



# **ATHENA**

Association for Therapeutic Eurythmy in North America

MAY 2010



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues,

I am sure you have been as busy as we, on the ATHENA Board, have been. There are many demands made on us as we build up our unique profession here in North America.

ATHENA keeps regular contact with our colleagues around the world. We can be proactive in establishing ourselves as a responsible and honorable group of professionals. As Therapeutic Eurythmy becomes better and more widely known, we will have created a basis of trust and professionalism. Please carefully read the article about standards and the suggestions to be discussed at our next Annual General Meeting during the ATHENA Conference, August 5, 2010, in Denver, Colorado.

The conference, *The Etheric Body and the Polarity of the Upper and Lower Human Being*, will take place on the campus of the University of Denver, Colorado. It will be an important conference co-sponsored by ATHENA and the physician's group PAAM, and our umbrella organization, AAMTA. It will be an opportunity to work with Broder and Elke von Laue and the content of their new book, *The Physiology of Eurythmy Therapy*.

We are continuing our work with Rachel Ross. She has led us to better comprehend constitutional types, how to see more deeply and to understand the remedial work with young people. She met with us again on April 9-10, 2010, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Thank you to Rachel for her contributions to our newsletter. And it is especially helpful to have the medical perspective in articles from Dr. Gloeckler and Dr. Blanning.

This issue of the ATHENA newsletter continues our exploration of the constitutional types with articles about large and small headedness. As we continue our study of these constitutional types, please do not hesitate to share your work. We would like to include case studies of any of these constitutional types as well as any other work you are willing to share. We are all busy and it takes time and energy to sit down and write, but as colleagues, we are deeply appreciative. Please email, call or write us with any questions you have about your work. Each time we seek each other for help we are richly rewarded with valuable responses. Please send your materials for the ATHENA newsletter to [editor@eana.org](mailto:editor@eana.org) or [mhrud@aol.com](mailto:mhrud@aol.com). We wait to hear from you.

*Wishing you well,  
Mary Ruud*

*Cover Art by Fernando Botero Angulo, Colombian artist born April 19, 1932. Front Cover: The Head, (Cabeza);*

*Back Cover: Head, bronze, 1999, Miami, Florida.*

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### ATHENA NEWSLETTER

Please send contributions to:

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*Deadlines: March 1 and November 1*

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

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
ATHENA  
THURSDAY AUGUST 5, 2010  
1:30-2:45  
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER  
DENVER, CO.**

**THE ATHENA BOARD MEMBERS**

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**ATHENA/IKAM MEMBERS**

Dear Colleagues,

In Europe there is a strong initiative to protect and unify all of the medical and therapeutic activities inspired by Anthroposophy under one name: Anthromed.

Each professional group is examining its own qualifications and standards in the light of this unification. As ATHENA members we are also members of IKAM the International Organization for Anthroposophic Medicine. Our work as individuals out in the world represents this larger group of individuals working from a common source of inspiration.

As in any profession, each practitioner needs to stay abreast of new developments in research, hone their own skills and seek out fruitful exchange with colleagues. In therapeutic eurythmy we have an incredible source of healing that needs to be seen and recognized with respect in the world. Upholding our professional standards is an important piece to this entire picture of recognition.

IKAM members are expected to complete 21 hours of professional development a year, or 63 hours in three years. What these hours are comprised, is still open to discussion according to IKAM.

We are considering adding this requirement to ATHENA membership to be in alignment with our colleagues internationally. That would allow us to use the international ANTHROMED logo alongside ATHENA and IKAM. It would also align us with other professional organizations that naturally have a further education component as requirement for membership.

We would like to have this discussion during our conference in Denver this summer. Please send any comments you have to ATHENAcorrespondence@gmail.com, or ATHENA, 46 Center Street, East Aurora, NY, 14052.

*Looking forward to hearing from you!*

*Maria Ebersole*

**ATHENA/PAAM/AAMTA CONFERENCE****UNIVERSITY OF DENVER****DENVER, COLORADO****AUGUST 4-8, 2010**

The Etheric Body and the Polarity of the  
Upper and Lower Human Being

With Hans-Broder von Laue, MD and Elke von Laue, TE

The von Laues will present their unique perspective on therapeutic eurythmy during the conference. Our therapy is central to their understanding of the etheric body and the polarity of upper and lower human being! Their focus will be on the working of the vowels and consonants within the human organism. The combination of their extensive study and deep understanding of Rudolf Steiner's medical indications promises to take us further in our practice of therapeutic eurythmy. They have been able to bring together many of Steiner's indications to show the interrelationships of the different sounds and how they work in the body. Their book on therapeutic eurythmy will be available at the conference in English! They will also focus on CANCER, having worked extensively with this condition during their decades at Oeschelbronn Hospital.

This will be an opportunity to meet with doctors and other therapists with a focus on therapeutic eurythmy. I am sure we will find a stronger foundation for our therapy together with these other colleagues.

There will be a continuation of our work with the von Laues after the close of the full conference at lunchtime on Sunday, August 8. They have graciously offered to meet with all interested therapeutic eurythmists for an extra day. We will move over to the Denver Waldorf School for this gathering. The theme for this time is still open and there are, so far, ten of us signed up for this more intimate working with them! This 'mini post-conference' will end on Monday evening, August 9.

Please contact Jeanne Simon-MacDonald at the email address listed above, if you are interested.

*Jeanne Simon-MacDonald*

*One of... "Three Spring Notations on Bipeds"  
by Carl Sandburg (1920)*

The down drop of the blackbird,  
The wing catch of arrested flight,  
The stop midway and then off: off for triangles,  
circles, loops of new hieroglyphs—  
This is April's way: a woman:  
"O yes, I'm here again and your heart  
knows I was coming."

## WORKSHOP FOR THERAPEUTIC EURYTHMISTS WITH DR. HANS BRODER AND ELKE VON LAUE AT THE HOUSE OF PEACE

1 High St., Ipswich, Mass. 01938

Wednesday, August 18, 2010, 5:00 - 9:00 pm and

Thursday, August 19, 2010, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, August 18

5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

- Welcome and introduction

*The order of consonants in speaking and moving*

Supper

*The distinct therapeutic qualities of the consonants*

Thursday, August 19

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Breakfast

- *The threefold quality of the consonantal gesture - movement – feeling - character*

Break

- *The four steps of therapeutic eurythmy with consonants*

Lunch

- *The sequence of vowels, their distinct therapeutic qualities as polarity of the consonants*

Snack

- *The process of the vowel exercises (speaking-moving –listening) and the process of the consonantal exercises (picture creating movements – after images)*

**Elke E. von Laue**, born 1938 in Germany, has taught Eurythmy Therapy in many countries in seminars and in the college for Eurythmy Therapy in Dornach / Switzerland. She still is active working with patients and teaching in workshops. She published several papers on Eurythmy Therapy in Medical Journals.

