

Archangel Michael

"In the correspondence you sent it mentions that in "1879 the Archangel Michael serves as a guiding spirit for all of humanity." Can you explain this in detail? Is the Archangel Michael a symbolic concept/idea representing something esoteric, or is Michael a being within time and space?" James,. Pittsburgh, PA

Michael is one of seven Archangels who take turns as guiding spirits of humanity. His current reign started in 1879 and is in effect for about 300 years. Rudolf Steiner places great emphasis on Michael as the executor of cosmic intelligence and the "countenance" of the Christ Being. Steiner relates that Michael's name is pronounced in three syllables following the original Hebrew pronunciation, roughly spoken mi-kie-ale. His name in translation means: "who is like God?" He is the only archangel whose name forms a question.



Rudolf Steiner states that Michael has many important tasks in relation to humanity of which two are emphasized, namely cosmopolitanism and freedom. One of the Random House College Dictionary definitions characterizes cosmopolitan as a person who is free from local, provincial, or national prejudices, or attachments etc.; a citizen of the world. Unlike other spiritual beings of the hierarchies who are generally looked to for protection and guidance, Michael's emphasis is on the development of human freedom and is present for and encourages those who act out of this impulse. The biblical story of Moses at the Red Sea tells of the sea parting only when Moses took that first step into the water. It is the deed, taken freely by the individual in spirit striving toward his growing humanity upon which Michael will cast his encouraging gaze.

In researching my response to your question Ernst Katz, one of the seed bearers of Anthroposophy in the United States, related an anecdote told to him by a direct student of Rudolf Steiner. When asked by Walter Johannes Stein which of his books will be of the most influence over time, Rudolf Steiner replied that *The Philosophy of Freedom, Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path* will last about 300 years, about the same amount of time as the reign of Michael.

Fred Janney

I Wonder...

Questions

about

Anthroposophy

When we receive a question that we would like to respond to with a little more depth we will answer it in this column. If you have a question about Anthroposophy and you would like to have answered feel free to write us.

Has anyone read

Intuitive Thinking

as a Spiritual Path?

We would love to

get Your thoughts

and comments

about this book.

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Dear Readers,

The article in the first newsletter by Mark Robertson also got us thinking about the value of inner silence and healing the soul through artistic expression. So, we have asked an art therapist to write an article about some work you can do to create inner silence, just by using pencil and paper. While the exercises may seem simple, it helps create inner quietness that nurtures your spirituality and is helpful to the soul.

We would like to hear from you if these exercise's help to center you in a place of inner silence (see the questions that go with the article). We will gladly print the experiences you share with us in the next Newsletter. Of course, we also always welcome your artwork. If you are interested, we have a book titled *Form Drawing* in our library.

Our first newsletter was well received by you and by your supporters on the outside. We love and value your many responses and comments to APO. However, due to limited space, and in order to print as many responses as possible, we have to edit (sometimes way down), many (too many) of your letters. We will always try to keep the essence of the point you are making. If, inadvertently, we take out something essential, we apologize.

We are pleased to provide this forum for you and are open for ways to make this service more meaningful to you as your path unfolds. This unfolding path also has meaning for us at APO. We hope you will share some of your experiences with us, taking us along the path from where you were to where you are now, and perhaps where you hope to be as a result of the knowledge you are gaining. Such a letter about your journey would be quite meaningful to us and to the people who support you.

Blessings on your path,

Kathy Serafin



~ Letters to the Editor ~

THANK YOU SO MUCH for this first issue of your (our) Outreach Newsletter "Illuminating Anthroposophy". Every page is an inspiration for me to see so many others venturing on the age-old noble quest. For my part in the Fall Issue, I'd like to quote Carl Jung: "Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. "Who looks outside...dreams. Who looks inside...awakes." Thanks again to you and all the supporters of this Outreach, where we all may become an illuminating spark on this path of evolution.

