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Chapter 2

THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

At the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Rudolf Steiner encouraged the original core of teachers to work into the future together by carrying the school forward in a new way.¹ He asked that they take on the rigor of establishing a **new social form**. He acknowledged that this task would be difficult, but he said that it was absolutely necessary for world evolution that preparation begin for mankind to experience a new way of working with one another. This form, often called the college of teachers, was to be based on a spiritual beholding of one another, a working out of consensus, and a conscious attempt by the teachers to align themselves with the “genius” or “being” of the school through disciplined meditative practice.

1. See **Rudolf Steiner's Conferences with the Teachers of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart**, Volume 3, 1922-23 and Volume 4, 1923-24, Steiner Schools Fellowship, England, 1988.

Perhaps no organ within the Waldorf School is more difficult to achieve than this college of teachers. On the one hand, the college of teachers can provide the most marvelous spiritual insights, bringing life to education. On the other hand, it can be inefficient, ponderous, even socially inept. Yet, we work in this way so that we may share the fruits of the spiritual world, and so that we may begin to understand what it means to work together out of freedom. What then is this college of teachers, a body which is unique to Waldorf Schools?

We can only begin to answer this by trying to understand what the Waldorf School is all about. Rudolf Steiner characterized Waldorf education as an education which was designed to meet the needs of human beings in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch of earth evolution. This epoch is characterized as a time when our task as human beings is to develop the consciousness soul, that element in the human constitution which requires each one of us to stand alone and to experience oneself as an individual in day-clear consciousness. It is this experience that provides for the possibility for each man and woman to achieve the true freedom referred to in Steiner's book, **The Philosophy of Freedom**. However, the price for this possibility to experience oneself as an individual is that one must learn to live with the fact that there is a space, even an abyss, between oneself and the world, both the world of nature and the world of one's fellow man. So it is that at a certain point in life, each of us can feel himself to be completely alone. At the same time, this condition also leads each of us to strive to reconnect ourselves, and to overcome this gap that separates us from the world and the others around us. Before this can happen, though, and as this epoch progresses, the experience of *subject/object* will become ever stronger, while the experience of being alone will intensify. In light of this, we can see that our task for the present is to make use of this isolation and to develop capacities which will lead us from isolation into a new kind of community. This community will only be timely, however, if it is one based on true freedom.

This task of finding a new kind of community is one of the primary objectives of spiritual science. When we go further and look at our task as teachers working out of spiritual science, we see that our responsibilities include the guidance of children along their individual paths of incarnation. In normal development, they begin their lives in a state of natural unity with the world and then pass into the equally "natural" experience of separation from it around age nine.

However, from this point, and in light of the demands of this cultural epoch, we must begin to give them the tools so that they will have the possibility to establish anew a conscious connection with the world and the people around them. Yet, this connection can only come about when, over the course of their lives, they find the way as a result of individual, conscious effort. Each individual must make whole what is otherwise a polarity of self and world. This is an ideal for the future, however. We cannot expect to realize this reunification anytime soon, yet as teachers, we need to point to its possibility for ourselves and for the children. Here we come to see the unique challenge of the Waldorf School and the legacy which Rudolf Steiner left us in order to meet it. This legacy consists of the forms for our work together in the school, especially in the faculty meeting and the college of teachers. For our task is not only to create social forms so that these incarnating children find their way to each other and to the world. It is also to help them to come to recognize, accept and learn to work with the destiny which they have brought with them. To be able to do this is through and through a matter of a spiritual development. It does not come out of nature, but can only be acquired through self-directed activity.

To cultivate this capacity in the children so that as adults they can develop their own spiritual perceptions in freedom, something is required of the teachers. They must first learn themselves to work with these factors in their interaction with the children, the colleagues, the parents and the entire school community. All this depends on achieving a degree of self-knowledge. Within a Waldorf school, an institution which is based upon an active working with the spiritual world, a very important condition must exist as a prerequisite to such work done on behalf of the children; we must create a vessel which can become a protected place in which these matters, matters which go far beyond the concept of "social" as we know it, can be rightly considered and worked upon. The college in particular should be such a vessel. It must be the place in which we can nurture, protect, and support the young people who have come to the Waldorf School in their quest to become true human beings. It must also provide something similar for the colleagues if they are to provide such support. Our central task, though, is the care of the children. How can this care lead them towards this new way of being together?

