



ATHENA

Association for Therapeutic Eurythmy in North America

APRIL 2008



*And when your eyes
freeze behind
the gray window
and the ghost of loss
gets in to you,
may a flock of colors,
indigo, red, green
and azure blue
come to awaken in you
a meadow of delight.*

John O'Donohue

Dear Members,

Greeting from the Upper Midwest! It has been an intense winter and though we have many snowfalls ahead, the sun is beginning to warm. Through this deep inward-turning winter season, we have been able to deepen and intensify our work.

ATHENA is grateful to have again received a grant from the Waldorf Educational Foundation and we have distributed the funds to members. We are actively seeking grant and funding sources for our work. If you know of foundations, companies, or individuals who may be interested in supporting Therapeutic Eurythmy, please let us know. You can contact any ATHENA board member.

Please note the changes in our fiscal year. We are coordinating our fiscal year with schools to make the connection of our work with the schools clearer.

I hope all members have received information about the first World Therapeutic Eurythmy Conference in Dornach, April 30-May 6, 2008. If you have not received a program, go to the Goethanum web site, the Medical Section, then the English page and click on conferences. It will also be posted on our own web-forum, athenaurythmy.co.nr. The conference has a full and nourishing program of lectures, presentations, and workshops. Because we hope as many members as possible can attend, we will not have a national conference this spring.

These are the recipients of travel grants for the Dornach conference from Glenmede through the Waldorf Education Foundation: Michael Chapitis, Lesley Cox, Maria Ebersole, Linda Larson, Johanna Rohde, Dale Robinson, Gillian Schoemaker, Jeanne Simon-MacDonald, Alice Stamm, Susan Walsh, and Carol Ann Williamson; through the Mid-States Shared Gifting Program: Mary Ruud, Susanne Zipperlen, and Beth Usher.

Good wishes for your work. Keep in touch through our newsletter, our web-forum or just contacting each other. It is through our collaboration that we can build support for our growing profession.

In collegueship,
Mary Ruud
ATHENA President

Visit our website at athenaurythmy.co.nr.
Please remember to pay your dues to ATHENA!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Articles	Page
Reviews of Conferences	3, 4
Marjorie Spock, <i>Marianne Else</i>	4
Fourfold Assessment, <i>Gillian Schoemaker</i>	6
Therapeutic Eurythmy, <i>Susan R. Johnson, M.D., F.A.A.P.</i>	7
How We Work with Physicians, <i>Mary Ruud</i>	8
Our Special Children, <i>Truus Geraets</i>	9
Book Review	10
Forum Exchange , Hygienic Eurythmy Course	11
Rudolf Steiner Health Center	11

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF ATHENA

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 2008

7:00 PM

**RAINBOW HALL, BEAVER RUN
CAMPHILL SPECIAL SCHOOL,
GLENMOORE, PENNSYLVANIA**

The Board of ATHENA is sorry to have missed the December newsletter due to unexpected illness of our editor, Vita Leicht. Maria Ver Eecke has kindly agreed to edit this newsletter for ATHENA. Please watch in the future for a new newsletter format, a combined effort between ATHENA and EANA.

Please send contributions to: Maria Ver Eecke,
34 Margetts Road, Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977
editor@eana.org

Although welcomed, the viewpoints expressed in the ATHENA Newsletter are not necessarily those of the publisher.

THE ATHENA BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Ruud, President
Gillian Schoemaker, Vice President
Jeanne Simon-MacDonald, Treasurer
Barbara Bresette-Mills, Recording Secretary
Clara Bay, Board Member-at-Large

ANNUAL PAAM/AAMTA CONFERENCE

"JOURNEY OF THE INDIVIDUAL THROUGH CHRONIC ILLNESS"

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PRESENTATION

JUNE 26-29, 2008

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON, CHARLESTON, S.C.

PRESENTATIONS WILL INCLUDE

DIABETES, HEPATITIS,
MENOPAUSE AND OSTEOPOROSIS,
ARTHRITIS, THERAPEUTIC EURYTHMY
AND MORE...

REGISTER AT THE PAAM WEBSITE;

[HTTP://WWW.PAAM.NET](http://www.paam.net)

REVIEW OF CONFERENCE IN ARLESHEIM

In November of 2006 at the annual Swiss Therapeutic Eurythmy Association Conference (in Arlesheim) the theme was the Four Ethers. Over 100 participants were present.

