The Art of Administration

VIEWPOINTS ON PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT IN WALDORF SCHOOLS

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Viewpoints on Professional Management in Waldorf Schools

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INTRODUCTION

Today, contemporary educational reform has highlighted a need to establish "site-based management" in schools. Modern teachers can be heard expressing a need to be empowered, self-directing and responsible for their own environment and curricula. They see the results of their educational striving being condemned in the media as insufficient. American education is desperate for change.

Rudolf Steiner, in his address to the teachers at the beginning of the second school year in Stuttgart on September 22, 1920, said the following:

> "The (Waldorf) school will have its own administration run on a republican basis and will not be administered from above. We must not lean back and rest securely on the orders of a headmaster; we must be a republic of teachers and kindle in ourselves the strength that will enable us to do what we have to do with full responsibility. **Each one of you, as an individual, has to be fully responsible**."[1]

Those of us in Waldorf education who have been working with this structure, and experiencing the resulting freedom, understand the longing of our colleagues in the public sector. We may also recognize that there is much that we could offer them through the successes and trials of the social management that we employ in our schools. On the other hand, there is much that we have to do within our own movement to refine our way of managing our schools.

This book explores this question of administration and management. It was written as a result of questions asked over the past several years that have been directed at A.W.S.N.A. while I have served as chairman of the Eastern Region. These questions have come from schools both in their infancy and from schools over fifty years old. They take the following form: How are Waldorf Schools administered? What is the role of the College of Teachers in a Waldorf School? What is the purpose of consensus? How can we run a better faculty

[1] Rudolf Steiner, **Conferences, 1919-1920,** Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1986, p. 34.

meeting? How do we evaluate our teachers, our students, our schools? How do we determine mandates for committees? How should the phone be answered in the office? What is a Waldorf Administrator, and what should they do and not do? What are the criteria necessary in the acceptance of children? How can we better present ourselves to the media and the greater community? How can we deal with the human complexities which arise when adults work together? What are the models for Boards of Trustees in Waldorf Schools?

As one penetrates the questions, one soon realizes that there are **no** definitive answers, **no** recipes, **no** dogmatic responses which can serve our way of working. Living social organisms are constantly undergoing change. The forms we create are there only as a temporary supportive framework. We must all learn to love the challenge of **constantly improving** upon what we have, and resist settling on any fixed final form which could lead to an individual power position and discord.

This book does not wish to dictate "how" to do things, rather it is hoped that the articles included in **THE ART OF ADMINISTRATION** will stimulate the reader's thinking so that an answer which fits their particular situation may become apparent. The answer to most of our questions resides within ourselves and we can find them if we develop the ability to observe carefully. To observe carefully means we have to try to study and understand Rudolf Steiner's intentions when he passed on the leadership of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart to the teachers.

We must go beyond a mere practical answer to our administrative questions, and try to fathom that which is truly being asked of us. Administration in a Waldorf school calls forth the development of a faculty called **moral technique**. It is through the active working with Anthroposophy that we learn how to develop ourselves in this area. As we strive to understand moral technique we begin to develop the capacity to meet those problems which come toward us with interest and love. At the same time we are strengthening ourselves so that we do not allow the arrows of critical opposition to penetrate our sensitivity. Rather we seek constantly for equilibrium, and in such a state of consciousness, we may then be able to **intuit** a solution to the problem. This way of working stands against that of the person who becomes immersed in the problem as a result of their own

critical faculty. To develop this ability to intuition requires that individuals are willing to undertake their own inner development. Modern administrators can only function in this way if they have an understanding for their activity, and recognize a deeper resource from which spring their responses.

The writing of this book was an interesting experiment. First, the questions were organized and then the chapter headings were developed. Then they were presented to the Delegates of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America who were asked to identify participants to concentrate on different aspects of the project. This list was then further developed and finally ten individuals from around North America, recognized by their professional relationship to a particular set of questions, as well as to their understanding of school administration as a whole, were asked to prepare a draft of a chapter. In September of 1991, all but one of that group, together with the Chairperson of the Pedagogical Section Council, gathered together around a round table at the Lexington Waldorf School and presented their thoughts to one another. Then followed discussion, debate, and probing conversations as the group struggled with each other to broaden or contract the focus of each report. The intention was **to look at each question from as many points of view as possible**. It was hoped that when we left Lexington to go home to write the final revision, something of all the other participants would live in each other's chapter.

We sincerely hope that this book can be of service, and we invite you, the reader, to give us feedback so that this work can develop into the future.

I would like to express my appreciation especially to David Alsop, but also to those other colleagues who have participated in this book and who have endured their editor's demands with warmth and humor!

David Mitchell
Wilton, NH
February 1992

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Chapter 1

THE WALDORF SCHOOL FACULTY MEETING

Some years ago, the U.S. Department of Education reported a survey in which "as many as 45 percent of the teachers report no contact with each other during the workday; another 32 percent say they have infrequent contact. As a result, these teachers fail to share experience and ideas or to get support from colleagues. Isolation may undermine effective instruction."[1].

Many administrators and policy makers speak about fostering collegiality, setting aside time for faculty interaction, and involving teachers in setting school policies. However, few achieve this goal. The hierarchical structure in most schools, the absence of a shared, fully articulated philosophy of education, and the intrusion of school board politics all serve to undermine the implementation of meaningful faculty interaction.

From their inception in 1919, Waldorf Schools were designed to place faculty collaboration at the heart of all policy formulation. Teachers in Waldorf schools the world over meet weekly, often Thursdays, to do the work needed in

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1. U.S. Department of Education, **What Works?**, 1986.

service of the children in their care. This work may include curriculum development, child observation, study, reporting, decisions on schedules, hiring, public events, etc. The meetings become real because the authority and responsibility of school direction rest with the striving teachers.

Thus the faculty meeting represents simultaneously one of the greatest opportunities and one of the greatest challenges of teaching in a Waldorf school. The success or failure of the faculty meeting can be the determining factor in the health and growth of a school.

The challenge and opportunity become all the greater because there are no formulas. In their training, Waldorf teachers receive a comprehensive picture of the developing child, a philosophic basis out of which to work, and a curriculum full of countless marvels just waiting to be discovered. However, working on a faculty of teachers remains, by its very nature, a new frontier. There are no guides for faculty meetings, nor should there be! Each group explores together, researches the possibilities and develops an organizational structure that fits the character and needs of the particular school. This ongoing, active searching is a crucial ingredient in all faculty work.

The thoughts that follow are therefore intended as a stimulus for further exploration.

Why have faculty meetings?

A long, sedentary meeting in the traditional sense could rightly be viewed as anathema to the spirit of Waldorf education. Teachers work so hard already, planning lessons, holding parent/teacher conferences, serving on numerous committees, teaching long hours at low wages — is not a long afternoon of meeting just asking too much?

The answer might well be "yes" if the teacher feels she is merely fulfilling an obligation. If the content is not of interest, if the structure is not artistically organized, then time will weigh heavily on the minds of all participants. Everything depends on what colleagues bring to the meetings.

In an age characterized by Rudolf Steiner as the time of the Consciousness Soul, we can no longer let others do our tasks. Headmasters and principals cannot truly replace an active faculty of teachers. We need to emancipate ourselves, stand on our own "pedagogical feet," and abandon the old supports. To a large extent, public education has failed to do this, and therefore remains fettered to an old system of governance that stifles initiative and actually impedes the real practice of pedagogy. A Waldorf school must first of all have a faculty that is free to set pedagogical policy. The responsibility is tremendous, but completely in harmony with the needs of our times. Liberty, fraternity, equality: these three words served as a clarion call before and during the French Revolution, and continue to resound in one form or another in the years since then. Yet unfortunately, these three mighty ideals are often understood only in terms of physical realities, i.e., the redistribution of material wealth, freedom "from," and equality in the workplace. This materialistic interpretation, though valid in its own sphere, misses the main thrust of these ideals. We need to achieve fraternity on the physical plane, a real caring of one another's needs. However, liberty needs to be addressed in psychological terms, the ability to give space for the thoughts and feelings of others, the ability to be free in relationship. Equality, in the ultimate sense, is a spiritual matter. We are most equal in our striving as human beings, in our strenuous searching for insight. In a Waldorf context especially, it is our striving that brings us together.

A faculty meeting is a wonderful experiment, an attempt to implement the three ideals of the French Revolution in the sense described above. Certainly there is a "fraternal" aspect, known to all the colleagues who congregate around the snack table! During snack, everyday concerns are shared, genuine interest in the needs of others is furthered when the afternoon schedule allows for informal human interchange. In fact, much can be accomplished during what appears to be purely informal conversation. Concerns about family, housing, finances, and lesson materials are taken up. When faculty meetings are too tightly scheduled, often in the name of efficiency, one senses the lack of "fraternal" carrying in the school. Strangely enough, being too efficient is often inefficient.

Likewise, group work either enhances or impedes individual "liberty." A headstrong drive to reach consensus can stifle individuality (see decisions' section of chapter), but when done well, a faculty gathering can be a time of inner

freeing, a chance to truly share. Respectful of each colleague's insights and contributions, an atmosphere of psychological "liberty" deepens the pedagogical work of each teacher. In this atmosphere, Waldorf teachers can create a new language to meet one another out of enhanced Anthroposophical insight. In striving toward this goal, colleagues can experience spiritual "equality."

Some years ago, Jørgen Smit asked a gathering of teachers in Garden City, "What are we doing so that the living spiritual substance can grow within the schools?" This question goes to the heart of our faculty and college work: the need to forge a new social form, a living vessel for spiritual/pedagogical inspiration.[2.]

Continued Teacher Training:

Faced with the constant press of business, the outer circumstances of school life can easily determine faculty priorities. A pressing issue of one sort or another always arises, such as, "What happened to the planning for tomorrow's assembly?" After some discussion of what went wrong, a group becomes immersed in the **details** of how many chairs to set up, where the display should go, etc. Yet all the "apparent" business, in the most amazing and varied way, obscures the central business of a Waldorf school faculty meeting: the self-development and continued training of the entire body of teachers.

In the Torquay lectures, among other instances, Rudolf Steiner spoke of the teacher's meetings as, "the heart and soul" of the work, a place and time when "each one learns from the other":

> "... We have our Teacher's Meetings in the Waldorf School which are the heart and soul of the whole teaching. In these meetings, each teacher speaks of what he himself has learnt in his class and from all the children in it, so that each one learns from the other. No school is really alive where this is not the most important thing, this regular meeting of the teachers. "[3.]

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2. Jørgen Smit, June 1989, Garden City, notes of T. Finser
3. Rudolf Steiner, Torquay Lectures, 19.8.24.

An active teacher is constantly learning from others, even when discussing chairs. However, this general, indirect method is not enough.

A faculty needs to consciously schedule a time for "sharing." The spontaneous outpouring about a successful lesson, a heart-rendering story of an especially difficult day, or the joyful sharing of lessons and newly discovered materials can reunite a faculty socially, all of which stimulates further growth. The class reports and child observations given at many faculty meetings also enhance teacher training, but the heart-inspired, spontaneous sharing is what I have found irreplaceable. Over and above setting aside a time in the meeting for spontaneous sharing, too much planning or structure forces the situation, and then everyone feels they have to say something profound, or worse yet, not speak at all.

The health of a school depends on the attitude of each teacher and the quality of group work in a faculty:

> "Thus these constant staff meetings tend to make
> the school into an organism in the same way as the
> human body is an organism by virtue of its heart.
> Now what matters in these staff meetings is not
> so much the principles but the readiness of all the
> teachers to live together in goodwill, and the abstention
> from any form of rivalry. And it matters supremely
> that a suggestion made to another teacher only proves
> helpful when one has the right love for every single child.
> And by this I do not mean the kind of love which is
> often spoken about, but the love which belongs to
> an artistic teacher." [4.]

It is interesting to observe how the content of the above quote is organized. The "organism" of the school depends upon the meeting of teachers in "goodwill," which in turn rests upon the love each teacher fosters for the children. When the children are carried in a living, loving manner, the whole organism is strengthened. We know that each child should come before the faculty in the course of a year, even if only for a few minutes. Teachers perfect their work, become true artists, by practicing child observation. This means sharing images of the child, characterizing behavior and school work, allowing differing perceptions to live in

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4. Rudolf Steiner, Manchester College Lectures, 16.8.22, 25.8.22.

the circle, and carrying the child inwardly between meetings. Each child presents a sort of riddle, or a series of riddles, and from the human striving to understand these riddles come the soul forces a teacher needs to work effectively in the classroom.

Pedagogical work is an artistic activity that cannot be learned from a text. So often, the faculty study becomes a simple recapitulation of the lecture, and colleagues settle in for a brief inner nap. Of course a faculty study of lectures can be helpful, but it is the **activity** that results from the study that develops concrete teaching skills. Books are simply impulses for self-development.

A faculty cultivates the goal of becoming a new kind of university, a place where individual research is shared, ideas developed and insights fashioned out of conversation. Teacher meetings can become the life blood of a school when original work finds a respectful audience and an eager, appreciative circle of colleagues.

The soil for all the above mentioned work is prepared through regular artistic activity. So many teachers observe their colleagues' talents and feel hopelessly inadequate. Yet most of those very talents were developed and refined through regular, not so glamorous practice. **Everyone,** in reality, still has areas that are in need of work. So when a faculty of teachers sings, draws, paints, moves and speaks together, the artistic configuration of the entire group blossoms, research is inspired, and issues are resolved.

Finally, when a faculty works to continue teacher training, the children sense it. Their teacher's striving, an intangible element, becomes food for the children. Lesson plans do not reach the class as effectively as the *teacher activity* that stands behind their preparation. Likewise, when the teachers stand up and sing together at an assembly, one observes a remarkable change in the children. One has just to look at their sparkling eyes and ruddy cheeks! In a few brief moments of singing together, a faculty strengthens the etheric sheath of a school.

Structure:

All the aforesaid is possible only when the form of the meeting fits the content, when clarity and structure permit freedom and artistic expression. Thus the agenda becomes a crucial element in any faculty meeting.

Ideally, the weekly agenda reflects the life of the entire school. When a school is large it may be advisable for two or three colleagues from different areas and with different responsibilities to contribute to the drafting of the agenda. For instance, when the faculty chair, administrator and college chair meet weekly to draft the agenda, they can also serve as an administrative committee to handle designated administrative tasks that need attention. Regardless of who forms the agenda, however, the key consideration is: what is occurring in the life of the school that needs to be brought to the full circle of teachers? Rather than have the agenda become a personal document, these guiding question helps raise the work to a more objective level, a service to the "whole."

Just as the human being works through the structure of its various "members," so, too, the work of a faculty is enhanced through careful consideration of the several aspects of a meeting's structure. There are the *physical* needs and concerns, such as materials, room arrangements, time slots, report format and of course, snack. However, the *etheric* rhythm requires consideration of the life-engendering activities in a meeting: working with movement, speech and painting, perhaps for a month at a time. If the agenda takes into account the dynamics of the afternoon meeting, the *astral* element is engaged. Here the pacing of the agenda becomes crucial. For example, after a long, involved discussion, one might skip to announcements. The chairperson can conduct the agenda so that variety enlivens the session. Finally, one needs to carry constantly a consciousness of the **process** while it is occurring. Somewhat like "thinking about thinking," one is involved, yet aware of the nature of the process. This work with conscious perspective directly calls upon the human **ego**. [5.]

Nothing, including the above, can be adhered to in a rigid fashion. A living form requires moments of contraction and expansion. Teachers often give this careful attention in their lessons, yet the structure of a faculty meeting deserves the benefit of the same insights. During the five years I served as a faculty

[5.] Rudolf Steiner, **Philosophy of Spiritual Activity.**

chairman, I found that preparation made all the difference, especially in speaking ahead of time to those colleagues scheduled to give reports. Concise reporting upholds discipline and structure, while also allowing more time for classroom "sharing" and child observation. Needless to say, if one does not have to do much teaching, everything can be properly prepared and considered!

One of the major challenges facing Waldorf schools today is the health of our teachers. Not that we are all falling apart, but some issues have long been neglected. We need to lead healthy lives, even on Thursdays. Anthroposophical study and long faculty discussions are not a substitute for basic human needs, such as exercise, nutrition and artistic work. The physical well-being of teachers strongly influences relationships — with colleagues, parents and children. We often become so caught up in the periphery that we lose "the center." Teachers need a time to relate some personal elements, aspects of biography, during a faculty meeting. These need not be long, but even a conversation around the theme, "Where were you at age nine?" can help. Waldorf teachers deserve time to process childhood issues, while awakening to those of others. The exercise of looking back, whether on biography or at the end of a day, can strengthen the etheric.

Here are some possible agendas that attempt to incorporate some of the above considerations:

A. Eurythmy (30-40min.)
Pedagogical discussion and /or child observation (30-40min.)
Minutes of last meeting (5 min.)
Reports, which might include: (30 min.)
- College of Teachers
- Lower School, High School, Kindergarten
- Parent/ Teachers Association
- Board of Trustees
- School Committees

Questions on the reports/ discussion/free sharing (15-20 min.)
Announcements (10 min.)

B. Opening Quote (5 min.)

Minutes (5 min.)
Reports —might be similar to the above (30-40 min.)
Pedagogical discussion: class nights and parent/teacher work, all school meetings (40 min.)
Announcements (10 min.)
Rehearsal of faculty play (60+ min.)

C. Opening Quote
Faculty study — lecture from **Study of Man** (45 min.)
Child observation (30 min.)
Singing (15 min.)
Minutes (5 min.)
Reports see above (30 min.)
Announcements (10 min.)
Review and Closing Verse

(In all the above examples, the faculty snack would precede the meeting, although many have scheduled it half way through.)

Chairing a Faculty Meeting:

Before examining the specifics of chairing, a few reflections on the role and concept of leadership, in general, may be helpful. For nowadays, all leaders are suspect. Partly because of the abuse of power in modern history, and partly due to the strong current of egalitarianism in the western world, leaders are hardly given a chance anymore. If everyone is equal, so they say, then why have any leaders? This pervasive mind-set influences everything we do, even in a Waldorf context. Part of our present-day challenge is to create a new definition of leadership.

A faculty of Waldorf teachers works as a group. Without the active participation of all teachers, pedagogical policy becomes an abstraction. However, group work does not preclude the need for leadership. In fact, to say, "we have no leaders here, we do everything ourselves" obscures the reality of the situation. In every discussion, in every decision, in every form of implementation, **there are leaders**! Not to recognize them means to deny them the conscious support they urgently need in carrying out the will of the school. However, a

leader in one area of school life may not be suited for leadership in another. We need to learn to recognize our leaders.

We can do this by sharpening our perception of human capacities, learning to recognize talent and yet practicing inner discernment so those talents can be applied to the right tasks. Much can go awry when good people are given the wrong tasks. "But, so and so will learn to," is a refrain that does not succeed in administration. Of course, everyone can learn from experience, and for Waldorf **teaching** this is a central, pedagogical imperative. However, school administration should not, in my opinion, be the training ground for well-intentioned but otherwise ineffectual leaders. Teacher training, as described earlier, is a pedagogical affair. The damage done by misplaced administrative authority can be irreparable, not only for the circle of forgiving colleagues, but for the wider parent community.

The main task of a faculty chairperson is confidence-building. One can do this in so many ways, both large and small: encouraging colleagues with appropriate talents to take up new tasks, connecting people with each other, fostering an atmosphere of appreciation for the parents, board and colleagues, planning events and agendas that work, and developing a fine sense for "timing." A faculty chair facilitates, makes it possible for good things to happen in a school, keeps things moving. Confidence within and confidence without grows when issues are clearly perceived and the "warmth realm" is valued. (See "Social Challenge" section at end of chapter)

A faculty chairperson should expect little glory and much detail work. The words of Robert Louis Stevenson help those who have been given the "**Guardian Knot**" of faculty chairing:

> We require higher tasks because we do not recognize the height of those we have. Trying to be kind and honest seems an affair too simple and too inconsequential for men of our heroic mold: we had rather set ourselves to something bold, arduous, and conclusive... the task before us, which is to co-endure with our existence, is rather one of microscopic fineness, and the heroism required is

that of patience. There is no cutting the Guardian Knots of life; each must be smilingly unravelled." [6]

Patience and humility are the rewards of faculty chairing.

Here are some practical suggestions for the faculty chair:

- Ask colleagues to submit agenda items at least a day in advance.

The best agendas are destroyed by too many last-minute submissions.

- Post the agenda on the faculty bulletin board before the meeting.

Expect that with advance notice, members will arrive prepared.

- Begin and end all meetings punctually. Teachers can be asked to

follow the same high standards we ask of the children. Besides maintaining a regular rhythm, ending the meetings on time does wonders for family life. When punctuality is not observed and meetings frequently go past the allotted time, discuss it as a symptom. Is more time in fact needed? Is the faculty working as it should?

- Be an active chairperson. This does not mean dominating or doing

a great deal of the talking (indeed, nothing is more annoying than a chairperson who holds forth by virtue of the position). Rather, the chairperson's activity should be in **seeing and hearing.** Know what's happening, anticipate events as much as possible, and draw things to a close with a firm hand. Advance preparation is crucial, as well as a healthy dose of intuition!

- When an issue or discussion starts to go in circles, call a break or

do something else for a while. Even waiting a week can help everyone gain perspective. In the latter case, the key to subsequent discussion is for the chair to summarize the salient points of the previous conversation. If people feel that their views

[6] Robert Louis Stevenson, **A Christmas Sermon**.

are acknowledged, there is a relaxing of "positions" and less chance of repetition.

- Compliments, when things go well and reports are clear, can be a marvelous tool for encouraging more of the same.

- One must be careful that reports and announcements don't turn into discussions. These "back-ended discussions" are often disorganized, too personal and generally inconclusive. When an issue "flares up," let the group know that it is recognized and will be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

- Even when submerged in all the details of school administration, a faculty chair holds a vivid image of the big picture, and focuses the meeting on the things that in the final analysis matter most in a Waldorf school faculty meeting: child-centered activities, Anthroposophy, and curriculum development. When the essentials are not given enough room, no mastery of the details can make up for it.