It is in the building of the class community that one of the first steps is taken by which the children learn to know each other. The teacher already begins on the first day of pre-school to lay a basis for this class community. In their class over the years, the children learn to live together by learning to know and to love the others who live and work alongside them. In this process of learning to love the other, the teachers are indispensable. They must be the ones who create the possibilities for the children to learn this art of community building. Yet, we teachers are ourselves hardly able to know how this is to be done in our own lives. So we face an apparent paradox. It is a situation in which the teachers need to help the child lay the basis for some thing which they are hardly able to achieve themselves, the building of community. It does not work to base this teacher-community on old forms; we must build a new kind of community out of our work together. This community building demands quite clearly a particular effort on the part of the teachers themselves. True faculty work requires that we develop means of helping the children which go beyond our individual talents, abilities and efforts. Some of these methods of working are addressed in the first chapter on the faculty meeting. In a college of teachers, however, we are asked to go even further in creating a new paradigm for work as colleagues. In this paradigm, it is the circle which must take ultimate responsibility for the school, yet, it must not become a center of power in the usual sense of the word. It must be willing to make decisions which will have far reaching consequences, but it must be impeccable in its processes, consulting and communicating wherever it is needed. It must be mindful of what the school has been, yet, it must actively seek to develop an imagination for what it needs to become. This will be different for each school and therefore each college must find its way to spiritual insights out of true spiritual freedom. The college has to take responsibility for what happens in every part of the school, yet it must not let itself become merely an administrative organ which becomes so bogged down in details that it loses its sense for the whole.

The Spiritual Task of the College:

Ultimately, the responsibility of the college of teachers is a spiritual one. That means that we must recognize that the spiritual realities flow into all aspects of the school's life. Each action which affects the life of the school is, at bottom, the responsibility of the college. It is indeed like the heart organ of the school organism. As with the body, the heart does not take over all the functions of the

various organs. Instead it senses and regulates the flow of life-bearing activity to each part as it is needed.

The college of teachers should strive to be a future-bearing social form. In such a form, the material and the spiritual world so interpenetrate each other that we are actively helping to shape this new paradigm for human interaction with both the content and the method. Again, though, all of this work is for the benefit of the children who come through the door to meet us each day. Its primary aim cannot be for our own personal development.

For this very important aspect in the life of each Waldorf teacher, one must turn to the work of the Anthroposophical Society which Rudolf Steiner formed as the instrument of the Anthroposophical movement. Within the Society, each person must be willing to take his own schooling in hand. It is entirely a matter of personal freedom. Often this will mean work in a group and/or a branch of the Society in one's local area. Additionally, at some point in this self-education, the individual will find himself looking for indications as to his next steps. At this point, any person, but especially a teacher will wish to look into *The School for Spiritual Science* and especially its Pedagogical Section. Here, there are ample riches for self-development, opening up possibilities for tremendous personal growth.²

The Practical Tasks:

Having looked at some of the broad ideals of the college of teachers, we now turn to some examples of the practical application of these ideals. The foundation of a college will ask different things of us depending upon the situation. In a new school, the faculty will most likely be rather few. All the teachers will share in the decisions as the school seeks to find its own, unique form. Here the founding impulses of the school will have a great deal to do with what the school becomes. In some cases, there will be a strong Anthroposophical foundation. In other situations, it will be the parents' strong wish for a Waldorf School

². For more information on The Anthroposophical Society see **The Life, Nature and Cultivation of Anthroposophy** and **The Constitution of the School of Spiritual Science**, both by Rudolf Steiner. These are available from the Anthroposophic Press. Additional information can be found by writing to The Anthroposophical Society in America, 529 West Grant Place, Chicago, Illinois.

which will imbue the founding. Whether the school has come into being out of the work of parents or the hopes of Anthroposophists in the area or out of the idealism of a few teachers will also have its effect on the early collegial forms of the school. Whatever the basis though, the teachers will need to make the faculty meeting a vessel, however modest, where spiritual considerations are consciously cultivated. This may involve, for example, study of pedagogical texts, work on the festival life of the school, or learning how to study a child in a way which actively works with what the child has brought with him from the spiritual world before birth.