I brought the eurythmy exercises developed by Marjorie Spock out of her long research in eurythmy and the etheric. These exercises, which I presented, were created to give one a deeper experience of the four ethers. They were offered to be considered for Therapeutic Eurythmy. This was the theme of the eurythmy work, accompanied by lectures from Dr. Hammer on "Diabetes and Retinopathia Diabetes" and from Dr. Rust on "Typical Illnesses of the Thyroid and their Relationship to the Different Bodies."

I will summarize the work as follows: "The etheric world is a sea of sounding colour." (Rudolf Steiner) How many of us have been taught or are at home with the four ethers?

All eurythmy and all etheric movements are based on contraction and expansion. The life-ether adheres to the contractive pole, while warmth ether expands into dispersion. The wonderful interplay of chemical/sound ether and light ether in between these two extremes, bring about the world of rhythm.

In the dynamic world of the four ethers we also have the world of healing. Out of this dynamic world of movement, Marjorie Spock has developed lemniscatal exercises. Through these exercises it is possible to come to a greater understanding of the background of the etheric and our work as eurythmists. This in turn supports a greater understanding of the zodiacal gestures and planetary evolutions.

You can derive any movement from these four etheric movements. For example, the consonants can be understood in this way: the plosive/impact sounds (life ether), the breath/warmth sounds (warmth ether), the undulant sound (chemical/sound ether) and the vibratory sound (light/air ether). Working with the four lemniscatal ether exercises illumines the work with the consonants.

Besides the four lemniscatal exercises, I introduced a way of using the rod which Marjorie teaches, where everything is based on a listening rather than a doing. We are often too busy *doing* and thereby miss out on the world the etheric offers us when we learn to develop through *listening* movement. Through this we can come into the objective world of the ethers, and become one with the large evolutionary picture of movement and stillness.

Out of our work together during the conference, participants have gone on to explore this new approach in different ways.

Marjorie's work continued as she worked with world of the intervals through understanding involution and evolution. She focused on the lower tetrachord and its relationship to egohood and the feeling life (astral body). Therapeutic tone eurythmy exercises are being developed. The intent is to meet the needs of the disturbances of the soul and psyche in our time.

I presented this more recent work when the Swiss Therapeutic Eurythmy Association met in Arlesheim in November 2007. The theme was Involution and Evolution. Lectures were given by Dr. Hammer on Glaucoma and by Dr. Rust on the Heart.

Many of the participants in this conference had attended the first conference. They had worked with the exercises in the meantime and found that this second symposium brought forward a deeper understanding of these etheric exercises. Groups are forming to continue to work with this.

At the World Therapeutic Eurythmy conference in Dornach this spring I will be giving a workshop on Marjorie's work.

On Wednesday January 23, Marjorie Spock peacefully passed away in her home in Maine at 7:30 in the morning.

Michael Chapitis

REVIEW OF THE ATHENA CONFERENCE

KIMBERTON HILLS, PENNSYLVANIA

APRIL 19-22, 2007

The annual ATHENA conference was generously hosted by the Camphill Village Kimberton Hills with Anna Ree and Seth Morrison, Therapeutic Eurythmists, and Peter Hinderberger, MD.

IMAGINATION, INSPIRATION, INTUITION – THE ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY IN THERAPEUTIC EURYTHMY

The theme of the 2007 ATHENA Conference was from Lecture 7 of the Curative Eurythmy Course, given before doctors on April 18, 1921. Dr. Peter Hinderberger provided the lectures and the eurythmy was led by Seth Morrison and Anna Ree.

Both Dr Hinderberger and Seth built on the mighty picture given at the beginning of Lecture Seven; the genesis of the human being through formative forces from the region of the fixed stars, all forms of secretion from the planets, consolidation here on earth to the “I” and perception. The reverse genesis is Imagination, which organically is consolidation, Inspiration, organically secretion, and Intuition, organically the formative forces. Consonants, as Imagination, are forces of consolidation; vowels, as Inspiration, are forces of secretion and absorption; and movement to a verse, Intuition, are actual organic formative forces. We returned to this picture repeatedly during the conference as Dr Hinderberger and Seth led us, having worked with these ideas for years, into an understanding of how this informs our work as Therapeutic Eurythmists.

