rhythms that they will correct them-selves when the astral body withdraws. If they are forced out of their proper rhythm during the day, they will of their own accord regain the right kind of movement when they are at rest. - The means available consist in the

following exercises, which must be practised in addition to meditation. (B)

General demands which every aspirant for occult development must put to themselves. (C)

In a proper school of spiritual training certain qualities are set forth that require to be cultivated by one who desires to find the path to the higher worlds. First and foremost, the pupil must have control over their thoughts (in their course and sequence), over their will, and over their feelings. The control has to be acquired by means of exercises, and these are planned with two ends in view. On the one hand, the soul has to become so firm, so secure and balanced that it will retain these qualities when a second self is born. And on the other hand, the pupil has to endow this second self from the start, with strength and steadfastness. (E)

In what follows, the conditions which must be the basis of any occult development are set forth. Let no one imagine that they can make progress by any measures applied to the outer or the inner life unless they fulfil 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. No forces can actually be imparted to a human being; all that can be done is to bring to development the forces already within them. (Forces) do not develop of their own accord because outer and inner hindrances obstruct them. The outer hindrances are lessened by means of the following rules of life; the inner hindrances by the special instructions concerning meditation, concentration, and the like. (F)



#1 Thinking – Mastery of Thinking

Keywords: *Sequence of thoughts, Practice of the control of thoughts; Thought control; Cultivation of absolutely clear thinking; Objective Thinking; Control of thoughts*

First, we pay attention to directing the sequence of our thoughts - this is the so-called "practice of the control of thoughts." Just as thinking true and meaningful thoughts develops the sixteen-petalled lotus flower, so inwardly controlling our thinking processes develops the twelve-petalled flower. Thoughts that flit about like will-o'-the-wisps and follow each other by chance rather than in a logical, meaningful way distort and damage the form of this flower. The more logically our thoughts follow one another and the more we avoid all illogical thinking, the more perfectly this organ develops its proper form.

Therefore, whenever we hear an illogical thought, we should immediately allow the correct thought to pass through our mind. But, if we find ourselves in what seems an illogical environment, we should not for that reason unlovingly withdraw in order to further our development. By the same token, we should not feel the immediate urge to correct any illogicality we witness around us. Rather, we should inwardly and very quietly give the thoughts rushing at us from the outside a logical and meaningful direction. We should always strive to maintain this logical direction in our own thinking. **(A)**

Thought control. This means preventing, at least for a short time every day, all sorts of thoughts from drifting through the mind, and bringing a certain ordered tranquillity into the course of thinking. You must take a definite idea, set it in the centre of your thinking, and then logically arrange your further thoughts in such a way that they are all closely linked with the original idea. Even if you do this for only a minute, it can be of great importance for the rhythm of the physical and etheric bodies. **(B)**

The first condition is the cultivation of absolutely clear thinking. For this purpose, a person must rid themselves of the will-o'-the-wisps of thought, even if only for a very short time during the day - about five minutes (the longer, the better). They must become the ruler in their world of thought. They are not the ruler if external circumstances, occupation, some tradition or other, social relationships, even membership of a particular race, the daily round of life, certain activities and so forth, determine a thought and how they work it out.

Therefore, during this brief time, acting entirely out of their own free will, they must empty the soul of the ordinary, everyday course of thoughts and by their own initiative place one single thought at the centre of their soul. The thought need not be a particularly striking or interesting one. Indeed, it will be all the better for what has to be attained in an occult respect if a thoroughly uninteresting and insignificant thought is chosen. Thinking is then impelled to act out of its own energy, the essential thing here, whereas an interesting thought carries the thinking along with it. It is better if this exercise of thought control is undertaken with a pin rather than with Napoleon. The pupil says to themselves: Now I start from this thought, and through my own inner initiative I associate with it everything that is pertinent to it. At the end of the period the thought should be just as colourful and living as it was at the beginning. This exercise is repeated day by day for at least a month; a new thought may be taken every day, or the same thought may be adhered to for several days. At the end of the exercise an endeavour is made to become fully conscious of that inner feeling of firmness and security which will soon be noticed by paying subtler attention to one's own soul; the exercise is then brought to a conclusion by focusing the thinking upon the head and the middle of the spine (brain and spinal cord), as if the feeling of security were being poured into this part of the body. **(C)**

The quality that thinking needs above all is objectivity. In the world of the physical senses life itself is our great teacher in this respect. Let someone fling their thoughts hither and thither in a purely arbitrary manner, they will find themselves obliged to suffer life to correct them if they do not want to come into conflict with it. They must of necessity bring their thinking into correspondence with the facts. But when they turn their attention away from the physical world, this compulsory correction fails them; and if their thinking has not then the ability to be its own corrector, it will inevitably follow will-o'-the-wisps. The pupil of the spirit must therefore undertake exercises in thinking in order that their thinking may be able to mark out its own path and goal. Stability, and the capacity to adhere firmly to a once chosen subject, are what the pupil's thinking has to acquire. There is therefore no occasion for the exercises to deal with remote or complicated objects, much rather should they have reference to simple objects that are ready to hand. Whoever succeeds in directing their thought, for at least five minutes daily, and for months on end, to



some quite commonplace object - say, for example, a needle or a pencil - and in shutting out during those five minutes all thoughts that have no connection with the object, will have made very good progress in this direction. (A fresh object may be chosen each day, or one may be continued for several days.) Even a person who considers themselves a trained intellectual thinker should not be too proud to qualify for spiritual training by an exercise of this simple nature. For when we are riveting our thought for a considerable time upon something that is entirely familiar, we may be quite sure that our thinking is in accord with reality. If we ask ourselves: What is a lead pencil made of? How are the different materials prepared? How are they put together? When were lead pencils invented? and so on, we can be more sure of our thoughts being consistent with reality than if we were to ponder the question of the descent of the human being - or, let us say, of the meaning of life. Simple exercises in thinking are a far better preparation for forming commensurate conceptions of Saturn, Sun and Moon evolution than are complicated and learned ideas. As to our thinking, what is important at this stage is not the object or event to which it is directed, but that it should be strong and vigorous and to the point. If it has been educated to be so in reference to simple physical realities that lie open to view, it will acquire the tendency to be so even when it finds itself no longer under the control of the physical world and its laws. The pupil will find they get rid in this way of any tendency they had before to loose and extravagant thinking. (E)

Thinking. In addition, we must develop a series of qualities. To begin with, we must become masters over our thoughts, and particularly our train of thought. This is called control of thoughts. Just think about how thoughts whirl about in the soul of the human being, how they flit about like will-o'-the-wisps. Here one impression arises, there another, and each one changes one's thoughts. It is not true that we govern our thoughts; rather our thoughts govern us totally. We must advance to the ability of steeping ourselves in one specific thought at a certain time of the day and not allow any other thought to enter and disturb our soul. In this way we ourselves hold the reins of thought-life for a time. (F)

#2 Willing (action and holding back) – Mastery of Will

Keywords: *Logical consistency into actions, Control of actions; Initiative in action; Sphere of the will; Control over actions*