**Hans-Broder von Laue, MD**, born 1937 in Germany, has been practicing and teaching anthroposophically extended medicine with a specialisation in cancer research and cancer treatment as well as in Eurythmy Therapy. His latest publication, together with his wife Elke von Laue, is about *The Physiology of Eurythmy Therapy* (Floris Books) and will be available in English in March 2010.

We will work on the following themes during our time with them: “The qualities of vowels and consonants and their processes in therapeutic eurythmy”.

Please pre-register with \$25 check made out to “House of Peace” and send by July 18 to:

Barbara Richardson, 117 Durham Rd., Freeport, ME 04032.

Further donations for the honorarium can be made according to your means, sliding scale of \$25 - \$300. Overnight housing and meals will be available at the House of Peace at minimal cost. Students are welcome to attend.

*Barbara Richardson*

## TRAINING IN THERAPEUTIC EURYTHMY FOR DENTAL PROBLEMS WITH INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN COURSE LEADER MAREIKE KAISER

February 26 through March 3, 2011

This will be the first of two one-week supplemental training on how to address such issues as overbite, underbite, difficulties with change of teeth and tooth placement. This is a wonderful opportunity especially for therapeutic eurythmists working with children. Location will be on the East Coast. Details forthcoming. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

*Maria Ebersole*

## ANTHROPOSOPHIC HEALTH RETREAT

The Rudolf Steiner Health Center is an anthroposophic inpatient clinic specializing in personalized care, supportive oncology, and anthroposophic treatments and therapies. We offer natural alternatives for many illnesses, including chronic fatigue, cancer, arthritis, eating & sleep disorders, post-surgical recovery, chronic pain, heart disease, or simply the stress of modern living!

Location: Rudolf Steiner Health Center

Address: 1422 W. Liberty, Ann Arbor MI 48103

Phone: 734-663-4365

Email: [info@steinerhealth.org](mailto:info@steinerhealth.org)

Website: [www.SteinerHealth.org](http://www.SteinerHealth.org)

Dates: Begins May 17 at 9am, concludes May 29 at 6pm

Price: All inclusive: \$4350, see our website for more details

*Cycladic Head bust  
sculpture from the  
Aegean Cyclades  
Islands*

*Metropolitan Museum  
of Art, New York*

*Date: ca. 2700–2500*

*B.C.*

*Period: pre-Hellenic*





**CONSTITUTIONAL TYPES****THE "LARGE-HEADED" AND  
THE "SMALL-HEADED" CHILD  
MICHAELA GLOECKLER, M.D.**

When we look at what Rudolf Steiner has to say with regard to difficult children, we will not find diagnoses such as “minimal brain dysfunction”, “aggressive behavior”, “hyperactivity”, or “change brought on by the child’s environment”. So, as contemporaries now dealing with this terminology, we have to first try to come to an understanding of the way Steiner describes children, a way which can help us draw nearer to the true nature of the child. In this lecture of February 6, 1923 [1], as well as in the lecture series “Menschenerkenntnis und Unterrichtsgestaltung” [2] (*Knowledge of Man and the Form of the Lesson*), he describes children in terms of six constitutional types: large-headed and small-headed, earthly and cosmic, fantasy-rich and fantasy-poor. Together with the four temperaments, this typology connects the fundamental constitutional characteristics, with the help of which a child learns to express himself in the most varied ways and to reveal his inner being. It is the common task of pedagogy and medicine to assist the child during his school years with the full individualization of his constitution necessary for this expression. As work with these six types is not so widespread as that with the four temperaments, it is my hope that this contribution will help to stimulate further interest.

Steiner bases his description of large-headed and small-headed children on the three-fold nature of the human being [3]. In the presence of school physician Eugen Kolisko, he made the fundamental statement that viewing the nature of the human being as threefold must become second nature to the teacher and the physician. For not until we have inwardly experienced the reality of these three systems – until we have arrived at our own intuition of the forces and functions connected with them – can these insights guide us and awaken our understanding for what children suffer and experience, but also for what they need in the classroom.

Let’s examine then the threefold nature of the human being and its connections to the surrounding world more closely. There are three ways for the human being to be connected with the world in body, soul, and spirit. First, we have the connection through the senses of hearing, taste, smell, touch, and sight. Bound up with the senses is our thinking, which brings sense experience to consciousness. This nerve/sense connection to the world is such that our nerve and sense organs work better, the more successful we are in actually immersing ourselves in the qualities of the world, in perceiving and picturing in our minds the true reality of what is. In the acts of perception and thinking, we make

ourselves similar to the world, we carefully adapt ourselves to what is there, and try to understand its true nature. We search for concordance with our surroundings through observation and thought. If, for example, someone I am talking to has seen a particular flower and I decide and go to look at it as well, then we have both seen the same thing. We meet in viewing an objective truth. In the upper sphere of our nerve/sense system, we have the capacity to take in the world – to let it impress itself upon us – as it is. The richness of our soul life is formed from these impressions.

Our relationship to the world through our metabolic system – especially through the mouth, intestinal tract, and anus – is quite different. Think of your weekend shopping cart, filled with all the good things you picked out, right down to the ice cream and the frozen fish and spinach for the freezer. During the course of the week, all this makes its way through you. Here we have exactly the opposite of what happens in the nerve/sense system. When the digestive process proceeds normally, nothing remains the way it was. We immediately begin to “impress” ourselves upon “the world” with our teeth. When we press down and bite into something, it changes as it receives our imprint. In the further course of digestion we dissolve, analyze, and mineralize these substances. The world dies in terms of its own existence and is born anew in us through metabolic activity, becoming human substance. A dying and a being born takes place, but what is typical for the metabolism is this building up of the substance of the human body from plant and animal substance which have “died” as well as from dissolved mineral substances. This new creation, totally individual and formed only once in material existence, is created through the metabolism, through the building up of the individualized protein of the body. Just as we become world in the process of perception, so the world becomes human being through the work of the digestive organs.

The third connection and opening to the world is through respiration. Here we are not dealing with solid and liquid substances as with food, or with light, air, sound, and warmth as with sense impressions, but with an opening to the surrounding air. Here in the middle sphere of the body a very peculiar process takes place. Something of the world is taken in, as in metabolism, and is then exchanged (i.e. oxygen and carbon dioxide). We extract from the air we breathe in about 4% of the oxygen, then breathe out the carbon dioxide which has been formed in us and which is no longer needed. But the peculiar thing is that the major portion of the air we breathe in is exhaled unchanged. With respect to this portion of the air that remains unchanged, we discover a similarity with the activity of our nerve/sense system, where we take in the world as it is and allow it to remain unchanged. The strange thing is that quantitatively speaking, it is not the individual element which predominates in this middle sphere, but the part which we allow to remain unchanged as “world”, due to the fact that

in inhaling and exhaling the major portion of the air we breathe goes in and out “unused”. All this is also indicated by the fact that there is still enough oxygen (about 17%) in the air we exhale to be able to resuscitate someone who has stopped breathing. He or she can also extract 4% of the oxygen for his or her own respiration with “exchange of gases”. So it is in the middle sphere of the body that the concerns of the world and personal need are harmonized in a wonderful way to the advantage of the world. In our bodily nature, we have at our disposal a surplus which allows us to give ourselves over to the world to an extent which is greater than any demand we need to place upon it.