- If all the above is not enough, here is one last suggestion:

Meetings are not just hard work, they can and will be fun, too! The goodwill and humor of the faculty chair can be wonderfully infectious.

Delegation:

The faculty chairperson's task of confidence building is furthered through delegation, which also develops the faculty as a working group.

A faculty chairperson, indeed the entire faculty, can benefit from the conscious delegation of tasks. Delegation is actually the natural outcome of the heightened perception of human capacities mentioned earlier.

Once a task is assigned to a colleague or committee, **trust** becomes the vehicle through which they can function successfully. Trust does not mean blind faith — we cannot go back to the middle ages! However, when trust is exercised

in this age of the Consciousness Soul, the questions and concerns one might have are properly directed to those individuals who have assumed responsibility. So much damage is done to the living being of a school when "parking lot" conversations prevail. Giving input to the designated individual(s) needs to happen **early in the process**, so that the final product reflects as much as possible the insights of the larger faculty. Thus, when a recommendation or report comes back to the full circle, acceptance occurs more readily. Equally important, if the recommendation is **not** agreed to, then the responsible individual or committee should be entrusted with making the necessary changes and reporting back again. Nothing destroys confidence more than working hard at a project only to hear afterwards that it is not wanted after all, or have a group of twenty-five people take apart and rewrite everything. At each stage, everyone must seek to build, not destroy, confidence.

The following is a "shorthand" delegation sequence that might be considered by a faculty of teachers:

- Imagine the need. Build a picture that is vivid enough and clear enough so that it lives in the whole faculty.

- Given the picture of what is needed, find the individual or group that can best help that picture incarnate. The selection should be based on talents in the subject or area under consideration, as well as the basic social skills of listening, working together and following through.

- Set a definite time frame so members can make timely contributions and the committee can report back to the faculty.

- Don't forget about them in the meanwhile. Extend trust and helpful suggestions. Visualize their success with the project, and it will happen.

- Hear their recommendations. Ask for their reasoning if the solutions appear problematic. Remember to extend gratitude for much needed work done on behalf of the whole school.

Making Decisions:

Groups do not make decisions. In our age of the Consciousness Soul, individuals make the decisions, and the group can **recognize** when a totality of individual decisions has occurred and consensus exists.

Arriving at a consensus is a magical moment. When true consensus lives in the room, one senses that something more than human willing and deciding is at work. A moment of consensus can be fleeting, yet when it arrives a special union arises between the divine spiritual and the struggling, earth-bound consciousness of those in the room. When true consensus is present, it can be felt, experienced. If it is not experienced in the feeling life of the colleagues, if there is any question about whether consensus was reached or not, then it is not a consensus decision.

Striving for consensus is part of the spiritual path of a Waldorf teacher. In aiming to realize consensus on an issue, one is really calling upon the hierarchies; colleagues experience something greater than their own ego. Consensus-building means fashioning the spiritual vessel whereby the hierarchies can become active in a school. They need our conscious efforts.

> "It is this spirit which matters above all. And if it is alive, it will engender enthusiasm, irrespective of the personnel or the leadership of the school. And then one can also have confidence that something of an objective spirit will live throughout the school, which is not the same as the accumulation of each teacher's individual spirit." [7.]

There are many, many times during faculty work when consensus cannot be reached. This reality, when it occurs, needs to be recognized and not papered over. To represent a decision as the result of consensus when it is not, is a serious injustice. Group manipulation by a few, or the tyranny of the "majority" can wreak havoc in a cultural institution. Especially in our western world, the democratic rule of the majority creeps in wearing all sorts of disguises. One

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[7.] Rudolf Steiner, **A Child's Changing Consciousness,** 22.04.23.

might say that the "rights life" as described by Rudolf Steiner is far too strong in the English speaking world. In a cultural institution, the "truth" of the matter may find expression in the voice of a minority of one (1). Many times, I have heard all in the majority express the same opinion, only to have the tables turned when a previously silent colleague shares a few words of wisdom near the end of a discussion. Decision making in a Waldorf school must thus be made on the basis of insight.

Again, there is no magic formula for making decisions on the basis of insight. Here are a few brief suggestions of a practical nature:

- Imagine. Do picture-building and share perceptions **without** the pressure of deciding. Separating the discussion/picture building phase from the decision making opens up the sharing. Pressure kills true image-building. At this early stage, everyone should try to see **all sides** of the issue.

- Make sure everyone is heard from, even if it is only a "yes" after a colleagues' contribution. Decisions come unravelled when people save their words of wisdom for after the decision. Working with Rudolf Steiner's indications on the planetary influences can be helpful. (For instance, the "Mars" people are great initiators but need to appreciate more fully the "go slow" approach of the "Saturn" folks!)

- One way to "collect" the individual decisions, to see if consensus has occurred, is to go around the circle, asking each one to share, in a sentence or less, a summary thought on the subject.

- Use the element of time creatively. When issues are carried through the portal of sleep and back again, something is always gained. In the end, three weeks to process a decision is more efficient than making a series of quick but poor decisions.

- Let the "heart realm" speak. The web of thoughts can confuse and obscure. A decision may be intellectually correct, but if it does not feel right, if enthusiasm cannot be kindled, it can hinder the growth

of a school. This is especially true with regard to hiring, where karma is so strongly at work.

- Review the school's decision making process from time to time.

Every group needs to renew its commitment to process, just as a violinist has to practice those scales again and again.

- Finally, no matter how important a decision may seem at the moment, one needs to keep perspective. A decision is really nothing more than a spiritual intention, a resolve to act in a certain way to achieve the desired goal. For every decision is really a challenge, a conscious moment when direction is given for implementation. All the "incarnating" work still lies ahead. Failure to plan the communication and implementation can render any decision useless.

As indicated earlier, a consensus decision is a kind of gift, one that calls upon the members present to move forward with common resolve.

Role of the Scribe:

In many ancient cultures, the scribe held a sacred position. It was the scribe who preserved for humanity the spiritual wisdom of the Gods. In ancient Egypt, the entire physical world was seen as the handwriting of the Gods.

In a faculty meeting, preserving the "wisdom" of the discussions and recording the decisions require a special perspective and sense for the essence of each subject. Some colleagues are more able than others to distill the essence of the past.

A scribe can help the group review the meeting, as well as refresh teachers' recollections at the start of the next session. Reading the minutes before new reports are given is always helpful. Generally, minutes that are clear and simple with emphasis on major points and decisions work best. A pedagogical discussion is diminished by recording **everything,** especially when the children are discussed, since writing things down tends to fix and freeze the situation.

The scribe can work closely with the faculty chair between meetings to ensure that items needing attention are carried forward to the next agenda and details receive the necessary follow-up.

Review of the Meeting:

Rudolf Steiner hoped that the teacher's meetings would be a practical manifestation of Anthroposophically-inspired pedagogy. A real meeting of Waldorf teachers is more than an exercise in communication. It is a workshop, a practical session in "applied" Anthroposophy. How we approach each part of the meeting can strongly influence the development of spiritual insight in a school.

The review portion of a meeting can be considered in this way. Recollection calls for spiritual activity; it is not the preservation of old ideas or images, but a chance to perceive anew the events of the previous meeting. The goal is greater than a repetition of the old content. In reviewing, something new, less fettered by the "here and now" is created and then released. A good review can help colleagues "let go" of their personal attachment to previous events, while learning from the process.

A passage in **Theosophy** speaks to the development of new capacities through review:

> "When the human spirit encounters an experience similar to one to which it has already been linked, it sees therein something familiar, and is able to take up an attitude towards it quite different from what would be the case were the spirit facing it for the first time. This is the basis of all learning. The fruits of learning are acquired capacities." [8.]

Thus, rigorous review is an archetypal schooling of new human faculties. This deep human insight and schooling of new faculties can affect modern relationships in a positive way.

The Social Challenge:

Relationships today are increasingly difficult. Nothing can be taken for granted, all assumptions are off. Stripped to bare individuality, teachers and par-

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[8.] Rudolf Steiner, **Theosophy,** Anthroposophic Press.

ents need to rebuild not only the educational structure for our children, but the very social fabric itself.

The faculty meeting gives impetus for social healing in the community of parents and teachers.

> "... Instead of taking interest merely in my own way of thinking, and in what I consider right, I must develop a selfless interest in every opinion I encounter, however strongly I may hold it to be mistaken. The more a man prides himself on his own dogmatic opinions and is interested only in them, the further he removes himself, at this moment of world evolution, from the Christ. The more he develops a social interest in the opinions of other men, even though he considers them erroneous — the more light he receives into his own thinking from the opinions of others — the more he does fulfill in his inmost soul a saying of Christ which today must be interpreted in the sense of the new Christ language... In whatever the least of your brethren thinks, you must recognize that I am thinking in him; and that I enter into your feeling, whenever you bring another's thought into relation with your own, and whenever you feel fraternal interest for what is passing in another's soul. Whatever opinion, whatever outlook on life, you discover in the least of your brethren, therein you are seeking Myself." [9.]

These words from **The Inner Aspect of the Social Question** by Rudolf Steiner provide the possibility for renewed colleagueship and renewed community work. Fraternal interest in others has the effect of drawing people forward, calling forth the highest in each individuality. Whenever a group is fortunate to have a body of knowledge unique in contemporary thinking, there is a danger of becoming ingrown, shutting oneself off from the "superficial" outside world. In the long run, a movement cannot be effective in the world unless it is capable of widening its circle. We need to draw people in, not push them away.

Teachers can do this by entering into the life of the community, joining local initiatives, fundraisers, town improvement projects, local libraries, etc. If every colleague in a school took up just one community endeavor outside of Waldorf education, what an effect that would have! The impulse for such involvement can come from the faculty meeting, when reports and contributions from outside the

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[9.] Rudolf Steiner, **The Inner Aspect of the Social Question**, R. Steiner Press.

school are allowed to enter the circle, when colleagues actively practice the art of taking fraternal interest in each other and the world at large.

When one practices inner tolerance and cultivates interest in the thoughts of others, something new unfolds. This can best be described as a heightened feeling of responsibility for every action one performs."[10] Not just the child-teacher relationship, but in fact, every relationship in the school community matters.

Once again, the child observation sessions can be a training, this time in a social sense. For when we "learn to listen to the revelation of spirit and soul in the growing child as they existed before birth," we see a journey that is greater and longer than we can fully comprehend with ordinary sense perception.[11] We can contemplate the path of destiny, strive to see the child's eternal core , and in so seeking, "our relationship to the eternal core of man's being will become less and less egotistical."[12] Child observation, when carried as an inner quest, lays the basis for an unegotistical mood of soul.

Thus the children help us become less egotistical. They promote renewal of the social life; they become our teachers. This attitude of soul, when present in a faculty meeting, works to the good of the entire community.

Much of the above may sound too idealistic, even impossible. Yet even when we do not succeed as we would wish, our struggles still help. For when the **intention** behind having faculty meetings lives strongly in a group, then the specifics and weekly details can better fall into place. The spiritual intentions of a faculty gathering, as well as the mood of soul, are the intangibles without which we cannot be Waldorf teachers.

The mystery dramas by Rudolf Steiner offer a lively example for a faculty's collective striving and group work. This concluding quotation could serve as a motto for faculty meetings:

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10. Ibid.
11. Rudolf Steiner, **Education as a Social Problem**.
12. Ibid.

"In future times it will behoove us
As men to live each for the other
— No longer through the other's being.
So shall the cosmic goal be reached
When man is rooted in himself
And each gives to the other
What neither wills as his."[13.]

May men and women, working together in the context of the faculty meeting, find the insight, the fraternal interest and the good will to actively nourish one another and the community we serve!

[13.] Rudolf Steiner, **Sketches for the first Mystery Drama**.

James Pewtherer was a founding teacher of the Hawthorne Valley School in 1973. He has taken two classes through from first to eighth grade as well as having served on the school's College of Teachers since its inception and has been a representative for Hawthorne Valley to the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America. He serves on the Association Coordinating Committee, is also a member of the Pedagogical Section Council of the Anthroposophical Society and of the Hague Circle which serves the international Waldorf School movement. As such he has helped with the founding of Colleges of Teachers at other schools.

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.

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[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 be half 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 be come 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

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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 colleagial 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

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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.

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.

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Chapter 3

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key element in any relationship – personal or professional. How we speak to each other, listen to each other, understand each other, determines how well we live and work together, whether it is a friendship, marriage, working relationship, parent to child relationship or teacher to child relationship.

My friend and I are going out to dinner; she hasn't been out of the house for six weeks since she had her new baby. She has her heart set on a restaurant where I don't particularly like the food. Serious dilemma? Not really. I can always find something to eat, and my friend is a happy person.

I am irritable and nervous. The book chapter I promised to write is due in a week. The children have music lessons, Halloween is almost upon us, and everybody has to eat. My husband is a busy person as well, but he "hears" my unvoiced cry for help. He takes the children out for the weekend and leaves me free to meet my deadline.

A colleague comes into my office to discuss a complicated issue. I can see that he is not having a good day. Is this the time to discuss it? No! It is not

fair to him, myself or the issue. I suggest that we talk tomorrow over coffee and cake. Sharing a meal or dessert adds warmth to the process of communication. Does this mean that we will agree on the issue? Maybe not, but we may more easily come to a compromise.

My children are nine and twelve years old. During their early years we were very conscious and conscientious about diet, medical advice, clothing, toys and the media, but as they grow, can we keep reflexively saying no to all their requests? Probably not. So we begin regular family meeting sessions discussing allowance, limited TV viewing, their responsibility around our home. We come to a compromise having discussed the issues together. Everyone is happy until the next meeting when a new issue comes up!

It is important that we are sensitive to the other person or people in a working group. It is so convenient for us when all we can see is our own agenda. It requires consciousness and skill to actively listen. In reading a newsletter from the Green Mountain Waldorf School, I came across a statement by Carl Rogers:

> "The major barrior to interpersonal communication lies in our very natural tendency to judge; to approve or disapprove of the statements of the other person, or to evaluate them from our point of view. "

Every chapter in this book addresses communication in some way. The successes and difficulties of any of these groups or processes, all depend on how we relate to one another, how we truly hear what our colleague is relating to us as individuals, in a group and how we speak to each other. For the purposes of this chapter,however, we will focus on the office staff and their relationships to the other working groups in the Waldorf school.

The Role Of The Staff:

As a school grows from a small kindergarten to a full grade school, later adding on a high school, administrative needs grow as well. The work may begin on and around a kitchen table, but soon the need arises for a real office with a desk, file cabinet, telephone, copymachine, etc., and all the human beings that go along with it.

The members of the office staff hold a unique position in the Waldorf school. It is important that they communicate effectively to other members of the community and that they support the communications of others. They have both a special ability and a special responsibility to keep lines of communication open among teachers, among families, between teachers and families, between the school as a whole and the outside community.

In a young school, the office staff may be one person. This person may be receptionist, secretary and bookkeeper all in one. As the school grows, the need for office staff expansion grows so that in a school of 260 children there may be a need for four full time office staff. The Chicago Waldorf School currently has a full time receptionist/secretary, bookkeeper, development officer and administrative chairman. (See appendix for outline of job descriptions.) Each of us has specific responsibilities, but there are times when those are shared.

The fact that we employ four full-time people in non-teaching roles might seem to depart from Rudolf Steiner's intention for school management. He said,

> "The nature of the art of education demands that the staff divide their time between teaching and school administration. This ensures that the running of the school will be thoroughly saturated by the whole spirit arising from the attitude that exists when every individual teacher unites to form a teaching community."

Do we, perhaps, undermine this school spirit that Steiner envisioned when we exempt teachers from administrative responsibility and employ administrators who have no teaching responsibility? I believe that we do. I think therefore that not only should every faculty member participate at some level in major administrative decisions, but every staff member should have regular connections with the children. In our school, the office staff often serve as substitute teachers. It is also the case in other Waldorf schools that office staff have a part time class responsibility such as handwork teacher, handwork assistant, maybe some skill classes with upper grades.

Telephone Communication:

"Good morning, Waldorf school, this is Mary. May I help you?"
These words, repeated dozens of times daily, form an essential strand in the web of communications that supports the life of a school. Spoken in a friendly tone, they invite callers to frame their questions, state their business, express their concerns. At the same time the greeting is professional, clear and informs the caller who is receiving the call. It is so very important that people answering the phone follow this protocol.

The caller might be a prospective parent making a first contact with the school, or it might be a regulatory agency calling to check fire safety or immunization records. A parent might be calling to suggest a fundraising idea. Perhaps it is a parent calling to relate a tangled tale of misplaced lunches or carpools gone awry. It could be someone from another school seeking information, or inspiration, or support. Or it could be a local newspaper reporter responding to a press release. Personal calls come in for teachers, and messages must be relayed. The number and variety of calls reflect the complexity of the communications network that the school office must maintain.

Of course the receptionist has primary responsibility for answering the phone, but there will be times when each one of us needs to respond to a persistent ring. It is important that the person answering the phone is friendly and has some relationship to the Waldorf school. If the receptionist cannot fully respond to the caller, he or she needs to direct them to the proper person.

Many schools expedite this process with an information request form listing common questions and requests and with a space for comments. These can be easily routed to the proper person for a response. (See appendix for an example.)

School receptionists also keep a log book where all messages for teachers and staff are recorded. Teachers and staff are then encouraged to form the habit of checking "the log book" several times a day. Some schools feel that a log book is too public for teachers' messages and prefer the privacy of placing messages in teachers' mail boxes. A more complete phone log that records all calls received can also be a useful tool for keeping track of the many types of calls and insuring that each has been responded to properly.

A.W.S.N.A. PUBLICATION

Another minor but essential aspect of telephone communications is the phone tree. We have a schoolwide phone tree for quickly disseminating emergency information such as school closings. We also have a room parents' phone tree to quickly relay requests for services (bakers, drivers, sewers, etc.). Individual classes usually have their own phone trees for conveying information about class business.

Printed Communication:

The most tangible forms of communication involve the printed page. Many schools publish some or all of the following: weekly bulletins, monthly calendars, quarterly newsletters, annual reports, a parent handbook, and a faculty handbook.

A **weekly bulletin** is typically typed and xeroxed in the office and sent home with the children. Often it is, as its name implies, a "bulletin board", notifying parents of upcoming events, calling for volunteers, reminding of school regulations, perhaps carrying classified ads. In some schools, the weekly bulletin might also be a vehicle for letters, reaction and discussion. The weekly bulletin is usually staff written, but volunteer help is welcome in collating, stapling and distributing.

A **calendar** most often comes home with the bulletin at weekly or monthly intervals. It is a convenient visual reminder of upcoming events and also insures that events don't overlap or conflict. Keeping the calendar up to date and making sure events are scheduled appropriately are important office tasks.

Quarterly newsletters often carry longer articles by parents or teachers. They may report school events in more detail, describe an aspect of the curriculum, address issues of interest to the whole community or show examples of students' work. They usually contain photographs or artwork. Newsletters occasionally reprint articles from other schools, forming a valuable communication link with the wider Waldorf community.

Volunteer parents typically take a large part of the responsibility for producing a quarterly, and sometimes for that reason it may flourish one year and wither the next. Newsletters are not usually produced "in house". Schools may pay for outside printing and layout, or these services may be donated. A staff or faculty member may have a large or minimal responsibility for overseeing the newsletter, suggesting content and approving articles.

An **annual report** is often an integral part of a fundraising drive. Some are brief pamphlets giving only a financial picture of the school and listing donors. Others are longer, giving a broad picture of school life as well as presenting economic information. Virtually all are professionally produced and printed under the supervision of a member of the administrative staff.

The **parent handbook** appears each fall, in most schools, slightly updated from the year before. It is an important communication tool, as it lays the groundwork for community life. (It would be a more effective tool if it were more widely and carefully read.) It addresses the school's expectations of its families in areas ranging from media viewing to dress to tuition payment, explains the organization of the school community and suggests opportunities for involvement. Some schools incorporate community addresses and phone listings into the parent handbook; others publish these separately.

Most parent handbooks are faculty or staff written. Often there is substantial parental input. At least one school issues the handbook to new parents in a looseleaf binder, then issues only those pages containing revisions or additions to returning parents each year. Some handbooks are typewritten and xeroxed in house; others are professionally printed.

The Chicago Waldorf School may be unique in that we also have a Room Parents' Handbook. This booklet written by and for room parents stresses their important job of listening and occasionally mediating in the school communications network. It also gives a chronological review of the year, listing all the occasions when a class teacher might need the room parent's services. The office staff needs to work closely with the room parents to be constantly aware of issues that arise among the parent body.

A.W.S.N.A. PUBLICATION

The **Faculty Handbook** , like the Parent Handbook, lays down guidelines for teachers and staff. It addresses salary and contract issues and delineates what is expected from all staff in the area of meeting attendance, school involvement, continuing education, etc. Ideally, the Faculty Handbook should be teacher-written, but often this responsibility devolves upon a member of the office staff. Or, at least, the office staff often must take on the yearly job of revising and updating a faculty-written original.

Then there are the written communications to the community outside the school: the prospectus or information packet, the press release and the advertisement.

The **information packet** is sent to inquiring parents and creates an important first impression. Some schools describe themselves in detail with a professionally produced prospectus. Others have only a brief pamphlet describing their school and then add to it material describing Waldorf education in general.

A typical information packet might include a general letter welcoming the inquirer's interest, a pamphlet or booklet describing the school, a tuition schedule with scholarship information, a calendar or flyer listing upcoming events, and a reprinted article describing Waldorf education.

Depending on the receptiveness of local media, press releases can alert the public to the school's existence, to upcoming festivals, workshops or lectures, to newsworthy developments such as a change of location or a new building. A feature article in a newspaper or a short spot on the evening news can stimulate local interest in a school. Press releases are most often written and sent by a development director. In the case of a special event such as the Holiday Fair a volunteer parent may take on this responsibility.