Dr Hinderberger’s lectures took us through the physical, soul, and spiritual nature of the organ systems, reminding us that what is not used physically becomes spiritualized. As an example from the kidneys, 99% of urine is reabsorbed. As it has no physical function, it meets a spiritual need, the kidney-radiation uplifts nutrition, ensouling it and lighting up the head.

Dr. Hinderberger’s talks, Anna Ree’s musical eurythmy exercises, and Seth’s eurythmy work led to practical examples for our work. ATHENA would like to gather these resources in a form that can be readily shared with members unable to attend the conference.

Mary Ruud

MARJORIE SPOCK

SEPTEMBER 8, 1904 - JANUARY 23, 2008

Marjorie Spock died peacefully Jan. 23, 2008, at the age of 103, at her home in Sullivan, Maine. Marjorie Spock was born Sept. 8, 1904, in New Haven, Conn., the second child, and first daughter, of six children.

The Spock family was prominent in New Haven, as her father was a corporate lawyer there and her older brother, Dr. Benjamin Spock, was later a world-renowned pediatrician, known through “The Baby Book,” which changed the way children were brought up and viewed, and known for his work against the Vietnam War. At 18, Marjorie went to Dornach, Switzerland, to meet and work with Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy. This had deep significance for her life, especially her study of the dynamics of human movement, through Eurythmy. After her final return to the U.S., she received her BA and MA degrees from Columbia University at the age of 38. During her studies, she began a prominent career as a teacher and the head of the Dalton Middle School and teacher at the Fieldston Lower School, both progressive schools in New York City. She also taught at The Rudolf Steiner School in New York City and The Waldorf School in Garden City, Long Island.

With her deep understanding of nature and as an avid Bio-Dynamic gardener, Marjorie’s work took on an added dimension when, in the area where she and her friend Polly Richards lived, on Long Island, N.Y., the government began aerial spraying of DDT against the perceived gypsy moth epidemic. She and Polly, who helped finance the legal action, brought a case with 10 other people against the United States government for the continued DDT spraying. Marjorie and Polly were formidable leaders for this commitment to the health of the earth. Organic, Bio-Dynamic food was a life-saving matter for Polly, who was in ill health. For Marjorie, the concern was for her friend’s health, and the constitutional right as a property owner to keep her land, as she wanted it, free of government infringement.

This team was brilliant, committed and erudite. According to Marjorie, the “government ran roughshod over anyone who got in the way of the new technology. They brushed us off like so many flies.” The federal judge, appointed by President Eisenhower, threw out 72 uncontested admissions for the plaintiffs and denied their

petitions. From the summer of 1957 to 1960, when the case reached the Supreme Court, Marjorie wrote a report to interested and influential friends of each day's progress in and out of court, each evening after work.

Rachel Carson heard of this and soon got these daily briefings because she realized that the testimony from the experts that Marjorie had found, would be valuable for her own research. This case, along with a massive bird kill on Cape Cod, was the springboard for the writing of "**Silent Spring**." Although the trial took only 22 days, toward the end, Rachel Carson asked for the transcript. They became close collaborators and friends. Though the plaintiffs lost the case, they won the right to bring an injunction in court, so that prior to a destructive environmental event, a full and proper scientific a review had to be made. Marjorie always described it, saying, "We lost the battle but won the war." This became the germinal legal action for the environmental movement in the United States. There has been continuous interest in this case since that time. Recently, Marjorie was interviewed for a documentary on Rachel Carson.

After the case, Marjorie moved to Chester, N.Y., where she farmed, bringing Bio-Dynamic produce to a larger public. She worked closely with Dr. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, the renowned soil scientist, and compost and farm adviser for Bio-Dynamic movement. As a beloved destination since childhood, in 1965, Marjorie moved to Maine, where she lived and worked for the next 43 years as an inspiring teacher, eurythmist, author, Bio-Dynamic farmer, translator and mentor to the many people, young and old, who came to see her. Until last Thursday, she held a study group, which has been ongoing since 1965, and to which people came from all over the state. Visitors, from all over the world, and wonderful neighbors, were always heartily welcomed and experienced wide-ranging and deep conversations, wise counsel and humor.