In our middle sphere we also breathe between the “heavy” and the “light” spheres of the body. Related to this, we have two peculiar features of the opposite poles of the nervous and the digestive systems. The nervous system, with its centre in the brain, floats in the cerebro-spinal fluid, which gives it buoyancy and partially frees it from the effects of gravity. But when we examine the intestinal cavity below the diaphragm, we see how the organs hang down very much subject to gravity. In the case of a slim person, for example, the stomach really hangs down; in the case of a heavy person, where the inner walls are cushioned with fat, it is pushed up somewhat. So it is clearly visible that below the diaphragm, the influences of gravity are at work on the metabolic system, whereas the nervous system is largely free of these influences, buoyed up according to Archimedes’ Law. We experience the faculty of soul connected with each of these three systems in a corresponding way.

We experience the content of our conscious thought-life as being light and bright, not material or heavy; even when we have “heavy” thoughts, they are light in this respect. In this middle sphere, in the lungs located in the chest cavity, there is a constant negative pressure, which increases during inhalation and continues as we exhale so that the lungs do not collapse. Thus in the process of breathing in and out, of sucking in and pressing out, a balance of upper and lower, of lightness and heaviness is created, which is also characterized by lightness. For we experience our feelings as being correspondingly light and flexible, even though certainly more clearly bound up with our bodies than our thinking is. By contrast, we feel that our willing is completely bound up with our body and its heaviness. It is as if we had to wrest each movement from the force of gravity moving our limbs in opposition to it.

Through our bodies we are connected with the world in a threefold way. We relate to the world through our soul life in a threefold way as well, for we live in willing, thinking, and in the middle, feeling – searching for the balance between ourselves and the world. The rhythm of our breathing is in harmonious accord with the rhythms of the cosmos. At rest we breathe 18 times per minute – that means 1,080 times per

hour, and 25,920 times per 24 hour period. This is the same as the number of years it takes the sun’s point of sunrise at the vernal equinox to pass through the entire zodiac. 25,920 years are a so-called “Platonic world-year”. Time and again, Rudolf Steiner referred to this special connection of human life with the course of the world. What is contained in the sun cycle through the year – winter and summer (cold and heat) with the transitional periods of spring and autumn – is comparable to one 24-hour period experienced on earth, with night and day (also cold and heat) and the wonderful mood of transition at dawn and dusk in between.

In the case of the infant and of the small child, the nerve/sense system and the metabolic system are connected, but without the benefit of a vigorous, autonomous middle sphere as yet. When children start school, it is the principal task of teacher and physician to support the formation of this middle sphere both pedagogically and medically. For it is in this sphere where personal needs and the concerns of the world should be harmonized – that we feel ourselves to be truly human. If someone speaks to us in an unfriendly way, we feel touched by unhumanity, whereas an understanding look or an appropriate gesture comfort us and are experienced as an expression of our common humanity. It is in this sphere of accord with the world – where knowledge and experience of oneself and of the world can meet in harmony – that our humanity lives. Our task is to help strengthen and encourage this humanity through education.

There are children in whom the nerve/sense system and the metabolic system are out of balance right from the start. Steiner speaks about these children in the above mentioned lecture of February 6, 1923, in which he also makes the comforting statement that in reality there is no one in whom the two systems interact in total harmony. The scales are always tipped a little more to one side or the other. For this reason it is important to look at every child with the silent question – how are these three systems interrelated in your case? How can I help you to strengthen your middle sphere?

In the course of the lecture referred to, Steiner describes the characteristic features of the two types of children that we can readily grasp in connection with this threefold division – namely the small-headed and the large-headed child: *“We have the nerve/sense system. But we only understand it rightly if we are aware that the nerve/sense system is actually governed by laws which are not the physical-chemical laws of earthly materiality. Through the nerve/sense system the human being is raised above the laws of earthly materiality. For in its formation, the nerve/sense system is entirely the product of pre-earthly existence. The human being has the nerve/sense system that he has received in accordance with his pre-earthly existence so that – because in reality all the material laws of the nerve/sense system have been raised above earthly materiality – his nerve/sense system*

*is also capable of the parallel development of all the functions related to the soul and spirit.” [4]*

Now in the case of a child in whom the head is overdeveloped by comparison with the torso and limbs, this is an indication that the nerve/sense system is not harmoniously integrated into the other members. Referring to this constitutional type, Steiner noted that the child’s astral body and ego do not really want to take hold of the nerve/sense system. For this reason, such children have a tendency to daydream – removed from the earthly activities around them – rather than taking an alert and active part in them through open sense-organs. Just as the brain floats in the cerebrospinal fluid – for the most part unaffected by gravity – and is protected within the skull, so these children are in danger of giving themselves up too much to the particular dynamics of the nerve/sense system. The phenomenon of “large-headedness” connected with this is not only a question of external measurement (it can be more or less clearly recognized by the circumference of the head). Most importantly, it is a question of the thought-function outweighing an alert grasping of one’s surroundings through the senses due to faulty integration of the nerve/sense processes into the rest of the organism.

Let’s try to picture such a large-headed child. He walks somewhat unconsciously, moving dreamily around the classroom, lost in thought. He seems not to take in his surroundings very actively, and shows correspondingly no spirited reactions. He can often be observed standing somewhere and looking dreamily around. You don’t get the impression that he is observing things very carefully; he seems to have more of a general impression of what is going on. When you arrive at school, you usually find such a child already at his desk, or else by the window and in the winter, over by the heating. He finds it somewhat difficult to concentrate and to differentiate precisely, and tends to listen and grasp things in a superficial way. He cannot hold things he encounters clearly in his thoughts so as to have them at his disposal. On the other hand, he is full of images and dreams, has a rich soul-life and is endowed with a certain cheerfulness. In terms of his temperament, he is predominantly sanguine/phlegmatic.

The question now is what can be done to help balance things out. What feelings and sensations have to be awakened in order to stimulate the child to differentiate, to make things clear to himself – to bring them “down to earth”? Figuratively speaking, he must learn to feel the difference between cold and heat – particularly the delimitation and contraction which takes place in the presence of hazy, shimmering heat – as opposed to the way we experience cold, which we brace ourselves against, which wakes us up. We use the term “biting cold”, not “biting heat”. And each of us can experience the way that being cool-headed helps us to reach a clear, rational

view of things. For this reason, Steiner recommended creating sensations of cold, especially in the area of the head, to help these “large-headed” children. For some children, wiping the head with cool water in the morning is sufficient; others need to be wiped down to the waist. What happens when this is done? Through the sensations that are thus awakened – sensations of differentiation between hot and cold – the child’s thought life is connected to the functions of the sense-organs. For the imbalance between the systems has come about because the child’s ego and astral body are only willing to connect with the bodily instrument of the nervous system in tentative fashion. If, however, strong stimuli are given which encourage a differentiation in perception and shake the child out of his hazy dreaming, then the astral body and the ego are stimulated to a stronger connection with nerve/sense activity. The child would really prefer to just dream and let things pass before him rather than go into something that hurts, bites, is cold, that engenders consciousness and self-awareness. By wiping the child gently with cool water in the morning, we are helping him into the world of the senses – the world of differentiation, of coldness, of hardness, of clarity. This is one aspect of the therapy. We create a bit of winter, so to speak, so that alertness and clarity may develop.

