

## Rudolf Steiner's Karma Exercises

By Luigi Morelli

Toward the last years of his life, particularly from 1918 to 1924, Steiner repeatedly called the attention of members of the Anthroposophical Society to the importance of coming to know oneself in "the encounter." In 1918 he introduced the idea of the archetypal social phenomenon, central to our exploration.

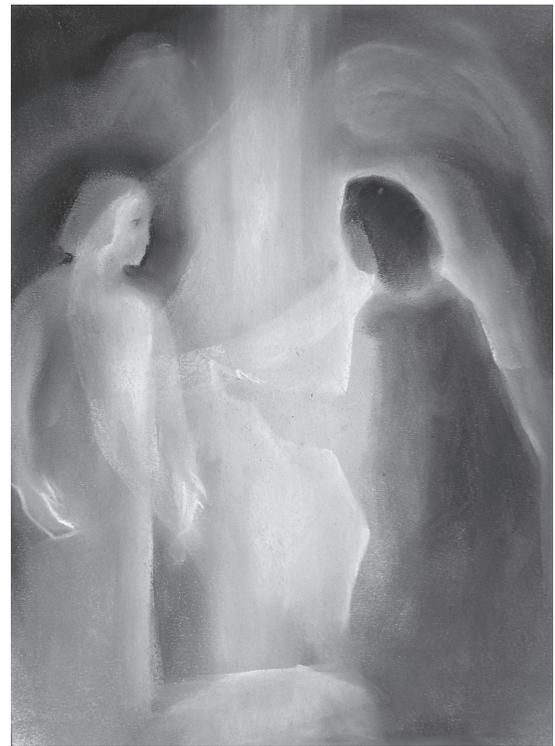
Let us approach this central phenomenon of the social path; it can be clearly articulated in what happens in a dialogue. Steiner described how when we speak, we put the listener to sleep and awaken to ourselves, and vice versa. We sleep into the other in listening, and awaken to ourselves in speaking. This means that our social impulses are strongest in our sleep, when we are least conscious. "Only *that which continues to work out of sleeping into waking conditions* is active as a social impulse in ordinary waking consciousness. . . . Thus there exists a permanent disposition to fall asleep precisely in order to build up the social structure of humanity" (emphasis added). We will be concerned precisely about *that which continues to work out of sleeping into waking conditions* in what comes next.

From the description of this phenomenon, we are led to understand that we are truly social when we fall asleep in the other; after that, we need to rescue something from sleeping, and bring it into our waking consciousness. In sleep, in our astral body we find ourselves together with all the other people in our lives, but we are not conscious of it. In the life after death, in kamaloka, we actually awake in the perception of the world of the other person. Social processes are thus "death processes," that render possible the kamaloka experience before death; hence, they are processes that we normally resist.

In a deep conversation we echo more consciously the processes that occur in the life after death. We come closer to an understanding of the speaker's past, and how his intentions carry him into the future. In effect, we have intimations of his karma, and our own. The speaker fills the listener with his past and future, which are present in the very same intention that draws him to speak. The same is true for the listener as well: his past and future come forward. If we can receive each other in full empathy, we can reach an insight into the person's situation, and the task he or she needs to face. Moreover, the conversation has the ability to awaken the listener to his or her true self. Through compassion, we become especially aware of our own ego. What takes place outside of us also occurs at the same time within us.

The archetypal social phenomenon has a central place in anthroposophical social science. Our social impulses are strongest in our sleep, when we are least conscious. In wanting to stay awake we manifest our antisocial tendencies; and in fact, developing a sense of our true self – the anti-social tendency – is the prevalent mission of the present time. This antisocial tendency, even necessity, contributes to illness in our bodies. The social nature in us contributes to our healing; and that cannot be done without going to sleep, to a certain degree.<sup>1</sup> This principle explains, in great measure, why socialization is both one of our time's greatest yearnings, and greatest difficulties.

To overcome our natural antisocial tendencies in the encounter with others, we must move away from our natural inclination to form concepts about the being of the other, and move toward developing images.<sup>2</sup> Through



"Listening" Artist: Iris Sullivan

Human Hearts are sensing  
the meaning of karma,  
When the hearts learn  
To read the Word  
That is working creatively  
in human lives;  
When the hearts learn  
To speak the Word  
That is working creatively  
In the human being.

*Rudolf Steiner*

1 Steiner, *The Challenge of the Times*, December 6, 1918 lecture.  
2 Ibid.

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If you would like to submit an article for publication please submit by:  
October 30  
for our next issue

Dear Readers,

We're happy to announce that this issue contains a significant article by Luigi Morelli titled, *Rudolf Steiner's Karma Exercises*. In the last years of his life, Rudolf Steiner worked to bring to humanity a living understanding of the ideas of karma and reincarnation. Central to this attempt were exercises that can awaken a sense for the forces of destiny in our biography, and ultimately the reawakening of memories of previous lives. A whole coherent direction emerges once we look at some of these exercises, arranging them from the most immediate to the most demanding. They form a phenomenological approach to the microcosm, to the world of the soul, parallel to all that we know in the anthroposophical study of the macrocosm, e.g. when we rise from a Goethean to a spiritual-scientific understanding of mineral, plant, animal, etc. It was through the following exercises and similar ones that Steiner pierced through the veil of karma and delivered the fruits of his karmic research. This path is open to all of us, at least potentially. It is the quintessential social path. For those interested in reading more by Luigi Morelli, you will find two of his books on the APO library book list: *Spiritual Turning Points in North American History and Spiritual Turning Points in South American History*. Additionally, Mr. Morelli is the author of *Aristotelians and Platonists: A Convergence of the Michaelic Streams in Our Time*, and *Karl Julius Schröer*, and *Rudolf Steiner: Anthroposophy and the Teachings of Karma and Reincarnation*. Find more at <http://millenniumculmination.net/>

This past year we find ourselves with an increase in requests for our *Initial Packet*, stimulated by our wonderful opportunity last year to send to prison libraries 600 copies of the book *How to Know Higher Worlds*. Inside each cover we placed a stamp inviting readers to write for more information. Other ways prisoners have been finding us are through resource lists and word of mouth, and thus in this issue you will find that our *Stepping onto the Path* section has grown! Here you will find some of the many new participants sharing their beginning steps in studying anthroposophy. We want to encourage all of our participants, both new and longtime, to send us your thoughts and experiences with the books you've read, your work with exercises and meditation, and your art and poetry inspired by your studies.

Also in this Newsletter, you will find a section titled: *Mastering Your Self*. The comments and experiences expressed in this section are from a seven session meditative class held at a women's prison in Michigan, based on Rudolf Steiner's Six Supplementary Exercises and the pamphlet *Self Development in the Penitentiary* by Fred Janney. We hope to begin bringing this class into other prisons around the country. If you would like to see if a class can be set up in your facility, let us know and we will work toward making this possible.

We are always grateful to receive your creative art, poetry, and writings expressing your struggles, inner work, and transformations. In October this year, we have another opportunity to perform a new version of our event *Enter Light: Voices from Prison*, this time in Arizona. We would love to bring new art and poetry, so please send us your work!

