

## Inner Development and the Teacher

Conversations with Lisa Romero, a presenter at Sydney Rudolf Steiner College, are followed by comments from several long-term teachers.

The Journal plans to have interviews and conversations around the steps on the anthroposophical path of inner development. If there are schools or groups working with inner development in the pedagogical realm who would like to share a picture or conversation on their work in the journal, please contact Peggy Day, the coordinator of the Pedagogical Section in Australia at [peggyd@glenaeon.nsw.edu](mailto:peggyd@glenaeon.nsw.edu)

*Q. How did you first meet the work of Rudolf Steiner and how has Inner Development Work unfolded?*

**Lisa** - I was given *Knowledge of Higher Worlds*<sup>1</sup> at 19 years of age by my first esoteric teacher who was in the Rosicrucian stream. I therefore knew Rudolf Steiner only as a spiritual teacher. Seven years later when studying homeopathy, I entered into a more conscious schooling in Spiritual Science. I met and learnt from Erwin Berney, Anna Havas and Susan Harris, all tutors at Parsifal College in Sydney. Later Erwin asked me to teach the subjects of Male-Female and Health and Healing when he retired from lecturing and also facilitated my involvement in the Edu-Care-Do course. This grew into the Health and Healing Course in which students studied practical applications in the health field which involved also practice in inner development.



The students increasingly noticed that the meditation allowed insights into their healing work and asked for further teaching. Thus there began inner development classes and workshops- and then 5 years ago the retreats began. The participants soon moved beyond the health field - teachers and parents came and it grew into the workshops and retreats.

I was invited by the Anthroposophical Society in New York to hold talks and this later grew into workshops for 30-40 people on *How to Know Higher Worlds*. Also many younger people there have an interest in the questions of gender and relationship and attend workshops.

Last year I was invited to the Meditation Initiative at the Goetheanum. Around 150 people from around the world, working deeply with meditation, gathered and worked together.

*Q. How do the fruits of the Inner Work move into daily life and how does this help the teacher?*

**Lisa** - I could not have so deeply understood the 3 and 4 fold pictures of the human being or the perceptions of human development without the living pictures of meditation. The inner practice works into the world in a living way and creative solutions for daily challenges arise. This taking hold through the inner schooling speeds up the path of development.

For the teacher several fruits become available:

1. The first way the teacher uses it is in not getting entangled in the daily struggles- they have a moment of freedom in which to choose.
2. They have more available capacity of forces to give to the work.
3. They recognise what would be helpful or progressive for the children with more objectivity e.g. colours and forms they work with, the part in the play or the verse to speak.
4. With their awakening awareness of their essential nature they become committed in a whole new way to the evolution of the other.
5. We realise that lives in us is more important than what we know.

---

<sup>1</sup> Current translation Steiner, R. (1994). *How to know higher worlds* [GA10]. Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press.

*Q. The development of this stronger inner life and the practices in How to Know Higher Worlds also connect to the College work in schools don't they?*

**Lisa** - The teacher becomes deeply connected inwardly to their colleague's work and also to the unseen colleagues of the College Imagination<sup>2</sup>.

*Q. Why this path based in the work of Rudolf Steiner and How to Know Higher Worlds?*

**Lisa** - Through this path we recognise where we have been, where we are now and where we are heading- we are not attempting to go back where we have been. We are strengthening the 'I' not merging back into the primal oneness. We can reject the path of limited intellect but foster will-filled thinking and conscious reflection of the letting go of our limitations.

*Q. What supports Inner Development and how is this incorporated in retreats?*

**Lisa** - Through eurythmy the cosmic forms are connected to the body before breakfast so that participants are strengthened and ready to face life.

The lecture content twice a day allows us to understand what the practice entails, why we do it and how. It is content we can integrate into our lives. There are big cosmological and human pictures given by Rudolf Steiner which form a stability and foundation for journeying beyond our limited particular self.

The private practice time afterwards is followed in the morning by time for discussion questions. The artistic time after lunch gives the soul direct experiences in observations of nature, colour and light and dark. Supported rest with baths, massage and compresses allows participants to feel comfortable in a peaceful state, to be present sooner in the work and build resources, put their workaday self aside and feel at ease in an inner space.

Even though we are never really ready for the next step in the evolution of consciousness, the inner path of Spiritual Science calls us where ever we are, at any stage, to raise ourselves up. Whether we are exhausted or disenchanted we are called to enliven our life.