Amongst Marjorie Spock's writings are "Teaching as a Lively Art," her master's thesis; *In Celebration of the Human Heart; Eurythmy; To Look on Earth With More Than Mortal Eyes; and Fairy Worlds and Workers: A Natural History of Fairyland*. The two pamphlets, "Group Moral Artistry I: Reflections on Community Building" and "Group Moral Artistry II: The Art of Goethean Conversation," have had a readership around the world. Her love and understanding of the

mystery of language can be seen in her article, "A B C D E F G: The Secret Life of Letters."

Surviving Marjorie Spock are several nephews, grand nieces and Mary Morgan, the wife of Dr. Benjamin Spock.

In the 100th year of her life Marjorie produced, directed and choreographed a video about Eurythmy which was filmed at Hammond Hall in Winter Harbor, followed by two short training films at 101 and 102 years of age.

The last few years have been amongst the happiest and most productive, because of the loving help and care that Kim Smith gave Marjorie. Many around the world are grateful for this, as she was then able to work tirelessly for the understanding of the goodness of mankind and for the health of the earth.

A funeral service was held Jan. 26, 2008, at Hammond Hall, Winter Harbor. On Saturday, Feb. 2, 2008, at 10:30, a Christian Community service, The Act of Consecration for Marjorie Spock, will be held at New Elm Farm, 27 Lambert Road, Freeport. (Tel: 865-4019). For those wishing to make donations, there are two possibilities: The Foundation for Human Movement Studies (supporting the mission of Spatial Dynamics), c/o Susan Harrington, 47 Spice Mill Road, Clifton Park, NY 12065, The Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening Association, 25844 Butler Road, Junction City, OR 97448.

Marianne Else

i thank You God for most this amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today, and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth day of life and love and wings: and of the gay great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing breathing any—lifted from the no of all nothing—human merely being doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

e.e. cummings

FOUR FOLD ASSESSMENT

This is an outline of one of the methods we use in our therapy group in order to come to an understanding of the child.

1. Before the meeting observe the individual being studied in her natural context without forming judgments or opinions or making any kind of diagnosis.
2. Firstly, the medical history is presented and then observations shall be shared by everyone – beginning with the physical. When this seems to be “complete” we will move on to the etheric, then the astral and last the ego..... Only share objective observations! Statements beginning with “I think” or “I feel” should be avoided. We will close the meeting after all observations are shared.
3. Between the observation-sharing and the follow up meeting do the following homework: Recreate in your mind the observations that you remember. Begin with the physical, then add the etheric, astral and ego observations. After holding the full image clearly in your mind let it fade away. Be aware of what after images, colors, thoughts come to you immediately and in the intervening time before the follow-up.
4. At the follow up meeting impressions are shared. Hopefully the collective efforts of the group will bring us to a meeting with the essential nature and needs of the individual we are supporting.
5. Before the meeting observe the individual being studied in her natural context without forming judgments or opinions or making any kind of diagnosis.
6. Firstly, the medical history is presented and then observations shall be shared by everyone – beginning with the physical. When this seems to be “complete” we will move on to the etheric, then the astral and last the ego..... Only share objective observations! Statements beginning with “I think” or “I feel” should be avoided. We will close the meeting after all observations are shared.
7. Between the observation-sharing and the follow up meeting do the following homework: Recreate in your mind the observations that you remember. Begin with the physical, then add the etheric, astral and ego observations. After holding the full image clearly in your

mind let it fade away. Be aware of what after images, colors, thoughts come to you immediately and in the intervening time before the follow-up.

At the follow up meeting impressions are shared.
Hopefully the collective efforts of the group will bring us to a meeting with the essential nature and needs of the individual we are supporting.

Physical Body

Physical substance you can see and touch

Etheric Body

Unconscious life and growth forces

Vitality, energy, stamina

Wound healing, recovery from illness

Fluid body—wet, dry, congested

Body rhythms—sleep, digestion, elimination, menstruation

Constitution—robust, weak

Habits

Thought life (thoughts are transformed growth forces)

Astral Body

Consciousness of experience

Breathing

Movements, gait, coordination

Sympathies and antipathies

Odors

Illness and pains

Sexuality

Feelings and emotions

Moods

Ego

Self-consciousness/objective observations of self

Reflective consciousness

Ideals

Physical warmth

Warm enthusiasm

Interests

Intentionality of will

How the individual makes their contribution in the world

Speech

Relationships/How does the individual meet others

Empathy

Ability to listen

Humor

The intention in holding child studies is to foster

increased awareness of an individual and support their further development, to move beyond the reacting to crisis and be proactive. We are to observe and hold back judgments, that the true nature of the person would reveal themselves to us.

