

## On Being Free

Cheryl Sanders-Sardello

The world and community we live in has lost something. This is obvious to everyone and does not take an historical point of view to recognize. We have lost a balance that once was given to us from the natural, one might even say, the spiritual world. The balance was within ourselves in relation to the outer world. There was a possibility for equanimity, a realization that we are here for a purpose.

The culture, our home and life in general have moved away from a sense of belonging, mutual care and respect. Our 'culture' has shifted us into a world of fear, intimidation, insecurity and hopelessness. In a way, one might take a second look at what is wrong, and begin to see why this is so. It is not a punishment, or even a nightmare. It is as it should be. Why?

Human beings are by nature creatures of habit. Our latest habits all seem to be bad for us. We tend to overindulge, we treat life as a competition, with only winners and losers. The wealthier you are indicates your level of "success", the poorer you are indicates your loss. Then, we add a false sense of value to the winners and losers, and thus we have our economic structure to tell us what everyone is 'worth'. A bit simplistic, but if we neglect to reflect on the fallibility of this picture, the more it seems real and cruel and definitive.



The west, red window of the Goetheanum depicts cosmic and early influences that work upon the human being who is attempting to follow a spiritual path.  
*Illustrated by Van James*

This picture also, however, makes us want to turn toward a new image of ourselves, but not at the expense of losing everything we have ever known. We tend to look "back" and see what has disappeared, or look forward and wish for a picture of winning (the lottery, the love, the job). What if we knew how to "look forward" and be entirely open to the unknown of the future that holds every possibility? Not trying to force the unknown future to look like a past that might have been rosier than life is now, but really, truly receptive to the unknown. One can practice this anywhere, under any circumstances. We are the ones who can change the world from this darkness that seems to be everywhere, by not trying to recreate the past, but by allowing a future coming toward us that will offer more if we let go of perceptions and ideas that are narrow and closed.

Perceptions are the ground of our being, but we neither attend to what is perceived nor know what to do with the wholeness of the world if we were present to all that is there. One of the ways to be open to the future coming toward us in its fullness is to practice purifying our senses. Pay attention to what something feels like, look past the face of the other and into their soul, savor the taste of food, the smell of the environment, listen into the very heart of the voice of another. These do not all have to be wonderfully pleasant sensations. This is something that can be practiced no matter where one is. Even the things of the world that are not beautiful wait for us to attend to them. In fact, our very attention to the small, smelly, hardness of parts of the world heals something that we would prefer to forget, or throw away. Our attention makes things different, and therefore makes a difference. The activity, or exercise of 'paying attention' deepens the perception of the world into our body, our consciousness, our heart. One could say it imprints the world into our soul. If we hold what we perceive, let it live in memory as sensation (smell the grass even when you are not outside - taste the bread long after you have eaten it, etc.) the perception sinks into us, we savor it as the spiritual activity of the body. The capacity of the heart to perceive awakens from within. The attention one asserts on perceptions comes alive in the heart from the wholeness of the experience.

*cont. on pg. 11*

*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 his Heart is Man  
united  
most of all with the deepest  
fount-  
the fount of his true Being.*

*Rudolf Steiner*

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*Poems, Artwork  
and Letters Welcome.*

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

In this issue, the two main articles point out how important it is where we direct our attention. How important it is to stay centered and retrieve our true wealth despite the outer circumstances which wash over us and our society. In her article, *Nervousness and the I in Modern Times*, Henriette Dekkers-Appel speaks to the consequences that Steiner foresaw of the culture of materialism and how this can be infused with spiritual energy to add the splendor of the Light of spiritual elevation by strengthening 'imaginative thought', pointing the way to the Michael Age bringing us closer to the custodian of the heart, the 'I'. The second article by Cheryl Sanders-Sardello titled, *On Being Free*, directs our attention to the cacophony of stimuli coming at us to occupy all our senses so that there is no inner quiet. She describes the remedy that no matter where you are, how we can center ourselves in silence and elevate. She also gives us a simple meditative exercise to restore our freedom in silent attentiveness to the whisper of our hearts.

In this issue you will also find a summarized response to a question on the survey that so many of you had worked hard to complete, titled *What New Ways of Thinking, Feeling and Willing are You Applying?* In another section you will find some responses to our question to share your *Spiritual Journeys* with us. Both sections are moving and insightful, reminding us how courageous is your striving and studying! We hope that you will continue to send these valuable insights into your journeys.

You may remember that we were invited to speak about APO at the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland. We brought your art work, your poems, survey responses and spiritual journey letters and created an art gallery of your anthroposophical work in the main entrance hall. So many people came to our exhibit! They all were impressed with the quality of your work and reflected on your commitment to a deeper understanding through studying anthroposophy.

This last summer was indeed eventful; we became aware that two other countries' anthroposophical societies intend to offer a prison outreach program modeled on yours. Both Canada and The Netherlands have an initiative under way to offer such a program. We are grateful that this path will be held forth to people who wish to deepen their life experience and are behind prison walls elsewhere.

We hope our newsletter will take shape into a more interactive forum where, besides sharing your experiences of illumination and spiritual growth, you will also send us your comments on articles and other writings. We welcome all your contributions to these newsletters! By sharing your insights you might help another find his way to inner freedom. You never know!

*Blessings on your Path, Kathy Serafin*

## Meditations

**I pray the rosary** and spend some time in meditation every day. It's a great thing and one of my favorite times. I get away and get in touch with my inner peace. *Johnny Ray, Key West, FL*

**These meditations** are about controlling my emotions instead of immediately reacting. I do the math so to speak, on the situation first and put things in perspective. And I have pretty much mastered this recently. To hold on to silence and quietness in the physical sense are key. I am on track with all these things. *Ken, Manson, NC*

**I have been doing the meditation** exercises in *Self-Development in the Penitentiary*. Control of feeling has given me the most trouble. My watch was stolen on the dorm I was living on a few weeks back. I was mad, but I kept asking myself, why did my watch get stolen, what lesson can I learn from this? I had decided I wouldn't get mad, but I would just let it go and forgive who ever took it. Then I found out who took it. Suddenly there was no forgiveness in my heart. It's like I was the guy I used to be ten years ago. My mind seemed to stop working and I went on auto pilot. I confronted the guy and we fought. I spent two weeks in solitary for fighting. I have a lot of work to do. I realize that regardless of why my watch was stolen, I had a chance to act with love or hate, and I chose hate. I wish I could do this over and make a better choice. I'm sure I'll have a chance with a similar situation one of these days. I hope I will have grown into a better person when that day comes. *James, Palestine, TX*

**I meditate every morning** when I wake up and practice when I need to quiet my mind, such as before bed, before studying, when I'm angry etc. This gives me a way to quiet my runaway mind when I need a quiet concentrated mentality. Especially in the mornings, meditation locks in thoughts and intentions to guide my journey through the day. It has helped me tremendously. *Joseph, Galesburg, IL*

**I use the exercises** in the newsletters as a form of relaxation, especially right before I do my meditation session. It helps to ease me into a deeper and more profound state. *James, Sneads, FL*

**My meditation is much deeper.** How I react with others and my view of the world around me has changed. I feel that meditation has helped me grow spiritually and I believe it has made me healthier. *Michael, Michigan City, IN*