As a second aspect, Steiner recommended supporting this process of awakening to the sense world through the metabolism, in order to promote a balance in the systems from this point of view as well. We can understand why when we ask how the ability to differentiate – the elements of the analytical, the hard, the unrelenting – live in the metabolism. They live in our capacity to dissolve substances, to separate them out of their compounds. This is one aspect of metabolic activity. Its other task is the diametric opposite: after the substances taken in have been broken down and isolated, then the metabolic system performs the creative task of building up the body’s own substance. The more we are truly ourselves in healthy metabolic activity, the better we are able to give ourselves over to the world via our nervous system. Here Steiner calls our attention to a law of effects on opposites: if the child’s head has been wiped with cool water and he is more aware, then in his metabolism the breakdown and processing of foodstuffs will be correspondingly supported. If, on the other hand, the organism is stimulated to separate substances out and to take them into the life of the body – working in synthesizing fashion – then the ability to synthesize and connect in thinking will be correspondingly strengthened. Steiner recommended that physicians get detailed information on family eating habits. A child may, for example, be getting too little salt if a low-salt diet is being followed in the home because a parent has heart problems. And as a crystalline compound formed from the diametric opposites of acid and base, salt has a special significance. For if the organism doesn’t learn to dissolve salt, to take it into its



total context and to process it, then the functioning of the nervous system and metabolic activity cannot be kept in proper balance. Sufficient salt in the diet, or medication in the form of lead compounds – (certain lead salts which can be administered) – supports the organism in the analysis of solid substances, of pure salt substances. In this way, the conscious capacity for clear differentiation – separating and connecting – is stimulated via the metabolism. All these things are aids for the large-headed child.

Now let's turn to the small-headed child, who does not tend to give himself over to the dynamics of the nerve/sense system. In his case, the dynamics of metabolic activity are not sufficiently under control, because the child's astral body and ego do not take hold of the metabolism properly; they are not willing to connect themselves in sufficiently close fashion with this death and resurrection of substance. What happens when this connection is not close enough, when the child's individuality does not sufficiently penetrate his metabolism? We then have a child who is always somewhat tense, having to hold his own against the particular dynamics and forces of the substances he eats. These children are to some extent driven, so to speak, by the nutritional and digestive processes. They often eat greedily, hastily, in fits and starts, depending on what they have in front of them. Their bowel movements are often irregular as well. Occasionally they may have very solid, incompletely digested stool. Sometimes they may have no bowel movement for two days, and then everything "moves along" again. When we investigate more closely, we find that the rest of the child's behavior also has something impulsive, something driven about it. If a child is at the mercy of the warmth generated by metabolic activity – but also of the forces and the particular dynamics of various substances, because these have not been sufficiently controlled and processed – then he may become excitable, bad-tempered, choleric, driven due to the after-effects of the substances. When these forces have spent themselves, he may brood, pale and exhausted, in a corner, burdened by melancholy and by substances. On this point Steiner noted the following: "*Of the human being's three systems, it is the metabolic/limb system which is the most dependent on continuing external material processes within itself. So when we become familiar with the processes that take place on the earth through physics and chemistry, it is these processes that have their continuation within the human being insofar as the metabolic/limb system is concerned. But we learn nothing about the laws which govern his nerve/sense system.*" [5] He continues: "*If a child's ability to synthesize, to be constructive in his imagination is too limited, if he cannot make things clear to himself in pictures, if in art he is a kind of little Botocudo (Brazilian Indian) as is often the case with children today – this is a symptom that the metabolic/limb system is not in order ...*" [6] In this case the astral body is not

willing to take hold of the metabolic/limb system properly, and so it requires some support. How can we help such a child to deal with the particular tendencies of the metabolism? How can the child's astral body and ego be supported through the metabolism with respect to their integration into the total organism? A marvelous way is through warmth in the form of a warm tummy wrap after the noon-day meal or in the evening before bedtime. Modern medicine would say: warmth relaxes the autonomic nervous system and stimulates the digestive nerves in harmonious fashion. It thus stimulates, relieves tension, and promotes digestion. Rudolf Steiner brings this to us in the form of a picture: "*The divine spiritual powers cause it to be warm in summer and cold in winter; these are spiritual effects which are achieved by the divine spiritual powers through material means.*" [7] The application of warmth is external summer therapy, which supports the transformation of matter into human substance. From the point of view of diet, these children can also be helped by the use of a key substance – sugar – to stimulate the metabolism. Their diet should be richly varied and easily digestible, and always include something sweet for dessert. Nowadays the indication that these children need a good helping of something sweet sounds rather strange. We should keep in mind, however, that Steiner was speaking at a time – three years after the end of the First World War – when sugar was still in very short supply and there were many undernourished children in the schools. For the children we have been talking about the important thing is the invigorating effect which sugar originating in the blossom and fruit warmth of plants has on the metabolism. Nowadays we have to add that the sugar should of course be part of a healthy meal and not enjoyed in the form of sweets between meals.

These aids can be complemented medicinally by giving homeopathic doses of silver (argentum). Silver is a substance that completely conforms to this will to synthesize of the metabolism, giving the child's astral body and ego the opportunity to find a connection to the digestive processes. With regard to medication, however, it is important to call in the school physician or the child's family doctor. Parents react somewhat negatively – and rightly so – when they get advice on medication from the teacher. However, if the teacher recommends that they speak to the school physician about the possibility of medication because experience has shown that this often has a positive effect on the child's behavior in school, then they are more likely to follow up on the suggestion.

From the case history of a little boy – a typical small-headed child – to whom I was introduced when he was in the first grade, I learned that this therapy can only really be completely successful when it is carried out over the course of a year, or at least over a longer period of time, especially the tummy wrap. There will be periods when no medication is



given so that the child can be reassessed on an on-going basis. But the metabolism needs the summer warmth of this wrap over a longer period of time like a kind of education for the body corresponding to the cold wiping for the large-headed child. Sometimes children become so accustomed to their warm tummy wrap that they continue to ask for it in the evening for a second and third year – something we should let them enjoy. In such a case, a pedagogical problem is often involved as well – and here is where the teachers can help the physician. For the latter may prescribe the warm tummy wraps, but then not have the time to follow-up by telling the parents that it's not enough to apply something warm to their child's stomach and then rush off again. They need to take the time to sit awhile by the child – creating a cozy, summery feeling of inner warmth, to tell him a nice story, so that this little driven bundle of energy can really relax, and his imagination is stimulated to personal, living images, and ideas. In this way the teachers can help the child to love this therapy because suddenly mother or father, a favorite aunt or a big sister has some time. It is these children in particular who are in need of this.