Fiat Lux! William G, Crescent City, CA

THIS IS JUST A BRIEF NOTE to go along with the small donation of \$20, and to let you know that the work you're doing with prisoners is commendable and appreciated. Not many, in my close to 25 years of incarceration have been attracted to such a challenge of encouraging prisoners to transform prison time into such a thing I call *transformative justice*, the transformation of the heart, the value system. This comes to fruition inspired by grace and forgiveness at a level that affords a person to see and take responsibility for all those who have been affected by the ripple effect of the crime and its aftermath. It is then when we begin, not only to grow in wisdom and from the experience, but to appreciate more the process and content of life. For those of us who are struggling to become better human beings; people, places, and things become more interesting and life becomes more meaningful, while the rage of our souls become more manageable. This is the prerequisite to finding spiritual equipoise. I enjoyed the first edition of your newsletter, and my soul hungers for more! You will be hearing from me, and I will support all of your efforts.

Fondly, Michael, Bellefonte, PA

ON THE COVER

The image seen on the cover of this newsletter comes from the Mercury Capitol of the Goetheanum.

Art For Health

BY MARIETTA YEAGER

This article is follow-up to Mark Robertson's article in the previous issue of this newsletter. His reference to art as therapy is well met indeed! As an art therapist, I hope that the reader will consider the value of taking up an artistic practice with whatever materials are available. No previous experience or training are necessary ~ only the interest in giving it a try.

Why art? People turn to art for many reasons. For some, art is distracting from everyday stress or troubling thoughts. For others, it is nourishing to our soul and even our senses. But what about art's ability to help us work through issues, express emotions, or to simply relax?

In our pressured, anxious, even sleep-deprived lives, taking time to engage in the arts – whether it's painting, drawing or listening to classical (or other relaxing-type) music for 10 minutes each day – can be among the healthiest things we do for ourselves. A doctor of internal medicine, Dr. Kirk Panneton, claims that in his 20 years of practice, "stress was responsible for 80% of what came through the door."

To add to that, Michael Samuels, an imagery therapist in New York states, "Healing, art and prayer all come from the same source: the soul. When we travel deeply into the inner realms, we reach the insights, emotions and transformation that are our birthright . . . Making art is similar to meditation, relaxation or guided *imagery* . . . It enters like a friend, like play, like a surprise, like joy. It breaks the habitual space of the technical environment and it makes us more human."

The activity of painting, especially with watercolor, can be joyful and relaxing, addressing and strengthening our innate rhythmic system of breathing. Since no outlines are made, the colors themselves can 'speak' to us, warm us with the orange and red or calm us with the blue and green.

If you are able to obtain a bit of clay, you may experience a regenerating effect on your energy level. As you slowly change its form to a sphere and then go on to another shape, you 'inform' the clay as well as experience that reflected in an inner way within your own being. We become more aware of the nature of concave or

convex forms and that in turn can help us to harmonize our own inner and outer relationships with the world.