**I practice meditation** every day. Some days I'm able to concentrate more than others and get into deeper meditations. It has brought equanimity, peace, and sometimes joy into my life. By joy, I mean that sometimes that meditation itself produces joy, not that I never knew joy before I started meditating. As for the different exercises, I've tried them but never followed through serious enough to notice specific results other than the greater clarity in my thinking and feeling that comes from the overall meditation experience. My favorite technique, I guess you could call it, and some of my most meaningful, enlightening meditations come from reading the books, the actual experience of reading them, of letting Steiner lead me into meditation. He is simply amazing. I spend the time between books longing for my next ones to arrive. I would also like to say a word about the newsletters. I really enjoy them. It's encouraging hearing of others' experiences in the same situation. I like to read the book reviews, especially of books I've read to see if someone picked up on the same perspectives I did. The articles are great—very concise and clean. It's good to hear other peoples' perspectives on anthroposophy who are involved in the anthroposophical movement. I like the meditative verses on the last page. I use these in my meditations, especially the morning and evening verses and I'm going to take some time soon to experiment with the form drawing technique; it sounds and looks interesting. *Conley, Palestine, TX*

**Meditation relaxes** my mind and body. *Cesar, Texarkana, TX*

**I have taped my Verse for Meditation** sheet to the top of my rack. I can see it anytime I lay down. I have read over everything and I tried my first meditation exercise out of the self development book. I'm anxious and I feel as though I have such a long way to go. But I will practice everyday. *Bill, Greenwood, MS*

**Yes, I meditate** off and on. It ebbs and flows. When I set a meditation schedule, I find the more I advance, sometimes it also becomes more difficult to keep at it. Perhaps this is my 'shadow' self. *Jason, Lamesa, TX*

# NERVOUSNESS AND THE “I” IN MODERN TIMES

BY HENRIETTE DEKKERS-APPEL

*In ancient times mankind had, due to his constitution, a clairvoyance and a natural relationship with the spiritual world. He perceived himself, his folk and fellow mates, and most of all his “I” interwoven with nature-spirits, with heavenly messengers, with angelic powers, as well as forces of wrath and revenge that surrounded him whenever evil streamed out of his heart and hands.*

In the twilight of the historical shift to the epoch of the Greek-Roman time (750 BC to 413 AD) this changed fundamentally: the perception of his “I” gradually entered his innermost sense of Self, his innermost Core of Being. He became aware as an individual, unique person. Man’s constitution changed. The width of his spirit-relational senses shrank and became denser, more physically bound. In this way rational thinking gradually arose, followed by logic and argumentation, analysis and separation, phenomenological perception and an innermost urge to find out and prove the truth by oneself, by one’s own “I”. Materialism, research, inventions in all realms of earth-bound processes became possible. Man’s spiritual relatedness evaporated and retreated into the lands of myth and mythology. Inevitably the religious leaders had now to ask for ‘belief’ or had to ‘prove’ by argument that God existed. Finally the unseen became unspoken, and was widely declared ‘non-existent’.

Materialism is an important matter in this period of mankind; it brings concreteness in thought, objectivity of facts, scientific developments. It brings intelligence and brilliance. Psychologically it brings freedom of man to explore and invent. *However, one may state, that the brilliant intelligence and the moral quality of man’s deeds diverge to such an extent as they have never done before in history.*

Materialism must now pass to a next step in evolution. It is the step that requires the development of the level beyond concrete perception, beyond analytic thought, beyond philosophical deliberations. It is the step towards imagination. Imagination means: to conceive the full reality of the combination of crystal clear perceptions *plus* the non-visible processes allowing us to explore the open questions as to what the spiritual dimensions are that we can now integrate into our awareness.

Here we enter into the Light and the Dark of modern times, the times where the leading world cultures are represented by the Anglo-American, English speaking world and the intellectual industrial inventors of the western world. On the one hand intellectual capacities have grown beyond measure. Man’s “I” tends to identify with them in an almost almighty atmosphere. But the “I” is more than that. The “I” is the custodian of man’s heart and of man’s willpowers too. These capacities await maturing, they cannot be argued nor measured by logic and intellectualism alone, nor are they guarded by the spirits of wrath and revenge outside us. Instead they are attended by the benevolent forces of spiritual elevation.

Rudolf Steiner spoke about man’s necessary change in constitution to accompany this effort of maturing the “I”. He described how in this way man’s spirit-relational senses loosen themselves again from

being limited to the physical and open up to perceive from the point of view of the newly acquired “I”, the world, the social surroundings, the spiritual dimensions and realms of one’s thoughts and one’s deeds. He described how the thinking opens up and widens for images, ideas, ideals, imaginations, even for karmic consequences of man’s deeds. How the heart forces expand into the etheric world to sense truth, compassion, remorse and to perceive the good and the evil in social issues.

It must be underlined that Rudolf Steiner’s basic mission was to make his teachings available to the “I”, to the consciously active will of the “I” of modern man. No spirits, no passive invasion of psychic techniques that in any respect overrule or dim the consciousness of man’s “I” need be cultivated.



THE WORLD BRINGS ABOUT WILL  
WILL IS BEING BORN      WILL HAS BEEN BORN

The north, green window of the Goetheanum was designed by Rudolf Steiner to illustrate the stages of inner development along the path to high knowledge. *Illustrated by Van James*

This constitutional change, that means the “I” located in the innermost sanctuary of man’s Self, accompanied by the widening of his potential spiritual capacity to generate imaginations, inspirations and intuitions, are challenging and promising, but in today’s cultural context easily ignored. The importance of the progression from pure materialistic thought to what Steiner calls Imaginative Thinking is that in the absence of this progression he predicted that materialism will produce nervousness in people, aggression, destructive behavior and epidemic outbreaks of psychiatric illness. As soon as Rudolf Steiner grasped the consequences of materialism’s denial of the existence of spiritual truths, he lectured on many occasions addressing this theme, teaching how man’s “I” can acquire new windows in thinking, feeling and willing. This leads us towards a more true, compassionate and profound relation with ourselves and our eternal inner being, with our fellow mates, with the spiritual powers, with karma and with mankind’s future.

To strengthen our “I” awareness, Steiner developed a broad range of exercises. One basic group of exercises relates man with the sense bound outer world. Usually inner thoughts dwell on whatever issues from the past or the coming future call our attention and distract us from the outer world’s sense impressions. These distractions are only stopped by the actual need when we have to cross traffic filled roads, engage in human contact, or face an endangering/thrilling situation. Only then do we stand still in the present. The present however keeps the secret of the future. Our senses under healthy conditions are wide open to that ‘present’, instead of being at the mercy of excessive and often superfluous inner rumoring. We could surrender our “I” in an active way of perception to disclose in an unprejudiced manner the full range of where we are and what life presents to us. Rudolf Steiner mentions

*cont. on page 3*

the fact that spiritual powers light up the present in a most individual way for human beings in order to wake up to his or her karma in the here and now – as long as that human being wants to notice. He counsels us to be aware and awake to the present moment, open, and without prejudice. An example. A young woman sat in an airplane on the way to a holiday destination. Newspapers had for long time been filled with news of terrorists, of youngsters transporting cocaine in their stomach from continent to continent, and so she flamed up in full alarm when a dark young man took the chair beside hers, put his head in his lap and refused the drinks offered by the stewardess. ‘There it is’, she alarmed herself, ‘watch out! Bomb alarm or coke transport, what shall I do?’ As the plane rose to the sky and people were in their seat belts, something inside her admonished: ‘look closer and perceive all there is to be perceived!’ Putting aside her alarmed mood she looked with all her senses – jeans, jacket dark blue, dark curled hair, dark brown skin, slim, bent shoulders, back bent over his lap – hands folded under the head – the back rhythmically moving – up and down, up and down –. Only then did she recognize that he sobbed and could not stop sobbing. Then and there her heart was caught by a deep inner moving. She put her hand on his back asking ‘what is it that makes you sob’, and he cried with distorted face and voice ‘my deeply beloved father and life teacher today died unexpectedly and I am on my way to bury him – couldn’t even say or kiss him goodbye, or and I tell him what I owe to my deepest love and life guardian’. It was as if an angel entered between them when she heard herself say ‘your father is still close by, just put yourself in silence here and now and tell him all you want to convey to him, how he helped, what you shared, how and what and on what occasions he teaches you about life, tell him your gratefulness, your joy with him, his warmth and care that sheltered you’. The young man stopped sobbing and looked up in awe: ‘Yes! I will now tell him!’ and went silent. The young woman sat back, elated, in her heart both a mood of gratefulness and shame because of her prejudices at the start.