In the above-mentioned lecture, Steiner followed these two guidelines for therapy with several fundamental instructions for teachers and school physicians with respect to pedagogy. Many school physicians teach nowadays as well, and thus find it easy to speak with the teachers about pedagogical problems. Permit me to make a comment here. I continually experience the difficulty that many school physicians have in communicating with teachers on these issues when they themselves have little or no teaching experience. Yet in the course of sitting in on classes, they observe many things that could be very useful, even if they themselves don't know how to translate them into pedagogical terms. So it is important to take these observations into consideration, but the school physician must also learn to state his pedagogical ideas only when he is actually asked. One of my most painful first experiences as a school physician came the third time I sat in on a certain second-grade class. I was full of ideas about what the teacher could do better, so I simply talked about everything I had noticed. The upshot was that it was two years before I was invited back into this class, because the teacher couldn't handle the revelations and suggestions in this form. Knowledge is only beneficial when it is sought after – only then does it leave the other free, only then can it truly be of help. This is something that we school physicians have to practice: viewing things with a loving eye such that images of the situation arise, not judgments. When we are asked, we can then safely speak from our view of these images, advising, trying to characterize things, to depict processes, and to answer in such a way that the teacher can accept what we have said and find the proper pedagogical

application.

So what can be done from the pedagogical point of view to help large-headed and small-headed children? What can be done every day in the classroom to help strengthen the middle sphere in these children? What could we term the “winter” and “summer” qualities of the middle sphere? The answer is that they correspond to the coldness and warmth of the feelings of antipathy and sympathy. Antipathy: drawing boundaries, meeting things head-on, closing oneself off. Sympathy: opening oneself up. And in between, to be at rest, as in breathing. Opening, closing, rest – always threefold, with the turning point, where breathing-in becomes breathing-out, in rest. Correspondingly, inner peace and quiet is the middle-point in our feeling life.

In every lesson there is an opportunity to allow the children to experience the full range of emotions. Antipathy, terror, and crying all obviously increase the strength with which we breathe in, holding ourselves back. When we sob, we drew in the air spasmodically, irregularly, until our limit is reached. On the other hand, laughing is exhalation, opening up, sharing – it is a long breathing-out. We pour out our feelings, so to speak, in laughter, until we are red in the face and completely “laughed out”. So we have opposite processes: antipathy, in which we step back behind a limit (crying as a process of in-breathing); sympathy, in which we open ourselves up (laughter as a process of out-breathing). Steiner encourages us to bring the children to the point of laughter and then – now serious again and full of compassion – to bring them almost to the point of tears in every lesson, so that through their living experience of the content of the lesson, the children can experience and build up this middle ground between the two extremes. They may be angry, irritated, or indignant – this is followed by complete sympathetic participation in what is being said. Regardless of whether the subject is English or arithmetic, if the teacher wants to bring the children to an experience of these feelings of warmth and coldness in every lesson, he will scarcely have time or an opportunity to look at his notes, as this would interrupt the flow of the lesson while he considered what he still wanted to do. For this reason, Steiner stated that teaching from memory is a pedagogical and therapeutic necessity. If the teacher doesn't have a clear picture of what he wants to teach, then he is not sufficiently “into” what he wants to say to be able to create the mood the child needs in order to enter into what is being said with interest. For what the teacher wants to say should not be mere book knowledge which lives only in his thinking. It must also have penetrated his feelings and his will if it is to move the child and be of significance and of interest to him. The child's inner being must meet the inner essence of the content that speaks through the teacher. This high standard has an astonishing effect on the teacher as well, who is strengthened and centered by this identification with the

content of his lessons. It works wonders when one feels that one is totally exhausted, for if I am able to do what I do with all the love and strength in me, then I am strengthened in return. I must not divide myself by doing what I don't really want to do, for this would mean tearing my inner being in two, and that requires strength. The therapeutic aspect underlying this identification with the content of the lessons was formulated by Steiner as follows: "*The teacher should really try not to bring himself – i.e., who he is as a private person – into the classroom. Instead, he should have a picture of what he will become through the material he is dealing with in a specific lesson. Then he will become something through the material. And what he himself becomes in this way will have an extraordinarily enlivening effect on the whole class. The teacher should have the feeling that when he is indisposed, he can overcome the indisposition – at least to a certain extent – through his teaching; then he will have the most favorable effect possible on the children. He should teach out of the mood that teaching is beneficial to himself as well, for if he has a morose disposition, for example, he can become cheerful while teaching.*" [8] The effect of such an attitude toward teaching can be directly experienced. However, the identification with the content must be so strong that, for example, a particular song you want to sing with the children fills every pore of your being, so to speak you are completely caught up in your enjoyment of it. Even if you're not quite sure of the words yet, don't search desperately through your songbook: instead, just hum the song at first, but really "get into it" and enjoy the tones. This gives the children the opportunity to enter in soul – that is, in the middle sphere, with their feelings – into what you're talking about or presenting.

In terms of this therapeutic aspect, artistic activity in the lesson has a special effect, for in artistic activity we have this complete identification in its purest form. Let's take eurythmy as an example. This art form can only be created if we enter into the sounds and processes without reservation. This identification is expressed in a threefold way: in the movement, in the feeling of the movement, and in the character, the personal note that each person gives to his movements. We practice the arts for a great variety of reasons, but in the final analysis they are the high path to schooling ourselves in identification.

Such teaching is based on the teacher's presence of mind. Anyone can, of course, suddenly forget what he wanted to say. But it is in just such a desperate situation that he may then begin talking about something that is of far greater importance for the children than what he originally intended to say. This also involves a certain amount of risk, but it is this element of risk that makes us interesting to the children. A teacher who is a model of self-confidence and mastery can, of course, teach well and perhaps also maintain good discipline. But he produces a different effect on the children from the

teacher about whom the pupil senses, "He still has to work and learn like I do – I can really learn something from him. He doesn't have everything yet, but is still working on things." And this is exactly what pupils should be learning in school – how to work – for what we teach them in terms of content will be forgotten again. However, the way in which we guide them to inner and outer work – that ability will remain with them for the rest of their lives. The way we have exerted ourselves is the most essential thing for our pupils, and that we succeed in making them part of this process, this struggle. It may become so quiet you could hear a pin drop as the teacher recounts a personal experience where he is totally wrapped up in feelings of fear, concern, or joy. The more his individuality is revealed the more the pupils really experience their teacher as a human being – the easier it is for them to come to love him and to learn from him. And love, as we all know, is the best foundation for discipline. Pupils always have a tendency to be cheeky, but they "stifle" it, either because they feel sorry for the teacher or because they love him. But in-between times, they're cheeky. Compassion and love are the forces we rely on.