Advertisements can be similarly useful. They have the advantage that the message can be closely controlled, and the disadvantages of higher cost and lower credibility than news coverage.

Meetings:

As important as written communication is, human contact most surely integrates our feeling and will life. Face-to-face discussions, whether it is one-on-one or group may be regularly scheduled or impromptu, community-wide or for select groups, but meetings, with their attendant discussion, dissension, compromise and consensus,are essential for the community to thrive.

Most of the following meetings are familiar to all Waldorf schools: faculty meetings; staff meetings; college, board and committee meetings; all-school meetings; parent/teacher association meetings; class nights and orientation mornings. Administrative support is essential for the schedule of meetings to run smoothly.

As a cornerstone of Waldorf school administration, the weekly **faculty meeting** has its own chapter in this book. For the purpose of this chapter, however, we should add that it is most helpful to the communication network for the administrative staff to attend and contribute in faculty meetings. In this way they can better promote understanding between parents and faculty.

Furthermore, while it is well accepted that Waldorf teachers need to work out of an ever-deepening understanding of anthroposophy, when it comes to the office staff, a grounding in these principles may be viewed as less important. I believe that at least a basic sympathy with the anthroposophical outlook is essential for the office staff to communicate effectively within the school and to represent the school to the public. One way of deepening staff understanding of anthroposophy is for them to attend faculty meetings and participate in faculty group study. In some schools the office staff presents the **preview of events** for the week ahead. Administrative reports to the full faculty describing the nature of the ongoing work is also important.

There should also be separate **staff meetings** on a regular – perhaps weekly – basis. Many daily nuts and bolts decisions about school operation need to be coordinated. And, more important, regular discussion helps over time to build a constellation of people who work together smoothly and share responsibility easily.

Each school will have its own distinctive roster of **Board Meetings**, **College meetings**, and many and varied **committee meetings**. At many of these meetings it will be helpful to have a representative of the administrative staff. The administrative staff can also enhance the functioning of committees by typing and distributing minutes, reporting decisions and developments in the weekly bulletin or other appropriate channels, and by monitoring the calendar to be sure meetings are scheduled appropriately.

Many schools hold **all school meetings** one, two or three times a year. Some of these meetings are almost purely social; others are more informational, reporting on financial issues, for example, or discussing concerns of the moment. Whether or not a great deal of information is formally transmitted at all school meetings, they are an important element of a posture of openness and sharing. They also provide valuable opportunities for informal sharing and communication. Staff members may or may not have an important role to play in running the all school meetings; however, it is essential that office staff attend these meetings.

Another forum for a general meeting might be offered by a school **parent-teacher organization.** Parent-teacher organizations, associations, or forums often host quarterly, bi-monthly or monthly meetings. In some schools these are well attended, in others not. It is important to make them vibrant and alive.

They may be settings for wide-ranging discussions; they may stick to a featured topic; they may host a guest lecturer. Many variations on these themes are possible. For many parents, meetings of a parent/teacher organization offer a way in to deeper involvement with the life of a school.

The **class night,** where teachers meet the parents of their students in the classroom, is a highly effective setting for communication. It is usually held two or three times a year in each grade. Here parents and teachers learn from each other and the class as a whole gains a sense of itself and is strengthened socially. In contrast to other parent evenings, class nights are nearly always well attended.

Many schools also regularly hold a sort of "open meeting" for the outside community. These are **orientation mornings** or **open houses**, often held monthly, for prospective parents, teachers from other schools and interested members of the community. They hear a short presentation on Waldorf education, tour the classrooms, have an opportunity to ask questions, and tour the classrooms. In some schools a member of the administrative staff may conduct the orientation; in others it may be taken by a faculty member. In either case, the administrative staff generally carries responsibility for publicizing and facilitating these mornings.

Informal Communication:

Both the printed word and the formal meeting are, in a sense, "controlled" communication. Every school is also familiar with the power of the "uncontrolled" communication of informal social interaction, the chat outside the school doors in the morning, the spur-of-the-moment phone call, the "meeting after the meeting."

Such communication can be a wonderful strengthening force in a community. As ideas are shared, friendships form and deepen, and the social fabric of the community is more closely knit. For this reason, it is important to provide many arenas for social interaction – from the doll-making workshop to the spring picnic to the kindergarten tea. The opportunities are endless, and the administrative staff can play a crucial role in supporting them.

However, "uncontrolled" communication can also be a weakening force. We are all familiar with the potentially devastating effects of the "rumor mill". Here the administrative staff is in a unique position, by a posture of openness and accessibility, to defuse harmful communication.

Listening is an important part of the administrators' job. The office is an easy and accessible place to drop in to share an idea or voice a concern. Sometimes a sympathetic ear is all that is needed or wanted. Other times some simple clarifications may be in order. When the issue is more complex, it is important for the office staff not to usurp the role of the faculty, the college or the class teacher. Sometimes our role is simply to put the concerned party in touch with the person they really need to talk to.

It may be difficult for the office staff to balance work pressures and deadlines with the needs of the unexpected visitor or caller. It is important for us to remember that communication, both planned and unplanned, is our job. As one administrator puts it, "People tell me I should close my door. I don't think I'm here to close my door. I'm here to listen." Another administrator told me, "You should never be too busy to listen.

If we are able to truly listen and to faithfully and responsibly act on what we hear, we members of the office staff will most effectively help our schools to grow and flourish.

Although we are all guided by Rudolf Steiner's indications, a Waldorf school each has its own unique way of working. As a teacher, parent and administrator, I have found it most valuable to visit other Waldorf schools observing classes, faculty meetings and to just informally chat with office staff. Consider the following example: In a recent visit to the Waldorf School in Lexington, MA., the primary purpose being a meeting with other colleagues to discuss the content of this book, I took the time before the meeting to visit a kindergarten class, speak with their office manager, and attend a faculty meeting. In that short period of time, I brought home new ideas from each experience:

1) The kindergarten teacher had so wonderfully arranged her playstands in such a way that the children were surrounded by the rainbow colors. I most certainly felt as a visitor held by the warnth and color in this environment.

2) As I sat in the office observing the comings and goings, I noticed several three-ring binders artfully covered with childrens' paintings. Each binder displayed various articles of a particular theme: Newsletters, curriculum guides, samples of childrens' reports, articles on Waldorf schools, Waldorf education, family life and parenting. Such a simple task! I spent years trying to figure out what to do with articles and newsletters from other Waldorf schools aside from leaving them on faculty room tables or loosely displayed on rack in the school entrance. I immediately implemented this idea at our school happy to know these valuable pieces of information are protected and available to visitors.

3) It was a relief to sit in another school's faculty meeting and objectively observe the dynamics. I felt quite at home and chuckled inwardly at times during the discussions. It was all so familiar. The experience gave me the opportunity to reflect on our own faculty meetings and a new perspective.

Every school needs to constantly analyze and review its communication patterns in the professional meetings at the end of each year. We must ask the question; How can we do it better? We must realize that we create the role model for our children who are being guided and formed by the manner in which adults around them communicate.

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Chapter 4

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

In my research of the committee structure of many Waldorf schools around the country, I have found that most schools have organizational charts and outlines of the functions carried out by their committees. I was left with the question: "Once the skeletal structures of our organizations are in place, what are the next steps in forming healthy, working communities within our schools?"

The framework of this chapter is best stated in the following:

> "The spiritual life forces of a Waldorf School are twofold, or we could say, there are two motives for its existence. On the one hand, it is the starting point for a renewal of education based on a spiritual knowledge of the whole man (the teachers' vocation as such). On the other hand, and at the same time, it is the working model for a social community, it is an institution of the free life of spirit."[1]

It is this working model for social community which is the basis on which committees should be structured. In this model we find an opportunity to develop an understanding of and a forum for active participation into the ideas and realities of social interaction. In this age of the consciousness soul our challenge is to

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1. Manfred Leist, **Parent Participation in A Waldorf School,** AWSNA, Great Barrington, 1987, page 13.

transform our relational life from the individual to the group. I will be sharing from my own experience as an administrator and hope to spark some ideas for others to experiment with in their own unique schools.

Purpose of Committees:

In order to create a network of support for the educational philosophy, it becomes important to understand the concepts of spirit (identity), soul (relationship), and body (structure) in relation to the committees. In the dialogue with the spirit we encounter the thinking life of the school and this involves clarity of mission and goals. Does the activity of the committee reflect the educational philosophy and shared goals of the organization? When a person serves on a committee, he or she should find personal fulfillment. At the level of committee work, one can find expression for his or her own individual inner growth and an opportunity to create a living reality as a group. In the dialogue with the soul life of the school, we experience how we relate to each other within committees, how our committees relate to other committees, and how the committees relate to the community at large. Is space provided to get to know each other, perhaps through sharing of biographies? Is there an awareness and mutual recognition of our relationship to other committees and is our work being communicated? In dialogue with the body, we find the actual structure and organizational charts where the material we work with is visible. Does the budget accurately reflect the needs of the committee? Are reporting procedures clearly outlined?

The scope of work being carried out by Waldorf schools today is greater than can be accomplished by the faculties alone and requires the assistance and cooperation of the whole community in order to address the many areas of concern needing attention in the school environment. A committee serves to fulfill the needs of the community to participate in the life of the school. Parents want interaction with the faculty, and a healthy working relationship can increase understanding for both in serving the needs of the children.

Committees serve to identify and expand the cultural life around the school. When we bring people together behind a common purpose, the creative potential is increased from the individual to the group. We begin to experience the building of a living reality as a group. Karmic connections force us to confront

each other and awaken to our mutual destinies. We must bring to consciousness the question, "Why are we together?" and "What do we bring each other?"

Committees function to share in the burden of responsibility. Rudolf Steiner's motto (as expressed in **Republican, Not Democratic**) for spiritually responsible human collaboration is, "*To sacrifice freedom for the sake of higher freedom*." Once a committee has been charged with an assignment, it must be allowed to give its best to the task, and the freedom to work out of a group consciousness.

Committee Organization:

When bringing together a group of individuals to carry out specific tasks as mandated by Faculty and/or Board of Trustees, questions of size and talent must be addressed. Determination of the scope of work will suggest an efficient working number. A group larger than eight people begins to necessitate the formation of sub-committees. Sub-committees serve to focus attention on specific areas of the tasks carried by the committee. An example is a Safety sub-committee as an active part of a larger Buildings and Grounds Committee. Sub-committee work encourages active participation, a closer working relationship and the possibility of greater personal fulfillment. Finding activities in which all can find fulfillment requires periodic evaluation of efficient working size.

I imagine a healthy organization resembling a tree in nature. In the root system, we find many off-shoots searching for nourishment in the earth. Sub-committees are like the roots. The roots then support the trunk and branches above. The trunk is the funnelling of activity through the committees, working to link the growth of the branches with the life-giving work of the roots. The upper part of the tree has two main branches which reach out to the world beyond. The health of the whole is accomplished when all systems feed each other and their activities are in harmony.

Individuals entrusted with carrying out specific tasks must be assigned those activities which best suit their talents. Having tried to bring a person onto a committee to enable them to change their perspective, or to feel included has resulted in energy being spent on the person, often at the expense of the work at hand. Conscious thought must be given to selection by talent, rather than the personal growth of individuals. A well balanced committee includes individuals

with varied life experience. One might seek a professional viewpoint or an understanding of the pedagogy. A parent of a graduated student might have a different perspective from a parent new to the community. It becomes the responsibility of the Faculty and Board to guide the process of selection to committee, bringing an awareness of temperament, male/female, and a balance of community, faculty, parents, and friends.

Forming Committees and Establishing a Mandate System:

The Faculty and Board of Trustees are entrusted with the task of determining the needs of the organization. Through the classroom experience, Faculty meetings and pedagogical committees, the Faculty deepens its understanding of the core needs. The Board of Trustees works to financially and legally build an organ which reflects these ideals. A mandate is the clear articulation of a task and its purpose.

Once the needs of the organization are determined, questions to address are:

1. Does a committee already exist which can expand to include this task?

2. Is a standing committee of committed individuals functioning for ongoing work needed?

3. Would a time limited, ad hoc, committee serve the need?

Each committee should have a charter or mission statement which is endorsed by both Faculty and Board, to be reviewed and revised yearly. A three year term of office enables new talent and initiative to develop. Staggering the rotation of committee membership allows for better continuity. Clearly defined areas of responsibility, with delegation of duties, will promote the individual's freedom to act in his or her area of interest. The committees are encouraged to make decisions on behalf of the whole when the leadership of the organization clearly shares the vision and purpose of the work. An understanding and mutual listening between committees and Board or Faculty is of primary importance in maintaining trust in the organization. Committees should take specific decisions

to the Board or Faculty in cases of uncertainty. Many schools have well developed committee structures which can be transformed into a mandate system with more conscious articulation. The governing bodies of the organization work toward clearly defining policies and procedures for the committees. When understanding and a common definition are reached, the mandate will be apparent. Work in areas of policies and procedures can be followed by the building of common definitions of mandated tasks.

Guidelines for Proposed Mandate

1. Each committee needs to write up a **proposed** mandate, including definitions of duties, limitations and accountability such as:

    a. The _____ Committee is empowered to make decisions and follow through to implementation and review in the following areas of responsibility:

    b. The _____ Committee would act in an advisory capacity and make recommendations to _____.

    c. From whom would committee members expect to seek advice before making a decision and implementing it?

    d. To whom is the committee accountable?

    e. What tasks are presently within the committee's domain that you recommend be shifted to another group or individual?

    f. What tasks currently carried by another group ought to be within the committee's domain?

2. Faculty and/or Board will review and refine these proposed mandates. Conversations between committees regarding the proposal may be needed.

3. Approval from governing bodies to the mandate will be the result of this work.

The Meeting:

The social/relational work takes place at the point of meeting in committee. Three elements important to group work are:

Study	Thought Life
Social	Feeling Life
Work	Will Life

When all three areas of interaction are exercised, individuals find fulfillment and energy for their work. Each meeting can provide an opportunity for inner development as well as outer activity when a living consciousness of content, relationship and procedure are carried. A well planned meeting with agenda preparation and distribution in advance is essential. Are the aims clearly defined for discussion? Is there time allocated for discussion and analysis? Was a decision reached? Who needs to be communicated to? At the conclusion of each meeting, a period of review and reflection on the experience helps to foster group loyalty. In the review process we develop a sense of balance between procedural consciousness and lively engagement.

Policy:

Each committee should set a definite day and time to meet regularly. The frequency of meetings is determined by the scope of work. Meetings should not be cancelled. Even when there appears to be no pending business, just getting like minds together can sometimes produce a spark of creative energy. Each meeting needs set times to begin and finish, too long a meeting can be wearing. Clarity, precision and punctuality honor the commitment to the freely given time of volunteers.

Membership on a committee means responsibility and commitment. If a person cannot attend meetings regularly, the whole group is affected. After three missed meetings, the person will be asked to step off the committee to be replaced by someone who is willing to participate on a fuller level.

Procedures:

Minutes taken at each meeting provide a means of communication among the committee members, and others in the school. Distributing the minutes prior to the next meeting acts as a reminder for the date and time of the next meeting,

as well as a written review of the work completed and in process. Minutes of all committee work filed in the school office serve as a means of consistent record keeping. An agenda distributed before the meeting allows members to come prepared for the work at hand.

Format:

Setting goals for the group, with periodic review, encourages continuity and ownership of the work. Time allowed for open discussion and analysis helps the group reach a more unified decision. Consciously observe rules of decorum. Interrupting, talking while another is speaking, arriving late – these and other behaviors are disruptive to the group process. Committee work can be fun. Involve everyone, encourage all to participate and interact. Remember to give members rewards and show the committee they are recognized. Publishing the committee's accomplishments in the school bulletin and occasional social get-togethers help to raise awareness of the committee's function.

Communication:

Defining clear avenues of communication throughout the organization promotes healthy growth. Being aware of which decisions need input from Faculty, Board, parents and/or other committees can prevent misunderstanding as well as overlapping of responsibilities. Timing of the communication is also essential. Before a final decision affecting another group in the organization is reached, space for information gathering is needed. Finding avenues to communicate the process undertaken by a committee before reaching a decision will strengthen the final outcome. At all levels of activity, the following qualities are important: accountability, authority and responsibility.

Accountability:

Accountability is the key area which requires strengthening throughout our Waldorf schools. Built into the fabric of an organization without a single person "in charge," is the potential for lack of ownership. Delegation of tasks followed by clear and accurate reporting provides increased awareness and understanding of committee activity.

Within the whole of the organization there are those with the authority to lead and guide the process. The role of leadership in a Waldorf school is one of facilitator rather than "Boss." We work towards concensus in the decision making process in order to reach a stronger and better supported outcome. In an interview with M. Scott Peck, the author of **The Road Less Traveled**, a group of physicians came up with this definition of consensus:

> "Consensus is a group decision – which some members may not feel is the best decision but which they can all live with, support, and commit themselves to not undermine – arrived at without voting, through a process whereby the issues are fully aired, all members feel that they have been adequately heard, in which everyone has equal power and responsibility, and different degrees of influence by virtue of individual stubborness or charisma are avoided, so that all are satisfied with the process. . . ."[2.]

Being a committee chairperson requires the ability to be conscious of each individual's contributions and needs, focusing on enhancing the abilities of the group and sharing observations. A person acting as facilitator keeps the committee members active and engaged. A good facilitator has an open awareness of the individuals interacting within the group. When a person sits quietly through a discussion, ask them to share their thoughts before moving on to the next topic. Being aware of everyone's need to participate in, and own, the process is a primary focus for the person leading the discussion.

In order for the organization to fully promote responsible action in committee work, levels of trust and clarity need articulation. The ability of the governing bodies to guide through delegation is essential, along with the commitment to review and revise the direction when necessary. When trust and confidence are in question, we must have the courage to confront issues. Allowing time for the differences in perspective to find expression can help prevent misunderstanding and hard feelings. Support the action of a committee. During the review process, find the insight for improvement for the future if needed. Finding ways to express the ideals of a Waldorf school will enhance the work in the committees.

[2.] M. Scott Peck, **Context/No. 29,** Valley Diagnostic Medical and Surgical Clinic, Inc. of Harlington Texas and the Foundation of Community Encouragement, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1989.

Fundamental questions need to be addressed: "How do we foster inner work?" and "How do we balance the individual's needs with the needs of the group?"

Conclusion:

I am aware of the need to develop courage and enthusiasm for relationship building. When the awareness is clear and focused on the group, one can best facilitate and guide the work in committees. People volunteer in search of fulfillment and an inner desire to connect their wills with others. The schools have work to be accomplished and when volunteers are allowed to serve the oganization, the work in the classroom is strengthened. The teachers can focus their attention on lesson plans and the deepening of the pedagogy when a shared confidence in the environment is living. In order to provide a working model for a social community, we strive to be a reflection of the principles carried by the teachers.

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Chapter 5

THE ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR, BUSINESS MANAGER, AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

It must be stated at the outset that this survey is based almost entirely upon my own experience and observations.

In every organization that works to find its correct relationship with the surrounding community certain functions quite naturally arise. In schools, the primary function is the pedagogical work that takes place between the students and their teachers. This work cannot take place in a vacuum, however. It must be supported by a clear vision of the pedagogy and how that pedagogy can best meet the needs of that particular community. It must be enabled to grow and prosper with the benefit of sound fiscal policies and responsible fiscal management. It must be enhanced by appropriate physical facilities, capable of providing a living environment for the activities of the students and the community. Communication, coordination, resource management, fiscal management, fund raising and friend raising are some of the key elements in the working of a school which require attention. As the school grows more complex with each passing

year, it soon becomes necessary to consider the question of administrative structure and positions. In many Waldorf Schools, the process of addressing these tasks and responsibilities has led to, among others, the positions of Administrator, Business Manager and Development Officer. This chapter will attempt to explore some aspects of each of these functions. Sample job descriptions can be found in the appendix.

Administrator:

In the preface to his book, **Towards Social Renewal**, Rudolf Steiner writes the following:

> "The nature which spiritual life has assumed requires that it constitute a fully autonomous member of the social organism. The administration of education, from which all culture develops, must be turned over to the educators. Economic and political considerations should be entirely excluded from this administration. Each teacher should arrange his or her time so that he can also be an administrator in his field. He should be just as much at home attending to administrative matters as he is in the classroom. No-one should make decisions who is not directly engaged in the educational process. No parliament or congress, nor any individual who was perhaps, once, an educator, is to have anything to say. What is experienced in the teaching process would then flow naturally into the administration. By its very nature such a system would engender competence and objectivity."[1.]

In recent years, more and more Waldorf schools have created the positions of Administrator, Administrative Chairman, Administrative Coordinator, Administrative Director, and so on. How can this be reconciled with the closely held conviction that Waldorf schools must be "faculty run" which has arisen from study and appreciation of the above excerpt and much more? What happens if this reconciliation is not forthcoming?

There is much in a name, and the school should take great pains to ensure that the community understand what the role of the administrative person is

1. Rudolf Steiner, **Towards Social Renewal**, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1977. Translated by Frank Thomas Smith. Page 12.

in the school. Is it an actual administrator, according to the dictionary: "one who manages or directs," and if so, what is the extent of this direction? Is this position in any way related to a headmaster or a principalship? Care must be taken to inform the school community that the Waldorf schools are not managed "top down," and there is no one person responsible for all decision making. Rather, individuals are appointed to care for aspects of the school's life, and one of those aspects is the administrative work. For this reason, I have always felt the most appropriate title for the administrative position to be Administrative Chairman, for then it is clear that just as the faculty has appointed an individual to watch over and assist the pedagogy and the faculty (Faculty Chairman), so too has it been acknowledged that an individual has assumed responsibility for the administrative function (Administrative Chairman), and that these two, along with others (Board Chairman, College Chairman, High School Chairman, etc.) are working side by side.