This incident brings us close to another exercise of Rudolf Steiner: ‘Practice every now and then retrospection, looking backwards in life through the window of the question: ‘to whom do I owe my actual personality formation? Who in the past challenged me, thwarted me, forced me to experience and made me change, acquire or transform competencies, taught and stimulated me?’ This is a fundamental social exercise in life. The opposite question is also helpful but more difficult; it is the door of perception through which I may perceive the effects on other people of my actions, my deeds. In this exercise I put myself in a moment of retrospection and without prejudice in the position of my fellow mate and strain myself, trying to grasp how he or she perceived me in a certain meeting or situation. The exercises are promising and sometimes exciting when practicing them. They bring the “I” into the sanctuary of the newly opened up spiritual capacities, and of potentially deeper spiritual perceptions, to feel, to act in accordance with future karma.

A final example brings us to the “I” in deepest connection with the Will and man’s eternal being. It relates to man’s capacity to transformation evil into the good. It is widely known in war literature. When the US Army in 1945 freed the prisoners of the concentration camps in the middle of Europe, they found exhausted, bewildered, starving people, some of who died even during the process of liberation of their camps. The strong and courageously liberating soldiers were deeply shocked far beyond comprehension by what they met. In one camp they found a guide, an interpreter gifted with the knowledge of five languages, who helped these U.S. soldiers and doctors to find and sort out whatever they needed. His appearance was completely different from the other prisoners: his body was straight and he went upright, his eyes were radiant, his look firm and present, his energy inexhaustible, his mood warm and gently strong. They worked for 19 hours or more a day to find and sort out, and this inmate never went tired, saying again and again: ‘The prisoners looked out for your coming, take the time to help them all’. The U.S. soldiers imagined that he had been caught and imprisoned only recently, and were taken aback when they heard him tell how he as an inmate had already been a prisoner for four years, being moved from one death concentration camp to another. They sat down to hear his story. In the early days of WW II the Warsaw Jewish ghetto’s people were taken prisoner, some of them were put on trains to concentration camps. Some prisoners were lined up and shot. Such was the ordeal for his family. He was destined for the camps whereas his wife and five children were put against the wall and executed. He was forced to watch this agonizing scene, he pleaded to die with his family but the German soldiers refused because his language skills might be of use in the war activities. A flame of hate and destructive revenge flared up in his heart at the sight of the horrendous happenings. Then, in a flash, he realized how destructive these powers are, by identifying with these feelings he would become just like them. Struggling in pain, he decided to exchange these powers for another power: to do his utmost from that moment on to perceive in every human being the innermost glow of the divine creator. ‘Not an easy decision’, he admits to the U.S. soldiers, ‘but a decision of my full “I”, in full dedication for this extremely difficult task and I had no idea how I would face the future. This former Jewish judge was sent to the camps and became a nobody, a number among the tens of thousands of inmates, a practical interpreter for camp leaders. Inwardly however, he grew to be the savior of many bewildered and inwardly lost fellow inmates. He became the mediator between camp leaders and endangered inmates, the light and hope in the disputes that exist between inmates as happens in every prison (there were prisoners from all parts of Europe with different backgrounds). This man took the road toward his eternal human being, strengthened with the force of immeasurable Light and Life.

Rudolf Steiner lectured to point us toward the practical path of awareness in our will. Mankind’s progression to raise spiritual awareness by way of imaginative thinking is in the natural order of our development and is our birthright...let none be left behind.

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Design by Patricia DeLisa

# Spiritual Journeys

**I would like to share** what has happened to me since I started my spiritual journey through anthroposophy. I have only been involved now for two years, but I have seen nothing but positive results in my life. I am not the only one to see these results as many inmates have asked me about my change. As time passes, I have become aware how my emotions, my intuition and my spirit have come to balance out more in my life. It is no longer about myself, but about others. It is about evolving to become a better person to make this earth a better place to live in, not only for the people of now, but also for the next generations to come. My confidence level is up again. Now I know I am someone important on this vast universe. I can finally say that I can see myself from the outside in. I know I have much, much more to learn, and as I continue on this spiritual journey, I truly believe that my decision making will improve and so will the person making these decisions. *Raul, Ft. Stockton, TX*

**While in prison, a human being** steps onto a spiritual path... This is not an easy question to answer because there is so much to say. For all the things I believe I lost, I have found so much more on the inside of myself. We continue to be the same person, but as we open our inner eye, we realize what we really are. With this awareness also comes the responsibility to walk the path in a more sacred manner, awakened manner. We native Americans call it walking the Red Road or Corn Pollen Road. The way is simple, yet for the most part we are asleep even while awake, for we depend too much on our eyes and ears to tell us about the world around us. In order to ever really see anything you must learn to use your heart to see, hear and feel. Only then will you be able to walk the road of your ancestors. *Gabriel, Florence AZ*

**My journey through prison** was kind of hard for me, I have had to interact with all types of personalities from inmates, counselors, C.O.s, and other staff members. I have destroyed a lot of people's lives dealing drugs, (including my own) which is not right. I have been a loner since I was ten years old and have been molested in a group home when I was twelve years old. I did not care about life, but still dealt with whatever life had thrown at me because I refused to stop growing to find the 'true me'. Darkness was my brother, drugs my mother and the streets my father. Prison became my stepmother at fourteen years old. In time, the evolution of me became more intense because I was fighting myself for reasons I did not understand. A 'new me' kept creeping inside me slowly through the experience of the mistakes I have made in life. The more I stopped fighting this, the more I began to understand about life, emotions, personalities, and human beings. My motto is, "be alive in your words, don't die behind them." You have to have your words come alive of what you plan to do with life, instead of dying inside like I kept doing. I have given the prison system thirteen years of my life because I was selfish and lost. I thought that struggling was a bad thing, but as I look at it now, you have to struggle to understand where you stand as a human being who is bound to make mistakes. I'm happy to say that I love the 'new me' because I made it through the storm to calmer waters. I am 32 years old with more knowledge and wisdom of who I am and I'm able to live a normal life by being unselfish. I cannot change what happened, but I can open my eyes to a new reality. All my life I've been afraid, hiding behind different masks so no one could see the 'true me', but now I'm not afraid. I have given myself the chance to see life differently. I know when I leave prison, I will still be judged by many, but I must not let that stop me. I cherish this new freedom and will not live again like a loner without a soul. Respectfully, *Dionell, Somerset, PA*