The last means of pedagogically strengthening the middle sphere (spoken of by Steiner in the same lecture as above) is the moral disposition of the educator – the most important means of working hygienically through teaching. What the teacher is in moral terms, what he has made of himself through his own efforts, what he has achieved in overcoming his weaknesses, not putting his personal problems first, but giving himself over to the content of his lessons and to the children – all of these things enable him to have a hygienic effect, making him a healthy role model for the children that he teaches. For health both of body and of soul is the result of work which the being active in the body and soul of the child must perform on the way to integrating all the functions and individual activities of the organs in harmonious fashion.

*Translated into English by Linda Maloney*

From: *Persephone, Arbeitsberichte, Der Medizinischen Sektion, Am Goetheanum 2, DAS SCHULKIND-Gemeinsame Ausgaben, Von Arzt und Lehrer, 1992*

Notes

1. Private publication for teachers: *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner 1922-1924*. Vol. 2. February 6, 1923. CW 300b Anthroposophic Press, c. 1998.
2. Rudolf Steiner, *Knowledge of Man and the Form of the Lesson*, Bibliography No. 302, 1978, Lecture June 13, 1921.
3. See note 1.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

**THE LARGE-HEADED, SMALL-HEADED POLARITY:  
SEEING BEYOND THE SIZE OF THE HEAD****DR. ADAM BLANNING**

*Adam Blanning MD is an anthroposophic physician and school doctor, and the medical director of the Denver Center for Anthroposophic Therapies. He is also an active lecturer and writer, especially about child development and remedial early childhood education.*

We can easily be tempted to think about the large-headed and small-headed polarity as a spatial, physical process. Of all of Steiner's descriptions of constitutional traits and tendencies, his description of head size is wonderfully accessible because it describes something that we can see with our eyes. But this accessibility can also make our relationship to it superficial. We can also shrug it off as a simple descriptor, and not really penetrate the polarity any further. But the large-headed/small-headed polarity is not really a spatial process—it is a developmental polarity in time—the time course being the child's transition out of the spiritual world and into the physical body and the earthly world it meets. If we can come to view head size simply as one (actually more minor) manifestation of this much larger incarnation process, then it will help us gain insight into the proper therapeutic gesture for the child. While the polarity has of course traditionally been named in reference to head size, we should perhaps actually think of it more as “stuck in metabolic development” (large-headed) or “too quickly being met by, and conscious of, the world” (small-headed).

Rudolf Steiner first described the large- and small-headed polarity at the faculty meeting of February 6, 1923, which included Dr. Eugen Kolisko—whom Steiner had asked to begin work as the first school doctor—and the meeting was to be committed to discussion of “health in the school.” Steiner begins the meeting by emphasizing how “all of our Waldorf School Pedagogy has a therapeutic character,” and that “the entire teaching method is itself oriented towards healing the child.” The meeting has a different feel than many of the surrounding faculty meetings and Steiner begins with a clear intention. As opposed to many of the contemporary discussions during the faculty meetings, where topics arose out of Steiner's visits to the first Waldorf School, or from specific questions from the teachers, Steiner here immediately focused on what, for the teacher, is a “particularly important” way of looking at the three-fold human being:

*“The teacher should have an instinctive feeling for each child, that is, for whether one of the three aspects of the human organism, the nerve-sense system or the rhythmic system, or the metabolic limb system, predominates, and for whether we need to stimulate one of the other systems in order to balance a harmful lack of balance in the other systems.”*

Steiner begins by contrasting the nerve-sense system (which

finds its strongest expression in the head, and the form and activity of the senses in the head) and the metabolic-limb system (which finds its strongest expression in those digestive and reproductive organs below the diaphragm, as well as the willful movements of the limbs—more clearly in the legs than in the arms). Steiner describes how the nerve-sense system can only be properly understood by recognizing that it is “not subject to the physical and chemical laws of earthly matter,” and that the “human being rises above the laws of earthly matter through the nerve-sense system.” This connection to the life still in the spiritual world pervades the nerve-sense system, as its form is “completely the result of pre-natal life” and it is received by the human being “in accordance with pre-earthly life.” It can develop all of its activities independent from earthly conditions and material laws because of this spiritual connection and is “removed from earthly matter.” We can summarize by saying that the nerve-sense system is something we bring with us from the time before birth (actually from our last incarnation), and that it unfolds its activity largely independent from earthly matter and earthly laws. In a sense, it belongs to what has come before, to our development in the past.

The metabolic-limb system is the opposite, in that of the three systems it “depends most upon external material processes.” Steiner states that when people strive to understand the earthly processes playing out in physics and chemistry within the human being, it is only in the realm of the metabolism and limbs that these laws hold true. In contrast to the nerve-sense system which belongs much more to our time in the spiritual world before birth, the metabolic-limb system is open to, and interacts with, earthly substance and its material laws. Its function and form stand in direct relation to the conditions of our current incarnation and what we are meeting in the moment.

From these first descriptions from Steiner, we can begin to see the polarity as a contrast between a system dominated by pre-earthly life and largely independent of existing physical condition, and one which is intimately and immediately impacted by what we find around us. We can say that the development of the nerve-sense system is connected to pre-earthly spiritual activity, the metabolic limb system connected to earthly matter.

In order to understand this contrast more clearly it is helpful to ask the question: what process gives rise to nerve-sense activity, what process to metabolism and limbs? How is it that one can function so remotely from earthly conditions, the other so intimately interconnected?

The answer comes through an accurate picturing of how the four members (physical body, etheric body, astral body and I) interact in different ways. The I-being in particular has different pathways into activity in the body, differentiated by the way the I interacts, or does not interact, with the other



three members. The I-being can actively enter into a sculpting, penetrating activity with earthly matter, through the bridge of the astral and etheric bodies, to create a four-fold interweaving of the four members—this is how we come into connection with the earthly world to lift it and transform it. The I-being, in contrast, can also stand largely independent of physicality, only intermittently diving down into it. This latter process is not an interaction of transformation but of objective (outside) observation. It does not bring any intermingling of spirit and substance—each stays independent—and allows us to observe what is, without changing it.

If we now relate these differing pathways to the three-fold human being, Rudolf Steiner describes the integrating, four-fold weaving I-being into the astral body, into the etheric body, into the physical body as giving rise to limb-metabolic activity, in our “growth processes, in the daily restoration of our forces through nutrition as well as in our reproductive forces, i.e. in everything into which the (earthly) human being’s conscious activity does not extend.”

In contrast, “there is an unmediated intervention of forces that go from the ego directly into and through the entire human being. The activity of this stream thus originates from the ego and flows into the nerve-sense organization without first passing through the astral and etheric body. This penetration is naturally strongest in the head where most of the sense organs are concentrated, but should actually be drawn in such a way that it also spreads out over the entire human being, e.g. by way of the sensory organ of the skin.” This latter process manifests as nerve-sense activity, and “as the ego organization initially travels along the pathways of the nerves, the spirit enters directly into physical matter. This has an essentially destructive effect on the organism. Wherever the spirit enters physical matter directly a destructive process occurs, so that along the nerve pathways, proceeding from the senses, a delicate death process spreads out through the human organism.”