Clearly, the administrator must have or establish a living relationship to the spiritual impulses working within the school, and the best way to attain that is by being a practicing Waldorf teacher, in the classroom. The number of class hours is not the important thing — what matters is a strong practical connection to the pedagogical needs of the school's students and faculty. This is only one aspect of what the administrator will have to carry in consciousness, but it is critical to understanding the fabric into which all decisions effecting the school must be woven.

There may be several ways in which the administrator maintains his living connection with the heart of the school. In his essay "**The Riddle of Leadership**," John Gardner writes:

> "In a school community, there are other needs for teaching besides those in the classroom. The parents need education in the purpose and methods of their school; there are always beginning teachers who must be helped along; and the need of even more mature teachers for friendly counsel, both as seekers after knowledge and as human beings, never ceases."[2.]

2. Rudolf Steiner, **Towards Social Renewal**, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1977. Translated by Frank Thomas Smith. Page 12.

Engaging in these teaching activities is certainly valid as a way to remain in touch with the pedagogical impulse.

Isn't it obvious that for the school to be truly faculty run, those engaged in the running of it must be truly faculty? Perhaps, but is teaching the only avenue to understanding and furthering the spiritual impulses of the school, and assuming a responsible position side-by-side with ones' colleagues? I think not. There are individuals who through prior connections with the schools as parents or trustees have been able to assume administrative positions in their communities and who have been very successful. They enter the position with an awareness of the unique nature of the Waldorf school, and have an appreciation of the role of the administrator in the school. They are known, and readily accepted.

It seems that the most difficulties arise when a Waldorf school tries to hire a "professional administrator" from outside the circle of the school. Usually, this comes as the result of some segment of the community feeling that it is time to "get professional," and even if this is not directly said, it is felt by the faculty to imply weakness or failure. There is often the feeling that the school is a business, and needs professional management as such. It is important to acknowledge that the school has many business-like aspects, but fundamentally it is not a business. It is a cultural/spiritual institution, working, with the energy of teachers, parents, and other community members, to provide an unencumbered environment for the education of children. For those who worry that this is inefficient, Rudolf Steiner offered the following, again in the preface to **Towards Social Renewal**:

> "Of course, one could object that such a self-governing spiritual life would also not attain to perfection. But we cannot expect perfection; we can only strive toward the best possible situation. The capabilities which the child develops can best be transmitted to the community if his education is the exclusive responsibility of those whose judgment rests on a spiritual foundation. To what extent a child should be taught one thing or another can only be correctly determined within a free cultural community. How such determinations are to be made binding is also a matter for this community. The state and the economy would be able to absorb vigor from such a community, which is not

attainable when the organization of cultural institutions is based on political or economic standards."

"This book will necessarily arouse many prejudices, especially if the consequences of its thesis are considered. What is the source of these prejudices? We recognize their antisocial nature when we perceive that they originate in the unconscious belief that teachers are impractical people who cannot be trusted to assume practical responsibilities on their own. It is assumed that all organization must be carried out by those who are engaged in practical matters, and educators should act according to the terms of reference determined for them.

This assumption ignores the fact that it is just when teachers are **not** permitted to determine their own functions that they tend to become impractical and remote from reality. As long as the so-called experts determine the terms of reference according to which they must function, they will never be able to turn out practical individuals who are equipped for life by their education. The current anti-social state of affairs is the result of individuals entering society who lack social sensitivity because of their education. Socially sensitive individuals can only develop within an educational system which is conducted and administered by other socially sensitive individuals." [3.]

This implies that the ideal source to find individuals who could serve the school well in the administrative functions would be from within the school's faculty. Rudolf Steiner wanted the teachers involved in the administration of the school for precisely the reason that it would help them to be better teachers! We are experiencing a growing tendency in the Waldorf movement to try to protect the teachers from everything except their teaching. Perhaps instead of adding more administrative staff, we should be concentrating on adding more teachers, so the loads could be managed, and each teacher could make their reasonable contribution to the administrative needs. However, we must use caution and remember that an appointment to an administrative position should also be based upon a recognition of capacities. Just as the school would not ask a teacher lacking musical ability to teach choir, it should not ask the impossible of colleagues in the administrative realm, either.

[3.] Op cit, pages 13-14.

The administrator, therefore, should be first and foremost an educator, steeped in Waldorf pedagogy and committed to the spiritual development of himself and those around him. He also needs a good heavy dose of common sense and the ability to work with people!

What is he actually to do? What is the task at hand? This can be divided into two quite different functions, and this an area where much difficulty and misunderstanding can arise. These two functions are administration and management. The administrator must handle each, and often with different temperaments!

First, the administrator is called upon to "minister to" the school. This implies a school-centered consciousness, where the task is to listen, filter, sort out information, make suggestions to be responded to by others, act as a conduit for information and the impulses of others. In short, to bear witness to the life of the school and help to make it visible to others. The administrator becomes a sense organ for the school, and informs the school about its inner and outer environment. This is made possible by the fact that the administrator is involved with so many diverse groups within the school community and attends many meetings. This is the "selfless" function, and the task is one of vision, imagination, exploring next steps in the growth and development of the school; enabling the school to move forward. A key task here is that of communications. The administrator must be able to share that which he sees with all constituents of the school community - faculty, board and parents. He should be able to function as an information bridge between board and faculty — an important reason why he must be fully involved in the work of each! He cannot be perceived as the agent of any one constituency, but instead as there working to further the school as a whole.

One of the greatest challenges to the Waldorf school administrator is the fact that he/she does in fact have responsibilities to both the Board and the faculty. The ability to look beyond this, and not to get stuck on the concept of "having two bosses" is crucial for success in this position. It is simply a fact of life that a new form is being worked with, and old models will not be of support.

The second major function of the administrator is management. This is where responsibility is assumed for those tasks mandated by the faculty and the Board. Decisions must be made, deadlines must be met, and action must be taken. This is the arena of executing policies, and seeing that the work is done. Typically, the areas of primary responsibility are the non-teaching staff and their tasks, the maintenance of the physical plant, and the school finances, including the development and fund raising programs. It could be said that the essential nature of the work is "resource management." Please refer to the sample job descriptions in the appendix for more detail.

The art of being a Waldorf school administrator lies in finding the proper balance between listening and acting, responding and initiating, holding back and taking charge. He must find the proper relationship to every new challenge that comes his way, and he must find it out of his own imagination, precisely as the teacher must meet every new situation with a child, without prejudice or preconceived answers. By working in such a way, the administrator will be providing leadership of the best possible kind for the school community. He will not be perceived as heavy handed or insensitive, nor will he be labeled ineffective or titular, but rather he will inspire confidence within the school community.

Business Manager:

As stated earlier, the Waldorf school, while not essentially a business, does have numerous business aspects, all of which need careful attention if the school is to succeed. In the beginning stage of the school's development, these things are often managed by the Trustees, with the assistance of a bookkeeper and the involved interest of an experienced faculty member. The healthy development and increasing complexity of the school's operations will challenge the community to find the appropriate form of operation, and, for better financial management, many schools have implemented the specific position of business manager.

It needs to be emphasized again that each school must find the constellation of administrative and staff positions which are appropriate to that particular school. It would not be healthy to create positions simply because some other school has them. The vision that lives in a particular school — which must be articulated by that school — the biography of a particular school, and the abilities of

involved community members, will lead to particular and distinct administrative organization. The functions, however, exist in all schools, and must be attended to, whether it is by a finance committee, a board treasurer, an administrator in concert with a bookkeeper, a faculty finance liaison, or a business manager.

What are those functions? Essentially, insuring that the school's finances are being managed responsibly, that the financial policies are being faithfully executed, and that the school is fiscally responsible to the wider community — including federal, state and local agencies.

The business manager plays an essential role in the formation and implementation of the school's annual budgets. He is the one with the most intimate and immediate knowledge of the successes and failures in the fiscal plan, and can suggest corrections and refinements as the year proceeds and in the preparation of the upcoming budget. He bears the responsibility for providing the board and faculty with accurate and timely information about how the finances are unfolding, through monthly and/or quarterly reports. He must ensure that all continuous obligations incurred by the school are being met, such as payrolls, payroll tax deposits, insurance premiums, payable bills of all sorts; and, he must ensure that those obligated to the school are meeting their commitments, such as tuition payments, fees for day care, fundraising pledges, and so on. In short, he must be watchful of the income and outflow of funds.

In addition to current financial activity, the business manager needs to plan and act for the long-term financial health of the school. This entails such activities as building an investment portfolio, with which to manage the schools more liquid assets, and the management of the retirement fund for faculty and staff. It also means ensuring that the school is carrying adequate coverage on a number of insurance policies — on everything from general liability to school buses. The business manager bears responsibility for making sure that the fiscal policies of the school are visible and understood by all concerned, by making sure that the faculty handbook is up to date, and that the information given to parents is accurate and clear. For faculty and staff, what are the policies regarding sick leave, severance pay, reimbursements, and so on. For the parents, what are policies regarding tuition cycles, late payments, failure to pay, discounts for prepayments, and so on. The business manager is often the first to

know when a new policy is needed, or an old one needs revision, and will suggest possible revisions to the faculty and/or board.

While all Waldorf schools are non-profit and tax exempt, this by no means absolves them of the responsibility to file tax returns on state and federal levels. The business manager, in cooperation with the school's accountant, will be very involved in the process of filing these documents. It is advisable for all schools to undergo a financial audit at least every three years, and many schools do this every year. This can be a long, difficult, expensive process if the record keeping is not immaculate (even if it is correct!), and the business manager will assume responsibility for the preparation of the audit materials for the accounting firm.

The business manager will also be the school representative to the school's bank, and this relationship must not be taken too lightly. Much can depend upon the confidence of and in individuals in this relationship.

The accuracy and availability of financial information is extremely important to the success of the school. Everything from responsible, understandable grant requests to that of tax returns to the ability to plan next year's budget well depends upon good data, managed in a warm, trustworthy manner. The management of the school's fiscal life, in a professional manner consistent with the vision and purpose of the school, is critical to the school's ability to provide its services to the community.

Development Director:

As more and more schools realize the need to supplement their finances with gift income, for both operating and capital needs, the number of development officers in our schools has grown by leaps and bounds. Fortunate is the school that recognizes this eventuality before it becomes an emergency, because then the necessary groundwork can be laid before an actual appeal is required, greatly enhancing the possibility of success. A development officer who is put in the position of immediately having to generate gift income, without time to do the necessary groundwork, will have difficulty. He will initially only be able to do fundraising, not development, and there is a difference, even though they do go hand in hand.

The role of the development director is gloriously complex while being at the same time utterly simple: he must raise money; and in doing so, he must first raise friends. This is the difference between fundraising and development — the fundraiser, usually a special event or a one-time occasion, does not seek to develop a lasting, future-oriented relationship with the donor. The focus is on the financial support. In development, the focus is on the relationship, which may, or may not, lead to financial support in the future. It is not by chance that so many of the development officers in Waldorf schools are also responsible for public relations and even advertising, because much of their effort is in informing the community about the schools. This effort is not only for enrollment purposes, but also for general friend raising.

A good analogy for the development director is a gardener. He must very gently and carefully sow any number of seeds, then periodically water and cultivate, until ultimately it becomes possible to gather in the harvest. Provided the weather doesn't destroy his crop! We all know how devastating a school crisis in confidence, of one sort or another, can be.

Development officers, first and foremost, are advocates for the school. They must be articulate about the goals and objectives of the school, not only pedagogically, but also organizationally — site development plans, construction priorities, financial priorities - so that they can respond to the parents and the public. This implies a detailed working knowledge of the school, and the most successful development officers are those who are included in the working of the board and faculty, and not just the work of the development committee. It also implies that the school actually has a long-range plan, and knows what the needs it will be facing are, and how these needs will be prioritized. Common are the development people who have had to struggle for this information. In his book **Designs For Fund-Raising**, Harold J. Seymour states the following:

> "Getting down to the specifics, the purpose of any development office at whatever kind of institution should be simply to develop support by service and gifts. The direct role in the area in fund-raising itself is to promote all three legs of the fund-raising tripod — occasional capital campaigns, consistent annual giving by all elements of the constituency, and the promotion of deferred giving through bequests and living trusts. The indirect role in the area of public relations — because it is development's very life

> blood — is to sustain a critical awareness and a lively concern for the ways in which the institution deals with the arts and graces of appreciation, hospitality, responses to suggestions and criticisms, and all the other major processes of dealing with its constituency — past, present and future. Whatever the size or nature of the institution, purpose should never aim for less than this or attempt to do much more."[4.]

This sums up, very well indeed, the focus for the work of the development office. However, what, exactly, is the school's constituency? This must include all past and present families, all friends of the school, all local businesses who do business with the school, and the local community. It is necessary for the development office to maintain a connection with each of these constituents — usually through mailings and news releases and on-campus events. One of the key constituent groups in need of such on-going maintenance is the alumnae. Keeping in touch with them is a major element in the friend raising efforts of the development office, and clearly demonstrates the long-term nature of this activity. Again, fortunate is the school that has maintained and updated its mailing lists since the beginning!

The development director must be able to inspire a cadre of volunteers, for the work cannot be accomplished by one person alone. Indeed, the whole community should feel that development is their concern, and that everything they say and do is reflective of the school community, especially with respect to public relations and advertising.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the role of the development director is with the following quotation from John D. Rockefeller, Jr.:

> "Some people have a less keen sense of their duty and responsibility than others. With them a little urging may be helpful. But with most people a convincing presentation of the facts and the need is far more effective. When a solicitor comes to you and lays on your heart the responsibility that rests so heavily on his; when his earnestness gives convincing evidence of how seriously

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4. Harold J. Seymour, **Designs for Fund-Raising**, Fund Raising Institute, Ambler, PA. 1988. Pages 116-117.

> interested he is; when he makes it clear that he knows you are no less anxious to do your duty in the matter than he is, that you are just as conscientious, that he feels sure all you need is to realize the importance of the enterprise and the urgency of the need in order to lead you to your full share in the meeting of it, — he has made you his friend and has brought you to think of giving not as a duty but a privilege."[5.]

Conclusion:

In every successful Waldorf school, close attention is being paid to matters of communication, coordination, resource management, fiscal management, friend raising and fund raising. How the schools organize these efforts may result in any number of different combinations of positions with any number of titles, but the bottom line is that the capable handling of the tasks and duties of administrator, business manager, and development director are essential to the well being of the school.

5. Ibid., Appendix, Page 198.

Anniken Mitchell, who attended the Oslo Waldorf School in Norway as a child, has lived in Wilton, New Hampshire for the last 19 years where she has raised four children and served for seven years as the Director of Admissions at both a high school, High Mowing School, and an elementary school, the Pine Hill Waldorf School.

Chapter 6

ADMISSIONS AND PARENT EDUCATION

One of the most exciting experiences in the life of a Waldorf School is to encounter the steady stream of children who find their way to the school, their class, and their teachers. The journey to the school seems to be through the most varied and interesting circumstances.

The process of Admissions is there as a helpful guide in making the choice of sending one's child to a Waldorf School as conscious as possible for the prospective parent, and for the school. A clear process also helps the teacher to receive the child into their class with knowledge and forethought so that the needs of the child can be met.

The circumstances and staff available in each school will determine who will carry out the different functions of the Admission's process. However, what is important is that the overall procedure has been covered with care and attention so that the class teacher and the full circle of colleagues can welcome the child into their care. It is not just the individual teacher but the faculty as a whole who together will carry the joys and difficulties that each destiny encounter brings to them.

Telephone Inquiries:

After an initial exposure to the existence of the Waldorf School, prospective parents will in most cases make further inquiries over the telephone. This initial direct contact with the school is of great importance. It will establish a "warmth" connection between the school and the prospective parent. Have concise, consistent, clear information available. Be prepared to answer briefly what Waldorf Schools are all about, what grades you have, the cost, the length of the day, etc. Be interested, patient and friendly, establish a sense that the school is accessible and available for further exploration. Inform the parent of upcoming events at the school that might be of interest to them, and invite them to call back if they have further questions. Keep a card file on all inquiries for further reference, follow up calls, and mailing list of school events. Include the name, address, telephone number, name and birth date of the child, what grade they are interested, and what year they are seeking admission. They should also be asked how they heard about the Waldorf School.

Information Packet:

After the initial telephone contact, send out a packet including your school brochure, a letter detailing the admission's process with financial information, the latest school newsletter, a calendar of events and any other information on Waldorf Education that might be helpful to prospective parents.

Informal Interview and Tour:

If the initial contact and packet of information have piqued the interest of prospective parents they will call back and at this point an informal interview and tour of the school can be arranged. This initial visit is best conducted without the child. This visit provides an opportunity for both prospective parents and for the school to get a sense for each other. Topics to cover might be first to get a picture of how they heard of your school, and how much they already know about Waldorf Education and what educational values and environment they hope to find for their child. If parents are new to Waldorf Education, the admissions person will explain briefly the history, educational philosophy, and aims of Waldorf Education, covering topics such as the role of the Class Teacher, the threefold nature of the child and how it relates to the change in consciousness and is reflected in the curriculum. Also give a brief picture of the history of your

own particular school, school organization, school community and parent participation. Allow for many questions; the best conversation is if you can find a common point of interest and engage the prospective parent in a good discussion. Also get a brief description of their child, his/her educational history, and family history. While touring the school in progress, you have a great opportunity to talk about the pedagogical method in praxis, from grade to grade. The mood and social experience of the teachers and children at work speak volumes and make the visit to the school truly enjoyable and memorable to most visitors.

Application:

At the conclusion of a mutually successful admission interview the prospective parents would send in their application along with school records and a non-refundable application fee. The application form should provide basic information such as the child's name, birth date, sex, year and grade for admission, parents' names, address, phone (home and place of work) and schools previously attended. It is also helpful to know of siblings, their birth dates and school of attendance. It is wise to ask the parents, as part of the application process, to write a biography of their child including developmental and health history and any unusual circumstances in the family history.

Upon receipt of the application and records, the admissions person would meet with the class teacher to give a picture of the child and family, and if the teacher wants to proceed with the process the family will be invited back for an interview with the class teacher. Now the child would be invited to visit the classroom and be observed by the teacher (given that the child is in a grade higher than the 1st grade).

Class teacher Interview:

Before the meeting with the prospective family the teacher would have read through the application and school records, and familiarized him/herself with the general situation of the child. The interview would, in general, give a fuller picture of the child's developmental, health and educational history, a sense for the family life, history, and values. It would also give a clear picture of the child's relative skill level, an evaluation of the child's spatial orientation and dominance. Record comments and observations. Also, share with the parents the areas of

concern in one's own class and answer questions pertaining to curriculum and school life.

The format of the class teacher interview will have to reflect the age of the child. Most of the new children entering each year come through the kindergartens which places a big workload and responsibility on the kindergarten teachers who work with these new families in preparation for a first grade commitment.

Some helpful guidelines for admission interviews for the different age groups are as follows:

Preschool and Kindergarten —

1. Give a description of the child from birth to change of teeth according to the Waldorf theory of child development. The importance of imitation, play, rhythm and physical environment for the young child, and how these elements are nurtured in the daily and weekly activities in the kindergarten.

2. Get a full picture of the child's biography and social experience prior to the kindergarten.

3. Engage the child in play and conversation to determine development in both areas.

4. Have the child draw a picture.

First Grade —

Acceptance of kindergarten children into first grade should not be automatic, but require a new application form from all incoming families. This gives both the school and the parents a chance to look at the connection they have to each other, and the readiness of the child for the first grade experience. Many schools do not yet have the first grade teacher available at that time of year to conduct all the admission interviews. The kindergarten teachers along with one class teacher would meet with the children and prospective parents. In addition to the biographical and family information on the child the teachers

would observe the child in relationship to:

language development: clarity recognized in child's speech and thought patterns; child able to engage in conversation with the teacher?

physical coordination and spatial orientation: How does the child walk, posture in standing and sitting, gestures in handling objects? How are the handshake and eye contact? Determine left/right dominance in eye, ear, hand, and foot. Can the child follow simple series of instructions,clap rhythms in sequence, hop, run, skip, and walk backward?

artistic expression: Can the child draw a recognizable picture, and perhaps, a simple form drawing? Can the child sing, match a tone?

other: How is the child's relationship to his/her parents and other adults? Can the child leave the parent to go with the teacher? Is the child free from wetting or soiling during the day?

Grade 2

1. Do all the above.

reading: able to recognize letters,

arithmetic: able to solve simple problems with the four processes

writing: able to write simple words

physical coordination: able to recognize left and right

artistic expression: able to draw simple form drawings and line rhythms

Grade 3

1. Do all the above.

reading: able to do some reading — for fluidity and comprehension

arithmetic: Some mastery over the times tables; can add with carrying, and subtract with borrowing

writing: able to do simple writing, a short dictation

physical coordination: able to jump rope, hopscotch, and rhythm exercises

artistic expression: can do mirror form drawing

Grade 4

1. Do all the above.

reading: able to read a simple text and retell it, has some familiarity with parts of speech and punctuation

arithmetic: able to carry in addition and multiplication, single digit division, mental arithmetic, familiarity with measurement, word problems

writing: able to write a brief composition on a subject related to an experience they have had

artistic expression: able to draw a picture of a balanced human being and a form drawing

Grades 5 & 6

1. All of the above with more complex content

reading: able to read fluidly with good expression; good comprehension of material read.

arithmetic: able to work with fractions using all four procedures

writing: composition and dictation to include basic fourth/fifth grade words

artistic expression: able to draw a picture of a balanced human being and a more coplex form drawing

Grades 7 & 8

Children entering the 7th and 8th grade require careful examination. They should be asked to demonstrate their abilities in reading, arithmetic, writing, physical coordination, and artistic expression asked in the lower grades. The class teacher should evaluate carefully if the student can fit in with his/her class of children. The social balance of the class needs to be considered and the teacher should be aware what this new child will bring with him or her when they enter the class. Often times a teacher will find a student who seems to fit in as if they had always been there.

It is a good practice that the class teacher and a special subject teacher, especially competent at dealing with the Middle School, participate together in the student evaluation, and that the parents' commitment to work with the school and continue with Waldorf education be affirmed.