**I own an eternal debt of gratitude** to anthroposophists for helping me bring into focus the questions and answers which have awakened my consciousness to profundity and enriched my life. The works of Rudolf Steiner helped me in a personal way, helping me to grow—among other things—into a positive person. Perhaps the greatest challenge I faced as a young man on Texas Death Row was initially realizing that I was more than just a sentient animal. As I dealt with the daily pressures of prison life and coming to grips with why I would be executed, I began to wonder about life's bigger questions. Through anthroposophy a new world opened to me and I could find in it the guidance and answers that I needed to form a solid ground in me; a sense of security from out of which I could explore the deeper, darker recesses of my inner being. It was from out of this growth and introspection that I began to get an inkling of remorse. Please know that I'm not an innocent man on death row. I am guilty. I murdered three

people, and I deserve to die. Of course, I want very much to live. It has taken me so long to be able to sort out these feelings in this regard (I've been on the "row" since 1991, I've been studying anthroposophy since 1995). I used to be confused, being unable to distinguish between what I felt that I deserved and what I wanted for myself. I was tied in knots, but the various practices that I picked up along the way through an anthroposophical spiritual development, helped me solve such inner problems. Perhaps the more important message is not how I actually came along, but that this particular coming-along itself made me more aware of the significance of everyone's value, and how each of us have such a bearing on everyone's destiny that we should really stop and think, and never forget this. I have learned that our greatest liability is born out of our greatest strength: freewill and intuition; the sense to do what is right and the choices we make from it. Be it for self or for others determines the amount of bondage for our souls. However, if we can overcome our inner beasts, the more we focus on the welfare of others, learning about them, trying to help them, wanting to make things right for them, fixing what we have broken, then these heartfelt actions can unfetter our souls, and we may soar to better heights. I wish so much that I knew then what I know now. I can't undo the harm I've caused and I will bear this sadness forever, but at least now I have a genuine sense of regret and a wellness of being that has emerged from my unique spiritual path. And this path could not have been, were it not for anthroposophists and their continuing mission. *Mark, Livingston, TX*

**Well, I tried several** different churches and religions, after growing up catholic. I spent my whole life wondering and searching, hiding and running. I spent my whole life looking for a quick fix. Then I was given a book on inner peace. I began to look inside of myself for answers and began to look at what was wrong with me, instead of what was wrong with everyone around me. I began to face my problems head-on and deal with them instead of running from them. I learned that every second of every day is to be treated as a journey. I look for the solution to my problems/issues inside myself now. I used to be so bitter and angry inside and raging at the world. Being incarcerated has made me sit down and step back. I learned to remove all the layers of bricks I had built up around my heart and soul. I fixed me and stopped hiding behind everyone else's faults. I realized that the only true way to make this world a better place is to become a better person. I can make the world a more peaceful place by showing gentleness, kindness, compassion and peace to one person at a time. This in turn will cause a chain reaction. It only takes a smile or a "how are you?" or even a single word like "hello" to brighten someone's day and enrich their lives. Even in a place like this, a smile goes a very long way! I now have a calmness and peace inside that I cannot begin to describe in words. I began my life struggling and fighting to stay alive physically all the while spiritually dead. Now I have a light inside and realize violence is not the answer to anything, and inner peace can be achieved. Thank you. *Heidi, Marlin, TX*

**My spiritual journey** in prison began with me being put into an ad-seg cell 23/7 as a political prisoner. I had never been locked up before, alone in this cell with my terror of being confined. I suffered most from being cut off from the natural world of all living things being an Indian with celtic-blood. I was not allowed to practice any of my traditional tribal religious practices. My spirit suffered for this. Then I was moved next to a Hispanic neighbor who was a Gnostic and in one of his magazines was an announcement about APO. Having been an anthroposophist in the 70's and 80's and a practicing biodynamic farmer and consultant with the late Peter Escher as my mentor, my spiritual walk with Steiner was closely tied with my belief about the natural world. APO put Steiner's guiding words and inspirations back in my thinking, feeling and willing. Steiner's poems and prayers to my Higher Self affected me, lifting my spirit self and my three fold consciousness righted itself, filled with the winds of inspiration. Upon this foundation my efforts to practice the six prerequisite exercises began to bear fruit, so that even my Native American practices were more fulfilling and meaningful. I was released from ad-seg, crippled in body from harsh treatment, but whole within myself. These last five years I have been on a Native American, unit, where I could at least see nature, green grass and trees. My work now is to refocus my life outward, to 'a life mastery wheel' based on Steiner teaching and Native American. It is helping me to get both organized and focused in my spiritual life. *White, Tennessee Colony, TX*

# Art and Poetry

## A Seed Sown

A seed sown in the ground in time a rose it brings  
 Fertilized with love and care and precious time,  
 In the spring a lovely smell it sings,  
 Bathed in sunlight, washed with rain makes  
     it look so fine,  
 Sprouted from a single seed, beautiful flowers  
     it now bares.  
 It took love and care; and precious time washed  
     within and bathed in sun,  
 To allow us to see today the wonderful sight  
     from us it snares,  
 After each element has done its perfect part,  
     beautiful roses have come.

John, Midway, TX

## If All Were Now Perfect

If all were now perfect,  
 How might the soul grow?  
 What fruit would there be  
 From the seed we now sow?  
 Will a plant stem grow stronger  
 Without resisting the wind?  
 Is a heart to know righteousness  
 Without the contrast of sin?  
 Where might love flowers bloom  
 Outside a world full of hate?  
 How does one choose the good  
 Without evil to negate?  
 How is Christ glorified  
 If not by giving His life?  
 What's to "take up your cross"  
 Without struggle or strife?  
 Where is God's loving hand  
 When great adversities test  
 When it's always His purpose  
 To bring out one's best?

Alexis, Holderville, OK

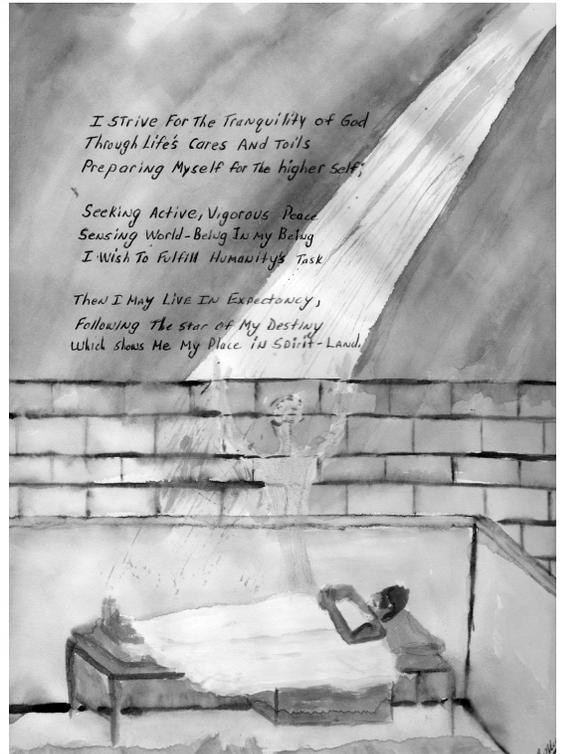


Jayson, Richmond, TX

## Star

Dancing through the deep blue  
 Pausing only to shine yourself upon me  
 Fiery, excited to cast yourself through the darkness  
 Illuminate my world that fails me  
 Bright light to my heart and reassure me that peace exist.  
 Bead the wondrous sky that you climb  
 Fall gracefully to your rest  
 Into all beautiful colors left within your wake.