It is important to remember that it is not the nerve and metabolic organs that allow these divergent activities to take place, but that these activities give rise to the organs of the nerve-sense pole and metabolic limb pole, giving differentiated form and function to the human body. While both processes are happening continuously in the body, both processes meeting and interacting in all of the organs of the body, there is of course a spatial predominance (nerve-sense in the head, metabolic-limb below the diaphragm), but there is also a chronological order to these processes. An infant’s activity is dominated by processes of growth and metabolism (in the first two months of life a healthy child’s body weight doubles!), with only very simple and fluctuating experiences of consciousness. In old age, the body gradually loses its vitality, until death comes when the four-fold weaving of the metabolism can no longer overcome and transform earthly

matter. Metabolism and growth dominate the beginning of life; consciousness and “a delicate death process” the end.

If we look at the development of an individual organ, we can see this progression, too. In order for any organ to be formed, substance must initially be lifted into this four-fold metabolic stream. As an embryo and fetus, much of this initial digestive, then transformative process is assisted by the mother’s own metabolism. After birth, the child’s own metabolic-limb system must take over this activity. Even the sense organs, in which “the spirit enters directly into matter,” must first be built up through the metabolic stream. This metabolic process which provides the enlivened substance to build the organ, the raw physical substantiality, is then formed from the outside—giving it shape, refinement, and firm structure—by the nerve-sense activity. The metabolic four-fold streaming brings warmth, flexibility, and change in time; the direct in-streaming of the I-being cooling form, precise structure, and constancy. In order for a sense organ to function properly, it needs to be able to serve as a physical platform for spiritual activity to enter in and out of relation to the body, in order to sense the world around the body. Its constancy is essential, otherwise it would be changed in its structure every time a sense impression came in. But before this constancy, sleeping metabolic fluidity and flexibility must help to create the organ.

This progression can fall out of balance in two ways. First, the transition from metabolic to nerve activity is slowed or hindered, which results in excessive metabolic activity, with the resultant qualities of “self-absorbed” warmth and digestion—self-absorption because the platform for conscious interaction with the outside world has not been created and the forces which would eventually be available for consciousness are wrapped up in processes of growth and digestion. The degree of slowing in this process ranges from barely perceptible to a much more profound disconnection from the earthly world. This is a description of the large-headed constitution.

The other imbalance comes from an interruption of the metabolic stream, or premature demands for conscious activity before the metabolic activity has reached its completion. We can envision that this kind of interruption could come easily, as a proper metabolic activity requires the interweaving of all four members, and that a problem on any one of those levels of physical body, etheric body, astral body or I-being activity would weaken the up-building process. This too-early switch to conscious activity (either because the metabolic stream is weakened, or sensory demands are excessive) gives us a picture of the small-headed constitution, again with a large range of expression.

Every child incarnated today, stands on one side or the other of that imbalance. It defines much of the experience of

polarity is the foundation for our understanding of how the child experiences his or her body, and how that experience of the body is going to color perceptions and interactions with the surrounding world.

If we now return to the question of head size, we can understand that the relative size of the head and the limbs can be used as an important indicator of where a child lies on this time continuum. But it is most valuable as a confirmation of the underlying process (whether the nerve-sense process dominates a metabolic-limb life that is out of order, or vice versa), not as the primary characteristic, and always has to be viewed as one manifestation of a much larger process.

Every child is large-headed in relation to the body proportions they will grow into later in life. Metabolic growth forces work centrifugally—out to the periphery—and fill the body with substance. This outward, expanding growth is met by the centripetal, inwardly sculpting forces of the nerve-sense system. In the large-headed child, the head remains relatively large because it is still full with metabolic forces, and has not yet been adequately met by this centripetal, sculpting force. The features are often large, rounded, the head with a full bowing brow and large occiput. In company with the large head, the hands and feet may be proportionally small. The roundness of the head dominates the whole form and there is little transition to a radial limb gesture (think of Steiner's drawing of the three-fold human being in *Study of Man*). Sensory processes may be poorly developed, and uncomfortable, and when impressions come unexpectedly they are met by the dominant metabolic surge, pushing to the periphery, as the child “with a small remark, [becomes] red faced and terribly annoyed.” Sensory development is slowed, and because of this “the nerve-sense system is not in order.”

The small-headed child has a relatively small head, one perhaps more generally associated with the proportions of an older child, which we can now understand as prematurely “sculpted.” This can happen, as already mentioned, either because the metabolic forces of the body are weakened (e.g. perhaps from toxic or artificial physical substances that cannot easily be met and lifted into the etheric stream, or disjointed and unpredictable life rhythms that stress and weaken the etheric body), or because of premature sensory demands (premature birth, shock, trauma, media). This premature consciousness makes the head small, often with a small or shorter brow and not much extension of the head into the back space. The hands and feet may be proportionally large in relation to the head size, as growth forces are pushed out of the head and comes down into the limbs. Steiner states that the small-headed children are “often pale in school”—the blood process hidden, the blood vessels constricted. The “metabolic-limb system is not in order.” Steiner even says that with time the “organism becomes fragile, and the tissue becomes brittle.” They are too quickly meeting and being influenced by

the world they are born into, and the nerve activity called forth by that interaction is devitalizing and aging. Too awake, too soon.

Rudolf Steiner's other indications about the polarity, including its relationship to temperament, and therapeutic indications for salt, the cool washing of the head in the morning, and lead for the large-headed child, and sugar, a warm abdominal compress in the evening, and silver for the small-headed child, can all be understood through this temporal dynamic. For the prolonged metabolic activity of the large-headed child, we need to therapeutically stimulate the descent into the body, and better “sculpt” the nerve-sense system. For the small-headed child, trying to protect, buffer and quiet the sensory life of the child, allowing the full metabolic development of the organs to be completed which has been interrupted.

*This is an excerpt from a book Dr. Blanning is writing about the large-/small-headed and epileptic/hysteric polarities, and how they can be integrated into child observation, their relationship to anthroposophic remedies and to pedagogical and remedial activities.*

1 Steiner, Rudolf. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* 2. Meeting of Feb. 6, 1923.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Steiner, Rudolf. *The Invisible Man Within Us: Pathology as a Basis for Therapy*. Dornach, Feb. 11, 1923, Mercury Press, Chestnut Ridge, NY.

5 Ibid.



“Ideal Head of a Woman” drawing by, Michelangelo, 1525-28

## PEDAGOGICAL CONSTITUTIONAL TYPES/POLARITIES

### LARGE AND SMALL HEADED CHILDREN

RACHEL ROSS, M.ED

Working with the pedagogical constitutional polarities in children is a challenging task. First, we must learn to accurately observe the child to ascertain what the perceptual, learning and behavioral issues really are. Then, we need to bring knowledge to our observations to understand the origin and nature of the child's nature. From this, we are better able to develop the correct protocols and methods for treating the child, to promote harmony, balance and health. Rudolf Steiner's observations and insights into the nature and presentation of the constitutional types have been invaluable in understanding and helping children learn and grow.