If the student has not had foreign languages or work with musical instruments, extra tutorial support will be needed in the beginning to help the child in the transition period.

Admitting a High School Student:

Prior to interviewing a high school candidate, the admissions person has the advantage of having school records, recommendations, an application form from the parents, an application form from the student that should include an essay, a piece of artistic work and the student's views on many issues.

Usually the family will come together to an interview. The first part of the process could include a general presentation of the Waldorf High School and the expectations of your particular school. This should be delivered in an upbeat friendly manner interspersed with dialogue with both the parents and the student. Next, the interviewer could give the prospective student some reading material and ask him/her to wait outside the office for a short while.

Alone with the parents the interviewer can probe more deeply into the student's background, gifts, difficulties, relationship with both peers and parents,

with authority in general and finally reach an understanding about what the parents are looking for in their choice of High School. Then the parents are given reading material and asked to wait outside and the student is met alone. During this time the interviewer can ask frank questions about the student's personal interests, academic motivation, extracurricular pursuits, relationships with parents, peers and former teachers and his/her view on drugs and alcohol. The interviewer should be very clear on explaining the school's policies and give the student the understanding that he/she is free to make choices. If the Waldorf School is their choice then it is understood that a relationship of trust is established with regard to the school's rules. It is important with an adolescent to empower them to want to make the right choice for themselves in cooperation with their parents.

Acceptance:

After completion of the class teacher interview and classroom visit, the Admissions Director and class teacher would bring a description of the child to the College of Teachers who would then accept the child as a group into the school. A letter indicating acceptance or not will then be sent by the school to the parents. The acceptance letter would include an enrollment agreement, to be signed by the parent and returned to the school with a non-refundable deposit, which would ensure that a place will be held for the child.

Enrollment Packet:

In addition to the enrollment agreement the full enrollment of the child would also include:

a. tuition and payment plans for the parent to choose and any other financial information relative to your school
b. health assessment form for their family doctor to fill out about the child
c. immunization waiver form if the parents do not wish the child to be immunized
d. emergency addresses and phone numbers in case of emergency

[All of the above must be returned to the office prior to the first day of school.]

e. Parent Handbook

Acceptance of Children with Special Needs:

If during the class teacher assessment it becomes apparent that the child would require educational support beyond what the class teacher can offer, a second interview and assessment would take place with the school's care-group, who together with the school physician would outline the appropriate therapeutic and educational support for the child. If the school agrees that the child might benefit from this program, a conditional acceptance would be offered, with a trial period and reassessment of the child's progress after a period of time. The class teacher would confer with the care group, and keep written records of all agreements and expectations with the parents.

Re-enrollment:

The other process in the life of admissions in a school is the yearly re-enrollment of the present student body for the following school year.

The timing of this process is closely linked with the setting of the budget and the determination of tuitions for the coming academic year. Class teachers can get a sense from their class parents during the mid-year parent/teacher conferences what their intentions are for the following school year. This estimation will give the Board of Trustees a preliminary picture of what enrollment numbers might look like. However, it is always an act of faith to set a budget based on projected enrollment, because the reality of each classes' enrollment will not be certain until the first day of the new school year!

As soon as tuitions are set a new enrollment agreement is sent out to all families, and returned after 2-3 weeks along with a non-refundable deposit of around 8% of the full tuition costs. This deposit will secure a place for the child in the class and will give the school a picture of the commitment for the coming school year. The College and Board should receive monthly up-dates on the enrollment picture, based on children re-enrolled and new applications received in each grade. Families applying for tuition assistance will be re-enrolled pending a satisfactory agreement being reached on tuition assistance, and a new agreement will be issued when the financial aid process has been completed.

Exit Interviews:

To include an exit process, in the life of the school, where we strive towards parting with families with as much consciousness as we receive them, is

important. This process is called the exit interview and is intended to bring clarity and conclusion to the relationship. It is a time to tie up loose ends and to cultivate positive feelings.

The parents will be informed in the cover letter with the new enrollment agreement that if they are not re-enrolling their child they should contact the class teacher personally and inform the school administration in writing. A letter will be sent by the school confirming receipt of such a notice and that a place will not be held for the child. Each family with a child leaving will be asked to meet with a designated faculty member for an exit interview. The College Chairperson or another College member will also participate in the exit interview where there is a possibility of bad feelings or stormy questions around withdrawal.

The interviewer should record, in a friendly manner, the parent's views about:

1. a brief history of the child's tenure at the school; the year entered, teachers, significant absences.
2. How has the child progressed, where is he/she in comparison with peers, what are his/her strengths and weaknesses?
3. The family's relationship with the school, how they have experienced the school's strengths and weaknesses.
4. Their reason for leaving the school.
5. Future plans for the student's education; where will he/she go and what kind of a school will he/she attend?

An outline of these and other questions should be given to the parents in advance and the notes of the interview should be kept as a record of the College, who must be informed of the interview.

New Parent Orientation:

At the beginning of the new school year all new parents are cordially invited to attend a parent orientation. This is an opportunity to get a better picture of what life as a parent in a Waldorf School is all about. Faculty and office staff give an overview of the organizational life of the school, who is in charge of what, where to bring questions and concerns and how to participate in the life of the school. Representatives of the parents would also share the activities carried by

the parent body such as the Christmas Fair, the Auction, and other social and fund raising events. After the children have been welcomed into their classes it is also important to welcome the parents into the community of adults, who all make their contributions in one way or another to make the Waldorf School possible.

Parent Education and Outreach:

In most cases when prospective parents bring their children to a Waldorf School it is out of a feeling that this educational approach is right for their child. An on-going parent educational program serves the purpose of deepening their understanding of the educational aims of Waldorf Education. Parents must be nourished and sustained in order to have the stamina to make it through many years of financial and moral support that they will give to their particular school.

The most immediate format available would be the regularly scheduled **class evenings** where the class teacher gives an overview of child development and the curriculum for that year. Special teachers are invited to these evenings to share examples of work done with the children in that class. It is also an opportunity for parents to get a taste of the artistic activities that the children engage in through exercises in painting, modeling, eurythmy, and speech.

Other occasions throughout the school year that help build a sense of joy and school community in the educational experience are: **class plays, school assemblies**, **musical evenings** and **all festival celebrations**. **Study groups, parenting workshops, Anthroposophical Core Courses,** and **a lending library** are essentials for those parents who want to probe deeper.

In addition to these in-house events, a yearly schedule of public events such as a **winter lecture series, workshops, open houses** and **exhibits** serve a twofold purpose of both attracting new enrollment and interest in the school and offering the parent body rich and stimulating events throughout the year.

An **enrollment committee** consisting of both parents and teachers has a vital role in helping to organize the calendar of public events. A more informal way of introducing the school to prospective parents is to invite them to an **Enrollment tea**, where a teacher and host family would be available to answer

questions and share their experiences in a Waldorf School both from the teachers' and the parents' perspective.

Organizations within the local community like the Lions, the Rotary, the Real Estate companies and the public libraries usually appreciate having a speaker and/or a display of the children's work. A well-planned program utilizing the teachers in a fair balanced manner can make your school known throughout your local community and help prospective parents become aware of Waldorf Education as a strong and viable educational choice for their children.

Cornelius Pietzner graduated from a Waldorf School, studied at Williams College, and spent a year in Norway and the mid-east studying the oil industry. He worked for three years at the Waldorf Institute as Director of Public Relations. He spent three years at Camphill Special Schools responsible for Development and Public Relations. In 1988 he founded Camphill Soltane and has been responsible for Development, Board, Promotional and outreach activities.

Chapter 7

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

Community relations defines a very broad area both operationally and conceptually. Because of this it may seem abstract, remote, unnecessary, ethereal and diversionary, and not relating to the "true" function of a school, especially a Waldorf School! Such an attitude is perilous, and will be ever more so as the American public awakens to the need for a deeper, more comprehensive and effective relationship with education altogether. It (the public) will demand greater participation in mainstream education, and those forms of education which have been proven over time to be successful and relevant to the needs of children and nations. Waldorf Education and all its exponents will wish to respond to and encourage such a dialogue, such an involvement. This dialogue will include the area of community relations!

Every Waldorf School is an important member of the surrounding community. Each day the school receives important people from the community through its doors, and each afternoon it sends important members of the community back to their homes. This daily breathing relates a Waldorf School in the most direct fashion to the community it serves, through the children it serves, and through all the people who are closely connected to the children that a Waldorf

School serves.The issue of community relations is important for every single Waldorf school. The issue of public relations for the school movement as such is a related but slightly different issue. The potential for the Waldorf School Movement to become an active and contributing part of the larger issues within the educational environment of this country is both substantial and exciting.

Public or community relations is much more comprehensive than a narrow program of periodic interfacing with the media or surrounding locality. Indeed a true public relations encompasses and relates to many of the other areas within the life of a school addressed by this book. In this sense community relations is a fundamental component of *every* Waldorf School. It connects areas of admissions, parent and Board relations, and fundraising.

Community relations begins at home. In any service organization *everybody* is involved as a bearer of the message of the organization. The stronger the co-ordination among the bearers of the message, the more powerfully can the message usually be conveyed. Furthermore, the greater the message itself is believed by its bearers, the greater is its credibility.

Community relations need not be reactive. It can be a powerful, proactive expression of the impulse of Waldorf education and the specific impulses of a particular school in a particular location with particular strengths and unique challenges.

Community relations is as much an **attitude** as an **activity**. It is as much tolerance, interest, openness, confidence and sharing as a laundry list of school functions, open houses, enrollment teas, press releases and public service announcements. This attitude can perhaps best be approached by considering community relations as a **dialogue**, a conversation – which is mutual and two-way. Community relations is **not** a desperate push to project, at all costs, your message onto an unsuspecting, illiterate and hostile "real world". It is not merely generating and delivering public service announcements and developing recruitment brochures. It is not a single function for a "hired gun" or an endless random string of events. It is, much rather, an invitation to relate, to participate in the life and growth of your community and its educational realities and needs.

None of us, either as individuals or as organizations, exist in isolation. We need and want interaction, common cause and mutual involvement. Community relations, at its simplest, is the activity of avoiding isolation.

Reciprocity and mutual influence between the inner exigencies and outer conditions of a school is a critical issue for the effective integration of the Waldorf School in the community. A Waldorf School *needs* to have a reflection of its activity within the larger community. It needs a mirroring and a response. And while we are generally clear about our ideas (pedagogical, social, etc.) we are also tentative and often inartistic about their idiom. Thus to some extent, community relations can also be seen as the attempt to develop the appropriate idiom for our ideas. Occasionally, others do this much better for us, than we can do ourselves.

For example, several years ago, then Secretary of Education, William Bennett issued a small booklet called, **What Works in Education**.[1] It described basic educational ideas. It used "conventional" language. Much of what is contained in this booklet is a description for what Waldorf Schools actually do or would advocate! However, very few people seemed to be aware of the publication of this booklet, and its coincidence with some of the ideas of Waldorf education.

Returning to the element of dialogue or conversation, we come to the basic image of community relations, which is best conveyed through the lemniscate or figure-eight. In this magical flowing line, the inwardly turned gesture of an organism (school), achieves a crossing point by which it becomes available, displayed, public in an outward and generous posture.

The lemniscate demonstrates a profound harmony and equality from one surface to another. In like manner, the meditative work of the college and faculty, and the pedagogical work performed by the school community will have a relevance, connection and parallel that includes the larger community.

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[1] **What Works – Research About Teaching and Learning**, U.S. Department of Education, 1986.

To summarize – community relations is an **attitude** of participation, of being a contributing, part of a larger function. It is not an attitude of isolation self-righteousness or missionary zeal. It involves **everyone** at the school – secretaries, faculty, all helpers – and can never be effectively delegated or remanded to a "PR coordinator" (just as an effective longer-term fundraising effort cannot be vested solely in a Development Coordinator)

Community relations is a dialogue, represented by the wonderful form of a lemniscate. It has both inner and outer surfaces – indeed one is the extension of the other. Community relations is comprehensive and permeates many facets of a school's general administrative involvements.

Community Relations:

1) Image of the Lemniscate –

2) Reciprocity/Correspondence between inner & outer functions

3) Outer gesture also mutual, give-and-take

4) Idiom ◄——► ideas

5) An attitude of bridging

6) Everybody is involved

There are no fixed recipes for community relations, no prescriptions. Public relations is not a one-time, splashy happening. To assume an inflexible rigid "program" of events would be not to understand that each school is inserted uniquely into a unique community. Real involvement in the life and affairs of the community, at various levels through a diversity of means indicates real community relations. Interest, confidence, sensitivity, flexibility and perseverance are appropriate "ingredients" to undertake the joyous and fulfilling tasks of community relations.

Focussing the Effort:

Any community relations effort will best be served by planning and forethought. There are different ways to consider your events. First and foremost, determine your goals and purpose. There are generally three broad areas which occasion "community relations":

1) Enrollment

Goal – to introduce parents (and their children) to your school and Waldorf Education to increase the student population. This is an ongoing, annual task – albeit with different emphases.

2) Fundraising

Goal – to deepen existing donor relationships, introduce and cultivate new prospects to the school, and to Waldorf Education; to share plans, ideas goals with an identified constituency with the eventual goal of generating gift income. There will be different emphases depending on the actual situation, sources and nature of gift income.

3) Community Participation

Goal – to present your school, and Waldorf Education for professional participation in workshops, colloquia, conferences, discussions to a broad spectrum of your local, parent and professional community.

The audience and specific purposes of such events will vary greatly – from basic public lectures, to weekend workshops, to larger scale conferences. The expected "return" is to be a contributing and participating member of the community, and foster a greater level of understanding and insight into the work of the school and Waldorf education as such.

Each of these three areas involve events and activities specifically suited to achieve its goal. The clearer one can be regarding the needs and purpose of the activity the more suited, and thus effective will it be. One can obscure and confuse the primary, "bottom line" intent of the activity through assumption and

lack of categorization or planning. If goals are neither clear nor articulated, they will not be met. Mixing up goals frequently leads to disappointment.

For Example: Area #1– Enrollment – Consider, and take note of, enrollment activity and inquiry cycles. When do inquiries come most frequently? From where, what part of town? What kind of people inquire and in what form? Compile some basic statistics as the "raw data" from which you will develop your recruitment and enrollment activities. You may find that serious inquiries (and interest) come most frequently from mid-late August thru October (Cycle #1), and again from March (Easter) thru June (Cycle #2). November through February may be slack times regarding **Enrollment**.

Focus and develop your enrollment activities during these cycles – with one major activity per month. Use the interim times (Nov - Feb - June - July) to develop efficient, prompt, friendly and convincing responses to inquiries (phone calls, interviews, packets etc, see Chapter 6 **Admissions**). Utilize the evidence of your raw data to help you effectively plan this timing and focus of your activity.

For Example: Area #2 – Fundraising and Development – This is a complicated area, with numerous dimensions, needs and opportunities. A school may have four areas of income – two of major importance: tuitions and gift income. Of (usually) lesser significance are (unrelated) business income (gift shops, school stores etc.) and endowments.

Fundraising and Development are ongoing responsibilities – with annual appeals, capital campaigns, and all the innumerable auctions, craft fairs, car washes, bake sales, holiday sales and so on that serve as community functions while raising urgently needed dollars.

Most charitable giving occurs towards Christmas/Hanukkah time. The annual appeal and events related to it will be scheduled during December. Very often the major Bazaars, Sales, Craft Fairs, etc. take place in late November, or early December, complemented by a second major event in early to late Spring.

Thus we may generally observe Community efforts related to Area #2, taking place in early winter and mid-spring. The preparatory activity in fundrais-

ing is critically related to the success of the solicitation. Again, timing is of major importance.

For Example: Area #3 – Community Participation – These events serve a variety of needs and connect your school to people, issues and concerns in a multitude of ways. Some are:

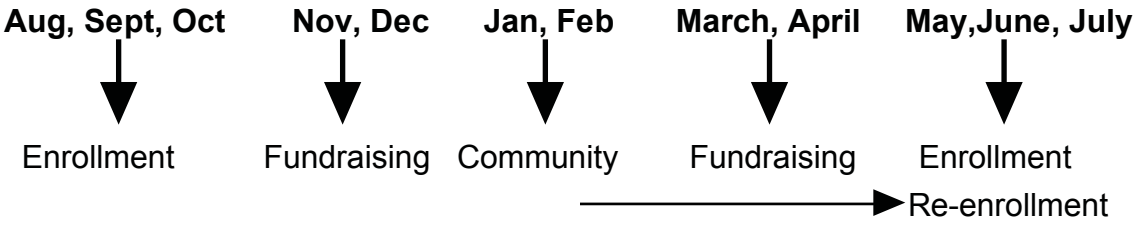
a) Lecture Series/Adult Education – for parents, the community, professionals, civic and social clubs.

b) Workshops – Professional Development – other Waldorf colleagues, interested educators, parents, etc.

c) Conferences, colloquia, etc. – Professional Development, Research, etc.

One can observe that these and other events conspire to create their own annual calendar. Each focus area calls for outreach in a specific direction to a specific audience for a specific reason. Each has a different purpose and will be organized differently. Planning and evaluation are two critical components in making any event a success and might include a team or multi-disciplinary approach to achieve the broadest perspective.

The activity calendar slowly suggests its own natural rhythms, based on the statistics (raw data) or needs you will have identified in the planning stages. Identifying the primary goal will suggest an appropriate event in timing with cycles suggested by your own information and experience. As you begin the year you may wish to project your activities according to the areas outlined above, or add your own categories.



Focussing the effort, regardless of the activity area, is a determination and refinement of your objectives. This may also be called developing a strategy or

marketing plan. There are numerous, and sometimes conflicting approaches to this area. One approach and one of the simplest, recommends:[2.]

1) Select Your Market Objectives	2) Identify Target Market	3) Develop a Marketing Strategy & Program
↓	↓	↓
(What do you want to accomplish?)	(Who do you want to approach?)	(How do you want to do it?)

The "market" may be comprised of different elements:

1) *Demographic*– what age range, social-economic status, etc. is your group?

2) *Geographic*– where is your market located?

3) *Behavioral*– what are relevant and supporting patterns, habits, interests, acquisitions etc.? Think of a profile, or likely candidate.

4) *Volume* (usage) – what frequency, or kind of involvement, are you looking for? Parents, donors, volunteers, participants for events, board members? How often will you want their involvement?

Consider this a sketch which you can amend, alter or "flesh in" to suit your particular orientation. However breaking down and analyzing your constituency by function, type or other characteristic may facilitate developing appropriate relations and achieving your school's goals.

In considering your constituency, you will also want to reflect on what you wish to offer – and how it may match your community's needs. Product, price, distribution and promotion are the four areas commonly considered in developing

[2.]Eugene M. Johnson, Developing a Marketing Plan for a Non-Profit Organization, **Non Profit World Report**, Vol. 4, No. 5, pg 28 -30.

a marketing strategy. Although these terms reflect a business imprint it can be helpful to apply a dissimilar and unusual paradigm to your considerations. All four areas are important for the healthy unfolding of a Waldorf School. Perhaps we rightly overemphasize "the product" – for without such an excellent one what would we be working so hard for? Yet an excellent and unique "product" can languish and falter if its delivery and price is inconsistent, boorish and over-inflated.

Planning your annual calendar will help you to maximize the effectiveness of your activities. Naturally, there will be other events conflicting with your schedule – yet slowly you will notice and confirm a rhythm to your community relations work adjusted to the three major areas of outreach. Over time this will become a foundation for additional activity or variations appropriate to the biography and development of your school.

The Process Of Community Relations:

Community relations has technical aspects as well as procedural issues that may enhance the overall effort. The participants in the process of community relations are of immense importance. The process of developing events itself may reflect a sensitivity to a larger circle of people. Most people will respond positively to a genuine invitation to become involved in an activity. This allows your school to develop a critical support base – the volunteers.

Volunteers:

Individuals, both parents and friends, may wish to contribute to your school in different ways. An often under-utilized and over-looked resource are people with talent in your community who can offer skills, time, involvement, enthusiasm, and will! No school can afford to neglect the invaluable role of the volunteer. The volunteer can carry a crucial function in the cycle of events that bridge the school to the community.

Volunteers will need explicit instructions, clear mandates and specific and real responsibilities, with reasonable time frames, realistic parameters of involvement, and reachable goals. They will need ongoing support, evaluation, encouragement and recognition. Frequently, the last two elements are not properly carried out. It is easy to use volunteers and expect great results without

supplying them with the necessary tools to accomplish their tasks. Volunteers are donating real assets to your school, and should be thanked and acknowledged. Volunteer development and, perhaps even more importantly, volunteer retention requires commitment, consideration and time from your school community. These can be formal occasions which will confirm to the volunteer the value of his/her involvement with your organizational efforts and goals. An “Award Ceremony” or “Thank You Dinner” are two of many options.

I stress this component of volunteer development because too often I have seen an emphasis on the receiving end of things – expending considerable efforts on getting gifts, getting resources donated, getting volunteers, etc., with an inadequate correspondence in the giving back end. We know that thanks and gratitude belong to receiving but somehow, with the numerous obligations and pressures, this aspect can be neglected. The result may be ineffective and unenthusiastic volunteers, or worse, a diminishing base of ongoing volunteer involvement.

The Goal:

Focussing and narrowing the purpose and expectation of an event or activity is a primary task in helping you achieve your needs. This aspect is often ignored or assumed – the goal may appear obvious. Usually, if it does appear too obvious, it is too broad or ambitious. An Open House should not, for example, intend to explain everything about Waldorf Education, display all the children's work over the years, boost enrollment by 100%, make the whole community ecstatic about your school, raise funds for your capital campaign, generate a series of media articles and introduce Anthroposophy to everyone who signs the guest book! "Well, of course not!," we may say (though secretly hope this will all take place).