Second, we must bring an equally logical consistency into our actions - this is the practice of the control of actions. Any instability and disharmony in our actions injures the development of the **twelve-petalled lotus flower**. Therefore, each of our actions should follow logically from whatever action came before. If we act today out of different principles than we did yesterday, we shall never develop the lotus flower in question. (A)

Initiative in action. You must compel yourself to some action, however trivial, which owes its origin to your own Initiative, to some task you have laid on yourself. Most actions derive not from your own initiative but from your family circumstances, your education, your calling and so on. You must therefore give up a little time to performing actions which derive from yourself alone. They need not be important; quite insignificant actions fulfil the same purpose. (B)

When this exercise has been practised for, say, one month, a second requirement should be added. We try to think of some action which in the ordinary course of life we should certainly not have performed. Then we make it a duty to perform this action every day. It will therefore be good to choose an action which can be performed every day and will occupy as long a period of time as possible. Again, it is better to begin with some insignificant action which we have to force ourselves to perform; for example, to water at a fixed time every day a flower we have bought. After a certain time a second, similar act should be added to the first; later, a third, and so on...as many as are compatible with the carrying out of all other duties. This exercise, also, should last for one month. But as far as possible during this second month, too, the first exercise should continue, although it is a less paramount duty than in the first month. Nevertheless, it must not be left unheeded, for otherwise it will quickly be noticed that the fruits of the first month are lost and the slovenliness of uncontrolled thinking begins again. Care must be taken that once these fruits have been won, they are never again lost. If, through the second exercise, this initiative of action has been achieved, then, with subtle attentiveness, we become conscious of the feeling of an inner impulse of activity in the soul; we pour this feeling into the body, letting it stream down from the head to a point just



above the heart. (C)

As in the world of thought, so also in the sphere of the will, the self has to become master. Here too, as long as we remain in the world of the physical senses, life itself may be said to be our master. Some vital need asserts itself and the will feels impelled to satisfy the need. But one who undergoes a higher training has to acquire the habit of strict obedience to what they tell themselves to do on their own initiative. In learning this they will be less and less inclined to cherish pointless desires. Dissatisfaction and instability in the life of will come from setting one's heart on some aim, of the realization of which one has formed no clear notion. Dissatisfaction of this kind can bring the whole inner life into disorder at the moment when a higher self is ready to come forth from the soul. A good exercise for the will is, every day for months on end, to give oneself the command: To-day you are to do *this*, at this particular hour. One will gradually manage to fix the hour and the nature of the task so as to render the command perfectly possible to carry out. In this way we rise above that deplorable state of mind which finds expression in words such as: I would like to do this, I wish I could do that - when all the time there is no real expectation of fulfilment. A great poet made a prophetess say: '*Him I love who craves for the impossible.*' (Goethe: *Faust*, Part II, Act II) And the same poet says in his own name: '*To live in the Idea is to treat the impossible as though it were possible.*' (Goethe: *Proverbs in Prose*) Such words should however not be quoted as refuting the above recommendation. For the demand that Goethe and his prophetess (Manto) are making can only be met by one who has first educated themselves in the achievement of desires that *are* possible of fulfilment - in order then, by dint of their strengthened will, to be able to treat the 'impossible' in such a way as to change it by their will into the possible. (E)

Action. The second quality is to find a similar relationship to our actions, that is, to exercise control over our actions. Here it is necessary to undertake actions, at least occasionally, which are not initiated by anything external. That which is initiated by our station in life, our profession, or our situation does not lead us more deeply into higher life. Higher life depends on personal matters, such as resolving to do something springing totally from one's own initiative even if it is an absolutely insignificant matter. All other actions contribute nothing to the higher life. (F)

#3 Feeling / Equanimity – Mastery of Feeling

Keywords: *Cultivate perseverance; Tranquillity, Regulate his Emotions; World of Feeling; Even-tempereness*

Third, we must cultivate perseverance. As long as we consider a goal we have set ourselves to be right and worthy, we should never let any outside influence deter us from striving to reach it. We should consider obstacles as challenges to be overcome, not as reasons for giving up. (A)

Tranquillity. Here the pupil learns to regulate their emotions so that they are not at one moment up in the skies and at the next down in the dumps. Anyone who refuses to do this for fear of losing their originality in action or their artistic sensibility can never go through occult development. Tranquillity means that you are master of yourself in the most intense pleasure and in the deepest grief. Indeed, we become truly receptive to the joys and sorrows of the world only when we do not give ourselves over egotistically to them. The greatest artists owe their greatest achievements precisely to this tranquillity, because through it they have opened their eyes to subtle and inwardly significant impressions. (B)

In the third month, life should be centred on a new exercise - the development of a certain equanimity towards the fluctuations of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain; 'heights of jubilation' and 'depths of despair' should quite consciously be replaced by an equable mood. Care is taken that no pleasure shall carry us away, no sorrow plunges us into the depths, no experience lead to immoderate anger or vexation, no expectation give rise to anxiety or fear, no situation disconcerts us, and so on. There need be no fear that such an exercise will make life arid and unproductive; far rather will it quickly be noticed that the experiences to which this exercise is applied are replaced by purer qualities of soul. Above all, if subtle attentiveness is maintained, an inner tranquillity in the body will one day become noticeable; as in the two cases above, we pour this feeling into the body, letting it stream from the heart towards the hands, the feet and, finally, the head. This naturally cannot be done after each exercise, for here it is not a matter of one single exercise but of sustained attentiveness to the inner life of the soul. Once every day, at least, this inner tranquillity should be called up before the soul and then the exercise of pouring it out from the heart should proceed. A connection with the exercises of the first



and second months is maintained, as in the second month with the exercise of the first month. (C)

Passing on now to the *world of feeling*, the pupil must succeed in reaching a certain *equanimity* of soul. For this they will need to have under their control all outward expression of pleasure or pain, of joy or sorrow. Such advice will be certain to meet with prejudice. Surely, if they are not to rejoice over what is joyful, not to sorrow over what is sorrowful, the pupil will become utterly indifferent to the life that is going on around them! But this is not at all what is meant. The pupil shall by all means rejoice over what is joyful and sorrow over what is sorrowful. It is the outward expression of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain that they must learn to control. If they honestly try to attain this, they will soon discover that they do not grow less, but actually more sensitive than before to everything in their environment that can arouse emotions of joy or of pain. If the pupil is really to succeed in cultivating this control, it will undoubtedly involve keeping close watch upon themselves for a long time. They must not be slow to enter with fullness of feeling into pleasure and pain, but must be able to do so without losing self-control and giving involuntary expression to it. What they have to suppress is not the pain - *that* is justified - but the involuntary weeping; not the horror at a base action, but the outburst of blind fury; not the caution in face of danger, but the giving way to panic - which does no good whatever.