Jason Allen, Tennessee Colony, TX



Richard, Soledad, CA



Mark, Livingston, TX

# What New Ways of Thinking, Feeling and Willing are You Applying?

**I am open to much more.** I am not set in any beliefs that were placed upon me by someone else. If it does not resonate, then I let it go. I listen more and speak less. I am becoming less judgemental. *Jack, Repressa, CA*

**I have read all the newsletters** I have received and do take to the teachings. They have taught me to watch my thoughts, listen to my feelings, and change a lot of my old habits due to this attention. I am more cautious of the situations I allow myself to get involved in. I'm a lot less temperamental these days. *Tristan, Brickeys, AR*

**My emotions** are not tied to my thinking anymore. I am learning to rest, relax and meditate by concentrating on a single idea, and I get deeper meaning and my awareness expands. I used to force myself to concentrate. Now, I repeat to myself out loud to rely on sight and sound, and then let my imagination freely unfold without force. *David, Gatesville, TX*

**Now I can understand** and listen with an open-mind and not think hateful thoughts, and judging others. *Joseph, Live Gulf, FL*

**If I remember myself** say, ten years back, I was not very aware of how my dreams and/or actions affected others; I like to think that I do now. I think before I act (more often anyway). I am sure reading Rudolf Steiner's work has contributed to this. *Derek, Calipatria, CA*

**I am no longer subject to fatalistic thinking.** I'm enjoying positive activities and I have hope. *William, Winnsboro, LA*

**I'm meditating** and attempting to remain steeped in an attitude of love, forgiveness, and gratitude. *Ernesto, Tehachapi, CA*

**More peaceful;** see both sides instead of one-sided views. Better understanding of others' emotion/feelings, etc. I have been using symbolism to unlock/balance, body/mind/spirit, to bring forth inner peace and serenity. *Carl, Calico Rock, AR*

**Thinking less in a negative manner,** feeling less impatient about situations and doing more self evaluation. *Richard, Soledad, CA*

**Actually I'm pursuing positive thinking,** and being conscious of the creative power of thought. Using meditation and visualization in my spiritual practices to help people, especially with their health. *Carl, McAlester, OK*

**I am less negative,** and more calm and relaxed. Exterior calamities in prison don't bother me; I am detached with a good sense of well-being. Loving myself a lot and creating my reality. Be harmonious and have self-control. *Joseph Frank, Tennessee Colony, TX*

**My thinking is deeper** and more concentrated thinking. I experience my feelings with more awareness. I am doing spiritual practices and am focused on my inner life. *David, Huntingdon, PA*

**I take time** to think through my problems and feelings and use some of the meditation methods I've learned through your program. And I've learned to ask more questions if I'm unsure of something. *Daniel, Soledad, CA*

**I am steeped in a feeling of love** most of the time; I feel more complete with myself, and do what is best for myself and others. Always striving for balance in all things. I understand that humanity is lost and blind, so I try to always be forgiving myself and others whenever the ego rears up and bites someone. Christ said "forgive them for they know not what they do". *Ray, Lewisburg, PA*

**I slow down** and observe more people, places, senses; this "slowing down to smell the roses" concept helps me out immensely. I practice becoming more aware of myself and my surroundings. *Robert, Cumberland, MD*

**I try and stay positive** and feel different in that I try not to let anger overtake me. *Roberto, Susanville, CA*

**Well, simply put,** when I awake, I apply a form of mental relaxation. When I'm about to go to sleep, I clear my mind at

that moment, to be in tune with my inner self. *Terry, Waynesburg, PA*

**I meditate in the morning** and at night, what I work on the most and I think is most important, is the practice of controlling my will. At work I do a certain ritual before the work begins which is rather meaningless but I do it and it seems to be working. *Sean, Austin, TX*

**I started keeping a journal** of how I feel. By using this for inspiration for poetry I hope this helps heighten/clear my astral body. *Robert, Tennessee Colony, TX*

**Being more observant,** thinking beyond sight levels, more confident that a moment is not just a moment which is gone forever, but rather built upon over and over. Accordingly, I'm letting myself see and hopefully live in evolving ways. *Peter, Corcoran, CA*

**Speaking as a third party,** neutrality. Also compassion, calmness and reading a lot. *Dwayne, Tone, CA*

**Just being patient.** I try to understand the way human people act without criticizing. *Alonso, Philipsburg, PA*

**The application** of asking questions, whether of Godhead, of people, or of situations, or even animals and nature itself. Being more perceptive and aware of how, when and where an answer may present itself after I ask a question. I have discovered that the answer often comes to us at such an accelerated pace that if we are not able to perceive it We miss it entirely we must be ready to receive the answer the second we think it or ask it. *John, Hutchinson, KS*

**I am thinking** my problems through instead of reacting impulsively. *Jason, Lamesa, TX*

**I have begun** to analyze not only situations but people too. I am also controlling my thoughts much better than before, and that goes for my feelings too. *Raul, Ft. Stockton, TX*

**Better organization** skills. I'm calmer and try calming approaches in difficult situations. *Douglas, Pittsburgh, PA*

**Looking at things** at all angles, instead of just one. I practice not only that, but also keep myself going forward instead of standing still or sliding backwards. *Robert, New Boston, TX*

**One thing that has improved** is thinking patterns. I tended to let my mind drift continuously and daydream even when I am doing other things including reading. Now, I've learned to draw my thoughts back and allow myself to be absorbed in what I am doing at that time. I have much better thought control. I examine each day at the end and look for lessons to use for happier living. I have learned to better center my emotions and use them as a tool rather than as a controlling force. I use meditative and breathing exercises to calm my mind before analyzing situations this acting on intelligence rather than emotion. I'm gaining better control of myself, my actions, thoughts, and emotions. *Joseph, Fairfax, SC*

**I'm in solitary confinement,** so I don't do too much of anything. I have noticed a new calmness in my demeanor. *Matthew, Railford, FL*

**Basically, everything** I have read about and the practices offered I already was instituting them before anthroposophy, but the material has got me opened up to it even more. *Ramos, Vacaville, CA*

**Some new ways** that I have adopted to my senses from your lessons are being more patient and collected when I react to a situation. Also I have been practicing peaceful alternatives through poetry and art. I have learned to accept the truth about my inner self. *Kyle, Milton, FL*

**I practice positive thinking** and being aware of the power in speaking positive words. *Kayan, Miami, FL*

**I am thinking** before acting and doing the meditative exercises. *David, Granite, OK*

**I am less hateful** and I'm not quick to lash out with my anger. I focus more on my meditations. *Russell James, Crescent City, CA*



*Mark, Anthony, NM*

*M. Pelton Lesson # 23*

# Book Reviews



## ***Esoteric Christianity and the Mission of Christian Rosenkreutz*** Rudolf Steiner

In *Esoteric Christianity*, Mr. Steiner's work creates and preserves the record of human achievements and discovery of life as viewed from the spiritual realms. He provides a very helpful introduction to the themes and concerns of religious worldviews of all ancient cultures. In this way also giving insight into the spiritual realms perceived through our dreams, establishing that even in ordinary life you can experience the existence of more than one world. The human being perceives with his senses when he is in the physical plane, but not when he withdraws into himself. It is in the natural periodic suspension of consciousness that our being escapes the physical plane and embarks onto the spiritual realms. Mr. Steiner emphasizes the fact that the Gospel's new revelations come directly from the spiritual world. In effect, this is what spiritual science will become for mankind. I learned that faith, love and hope constitute three stages in the essential being of man. By losing these elements the human being would be incapable to find their way about in life; their very existence would be undermined by fear. We are born for wonder, for joy, for hope, for love, to marvel at the mystery of existence, to be awed by the beauty of the world, to seek truth and meaning, to acquire wisdom, and by our treatment of others to brighten places we live ourselves. Spiritual secrets are never hidden from us and the cultures of the world in history project this. The revelations in this book,

*Esoteric Christianity*, resonate with this truth. *Elmer, Sacaton, AZ*

## ***Study of Man*** Rudolf Steiner

Steiner makes clear that these 14 lectures are intended for teachers. He is specific in how to teach mature concepts to children and how to use this knowledge as an adult, since it is also intended for the full development of the human spirit, soul and body. The general focus is our will, cognition and dream states. He makes 'will' his first interest. Will seems to incarnate itself in our whole being, Steiner states. The activity of mental pictures cannot be comprehended unless we arrive at a true, clear understanding that we went through a life before conception. Furthermore, our mental picturing is playing in from the other side of birth as a reflection in the human himself. Steiner states that it is a mistake to identify with thought (I think there for I am). Our 'will' is a great enigma. The parts of will; sympathy and antipathy, brings into our physical world, the reality of feeling. Memory arising out of antipathy, imagination out of sympathy. He hopes we will take his word and learn about spirit soul and body; for me, I will do more research into the blood. He says the blood could transform into spirit itself. *Shelby, Palestine, TX*