Determine *why* you do something, and for *whom* it is intended. Wrestle with a few important priorities until they become clear. For instance, if you expect a visitor of some influence, try to determine what is enough, and what will be too much for the visit. People do become overwhelmed – and your eminent visitor with the glazed eyes may have been overloaded with all the innumerable things he/she has been exposed to.

Sorting out, identifying and refining goals is exciting, and necessary. It will suggest and help shape your activities.

1) Do you want press or media exposure? If yes, what kind? How will you approach the matter? What angle might work? What are your back–ups?

2) Do you want greater attendance at a public lecture? If yes, who do you want to come? What groups? How will you approach them? Will you go in person, call, or write to solicit their attendance? Will you speak to the group representative? What is your core group (of attendance)? Why do they come? Can they help you increase attendance? Who do they know? etc.

3) Do you want to increase student enrollment? Why? What consequence will it have? (This is a slightly different question, but it can be answered in relationship to the community relations perspective). If yes, what data will you be working from to focus your efforts? Where is the data? If it isn't there how can you get it? What does it tell you?

These are all basic questions – but it is precisely these basic questions to which we so often presume the answers. Try and answer, straight forwardly and simply, these and other such questions. Write your answers down. Become clear about them – and they will help you prioritize and plan. Developing priorities will help shape your policies. Knowing your operational policies clearly will make your tasks more defined, more accessible.

These are all tasks which should precede the often frenetic schedule of events for your community. Just as an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, a pound of planning is worth a ton of events!

Planning & Evaluation:

The pre and post analysis of an event is as critical as the actual execution. Planning and evaluation are potentially community-building processes thru the inclusion of volunteer and committee members in the discussions. By including a larger group one fosters a sense of involvement, and develops a vested interest in the outcome of the event. People want to feel a part of what they are doing. Asking for advice (and listening to it) can be tremendously upbuilding. Include different elements of the community in your planning and evaluation.

Take time to plan. Take additional time to evaluate. Make a (written) record of what went right and what when wrong. The evaluation should have different parts to it. Did you reach your stated financial, social, scheduling goals? This discussion should form a document which will be used as a planning tool and guide for subsequent events.

Sufficient effort and commitment should be made to properly include the planning and evaluation components as a basic element of any community relations event.

Planning (and evaluation) should be applied not only to single events, or events in succession, but to the year itself. Having some forecast of the year's events and needs reduces the random scheduling of occasions. Indeed, planning in longer-term frameworks can be integrated into the long-range planning and development needs of your organization. Planning does not eliminate spontaneity. It is not a binding directive – but a road map or blue-print to help you achieve your goals. The process of planning may also help formulate and clarify your goals.

For example, assume a school has successfully developed 8 grades. All is going well – the school is growing at an orderly rate. In two years time, however, new buildings will need to be built on recently acquired land – to accommodate the growth in students and increasing programmatic diversity. The question has been living silently for some time among faculty: "Should we move towards establishing a High School?" This question gradually comes into common discussion. It is a complicated, difficult question – with many different, and differing perspectives. A process is determined by which this question will be addressed. This process is slated to last for 24 months. Part of the process must include current parents of students in all classes, but especially those in grades 4 – 8. Potential new parents will also need to be included.

This hypothetical situation will draw on many skills as it is a deep question of biography, development, organizational strengths – readiness . It is also a question of community process and community building. It will become a question of community relations. As the process evolves – a process lying at the very heart of the school and its unfolding life – the need for incorporating the com-

munity and involving individuals within it will become of paramount importance. Community activities will need to take place at the research, or early stages, of such a question. Thus one can see how planning can draw on and include the community in essential long-range issues of the school. The image of the lemniscate, once again, appears and we can experience the need for a mutually supportive modulation between inner questions and outer phenomena.

Every school can take steps and develop basic skills in developing their own community relations. Some steps are "action-oriented", some belong to the realm of planning – all require the attitude that your school needs the recognition and support of the community to thrive.

Some basic suggestions:[3.]

1) Develop effective graphics – consistent, unique, not overly complicated, compelling.

2) Implement strategies for getting media coverage (include variations of all kinds of coverage).

3) Train and support public speakers within your school community. Critique and develop a few individuals who will venture *out* into the community – as well as inviting audiences in.

4) Gain the involvement of well-established, recognized people in the community (ask directly, with reasons why, explanations what you need and wish to accomplish, and how you think they can help).

5) Encourage special events – use milestones, individual accomplishments, awards, honors, etc. Use such events for media coverage.

6) Develop a portfolio of photos that can be used for media and literature.

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3. **Meridian Non Profit Strategist** (Vol. No. 11, Issue 4, Oct. 1990) Interview with Los Angeles PR Firm Terzian & Assoc.

7) Build your mailing list by category, and don't be afraid to edit and cut the list from time to time. Bloated lists are expensive, unwieldy and intimidating. Who wants to send monthly "Lecture Announcements" to 6000 people?

Each of these areas is important and possesses complex ingredients in your overall community relations work. They should be researched and studied in greater length than this chapter allows. There are many ingredients, many techniques to making community relations work effectively. Most of these can be learned and assimilated quite rapidly.

There are, naturally, deeper and more fundamental issues of community relations which are by no means of a technical or practical nature. Some of these areas will point to the general structure of the Waldorf school itself, and may illuminate more profound elements within the school. For example, if the leadership and sense of overall vision and purpose is weak or confused the community will sense this quickly and intuitively. Strong leadership doesn't mean one strong leader – but a clear, convincing message coming without equivocation is crucial.

A vibrant, realistic sense of vision and purpose – issues which are deeply related to the life and health of a school – will emanate into the community. This too is community relations. If the inner life of the school can carry the strength of enthusiasm, the light of clear insight and common purpose, and translate this in confidence and openness to the community at large, the message will be convincing and effective.

It is important to:

1) Regularly define and refine your public relations activities and schedules.

2) Be consistent, and persistent! Planting seeds will hopefully become fruit. Find effective methods and build on them.

3) Vary your approach! This needn't be contradictory. There are numerous PR options. Explain, experiment – Community relations takes many forms.

4) Know your constituency. Identify your various groups, both existing and desired.

5) Involve everyone! Community relations is not for the few – it belongs to everyone. Your *whole* school community is involved and responsible.

6) Give it time to work! Community relations is a process; it will take time to build and solidify. Don't expect or press for results too early. All relationships are built over time, with multiple and varied exposure and opportunities.

The school community as an organism builds its own life-body and cycle over time.[4.] This interweaving flow of activity which gives a school its true identity and makes your school what it is, belongs to the most intimate part of the organization's biography. Yet it is just this life-body – wherein, over time, the institutional memories will lie – which needs to flow *out* of the school and into the surrounding community. This is a precious activity – yet the community itself will give back to the life-body of the school. It is this giving back which achieves the crossing point in the lemniscate we have chosen as the image of community relations.

The school does not just impart, or give away. In giving to the public it develops mutual interaction and receives support, advice and recognition as a dialogue of ongoing involvement. This interaction brings new life and activity to your school. Good luck!

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4. For further discussion of this theme, see **Extracts – The Economic Basis for Waldorf Education,** Vol. 2, Community & Public Relations, Cornelius M. Pietzner, "Community & Public Relations" pg 7, 1990, Threefold Educational Foundation, and **Handling Public Relations– A Guide for Waldorf Schools & Other Organizations** by Cornelius M. Pietzner, 1984, Sunbridge College Press [available from the author at Camphill Soltane, Box 300A, R. D. 1, Glenmoore, PA, 19343, (215) 469–0933].

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Chapter 8

EVALUATION

The administration of every Waldorf School has a professional responsibility for implementing some form of evaluation procedure. The purpose of evaluation is to affirm that you are doing what you say you want to do as an individual, as a student, or as an organization. Evaluation provides an objective statement that can lead to growth, increased confidence, and interpersonal sharing. This chapter will explore teacher evaluation and student evaluation.

Teacher Evaluation:

To truly ”e-valuate“ (to draw out the ”value“ from) we must be able to work in complete consciousness out of colleagueship. Evaluation is meant to solve problems and provide for professional growth; it is not intended to place blame. However, it must be recognized that in human organizations intentions and actions rarely coincide exactly. There **are always** problems to be unravelled.

The manner in which a Waldorf School is governed represents a cultural deed through which the promise of renewal in society exists. Therefore, it is no surprise that Waldorf Teachers place such importance in expanding their level of competence. The teachers in the first Waldorf School, "felt confidence in the 'power of ideas'. There were no external guarantees."[1] The striving of the teacher is to constantly improve at our tasks. This is why evaluation is so important in a Waldorf School.

Assembled in the Society's blue room in Stuttgart in 1919, the first building ever built exclusively for Anthroposophical purposes, were twenty four individuals who had assembled to listen to a pedagogical course by Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Dr. Johannes Tautz, the historian of the Waldorf School movement, reported that Steiner told the teachers that they were," working on a mandate of the spiritual worlds." The courses lasted until 3 or 4 A.M. He told them that, "Waldorf Teachers must become useful but conscious tools of the spiritual worlds. They must allow the impulse of the spiritual worlds to flow through them. The work of running the school could only be done as a group. They must be colleagues together!" He affirmed that it is difficult to do this today. They were told to think away everything that is physical (body, etc.) of the other. They were told to try to perceive **only the striving**, otherwise they would be overcome by the negative aspects of the other person, referred to as the Double. They were encouraged to cultivate the feeling that everyone knows something that they themselves don't know."[2]

Evaluation can serve a number of purposes. First, it can serve to help teachers to become as competent at their task as they are capable of becoming. Second, it can show all teachers a basis for knowing what is expected and what they can do to meet those expectations. Third, it can give the colleagues the means for having an overview of the entire school. Fourth, it can provide the means of identifying those individuals who are not able to meet the needs of the children at whose service the school is dedicated.

The first stage of evaluation is in the hiring process.

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1. Johannes Tautz, April 9, 1982, Spring Valley, NY, notes of David Mitchell.
2. Ibid.

Hiring New Teachers:

The College usually appoints an individual to be in charge of letting the Waldorf Teacher Training Institutes and other Waldorf Schools know that positions in the school will be vacant in the next academic year. This person will also handle all correspondence between the school and candidates and subsequently will invite individuals to come for a visit. It is **very important** that schools **phone** for references to get candid statements. Letters are fine, but, if you really want to know the complete story about a person, speak with someone and ask questions!

Rudolf Steiner said:

> "The term 'Colleague' means to read together out of the open book of karma. If we are in conflict with someone we will study his/her book of karma especially."[3.]

Usually several candidates are brought before the College and discussed. Those candidates thought most likely to fit in to that particular school will be invited for an interview. In some cases the school will underwrite all or a portion of the cost of the visit.

Each individual is usually hosted by the school for two or three days. During this time the candidate will visit classes and have individual discussions with faculty members. They will be acquainted with the pay scale and the faculty benefits. One individual would speak specifically about the person's spiritual path and their commitment to Anthroposophy would be asked about. A tour through the community would be given and the history of the school would be shared. Also, the difficulties that they might face in that particular community would be shared.

At the conclusion there would often be a tea or other social occasion with the faculty. The candidate would be invited to a faculty meeting where they would be asked to share their biography. They would be asked what they consider their strengths to be, what areas they will need to be helped with, what their special

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3. Ibid.

needs are, and whether they had any particular questions that they would like to ask the faculty?

In most schools the candidate is asked to think about his/her experiences for a few days after the visit. Is the group of teachers that they met a group that they feel karmically connected with? Can they envision going into the future with them? They are then asked to write or phone the contact person and inform them whether or not they would still like to be a candidate. If the reply is negative then they are candidly asked to respond why. This is then shared with the College. It is very important for the school to know how it is seen by people from the outside, so growth can take place.

If the candidate is an especially desired one they may be asked to call the school if they have any other offers that they are considering before they make a final decision. This insures that the school maintains control and is not inadvertently handicapped in its decision making process by a long list of candidates.

Once a candidate is confirmed by the consensus of the College, then some schools write a letter inviting the teacher to join the school. It is important that the decision to hire someone is made with full consensus because this makes everyone responsible for the success of the new teacher. In the hiring letter the school would write a detailed description of the position and other duties that would be expected, the pay level, and a response in writing would be requested. This is considered a legal contract.

Some schools prefer to send a formal legal contract (see Appendix) to be signed. This contract would have a detailed description of the job being offered, rate of pay, and reasons for dismissal.

Hiring New Staff:

In the case of a person being hired by the school for a non-teaching position, a complete **job description** would be written and the person would be informed whether they were responsible to the Board of Trustees, the College, the Executive Committee, or the Administrator. A timely review of their work would be planned, say within the first three months of employment.

After the hiring of a staff member or a teacher is confirmed an announcement would be made to the parents and the candidate would be invited to a social gathering where they would be welcomed and introduced to the greater community.

New Teachers Load:

The new teacher is usually given a minimum of extra responsibilities in the first year. Their class load is as small as practical, and in the case of a first grade teacher, most of their time is spent with their own class. This extra time allows the new teacher to make contact with the parents and to put down roots in the community. The faculty extends itself to help make the transition as smooth as possible and the College assigns the new teacher a mentor.

Mentoring:

The more experienced Waldorf teacher has the responsibility to assist incoming teachers by becoming a mentor. This new teacher might be a complete novice, a teacher right out of one of the training institutes, or an experienced teacher coming from another school. However, mentorship is most effective when a partnership is created – both individuals acknowledge that they can learn from each other and that they both are on a path of development.

The mentor would establish regularly scheduled weekly meetings to discuss the new teacher's work, to answer questions, to be their friend, to explain school policy, and to try to anticipate areas where they might require help. This mentor should be sure to make early class visitations, and should be acquainted with the teacher's spouse and children. The mentor represents the new teacher to the College and gives reports as necessary. The mentor would also express any perceived need of the new teacher to the College.

Colleague Support:

Some Waldorf Schools have borrowed a good idea from the Quaker Schools that is called the "Buddy system". At the beginning of the academic year each faculty member is paired off with a colleague to whom special attention and support are pledged.

This colleague acts as an individual "care group" for the other and vice-versa. He or she would be attentive to those areas of concern that we need to know about before they become a crisis. A mutual understanding of helpfulness is encouraged between both parties and one can represent the other to the colleagues in areas such as unforeseen economic hardship, etc., where it is better to have someone speak for you than to speak for yourself.

On Going Teacher Training:

As previously discussed in Chapters I and 2 of this book the College and Faculty meetings are times of study and growth. These are times when we get to know one another and to exercise ourselves in artistic deepening.

Before the beginning of each academic year many faculties set aside 3-4 days for professional days. During this time the new faculty for the school meets to take up practical business, to study, to do speech work, sing, do modeling, painting, Eurythmy and other artistic work together. All of this warms up the faculty prior to the arrival of the children. These meetings are also the time to do biographical sharing. For example, space can be set aside for each faculty member to speak for 10 minutes about some figure in their biography to whom they feel **gratitude.** Everyone would share on the same topic spending about an hour a day each day, until everyone has had a turn. Other topics one might choose are: everyone could speak about an event around the 9 year change that they recall, or everyone could speak about a suffering and a joy from the past year — the possibilities are endless. I have found these exercises to be invaluable in getting to know my colleagues!

Other activities regularly included in faculty meetings that allow for evaluation are:

class reports where teachers speak briefly about each child in their class and give an overview on how they are meeting the challenges of the curriculum;

parent meetings where the class teacher and a College member meet with the parents of a class to discuss the children and the activities of the class;

child studies where a teacher will bring to the faculty a specific child to be discussed. The teacher would first present a de-

tailed physical picture of the child, then move to his or her soul strengths and needs, building up a picture for the other teachers to share;

pedagogical presentations where the teacher will metamorphose a prepared study that the faculty is undertaken and make it come alive;

special subject reports where the language, handwork, manual arts, and gym teachers speak about their classes and program;

office reports where the administrator or office personnel report to the faculty on their struggles, joys and work load.

The above reports in faculty meeting allow for interaction from one's colleagues and provide space for ongoing evaluative discussion.

Finally, at the closure of every faculty meeting, I have found it invaluable to have 5 minutes of **open time** where anecdotes can be shared followed by 5 -10 minutes entitled **meeting evaluation**. During this time any colleague would be free to comment on anything that occurred in the meeting. Comments might be made on how the agenda was formed; if one was offended by something that was said; if someone felt that someone else had too much to say; if someone was grateful for something that someone said, etc. This is a time to let the steam off or to express appreciation. It is not a time for debate and responses are not allowed. It is a time for colleagues to review their time together and to make any comments to the entire group. This can help to avoid backbiting outside the meeting and can insure that every issue involving colleagues is addressed in the proper forum — that is with the fully assembled colleagues themselves.

Waldorf teachers have the foundation for working together in a still deeper way, based on the work done in the Faculty meeting, as described above.

As schools expand and develop in maturity it is necessary to adopt policies that formalize a process of evaluation that may have been formerly haphazard or nonexistent.

As Waldorf teachers we must insure that the quality of our education continues to improve. It is easy to become professionally isolated — to be spun in our own cocoon. We have the possibility to generate interest in our colleagues and in what they are doing. We can become aware of the spiritual essence of each other! We can make time to get to know each other, as we make time to get to know the children. Peer and self-evaluation are the means by which we can accomplish this.

Teacher Evaluation:

As a school matures the teachers will recognize the need for rhythmical teacher evaluations for three reasons: to help the school set its goals, to support individual development, and to uphold the quality of the school as a whole.

Many public schools use evaluation as the means of determining merit-pay. These evaluations have not always been seen as constructive. However, in the Waldorf Schools, evaluation is used solely as the means to improve oneself and the quality of the school. In reading the pedagogical works of Rudolf Steiner one recognizes that there is an objective archetypal picture of the teacher toward which we are all working. It becomes specific when you enter the classroom and see how a teacher copes with the expectations that the school has set forth.

The aim of evaluation is to confirm and acknowledge.

Self Evaluation:

Most Waldorf Schools have a self-evaluation procedure. This means that each teacher and staff member would evaluate themselves each year in both a written and an oral form. Usually the Chairman of the College of Teachers over-sees the evaluation process which is an ongoing one. Every teacher would agree to following this procedure when they were hired. (See Appendix)

All teachers would appear yearly before the College and would share how their classroom management and discipline are going. They would be asked to comment on their speech, self presence, authority, give and take and rapport with the children. They would also be asked to address their teaching methods,

form, order and content of their lessons. The children's work would be spoken about, the achievement of the class, their care for materials, etc. The aesthetics and the hygiene in the classroom would also be referred to as would the teacher's relationship with parents and colleagues. (See Appendix for sample forms)

Everyone in the College would be free to comment on these presentations in the spirit of mutual growth. Strengths would be affirmed and areas of concern would be noted. The one difficulty I have experienced is that it takes true courage to be honest and frank. This must be practiced. If the self-evaluation response from the colleagues is allowed to evolve to backslapping and unbridled praise it will lose its effectiveness. The task is to be frank, honest, to use soul tact, and to speak with loving kindness.

Classroom Visitation:

Every teacher in the school would be required, as part of their schedule, to make time to visit other teacher's classrooms, at least three times over the course of the academic year. A short report of each visit should be included in that person's personnel folder. It would also be encouraged that teachers attend conferences as well as visit other Waldorf Schools.

Master Teacher Visits:

Periodically the school would invite a recognized "Master Teacher" who would visit and observe classes. They would be asked to evaluate the teachers and discuss their findings with them based on at least two visitations to each class. The Master Teacher would write a report (see Appendix) and pass it onto the teacher for him or her to read and sign. These records would be kept as part of the teacher's personnel files.

The Master teacher would be invited to the faculty meeting to give his or her impression of the school to all the teachers.

Questions of Teacher Competence:

The College of Teachers is the forum for evaluating teacher competence. Problems in this regard should be directed to this body in the presence of the teacher concerned. An evaluative discussion would follow. Whether or not the concerned teacher remains for this discussion should be left to the free decision

of all. Either the teacher may decide to leave, or a College member may ask that they leave; otherwise, they will be part of the discussion. A written record should be kept of recommendations and decisions, and these should be communicated to the teacher within 24 hours if they were not present for the discussion, by the mentor or the designated College member.

It is important not to let an evaluation instrument grow stale. Any evaluation system is only as effective as the evaluators and what they do with it.

In her book, **Teacher's at Work**, Susan Johnson points out the following pitfalls of evaluation. Some teachers complained about: "evaluators feeling obliged to find areas for improvement" for nit-picking and "picking inconsequential problems." Others complained that evaluations were "infrequent and ritualistic." A middle school teacher complaining about evaluation said that he observed teachers keeping their best classes for the evaluation; "It's more like a staged production."[4.]

Questions from Parents:

Parents or teachers wanting to raise questions about a teacher's competence should address them to the College Chairperson or to a College member, who will arrange for a discussion to take place. All Parents should be informed through the Parent Handbook, or through normal school information channels, that they have this avenue to raise questions.

Dismissal of Colleagues:

There comes a point in the process where it is understood that, for the sake of the children, a teacher cannot be retained. Hopefully, the processes above will have been successful and the teacher in question will come to his or her own awareness that they must terminate their relationship with the school. If this is not the case then a group of teachers should sit with the teacher and explain that the "confidence of the colleagueship" in them has eroded. Every possibility should be extended for the teacher to withdraw him or herself. This

4. Susan Moore Johnson, **Teachers At Work**, Basic Books, NY, 1990, p 270-5.

karmic responsibility is something we all take upon ourselves when we join the school.

If the teacher does not resign then the College may have to dismiss them. If this is done and the above procedures have been followed, then there should exist a written record of evaluations stating the reasons and the failure of the individual to institute change. Severance pay should be decided and everything should be as clear and as factual as possible. It should be clearly expressed that the judgment is not being made that the individual is a "bad" person or incapable in other areas, however, for the sake of the children the relationship with the school has been judged unworkable. The Board should be informed of the firing and a lawyer should be notified.

When the difficulties of firing a colleague were discussed at the first Waldorf School, one teacher commented that the teacher would be sure to cause trouble in the community to which Rudolf Steiner replied: "In my opinion it is better that it suffers from without than from within!"[5.]