---

<sup>2</sup> This is a verse given to teachers of the first Waldorf School by Rudolf Steiner in 1919  
Journal for Waldorf/Rudolf Steiner Education 16.2 November 2014

## Reflections on the Fruits of the Inner Path by Teachers

### Josefin Porteous - Eurythmy Teacher



*Q. What does it bring to your life to give time and focus to your inner practice?*

#### **Wisdom and Love**

Attending workshops and retreats allows me time to strengthen focus on the inner life. If we are overwhelmed and can't stop the busy life of our day to day routine, then through this focus on inner work we become in awe of the magnificence of life and the spirit; the magnitude of wisdom everywhere and how to take this up with the gift and task of love.

#### **Strength of Uprightness**

Imagine a cross with its horizontal line as well as the vertical line, the horizontal line representing the daily life with its endless tasks and never ending little and big things we are doing all day. I feel that I am being pulled into the upright with all the practices and artistic activities. Being confronted by ourselves and the meaning of spiritual goals is a very grounding experience. You experience a real humbleness.

*Q. How do the practices work on into your teaching?*

It makes it possible for me to stand in my busy life and being aware of the vertical as well as the horizontal dimension. This works like a thunder connecting me to the earth much more strongly. It brings a well-rounded experience for me as a teacher. It doesn't make life easier but it makes it richer, fuller and more worthwhile.

### Diane Tatum - Eurythmy Teacher

*Q. What does it bring to your life to give time and focus to your inner practice?*

#### **When an Organisation Focusses on Inner Work**

I'm so grateful that the organisations I work in have made it a point to bring people focussed on the anthroposophical Inner Path in to do professional development on our inner work with us as a whole staff. Each time, we're given an opportunity to work together in a way that is challenging and uplifting for everyone, whether one has already established a meditative practice or is just at the start of finding a way with it all. Through doing inner work together we become strengthened on an individual and collegial level simultaneously. We unite with one another in a deeper way,



#### **Work on the College Imagination**

As an example, Lisa came to our school to help guide our work with the College Imagination. The depth of understanding she brought us has helped to anchor the spiritual work of our staff as a collegial body -there is a more palpable core of inner work at the heart of what we do. Of course, it's a long road and there's so much still to be done, but at least – through placing the inner work at the core of our professional development - we have the sense of being on the right track!

*Q. How did the continuing inner practices and activities work in you?*

### **Inner Quiet**

Firstly, I thrive on inner quietude – I guess we all do – but the act of will that it takes to forge that space is often lacking in daily, professional life, and so it's life-affirming to have this modelled by someone. With that quietude, comes an enhanced sense of how to work with time in a more conscious way. There are so many 'Ah-ha' experiences that can come when the space is cleared for them to land. I've always felt connected to particular mantric verses but it was through the workshops that I began to experience a way of embodying them, inwardly, so their inner power can become more real.

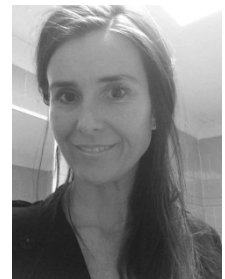
*Q. How do the practices work on into your teaching?*

Fundamentally, the practices have become a core reference for my work as a teacher. For the longest time the capacities of **Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition** were 'those big I words' that seemed somewhat remote and beyond reach, at least for me. Not that I wasn't meditating and trying to make sense of it all, but in retrospect it appears that a stronger context and some essential tools were missing. Through the refinement of the inner practices, bit by bit it seems as though preparing lessons, teaching them and then reflecting, in the way that they lead to being filled with lively pictures, 'whisperings' and creative impulses, in short, everything we do can start to take shape with greater clarity and contour in a more conscious way. This makes teaching much more of a creative dialogue with the spiritual world. It's the best antidote to tiredness or burnout, when you realise just how much help from the other side is freely given and always at hand.

### **Vanessa Gardiner - handwork and painting/drawing teacher at Kamaroi Rudolf Steiner School and Sydney Rudolf Steiner College**

*Q. What does it bring to your inner life to give time to go to Inner Development retreats and workshops?*

SPACIOUSNESS - For those of us actively working within Anthroposophical impulses, this is not usually part of our day to day lives?! It is an extraordinary gift to have the opportunity, for that with which I am 'soul wrestling' to emerge clearly. To have been steeped in the earnest, real, compassionate and humorous teaching gives me great courage and fuels my enthusiasm and will to meet my life tasks with an integrity with myself and my own destiny, that I don't feel I would've had access to otherwise.



*Q. How did the practices and activities work in you?*

Balancing the Giving Aspect of teaching with ... Receiving

Part of what draws me to working out of Anthroposophy is how it meets the most human needs within us and connects us to the spiritual world and evolution so eloquently. This gives our lives such meaningful directives and has enabled a 'receiving' quality into my life personally- to be able to balance the 'outpouring' and to feel, much more palpably, the sense of 'being carried'.