## ***The Apocalypse of St. John*** Rudolf Steiner

*The Apocalypse of St. John* is a favorite. Much is discussed about the evolutionary journey through the world's periods, globes and epochs. The vehicles built to gain experience are referred to as they relate to the apocalyptic symbolism. Many of the enigmatic symbols are deciphered and explained in light of Christian initiation. Steiner's explorations are so vivid that one is able to transform what is explained into pictures that may become clearer with time. Steiner enlivens a hope for the future. He explains that even very late in evolution those who have missed the mark will have an opportunity for redemption. He invites us to join the few but growing number of souls who are preparing the earth for the future while outlining the steps that are to be taken. I particularly liked the reference to Manichean philosophy and the diagram in the back. *Alexis, Holdenville, OK*

## ***The Bhagavad-Gita and the West*** Rudolf Steiner

This thought provoking book, *The Bhagavad-Gita and the West* is a powerful work that carries with it an important message that can benefit anyone. This book elucidates how to better comprehend the esotericism of the figures of Krishna, Arjuna and the later appearance of the Christ impulse as well as its presence in the evolution of the world's mentality today. This book gives you a clear insight into those figures who pre-existed before the advent of Christ. Steiner speaks of this as our best chance for nurturing and developing those needed characteristics that must enhance world evolution and the individual's progress toward spiritual maturity. *The Bhagavad-Gita and the West* is an amazing contribution to the esoteric student whose scope is broad, and is sincerely seeking and inner connection between spiritual striving and that of a deeper content. Humboldt, the linguist and Prussian minister described in 1827 (the year of Beethoven's death) the Bhagavad-Gita as the greatest philosophical poem. *Ozzie, Railford, FL*

## ***Guidance in Esoteric Training*** Rudolf Steiner

In this book there are a number of lectures that give in depth views on particular aspects of meditations. One of which is the need for perseverance. Steiner states that obstacles on the path of meditation are not merely an individual's weakness but the real and powerful forces that are in opposition to progressive evolution. Lucifer and Ahriman attack seekers who meditate. They thus take an active role in evolution by placing obstacles in our path. Steiner give remedies to help neutralize these obstacles such as the visualization of the Rose Cross or the Staff of Mercury with one black and one white snake intertwined around it. There are a great number of verses that were given by Steiner to his pupils to use in meditation. Also meditations on the days of the week to help understand the seven fold nature of evolution, meditations for each month (i.e. the virtues) and eight meditations for the days of the week to help awaken attention to certain soul activities that are then given care and attention by the pupil. For me one of the important aspects of this book was reading and practicing the general requirements that Steiner states are necessary before one starts on the path of meditation. These are seven conditions that a student must cultivate. These are presented in two individual lectures. These conditions are wonderful for us who are in prison. Where as the noise and lack of privacy in prison makes it difficult to meditate these same conditions are perfect grounds for the cultivation of these conditions that prepare one for meditation. *Robert, Hazleton, PA*

## ***In Place of the Self, How Drugs Work*** Ron Dunselman

I first read *In Place of the Self* while I was doing a study on drug abuse. This book, along with books on psychology was the basis for writings I made over the last year. I found this book to be the single best authority on the overall history of different drugs and alcohol. Nowhere in any other book will you find such valuable information on the topic. Included in this book are statistics, history, and how these drugs can also alter your spiritual status. If you are interested in studies on addictions and need a good reference source, this is the book for you. I have read through this book twice, each time coming up with more ideas for articles. This book is also full of interesting quotes and references. *Gabriel, Florence, AZ*

## ***Theosophy*** Rudolf Steiner

When I first tried to study anthroposophy I have to admit that I was lost. I had tried to start off from books that were far too deep for the level I was at. I could not understand the basic, premise that Rudolf Steiner was trying to teach me in the books. I had tried to take in too much at once without developing a good foundation of understanding. One of the best books to develop that understanding is *Theosophy* by Rudolf Steiner. This book starts with the very basics of human perspective and helps you to transform your understanding into higher planes. Steiner uses plain terminology to translate complex ideas into food for thought. I have found that Steiner's views are similar in nature to some Native American beliefs on spirituality. For example the concept of the "life force" and the circle of life are ways I have been traditionally taught to view earth's life cycles. The specific entities of the different levels of man were part of our teachings when we were young. This book is a valuable startup to spiritual understanding. *Gabriel, Florence, AZ*

# - SELF-AWAKENINGS -

## *EduCareDo Correspondence Course Response Summaries*

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

Caring for the senses is an idea so simple that you would think I would have thought of it myself. It is so complex and far reaching in its benefits that it is quite profound. I never would have thought how knowing and experiencing the senses would help me clear my mind and bring me into focus. These are the neglected parts of myself that have been right under my nose so to speak. I am also beginning to use the exercises routinely and will start a morning ritual. *Fredrick, Bonham, TX*

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

Control of willing. I discovered that while I read books from APO, there is always a lot of noise outside my cell. Part of my brain wants to listen to what is happening. But, there is only one way to remember what you read, total concentration on one subject, only then can you understand and remember. So in order to block out the background noise I discovered the key to success. When I start to read and chatter is going on, I read in my mind louder. Loud in a sense that allows me to keep my concentration and it works beautifully. Now it is as if I can 'will' to build a bubble around myself and be consumed in the spiritual world that anthroposophy brings to my being. *Carlos, Menard, IL*

### **Lesson 9 Development and Care of the four members of the Human Being**

What was really new to me in this Lesson is the way the Human Being evolves through seven year periods. The development, care and polarities were new as well. The most important and closest to my heart in this lesson was the processes within the 7 year periods. What was enlightening and eye opening to me was learning that after the 28<sup>th</sup> year, what we become depends on the work which we are free to do now on our own development. I will meditate on my childhood and see if there's a way I might rebuild and right some of the wrongs in my childhood. I will also be more sensitive to assure the proper maturing of children, and be a better example around them. I want to teach them what I've learned in this lesson. *Arturo, New Boston, TX*

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

In this lesson it was new to learn how all things are 'used' as fuel for other things to exist. This also applies to the spiritual realms where different realms/worlds use the etheric energy that leaves the physical body at its expiration. The evolution of earth and human beings depends on how the different spirits act through time on the elements, ethers and bodies. Through further introspection and understanding of the spiritual worlds/realms and how they relate to us (and us/ them), I can learn how to help support the spirits that provide the necessities for us here. I continue to study and apply the teachings. *Lee, Hudson, CO*

### **Lesson 14 Work arising out of Rudolf Steiner's strivings. Review of the First Half Year.**

New in this lesson was the universal declaration of human rights, a plain language vision. I learned more about the emotions of hatred, terror, and fear, greed, misery distrust and how the polarizing beings (the tempter, the deceiver and the unforgiving) influence us. I hope to bring the light of consciousness to my awareness and to recognize the one sidedness of these powerful forces. I want to learn how to subdue or at least counter-balance the detrimental effects that these have in the lives of humanity. I have awakened with renewed consciousness, vigor and strength to balance those forces in my own life with creative knowing, in my thoughts, feelings and the courage of my will. *Steve, Beeville, TX*

### **Lesson 16 Female and Male Spirituality part 2 and 3 Open-mindedness for New Experiences**

What was new to me in this lesson was the idea of initiation rites explained in the start of the lesson. Also new were the similarities of Egyptian mythology and Christianity. Steiner comments about the lesson exercises of 'open-minded receptivity'. I find myself closing my mind to a lot of stuff that I don't immediately agree with or don't know about. Instead I learned at least to be open or to experiment with it. It may not be comfortable at the time but it usually works out in the end and it brings great results. That's what I've been finding out. The more I just do the practices and meditate, then life gives me experiences to grow. As I go deeper in my practices I also become more open. It really isn't a forced thing, it just happens. *Dalton, Ontario, OR*