Only by the practice of an exercise of this kind can the pupil attain the inner poise and quiet that they will have need of when the time comes for the higher self to be born in the soul, and more especially when this higher self becomes active there. Otherwise, the soul may lead an unhealthy life of its own alongside the higher self like a kind of double. It is important not to fall a victim to self-deception in this matter. It may seem to many a pupil that they already possess a good measure of equanimity in ordinary life and will not therefore need this exercise. In point of fact, such a one is doubly in need of it. A person may remain perfectly calm and composed in relation to the exigencies of everyday life, and then, when they rise into a higher world, exhibit a sad lack of poise - all the more so indeed, since the tendency to let themselves go was there all the time, only suppressed. It must be clearly understood that what a pupil *appears* to have already of some attribute of the soul is of little account for spiritual training; what is far more important is that they should practise

regularly and systematically the exercises they need. Contradictory as such a statement may sound, it is true nevertheless. Say that life has endowed us with this or that virtue; for spiritual training it is the virtues *we ourselves have cultivated* that are of value. Are we by nature easily excitable, it is for us to rid ourselves of this excitability; are we by nature calm and imperturbable, we must bestir ourselves to bring it about through our own self-education that the impressions we receive from without awake in us the right response. A person who cannot laugh has just as little control over their life as someone who without self-control is perpetually giving way to laughter. (E)

Equanimity. The third quality to be striven for is *even-temperedness*. People fluctuate back and forth between joy and sorrow. One moment they are beside themselves with joy, the next they are unbearably sad. Thus, people allow themselves to be rocked on the waves of life, on joy or sorrow. But they must reach equanimity and steadiness. Neither the greatest sorrow nor the greatest joy must unsettle their composure. They must become steadfast and even-tempered. (F)

#4 Positivity

Keywords: *Forbearance or tolerance; Freedom from prejudice; Positive attitude to life; Thinking into feeling; Positiveness; Understanding for every being; Thinking together with willing, Open-minded receptivity; Understanding for every being*

Fourth, we must develop *forbearance (or tolerance)* toward other people, other beings, and events. We must suppress all unnecessary criticism of imperfection, evil, and wickedness and seek rather to understand everything that comes to meet us. Just as the sun does not withdraw its light from wickedness and evil, so we, too, should not withdraw our understanding and sympathy from anyone. When we meet adversity, we should not indulge in negative judgments but accept the inevitable and try, as best we can, to turn it to the good. Similarly, instead of considering the opinions of others only from our own standpoint, we should try to put ourselves into their position. (A)

Freedom from prejudice. This, the fourth characteristic, sees good in every-



thing and looks for the positive element in all things. Relevant to this is a Persian legend told of Christ Jesus. One day Christ Jesus saw a dead dog lying by the wayside; he stopped to look at the animal while those around him turned away in disgust. Then Jesus said: "*What beautiful teeth the dog has!*" In that hideous corpse he saw not what was ugly or evil but the beauty of the white teeth. If you can acquire this mood, you will look everywhere for the good and the positive, and you will find it everywhere. This has a powerful effect on the physical and etheric bodies. **(B)**

In the fourth month, as a new exercise, what is sometimes called a 'positive attitude' to life should be cultivated. It consists in seeking always for the good, the praiseworthy, the beautiful and the like, in all beings, all experiences, all things. This quality of soul is best characterised by a Persian legend concerning Christ Jesus. One day, as He was walking with His disciples, they saw a dead dog lying by the roadside in a state of advanced decomposition. All the disciples turned away from the disgusting sight; Christ Jesus alone did not move but looked thought-fully at the corpse and said: '*What beautiful teeth the animal has!*' Where the others had seen only the repulsive, the unpleasant, He looked for the beautiful. So must the esoteric pupil strive to seek for the positive in every phenomenon and in every being. They will soon notice that under the veil of something repugnant there is a hidden beauty, that even under the outer guise of a criminal there is a hidden good, that under the mask of a lunatic the divine soul is somehow concealed.

In a certain respect this exercise is connected with what is called '*abstention from criticism*'. This is not to be understood in the sense of calling black white and white black. There is, however, a difference between a judgement which, proceeding merely from one's own personality, is coloured with the element of personal sympathy or antipathy, and an attitude which enters lovingly into the alien phenomenon or being, always asking: How has it come to be like this or to act like this? Such an attitude will by its very nature be more set upon helping what is imperfect than upon simply finding fault and criticising.

The objection that the very circumstances of their lives oblige many people to find fault and condemn is not valid here. For in such cases the circumstances are such that the person in question cannot go through a genuine occult training. There are indeed many circumstances in life which make occult schooling

impossible, beyond a certain point. In such a case the person should not impatiently desire, in spite of everything, to make progress which is possible only under some conditions.

They who consciously turn their mind, for one month, to the positive aspect of all their experiences will gradually notice a feeling creeping into them as if their skin were becoming porous on all sides, and as if their soul were opening wide to all kinds of secret and delicate processes in their environment which hitherto entirely escaped their notice. The important point is to combat a very prevalent lack of attentiveness to these subtle things. If it has once been noticed that the feeling described expresses itself in the soul as a kind of bliss, endeavours should be made in thought to guide this feeling to the heart and from there to let it stream into the eyes, and thence out into the space in front of and around oneself. It will be noticed that an intimate relationship to this surrounding space is thereby acquired. A person grows out of and beyond themselves, as it were. They learn to regard a part of their environment as something that belongs to them. A great deal of concentration is necessary for this exercise, and, above all, recognition of the fact that all tumultuous feelings, all passions, all over-exuberant emotions have an absolutely destructive effect upon the mood indicated. The exercises of the first months are repeated, as with the earlier months. **(C)**

It will be a further help to the education of their thinking and feeling, if the pupil acquires a virtue that I will call positiveness. A lovely legend is related of Christ Jesus. It tells how He is walking with a few other persons, and they pass by a dead dog. The others turn away from the revolting sight. Christ Jesus speaks admiringly of the beautiful teeth of the animal. One can train oneself to meet the world with the disposition of soul that this legend displays. The spurious, the bad and the ugly should not hinder us from finding, wherever they are present, the true, the good and the beautiful. Positiveness must not be confused with lack of discrimination, or with an arbitrary shutting of one's eyes to what is bad, or false, or 'good for nothing'. They who admire the 'beautiful teeth' of a dead animal see also the decaying body. The unsightly corpse does not, however, prevent them from seeing the beautiful teeth. We cannot deem a bad thing good or an error true; but we can take care not to be put off by the bad from seeing the good, nor by the false from seeing the true. **(E)**

Positivity. Fourth is the understanding for every being. Nothing expresses



more beautifully what it means to understand every being than the legend, which is handed down to us, not by the gospel, but by a Persian story. Jesus was walking across a field with his disciples, and on the way they found a decaying dog. The animal looked horrible. Jesus stopped and cast an admiring look upon it, saying, *'What a beautiful teeth the animal has!'* Jesus found within the ugly the one beautiful aspect. Strive at all times to approach what is wonderful in every object of outer reality, and you will see that everything contains an aspect that can be confirmed. Do as Christ did when He admired the beautiful teeth on the dead dog. This course will lead you to the great ability to tolerate, and to an understanding of everything and of every being. (F)