Another goal was that by doing this exercise jointly, we would all enhance our observation skills, one by making observations conscious and by listening to what others see, we also begin to see more.

By observing without saying what we think, we begin to clear up our windows through which we see the world, so it is less colored by our own experiences.

We can box a person into our expectations of them. This hinders their full expression. Practice first on a plant was Rudolf Steiner's suggestion. This way we will be familiar with this process. Know this process is in a state of becoming.

Hold back from making judgments, opinions about what you hear and observe. Just live with the observations. Try to build up a picture of the individual. Then let the picture fade away and experience the mood that comes to you.

Gillian Schoemaker

THERAPEUTIC EURYTHMY

“Teachers and Waldorf School parents often ask for a good article about Therapeutic Eurythmy. The following article from Susan Johnson fills this need beautifully.”

Mary Ruud

Four years ago I had never even heard of the word Eurythmy. I was required to participate in artistic eurythmy every Saturday morning as part of the San Francisco Waldorf Teacher Training program. I did not like eurythmy – I couldn't do it. I was like a walking head that had no coordination between my arms and feet. Even simple movements done in a circle (movements that kindergarteners and first graders do as part of their Waldorf education), I could not do. For one thing my feet were about eight inches apart when I stood up, and I could not get them to come together because my knees would get in the way. For another thing the only way I knew how to move was through my head. I watched our

eurythmy teacher perform the movements, and I would systemically analyze each movement and note if she was using the left hand or right hand first and how she was placing her feet. Of course my head could not keep up with the intricate movements, and I would fall behind, get frustrated, become tense, and end up with a severe lower backache.

After suffering through weekends of eurythmy, I finally asked for help from my eurythmy teacher. She recommended that I see an anthroposophical doctor and get a therapeutic eurythmy prescription to help me move more easily and to bring my feet together. Needless to say I was skeptical, but I also had three upcoming years of weekly eurythmy classes and four solid weeks of daily eurythmy every summer to endure as part of my teacher training program.

I had at least 20, one-hour, therapeutic eurythmy sessions during my first two years of teacher training, and then I repeated another series during the spring of my third year. I grew to love eurythmy. I would come to my Friday night session of therapeutic eurythmy worn out from a day of commuting and somehow would become energized by the end of the hour. The movements were beautiful to make and all rhythmical. They were sometimes very slow like three-fold walking, and other times very quick. My hands and feet would move simultaneously and other times alternately while I was given beautiful imaginations (pictures) of stars falling down from the heavens or a seed sprouting and reaching up to the stars. I would encircle my body with my hands like a blue velvet cloak of protection-protecting that space that I usually gave away too freely during the day, depleting my energy. I would pass a copper ball back and forth to my therapeutic eurythmy teacher while she would recite a beautiful poem. Pretty soon I was moving my arms and my feet and not even realizing it. My mind was on the pictures and my body was freely moving. I started feeling goose bumps up and down my spine while I moved, and slowly but surely over the next four months my feet started coming together. It was amazing. During a summer conference in Fair Oaks I was able to line dance for the first time in many, many years! What absolute joy to be moving to music and not even paying attention to my feet. I had tried to dance five years earlier at a neighborhood Greek festival, and I had dropped out of the line because I couldn't even follow the simplest of movements.

Eurythmy is now a part of my life. There are special movements for the soul that I love to do and can be taught to anyone who is interested. The “A (Ah) veneration” develops devotion in the soul, helps overcome insomnia, activates breathing, and strengthens our constitution making us less prone to outside influences (illnesses, stress etc.). The Love E (A) helps overcome the type A personality and any tendencies to cardiac disease. It also warms the body, something which one can feel immediately after performing the movements. Hope U (oo) brings hope and a metabolic warmth to the blood circulation and breathing. It is also used to treat insomnia caused by indigestion.

I like to do the three-fold walking movement in the morning because it lets me know if I am grounded. I can't do the movement without losing my balance when I am not grounded. There is also a beautiful sequence of movements that accompany a series of consonants and vowels known as the “Hallelujah”. The word Hallelujah itself means “I purify myself of all that prevents me from beholding the Divine”. This series of movements strengthens the etheric (our vitality and immunity). There are consonants that help a child with bedwetting, a vowel sequence that helps children who stutter, sequences of consonants, vowels, and other movements that help children and adults with learning difficulties, sensory-motor integration problems, hyperactivity, poor memory, tics, asthma, diabetes, cancer, menstrual difficulties, indigestion, enlarged adenoids, and many other conditions.