### **Lesson 18 The Arts and their Mission part 1**

Art is a bridge between polarities of the upper and lower gods through our spirit self. In ancient schools, art, religion and science were not separated but combined in mysteries. I will balance abstract thoughts with art by learning to play the guitar. *Richard, Frackville, PA*

## *- So What's Your Experience? -*

*We welcome your comments on previous newsletter articles*

**Wrestling with the Demon of Reaction (Issue 14)** - I really enjoyed the article in the newsletter - *Wrestling with the Demon of Reaction*. It's important to me to keep my fire burning. As I contemplate the issues behind my wish to change, I seek for a healing element in my human evolution. I see it is necessary for me to transform many of my concepts, also my attitudes to the truth. These questions lead to creative thinking beyond the senses to a spiritual grounding and self transformation. I realize the sources of irritation come from past unaddressed emotions. Now I can ask the 'who' and 'when' and without blaming anyone I learn to think before reacting out of selfishness. Choosing to interact with the changes I am making, instead of being afraid to apply them, is what is important to me. When I feel and become aware of my own heartbeat it really does bring about a change in my attitude, as well as the realization that the demon of reaction is outside of myself and therefore can be controlled. I am sure now that this inner work can help me make real progress by discovering in the spiritual world what I need to shape the course of my life and also the next life. You people are so important to me. *Sean, Florence, AZ*

**Metamorphosis in Nature as an Analogy for Human and Cultural Metamorphosis (Issue 14)** - I really liked the article in your latest newsletter by Eileen Bristol, I can really relate to the cycle of up's and down's (growth and decay) she was talking about. The article was very encouraging not to let the downs 'get us down' but to look at them as a process of metamorphosis, from which to learn and grow. *Conley, Palestine, TX*

**Drawings Toward Mastery (Issue 12)** - I did try the *Drawings Toward Mastery* Form Drawing exercises; they are all dynamic on their own. I do some drawing but form drawing work seems almost separate from art pieces. A good comparison to me is warming up or practicing guitar, compared to actually playing the gig. Form Drawing is more meditational and seems to satisfy an inner need, one of creativity and symbolism. As Rudolf Steiner notes Form Drawing is eurythmic. It combines proportion and harmony, movement and rhythm. For me it seems to activate multifaceted impulses that involve the whole being. It's great for manual dexterity and there's a sense of awakening with the application. *Dale, Winnfield, LA*

**Meditative Exercise (Issue 11)** - December will be 21 years I have been in FL prison without a break, and yesterday was the first time I was to come in contact with your great newsletter! I read about six issues back to back dated from 2003 to 2010. I was blessed. I made note of Dr. Steiner's quote in your 2008 No 11 issue about composing yourself inwardly three times a day, one of which should be immediately before going to sleep at night. In this way, one would take the thoughts of the meditation with them into the spiritual world as one falls asleep." I am sure Dr. Steiner expounds on this in his writings, but I will mention here that upon awaking in the morning one should lay still and rewind and meditate on the dream before it is forgotten. *Tony, De Funiak Springs, FL*

# Illuminations

HOW TO KNOW HIGHER WORLDS was tremendous. The teachings presented by Steiner are creating a well spring of perceptual awareness in me. The need for selfless commitment is a moral foundation that promotes spiritual development. My yearning to unleash the fetters of sensory (physical) influences is peaking. How wonderful to edify the inner Spirit, and nurture the senses relative to the Soul! *Perry, Palestine, TX*

I'M RETURNING *Facing the World with Soul* and *The Light of the I*, both books relate to the core inside of us which makes up our being. I once read some material by Confucian; he spoke about how people search the world over, looking for the answer to life, only to find it right within themselves! I've spent most of my life in prison, by all rights I should be a monster unfit for society, but my travels have humbled me, brought me to earth. It would be nice if we could all live in harmony, put an end to all wars! There are a lot of lost souls in prison, and the world. Anyone providing light on this darkness should be saluted. *Jackie, Marion, OH*

IT IS REALLY GOOD to read the positivity that comes back from those who write responses in the newsletter. Prison can be a bleak environment, so it's refreshing to hear people working on themselves for change. *Frankie, Cumberland, MD*

THANK YOU very much for the books and for accepting me as a member of this great reality. I am grateful for being a part of this great program. *Rodolfo, Ellsworth, KS*

FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS my mind has been expanded because of my deeper involvement with spirituality. So many people today are just not awake about what it means to get closer to God. There are a group of us studying together on this unit. We have been reading books from your list and we have been discussing them together also. Thank you. *Richard, Ft. Stockton, TX*

TO BELIEVE IN A LIFE apart from God is a dream from which we must awaken. As one awakes from a nightmare, so the mentality awakes from the dream of a living death to a realization of eternal life. The armor of light is the truth, the very knowing of which makes free. This awakening is a process of evolution, a little here and a little there. When the whole eye is opened we see that life is neither separate from God nor different from God. Life is God. Life is seldom what we expect but we can trust that we will survive the rough times. We have lessons to learn which mean growing pains. If we remember that our challenges are gifts to grow on and that within every problem lays the solution. There is a healing power that comes from trusting ourselves and trying to trust others that we bring harmony, thoughtfulness, and courage to all our actions. Even now, after 25 years in prison, life holds many possibilities. *Ervin, Menard, IL*

I HOPE TO CONTINUE MY STUDIES in anthroposophy when released and live up to the potential that I've learned I possess within from these studies. I am thoroughly grateful and forever indebted to all the effort, energy, hope and passion that you and all at APO have given those who seek truth. *Quentin, Fairton, NJ*

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE you guys for all you do for us! At first I received the packet, then two books - *A Way of Self Knowledge* and *An Introduction to Anthroposophy* along with some copies of *Illuminating Anthroposophy*. I thought they are speaking a foreign language. I had so many questions and as I read and reread I got answers and then more books. After laying this foundation and after reading back copies of *Illuminating Anthroposophy*, I understand a lot more and wanting more. I've read *Enlivening the Chakra of the Heart* six times and know I must get it back to you. Rudolf Steiner's work and the writings of the many other authors in the library are priceless. After reading these books I'm going to start back on the *Self Development in the Penitentiary* booklet and prepare to start on the exercises; control of thinking, feeling and willing as well as the 'I think' exercises. I want to be mentally, physically and spiritually prepared. State of mind is everything. *Kenneth, Lexington, OK*

IT IS VERY INTERESTING to study these kinds of books, thank you. Occult science is the best way to know oneself and the spiritual world that many people do not believe exist. It is great to learn everything one can in this life since it is the only way to know and understand the functioning of the material and spiritual life, and of course, experience it. I used to meditate everyday but I've been negligent. This is just like any work: If one stops the practice, we lose the ability. From that comes the saying: 'practice makes the master'. So I will keep practicing my meditation. *Carlos, New Boston, TX*

I'VE LEARNED from the book *Life Patterns* that in order for me to take control of my inner and outer self, I must look at how my past reflects what's presently around me and how it will effect my future. *Life Patterns* taught me how to become aware of repetitive actions with which I tend to respond to certain situations. By knowing this I can start a change in my life's ongoing patterns for the betterment of those around me and myself. In the book *Understanding your Temperament* I've learned a lot about why many of the people I know, including myself, do what we do. I've asked myself many times: Why am I this way and that way? And *Understanding your Temperament* gave me the answer to questions I've been looking for, for a long time. *William, Big Pine Key, FL*