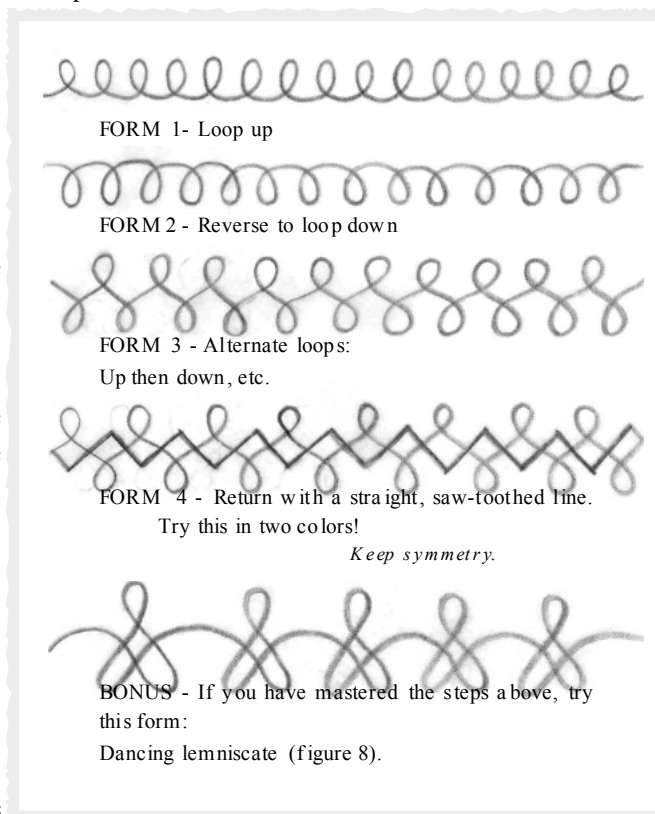
Drawing has an advantage of strengthening our focus or concentration. If you are drawing from observation you must pay careful attention to all proportions and details. If you draw from memory, your perception and judgment are especially stretched.

A kind of drawing that I would like to introduce here is called *Dynamic Drawing*. It can be defined as lines rhythmically drawn, that can weave in and out of one another. There is a coming and going of continuous movement. What follows is an example, given in steps, that you may enjoy learning . . . though it may initially remind you of grade school penmanship exercises. Pay attention to how it sharpens your thinking as you practice. The improvement to your handwriting is just an added bonus. **Precision is important**; so your perception of symmetry,

judgment of space, and eye-to-hand coordination will be tested.

Above are some forms to try. Imagine a straight line and practice until you can do a whole row without stopping -- a continuous flow. Remember to keep all loops evenly spaced and of equal size. Not always so easy, but hope you have fun!

Marietta Yeager, Anthroposophical Art Therapist



So, what is your experience?

Could you keep to a straight, rhythmic line (flow) without stopping?

Were you able to keep balance and symmetry to the forms?

Did you recognize familiar feelings as you faced frustration or overcame a hurdle?

Art and Poetry

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

A Prayer for Life

Please tell me Lord, what have I missed:
The touching of love in a moment of bliss,
The knowing of care beyond all end,
Feelings of depth time cannot bend?

What is this that passes us by?
We claim "without!" with hue and cry
How may we give what we do not receive?
Our life is a loss, in this we grieve.

We really do not know this gift of life,
We bury it under mountains of strife
In memories of past in that which was lost,
Or in prices paid of such a high cost.

Our most wonderful blessings we don't even see,
While we cry and cry for that which could be
Wake us oh Lord, our God up above,
And bring meaning to a life given in love.

Dennis Woods, Corcoran, CA



*Head of Minerva
Ken, Clairsville, OH*



Troas, Corcoran, CA



*Pelican Bay
William, Crescent City, CA*

*Poems, Artwork
and Letters Welcome.*

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Book Reviews



AT THIS TIME I find a tremendous amount of benefit in having concentrated on the attitudinal development outlined in the first chapter of *How to Know Higher Worlds*, those exercises that focus on the deepening of the soul qualities of devotion, reverence, admiration, respect, and wonder. It is an extraordinary worthwhile challenge for me to develop those qualities, because I seldom felt or nurtured those moods throughout my life. Cultivating thoughts and feelings of reverence and devotion - which at first seem at striking variance to my longtime critical thinking - has indeed given me an unsuspected inner peace, and at the same time has changed my daily thinking about others, the world as I know it, myself, and my future. *John Paul, Walsenburg, CO*

Dear John, Ah yes, when one's perception changes, the world changes, and yet it remains the same. *Kathy*