Forming a College in a New School:

At a certain point in the school's growth, the size of the faculty, and the number of part-time teachers, new teachers and teachers new to the school may mean that the whole faculty no longer can carry the intimate inner work on behalf of the school. The press of business, faculty education, class discussions and so on will require that the centering and active carrying of the spiritual life of the school be done in a circle outside the general faculty meeting.

At this point, a college of teachers might well be considered. It would most likely be founded with the help of the Pedagogical Section of the Anthroposophical Society and by those members of the faculty who feel that they wish to take on the extra responsibilities which will be referred to below. It is critical, though, that this deed be carried and supported in spirit by the entire faculty. It needs to be clear that this is a work taken up on behalf of the whole school and that it is done out of a deep sense of service to the children and the faculty. It is a necessary step in the life of each school which often comes when its pioneer phase is complete.

Forming a College in an Established School:

In founding a college in a more mature school, there is usually a history which must be addressed. Colleagues often know each other well and it may be that matters within the school have become difficult, even so difficult that the work within the faculty goes badly. Or, it may simply be that the faculty feels that there is an aspect of the life of the school which needs renewal. Whatever the circumstances, the founding or refounding will need opportunities for deeper conversations in which the teachers can look at the current situation of the

school. Such discussions might well include a look at the school's founding impulse, its current goals as a faculty, its present situation in regards to size, demographics, personnel, etc., and the particular challenges which the school is facing at the moment. Out of this kind of sharing and with the full participation of the faculty, the shared perception might well embrace the wish to strengthen and deepen the spiritual work of the school. The process of founding a college can be invaluable. It is an opportunity for the teachers to renew their commitment as individuals to the spiritual foundations upon which the school and Waldorf education are built. Because new colleagues will have joined the faculty since its early days, the preparation for a founding allows each of the teachers to grow closer to the school without regard to "old" or "new" faculty members. This is not to say that all the teachers will join this new college but only that the opportunity to be apprised of the elements and process of the forming of a college will build a basis for confidence and trust throughout the faculty.

The founding and work of a college of teachers can be seen as a sign of the intent of the faculty to create an organ to insure that the life of the school, in body, soul and spirit, succors the young human beings for whom it exists. In some ways, the elements which make this possible are the "imponderables" to which Rudolf Steiner referred. Nonetheless, we can enumerate some of the conditions which have made for a healthy, working college.

Description of a College:

In such an enumeration, we can say that the basis upon which all college work is dependent is the individual commitment of its members to self-development, that is, to living Anthroposophy. Still other factors are, the on-going commitment of the members to work within a particular school; the commitment to work with the colleagues in this particular school; a determination to maintain the quality, depth and professionalism of the teaching; the resolve to create a protected space in which the karma of a child, a class, a colleague, or the school can be recognized and acted upon (it will be this recognition of the destiny of the school in particular which will allow the school to continuously reform itself as a living organism.); and the resolve to make the "level" of the college meetings such that we create a forum in which spiritual beings will be interested and active in our work. All of these are crucial requirements for a healthy, effective college.

These demands require more work of the teachers but they are at the same time a source of endless creativity and strength if they are rightly tended.