Let us look at the physical manifestation of the polarity of the large headed and small-headed children. What do we observe of their physical, emotional nature and their consciousness? We need to work with the unique relationship of the "I" organization upon the physical body. The "I" (ego) is directed from the nervous sense system or upper pole. Nerve/sense pole is too strong; the metabolic forces are too strong in the nerve/sense system.

In the large headed child, one has to look at the size of the head in proportion to the body, presenting with a large forehead and occiput. The "I" and the astral body are diverted from the nerve/sense system and therefore they lack the hardening element, causing the head to be large and round. This type of child often has rosy cheeks. She can also be artistic in nature, articulate, but can also tend to be introverted, and even can think of death. This child can be emotional, gifted, and seems preoccupied, even spaced out and dreamy in consciousness. Movement and coordination can be challenging, because she is not in her limbs so does not enjoy movement and can even be avoidant. One could say there is a resistance to link with the physical body and world. Child might even swear if forced beyond the established comfort level.

Now what are some of the positive methods needed to help the large headed children connect with the earth and his or her body to bring balance between the nerve sense and the metabolic limb system? One must realize that it is important to begin where the child is and gradually encourage him/her to do activities that will be challenging to his/her nature. If pushed too fast to change, the child can display resistance, avoidance and a sense of failure. This is not helpful, and will not bring about healing and change in the child's nature. Each individual responds and evolves at a different pace and manner. We need to be mindful of this and find the appropriate way to help the child be willing to change and have courage to do things that are challenging.

That being said, with a large headed child we need to

cool down or contract the "head pole, nerve sense system to bring consciousness of the body and to the world around him/her. By washing the face and upper body in the morning with cool water, the child will respond with wakeful awareness of him/herself in a physical body. As the child becomes more awake in the body, so too will awareness grow of others and the environment. At the same time, we must stimulate the metabolism and strengthen the breathing. This can be done in many ways through warm food and drinks like homey tea, baths, abdominal compresses and remedies.

Through rhythmical movement exercises and daily life tasks, we strive to coax the child into the limbs. Often these children have low muscle tone and by nature, avoid movements. Their coordination is poor and they appear clumsy. All weight-bearing activities are wonderful for them so that they actually feel their muscles and joints. Rudolf Steiner suggests that eating salt and root vegetables in the diet are beneficial to nourish the nerve/sense system, which is helpful for the large headed child. The remedies he suggests include plumbum, then cuperum (copper).

Pedagogically teachers need to present the lesson in a nutshell, clarifying salient facts. The authority of the teacher as being in charge, without pushing or being aggressive offers a positive role model for the child to imitate. If the teacher or parent is too passive, often chaos prevails and the large headed child can become even more overwhelmed and lost in the crowd.

In Eurythmy Therapy the practice of consonants while standing is recommended. Practicing the first half of the evolutionary sequence with the legs while sitting in a chair is also helpful, bringing form and activity to the lower body, while building core muscle tone.

Now we need to address the polarity to the large headed child, the small headed child. We must remember that the head size is determined by its relationship to the size of the body. A small child may have a smaller head than a larger child. So we need to look at the shape and size of the head compared to the body it sits upon. A small headed child presents with a particular profile. This type of child tends to move quickly and has a strong link the physical body, always in motion and feels comfortable doing so. The nerve/sense system tends to be working too strongly in the metabolic system; consequently the child can suffer from diarrhea. The astral body and ego have not taken hold of the metabolism properly, chaos in metabolism causing either constipation, diarrhea or both.

Behavior appears as hasty and erratic, jumping into an activity before waiting to hear all of the directions. Consequently, errors are made due to carelessness out of the constitutional forces these children can appear to be sullen and angry at times, being stuck. This type of child tends to be thin and pale. Life forces are not strong, everything seems to get



burned up by movement and the strong astral forces.

What can we do to help this type of child? One of the first things we can work with is the breathing through working with rhythm in movement, singing, speech and daily life. Learning is best done through continued practice, repetition and review. We need to bring warmth into the child's metabolism through warm food and honey herb teas, eating sweet fruits and wearing wool and layers for warmth are helpful to the small-headed child. Sweet honey brings sun forces into the digestive system with a calming effect. Hot water bottle and/or compresses placed on the abdomen are beneficial as are nutritional and prunus baths in the evening. It is also recommended using silver ointment and then bryophyllum as therapeutic remedies. In Eurythmy we use the vowel sounds to promote healthy breathing, harmony and health, especially the large "I" (ee) exercise.

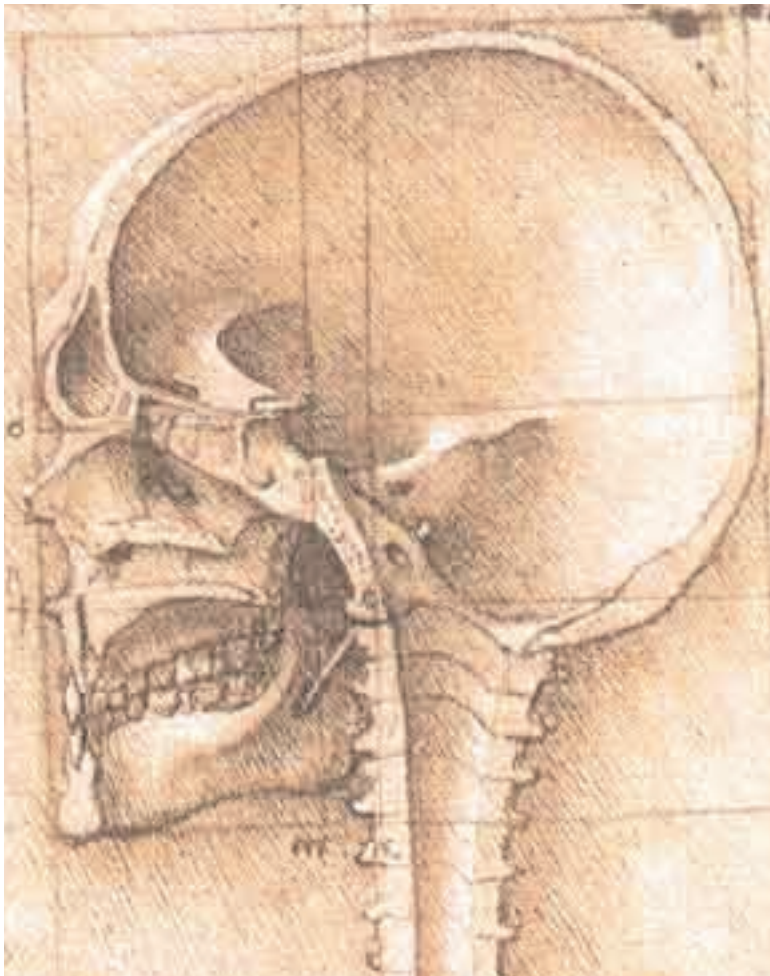
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*Proportions of the Skull, 1489, and  
Proportions of the Head, 1488-89,  
by Leonardo da Vinci*