#5 Open-mindedness / Faith

Keywords: *Openness and impartiality; Faith or trust; Complete open-mindedness; Thinking, together with the willing; Complete openness*

Fifth, we must develop **openness and impartiality** toward all the phenomena of life. This is sometimes called **faith or trust**. We must learn to approach every person, every being, with trust. Such trust or confidence must inspire all our actions. We should never say, in reply to something said to us, *"I don't believe that because it contradicts the opinion I have already formed."* Rather, when faced with something new, we must always be willing to test our opinions and views and revise them if necessary. We must always remain receptive to whatever approaches us. We should trust in the effectiveness of whatever we undertake. All doubt and timidity should be banished from our being. If we have a goal, we must have faith in the power of our goal. Even a hundred failures should not be able to take this faith from us. This is the *"faith that can move mountains."* (A)

Faith. Next comes faith, which in its occult sense implies something rather different from its ordinary meaning. During occult development you must never allow your judgement of the future to be influenced by the past. Under certain circumstances you must exclude all that you have experienced hitherto, so that you can meet every new experience with new faith. The occultist must do this quite consciously. For instance, if someone comes up to you and tells you that the church steeple is crooked and at an angle of 45 degrees, most people

would say that is impossible. The occultist must always leave a way open to believe. They must go so far as to have faith in everything that happens in the world; otherwise, they bar the way to new experiences. You must always be open to new experiences; by this means your physical and etheric bodies will be brought into a condition which may be compared with the contented mood of a broody hen. (B)

In the fifth month, efforts should be made to develop the feeling of confronting every new experience with **complete open-mindedness**. The esoteric pupil must break entirely with the attitude which, in the face of something just heard or seen, exclaims: *"I never heard that, or I never saw that, before; I don't believe it-it's an illusion."* At every moment they must be ready to encounter and accept absolutely new experiences. What they have hitherto recognised as being in accordance with natural law, or what they have regarded as possible, should present no obstacle to the acceptance of a new truth. Although radically expressed, it is absolutely correct that if anyone were to come to the esoteric pupil and say, "Since last night the steeple of such and such a church has been tilted right over", the esotericist should leave a loophole open for the contingency of their becoming convinced that their previous knowledge of natural law could somehow be augmented by such an apparently unprecedented fact.

If they turn their attention, in the fifth month, to developing this attitude of mind, they will notice creeping into their soul a feeling as if something were becoming alive, astir, in the space referred to in connection with the exercise for the fourth month. This feeling is exceedingly delicate and subtle. Efforts must be made to be attentive to this delicate vibration in the environment and to let it stream, as it were, through all the five senses, especially through the eyes, the ears and through the skin, in so far as the latter contains the sense of warmth. At this stage of esoteric development, less attention is paid to the impressions made by these stimuli on the other senses of taste, smell and touch. At this stage it is still not possible to distinguish the numerous bad influences which intermingle with the good influences in this sphere; the pupil therefore leaves this for a later stage. (C)

The **thinking, and** together with it the **willing**, reaches a certain maturity if one tries never to let past experiences rob one of **open-minded receptivity** for new ones. To declare in the face of some new experience: *'I never heard of such a*



thing, I don't believe it! should make no sense at all to a pupil of the Spirit. Rather let them make the deliberate resolve, during a certain period of time to let everything or being they encounter tell them something new. A breath of wind, a leaf falling from a tree, the prattle of a little child, can all teach us something, are we but ready to adopt a point of view to which we have perhaps not hitherto been accustomed. One can, it is true, carry this too far. We must not, at whatever age we have reached, put right out of our minds everything we have experienced hitherto. We have most decidedly to base our judgement of what confronts us now upon past experience. That is on the one side of the balance, but on the other, there is the need for the pupil of the Spirit to be ready all the time for entirely new experiences; above all, to admit to themselves the possibility that the new may contradict the old.

These then are five qualities of soul the pupil has to acquire in the course of a right and proper training: control over the direction of their thoughts, control of their impulses of will, equanimity in the face of pleasure and pain, positiveness in their attitude to the world around them, readiness to meet life with an open mind. Lastly, when they have spent consecutive periods of time in training themselves for the acquisition of these five qualities, the pupil will need to bring them into harmony in their soul. They will have to practise them in manifold combinations - two by two, three and one at a time, and so on, in order to establish harmony among them. **(E)**

Faith. The fifth quality is complete openness towards everything new that meets us. Most people judge new things which meet them, by the old they already know. If anyone comes to tell them something new, they immediately respond with an opposing opinion. We must rather be on the alert for possibilities of learning something new. And learn we can even from the small child. Even if one were the wisest person, one must be willing to hold back one's own judgement, and to listen to others. We must develop this ability to listen, for it will enable us to meet matters with the greatest possible openness. In occultism, this is called faith. It is the power not to weaken through opposition the impression made by the new. **(F)**

#6 Harmony / Inner Balance

Keywords: *balance in life (or serenity); Inner Balance; equilibrium of soul; against blemishes and shortcomings in one's soul, find in the exercises the means of strengthening and stabilising thought life, feeling life and indeed the whole character; inner harmony*

Sixth, we must achieve a certain balance in life (or serenity). As esoteric students, we should strive to maintain a mood of inner harmony whether joy or sorrow comes to meet us. We should lose the habit of swinging between being "up one minute and down the next." Instead, we should be as prepared to deal with misfortune and danger as with joy and good fortune. **(A)**

Inner Balance. This is a natural outcome of the other five qualities. The pupil must keep the six qualities in mind, take their life in hand, and be prepared to progress slowly in the sense of the proverb about drops of water wearing away a stone. **(B)**

In the sixth month, endeavours should be made to repeat all the five exercises again, systematically and in regular alternation. In this way a beautiful equilibrium of soul will gradually develop. It will be noticed, especially, that previous dissatisfactions with certain phenomena and beings in the world completely disappear. A mood reconciling all experiences takes possession of the soul, a mood that is by no means one of indifference but, on the contrary, enables one for the first time to work in the world for its genuine progress and improvement. One comes to a tranquil understanding of things which were formerly quite closed to the soul. The very movements and gestures of a person change under the influence of such exercises, and if, one day, they can actually observe that the character of their handwriting has altered, then they may say to themselves that they are just about to reach a first rung on the upward path. **(C)**

These exercises have been assigned a place in spiritual training, because when thoroughly and effectually carried out they have not only their more immediate result in the cultivation of the desired qualities, but indirectly a great deal more will follow from them that is of no less importance for the pupil on their path to the spiritual worlds. Whoever gives sufficient time and care to their practice will, whilst they are doing them, come up against many blemishes and shortcomings in their soul, and will moreover find in the exercises themselves



the means of strengthening and stabilising their thought life, as well as their life of feeling and indeed their whole character. They will undoubtedly need many more exercises, adapted to their own individual faculties, to their particular character and temperament. These will emerge when the above have been practised in all thoroughness. One will indeed discover, as time goes on, that these six exercises give one indirectly more than at first appears to be contained in them. Suppose the pupil is lacking in self-confidence. They will after a time begin to notice that, thanks to the exercises, they are gaining the self-confidence of which they stand in need. And it will be the same with other qualities of soul wherein they may be deficient. (Special exercises, described in more detail, will be found in my book *Knowledge of the higher Worlds and its Attainment.*) (E)