What then, are the steps needed not only to establish but to **maintain** this college of teachers in a living way? Let us begin by stating that there is no one "right" college form. Even its name can vary, being called a council in one school, a conference in another, and a collegium in a third. At the foundation of any college, however, stands a circle of colleagues who bear the conviction that a living connection with spiritual beings is required if the school is to fulfil its responsibility to the children. Out of this conviction, some members of the faculty, who have committed themselves to inner work, will put this striving and its fruits at the service of the school. It is this which will form the basis for any college of teachers, a sacrifice of some individual freedom in favor of a higher freedom within a dedicated circle of teachers. This will be a circle of teachers who actively cultivate a consciousness which is greater than their own individual point of view. And if a college is thus rightly constituted and formed, it will, like the heart, sense what is happening in every part of the organism. It will **know** how things are throughout the school. At the same time, this heart organ will intuit what the times are asking of the school today and what it will need to become in the future. The school will be a place in which children and young people will feel themselves to be part of an exciting endeavor, a place in which they can meet life. In addition, one will find that in such an organ, attention, true consideration, and productive activity will surely be devoted to those areas which are in need of it at that point in time. And miraculously, the effectiveness of the work will be more than the sum of the energy and capacities of the individual members of the college. Rather, it will be of a much higher potency because it will invite the interest and participation both of spiritual beings and those human beings who are on the other side of the threshold of the spiritual world.

The Individual's Commitment to the College:

These experiences will only come about, however, when each individual has dedicated himself or herself to inner activity. Indeed, this inner commitment to become a meditant, to develop the organs of perception needed for the spiritual world, is a veritable foundation stone for a college of teachers. The important factor here is not how "spiritually developed" someone is. Rather, the important point is that I, as a college member, have recognized that I must transform

my own being in such a way that I become an instrument for the spirit. Rudolf Steiner has given many indications for such an Anthroposophical path.³ More will be said on this below. Another valuable source for material on this topic is in **The Meditative Life of the Teacher** by Johannes Tautz.⁴

Having made this commitment to oneself, the opportunity exists to join with colleagues in a new way. The circle is now made up of individuals who wish, out of something larger than what they are as personalities, to carry the needs of the children and the school. This means that one has the possibility of committing oneself to work with other colleagues to create a spiritual vessel for the school. This vessel is made up of the good intentions and of the actions born out of Anthroposophical striving. To put it another way, it means giving up my **personal** wishes for myself, my class, and my school in order to discover what the spiritual tasks and needs of the school are as **its own living organism**. The only way in which these tasks and needs can be recognized is if each member works to create a protected space in which the college as heart-organ can perceive what the times are asking. For the individual members of the circle, this demands a fine balance between two gestures. On the one hand there is the needed inner and outer activity of each individual. On the other, there must be the willingness to hold back so as to hear what is living in the larger sphere of the cosmos. This reality may sound in one's heart, in the room, the school, the community or beyond. Indeed, it is not too much to strive to hear in this way what is being asked of all of us by the spirit of our time, Michael.

This kind of perception is possible when the social structures within the school allow for each colleague to contribute, communicate and consult with the others so as to maintain a living circulation within the school. This means that a soul-spiritual basis is engendered within the college such that the deliberations of

³. Indications can be found in **Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment; Occult Science, An Outline; Theosophy; Guidance In Esoteric Training; Esoteric Development**; all by Rudolf Steiner. Most are available for purchase from the Anthroposophic Press, Star Route, Hudson, N.Y. 12534. They can also be borrowed from The Rudolf Steiner Library, R.D. 2, Box 215 Harlemville, Ghent, N.Y. 12075.

⁴. Available to active Waldorf teachers from the Pedagogical Section Council, c/o Hawthorne Valley School, R.D.2, Box 225, Harlemville, Ghent, New York 12075. \$8.00 postpaid.

the colleagues are based upon a mutual trust which has come from a real recognition of the others.

This is the meaning of decision making by consensus. It does not mean that every member must agree to a given decision, but that the process has been one in which, for each individual, the best efforts to find the truth have been made. The process of working together must be timely but not hurried, thoughtful but not ponderous. Ideally, each member will come away satisfied with the decision. However, failing that kind of agreement, each will nonetheless stand behind the integrity of the process. It may mean allowing something to happen which is against my best judgment, but I then put my confidence in the wisdom of the individuals who make up this very special circle. I will stand behind the decision as the best which the college could do at that moment. If it should prove to be the wrong decision, I will take it as my own responsibility, too. This does not mean an "I told you so" attitude, but rather an attitude which sees the whole process as a path upon which I, as a member of the college, have learned something out of spiritual insight.