One particular teacher was seen by Steiner as needing to be dismissed from the school. Speaking about it with the College he said,

> "It is always a problem when a colleague works more out of personality than out of spiritual striving. . .there is always trouble when someone . . . brings a certain personal tone into the affairs of the school. (This individual) brings a personal tone into everything. He finds it difficult to get down to essentials. He would like to have succeeded in becoming a Waldorf Teacher. He would like to be a poet. He would like the children to have confidence in him. The particular qualities he has make one sorry for him. We must see to it that we offer him something else instead. But he will always be difficult. For certain things that belong to the spirit of the School he will simply not understand at all, especially in the teaching of manual skills. It is very difficult to allow sympathy to play in where objectivity is essential. It is often misguided. I don't think he has it in him to find his way into the whole spirit of the school!"[6.]

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5. Rudolf Steiner, **Conferences, 1919-1920, Volume 1**, Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1986, p114.
6. Rudolf Steiner, **Conferences, 1919-1920, Volume 1**, Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1986, p112.

Care Group:

Many schools have found that a committee of experienced and caring teachers can constitute a **care group**. The care group pays attention to relationships and hardships amongst the colleagues of a particular school. These individuals can take on specific problems, and can meet with a teacher in their home or at some point outside the school. Usually the care group works under the auspices of the College of teachers and reports directly to the College Chairperson, although in some schools it is a the faculty chairperson who will bring a name to the College if someone is falling apart. In some schools the entire College serves as the "Care Group."

Evaluating the Children:

Usually we are required to keep academic records for the children by the state. These records are to keep the parents informed as to the child's progress and to be available to the next school in case the child transfers.

The Elementary Age Child

Waldorf School teachers are so active with their students that in the younger elementary grades a grading system is unnecessary. Rather, the teacher writes a flowing report about the child's progress to the parents and a verse encapsulating the report is written to the child.

> "A Waldorf elementary teacher stating joint spiritual and academic goals for education said: 'We deal with the whole child — the spiritual, physical, and intellectual parts of the child, seeking to reunite these.' In other words we as Waldorf teachers have a common goal."[7. 8.]

Standardized testing does not have a lot of use in Waldorf Schools and recent studies find that this might be just fine.

> ". . . Edward Deci and others have demonstrated in a variety of experiments (Deci & Ryan), external accountability systems tend to undercut the intrinsic motivation of teachers and students alike and thus distort the learning process. In testing . . . the direct at-

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[7.] Susan Moore Johnson,**Teachers At Work,** Basic Books, NY, 1990, p224.

tention to low-level skills and facts . . . drive teachers and students alike to attend to (only) what is tested."[8.]

Another study showed that there are

> ". . . serious problems with so-called objective forms of testing can no longer be ignored. Many reduce learning to multiple choice test items that trivialize knowledge and learning. Many are written by educational test experts remote from classroom practice and students, and who are uneducated in the subject fields . . . The development of effective evaluations requires a recognition of the enormous potential and range of the human mind, a respect for the diversity and complexity of human cultures, and a recognition of the limitations of current pencil and paper objective testing techniques for assessing such qualities and traits with much subtlety or precision."[9.]

On the evaluation of children, Rudolf Steiner had the following to say,

> "We could give two reports, one in the middle of the year as an interim report, and another one at the end of the school year. As far as the powers-that-be permit it, just write general information about the pupils in these reports. Characterize the pupil, and only mention a particular subject if it is specifically outstanding. Be as positive as you can, and when the pupils come into the higher classes do not grade them more than absolutely necessary."[10.]

The teacher will have constant contact with the parents through class evenings, home visits, the telephone, and during after school pick-up. Usually there is a parent interview conducted at mid-year where the child's progress in all aspects of his/her school life is discussed with the parent. Then at the end of the year there are written reports by all the teachers on each child.

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8. Ann Lieberman, ed., **Building a Professional Culture in Schools,** Colombia Teachers College Press, NY, 1988, p 18.

9. Beatrice and Ronald Gross,ed., **The Great School Debate, Which Way for American Education?**, Touchstone, NY, 1985, p 382.

10. **Rudolf Steiner, Conferences, 1919-1920, Volume 1**, Steiner Schools Fellowship, 1986, p67.

In the Middle School, grades 6-8, it is necessary to have more frequently written reports to keep the parents informed of where they can help to insure good habits, or provide tutorial help. (See Appendix for example of a middle school science report form.)

It is very important that all evaluative reports are proofread by the school for grammar and spelling errors, and that each class teacher is aware of what the special lesson teachers will say so that the reports are consistent.

An example of evaluation for young children in a Waldorf School involves teacher observation. How can we observe the children better so that we can more adequately serve their needs? When we observe the children we are actively involved in a process that has our interest. Later when we are contemplating a child in the solitude of our homes we can summon up these observations as we build an objective picture of his/her being. The effort that we put into this activity calls upon the angel of the child to come to us with inspiration that can help us meet the child's particular needs.

The following are some questions we might ask ourselves to school our observations for pedagogical evaluation[11.]:

Physiological:

Is he/she large headed or small?
What is the color of the hair?
What is the pallor of the skin?
What is the shape of his/her feet, and hands?
What is the shape of the ear?
What is the spacing of the eyes?
How is the body proportioned?
Is the white moon in the fingernail distinguishable?

Movement:

Is he/she well-coordinated, or awkward?
Does he/she walk on toes, heals or flat-footed?
Do his/her feet turn inward or outward?

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11. For background information on the relevance of these questions see the following: **NEWSLETTER, Association For A Healing Education, Volume 5**, Winter 1991; **The Study of Man**, Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophical Press, 1919; **The Bridge Between Universal Spirituality and the Physical Constitution of Man**, Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophical Press, 1920; **The Foot**, Norbert Glas, Anthroposophical Library; **The Ear**, Norbert Glas, Anthroposophical Library; **Curative Education**, Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophical Press, 1924; **Occult Physiology**, Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophical Press, 1911.

Warmth Organism:

Are his/her hands moist, cool, warm?
Is he/she usually well dressed for the temperature?
Any complaints of high fevers or headaches?
How does he/she react to being touched?

Fluid Organism:

What is his/her heart rhythm?
Notice his/her speed, endurance, strength?
Does he/she perspire a lot or a little?
Does he/she need to urinate frequently?
Does he/she drink a great deal of water?
Does he/she have a strong body odor?

Physical Breathing:

Does the child breathe deeply or with shallow breaths?
Does the child breathe through the nose or mouth?
Is the out-breath or the in-breath more pronounced?
What is the quality of his/her speech?
Does he/she snore?

Soul Breathing:

Is the child introverted or extroverted?
Is the child a cosmic or earthly child?
Is the child fantasy rich or fantasy poor?
How (and how often) does he/she laugh, cry?
What are his/her sleeping, waking rhythms?
Is his/her thinking focussed or dreamy?
How is the interaction with his/her peers?

School Work:

What is his/her reaction to discipline?
Is he/she artistic?
Is he/she adept at remembering detail?
Is he/she neat?
What is the usual condition of his/her desk?
How does he/she hold a pencil?
What kind of attention span does he/she have?
Does he/she establish eye contact?
How does he/she sit in his/her chair?

Children in Need of Special Care

There exists in most Waldorf Schools a care group which looks out specifically for those children that need extra help and attention. Ideally this group has within it an Anthroposophical doctor, a curative Eurythmist, a Bothmer gymnast, a curative painter, a Hauschka massage specialist, the school's reading/math tutor, and several Class or specialty teachers. Of course, the budget

defines (unfortunately) what we are able to provide , but no one can deny the desperate need that exists in most of our modern children for these therapies!

How can we observe that there might be a problem when we look at the children? There are four levels of medical complexity which travel inward beginning with the physical body, going to the etheric, the astral and finally the ego. Each has a corresponding therapy, and each is more complex to deal with.[12.]

The first level of deformities can be observed in the physical body. The Anthroposophical doctor might recommend such therapies as: **modeling, Bothmer gym, Feldenkreis, Rhythmic massage, lymphatic massage, or neuromuscular massage**. Indications that the physical body, or home, of the child is not as harmonized as might be are:

Physical deformities
Posture problems
Poor circulation
Clumsiness or poor coordination
Dizziness
Disorientation
Nervousness
Poor attention span

The second level can be found in the etheric body. The Anthroposophic doctor would use **curative eurythmy** as a therapy for the etheric body. Here we might observe the following:

Poor circulation
Spatial disorientation, including mixed dominance
Bedwetting

The third level concerns the astral body which can be treated with **curative painting, artistic therapy and music**. These soul problems may include:

Emotional problems

12. Acknowledgement to Dr. Thomas Cowan, school doctor at the Pine Hill Waldorf School, who has guided my colleagues and myself in this area.

Polarity problems (expansive behavior –hyperactivity or contracted behavior – involuted)
Emotional transitions . . . life crisis – 9 year change
Asthma (soul posture of rigidity often becomes asthma)
Epilepsy . . . the soul and spirit dive down into the body and can't get out. There is a feeling of being dammed up, so a seizure results.
Problems with sleeping and waking – there are problems within the soul and astral body, children could use expansion and contraction exercises

The fourth level involves the ego. This is the integrating level. The Anthroposophical doctor might recommend intensive **speech work** and **counselling**. Recognized symptoms might be:

Problems of self esteem/self image –
Juvenile diabetes (weakness of the ego)
Problems with honesty or truth

The High School Student

The High School student needs individual and active evaluation. Besides the regular meetings with teachers and sponsors, the adolescent needs constant feedback form his/her teachers on their progress.

On the other hand, the high school teacher needs to be constantly evaluating his/her own teaching. Susan Moore Johnson writes about,

> ". . . a high School teacher who was head of peer evaluations in his school explained that when a teacher was slated for review, a committee would be formed, including the teacher's department head and two colleagues of his or her choosing. After the teacher had completed a written self-assessment and the group had met to review the teacher's goals and concerns, each committee member observed one of that teacher's classes for an entire week. In addition students completed written evaluation of the teacher's work. Finally the committee reconvened to review the materials; report on their observations, and discuss opportunities for improvement."[13.]

[13.] Susan Moore Johnson,**Teachers At Work,** Basic Books, NY, 1990, p275.

The teacher in a Waldorf High School can use evaluation as part of a threefold process with his/her students:

- to reinforce and solidify what the student has already learned.

- to stretch the student beyond what he/she has learned.

- to activate the students' ability to think analytically and synthetically and to use discrimination. The students should be trained to be able to view problems from different points of view.

The teacher could ask the question: "How will I know the students have achieved my predetermined goal for the class?" Some criteria should be set to determine if the student has performed adequately, keeping in mind that each student will respond out of his or her individuality. Therefore, when evaluation begins the teacher must make sure the expectations are appropriate for each individual student.

When devising your own personal evaluation the following points could be considered:[14.]

1. Do the students have the **knowledge** to recall the material covered in the class?

2. Do the students have the ability to **comprehend** and make use of the material which was covered. Can they communicate using points they have learned?

3. Can the students **apply** the ideas that they have learned to other situations in their life?

4. Can the students **analyze** the knowledge that they have comprehended and applied and can they organize it into a totality?

5. Can the students **synthesize** the material? Can they take parts and pieces and formulate the whole?

[14.] David Mitchell, and Douglas Gerwin, **The Creative Learning Process**, Advance Learning, 1988, privately published work.

6. Can the students **discriminate** or judge the value of the ideas they have learned and can they **communicate** their relationship to those ideas in an independent manner?

Testing can **solidify** what the student has been taught. It should highlight the important aspects of a lesson and **be a learning experience in itself.**

To be comprehensive and fair, evaluation must recognize the students' different learning styles, and it must draw upon both their "left" and "right" modes of thinking.

Evaluations can be as varied as the lessons they test. Following are just a few general and specific ways of evaluating high school students.

In general (adaptable to virtually any subject)students are called to:

— make presentations to the class
— write block books containing notes, essays, charts, maps, illustrations, etc.
— answer unseen essay questions based upon preparatory questions given out ahead of time in a previous class period.
— take oral examinations.
— do independent projects related to the subject.

More specifically by course, the teacher can consider the following:

English
— have students write a piece in the style of an author they have studied.
— insert punctuation in an ambiguous passage
—complete sentences, saying whether the verb in transitive or intransitive.
—recognize previously unseen passages from authors they have read.

Foreign Languages
— have students write and perform skits, scenes from plays, puppet shows etc. to show fluency.
— spot the "deliberate errors" (testing recognition skills)

— write down words and add their own synonyms (testing vocabulary)
— do oral exercises “against the clock” (testing speed and fluency)

History

— have the students “write a description in the day of _____,“
— describe typical market scene in a given historical period.
— write letters, diary entries, or newspaper articles set in the period being studied.
— make written (or oral) portraits of a historical figure.

Science

— write reports on the biographies of famous scientists, then reconstruct the report to give a short oral presentation to the class.
— prepare projects for an extra-curricular science fair.
— imagine that they have been recognized as experts on a subject being studied. Give the students 20 minutes to develop questions for the producer of the radio show to use in an interview.
— after studying starches, sugars and cellulose in Chemistry give the students 5 unknown powders in the lad and have them identify them using tests of solubility, melting and boiling points, reaction to Fehling solution, Molisch reagent, iodine, etc.

Evaluating the School:

It can be a great help for schools to have a vision into the future. This can be formalized through the writing of a **Mission Statement** and a **five year plan**. The Mission Statement is a concise statement about the goal of the school that all faculty help formulate. The five year plan has three components: an economic forecast, a plan for the physical building of the school, and a pedagogical plan showing development of the curricula offerings.

The Association of Waldorf School of North America has written **A GUIDE FOR SELF-STUDY, EVALUATION, AND ACCREDATION FOR WALDORF SCHOOLS.** This vehicle is now being tested for suitability, so I will not go further into this subject. A copy of this guide can be obtained form the Chairman of A.W.S.N.A.

A.W.S.N.A. PUBLICATION

Conclusion:

It is a challenge to teach and administer in today's world. There is much present today in our society which causes obstacles both in the children and in ourselves. What we need is to cultivate an inner joy, a sense of adventure and a good sense of humor. What we are really doing is practicing new forms which will **always** be in process and will probably **never** be perfect. It is in our human striving that we make the forms come alive.

It is everyone's task to be responsible and wakeful — this is the challenge of today, and the goal of a good evaluation, for teachers, for our students and for our school!

Cornelis Pieterse co-founded the Chicago Waldorf School, The Lukas Foundation (a social-therapeutic community), and Envision Associates (a consulting organization). He held various teaching and counseling positions in curative institutions in Europe and America. He was 9 years at the High Mowing School in New Hampshire. For the last four years he has worked as a consultant and facilitator for corporations, Waldorf Schools, and non profit organizations.

Chapter 9

WORKING TOGETHER

When adults come together in a sustained working relationship there is a constant flow of dialogue swinging between the extremes of affirmation, and conflict. This chapter was written to address those adults choosing to work together out of an inner connection and commitment to Anthroposophy, most specifically in, but not restricted to, Waldorf Schools. In most Waldorf Schools, a College of Teachers assumes the shared responsibility for the destiny of the school as well as the interpersonal relationship between the adults who staff the school.

The unique role of a College as a meditative group has been addressed in a previous chapter. However, any group of adults might benefit from an examination of the nature of conflict, how to recognize it, how to deal with it, and how to transform it.

Conflict is an integral and important part of all social interactions, whether this be within a group or between individuals. Every issue discussed has its polarity, and a healthy Waldorf School will learn how to use polarity in its faculty discussions to form the tripartite, or third viewpoint, to which all may recognize

with consensus. Sometimes, however, the tripartite is not recognized and the polarity remains. This can result in conflict. We may then experience that conflict finds its way into discussions with particular intensity and persistence!

In working with conflict, and trying to resolve it, we must be clear that there are no rules, models or easy steps to follow. Each situation is unique and demands our full attention and awareness so that we may come to an appropriate response. We are asked to create anew from our inner resources rather than what may be prescribed by social norm or authority. Often we may not know if our actions and solutions are correct for a given situation until we have tried, even experimentally, and then consciously evaluated the results.

New soul/spiritual capacities are slowly and tentatively surfacing in humanity! We may already experience that a colleague or school community member can offer a particular insight or intuition, or can exercise a particular social skill that brings healing to a situation. Lets stay awake to what others can bring. We must also learn to recognize and trust our own intuitions and perceptions, and have the courage to act out of them.

This chapter explores aspects of the nature of conflict and the role it plays within the structure and development of social life. We will examine our own relationship to conflict (including a few words on conflict and karma) and offer possible guidelines and techniques on working with conflict. We will conclude by describing some exercises that schools can employ to help work with conflict.

The Nature of Conflict:

With a couple of possible exceptions, the nature of conflicts in a Waldorf school is essentially similar to what we might find in other organizations. We are living in a necessary phase of our ego development in which the strongest anti-social forces are at work. Name a shortcoming and I can find its echo living in my own being! We can all elaborate on our own countless human qualities which stand in the way of a healthy social life: martyrdom, all kinds of fears and phobias, jealousies, prejudice, dogmatism, want for power and influence — to name a few. We also have the basic human needs to be included, accepted, liked and recognized by others. These qualities are alive and well in most of us and therefore in our communities.

Rudolf Steiner pointed out that sympathy can be just as destructive as antipathy.[1] A sympathetic inclination toward a person can be blinding in recognizing what may be incorrect or even immoral in what was said or done. Seeking to only affiliate with colleagues with whom we are sympathetically inclined, results in cliques and power blocks which exacerbates conflict.

It is interesting to note that some conflicts have an icy-cold, below the surface, quality. These conflicts tend to run over a long period of time and often find no resolution at all. They are unspoken, invisible, but ever-present and could be described as cancerous in nature. Other types of conflicts explode in the heat of battle, often short-lived, but tend to recur in definite patterns. (To familiarize yourself with your relationship to conflict, make a self-assessment of what type of conflict you tend to "favor", and what type of conflict seems to come to you from others.)

The nature of conflicts has an added dimension in Waldorf schools. We have been entrusted with the spiritual content and life-renewing stream of Anthroposophy. This connection has given us access to a tremendous amount of knowledge about the spiritual world, human beings and their inner development, the two-fold nature of evil, temperaments, etc. To the extent that we allow this content of Anthroposophy to be more assimilated by our intellect and less by our soul capacities of Feeling and Will-life, it has the potential of remaining a mere body of information. As such, it can be used to justify all kind of opinions and judgements against our fellow human beings, with the net result that it may gain us a position of power or superiority over them.

We need to mention these things not just to wallow in the negative qualities of man, but clearly to acknowledge that they are operative in conflict situations. If we hope to understand and work with conflict in a conscious way in our schools, it is a that we are awake to these ever-present antisocial forces. Standing fully within the age of the Consciousness Soul requires this awareness of us. On the one hand we must never lose sight of the fact that each human

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[1] Rudolf Steiner, **The Challenge of The Times,** Anthroposophic Press., NY, 1941, pages 119-150.

being is endowed with a higher Self accompanied by benevolent spiritual beings who continuously guide him. However, on the other hand, we all have a strong affinity to these antisocial forces and beings who seek to impair our evolution. If we are not awake, or if we try to ignore or deny the existence of these forces, then we make ourselves more vulnerable to their influence!

The weaknesses of the Waldorf movement, are also its strengths! Rudolf Steiner was very deliberate in his intention to not have a headmaster or headmistress, or other hierarchical structures and orthodox social norms that people can fall-back on. This fact brings with it a decision-making process that can be much more laborious than otherwise might be the case, and that human differences of opinion and conflict will more easily come to the surface. This, in turn, places a much greater responsibility on all of us to create social structures appropriate to our time and to our geographic and cultural background.

The following are some observations we can make about the psychology of conflict:

- The chance for a conflict to escalate is greater when we ignore or avoid the conflict.

- The more we are emotionally or materially dependent on another person(s), the greater the chance for conflict. In other words, conflict usually occurs within the context of interdependency.

- Two people in conflict often share those negative character traits which they perceive and then criticize in the other.

- Conflicts have their source in our feeling-life and can only be driven and escalated by means of these feelings of hatred, fear and doubt. Pure concepts and thinking cannot create conflict. In the experience of the conflict, intellectual arguments are often thinly disguised emotions.

- Of all emotions, fears of the unknown and loss of control, are possibly the most potent in creating and maintaining conflict.

Exercise: When you are in strong conflict with another person, find a quiet time during the day where you identify the main qualities he/she possesses that bring you into conflict with that person. Then, in an honest self-evaluation, assess what you have in common with that person.

Purpose: A greater understanding of yourself and the other, which will lead to greater acceptance of yourself and seeing, again, the humanity in the other.

The Role Of Conflict:

At the end of Scene Ten of the Mystery Play, **The Soul's Awakening** by Rudolf Steiner, we find the dialogue between Lucifer and Benedictus (Johannes' spiritual teacher and guide) concerning who shall have dominion over Johannes's soul — Lucifer or Johannes himself?

Benedictus: He will admire you but will not succumb to you.
Lucifer: I mean to fight.
Benedictus: And, fighting serve the gods.[2.]

This dialogue may serve as an indication about the role of evil in life. While we should be careful not to automatically equate conflict with evil, conflict certainly has its origin in the dark and shadow sides of man. And, as in the case of evil, it plays an essential and, therefore, a potentially positive role in our own development and that of our institutions. It is often out of conflict, chaos or doubt that new impulses can enter our social creations.

In the unfolding of a meeting, all of us can confirm the experience that after a difficult moment – going through "the eye of the needle" by means of a confrontation – the meeting can reach a deeper level of significance. Once that happens, everyone knows it and is inspired by it. The meeting becomes more efficient without losing the necessary depth of deliberation. The analogy of a thunder storm comes to mind, in which the flashes of lightning, the rolling of thunder, the threatening clouds and the driving rain will send us to seek shelter. Then,

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[2.] Rudolf Steiner, **The Soul's Awakening**, G.P. Putnam & Sons, NY, 1920, page 266.

how fresh and light the world feels afterwards – something has been cleansed and renewed!