*Blessings on your path, Kathy Serafin*

## How to Know Higher Worlds Book Study Responses

*How to Know Higher Worlds* by Rudolf Steiner opened my eyes up to a whole new way of thinking and perceiving life. It also stirred something inside of me that subtly tugged at my lower self to take heed to the knowledge and wisdom being gifted to me. I've always felt that there was a part of me that I never liked or loved because it was in profound contradiction to who I know I can become. These particular decadent aspects of my lower self is my projected reality that is based to a significant degree on: lackadaisical, dark, and hateful energies that I've been perpetually manufacturing for decades and possibly for lifetimes. In reading this book, the lower dwelling part of me is now reflecting and contemplating on my past, present, and future. I know that the lower dwelling part of me has to perish to give birth to or awaken the higher functioning aspect of myself. I find myself questioning my anxieties, exercising control over my thoughts, and bringing balance to my feelings. I even find myself inspired to love not only myself, but the world as a whole. I know that I have a lot of work to do in preparing myself for this endeavor, but I have a very good feeling that with love, dedication, and the guidance from Steiner's teachings that in one lifetime or the next, I shall become my higher self and come to know higher worlds.  
*Brian, Corcoran, CA*

When I read in Steiner's book *How to Know Higher Worlds* that "there is a universal law among initiates that the knowledge due a seeker cannot be withheld", right away I knew the timing was right. This book I will be taking my time with! *Michael, Camp Hill, PA*

*How to Know Higher Worlds* was interesting. Steiner had a real deep perception writing his book, I believe a person can have higher knowledge of the world. You cannot judge carelessly about the next person. Everybody has their group that they want to belong to, and when we encounter them,

we have to understand why it might be that they want to be accepted. Becoming an initiate of the higher worlds, should have a companion because cultivating evolution with a significant one brings a beautiful creation. Being able to step over into the spiritual world will be remarkable, but I think it would be hard to live according to the spiritual world while in the physical because what's being seen there and here are completely different. You have to adjust to each world when it presents itself to you. Preparing yourself for what you believe is to come your way gradually is true because you have to realize what you bring upon yourself to appreciate it as you should, otherwise you lose out. The concept of "guardians of the threshold" is understandable, someone being there trying to help you advance on your path, the path you have to seek diligently.  
*Kenneth, Holdenville, OK*

In the book *How to Know Higher Worlds* by Dr. Rudolf Steiner, I have found that many of the teachings and exercises described are principles, morals, and attributes I am practicing in my life. What was a great eye opener was the informative detailed description of the ether and astral world, how it mirrors the tangible, physical world perceived by/with the senses. As one that has been into the studies and research of higher science, I have realized and accepted that everything is a microcosm of itself and the atom, the basis of the seeable universe. Dr. Steiner opened me to the acknowledgement that as everything tangible is a microcosm, so is the intangible, unseen world that's not perceived by the naked eye. Also, bringing the focus back to man's original state of harmony and balance by uniting the body, soul, and spirit as one through the soul organs, "chakras". As a brother, I will continue the exercises described therein, allowing myself to truly reach and experience higher worlds. *Colby, Huntsville, TX*

# Rudolf Steiner's Karma Exercises

cont. from pg 1

imaginings, we will acquire a deeper faculty of empathy. Developing imaginings is in fact the way to carry “that which continues to work out of sleeping into waking conditions.” Steiner insists that in the future, the social life can be founded only on a development of our imagination. When we meet another person, a picture should arise from the other person. “But this requires of course the heightened interest that I have often described to you as the foundation of social life, in which each person should take in the other person.” Here, we must find the social impulses. In fact, Steiner reaches even further, into a description of the sacramental aspect of this type of encounter; he calls it “the capacity to be mystically stimulated” in the encounter with another human being.<sup>3</sup>

As to how this could be done, an answer appears in the same lecture, where he spoke of what is now known as the “after-image.” To let the after-image reach us,

It is most important of all that the instinct shall be implanted in people to look back more frequently during this life; but in the right way. To do that, we need to immerse ourselves with real love in the other person. This has such a germinating power over us, that we really acquire the imaginative forces necessary to confront the contemporary human being in such a way that in him, something is manifest that appears to us only after many years in our backward survey of those figures with whom we have lived together.



*Karmic paths, Artist: Iris Sullivan*

This intention of looking back and immerse ourselves with love in the other person, acquires full dimension in a series of exercises that Steiner devised, that I have called “karma exercises.”

## Rudolf Steiner's Karma Exercises

To help us be more conscious in our encounters, Steiner formulated many practices and exercises designed for awakening interest, acquiring objectivity, and increasing our understanding of people and events in our lives. In the last twenty-three years of his life, Steiner struggled to bring a living understanding of the ideas of karma and reincarnation. In line with his intention, and central to this attempt, were the exercises that can awaken a sense for individual recognition of the forces of destiny in our biography, and ultimately the reawakening of memories of previous lives. Steiner's effort never received the consecration or ultimate form that the path of thinking finds in *Philosophy of Freedom* or *Knowledge of Higher Worlds*. The reason for this could be that Steiner barely managed to complete laying out important blocks of this edifice in the last year of his life. Nevertheless, a whole, coherent direction emerges once we look at some of these exercises, arranging them from the most immediate to the most demanding. This review is in no way exhaustive; it is merely indicative of the breadth of Steiner's work in the matter. Some of the names chosen

for nine of these exercises are the author's choice.

### *Karma Exercise I: Gratitude Recollection*

A first exercise that forms a prelude to the series that we will examine is designed to awaken gratitude and a sense of perspective concerning our personal achievements.<sup>4</sup> In it, Steiner asks us to turn back to an overview of our life and see what part other people have played in it, by detecting how much we owe to our parents, relatives, friends, teachers, colleagues, and so forth. The exercise should lead to the realization of how much in our life we owe to others. Repeated over time, it allows us to develop an imagination for those people who play an important part in our life, an imagination that points to their deeper being. A variation on this exercise is offered in the lecture “Social and Anti-Social Forces in the Human Being,” and goes a step further.<sup>5</sup> We are asked to bring before our mind's eye images

of those who have played a role in our lives, either directly and positively, or indirectly through hindrance and opposition, and see them as vividly as possible. We should be able to develop an objective sense of our indebtedness. Steiner has this gripping comment to offer: “It is extremely important, for the ability to inwardly picture another individual without love or hate, to give space to another individual within our souls, as it were; this is a faculty which is diminishing week by week in the evolution of humanity. It is a capacity which we are losing completely, by degrees; we pass one another by without arousing the slightest mutual interest.” By invigorating this ability,

we develop a truer picture of the people in our lives, in effect, an imagination of them. This will develop further in the ability to “relate ourselves imaginatively to those we meet in the present.”

### *Karma Exercise II: Phase of Life Recollection*

An exercise that anticipates the so-called Lesser Karma Exercise is the one Steiner described in the same lecture quoted above as a complement to the first. Whereas in the exercise above, we are seeking to develop an objective and imaginative perception of others, here the same is true about ourselves. In this instance, we will refer to a particular stage of our lives, and immerse ourselves objectively into that time, as if we were spectators of ourselves. In so doing, we are freeing the perception of ourselves in the present from the images that bind us to the past, and that lead us to identify our ego with our life experiences, rather than with the intimations of our higher self. We thus develop an imaginative picture of ourselves, and lessen the effects of the egoism that naturally develops in our age of the consciousness soul. None of this can be achieved without repeated effort. “According to true occult science, nothing can be done by remaining in place, for one forgets things and must always be cultivating them afresh. This is just as it should be, for fresh efforts need to be continually made.”

<sup>4</sup> Steiner, *Inner Aspect of the Social Question*, February 4, 1919 lecture.

<sup>5</sup> Steiner, “Social and Anti-social Forces in the Human Being,” December 6, 1918 lecture.

# Rudolf Steiner's Karma Exercises

cont. from pg 3

## Karma Exercise III: Basic Lesser Karma Exercise

A next simple exercise, the “Lesser Karma Exercise,” consists of looking back to one single event in our life, one that is seemingly due to chance, or to something that we did not wish to happen. Steiner spoke of this exercise in more than one place.<sup>6</sup>

The example that Steiner offers is that of a shingle falling from a roof onto our head. He asks us to imagine the deed of the “second person in us” who loosens the shingle from the roof just in time for it to fall on our heads when we pass under it. In other words, he wants us to picture that we have planned our lives before our birth in such a way as to come to certain critical turning points on earth. When we enter the exercise for the first few times, this second man is clearly seen as an invention, something artificially conjured up. However, he grows and evolves in us to the point that we cannot escape the feeling that he really is within us, accompanied with the growing realization that we have really wanted these events to come to pass. The memory of the fact that we have wanted these events has been all but erased from our consciousness; and the exercise, repeated over many life events, serves to awaken it. We can thus deepen an inner conviction and feeling for our karmic biography. Cultivating this feeling bestows deep inner strength, and modifies our attitude toward events we may have previously confronted with fear. We acquire a certain peacefulness and acceptance, together with the feeling that everything in our life has a purpose. This can even go further, as Steiner points to in a lecture of 1912.<sup>7</sup> “Through such mental pictures—that we ourselves have willed the chance events in our life—we arouse, in the life of feeling, memory of our earlier incarnations. In this way we understand that we are rooted in the spiritual world, we begin to understand our destiny.” Whether or not we attain more than a simple feeling for the tenor of our past lives, something else becomes apparent: we start taking responsibility for our destiny, and stop blaming parents, friends, enemies, or random events for those things that cause us unhappiness.