Movement integrates our senses, and “every movement which we perform with our body is a visible expression of our will.” Every movement we make, counts. The way we move is a mirror of how we feel about ourselves. How we move reflects who we are and the values we hold. (1)

© Susan R. Johnson, M.D., F.A.A.P.

YouandYourChildsHealth.org is a library of health information about raising children and creating a healthier family life. This Living Book also contains personal stories about the joys and triumphs, as well as the struggles and challenges, we face as parents. It is made freely available as a public service.

(1) Willi Aeppli from his little booklet called “The Care and Development of the Human Senses”

THIS IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON HOW WE WORK WITH PHYSICIANS

I have had the opportunity to work for four years at the Prairie Hill Waldorf School, Pewaukee, Wisconsin, with Dr. Mark Kamsler, an anthroposophical pediatrician.

In the winter of 2007, we were able to prepare a presentation for parents and faculty through a grant from the Waldorf Educational Foundation administered by ATHENA. The faculty and parents are supportive and the demand for therapeutic eurythmy is always greater than time and space can offer.

Parents sign up on a form requested either by the parents themselves or by the class teacher. I consolidate the information about each child and send to Dr. Kamsler. This includes the child's parents, birth date, class teacher, and any information supplied by both parents and teachers. I also include a summary of any therapeutic eurythmy the child has done in past sessions.

Dr. Kamsler comes to the school in order to observe each child. Some are children he knows from his practice and some are new to him. A volunteer parent brings each child to us. Dr. Kamsler shakes the child's hand and begins with questions about how they sleep, what they eat, what they are studying in the classroom, and other age-appropriate information.

The child is asked or led to walk, run, and skip. If they have learned exercises previously, they demonstrate them for Dr. Kamsler. Then, led by me, he observes the child doing the evolutionary sequence and the vowels in eurythmy. This is his main diagnostic tool. Often parts or the whole are repeated for his observation.

After another short conversation, mostly praise, the child leaves. If ideas come right away, Dr. Kamsler makes suggestions, though some ideas will emerge later in the day or some days later. With his understanding of eurythmy, Dr. Kamsler also makes suggestions about the order in which exercises can be done. While the diagnosis is based primarily on the movement observation, it also includes the information from parents, teachers, the conversation with the child, the child's physiognomy, and the collaborative discussion between Dr Kamsler and me.

This is a method developed by Dr. Andrea Rentea with therapeutic eurythmists, especially Susan Stevenson, at the Chicago Waldorf School.

The session lasts for seven weeks, with a week for make-up classes. I meet twice a week with each child.

The third week, I give the parents a written progress report and invite them to visit. At the end of the session, I write a report for the parents and give a copy to the class teacher. Whenever possible, I have conversations with teachers, especially other support teachers, about the child's progress. Along with the expected results that we are working towards, surprises emerge. A child who is working on the tooth exercise becomes more confident in class, or a student working with allergies alters his relationship with classmates. These changes all become part of an overall continuing diagnostic picture of the child.

Because I have also continued to teach class eurythmy, I appreciate the special opportunity to work one-on-one with children. Here the students are able to express their true natures. I am always in awe of what a remarkable being each child reveals.

Mary Ruud

OUR SPECIAL CHILDREN

I would like to share some experiences of my work with children, aged three to fifteen. The time-span I have worked with children bridges five decades on three continents. Right now I am connected with a Waldorf school in Southern California.

It has been my suggestion that we do not call my work here Therapeutic Eurythmy, but rather Special Eurythmy. It is special in that it is totally different with each child that comes to me. Anyway, who wants to be singled out for therapy?

The session begins each time with a little ritual of lighting the candle. I have four different kinds of matches, for the brave or for the not yet so brave. This gives us a chance to sit quietly at the little table. It creates for me the space to orientate myself and focus on the mystery of the new being that enters my space. It gives the children the chance to say what is important to them at that moment. I prepare intensively the day before and try to speak to their angel. I am always keen to hear from their parents, their teachers, or subject teachers, so that I can draw from a rich field of reality in which the child is embedded. The teachers are often amazed how happy the children of all ages are to come. Sometimes I have to explain to the teacher of a very "difficult" child that I don't meet that child from up-front but rather from behind their back.