Harmony. The sixth quality is that which everyone receives once they have developed the first five. It is **inner harmony**. The person who has the other qualities also has inner harmony. In addition, it is necessary for a person seeking occult development to develop their feeling for freedom to the highest degree. That feeling of freedom enables them to seek within themselves the centre of their own being, to stand on their own feet, so that they will not have to ask everyone what they should do and so that they can stand upright and act freely. This is also a quality which one needs to acquire. (F)

Endings

The reader familiar with spiritual scientific literature will recognize in the practice of these six qualities the so-called "six attributes" that a person seeking initiation has to develop. They are mentioned now because of their relationship to the development of the sense organ of the soul called the **twelve-petalled lotus flower**. Esoteric training may also provide special instructions for bringing this lotus flower to maturity. But here again the fashioning of a regular form for the sense organ depends upon the development of the qualities or attributes already described. If we ignore the cultivation of these qualities, then this organ will be distorted into a caricature of itself. A certain faculty of seeing may be developed in the process, but as a result of distortion any of the six attributes may be transformed and become bad rather than good. We may

become intolerant, fearful, and negative toward our surroundings. For example, we may become sensitive to other people's soul mood and mentality and for this reason avoid or dislike them. This may even go so far that coldness floods our soul whenever we hear opinions contrary to our own with the result that we cannot listen to them or respond belligerently. (A)

Now if anyone acquires higher powers through some artificial means without attending to all this, they will be in a bad way. In ordinary life today the spiritual and the physical are intermingled, somewhat like a blue and yellow liquid in a glass of water. Occult development gets going a process rather like the work of a chemist who separates the two liquids. Soul and body are separated in a similar way, and the benefits of the mingling are lost. An ordinary person, because the soul stays in close relation to the body, is not subjected to the more grotesque passions. But as a result of the separation, I have been talking about, the physical body, with all its attributes, may be left to itself, and this can lead to all manner of excesses. Thus, someone who has embarked on occult development, but has not taken care to cultivate moral qualities, may manifest certain traits which as an ordinary person they had long ago ceased to exhibit. They may suddenly become a liar, vengeful, quick to anger; all sorts of characteristics which had previously been toned down may appear in a violent form. This may happen even if someone who has neglected moral development becomes unduly absorbed in the teachings of Theosophy. (B)

Once again, two things must be stressed: First, the six exercises described paralyse the harmful influence other occult exercises can have, so that only what is beneficial remains. Secondly, these exercises alone ensure that efforts in meditation and concentration will have a positive result. The esotericist must not rest content with fulfilling, however conscientiously, the demands of conventional morality, for that kind of morality can be extremely egotistical, if someone says: *I will be good in order that I may be thought good*. The esotericist does not do what is good because they want to be thought good, but because little by little they recognise that the good alone brings evolution forward, and that evil, stupidity and ugliness place hindrances along its path. (C)

It is important that the pupil shall find it possible to go on developing the said six qualities in ever increasing measure. Their control over their thoughts and sensations must become great enough to enable them to set aside times of



complete inner quiet, when all the joys and sorrows, all the satisfactions and anxieties of everyday life - nay more, even all its tasks and demands are banished from mind and heart. In such times that alone which they themselves will to admit shall -be allowed entry to their soul. Here again it is possible that some reader may feel misgiving. Will not the pupil become estranged from daily life and its tasks, if they withdraw from it in this way, banishing it from mind and heart for certain stated times during the day? In reality, however, this is far from being so. One who devotes themselves in this way to periods of inner quiet, will find that they grow stronger in many respects for the tasks of daily life, and fulfils them, not only no less well, but decidedly better than before.

Such periods will have special value for the pupil if during them they refrain entirely from thinking of their own personal affairs and rise to the contemplation of the concerns of humanity at large. Should they be able at such times to fill their soul with communications that come from higher spiritual worlds, letting these take no less firm hold upon their interest than do their personal cares and concerns in ordinary life, they will be richly rewarded.

One who makes serious endeavour to gain this mastery over their life of soul will also find their way to a self-observation by means of which they will be able to regard their own concerns as coolly and quietly as if they had no connection with themselves. To be able to look upon all experiences that come to one in life, all joys and sorrows, in the very same way as one looks upon those of others is a good preparation for spiritual training. **(E)**

If a person has developed these qualities within themselves, then they stand above all the dangers arising from the division within their nature. Then the properties of their lower nature cannot longer affect them; they can no longer stray from the path. Therefore, these qualities must be formed with the greatest precision. **(F)**

Exercises in Daily Life

Here is a possible implementation of these Exercises in daily life. Have a copy of the exercises in a file for your regular meetings.

At the beginning of the meeting, take a brief glance at the Exercises.

Decide (individually and silently) on one to practice as an attitude during the meeting.

After the meeting look back and ask yourself where and when you succeeded,



where and when you failed, what the objective and subjective differences were.

1. Thinking – Mastery of Thinking

To rid oneself of "will-o-the-wisp thoughts;" to be aware of the red thread of the subject discussed.

Contribute in such a way that it either does not disappear or that one gets back to it.

- In speaking, contributing –
 - Contribute with a clear train of thoughts
 - Precise wording and presentation
- In listening, observing -
 - Follow presented thoughts and ideas with own thinking
 - In case of distractions, follow the chain of thoughts backwards and re-connect.

2. Willing activity and holding back – Mastery of Will

Observe your own presence in relation to the group. Do you tend to remain silent? Do you tend to talk too much?

Try to activate yourself if you discover that you are holding back an important contribution for the group because you cannot overcome your fear to speak. Hold yourself back in order to make space for others, who might sit with important contributions.

Where and when do we find it difficult to be active or difficult to hold back?

- Dived consciously to enter into and contribute
- Conscious withholding.

3. Feeling / Equanimity (Balance) – Mastery of Feeling

Observe your soul's response to what is going on. Try to become aware of the flow of your sympathy and antipathy, then let the issue as such be the centre of attention (in a conversation, for example). Cultivate an equanimity towards fluctuations of feeling and reactions. This is not suppression of sympathy/antipathy, it is learning from these.

- Active inner quietness ('calm inner lake')
- In charge of spontaneous inner reactions.

4. Positivity – Thoughts into Feeling

Try to find in every contribution something positive, particularly when you do not agree with what is said. What 'good' could emerge from a situation?

- Finding 'the good' in every contribution.
- Good-will.