## Karma Exercise IV: Attitude Toward Joy and Happiness

When the previous exercise has become an ingrained practice or changed our inner disposition, our attitude towards joy and happiness will change, although this step may not be easy. One will come through joy and happiness to feelings of thorough shame. And the only way to rid oneself of these feelings is to realize that we have not earned this happiness. “This is the only cure, for otherwise the shame may be so intense that it almost shatters the soul. The only salvation is not to attribute our joys to the wiser being within us.” And doing this will allow the feeling of shame to pass. In its place comes a new feeling of peaceful security in the spirit, and thankfulness towards the guiding powers of humanity. “If [the human being] ascribes joy and happiness to his karma he is succumbing to a fallacy which weakens and paralyses the spiritual within him.”<sup>8</sup>

## Karma Exercise V: “Contrary Being” Exercise

The Lesser Karma Exercise is developed to the extreme in the exercise that Steiner offered in the lecture of January 23, 1912.<sup>9</sup> In this exercise, we are asked to have a retrospective look at our life, and see our propensities, both for what comes naturally and what does not. We are asked to focus mostly on what we could not develop; on what became of us in spite of our desires to the contrary; on everything that we wanted to flee from, and have not managed to escape. When that image of this “contrary” being has been carefully built up, we are asked to immerse ourselves in this being, and completely identify with it. From this exercise, we will derive some level of understanding for something that does not come from this life but from previous incarnations. In this instance, we are no longer looking at a separate undesired event in our life, but at the sum total of all undesired events, as a whole gesture within our being.

## Karma Exercise VI: Grace Events Recollection

An exercise that is somehow the reverse of the Lesser Karma Exercise consists in consciously looking back at what did not happen, at what we were spared. The graphic example consists of looking at what held us back, pausing to look at a flower or at the landscape, while seconds later, a boulder detached from the cliff above and fell, passing a few yards ahead of us, thereby avoiding us. In a less dramatic manner, there are countless encounters that would not have happened in our lives were it not for delays, changes of plans, or last-minute decisions. Observing these events leads us to break away from a strictly mechanistic cause-and-effect mentality, and to develop an ability to perceive the chain of events that constantly unfolds in front of our eyes by virtue of the forces of karma.

## Karma Exercise VII: Extended Lesser Karma Exercise

An enhancement of the Lesser Karma Exercise appears in *Secrets of the Threshold*.<sup>10</sup> There Steiner asks us to go back over our last three or four weeks; or better, the last three to four months. We look at everything that has taken place in this period of time. In doing this, we lay aside the idea that any undesired event was the result of an injustice caused to us. Likewise we lay aside any self-justifications we could invoke for our shortcomings. In brief, we place all responsibility for our life at our own feet. This exercise awakens us to a new relationship with the spiritual world; that is, a relationship with the “second person in us” who arranges the events in our lives. We will continue this series with two exercises specifically designed for the perception of previous lives; both of them were given to us by Steiner in 1924.

## Karma Exercise VIII: Moon / Sun / Saturn Exercise <sup>11</sup>

This exercise can be applied to another person or to oneself. Here it is a matter of peeling layers of the personality; of seeing more and more deeply into the real human nature, rather than what our senses present us of the human being, by looking at the threefoldness of willing, feeling, and

6 Steiner, *Karma and Reincarnation*, January 30, 1912 lecture. See also: January 29, 1912 and February 8, 1912 lectures in *Esoteric Christianity and the Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz*.

7 Steiner, *Esoteric Christianity*, January 29, 1912 lecture.

8 Steiner, *Esoteric Christianity*, February 8, 1912 lecture.

9 Steiner, *Karma and Reincarnation*.

10 Steiner, *Secrets of the Threshold*, August 31, 1913 lecture.

11 Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, Volume 2 (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1997) May 4, 1924 lecture.

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# Book Reviews



## *Rosicrucian Wisdom*

Rudolf Steiner

Rudolf Steiner propels through *Rosicrucian Wisdom* in fourteen lectures with deep discovery of who you are, where humanity has been, and where humanity is headed. The path is shown in Esoteric Mastery that

speaks to the soul and hits home our responsibility to ourselves and mankind. The Rosicrucian Path is today, the appropriate path that leads to Soul Consciousness and the second birth. In my humble opinion, it is a vital step in truly becoming in a safe and logical way. *Rosicrucian Wisdom* enlightens a being to realize the great work is a process that will bring humanity into God-like beings, thus establishing Heaven on Earth: Oh death where is thy sting? To me, death does not exist, rather, it gives a becoming Soul opportunity to further learn from its earthly experiences and what must be done to perfect thyself. Desire in *Rosicrucian Wisdom* becomes a tool to hone the spiritual using the law of attraction much like the blacksmith uses the forge and tools to perfect his creation. It is medicine for humanity now, and in the future. Finally, Mr. Steiner stresses the importance of implementing this wisdom into everyday life to shift vibratory forces that propels the soul upward into the spiritual realm. For when I return again I know through my desire to complete the great work, the law will provide parents whom desire a becoming soul. I thank all Rosicrucian souls for this much cherished wisdom!  
Wayne, Richmond, TX

## *Forgiving* Georg Kuhlewind

Forgiving is something I had a hard time doing; I held onto my anger, pain, and my desire for revenge, and this attitude had put me at a disadvantage. I had no peace of mind, I was weakening myself physically and emotionally. Reading this book provided the keys to self-forgiveness and the forgiveness of others that finally allowed me to open a new door in my life and find freedom from lifelong terror of being hurtful to others. Kenneth, Lancaster, CA

## Meditations

Well I find myself more at peace of mind, my thoughts more focused, less stress, my body more relaxed, and when I finish meditating, I feel rejuvenated. James, Walla Walla, WA

I must say that the morning and evening meditation verses that you sent me resonate deeply. Not only are they very beautiful and enchanting words – but they seem to be a key to a transcendental door. I recite them often and I have even sent the verse to my mom. I want her to find comfort in these words as well. I will practice the exercises and use the verses for meditation. Pepper Jose, Teague, TX

Through the meditation I had a calm mind, but I had past memories flood my mind so fast. I'm just learning how to push them back out. I hope to control my emotions, calm my mind, and find my inner joy through any situation. Jason, Wewahitchka, FL

I would like to gain knowledge and understanding of real meditation, self-wisdom, and most of what anthroposophy is all about. The only practice I have with meditation is the self-development of my artwork and exercises. I find it helpful to gain control over myself, from angst, fear, and any unhealthy desires, like drugs and alcohol and an unhealthy lifestyle. Jesus, Tehachapi, CA

Practicing focusing on a certain object everyday for a few weeks has helped better my focus. I meditate daily now for one hour and before that I do stretches to release any tension I may have. Victoria, Ypsilanti, MI

## *Michaelmas and the Soul Forces of Man* Rudolf Steiner

This book is a fantastic explanation of the past in which Michael and the forces of good cast the evil forces out of the “heavens” to roam upon the earth, yet not in physical form. It shows how the battlefield has changed to become our hearts and minds, and that if we consciously choose the influences of the Archangel Michael, we can conquer the dragon within us, and person-by-person, we aid in our ultimate evolution of striving to be in the Light, and back to where we came from (at least as our consciousness is concerned).

Brandon, South Bay, FL

## *Sacred Agriculture: the Alchemy of Biodynamics* Dennis Klocek

Dennis Klocek's *Sacred Agriculture* is the most profound book of insights into the supersensible dynamics of agriculture. When I first read Steiner's agriculture cycle, I was overwhelmed by the realization that farming, gardening, and livestock husbandry were in fact a holy way of life—that they are a sacred lifestyle, not a job. Dennis Klocek is both an alchemist and a biodynamicist, whose Steiner-enlightened perceptions of nature open a new world of revelation akin to our Cherokee Elo. The sacred beings and the etheric and cosmic forces we Indian Tribal people have names for, Dennis teaches one to perceive and alchemically understand using the similar paradigm of ancient sciences of the elements and ethers. Steiner's guidance in the threefold soul development through the stages of Imaginal cognition, Enlightenment perception, and Intuition experiences in the Supersensible cosmic realms are elucidated by Meister Klocek in terms readily understandable by nearly every gardener and farmer. While it takes a dedication to achieve, it is a sacred blessing to read, and a state of grace to live in this sacred manner.