I'VE JUST FINISHED READING the last two books you sent me, *Return from Tomorrow* and *The Near Death Experience*. Considering that both books' combined total number of pages weren't that many (225 pages), I felt I would read them rather fast. Wrrroong! I enjoyed reading both books, and each lent a unique perspective on the near death experience phenomenon. It's fascinating to think so much of Ritchie's experience occurred in just nine minutes of time. Which reminds me of a biblical passage that states: "A thousand years is as one day and one day is as a thousand years..." Like Dr. Ritchie, I am convinced that "our consciousness doesn't cease with physical death. How we spend our time on earth, the kind of relationships we build, is vastly, infinitely more important than we can know." Thanks to you and APO, the void in my life is being filled by interesting books to read. *A. Ray, Nashville, NC*

I JUST FINISHED the second of the two books you sent. I read *Return from Tomorrow* first, for some reason; something just said: "read *Return from Tomorrow* first". I must say I'm truly glad I did. These two books combined are a spiritual road map that all persons on a sincere spiritual journey should read! They also confirmed my intuitive thoughts about the matter. The book by Calvert Roszell, *The Near Death Experience* is also a precious piece of wisdom and knowledge. Kathy, I can't remember requesting these books, but if I didn't and you sent them of your own free will, may God bless you abundantly for doing so. I see staff members that are in "prison" themselves, but they don't even realize that they are in a prison ten times worse than this man-made prison I am in. I remember the day I was arrested. At that point in time I just want to give up and die, for the misery I was in was the worst thing I thought could happen to me. No, I did not try to commit suicide, but I would be lying if I said the thought didn't cross my mind. But now I'm extremely thankful for this part of my life, for God has been there every step of the way. No, I'm not perfect, far from it, but I must thank God for this time out in my life. I wouldn't trade it for all the wealth in the world. Even though I've been materially and financially poor all my life, I would rather be worldly poor than spiritually poor! I'm always asking God to reveal to me what my true purpose is on this physical plane and I feel in my heart that he will guide me. I just have to listen and pay attention. It's so easy to lose focus once you are surrounded by the worldly ways of the world. This is something I do not want to happen to me once I leave this prison. It's really easy to fall into the trap of worldly pastime. I truly hope this doesn't happen to me, for I do not want to go backwards. I only want to go forward on this spiritual journey that stretches before me. *Raymond, Reidsville, GA*

I WANT TO THANK YOU for sending me the two books: *The Apocalypse of St. John* and *Macrocosm and Microcosm*. I found them to be not only insightful, but also revealing of the profound. This comes to me as a special gift, thus helping me to continue to strengthen and solidify the path of self-learning. For instance, I came out with the understanding that the Apocalypse is a disclosure, which implies the event that takes place in Christian initiation. It is also, as a prophecy that man would have been obliged to sink down into a kind of abyss had he not been preserved from it by the entry of Christ onto our world (see *The Apocalypse of St. John*, pg. 121). Having seen myself in such a situation, and in appealing to the name of Christ, I have felt as if it were a resurgence or of my free spirit. The other book I read, *Macrocosm and Microcosm*, helped me to realize, among other things, the significance of thought, picture, imagination, and symbol. For example - and in reference to the question in the newsletter that asks: "Has doing the daily practices changed your thought?" - something happened while I was doing my regular running. The temperature and humidity were at their highest and the sun radiant. Yet, right after I began, a perception of inconvenience and difficulty to continue began to emerge. I then let my imagination run with the fact that our internal organ has been developed and grown by the sun rays' penetration into the physical body. I wanted to feel that. Then, I saw, as it were, the sun's radiance like a magnetic force, proceeding to pull me into the flow, without any effort from me. After that, I was able to finish running, and had it not been for the end of the recreation period, I would have kept on going. Unbelievable, yet it happened to me. *Peace & blessings, Victor, Collins, NY*

Letters from You on

IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER, on page 7, there is a letter about meditating at night when it is quiet Oh boy! The trouble I got into doing that. Thinking that I am about to meditate I'd often put myself to sleep. ... If you learn to control your mind when it is the most active, the most distracted, a true sense of peace and harmony will filter in. As Steiner says we must train ourselves to the point that a gunshot does not distract. ... Meditation is right thought, right speech, and right action. If you are



distracted and can remember you are distracted and focus on your thoughts and discard the negative ones and speak and act on the truth you will develop yourself quicker and be on more of a solid foundation than any 30 minute bed time nose gaze. Patience and perseverance pay off. But always remember your thoughts are the start of all action. Once you control them it's like a song I used to listen to, "Let freedom ring."