It is our task – designated by Rudolf Steiner –that we

as teachers should look at all the children as riddles we should try to solve. Well, some riddles are bigger than others.

I just want to give one example of such a child and how I was able to consult about him with my clairvoyant niece, who formerly was a Waldorf Kindergarten teacher.

In first grade, Jackson (not his real name) would often disappear under his desk to cry and pout for long times. Many things could offset this behavior. Out on the playground he would not play with the other children but have direct communication with nature. Birds would land on his head and he could call a butterfly to come and sit on his finger. I had a hunch that he must have spent a lot of time in his last incarnation on his own in nature. My niece could then give me the details how, indeed, he had been a hermit in another lifetime. How could I work effectively with these insights about him or other children? It should be clear that I have to be careful how I work with this information in relation to the school as well as to the parents.

In Jackson's case I made him a drawing about a hermit sitting in front of his cave, where he spends most of his time praying and meditating. Then I tell him that that hermit got quite old but that, when he died, the angels were very happy to receive him, because he had been such a pious man. They gave him some good time in heaven to rest, before telling him that it was now time to go back to earth again. "This time", they told him, "you will have a very different experience. You will be part of a big class with many children and that will not be easy." Next I present Jackson with this picture and story. I still do some eurythmy with him, especially to balance out the fact that he was born with one crooked arm which he cannot bend. After that he takes the picture home with him.

His situation in class starts improving by the day. While not working in the school anymore, I would see him occasionally. The first thing he tells me is "I still have the picture you made for me." This can tell us that the experience has gone very deep. After a few years, when there was an opportunity for him to go to another Waldorf school with a much smaller classes, I started seeing him again regularly. He has become a handsome young man, now in sixth grade; he plays the cello most beautifully and is totally integrated with the other children. His big love is biology which he approaches

with a scientific mind.

Isn't it the most important thing for a child "to be seen"? To be seen and understood in depth. Most of the therapeutic effects come from being recognized for who we are. A fourth grade student who became anorexic, could give us a reason for this later, in that she "was never seen by her teacher". This could lead us to the conviction that also the very quiet children should have a chance to shine in the light of deep understanding and should also be allowed to come to some Special Eurythmy sessions.

We have been given many indications from which we can draw, yet we have each time anew to look for individual solutions, realizing that **Being comes before Becoming**.

Truus Geraets

February 18, 2008

artofliving1@yahoo.com

www.healingartofliving.com

Love Dogs

Rumi

One night a man was crying Allah! Allah!
His lips grew sweet with praising,
until a cynic said, "So!
I've heard you calling out, but have you ever
gotten any response?"
The man had no answer to that.
He quit praying and fell into a confused sleep.
He dreamed he saw Khidr, the guide of souls,
in a thick, green foliage.
"Why did you stop praising?" "Because
I've never heard anything back."
"This longing you express
is the return message."
The grief you cry out from
draws you toward union.
Your pure sadness
that wants help
is the secret cup.
Listen to the moan of a dog for its master.
That whining is the connection.
There are love dogs
no one knows the names of.
Give your life
to be one of them.

BOOK REVIEW

Therapeutic Eurythmy for Children

Anne-Maidlin Vogel

Reviewed by Mary Ruud

"Anne-Maidlin's soul-spirit quietly, strongly, accompanies what appears on the following pages. It is hoped that those who study this workbook, even those she never met, can feel a small spark of her being from time to time."

Norman Frances Vogel

The world of therapeutic eurythmy has been gifted by a wonderful book lovingly gathered from the lifelong work of Anne-Maidlin Vogel by her husband, Norman. Anne-Maidlin, as a master teacher, includes and gives credit to her master teachers, Trude Thetter and Ilse Rolofs. The combined collection of so much wisdom and experience make this a rich resource for all practicing therapeutic eurythmists.

The preface is contributed by Michaela Glockler, Head of the Medical Section, who stands behind eurythmy as an effective therapy and admired both the work and the character of Anne-Maidlin. Dr. Glockler is especially pleased with Anne-Maidlin's work with per-mature infants, babies and very young children and fills a professional need.

The book is divided into subject sections with exercises briefly described and examples of suitable poems and verses given. Many poems are given both in German and English as the book was originally written in German. Interspersed among the exercises are relevant quotes from Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophical doctors.