White Eagle, Tennessee Colony, TX

## *Christ and the Disciples* Peter Selg

I truly became very moved by this text into the core of my spirit. How awesome it must have been to be engulfed in the Christ's ease of light into your soul! Truly Christ is not the being mainstream Christendom believes. Humanity is loved so much by Christ that he nearly tore himself apart before his crucifixion to complete his work. It is no wonder why Christ could only be in physical form for a short period of time. After reading this text and studying it, I truly count myself thankful to be involved with soul science in order to learn about our real master teacher. So many are dead amongst the living. It is now understood why Christ said, “My people perish for the lack of knowledge”. I believe in Christ's works, and when you finish reading this book, you can see a new picture of those works. Jason, Richmond, TX

With meditation, I calm my mind and have become more balanced and less violent. I want to learn esoteric knowledge and apply it to my life. Looking to gain personal strength, wisdom, and knowledge to understand the powers within. David, Florence, AZ

Meditation keeps me balanced and in harmony with the universe and my environment, prison. I have a better understanding of myself and my spiritual path. Jeffrey, Union Springs, AL

In *Strengthening the Will*, the review exercises, all the contexts mentioned, I naturally do some of this but now will be more focused and conscious with it. My meditation schedule seems to fluctuate some with what's going on in my environment. I do best in lock up, the sad truth. Thanks so much for your dedicated, compassionate service. You all are a real blessing indeed. Daniel, Huntsville, TX

I meditate often throughout the day. I am a voracious reader and contemplator. Practical knowledge helps me on my journey. Larry, Pelham, GA

*The Seer's Handbook* helped me understand certain concentration exercises that added extra techniques to aid in the process of my meditation. William, Bowling Green, FL

I have been doing some meditations and breathing exercises. They help me calm down and give me peace of mind. I have always been interested in learning more, however I am in need of guidance in my pursuit of gaining inner purity. Jarrett, Trion, GA

# Illuminations

The most profound knowledge I've gained is coming to terms of how, through time, humanity is losing touch with the divine element and spiritual aspect of our being. This in large reveals the mystery of the origin and manifestation of our world's current and progressive state of depravity, thus providing us with the solution to our problems as both individuals and the world as a whole. I can't express enough how much I enjoy this literature, study, and practice of anthroposophy. *Eli, Benton, AR*

My whole daily routine and life has had to be reordered. I'm finding my rhythm and shall delve into my studies. This year is dedicated solely to them. I feel a prompting towards the Old Mysteries. It is like I've seen it before. I understand it will unfold. *Nathaniel, Wasco, CA*

There is so much I don't know, and I cannot thank you all enough for filling in the blanks and your assistance in all areas of my life. This seeker of Truth, Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge has found a true treasure trove of them all! Thanks, once again, for all that you do. *James, El Dorado, KS*

The more I learn, the more I realize I've been living in the Stone Age. The lessons along with Rudolf Steiner's books are enough for humanity to inspire themselves to transcend into the future by lightyears, overnight. If only people would open up to receive the gifts Steiner has bestowed upon us. I was headed in a downward spiral until I was given the golden ticket; my perspective has changed on everything. I am so ready to live up to my potential. Now, with the help of APO who has never failed to direct me in the exact place I need to be, I am on a stable path of self-enlightenment. I don't even know you, but over the years I feel as if you and I have been on a great journey together. I very much accredit you with the support I received that led to my new and higher understanding of myself and life, thank you. *Robert, Rosharon, TX*

*Stages of Consciousness* is a must read for each of us on this earth plane for a better understanding of ourselves, I recommend it wholeheartedly. You guys are doing a supreme job bringing this knowledge to the masses, especially all of us who are incarcerated and would not have ever come close to finding this library. I am forever grateful to you for helping this hoodlum turn his life around for the good of mankind—not just the community, but for mankind as a whole. You are an inspiration to us all here in prison, I'm glad to be able to be a small part of it. *Joe Luis, Pollock, LA*

My studies here made me more aware of myself and things in life that matter most, and how to help others to develop these same traits. Furthermore, I want to continue my studies and learn more about human development. I wish to complete all of my lessons and I will do so. I study them and take my time to understand them completely. *Jamar, Lawton, OK*

## Mastering Your Self

*A Meditative Class to Strengthen and Harmonize your Thinking, Feeling, Willing  
All responses come from participants at Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility, Ypsilanti, MI*

TO STAY ON the positive side and know that feelings are only temporary and that I have control over the way I feel, and what I think. *Jennifer*

I AM ATTEMPTING to gain greater composure and grace when faced with disappointment, i.e. being denied a better job opportunity. *Christine*

I'M NOT GETTING mad so quick, and I'm controlling my temper, and learning that being mad won't solve anything. *Hope*

I WORK ON the first and second meditative exercises on a daily basis. I used to react to things in a bad way and didn't think about what would happen afterwards. I try to focus on being positive when I wake up because it is easier to go through the day. I struggle with my feelings and I am working on that. I am managing my time well. I am calmer and less anxious than when I first got to prison. *Alicia*

Thank you for my last selection of books, the newsletters, and personal message. I've been receiving material from you at APO since 2006. Twelve years, wow, I don't think I've received material from any service for twelve years. I think of this time as a learning experience with a chance to grow. Rudolf Steiner's messages have been reached with open eyes. I'd like to focus a little more and gain insight that helps with character change; hopefully this time will result in being fruitful. *Jerry, Lone, CA*

Thank you! I've been benefitting from your program for a couple of years and also know other prisoners who benefit from your program. I'm amazed how you support prisoners in their spiritual journey and how efficient your program is. I would like to help support prisoners—especially youthful offenders, as I was 16 years old when I was charged with an aggravated assault against a public servant, and eventually sentenced to 50 years. I am now 23 years old and I would really like to do something positive, to make a contribution to fellow prisoners such as myself. *Cory, New Boston, TX*

Throughout this process of redemption, a change has come over me. I've spent over a decade incarcerated, but until about five years ago, my entire focus was on serving my false ego. I was a slave to my lower impulses and ignored the subtle whispers of my Higher Self. Then a series of events were set in motion that led me to anthroposophy. Before this I studied the occult, but did so to learn and manipulate hidden forces for selfish advantage. The writings of Rudolf Steiner have helped bring awareness to the foolishness of my intentions. Gradually as I began studying, a shift occurred in my life's pursuits and I became less selfish and more altruistic. I haven't received a disciplinary write-up in four years; before that, they were common. The strength of my character has greatly improved. Instead of being someone who just takes from society, now I want to give back. I want to be a pillar of my community, not an embarrassment to it. My journey has had many obstacles to overcome, but the APO program has taught me to seek guidance and wisdom from the heavens and earth all around me. I spend hours every day in study, the more I learn, the more questions I have. In my pursuit, a lot has changed within me that has made me a stronger, better person. A lot of my poor thinking patterns and bad habits have been purged. Yet the enlightenment I seek is still beyond me. Before I was ignorant of my blindness, I thought I had it figured out, now I am all too self-aware of how little I know. *Jonathon, New Castle, IN*

I enjoy meditation and observing my reality to learn about myself. I wish to thank you for the positive energy you bring into my life through your help. This is the first solid belief I've ever had on anything remotely metaphysical. I love what I have found inside of myself, and every day I look forward to what reality my awareness will teach me. *Chance, Huntsville, TX*

## Sun in the Heart

In the human Heart

There lives a part of  
Man

Which contains matter

More spiritual than in  
any other organ:

Also a part of Man

Of which the spiritual  
life

Is made more manifest  
in matter

Than that of any other  
organ.