5. Open-mindedness / Faith Will into Thoughts

Listen really to what the other person is saying. Find out by listening if the other person is finished speaking or wants to add something Listen to what the other one is trying to express even if they might not be able to find the words they need. Listen to what is behind the pronounced things. This is also the task of confronting every new experience with complete impartiality and to become open-minded.

- Perceiving and welcoming the new.
- Appreciation and acknowledgment of its importance.
- Willingness for learning and development.

6. Harmony / Inner Balance

The working together of the previous 5 exercises – Balance of Thinking, Feeling, Willing



Chapter 4 – Optional Readings



Reading 5 – Optional | Course for Young Doctors – Esoteric Development

Rudolf Steiner, *Course for Young Doctors* GA316, Dornach, Lecture 4, 5 January 1924. Edited by Laura Summerfield using gender inclusive language. Some headings have been added by Karl-Heinz Finke to facilitate reading and understanding.

This Lecture provides a helpful overview of what is needed to practice a profession or vocation in terms of self-development. We suggest that you read this, not to learn more about Anthroposophic medicine (although this may be a helpful side effect), but to understand the archetype that Steiner indicates that deepens our work in the world.

In the three previous Lectures I have tried to give you an outline of the kind of knowledge that should serve as a foundation for physicians. Owing to the very brief time at our disposal, it has only been the merest sketch. But you will have realized that to speak in detail would need considerable time. The kind of knowledge I have given as a foundation for medicine would constitute, as it were, a first course which would take at least a year and longer still if that were possible. It is impossible for me to do more than give a general description of these things, so *I should like you to regard what I have said in the three previous lectures as a sketch of **what a physician ought to have as a basis**. Let me call it the **exoteric side** of medical knowledge, and it ought really to be followed by the **esoteric side**, of which we will speak now.*

This esoteric side must be built upon the foundation of the exoteric knowledge. In your medical studies you must not be too proud to master the exoteric side; you must master this with all earnestness. It is difficult at the present time, but, as we shall see, much will be achieved in this direction by the establishment of the Medical Section here at Dornach.

After all, it is possible now to expand the short sketch that has been given by many details contained in my lecture courses and writings. Up to now, very little has been done in this direction and the work will only begin to develop in the real sense of anthroposophical medicine when this work that I am preparing with the help of Frau Dr. Wegman comes to the fore. It will then be apparent that Anthroposophy can give a great stimulus to medicine and medical studies. *But you must realize quite clearly that medicine is a very special kind of study, with definite preliminary requirements — a study in which the results of Spiritual Science simply cannot be ignored. **There can be no true medicine***

*without the knowledge that results from Spiritual Science. The chaotic conditions prevailing today are due to the fact that the current trend of study and knowledge is utterly unsuited to medicine. **We have a science of nature that has found its way even into theology, a science that is suited only to technical purposes and not at all to a real knowledge of the human being. This science is not able to impart a true knowledge of our nature.** Medical science in the real sense demands something quite special and you will realize that this is so when I come to speak of how the human being really comes into existence.*

*I spoke yesterday from the exoteric side and will now make the **transition to the esoteric aspect**: external substances are, in reality, processes. Salt is only a precipitation of processes; the magnesium process, the iron process are processes which exist outside in nature. The lead and mercury processes are processes in external nature which the human being cannot have within his physical organism. For all that, it is only in outward semblance that these processes are not within the human being.*

How does the human being come into existence? The physical germ comes into being through fertilization and there must be a union between this physical germ and the etheric body of the human being. But fertilization does not create the etheric body. The etheric body forms around what are, later on, I-organization and astral organization, in order to receive the being of spirit and soul who comes down from the spiritual worlds, the being who has been living in pre-earthly existence. The real kernel of the human being is of the spirit and soul. It has come firstly, from earlier incarnations, secondly, from the period between death and rebirth, and has been in existence long before any fertilization takes place. This kernel of spirit and soul exists before a connection is made with the physical germ cell which is the result of fertilization. It unites, first, with the etheric body which in turn unites with the physical embryo. 'I',



astral organization, etheric organization — this trinity unites with what comes into being through the physical fertilization. You must regard the etheric body as something that is built in from out of the cosmos. Now at the time when the etheric body first unites with the physical organization it contains within itself the forces which are not suitable for the physical organization, namely, the lead forces, the tin forces and so on. It is only in semblance that the human being is not a complete microcosm because certain substances are not within them physically. The substances that are not contained in the physical organism of the human being are of the greatest importance for the constitution of the etheric body, and in the etheric body, before it unites with the physical body, there are lead processes, tin processes, mercury processes, and so on.

And now the etheric body (and the other members, too, of course) unite with the physical body. All the forces derived by the etheric body from the substances that are not contained within the physical body now pass over to the astral body — this happens to a slight degree during the embryonic period but in a high degree when the real breathing begins at birth. The etheric body then takes on those forces which the physical body works up within itself. Thus the etheric body passes through a very significant metamorphosis. It takes on the content and constitution of the physical body and gives over to the astral body its own constitution, its relationship with the environment of the human being. *The astral body is now inwardly linked with what the human being is capable of knowing, and the moment you begin, my dear friends, to acquire not merely a theoretical but a true and inwardly digested medical knowledge—in that moment you make alive within you the knowledge that is already within the astral body. It is there, but it remains unconscious, and it is, in reality, a knowledge of the human being's relationship with their environment.*

Let me take a special case. Think of some district that is depressing — on account of the soil containing gneiss and the mineral known to you as mica. Mica has a very strong influence on the physical constitution of a person who is born in such a district. The physical body is different in a district where there is much mica. The mica forces work upon the physical body from out of the soil. Now you will find that many rhododendrons grow in districts where the soil contains a great deal of mica. This plant grows plentifully in the Alps and in Siberia and so forth. The rhododendron substance is something that is intimately connected with the etheric body before it comes down into the physical body in

such regions. This relationship with the rhododendron the ether body gives over to the astral body. And now, suppose that illnesses occur which are due to a preponderating working of the mica by way of the ground water. The etheric body has given over what came to it from the rhododendron to the astral body. This element is present externally, in the rhododendron plants. This indicates that the rhododendron contains a sap that has a remedial effect upon this illness. In many cases, though not in all, a specific remedy is to be found in regions where particular illnesses occur.

[Night Learning]

And now suppose you are a physician. Every night when you go to sleep, you pass, in your astral body, into the environment which was once connected with the etheric body but is now connected with the astral body. If you have medical knowledge, if you know what healing forces exist in the environment, that knowledge becomes experience during sleep, and so you have continually the confirmation of what you learn, externally, through dialectics. And this factor must be reckoned with in medical study, because no outer dialectic learning of medical science really helps. It becomes fragmentary and chaotic if there cannot arise during every sleep, within the span of the astral body, the confirmation that is necessary. If medical knowledge is not acquired in such a way that the astral body, in the intercourse with the environment, is able to say "Yes" to what the student has learned, it is just as if they were listening to something that they cannot understand and only confuses them. So you see, medical knowledge is intimately connected with the sleeping state.