The book closes with short biographies of Anne-Maidlin's teachers, Trude Thetter, and Ilse Rolofs, and an extended biography and tribute to Anne-Maidlin from her husband, Norman. This book provides a small replacement for the loss of a devoted and talented eurythmist and teacher, lost at too early an age. We can be thankful to Norman and his colleagues for generously creating this book for therapeutic eurythmists, and for friends and students of Anne-Maidlin everywhere.

LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

*An expert from Therapeutic Eurythmy for Children,
from Early Childhood to Adolescence
with practical exercises by Anne Maidlin Vogel*

Children with learning difficulties think in pictures, not in abstractions. One must lead them by way of

imaginations or by doing into the form or into the abstract thought. Such children hear the sounds or tones one after the other first with the one ear and then shortly thereafter with the other ear. This is also so with their sight. The field of vision for such children cannot cross as is normal. They can't bring the right and left to cross (over) each other. They are light-footed. (Liesbeth van Vewen, therapeutic eurythmist)

These children are often physically too heavy in their limbs. They are inaccurate in their speech. They often have very beautiful, symmetric faces which are, however, a bit wide (rather wide nostrils). The teeth have spaces between them. Their faces are often unformed. The upper organism with its forming powers hasn't penetrated the entire body. Dyslexia appeared for the first time in England in 1905, then in Stockholm, Sweden, and then in Cologne, Germany.

The following factors may lead to dyslexia: optic and acoustic effects; an inharmonious family life / a broken home; moving home too often; changing countries; clogged ears or an infection of the middle ear. Children with dyslexia often cannot remember long sentences, due to previous ear problems.

In such cases it may be helpful to have these children read short paragraphs and then retell what they have just read. One must have all of their senses examined by a medical doctor in order to find the origin of the dyslexia. These children cannot cross their arms (E); the ego doesn't penetrate into the etheric.

WEEKEND EURYTHMY COURSE

HYGIENIC EURYTHMY

WITH MICHAEL WIDMER

In Lecture Five of the Therapeutic Eurythmy course, Rudolf Steiner introduces twelve exercises of which he says, "Eurythmy makes man capable of recognizing himself within increasingly and of gaining control over himself inwardly. Therefore such exercises have a pedagogic-didactic value as well as therapeutic and hygienic value. The attempt should be made to have these exercises – those described today, I mean – carried out by adults as well [as children] in moderation..."

That is, this is a series of exercises that not only have specific clinical applications, but can be done – as a whole series only – by both adults and children in a normal state of health. Thus, Steiner says, "the etheric body will become supple and inwardly flexible."

As our environment and culture tend more and more to make us inwardly stiff and inflexible, it is ever more important to find ways to counteract this trend, and the so-called "soul exercises" are a wonderful tool. Even eurythmists, though, may not have learned these exercises in their training. In order to make them better known, Michael Widmer has offered a three-weekend introduction to the series for two years in a row, through his Weekend Eurythmy program in Chestnut Ridge, New York.

Michael has worked with the exercises for many years in his therapeutic practice with both adults and children. Last year, after numerous requests for a course on "hygienic eurythmy," he chose this topic for a public course which was very well received. This year, the course was again open to the public but also suitable for eurythmists who are interested in the topic.

If you would be interested in future courses, please call Michael at 845-426-3746, or email weekendeurythmy@gmail.com.

FORUM EXCHANGE

Does anyone have advice on treating Raynaud's Syndrome? This is the condition where fingers and toes turn white and bloodless when exposed to cold, then red and swollen when warmed.

Thank You,
Mary Ruud

MHruud@aol.com

ANNOUNCEMENT

Rudolf Steiner Health Center offers clinical experience as a member of our intensive therapeutic team during our two week sessions. We would love to have a therapeutic eurythmist or recent graduate of the training. Our next session is May 5-17, 2008, and then July 9-19, 2008. Because of the intensive nature of the session we are unable to accommodate requests for shorter than two weeks. Interested individuals may contact us by email at rshc@earthlink.net or call us at 734-663-4365.

Thank you so much,
Dr. Molly McMullen



Festival at the Camphill-Rudolf Steiner-School, Aberdeen, Scotland



Children in eurythmy class create a “Sunburst” with copper rods, Cincinnati Waldorf School, Ohio