Hence in the  
Microcosm that is Man

Sun is the Heart

And in this Heart is  
Man united

Most of all with the  
deepest fount,

The fount of his true  
Being.

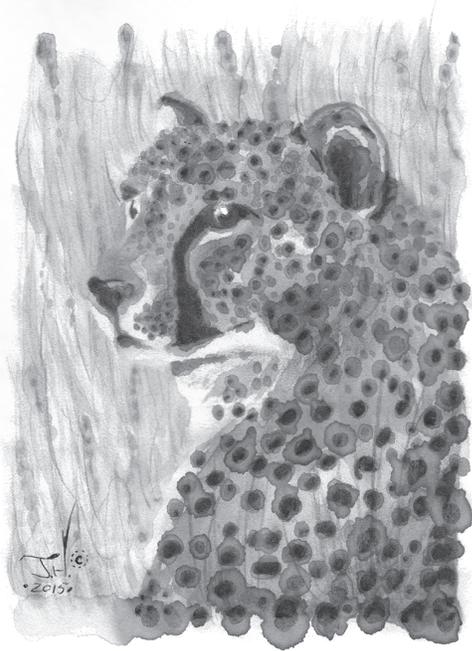
*Rudolf Steiner*

# Art and Poetry

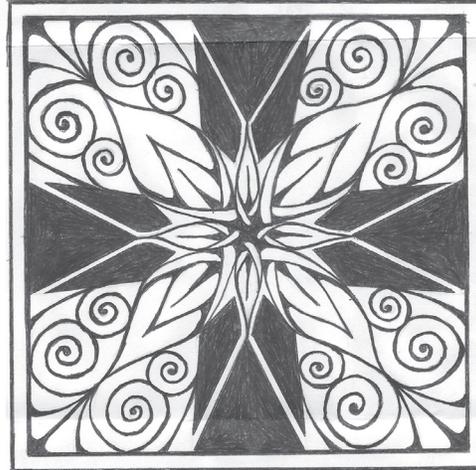
## *The Way of Suffering*

Years tormented by exile and scorn,  
Worked to mold the inner man,  
Then inside a new being was born,  
And new worlds the conscious scanned

*Jeremy, Wrightsville, AR*



*Jeremy, Crawfordville, FL*



*Paul, Seattle, WA*

## *Who Are You?*

If Christ is life, do you see it all?  
Do you focus on what's real?  
And do you look outside yourself?  
And into the picture of time  
For a passion you do not feel.

To pull ourselves from the flesh  
Yet jump into its midst  
Willing to sacrifice, to feel the pain  
The only thing that's real  
Giving death a kiss.

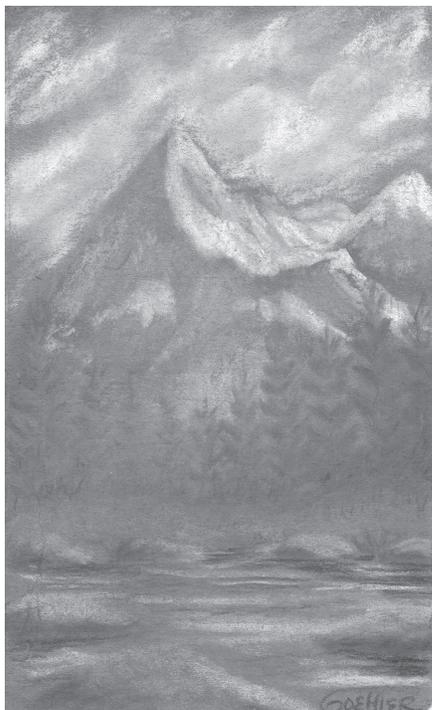
The cosmic power of the cross  
What have we actually seen?  
The symptoms we must endure  
To break apart the veil  
Our broken souls are in between.

Don't close your eyes  
to the prophets of desire  
Follow your heart, not theirs  
We need to wounds of the cross  
And the touch of human fire.

*Robert, Carrabelle, FL*



*William, Comstock, NY*



*William, Ione, CA*

## *From Darkness into Light*

In my life, there is a lot of darkness

In my past, even in me.

But I am aware

Aware that my heart leans toward beauty

Not physical beauty

But towards the things that are truly beautiful.

Like Sunrises and Sunsets

Waterfalls and Streams

And the unique qualities that separate individuals from

And connect them to another

Like I said before there is a lot of darkness in my life.

In my past, even in me

But as the Moon replaces the Sun

Darkness settles over the Earth...and

Just within this absence and awakening

Dew forms on the land

And...In its evanescence

Along with the awakening of Light

It leaves what is vital

For the beginning of life

Even in me

*Jimmy, Winnsboro, LA*

# Inspired by your Reading

I found *A Way of Self-Knowledge* to be very interesting; the concept of when one is meditating, allowing yourself to come outside your body and go into a state of observing everything you have done within your past. I have begun to go in depth with the theories that Steiner presented and find some of the things to be true. When you lay down to go to sleep, and have a thought on your mind, one goes into a state of consciousness where you are conferring with the higher self, but paying attention is the important part. We tend to drift, not allowing ourselves to hold onto that consciousness. I have noticed small things that have changed and I know that it is a continuing work.

Kenneth, Holdenville, OK

I got rid of my radio and what a big difference it is making on my ability to focus and retain the study material. Every song coming through the airwaves on radio is designed to pique the five lower senses. I have always been a rock and roll and heavy metal fanatic, which especially is always working the emotions up and down. So I made a choice, and after doing the study section in the bluebook on "some effects of initiation", I know it is the best choice. Without that radio I am able to feel my way into the books much better. I am really looking forward to the next round and picking up the pace a bit in my study – while maintaining a steady, consistent practice of pertinent exercise.

Daniel, Iowa Park, TX

*Transforming the Soul vol. 1& 2* and *Meditation* helped to get me back on track. When life starts moving too fast, your books help me to breathe and reflect. Gary, Defuniak Springs, FL

Wow! *Cosmic Memory* was one of the most thought-provoking books I have read in a while. I never thought of the evolution of mankind in the sense of evolution of consciousness. That is, the more conscious we become (logical/mathematical) the less in touch we become with nature and existence. You have given me much to think about and research further in this book. *The Fourfold Path to Healing* contains such a wealth of information. Addressing health issues from different directions—nutrition, therapeutics, movement, and meditation—this is the first time I have seen health issues addressed using a complete basis. Due to restrictions in my current environment, I cannot implement a lot of what is presented, but I can gain the knowledge to implement upon my release. Robin, Petersburg, VA

The book, *A Way of Self-Knowledge* is wonderful. This has been an extremely insightful and encouraging read, especially after all I have been through of late. It has also served as confirmation that I am still on the right path to true spiritual knowledge. This organization has been a tremendous help to me in more ways than one. Thank you for accepting me and guiding me on a path to true spiritual freedom. Lawon, Winnfield, LA

I want to say thank you for the opportunity that you offer people like me who want to excel in spiritual knowledge. The book I checked out, *David's Question: "What is Man?"* really enlightened me on a deeper understanding of how the spiritual scriptures are down to a science with hidden meanings. Right now I am under 24 hour lockdown and the books out of your library really take me out of this cell and around the universe. John, Raiford, FL

My reverence for occult knowledge, love for Christ, and the human race has blossomed by multitudes instilling a lifetime of devotion, to deepen and enliven my anthroposophical wisdom for our heavenly father. I've read: *An Outline of Occult Science, Apocalypse of St. John, The Book of Revelations, and Enlivening the Chakra of the Heart*. I managed to read these books a couple time through; they have opened my awareness to a whole new level, and bestowed profound revelations upon my soul. Paul, Seattle, WA

I wanted to take some time to say thank you for allowing me the opportunity to borrow books from your library. So far I've read and studied: *How to Know Higher Worlds, A Way of Self Knowledge, and An Introduction to Anthroposophy*, and all of the books are incredible. I've gained so much insight on my capabilities and the spiritual world. My perception is changing tremendously. These books really helped me understand how connected I am to the universe, and there is still a lot more studying I need to do, and just getting used to practicing what I'm learning so I can continue to strengthen my soul. I want to be able to consciously experience the supersensible world in this life I'm in now. Kenneth, Susanville, CA