Such a way of working can also be engendered in meetings of faculty, board and parents if the college mood is also consciously carried into these meetings by college members. Within the college itself, building this trust will need time, self-knowledge and work. It will also need a confidentiality which allows for a full exploration of a subject without concern that parts of the conversation will be rumored about and taken out of context. It must also, however, avoid the risk of being seen as secretive. The answer lies in having the moral tact to know what to share, whom to involve and when to involve them in the deliberations.

In a meeting with such an atmosphere, the spiritual possibilities can be freely sounded, examined and decided upon without the danger of sympathy and antipathy becoming the determinants in a decision. Here, the results of individual Anthroposophical activity in developing new capacities are experienced. Each member can feel that his counsel is not only the fruit of his own thoughts, but also the gift of those beings who stand behind the assembled colleagues and weave through their circle as the deliberations proceed.

Priorities:

Since the school's reason for being is to serve the needs of the children, the quality and scope of the teaching is a matter to be carried by the college as well. While much of this work goes on in the faculty with all the teachers, it is the college which has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the children's needs are being met. This charge encompasses many aspects, the continuing education of the teachers; preserving the role and direction of the festivals in the school; the work and study in the faculty meetings; the knowledge of what is going on in each classroom; overseeing effective teacher evaluation so that it is done with insight; the final responsibility in hiring or dismissing teachers. All these are realms in which the college must take a leading role. It is the sign of a healthy college that the work in most of these areas will involve the entire faculty in some aspects. Delegated committees will function with a good mix of college and non-college members, of kindergarten, elementary and high school teachers, of full and part-time teachers, and of experienced and newer colleagues. Not all elements need to be present on each committee, as Ernst Lehrs indicates in his article **Republican Not Democratic**.⁵ A real leaven to the work will be experienced by the shoulder-to-shoulder striving of ever-changing constellations of people, each contributing his or her unique qualities.

It is also the college which must penetrate the programs and the curriculum of the entire school. It is first of all a matter of striving for a thorough understanding of why Rudolf Steiner formed the curriculum in the way that he did. It is also a matter of reading the times as well as the children and young people so that their expressed as well as their unexpressed needs are met by the school, as far as possible, in every aspect of its life. The curriculum was chosen by Rudolf Steiner with a deep wisdom, so that it takes long years of work and study to understand why something is taught at a particular time in the life of the child. As trends come and go in education, we must learn to see what sort of relevance each has in the light of spiritual science. Ideas such as new math, ungraded classrooms and multiculturalism must be researched and understood in the light

⁵ Available from the Publications Committee of The Association of Waldorf Schools in North America, c/o The Hartsbrook School, 94 Bay Road, Hadley, Massachusetts 01035.

of **The Study of Man** so that informed discussions can lead to decisions based on spiritual insight.

An intimate knowledge in regard to everything which is going on with each teacher and in each classroom throughout the school is also a college responsibility. Each colleague can then feel himself or herself recognized and supported by fellow teachers. Each teacher needs to feel, "I can count on my colleagues to help me grow beyond who I am." These same teachers will share observations, encourage and support study and development in identified areas, and then assess progress in such areas. While learning to critique our own performance and that of our colleagues is difficult, it is the only way that we can morally stand before the children, their parents and the community. It is a responsibility which we must strive to carry, for to do less is to say that this new paradigm for shared leadership is fatally flawed. We have no right to ask for the trust and confidence of the school community if we are not willing to carry the responsibility for knowing and striving to improve everything which is done with the children.