[Developing the true desire to help – The Will to Heal]

*Such things convince us that **medical knowledge must be acquired by the whole human being**, by the human being as a living, feeling being, for together with this 'nightly' intercourse with the healing substances, something else grows up, something that can never be acquired through dialectic — I mean, **the true desire to help**. Without the sincere desire to heal, the feeling of sympathy on the part of the physician with the person he has to cure, without this strong desire to give personal help, no healing in the real sense is possible.*

[Attitudes]

And here I must say something that may seem very strange and paradoxical, but as you want to know in what way things are wrong today and what ought to be done, I must say it, for in Dornach we are working from esoteric impulses.



People have often said to me that steps might have to be taken to protect the remedies that are prepared in our pharmaceutical laboratory, so that they shall not be copied by other people. I once replied that I was not so very anxious about this, provided we succeeded in bringing true esoteric impulses into our medical work. Then people will realize that the remedies are made with an esoteric background, and that it is not the same if the remedies are made here, with the esoteric life behind the work, or whether some factory copies them. This may seem very strange, but it is true nevertheless. *Much more important than protecting things by business devices is the **growth of an attitude which aims at making the remedies effective from out of the Spiritual.** This is not superstition — it is something that can be substantiated in Spiritual Science.* Therefore, people possessed of understanding will begin to realize that with the taking of remedies that are produced here, a beginning has been made in the right direction.

Such objections as have been made to me are due to the fact that people do not realize in the least how seriously the esoteric, spiritual life must be taken, above all, in medicine. If you once grasp this, you see that a centre for medicine must be instituted here as a reality, not as a mere formality.

[The esoteric merges medical knowledge into what is a true medical consciousness, a true medical attitude]

And now you will understand that a first, exoteric course of medical study should be followed by a second which approaches the human being esoterically, which merges medical knowledge into what becomes a true medical consciousness, a true medical attitude. There have, of course, always been individuals who sought instinctively for this. And in the last third of the nineteenth century, at a time when there was so little that was capable of producing this attitude, one could see, but only in isolated individuals who were then regarded as cranks, *sporadic manifestations of this medical consciousness.* The basis of the reputation enjoyed by the Viennese School of Medicine at the time when I was growing up was connected with its attitude to therapy, where the actual therapy hardly mattered at all, especially treatment of pneumonia, an illness where one can do very little for the central disease itself. You have all heard of medical nihilism, and this is its origin. The most eminent physicians in Vienna were deliberate advocates of medical nihilism. In other words, they

held the point of view that no remedy heals. To a certain extent, Rudolf Virchow (1821–1902), too, held this view. His view was: If a hundred patients are said to have been cured, one can assume with fifty percent of them that it did not matter whether they had been given a remedy or not; they would have got well without it; with 30 percent it could be said that the remedy had done actual harm; and with the remainder, chance might have brought it about that the remedy selected had helped. It is not I who make this statement, but Virchow, who had a great reputation in the medical world last century. I know eminent men today, too, who adhere to this view, although they may be advocates of therapy. *No true medical consciousness is expressed in this view. Medical consciousness can never be regarded as a merely formal attitude. It must be a reality. Therefore, the second medical course would have to contain the human aspect that is built up on the basis of the exoteric material. There must be that **human factor** that worked, in a somewhat degenerate form, but, for all that so magnificently and attractively, in a person like **Paracelsus.***

Certainly, objections to Paracelsus can be made in certain details, but this medical consciousness lived in him, in a splendid way. Whenever he came to a district where the soil was strikingly red, he knew that a number of diseases — especially those that are due to diseases of the blood — were caused by the red sandstone in the soil. {Translator's note: The word in the German is the name of a substance described as a system of sandstone, shale and conglomerates of the lower terrain of Germany.}

The way in which a process of illness develops is very characteristic. We find that the people living in a district where there is this red sandstone soil have accustomed themselves to this soil and have a certain characteristic temperament. They have a very lively activity of the spleen. Coming as a stranger to the district, one does not easily take a liking to them. They are frightfully stubborn, dogmatic, obstinate, and when one considers what they do to be foolish — they just return the 'compliment!' But suppose a stranger comes and wants to set up a business or something of the kind. He cannot stand the soil, especially not the water, and he will show certain symptoms of illness. Paracelsus said that illnesses which are contracted in such a district are then passed on to the natives who are born there. He said that something must be present in the etheric body (which he calls the 'Archaeus'). He said that the 'Archaeus' must



have undergone something before it entered the embryo. Now in these districts we always find that laburnums are prevalent and in the blossoms, leaves and sometimes also in the roots of the laburnum there is a fluid which can provide a very useful remedy.

[Wisdom and understanding is coming from direct intercourse with nature, love of nature]

What is important is to unfold a quite different perception of nature through this medical consciousness. In my young days I knew a physician whom one often met in the meadows and fields — among the plants and insects and flowers. In the place where he carried on an unpretentious practice, there were three or four very learned men. But the work of this unpretentious physician who had such a love for the wildflowers in the meadows was much more fruitful for the sick people than that of the city physician and the other learned men. Their wisdom came from the schools, but his wisdom and understanding of remedies came from that direct intercourse with nature which leads to a real medical knowledge when we can love nature, in all her details. To look at fragments of nature under the microscope is not to love her. We must love nature. We must all be able to expand her to the macrocosmic. This shows you how necessary it is to call up this subconscious life of the astral body, particularly for medical knowledge, to call it up in reality.

It is not at all my wish to revive the stock-in-trade of ancient medicine, my dear friends, but only to lay before you the results of present-day observation. One is obliged to resort to the terminology of ancient tradition, because neither modern language nor modern medical terminology contain the right expressions. It might even be more favourable for the spreading of our views if we were to devise an altogether new terminology. But that would take years, and as you want to hear about these things now, I shall have to use the old expressions with certain modifications.

[Study of plant life for an esoteric deepening]

*It will be a good thing to look, first of all, at the plant world — not because I want to recommend plant remedies for everything, but because **much can be learned from the plants, above all for an esoteric deepening.***

It is very important to study three things connected with medical tradition, but not to study them in the way that is current in present-day science. When a

student has learned something of today, they know it and they think: Well, that's all right, I know it and I can apply it. But a religiously-minded person learns the Lord's Prayer. They, too, know it, but they do not think that the mere fact of knowing it is sufficient. They say it every day as a prayer. What they know, they pray, every day. They let what they know pass through their soul every day, and that is a very different matter — very different, indeed.