Thank you so much for sending me *The Universal Human* by Rudolf Steiner. It was an intriguing read for me. One particular topic stood out amongst many: where Steiner elaborated upon the genetic mechanics of the Christ event; how through physical heredity which was prepared through many generations before, an advanced entity such as Christ, Buddha, and Zarathustra

(who were all the same entity in different eras) had full capabilities of physical instruments with a suitably developed brain. It's interesting to think a perfect physical organization which is inherited and works with full faculties is only possible for a soul-spiritual self, such as Jesus, to have the powerful, legendary, spiritual effect. Jeremiah, Winslow, AZ

I was particularly taken by *The Veiled Pulse of Time* for it spoke to an aspect of my condition, my struggle. He spoke of converting suffering into consciousness. He talked of human potential, and the paths we all have to walk. He spoke of the qualities of time, a most relevant subject. Time is the crucial element in all rhythm and synchrony. Time has become everyone's religion. It vexes, cheats, mystifies, challenges, ignores, horrifies, and anticipates us. The scientist measures it; the novelist dramatizes it; the sculptor freezes it; the investor speculates with it; and of course there's the case of the prisoner. I could continue on in a lengthy exposition, but I reckon your time is needed elsewhere. Horace, Beeville, TX

I really enjoyed the *Bhagavad Gita and the West*. For a long time I've wanted to know what the Bhagavad Gita contained and through this book I was able to receive its full message, especially through the way Dr. Steiner breaks things down and correlates them together. I also enjoyed *Meditations on the Signs of the Zodiac*. I found it real insightful and earned a few more practices for my meditation sessions. Ruben, Milton, FL

What I did study of *Alchemy* was quite intriguing. It made me contemplate the symbol of the cross (though it didn't speak of this in the book). While reading of Mercury, Salt, and Sulfur, quite a revelation came upon me; revealing the father, the son, and the Holy Ghost, and how the Christ came down to the kingdom of earth to be crucified, and how he returns to the father. This book revealed much to me and I am thankful for that. *The Christ Impulse* was equally enlightening. What really left an impression was the law of reverence! Never before have I heard of this natural law. Now that I have, it makes clear sense. This study has led me to contemplate the law of karma in my own life over a long stretch. Many insights have been gained on small details which occur or have occurred, and the blessings and curses which have manifested during my life. This book also inspired deep concentration upon the future and its mysterious nature. Wilbur, New Boston, TX

I just finished reading *How to Know Higher Worlds* and *Anthroposophy*. I found the first book to be some intense readings. It was packed full of spiritual insight. I found the whole trials by air, fire, and water to be interesting. I thoroughly enjoyed *Anthroposophy*. The concept of an ether body and an astral body are new concepts for me, but ones I want to explore further. Robert, New Castle, IN

As a Hermetician, I understand how the hermetic arts are interwoven into the Western Christian Mystery system. The blue, red, and black house of the Lodge is a profound way of teaching the arts and the true meaning behind the Knights Templar, but without the foundation of the first three degrees, the uninitiated would not understand the meaning behind this book, nor of the higher worlds, in my perception. I understand when it is said in *The Knights Templar* that what is white is really black. The karma of oneself being the book of nature was a profound insight to me in this book. I like that, I am familiar with the Ahriman forces and Luciferian spirits, etc. That's where I'm at, understanding the deeper elements of the subconscious mind and channeling them into an endeavor. Michael, Iowa Park, TX

In the book *The Friend of God* I received the admonishment to "carefully guard the treasure of your soul, newly-won through humble silence." This puts me in mind of two scriptures: Proverbs 27:23, and Psalms 127:1, which states, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Freddie, Menard, IL

First I would like to say that the book *Meditation: Guidance of the Inner Life*, really opened my eyes to a whole new look at what can be meditated on. I would like to say thank you on that. At this point in my life, it's time that I get on a higher path of knowledge to help awaken the inner "I" that dwells in me, and that I may know my purpose in life, because the purpose I thought I had was not it. For so long all I've been doing is struggling my whole life and I'm only 28, in prison with a natural life sentence. I know this is not it; it's just the start of a new life of Higher Knowledge. Timothy, Raiford, FL

Thank you for the two books. I enjoyed the books and learned from both of these titles that we must search out these places of hidden knowledge and they will in turn, be revealed to those who sincerely seek it. Your insight is much appreciated and highly valued. Travis, Beaumont, TX

# SELF AWAKENINGS

## *EduCareDo Correspondence Course Response Summaries*

### **Lesson 1: Introduction**

This lesson taught about using visualizations to look at problems from different angles to see all aspects. It has shown me that judgement is like polarities, and that it pulls you in a certain way. I am going to look at challenges from different standpoints, and place myself in their “place” to better understand where they’re coming from. I’ve stopped passing judgment. My goal is to participate in more meditation sessions to achieve what I call inner peace with myself. *Terry, Jarratt, VA*

### **Lesson 2: First Steps in the Light on the Path**

This lesson says that with the will of our metabolic system, we are to do good for man and nature, and in turn set a bar of morality for society. With our communication through our rhythmic system, we express our perception of beauty in the world, bring joy to life. With our thinking through our nervous system, we explore concepts and ideas in order to seek truth. Truth gives us meaning. Meaning gives purpose; the responsibility we have as mature, capable adults to all children and young people. Ideas can be used as a weapon or tool, and if there is no investigation of what is true, chaos will ensue. We must calm the storms of the mind and defeat antagonism with an aggressive assault to imagine a society with beauty and peace as its foundation, as opposed to capital and commerce. With this, I will look for the child in people, though it may be deeply buried. And I will do this by displaying the essence of a child to people; smile, give, share, appreciate, thank, hug, speak nicely. *Devon, Joliet, IL*

### **Lesson 3: Understanding, Caring, and Developing the Human Senses, Part 1**

In this lesson, I learned about the seven “new” senses. Also, I had never truly thought of the fact that “consciousness arises when we find where we are between the polarities of the outer world and our inner world.” We impose our own analysis on the objective information we receive from our senses, which gives us our perception and, thus, our reality. I can apply more positive thought and analysis to my sensory information to better or alleviate my living situation at this time, and eventually my entire life going forward. I hope to get to the point where I will be able to appreciate my environment more and more every day. *David, Enfield, CT*

### **Lesson 4: Understanding, Caring, and Developing the Human Senses, Part 2**

It was new for me to understand that for the upper senses to function, we need the silencing of the relevant lower senses. That they are almost inverted and childhood plays a major role, i.e. natural material vs. artificial ones. Important to me is the thinking into seeing, and the development of a spiritual sense organ. Imaginative consciousness. I will begin using art activities as a way to transform and revive our sense organism to prepare me for modern life. I’ve been writing in my journal and using all twelve senses in conjunction with my thinking, going from a passive onlooker to an activating consciousness. *Jared, Wartburg, TN*

### **Lesson 6: The Threefold Constitution**

The fact that breathing is both an involuntary automatic action and one we can consciously control was new for me. Concentrating on it, we can regulate our rhythm and in fact I’ve been working on the concentration exercise for a year now, and am still ascending from an elementary control. When I read the concentration exercise and attempted it, I realized how like the will-o-the-wisp my consciousness is. Like a medium having spirits pass through it. Frustrating. *Nathaniel, Wasco, CA*

### **Lesson 7: The Human Being in its Relationship to the World**

I enjoyed some of the explanations on the processes of contraction and expansion as related to the model of the plant on page 5. I see this process as ebb and flow of all entities, my principle is the same but working different. The philosophy of Goethe was fairly new to me and I will investigate further into his work. I also like the examples on interrelation to other aspects of nature, like plants, to determine like natures and characteristics that all entities share. And the importance of balancing out the polarities of being rational/analytical, intuitive/imaginative in order to evolve the soul aspects of higher consciousness. I can reflect deeper into these philosophies, revisit these basic principles to reinforce my foundation into the nature of all things. I’m going to use your exercises when I work with people, they seem to work in a way not to give answers to the student, but to create an environment where the exercises pose reflections and create questions by the student to themselves. *Eyvind, Jarratt, VA*

### **Lesson 8: The Human Being and the Four Kingdoms of Nature**

What was new to me was the interrelationship of the four kingdoms of nature to the four members of the human being, and how it was explained helped me understand a little better. I have come across these terms before, but separated and more complex. I would like to incorporate this into the control of willing exercises to practice giving oneself the command: today you are to do this, at this particular hour. Seems a good start to practicing in this changing environment.