Let us now turn to the college as a place in which the destiny of the school can be considered. It is especially here that the individual meditative work bears fruit. Where Anthroposophy becomes more than study and intellectual understanding, where it has become something which now comes from within us as a way of perception and action, from the "inside out" so to speak, we find that the true task of the school can be recognized. Just by working actively with Anthroposophy as a way of life, our way of meeting the world becomes qualitatively different. It allows one to rise above the challenges of each day and see the historical context of the present moment as well as the possibilities for the future.⁶

In meetings on this level, we can maintain spaces in which the college of teachers can develop an overview which has both breadth and depth. From such a vantage point, it is able to articulate strong and clear intentions. Each member contributes what, out of his own counsel, he has held up to the clear light of spiri-

⁶. For a fine exposition of the world historic context of Waldorf education, see **The Founding of the First Waldorf School in Stuttgart** by Johannes Tautz. Pedagogical Section Council, 1984.

tual reality, "Is what I bring something which is essential or non-essential? Does it speak to the eternal or only to the ephemeral? Is it in consonance with the true aims and purposes of the school and of Waldorf education?" Everything which we do can now be seen in a broader context. We cannot of course, remain on this level only. We must also make some practical decisions which need timely answers. If, however, our point of departure has begun by orienting ourselves spiritually, our journey will be much different indeed. Out of our practice of working together, we are able to intuit what are the right and necessary deeds.

We can avoid the pitfalls of endless details if the college sees that its task is to develop imaginations which can be shared with the school community. Then by rightly delegating tasks in light of these imaginations, the entire school community becomes actively involved, taking up each task in a broad context and thus in a healthy way. These imaginations can become like stars, beacons for the entire school community, providing everyone with the possibility to work in consonance towards the greater goals of the school.

The Relationship of the College to the Community:

The interrelationship of the college of teachers to other circles in the school community are crucial to its success. Jørgen Smit, in his book, **The Child, the Teachers, and the Community**,⁷ recalls Rudolf Steiner's picture of the teacher's meeting as the heart organ of the school. Avoiding any conception that the heart is merely a pump, Mr. Smit builds upon the picture of the heart as an organ which senses and regulates the flow of the life-bearing blood to all parts of the organism. The heart ensures that the blood continues to move throughout the organism. If the teachers' meeting is to properly carry the above noted responsibilities, we can well see that it must do just what we would want the heart to do.

We can expand upon this picture by thinking of the college of teachers as more of an etheric heart. As such, it is more of a formative or life bearing organ. It gives to the faculty, the physical heart in this analogy, its form, shape, and impulse. It cannot, however, be seen as a source of power in the normal sense of

⁷. Available from the Pedagogical Section Council, c/o Hawthorne Valley School, R.D.2, Box 225, Harlemville, Ghent, New York 12075. \$8.00 postpaid.

the word. It sculpts the faculty organ, infuses it with life, so that it can meet the needs of the school. It is therefore equally essential that the communication and consultation between the college, the faculty, and the other organs of the school flow regularly, freely, and effectively.

The Relationship Between the College and the Faculty:

The flow between the larger faculty and the college is perhaps the area in which the interaction must be especially good. It is important that the college processes be as transparent as possible. If all the teachers know how the college works, how it takes in members, how it considers important matters, and what its place in the school is, the relationship to it can be a healthy one. As many conversations as possible should be taken up in the faculty or in the committees mentioned above. When it becomes clear that some far-reaching decisions are needed, when an intimate conversation is necessary, then the college meeting will be recognized as the place where these sorts of things should happen. The weight of these matters and the resultant decisions should not be loaded onto those colleagues who feel that their main task in the school lies more narrowly elsewhere for the time being. If, however, the college looks to delegate as much as it responsibly can, always being mindful of its duty to the children and the parents, a good balance can be achieved between the smaller circle of teachers and the larger circle from which it draws its membership.

The college also needs to guide the colleagues in the ever present need for continuing education, both for specific individuals and the faculty as a whole. Thus, part of the sensing task will be one of helping the school to anticipate the future by identifying and strengthening areas of activity and knowledge in the school. Furthermore, the recognition of particular needs or shortcomings in the work of a colleague might, at some point, need a more intimate circle of peers who can help the individual to address the problem in a positive way. Whether this colleague is a member of the college or not, the openness, trust and confidence in one's fellow teachers is enhanced when there is a strong, regular and transparent addressing of issues. Ensuring that the college makes teacher and class evaluation part of its normal process provides the entire faculty with the knowledge that the need for help will be noticed and acted upon as a matter of course. This can build tremendous confidence in the whole community.

