

Interview with Lisa Romero by Sarah Hearn. **Lisa Romero** has been a practicing homeopath for over twenty years and has applied an Anthroposophical approach to her practice for the past fifteen years. During the last nine years she has been teaching Anthroposophical health and healing throughout Australia and Asia and for the last several years she has been teaching workshops on the inner path and Anthroposophy throughout Australia and in Harlemville, NY

1. To start, how did you originally come to teach workshops on the Inner Path and Anthroposophy?

Well, I was first teaching health and nutrition courses, as well as male/female studies, at Rudolf Steiner College (formerly Parsifal College) in Sydney and then the Educaredo therapist training throughout Australia. While teaching I was often asked, 'how is it that you managed to come to this content and share it with us in a way that is really living and accessible?' In response, I would share the picture of Steiner saying "I don't want you to believe me, I want you to understand me!" – I explained that I had worked really strongly with my inner practice and contemplation, and let the pictures of the threefold and fourfold human being come alive in me. In order to really understand these incredible pictures that Steiner brings, I needed to be able to really live with them, rather than just knowing them intellectually. I then realized that whatever was living in me out of this work, could speak to others also, and people felt that this was valuable for them. From there, after about seven years of teaching full-time in various capacities, I needed to respond to the question that I was being asked: "How do I really enter into this work for myself?" or put another way, how can I really understand Rudolf Steiner and not just believe him? I then began teaching the Inner Work & Anthroposophy workshops to larger groups of people.

2. Even once someone turns toward Anthroposophy, people can often really struggle with taking up meditation or maintaining a regular practice. Could you talk about this struggle with the inner work?

Well, one thing is that I think it can really depend on how you come to Anthroposophy. With many spiritual teachers you meet them as a teacher of the inner life – first, and then, maybe after working with that teacher for some time, you find a way to work with those teachings into the world. In contrast, Rudolf Steiner, for many, is first met without calling him a teacher of the inner work – even though it's imbued in all the outer work (Waldorf education, anthroposophic medicine, etc.) So for example, you can take up a training and become a Waldorf teacher without ever penetrating those realms of the inner work. For many, meditation is not their first point of access but comes after years of working with their professional activity or in whatever form they've met Anthroposophy. However, I do think that most people come to the meditative path at some point in their work with Anthroposophy, but for me, it was the initial point of meeting. That was my first encounter with him as a spiritual teacher and then I met and continued on to meet other aspects of his work, which changed my work with

homeopathy into an anthroposophical approach. . Many people are initially attracted or drawn to Anthroposophy because of all its practical application in the world, but it does seem that eventually it leads people to that same question I mentioned, How can I really understand Rudolf Steiner and not just believe him? And, it does, firstly, require inner change and transformation to begin that journey.

3. With such a wealth of resources from Rudolf Steiner, 6,000 lectures, etc. at our disposal, could you say something about how to forge a healthy relationship between studying the wisdom offered by Anthroposophy, and practicing this wisdom in the world?

Study is a component of the anthroposophical path, but it is only one part of it. So the study of those wisdoms is essential. Taking hold of oneself is also essential. For instance, in the Rosicrucian path – they would say – you must be able to observe your own one-sidedness and out of yourself bring a balance to that.

On this path there's always a relationship between the healthy 'I' sense that we must develop in ourselves versus the ability to surrender ourselves. We have to first develop a healthy 'I' Self because if we don't have that, what do we have to surrender? The next step is also essential for the evolution of the path of development. I would say that at the moment in Anthroposophical circles this step is indeed taking place – we seem to have far more interest in meditation than we had 5 years ago, or 10 years ago. There does seem to be a fundamental shift, because there also has to be surrender in meditation. When I come across people that are just wanting to devour everything that Steiner says – I see that as a stage of our relationship to this extraordinary wisdom, but generally you'll see that in time, one stops wanting to devour and starts working to transform.

4. You've been giving Inner Path & Anthroposophy workshops in Harlemville for the last few years, could you explain how workshops are structured?

The workshops have been structured in the way that the path itself unfolds. The first stage is bringing the form and understanding of the exercises and how each step of the meditative work affects our consciousness. In a way, the first workshop is a clear picture of the meditative practice, from how we enter into it, to empty consciousness at the end, as well as the relationship between our various states of consciousness and the stages of consciousness met in the meditative activity. Many people do leave out stages of the meditative work – for instance it's quite common for people to forget to work with empty consciousness -- to work toward empty consciousness -- but when you understand each of the stages in relationship to our conversation with the spiritual worlds then you would not leave that out.

Workshop II addresses the inner and outer obstacles that, as Rudolf Steiner says, anyone who is truly meditating will meet. Often, people can't establish a committed

practice until they've actually worked with some of the inner and outer obstacles – and that's what we really go into in Workshop II. So the foundation workshop is what we call preparation, Workshop II, purification, Workshop III, is in a way a reflection of enlightenment or illumination – it really speaks about how the spiritual worlds work with us and how we can recognize and align ourselves to the workings of the spiritual worlds. And Workshop IV talks about the initiation path and the encounter with the guardians. It should be said that you never give up preparation and purification, even in the stage of initiation. Even though they're brought in this way, they are in fact, interpenetrated.

5. Having been present for many of your workshops here in Harlemlville, I've noticed how each group brings something really different from the others and that a real diversity of people attend the workshops. Could you share a bit about the groups you've worked with so far?

I think what's interesting for me in meeting such a diversity of individuals, from long term Anthroposophists and meditants to newcomers, is that the meditative path/workshop content seems to be able to bring something to all those levels, no matter what stage you're at, because those 'levels' are interpenetrated. We've had people who are class readers, to those just getting their heads around saying the word Anthroposophy. These people work together not only intergenerationally, etc., but also, while there is a form that I am working to bring, the participants help build the substance of the workshop. That's why people who have done the same level several times experience it very differently, because the workshops have that living quality to them – it's about what comes between us, what emerges from and for the group.