*Bernard, Bowling Green, FL*

### **Lesson 9: Development and Care of the Four Members of the Human Being**

I learned the fact that human development occurs in seven year periods, and that each seven year period contains its own cultivation and developing of the soul and its forces or organs, along with its physical growth and change. It was important to learn the responsibility that we as the older generations have towards the younger in able to help the young develop their soul forces to their full capacity. I’ll always be mindful in their presence. Always hold my tongue and try to be the most positive I can be in guiding or trying to help guide them along their path. Especially during early stages of life. *Jared, Woodville, TX*

### **Lesson 10: The Human Being, the Four Temperaments, the Four Elements, and the Four Ethers**

That through lack of understanding and control of our feelings, we cannot comprehend the basic temperaments that develop in life with the influence of the greater elements. This intricate involvement with these life forces is so important for humanity’s wellbeing and evolution toward soul consciousness. With a systematic practice (a form of journaling) we can begin to love ourselves more deeply and love others more deeply. To understand ourselves so we may become our brothers’ keeper and help the children of the world. I will begin looking at my daily actions and reactions and how this behavior affects my perception and thoughts of the world and those around me that are part of me. If I improve, they too can improve from my actions. *David, Anthony, NM*

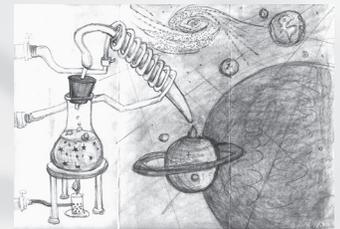
### **Lesson 11: Elements, Ethers, their Origin, and Evolution on Earth, Part 2**

I often wondered what lead me to anthroposophy. It was the spirit guiding me to be healed through biodynamic farming and curative eurythmy. This lesson brought a better understanding of the elements, the more comprehensive breakdown of sylphs, salamanders, gnomes, and undines. How they work as elemental beings and what forces function along their polarities. I can apply this in a way to aid me in obtaining higher consciousness and understanding of my world so that I may work towards healing it, or working with others in healing it.

*Jason, Florence, CO*

### **Lesson 14: Work Arising out of Rudolf Steiner’s Strivings and Review of the First Half-Year**

Our current state of affairs thrives on fear. We see this daily on false-flag operations, media concentration on bad news, public demonstrations paid for by fear-mongers, etc. We all need to see through the drama, control our emotions, and counteract all of this negativity. Work on myself must continue. I have come a very long way in control of my emotions, have a positive demeanor (more often than not). I am learning more balance in this outpouring, in order to keep myself in the loving state of mind, while giving myself away. I do daily work and reflection; dreams. I see progress. It has arrived through persistence. I must continue to work on myself daily. School and art help me stabilize. I’ve continued work on maintaining balance in my actions. *James, Walla Walla, WA*



### **Lesson 19: Ecological – Social – Economy, Part 1 of 2**

I learned to have as much trust in our dealings with other people as we have in a person whom we love. To be free means to realize oneself in actions one loves. Develop trust to rule social life—develop love for what we have to do. Change from domestic and local, to universal. We need to use ecological social economy to self-create eco-organizations to serve the needs of the individual and build a workforce for work cooperativity and responsibility. Not out of judgment of individuals, but out of the commonality of brotherhood and sisterhood for production and distribution of goods (economical geography). *Mario, McAlester, OK*

### **Lesson 24: Health and Nutrition, Part 2**

Health and nutrition is necessary to obtain the optimum state of existence. This lesson goes in depth about water and chemicals in water that irrigate crops that we consume. Air is also vital to our health, which is the most essential to sustain life. Greenhouse gases, cattle, fossil fuels, coal burning, exhaust fumes have all caused damage to our air quality. Nutrition establishes a relationship with the spiritual. This relationship can be as simple as blessing the meal we consume, which makes us more conscious of the higher self. The process of nutrition is the breaking down of food so that the body can use vitamins and minerals to rebuild and maintain our health. Foodstuffs we take in have properties that are absorbed in the body and converted into calories. Light is vital to the growing of the foodstuffs and also our health. Knowledge of light leads to understanding of how life arose out of an anabolic process in our food, as well as our bodies. Nutrition is that which sustains health, or the lack of good nutrition leads to illness of the body and soul. This chapter gives in detail the essentials for good health and nutrition.

*Alan, Nelsonville, OH*

## ~ So What's Your Experience? ~

*We welcome your comments on previous newsletter articles*

### *A Moment in Time and Dead leaves dancing in the Living Wind (Issue 26)*

I completely concur what Richard Cloud writes in his article, "A Moment in Time", quoting an old occult proverb, that "when the student is ready, the teacher will arrive." I am so honored by the moment I am in. I too, believe it to be "no idle occurrence". I especially loved when Cloud wrote, "the moment the teachings found their way to you and you found yourself drawn to the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, in that moment your karma revealed itself." Wow, this gives me great hope moving forward. Also, Chris DeRusse's article, "Dead leaves

dancing in the Living Wind", was also excellent. "When you've lost everything with no hope and realize it's your hand returning upon you, it's very profound." I was touched deeply by this. Also, I felt I was having a reunion with something so familiar, speaks to an experience I yearn for and believe possible. I have become inspired, to embrace what I have heard concerning re-connection with my true self. *Brandon, Trion, GA*

## ~ STEPPING ONTO THE PATH ~

HELLO MY NAME IS JOSEPH, I'm 38 years old. Since the age of 17, I've been serving a "Life" sentence here in PA. Life has been very difficult for me and I struggled a lot through the years, but I know that my life still has a meaning even though I may never walk out these gates until I die. I feel the only "real" freedom there is if I can find a way to free my mind. No matter where we are in life, even in prison, we can experience a sense of freedom. We just have to find a path that will lead us to it. Please send some books that help me on my journey. *Joey, Frackville, PA*

I AM LOOKING for physical, mental, and emotional strength, and understanding of life; the missing pieces to my journey's puzzle. Hoping to understand life better to prepare for release. *Manuel, Indian Springs, NV*

I'M ALL FOR learning more knowledge of how to become a better person. I hope to gain different tools to help me overcome struggles and difficult people and situations I involve myself in, and how to handle it in a positive way. I still feel lost, and believe that there's so much more to live and know of the afterlife. *Dareece, Henning, TN*

I HOPE TO LOOK AT LIFE and people with a different perspective. Another way of understanding and to hopefully be enlightened in some way. *Robert, Florence, AZ*

I AM STRIVING towards a higher path of learning of spiritual practices and awakening. I completely identify with Parzival in that I need to resolve my fears of failure, ineptitude, and the inability to feel. I was given an old copy of your newsletter and it felt like every word was written for me. I want to learn and know more, to become part of something bigger than myself in which I can devote my energy and life force that will in turn mold and shape me, through knowledge and insight, into what I'm truly meant to be. I'm tired of living life the way I've been and want to join the higher consciousness that APO offers! *Lawrence, Susanville, CA*

I WISH FOR A DEEPER CONNECTION to my higher self. I've studied different forms of religion and self-help in order to cultivate the raising of myself in which self-development, without giving up my sense of self, is an ultimate goal. Your program offers a stepping stone on my path. *Lucas, Chaparral, NM*

I HOPE TO BETTER myself through enlightenment, growth, and spiritual awareness. And change mankind through the same enlightenment. *Keith, New Castle, IN*

COMPOUND ON THE KNOWLEDGE I already have, and find keys to securing greater inner peace through higher awareness. I was raised in foster homes, attended different Christian denominations, and nothing really rang true 'til I started Buddhist studies, which actually made me appreciate and understand Christianity, looking through different eyes. I have studied many religions in pursuit of truth, and recognize common themes and ties. I look for similarities, not differences, and I think APO does too. *erry, Lake Providence, LA*

I HOPE your program teaches me about life and an understanding of who I am and what my purpose is. *Charles, Independence, VA*