A living relationship to the inner development indications can form through engaging in the background wisdom, whilst also engaging in eurythmy, singing and artistic processes which all carry and move the teaching deeply into other aspects of our being. This enables a much deeper magnitude of the teaching to 'land' within me. Aspects which I have thought I 'knew and understood' have been relegated new ground within me and I have stretched my self-reflection to new realms. It's very humbling but profoundly fulfilling.



*Q. How does it work on into your teaching?*

There are deeply personal integrations that I draw on in my task of teaching. These are more invisible, connected to my own mysteries. But there have been poignant practical changes through the strengthening my own daily practices and meditative work.

The inner work deepened how I took up the child study and meditative work I engaged in for the students I teach (primary students and adult in teacher education programmes) and how I carried them. There were subtleties which developed and had what I felt were a significant 'ripple effect'. I embarked on a year-long action research study, of the implications of this work on children's capacity to meet learning outcomes. This opened many other doorways into the riddles and how we work with them. From this work, we extended our faculty meetings, to incorporate a rhythm of this aspect of meditative support for our teaching. This has furthered us living the

questions more honestly together, brought insights and nourishment. We have looked to the 'inner work aspects' and meditative work more strongly for a shared directive when needed.

Caduceus Painting by Vanessa

### **Inner Development and Collegial Work.**

The most recent development now has been the decision for us to reform our 'college' work. This is naturally an extrapolation of many needs and workings but the inner work having such a renaissance within our collegial relationships has bought a new striving to create something that is very meaningful to the research aspects of college work, research of spiritual realities. I certainly see how the impact of us each striving within has allowed that movement quality, that the Archai need in order to do their tasks within schools, is activated by the meditative work and commitment of each individual.

I feel the onus on our own transformation as the portal to knowing the spiritual world is so significant for this consciousness soul age and something I feel we should all be taking up full-heartedly if we are truly to do credit to our work in the world. To be able to recognise what's living in our challenges and to know how to orientate to them brings enormous clarity, to be able to see in the light of supportive and diverting forces and to have bigger pictures all supports 'pedagogical love' to really live in our schools.

## The Teacher and Inner Work: Thoughts from Lisa Romero

All the inner work exercises strengthen us to carry out our tasks in the world. The workshops, lectures, courses and retreats are given to support each individual in taking the next step in their own journey of self-development. They are not given only to meditators but to be supportive for wherever the individual stands in the relationship to the inner work and the spiritual world. The necessity of our need to strengthen our soul to meet the challenges of life is becoming apparent to everyone working out of anthroposophy. We see the battle in front of us and know we need to ready ourselves. This is becoming clearer and clearer to teachers working on the front line of trying to hold back the forces of materialism.

*Education and training take on a completely new significance in our modern time in fact there should be no more teaching without insight into the relationship of the human being to the spiritual world. That is the battle that is arising<sup>3</sup>*

All that is given out of anthroposophy is imbued by the spiritual wisdom of the human beings becoming. We can look at Waldorf education through this lens and see how it is steeped in esoteric knowledge. Steiner himself states

*it arises from complete dedication to human freedom. And it springs from our ideal to place human beings in the world so that they can unfold individual freedom<sup>4</sup>*

We can all learn from what was given to the teachers. For what was given to the teachers was to advance the next stage of consciousness soul development.

### The Teacher and the Future Inner Path of the Students

What teachers bring in the form of the fruits of their inner life and deepened insights into their work with the children is supportive not only in childhood but goes on as the foundations that they in future will stand upon as adults as they attempt to work with self-development of the soul. The healthy development of the physical, etheric and astral life is the foundation on which the higher self must work.

We recognise that the teachers were instructed to work out of the age of consciousness soul to support the next step of development for humanity. This means the striving of the ego to transform the consciousness soul. The more awake we are and open to what flows as support from the spiritual world the more we can participate in the healthy progression of humanity. In the age of consciousness soul, more than ever, we need to be strong souls capable of meeting and transforming what the world of materialism is placing before us. Meditation and inner schooling exercises are the surest and fastest way to strengthen the individual soul and connect it with the spiritual in us.

*Out of the gravity of our times,  
Must be borne the courage to act.  
Give to teaching what the spirit gives you,  
And you will free mankind,  
From the crushing mountain of materialism,  
Bearing down on it.*

Lisa Romero's website is [www.innerworkpath.com](http://www.innerworkpath.com). Her recent book, *The inner work path: A foundation for meditative practice in the light of anthroposophy* is published by Steiner Books.

---

<sup>3</sup> Steiner, R. (1988). *The new spirituality: and the Christ experience of the twentieth century* (p. 103). London, United Kingdom: Rudolf Steiner Press.

<sup>4</sup> Steiner, R. (2003). *Soul economy: Body, soul, and spirit in Waldorf education* (p. 195). Great Barrington, MA: Anthroposophic Press.