THANK YOU so deeply that you are doing something for inmates. I have been incarcerated for 30 years and I read and try to learn something new spiritually everyday. So I go inside myself and want to know more. Oh, how excited I was to see the entire book list from your library and the wealth of wisdom it contains. *Cecilia, Wrightsville, AR*

I MUST TELL YOU my experience in being introduced to anthroposophy. For I believe it is a life changing experience and one intentionally supposed to have happened to me. The short version is that I am in prison and I asked an officer for a book. He put a fiction book somewhere for me. The next day when I asked about the book, it turned out a different officer had given it to someone else and he ended up bringing me the book *An Introduction to Anthroposophy*. It came sort of as a revelation that this would be a life changing book. My soul has been in turmoil for a long long time. I've searched my entire life for answers about who or what I am. See, I was removed from home when I was only four years old because my mother was abusive. I've never had a family perse. I got into drug life real heavily and came to prison. I got into gang life for awhile and I was content with this. In 2008 I dropped out of gang life due to some inner questions and disappointments I had about that life. I had been in it long enough to fully grasp that I was missing a piece of my soul. Since then I have been struggling to make serious, even life endangering decisions to change my life, and try to begin finding who I am again. Now, through this book, I have been hit with a rare bolt of understanding and insight. *Rusty, San Quentin, CA*

I OPEN THIS LETTER WITH PEACE. I would like to thank you for helping me with my studies and spiritual growth. I've finished the book *First Steps in Inner Development*, what I got from that book was how to control my thoughts, stay balanced in the mind and turning within. It also takes you through the steps. That's really what I liked about it, it shows how to do it. As for *The Apocalypse of St. John*, it made me look at the book of John in a different light. I truly got how universal this book is. *Terri, Menard, IL*  
*cont. on bottom of pg. 11*

## On Being Free cont. from pg. 3

The exercise of opening our perceptions makes possible opening the heart as an organ of perception. The heart is an amazing organ. It can actually heal the wounds of the body and psyche, and bring the capacity for receptivity to the future coming toward us into our everyday life, if we could but live from the place of the heart. The heart's greatest activity is bringing clarity into the substantive realm of forgiveness, compassion, contemplation, patience and inner peace. The work of the heart waits for us to come to it; to enter the place of the heart (the actual, physical heart) with all our attention and focus. To rest in the place of the heart, and from there empty the thoughts and mind of accusation and judgement. The heart can awaken us out of who we think we are, into knowing who we really can be, whole and totally free within ourselves. Even if the future appears fixed, completed and unchangeable, the wholeness of the future coming toward us can be transformed from the inside out, by virtue of the heart's ability to purify the senses, and, by sensing the wholeness of the world, we 'cleanse' the world itself of our sense of it's being narrow, finished, broken.

Few people do this. Few know to even try to do this. The exercise of placing our attention in the center of the heart, listening in silence and inner stillness, attending to what rises from the hearts' perceptions; these are activities many do not value. The quality of the time we have to spend is rarely considered, and not given over to question unless it is corrupted by other forces around us. Once, when there were fewer distractions, (one might say, "entertainments") people chose to go to places where time was set aside for contemplation, silence, listening to the heart, stillness. These were often monasteries. In our time of hurry and instantaneous results, there is not much attention paid to the heart, the senses, the body as the center of spiritual activity between the physical and the unseen spiritual worlds. And yet, as we struggle to make sense of all that is senseless in the world, we forget that within our very selves we have the heart which affects the whole of the world with how it "feels". We have the heart. We have the senses. We have the freedom to choose to enter the heart as the organ of perception through which all the world can be healed and made whole. We ignore the strength of this at our peril, for it is the only way to bring about transformation in the world. It requires clarity, a sense of purpose and courage to embark on this journey. It is not for the 'weak of heart'.

It does not matter where one is, what one has done in the past, or what one faces in life. Everyone can place their attention in the center of their heart. It is a simple exercise. And yet, it can change everything. It is the only place we are truly free.

The exercise is simple. Sit quietly and enter inwardly into a field of silence. Breathe deeply, and feel the silence around you. Distracting sounds are present? Let them drift around, or set them in a corner...they are part of the silence, but not the whole of it, which is there. You can see silence around objects in the room, the chair is silent, the wall. Within this mantle of silence, place your attention in the center of your heart. The physical organ of your heart, not the valentine, sentimental idea of heart, the real organ in your chest. Your attention is all of your focus and on the immediacy of this moment. If you were to stub your toe, ALL of your attention is suddenly diverted and absorbed by that toe. It has your undivided attention. That is how much attention to place in the center of your heart, in the mantle of silence. Now, simply listen. Pay attention. What arises is the hearts' attention, listening to you. If you bring a question into the heart, the heart will respond. Perhaps not in words, but maybe. Listening through the heart, one can often wake up with the clear sense of a specific answer to a question brought to the heart. The heart awakens our soul to the questions of our life, and we begin to perceive the future coming toward us. But now we know that it is not about planning, setting goals, basing our future on what happened in the past. Now we hear and see from the center of the heart, and sense the future as open, and filled with every possibility. This is not about being ungrounded, unable to make decisions, unable to move forward. It is precisely about being able to enter into decisions, possibilities, the unknown from the place of our greatest strength. The place of the heart.

## Illuminations cont. from pg. 10

THE BOOKS *Transforming the Soul* and *The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved* were fantastic. It really caught my inner soul and I see things in a different way, in a spiritual way now. *Ezechial, Ft. Stockton, TX*

ITS FUNNY how we live in a world with so many ideas but the power isn't yet in people. This is true, when conflict arises as a result of not being mature, with no one to guide a person, one easily chooses the wrong route that, as time passed, just got out of hand. This is a very strong idea that I think is key to any solution after we understand in what circumstances we grew up. We can look at anyone and find love in them. To get them on the correct path, we can focus on the one thing that everybody wants in life, show them that we believe in the good in them and don't trip over the errors that have happened. Then we could get somewhere. I'm doing this in the midst of my own circumstance, so anyone can do it. *Keith, San Quentin, CA*

I HAVE BEEN READING a very insightful book from your library, called *Start Now*. I find the book is filled with plenty of knowledge and wisdom. I am currently incarcerated at Two Rivers and will not be released until the end of 2015. It has become important to me to use this time to get myself on an enlightened path, to focus my life on the eternal wisdom and spirituality of the universe. *Thomas, Umatilla, OR*

THANK YOU for the books that you sent. Never have I learned so much about the spirit, creation, and the ultimate purpose of myself and others. I could never express all that I've learned into words, but suffice to say, that my feet have been firmly placed upon my path. *Justin, Tehachapi, CA*

I READ AN ISSUE of the newsletter *Illuminating Anthroposophy* and I was amazed at how strong and confident these words felt in my life. I am currently learning to write poetry. I would like to send my utmost gratitude for what you do. It is truly amazing how life brings individuals into another individual life. I feel blessed just to know about anthroposophy. *Adam, Florence, AZ*

I AM HAPPY to know that this program exists and that you offer it to people like me that are searching and longing to become whole. I would like to truly come to know myself as well as others around me, to receive and give the most out of life.

*Joseph, Loretto, PA*



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## Illuminating Anthroposophy

Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Newsletter

### *Meditative Verse*

*The sphere of the Spirit is the soul's true home,  
And a Man will surely reach it  
By walking in the path of honest Thought;  
By choosing as his guide the fount of Love  
Implanted in his heart;  
By opening the eye of his soul  
To Nature's script  
Spread out before him through all the Universe,  
Telling the story of the Spirit  
In all that lives and thrives,  
And in the silent spaciousness of lifeless things,  
And in the stream of Time-the process of becoming.*

*Rudolf Steiner  
Verses and Meditations*