WHEN I SAW YOUR NAME in that resource guide, I broke it down; Human-wisdom, I needed to know more. I have an appetite for knowledge and new ideas, so here I am. I also seek self-mastery. Through my path of being a Goji, I've found that in order to reach the higher self, I have to learn totality of self to achieve inner transcendence. I hope you can help me continue to grow and develop on my path. *William, Lewisburg, PA*

MY DESIRE is to study, think, and consider. To understand and to assist and spread love into the universe in different forms. *Teddy, Stormville, NY*

MY INTERESTS are to reach my higher self and be able to express my mind to the world. I feel the energy in all the books I read, and I know I'm on the right path. *David, Pollock, LA*

I HOPE TO GAIN all that is theosophy and knowledge of the cosmos; the past, present, and future, inner and outer self-realizations, and the absolute goal in the universe. The necessary tools, guides, instructions to help people who desperately want and need transformation, to become well balanced, productive, content, and successful to accomplish things they never thought possible. *Trace, Wilsonville, OR*

LISTENING TO ANDRELL AND MICHAEL (inmates in your program), I was amazed how aware they were of "self" and I wanted that, that knowledge of self. True knowledge of "self" and to gain the mental ability to teach kids one day. *Lester, Joliet, IL*

I WOULD LIKE to gain new insights and knowledge regarding questions and intrigue I have about my purpose here. I am interested in expanding my consciousness and to continue learning, even though I'm in prison. My spirituality is important to me, and I want to lead a more peaceful, compassionate life. Since my incarceration began in 2014, my spiritual path has been done mostly on my own. I meditate often and want to read books on meditation and mindfulness. *Cassandra, Denver, CO*

I WOULD LIKE TO GAIN knowledge and wisdom to unlock my subconscious to a deeper level! I want to learn the ancient teaching! I want to gain everything ya'll stand for! *Alex, Pelham, GA*

WISHING for a better understanding of myself and how to find peace in the storm. How to quiet my mind, and how to better utilize my emotions. The fact that APO incorporates prison study and relates to us behind bars, and is also diligent in the teachings, helps us from a beginner's level. *Katelynn, Ocala, FL*

I WANT TO LEARN conscious/subconscious will—planting seeds within mind. Watch the outer reflect the inner, as they are one. I am attempting to master this ability, and hope to work on a greater understanding of self and life. *Dale, Oswego, KS*

I AM LOOKING TO substantiate "the knowing" - Why are we here? What's our purpose? Our place in the cosmos? etc., And who and what really am I? To understand oneself and the world around us, these are my questions. *Rhondee, Eloy, AZ*

MY NAME IS MARCELL, I am 23 years old and I want to change my life, every and all aspects; mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. As a prisoner, I feel that there is and must be some meaning in my life and prison experience that is still to be discovered. I know personally that I can give my life meaning. I am very spiritual and interested in anthroposophy, can you please help me? *Marcell, Tucson, AZ*

I'M INTO THE PATH from the spirit in man to the spirit in the universe, cosmic consciousness, spiritual awakening, and clairvoyant development. I am gnostic and on the streets, I was a member of the Rosicrucian school. I want to grow more knowledge and understanding about life and the universe. *Ira, Walla Walla, WA*

I HAVE a fifteen year sentence. I am wanting to gain as much spiritual knowledge and guidance during this time I have. *Timothy, Norton, KS*

# Rudolf Steiner's Karma Exercises

cont. from pg 4

thinking. In meditation we first look at the person by disregarding everything that he achieves in life by virtue of what he can accomplish through his arms and legs, disregarding where he goes, where he lived, what he does professionally, how he moves. One focuses instead on temperament, mood, way of thinking, and so forth. It is a way to render the man transparent to everything that works in his will. Behind the picture of the individual thus elaborated starts to shine the spiritual Moon; that is, everything that works from the Moon sphere upon the person.

In the next stage, we further disregard what comes from his life of emotions, from the temperament, everything of a soul nature; and further, also disregard what the man receives through his senses. All that is left is the way the person thinks. At this point, the whole of the rhythmic system has been rendered transparent, and behind shines what comes through the spiritual Sun.

In the final stage, we also disregard what comes from the person's thinking, in order to behold what shines behind the man; he is thus made wholly "transparent," and one beholds the impulses shining from Saturn. At that moment, one can start seeing the individual as a spiritual being, and start perceiving his karma.

## Karma Exercise IX: Greater Karma Exercise

A final exercise is the so-called four days/ three nights exercise or the "Greater Karma Exercise."<sup>12</sup> Here it is a matter of bringing back to memory an event from daily life that may or may not involve another person. It is a matter of depicting it inwardly, or "painting it spiritually," as Steiner puts it, by recreating in greatest detail all the impressions received by our senses. If the memory includes a person, one re-creates inwardly the way in which she moved; the quality, pitch, and tone of her voice; words used, gestures, smells, and so forth. This experience is taken into the night and repeated the following two days. The image is first given shape by the astral body in the external ether. From there, the next morning the image is impressed into the etheric body. One awakens with definite feelings and the impression that the image wants something from us. It grows real in us. The etheric body continues to work on the image. On the third day, the image is impressed into the physical body. There the image is spiritualized. Steiner describes the experience of the day as a cloud in which the person moves. It gives rise to the feeling of being part of the picture itself. At first we feel part of the picture, but with our will paralyzed, frozen, so to speak. This experience then evolves and becomes sight, an objective image. This will be the image of the event of the previous life that was the root cause of the event in the present incarnation. An experience of this kind will most likely not arise until the exercise is carried out a great number of times.

## Reviewing the Exercises

Before moving further, we can look at the contrast between Lesser and Greater Karma Exercises. The distinction is significant. The first stage is one of "taking responsibility for our lives"; the second leads to precise knowledge.

Preliminary Exercise	Exercise I-II	Exercise III-VII	Exercise VIII-IX
Rückschau	Gratitude Recollection	Lesser Karma Exercise	Greater Karma Exercise
Review of daily events in reverse order.	Developing imaginative pictures of self and others.	Taking responsibility for our lives.	Perceiving the origin of present events and patterns in previous life events.

Table 1: Exercises of Spirit Recollection

We can graphically present the evolution of Steiner's exercises of Spirit Recollection in Table 1. All of these imply a strengthening of our powers of observation, and of our memory. The quintessential exercise that forms the foundation and prelude for all of them is the rückschau. The activity of the rückschau is one of pure review, deprived of evaluation. As we move towards the other exercises, review is mixed with as objective as possible an evaluation element.

Deciding to work with forces of destiny entails at first great effort of education of the will (usually resisted by our soul) to reconnect with our pre-birth resolves. Before incarnating, we were offered a preview of the challenges to come, and we accepted them with joy and earnestness, in order to advance our karma and the karma of those we love. A veil of forgetfulness was drawn over this experience for our lives on earth, and we have to struggle long and hard to recapture knowledge of our pre-birth intentions; such knowledge, however, enlivens meaning in our lives. The Lesser Karma Exercise and its variations reconnect us with our pre-birth intentions. The exercises are also a means to anticipate what normally occurs after death, in the kamaloka condition. Taking responsibility means being willing to live in the consequences of our actions, in their full ramifications; hence, it also means being willing to experience how these actions have affected other human beings.

A deeper level of resolve was attained at the so-called Cosmic Midnight. This is an experience that we cannot always undergo in full consciousness. It is during the Cosmic Midnight that we behold the full dimension of our humanity. Recollection of our previous lives forms an important part of this experience, as Steiner shows in his *Mystery Dramas*. It is this deeper level that leads us to the objective knowledge that the Greater Karma Exercise addresses.

Exertion of the will, through repeated practice of exercises or deeds that we do not naturally feel inclined to accomplish, forms the foundation for this path up to the Lesser Karma exercise. Deeper spiritual knowledge, however, becomes necessary once we want to move to the root causes of events in our biography in previous lives, as in the Greater Karma exercise.

12 Steiner, *Karmic Relationships*, Volume 2, May 9, 1924 lecture.



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*Meditative Verse*

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

*I feel my fate,  
My fate 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,  
Grows more abundant within me.*

*Rudolf Steiner*