Or think of an Initiate. We presuppose that they know the elements of occult science. They themselves attach no importance to the mere fact of knowing them, to the fact that they once assimilated them. They know that it is much more important to let the very first rudiments and then all that follows flow through their soul from time to time so that their soul can always be receiving new forces of inspiration. *A person who is fundamentally religious has quite different experiences from one who merely regards nature as something that is there before us in the physical world. We must live in the rhythms of nature again and again if we desire a living and not a dead kind of knowledge. There must be constant, rhythmic repetition of knowledge and the activity of knowledge. That is what I mean when I say that a real medical consciousness must be the basis for medical science. The acquisition of medical knowledge from the nature of the human being and from their environment — that is what is so important, in therapy as well. Again and again you must let the plants really come to life in the soul.*

[Example for a Plant Study aiming to acquire medical knowledge]

*Three things are of particular significance in the plant. (1) One is the scent that is connected with the oils. The scent, or aromatic element is that which attracts certain elementary spirits who like to come down into plants. The activity (not the substance) which underlies this aromatic nature, is to be found, in its most concentrated form, in the mineral kingdom, in **sulphur**. This spiritual extract that is active in the aroma of the plants gives rise to a kind of longing in the elementary beings who come down through the scent. In ancient medicine, this element was known as the **sulfuric nature of the plants**. If we contemplate the sulfuric nature of the plants we can acquire an understanding for their scent, if we know that something spiritual is in play above and below when the plant gives off its scent. That is the first thing.*

A (2) second thing that we acquire is an inner feeling-filled understanding of

what is growing in the leaf. The form and character of leaves is so manifold; they may be serrated, with pointed or round ends, geniculated, and so forth. *We should evolve a delicate perception of this leaf nature of the plants. For those spiritual beings who come down through the scent can draw life from this leaf nature. And streaming from the cosmic periphery inwards, there is everywhere the striving to the drop formation. This can give you a marvellous feeling for the cosmic, form-loving principle that is contained in the leaf.* And then, think of the plant covered with glistening drops of dew in the morning. In their essential nature these drops of dew are a reflection of the striving of the cosmic periphery to produce the spherical form, the drop form in the plant kingdom. The principle of drop formation is at the basis of the leaf nature in the plant. If the peripheric, cosmic forces alone were spiritually active in the plant, it would always produce this spherical form. The spherical formation is particularly to the fore when the cosmic forces get the upper hand in the formation of berries, also in the formation of many leaves, but the drop formation here is immediately taken possession of by the earthly forces, and manifold forms arise.

This **striving towards drop formation** is concentrated, in the mineral world, in **quicksilver**. Therefore, ancient medicine called this '*striving towards drop formation*', the **Mercurial** principle. In ancient medicine, Mercury was not the substance of quicksilver but the dynamic striving towards the drop formation.

On the earth, quicksilver is the metal which has the drop form because the conditions for this exist. On the earth, quicksilver has the form which silver has on the moon, where it would also have to exist in the drop form. The point is that ancient medicine called everything that had the drop form Mercury. All metals were also 'Mercury' in ancient medicine. This ancient medicine had living, mobile concepts, and we, too, must develop them. *We must gradually grow into a frame of mind which makes us say: "When I walk over the fields in the morning and see the silver pearls of dew on the leaves, these pearls of dew reveal to me what is living spiritually in the leaves themselves; it is the striving towards the cosmic form of the sphere." But this must become a feeling within us, so that we are able to understand the plants. We must understand them in their cosmic, spherical form.*

If you get such an insight into the nature of the plants that you understand the



forces in them which are striving towards drop formation, and then again think of their scent, you will gradually begin to understand everything that works centrifugally in the human being. There is a centrifugal force at work when the nails are cut. The centrifugal forces working through the human being make the nails grow again. During the first seven years of life particularly, the forces which come to a conclusion with the second dentition, work out centrifugally through the human being. They express themselves strongly in the formation of sweat. The element which in the scent of plants strives upwards and attracts the Nature Spirits is also active in the smell of sweat which works in the centrifugal direction. And so if you want to look for the plant nature in the human being, you must seek it where it strives outwards, and in this way you unfold an intimate knowledge of the connection between what is outside and what is within the human being. For you see, when the etheric body gives over its special features to the astral body, the whole thing is changed. The inclination of the etheric body would be to unfold what it takes from the environment, in the upward direction; inasmuch as this is given over to the astral body, it unfolds in the centrifugal direction. In this respect, too, the human being bears the plant existence within him.

And now think of how the plant sinks into the earth with its root; how with its root it enters into a close connection with the salts in the soil. A process takes place here that is exactly the opposite of the one we know in the material world. Take sodium chloride which, in solution, tastes salty, and now think of the process being exactly reversed, the solution being arrested, a congelment taking place and the smell and the taste become latent. There you have the process which goes on between the soil and the root of a plant. That is what was known as the **salt process** in ancient medicine. Ancient medicine did not use the word salt in the way we use it today, but meant by salt that element which, in the downward-pointed root of the plant, enters into a connection with the substances of the earth. That is the salt nature.

[Medical knowledge based on rhythmic, meditative absorption in the natural environment]

By directing your attention rhythmically to these wonderful secrets of nature you fill your medical knowledge with life that is capable of practical application. If you try in this way to fill your medical knowledge with life, you will begin to regard nature and the human being in such a way that the capacity to heal



will be born of the strong impulse to give help, of which I have spoken. The capacity to heal can only come from this foundation. It must be quickened by keen, diligent, and zealous exoteric learning, for otherwise mere vagueness will be the result. But it is necessary to know that the real foundation of medical knowledge lies in this rhythmic, meditative absorption in the natural environment of the human being, and not in theoretical study.

What I am now going to write on the blackboard is not there in order that you may "learn" it, but in order that it may quicken life in your medical thinking.

<Meditation – see column on right side.>

If over and over again, as the pious are wont to do in prayer, we make this inwardly living, it will quicken in the soul the forces which render us capable of medical work. The ordinary powers that are educated in the schools cannot awaken true medical knowledge, for true medical knowledge must be drawn forth from the soul. *And so at the very summit of the esoteric studies which we are to pursue, I always place this thought:*

that the powers of the soul must first be quickened in order to bring to birth in the soul the faculty that can lead to true medical knowledge.

Meditation

You healing Spirits,
You unite
With Sulphur's blessing
In the ethereal fragrance;

You come to life
In upward springing Mercury
Dewdrop
Of growing
And becoming.

You make your halting place
In the Earth Salt
Which nourishes the root
In the soil.

This is what the soul receives in
looking out into the universe
around. The human being answers:
I will unite
The Knowledge of my Soul
With Fire of the flower's fragrance;

I will bestir
The Life of my Soul
On the glistening drop of leafy
morning;

I will make strong the Being of my
Soul
With the all hardening Salt
Whereby the Earth with loving care
Nurtures the root.

Ihr heilenden Geister
Ihr verbindet euch
Dem Sulphursegen
Des Ätherduftes;

Ihr belebet euch
Im Aufstreben Merkurs
Dem Tautropfen
Des Wachsenden
Des Werdenden.

Ihr machet Halt
In dem Erdensalze
Das die Wurzel
Im Boden ernährt.

Ich will mein Seelenwissen
Verbinden dem Feuer
Des Blütenduftes;

Ich will mein Seelenleben
Erregen am glitzernden Tropfen
Des Blättermorgens;

Ich will mein Seelensein
Erstarken an dem Salzerhärtenden
Mit dem die Erde
Sorgsam die Wurzel pflegt.