Michael, McCormick CI, South Carolina.

Thanks for sharing from your own experiences about meditation. I'd like to add some more thoughts on the subject – one that is dear to all of us and probably has as many opinions as there are individuals reading this.

I think both points of view (represented by you and Ron) are true. Practicing concentration and awareness techniques in the midst of the day provides a great training ground for managing your attention. Meditating at night before you sleep places you in a more harmonious state, which can provide additional support for you, as you sleep.

Meditation in a more quiet time while "easier" nevertheless allows you to significantly alter your state of consciousness and if you do this repeatedly, you create long term effects.

I read a neurological study done on Buddhist monks and office workers who participated in a 3-hour "mindfulness meditation" session once a week for 8 weeks. As you might expect, neurological tests of the monks revealed strong differences in patterns. However, even the office workers with 8 meditation sessions under their belt showed increased activity in several areas of the left prefrontal cortex (associated with positive emotions) that persisted for at least 4 months after the experiment. Their experiments also showed that meditation can facilitate more rapid, spontaneous recovery from negative emotional reactions during the course of the day as well as increased immune function.

To use anthroposophical terminology, when you meditate you change the state of your astral body temporarily. Doing this over and over, day by day, slowly brings change into your etheric body creating a longer lasting effect.

While everyone is different, I find that when I can devote at least 20 minutes to a meditation I am able to reach a more elevated state. I myself have not ever had a regular habit of 3-hour meditations. It may be that you could become a little un-grounded if you did that regularly. If your situation allows for such extensive time, I would suggest you also integrate the basic exercises on a regular basis as well as artistic activity and physical exercise to keep you balanced.

Any experience out there amongst the readership on this question?

As for falling asleep, I have one friend who practiced meditation standing up for that reason. Sitting on a hard surface with a straight back can help some also. Doing some bodily stretches relaxes you and brings you into your body. ***Any other tips on staying awake from our readers?***

Eileen Bristol

We enjoy receiving letters and book reviews from all of you. Keep them coming! Does it help you in choosing the titles you would like to read next?

Meditative Work

It would be helpful if you can always write your name and address on your book request letters. This will help save time in processing your book order.

I READ THE EXERCISE on "The Pencil" and was awed at my own ability to mentally and spiritually, fly virtually through the human process of that pencil, from the forest to the factory, etc. Respectfully, Michael, Mineral Point, MO

AS FOR MY CONTROL OF WILL, I have been doing a simple thing like putting on my socks, then taking them off and putting them on the opposite foot. Silly, yes, and you should see the expression on the inmates who sleep next to me (I live in a dorm with 84 others). Bless you all, Albert, Ontario, OR

Dear Albert,

Great exercise! The next step for some of us who practice these kinds of exercises would be to select an arbitrary time when you normally wouldn't be putting on your socks – like 2:06 p.m. I one time picked to un-button then re-button my shirt at a specific time. I got some looks, too – let me tell you! *Jean Yeager*

I HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY MEDITATING for 4 months and feel a very subtle change in my attitude and perspective.. Respectfully, Donald, NKSP, Delano, CA

I'M DOING WELL due to the meditation exercises you gave me. It's not easy to concentrate on these things, and not easy to do it everyday, but once you really try and not play with it or slack off, it begins to get easier. Before I did not have a calm mind, nor took the time to be aware of the kind of thoughts I had at all. I could not find myself sitting for any length of time. Now I tend to see more clearly since I've taken the time to follow your "self-development in the penitentiary program". My mind and heart seem lighter and I thank you all for being there for me in my time of need. Without your program I probably would still be in seg. but now I'm one step away from population. With Love and Respect, Ray, Newtown, CT

~ Responses to: So what is your experience? ~

In the first issue of our newsletter, we asked some questions and we've received some very interesting and thought provoking responses. Read on.