The Relationship of the College to the Board of Trustees:

The relationship to the board of trustees of the school is in need of much the same interaction. The board is usually given responsibility for the fiscal well-being of the school, so that it needs to let its deliberations be informed by the pedagogical aims, even by the imaginations mentioned above, of the college. While the interaction will not be as great as it is with the full faculty, the need to share hopes and concerns in terms of new programs, salaries and benefits, teaching spaces and so forth is important. Early and regular consultation is a vital element throughout the deliberations, especially those which have a major impact on the budget. The board can quite fruitfully be involved in conversations in which the vision of the future of the school is being developed by the college. Without this opportunity, the board will risk operating in a vacuum. Perhaps it will provide sound financial support, but it might well be at the cost of a detachment from the deeper aims and purposes of the school.

For a board to be effective, it needs to provide the college with effective fiscal guidance and leadership. The college needs to see it as a partner to which it can turn for honest opinions and ideas as well. In an ideal relationship, two extremes will be avoided. The board will not act alone without regular consultation with the full college. At the same time, it will exercise some independence so that the college has the benefit of knowing the full effects of its various pedagogical decisions. Ultimately, the college must be the final arbiter as to policy, even though this may not be the case legally. For without the spiritual leadership and support of the college, no financial support, no matter how generous, can truly help the school. Thus, at a certain point, the board needs to defer to the considered judgment of the college of teachers. However, if the deliberations in areas of common concern have been rightly carried by both circles, there will be very few moments when a consensus cannot be reached.

The Relationship of the College to the Parents:

The interrelationships of the college must also include the circle of parents who, with the teachers, stand around the children. For, without a doubt, the parents must also be recognized for the contributions which they have to bring to the school. In all circumstances, steps must be taken to be sure that the college of teachers does not appear as a mysterious group which makes decisions without the parents knowing how these things came about. As with the board and the

larger faculty, the parents as a group also need to be consulted, kept informed, and can even be involved in deliberations where it is appropriate. The parents in particular need to feel that the college and the faculty are circles which have the characteristics of clarity, openness and warmth. The college can bring about positive attitudes and enthusiasm from the parents by enlisting their aid, asking their opinions, and providing opportunities for them to learn about the education and what stands behind it. This means creating regular meeting times, workshops, and other forms in the school which will ensure that there is ready access to this heart organ of the school. It also means that the college becomes a body which ensures that timely and decisive responses are made to any and all concerns. Once again, responsibility may well be delegated in some areas, but the parents need to know that, ultimately, they can count on the college to give them a fair hearing and decisive leadership which has insight as its hallmark.

Support for the College:

Given all the above considerations, the tasks of a college of teachers can seem to be overwhelming. We must, though, always remember that all that we attempt to do in the Waldorf school should to be done out of a spiritual orientation. With this in mind, we must enlist the help and active participation of teachers, board, parents and community members in helping the school to fulfil its goals. These goals are of real importance, for they are taken up on behalf of society, indeed, on behalf of all mankind. They require social skills which we are only beginning to develop. They also involve the development of spiritual insight out of the strivings of a circle where *one standing alone* is no longer up to the demands of the times. However, these efforts will only succeed if we also invite spiritual beings to share this work. If these invitations are real, if they are evident in our deeds as well as in our words, then we will give children the possibility to become full human beings.⁸

This, in the final analysis, is why the college is there. Each of us must decide whether this living imagination is something into which we will put our indi-

⁸. See **Towards the Deepening of Waldorf Education**, second edition. It provides a comprehensive picture which will be invaluable to all teachers. It will be available from the Pedagogical Section Council to serious, active Waldorf teachers. Inquiries can be directed to the aforementioned address.

James Pewtherer

vidual initiative and effort. Only with this kind of commitment, can the school become a free community of teachers working together for the future of humanity. Only by working and striving together can we hope to carry the weighty responsibility which we assume when we take up the profession of a teacher.