TO THE FIRST QUESTION about applying Steiner's teachings about...humility and compassion to the negative environment, I must admit it's a constant challenge. In the past I've often used the positivity exercise, looking for the silver lining in the clouds as an effective means for not being engulfed in the omni-present criticism, negativity, and foul language. I've also found benefit in listening to others without judgment or utilizing or challenging their statements, and then responding only after I've thought about what I sense they're really feeling and thinking, what could be helpful to them. *John Paul, Walsenburg, CO*

IN RESPONSE TO MARK ROBERTSON'S article and to your question about how to change your daily thoughts: It is not the one in the mirror that you must look at, it is the one within! One must become a skilled assassin of negative energy. Your body, the vehicle, and your spirit mind must fly you to humility and service. Christ said whoever has done it for the least of my brothers has done it for me! Prison is full of the least of them, yet the most valuable - they are the sheep that have wandered astray - You may be the only voice they might hear! Are you calling? Peace onto all, *Robert, Orient, OH*

I WANTED YOU TO KNOW that I received the first addition of the Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Newsletter. I am impressed, but most of all I am appreciative and grateful. I patiently await future issues. When we realize humanity is found upon two creations (Son of Man and Son of God), we start to connect the dots and see the lines that compose an image. I am an advocate of polarity rather than duality. I agree with Mark Robertson's conviction that the Ego can grow with our spiritual consciousness and become an obstacle on the path to higher understanding. The truth is, as we become a witness of the ego, our duty is not to destroy it but rather to foster and nourish it as our first born, not with pride, but with humility and service. One fact I have learned about life is that even though the results may not be perfect, the greater the effort we put into it the grander the magic we will receive out of it. Though I have not yet read much of Rudolf Steiner's work I am influenced to believe.... it is like the precious ointment upon the head.... *Thomas, Fairfax, SC*

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Illuminating Anthroposophy

Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Newsletter

Meditation for Morning and Evening

From *Verses and Meditations* by Rudolf Steiner, Given in English to an English Pupil

IN THE MORNING :

*Picture to yourself that you are in the midst of cosmic space,
surrounded by Light, and that a voice comes to you from the four points of the compass
(a single voice, but coming from four different directions speaking to you):*

*"BE A STRONG I. GIVE THY HEART TO THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD."
Be very quiet in your soul after this meditation.*

IN THE EVENING :

*Review the day in backward order from evening till morning. Picture to yourself that you are in the midst
of cosmic space, surrounded by Darkness, and that you are speaking to the Full Moon in the East:*

*"I WILL BE A STRONG I. I WILL GIVE MY HEART TO THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD."
Be very quiet in your soul after this meditation.*

I like this meditation. It is simple and easy to memorize. It appeals to and utilizes your auditory and visual creative senses. This keeps you busy and you are less likely to have stray thoughts wandering in.

Practicing "hearing" the resounding call rather than creating the sound within ourselves encourages our opening up to the spiritual world. So much of our life experience encourages us to "shut down" to protect ourselves. In this meditation we create a safe space where we can open up and hear a call to our higher selves. In the evening when we respond and imagine ourselves speaking a response, it solidifies our resolution. While we have an entire day between the "call" and the "response", we are placing these at each threshold to the spirit world, waking and sleeping, acknowledging the continuity of that aspect of our life.

Some people ask what is meant by "the Spirit of the World." Out of anthroposophy we can understand the "Spirit of the World" to mean the Cosmic Christ, the Spirit of All-Prevailing Love. If you are more comfortable with a different way of saying this, insert the words that mean the most to you. - Eileen Bristol