To recognize, allow for, and process the expression of conflict and differences among members of a group has many benefits. It provides a healthy diversity which will energize all members of a group. It allows for much greater individual and group learning and growth. A faculty, board or committee will gain greater flexibility and adaptability to meet the ever increasing demands placed on a Waldorf school, the changing needs of the children, curriculum, community life, parent expectations and other social/spiritual questions. Through our differences a more meaningful unity and connection can arise – a sense of purpose. Individual contributions, pertaining to the life and performance of the group, are recognized as being essential to the success of the whole group.

Without conflicts we would fall into blissful but dulling sleep. Among other things, conflict awakens us – it calls us to consciousness! What holds true for us as individuals, holds true for groups and entire organizations, as well.

If conflict awakens us, we may extrapolate that the more conscious we are as human beings, the less life's circumstances are truly **experienced** as conflicts. In other words, we still recognize the difficulties in life but they are experienced as opportunities and gifts. As a life-long process, we slowly gain a different inner relationship to what we used to call conflict.

> The gloom of the world is but a shadow.
> Behind it, yet within reach, is joy.
> There is radiance and glory in the darkness.
> Could we but see; and to see, we have only to look.
> I beseech you to look!
>
> Life is so generous a giver, but we,
> Judging its gifts by their outer covering,
> Cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard.
> Remove the covering and you find beneath it
> A living splendor, woven of love, by wisdom, with power.
>
> Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch
> The angel's hand that brings it to you.
> Everything we call a trial, a sorrow, a duty,
> Believe me, that angel's hand is there;
> That gift is there, and the wonder of an overshadowing presence.

Our joys too: be not content with them as joys.
They, too, conceal diviner gifts.

Fra Giovanni (1386-1456)[3.]

Conflict and Karma:

Living with thoughts about karma and reincarnation may strengthen the main ingredient in all conflict resolution – our inner development!

When considering questions of self-development, karma and social life, we must first learn to live with apparent contradictions. On the one hand, conflict has a role to play in our interpersonal interactions; to be a modern human being means that we will meet conflict as individuals strive for consciousness – we must learn to accept it and embrace it. Neither reject nor fear conflict. We must learn to see and trust that everything that comes to us in due course has a purpose designed to further our individual and social development.

On the other hand, it is very important that we must never seek conflict or, even worse, create conflict on purpose! We must ask ourselves, "How can I best **express** myself?" We must also ask ourselves, "How do I best **hear** the concerns of others?"

Perhaps the central contribution by Rudolf Steiner to the spiritual legacy of mankind is his spiritual research into the questions of karma and reincarnation. Never before has any person articulated this spiritual reality so thoroughly and explicitly. From his works we can gain important insights that can shed a unique light on our topic.

Most events and people whom we meet in life, and the general circumstances in which we find ourselves, are a result of our own deeds and experiences in past incarnations. We know this to be called individual karma. One of the implications of this insight is the fact that the difficulties we encounter in other people and events do not find their cause in these people or events but, ultimately, in ourselves. When we blame our problems and conflicts on the people or circumstances (accidents, for instance), we point in the wrong direction. This is somewhat analogous to a young child who, after running into a chair, blames the chair for his pain.

[3.] Notes taken from a handout from the Waldorf Institute, Spring Valley, NY

We often hear ourselves say, "If only this person or this particular conflict were not part of our school, the school would be so much healthier and we could proceed with our tasks." There is a tendency in us to want to surgically remove a problem and to view it as extraneous to the flow of life rather than embrace it. I believe it is an illusion to think that the 'other person' is the problem. The events and people in our lives are brought to us by spiritual beings who work in close conjunction with our higher self. How often does it happen that we encounter the same patterns and the same kind of people and conflicts? We are drawn like a magnet to those people who seem to present us with our issues and dilemmas. These people are mere vehicles for our growth and development on earth. As the child learns to orient himself spatially, congruent to his awareness of the separation of material objects and his own body, we need to orient ourselves in karmic laws. One of these laws tells us that all events coming toward us from without, are intimately connected with our ego identity and its individual phase of development.

This consciousness needs to grow into a strong inner conviction that recognizes our inner relationship to the difficulties that come our way. As Johannes Tautz phrases it, "We ourselves have sought these difficulties. Man fashions his own destiny. The difficulties that he encounters are his own 'I' mirroring itself in his surroundings, in his social environments." [4.]

Considering the unfolding of our destinies, we live within an amazing twofold dynamic. On one hand is the pole of our daily waking consciousness. The world of the senses enter our consciousness and we are aware of how we think and feel about ourselves and others. In response we make decisions about, and we have preferences for, career, people, lifestyle, goals and values, etc. On the other hand of the pole is our will-life that leads us through our limbs to events and people without our conscious participation and choosing.

As an exercise, we need to prepare ourselves so that when a person brings us a conflict, our inner reaction will be of great and genuine interest in that

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[4.] Johannes Tautz. lecture in Spring Valley, April 9, 1982, notes of David Mitchell

human being. Can we later recall all the details of that moment in the day; the room in which the conflict took place, the people present, colors, dress, mood, the seating arrangement and sequence of events? We must paint a picture before our soul of everything that was part of that moment. This effort allows us to cultivate an appreciation for the mystery of life and, according to Rudolf Steiner, orient ourselves toward a better understanding of our personal karma.[5.]

What often is called "bad" or "old" karma between two people is, I think, a misunderstanding. Karma leads us to the moment of the encounter, then choices or new possibilities enter and weave into the relationship together with what is "given" and predetermined. To inwardly turn one's back from a long-standing conflict with another human being by judging this conflict as being "bad" karma, is a subtle form of abdicating one's responsibility toward the present reality of the relationship. I believe that personal karma is not only designed to have us repay old "debt", but has within it fertile seeds for future possibilities and the call to develop new capacities of soul.

Next to personal karma, there also is group, national and world karma, and karma connected with the different spiritual streams which flow together under the umbrella of the Anthroposophical movement and her daughter movements. Certain conflicts may have their root cause in the context of these large streams. However, I believe that most conflicts have their strongest affinity to personal karma.

Elements and Objectives in Conflict Resolution:

The following elements and prerequisites are not necessarily in order of priority or importance. All these objectives should live in our consciousness as we work with conflict. They are applicable if you are a party in the conflict, or if you serve as an outside facilitator.

There cannot really be a question of fully 'resolving' a conflict. Some elements in conflict dissolve naturally while others may lead to the next level of challenges in the future. Our first objective in approaching conflict resolution must be to 'unlock' a situation so that **movement** can be brought in the fixed percep-

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[5.] Rudolf Steiner, **Karma Lectures**, Vol I-VIII, Stiener Press, London, 1956.

tions that people have of each other and of issues. If this movement can take place, conflict becomes a dynamic force for change and development.

The second condition is that the **process** of resolution is as important as the end result. It will be in the process that the necessary learning and social skill-building will occur. It is a common misconception that conflict resolution must result in having the parties smile at each other again and shake hands. While this objective can be an important step, the ultimate purpose of our work must be that paralyzing conflict can turn into creative differences and constructive diversity in our schools. Without diversity, our organizations and human relationships turn stale and stagnant. After all, there can be twelve legitimate points of view to each issue. How can these views be part of our deliberations without mutually excluding each other?

In resolving conflict, we must simultaneously work with two additional and seemingly opposing objectives. One very important goal is to create an atmosphere of **trust** among the parties; to have people look at each other with renewed eyes. Some of the exercises in this chapter are designed to accomplish this trust and to have each party 'walk in the shoes' of the other. However, trust doesn't come from exercises, rather it arises out of the **work** that we do **together**; it is born out of the activities and devotion that we experience with each other through working with the children! Still, without a basic level of trust, we cannot constructively work with conflict. The majority of our efforts will be spent building this foundation.

In the process of building trust between people, it is very easy to by-pass our fourth objective. When we're making progress toward having people trust each other, it will be very tempting to think that now we have resolved the conflict. Often this is not the case. Most important is the pivotal rule that the conflict must be articulated and fully described. In other words, the conflict must become **perceptible**. Perceptible not only in its effects (because, most likely, this is painfully clear to all), but we must learn to phenomenologically describe the nature and chronology of the conflict. Similar to a faculty's child study, we must describe and study the 'biography' of a conflict. This process will have a very important benefit. By making perceptible what was hidden, we externalize and thereby objectify it! Invariably, the conflict loosens its destructive grip on the parties. In

many cases, the process of bringing the conflict to our consciousness by describing it, will be sufficient to allow for resolution.

The fifth condition is to have the **will** to find a solution! While conflict can inflict great misery on all parties (sometimes for long periods of time), people may still be reluctant to seek a resolution. There can be many reasons for this reluctance. Resolution brings with it the necessity for change and for more work on the part of all members in a group. It may, therefore, feel safer and more convenient to stay with the status-quo of existing power structures.

When asked to facilitate conflict resolution, it is very important to assess how committed the parties are to finding a resolution. There are various ways to assess this commitment. We must pay attention to what people say or, more importantly, pay attention to their actions. What is the mood in a meeting? How genuine is the level of exchange and self-disclosure? How willing are the parties to commit to extra meeting time and allot the necessary material and human resources to the process? Individuals and groups can be ingenious in avoiding dealing with the issues at hand. It is important not to underestimate the elements that can stand in the way of conflict resolution.

Intimately connected with the 'will' to find a resolution, is the sixth condition of **courage**. In working with conflict, we inevitably are confronted, not only with the shadow side of the other person, but also with our own. A precondition for working with conflict is that we don't place ourselves above the others in the conflict. Any sentiment that make us feel that another person's problem couldn't be our own, works against the process of resolution. Honest and heart-felt humility joined by a certain 'fearlessness' are all essential ingredients.

A seventh attitude is not to seek fault with a person or to find one party 'right' or 'wrong' in a situation. We must be **nonjudgmental** in all respects and in everything we do. Invariably, both (all) have played their part in the conflict. By drawing sides or pronouncing opinions and 'explanations', we invariably add to the conflict. We should be very careful to **delineate** between the processes of conflict resolution and that of evaluation. The latter aims for a decision or corrective action of some sort. The former, however, is purely designed to accommodate communication and further development.

The eighth requirement is to honor the **freedom** of the other human being. If we recognize that each conflict finds its origin within the souls of the individual parties to the conflict, then resolution must start with accepting our own responsibility in the conflict. We must know that no matter how obvious the shortcomings of the other may be, or how radically wrong his thinking is, I have only the power to change myself. No amount of effort on my part can make me change the other person or have him learn the lessons that **I** think life is teaching him. The idea of honoring the unequivocal freedom of the human being, so central to the impulse of Anthroposophy, must permeate all our feelings and actions.

Two final guidelines are extremely important to remember and to apply whenever we can. One is that, when we are speaking of human interaction, colleagueship and, especially, difficult relationships – it is important that we learn to speak for our feelings and personal needs. It is a mystery and somewhat a contradiction to me that a movement, which excels in enriching the experience of childhood to many, many thousands of children, involves many adults who are so awkward and suspicious of expressing our feelings to each other. In our frailties and striving we bear 'witness' to our humanity again! This brings us to the ninth requirement: **Speak from the heart** in anything you say. Conflict will evaporate when we make ourselves vulnerable to the each other; when we can confidently speak from our own strengths, while allowing others to help us with our weaknesses.

The last condition concerns group work. In the vast majority of cases, a conflict between two members of a working group (for instance, a faculty), will adversely effect the workings of the entire group. This particular conflict will live in the consciousness, and become the burden of the group. Additionally, almost without exception, other members of the group will find their alliances to the conflict and, subsequently, contribute to it. For these reasons (and others), resolution should always take place within the context of the **full group**! The benefit to this approach is simply that other members can become co-responsible for the process and, when resolution occurs, it's redemptive influence will permeate the group and the entire organization. Please resist the temptation to have conflicts resolved in the corners (so-to-speak) of our organizations.

We now can summarize some of the elements and goals that must be present, as necessary prerequisites, to help resolve conflict:

- conflict is intimately connected with our biographies
- conflict must lead to further inner development
- we must 'embrace' conflict, and not see it as extraneous to life
- we must 'dissolve' frozen perceptions of ourselves, others and issues
- all our efforts must be to establish trust among human beings
- we must make the conflict perceptible in all of its aspects
- we must assess and engage the intangible soul forces of the Will, and have the courage to work with conflict
- in anything we do we must be nonjudgmental.– honoring the freedom of our fellow human beings must stand at the core of all our efforts
- we must learn to speak from our hearts and be in touch with our feelings and personal needs
- most, if not all, conflict resolution must occur within the full circle of human beings who are affected by, and contribute to the conflict

Steps:

This outline of steps in conflict resolution, is much more a general guide than a rigid formula. When we facilitate or directly engage in confronting a conflict, our intuitions will guide us through the process. Very often, individual steps may have to be by-passed or it may be sufficient to just cover a couple of these 'check points'. To better illustrate these steps, we will assume that the conflict has escalated substantially, effecting various individuals and different aspects of the organization.

Assessment & Commitment Stage

This first stage is important because it will lay a foundation and set a tone for the entire process. Primarily, we are considering three interrelated steps.

First, there must be an acknowledgment and identification of the 'problem' or conflict, including the individuals who may be involved. Usually, by this time, everyone is aware of the problem and the need for finding a working solution becomes urgent. Second, some kind of an assessment is made about how the problem should be resolved. Decisions are made on how to approach the difficulties. It may just be that two individuals should get together and 'talk it out', or that existing channels of communication and/or procedures should be followed; or, it may be decided that a third party should be brought in (from in, or outside the school community) to facilitate the process. Third, whatever the decision is, the main parties to the conflict must understand, agree and commit to the process! Without some basic form of agreement among the parties, resolving a conflict is practically impossible. In the latter case, a community might find itself, for the school's benefit, making an evaluative decision, some kind of arrangement that will allow for the continued running of the school. These decisions may run from binding arbitration, a negotiated settlement, strict rules and probation, to asking an individual for his resignation. Any of these responses may be legitimate and necessary in certain cases, but it should be remembered that a conflict can easily metamorphose and shift to other areas and individuals in the school community.

Biographical & Descriptive Phase

As mentioned earlier, this phase is crucial. When special care has been exercised to make the conflict fully perceptible, some kind of resolution may already appear. In this phase, therefore, it is our aim to fully articulate what the conflict is and sketch its history. We **"map"** the conflict. While it is important to achieve clarity in describing the circumstances, do not overload the discussion with minute details, but, rather, learn to characterize the essence of the conflict. Sometimes this can even be done with an image. In this process, it will become clear where the story coincides and where it does not. If individuals strongly disagree on the course of events and nature of the conflict, we let these discrepancies stand. These discrepancies are part of the complexity of the conflict. Furthermore, at this stage we concentrate on bringing problems to light; not on solving them. It is a very necessary, often painful, moment in the process, to have all parties (as a group) experience the severity of the conflict.

Perception-sharing & Mirroring Phase

This phase is truly the heart of the resolution process. Following and interlocking with phase two, phase three focuses on the actual interrelationships between people in the conflict. What are the perceptions that others hold of me? What is the impact of my behavior on others? Are my intentions consistent with my actions? Is what I say consistent with what I truly feel and think about others? (Ironically, many conflicts do not arise out of ill-conceived intentions but, rather,, out of a failure to be honest and straight with others, because we "don't want to hurt their feelings".)

The very definition of conflict is that perceptions we have of each other get fixed, stereotyped and distorted. Even the most caring and humane of us will discard data that contradicts the negative images we would want to hold of a person, and cling to those observations that confirm our preconceptions. Of course, what makes it more complicated is the fact that our perceptions and opinions of people are not just based on figments of the imagination; they all have a grain of truth in them! We could say that the purpose of this phase is twofold: One; to 're-align' our soul forces of thinking, feeling and willing by means of perception-sharing so that our interactions with people can become three dimensional again; i.e. we learn to express what is truly living in us regarding our thoughts and feelings about a person. (The truth is often less painful than a sugar-coated criticism or innuendo.) Two; by using the mirroring or feedback process, we can gradually adjust our reality (self perception) with the reality that other people reflect back to us, thereby allowing the impact we have on others, to be more consistent with our intentions.

Agreement & Contract Phase

If the conflict resolution resulted in the need to have certain forms of behavior and relationship change, then these changes must be clearly documented and agreed upon. For example, it may be that the parties agree to meet together on a weekly basis for the next three months, in order to facilitate continued contact and communication. Or, it may be agreed upon for each party to 'journal' their inner work on the issues surrounding the conflict, and exchange these journals with each other on a periodic basis. Or, it may be agreed upon to assign a 'speaking partner' to each person. This colleague would function as an unbiased listener and advisor. There are numerous ways to accommodate further support and communication to the parties that are in conflict. All these agreements must

be ratified and periodically reviewed. None of these arrangements should run forever. They are merely outer support systems that have a temporary value to assist people in making necessary behavioral changes.

Systems & Organization Development Phase

In some cases, part of resolving the conflict requires that changes be made in the organizational structures of the school. It may be the formation of a new committee, or changes in membership, or that certain procedures and policies need to be amended. In extreme cases, it might even happen that the very foundation (vision & mission) of a school is being challenged or in need of 'revision'. Individual development and organization development are reciprocal – the one effects the other. Rudolf Steiner indicated that any human creation reflects the consciousness of that human being and of the times, whether this is in art, science or our institutions.[6.] I also believe that, in turn, our creations influence our consciousness.

As a rule, though, it would be a mistake to change the organizational structures first, before (or as a substitute to) working with the interpersonal conflict issues! Many organizations resort to making all kinds of system changes, only to find that these collapse because people cannot work together. The old edict is still true,"Organizational structures are as good as the people who work in them".

Review & Implementation Phase

When any decisions are made, then we should be clear who, what, when and how things are to be implemented. It also is important to maintain records outlining the conflict resolution process. Sometimes, down the road, there may be a need to refer back to the proceedings for administrative and/or legal purposes. At all times, maintain a record of the agreements and decisions, and read these back to the group before the meeting adjourns.

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6. Rudolf Steiner, **Theory of Knowledge**, Anthroposophic Press, NY. 1940, pages 100-118.

The **review process** is the most important learning tool that we have at our disposal in group and organization development. In it we look back on our 'creation' and glean from it what worked well and what did not. Some of the guidelines regarding conflict resolution, pertain to the review process as well. A properly conducted review neither judges nor intellectualizes. It merely describes and characterizes, in images, what transpired from a detached, but living, point of view. Do not fall into the trap of continuing your discussions and arguments. Make the review brief (7 minutes); just a couple of observations and descriptions will suffice. Stay with your personal learning and insights. Leave others free to discover their own diamonds in the sand. Ask open-ended questions like: What worked best? When was the most difficult moment in the meeting? What image, fairy tale, weather or landscape did you associate with the meeting? How did you personally contribute to the meeting? Where was the golden moment of opportunity? If the meeting were a building under construction, what would it look like? By means of the review, we can learn from even the most difficult and frustrating meetings.

Exercises:

What follows are a few exercises and process suggestions in conflict resolution and related trust-building/biography and mirroring/feedback exercises. In each exercise, any number of variations are possible.

Conflict

(1) Have opposing parties, in twos, sit across from each other and draw a self portrait. When finished, each interprets their own picture for the other. Then, for 10 minutes, both articulate what new insights they gained of the other in relation to the conflict.

(2)Have all parties draw, paint or model an image of the conflict. Then, a general discussion is conducted about the nature of the conflict.

(3) Have each participant, silently for themselves, conduct an imaginary conversation with a person with whom he has a real conflict. The conversation should include a confrontation, and what he would say and do in response. After 15 minutes, the participant writes down the essence of the conversation and shares this with the full group. The participant should identify helpful behavior

and what was most difficult about the exercise. As an option, the full group could offer helpful feedback.

Trust Building and Biography

(1) Have half of the group blindfolded. The sighted people each take a person without sight, and guide this person through the building or out through the garden/park/street. The sighted person gives a full account of all the obstacles on the way. Next, roles should be reversed. Afterwards, the group shares insights and experiences.

All biography exercises are essential for promoting trust. As a guideline, avoid long accounts of a person's life and history. Design specific questions to which people, one by one, then respond. It is important that people can have fun with the exercises.

(2) Describe your favorite room or place while you were a young child.

(3) What is your first memory, ever?

(4) Your first love?

(5) Describe the first time that you truly felt independent (the world is my oyster)

Mirroring/Feedback

This exercise allows individuals to speak and then to hear how what they have said has been heard by the other.(For further explanation refer to the paragraphs on **Perception-Sharing and Mirroring Phase** above.)

Process

(1) When in a difficult phase of a discussion, have one person speak at a time, then afterward, another member of the group paraphrases what was spoken. Then proceed to next point.

(2) Assign two members of the group to sit outside the circle and have them, periodically, reflect back to the group, their observations and further process suggestions.

Sender:

- Whenever possible, seek permission from recipient.
- Address person directly.

- Use "I" statements only.
- Never speak for others or from "hear-say", but from personal experience and how you were affected by the recipient.
- Only use very specific, concrete and recent examples.
- Do not editorialize, moralize or philosophize; just describe.

Recipient:

- Paraphrase feedback.
- Make sure you understand feedback or ask for clarification.
- Ask for examples and seek feedback from others to confirm or modify information.
- Never argue, defend your position or give reasons. Let what is mirrored live in you.
- You may speak to how you were affected by the exchange: confused, helped, relieved, angered, supported, etc.

For all participants:

- Share new insights and what you have learned.
- Remember that in the exchange, the value systems of both recipient and senders are operative; therefore, do not judge.
- Avoid extreme responses.

Process:

- Have sender give one statement at a time, after which recipient paraphrases and ask for clarification, if necessary.
- Repeat process once or twice more, if needed.
- Recipient may request feedback from others.
- Never have one person continuously sit in the "hot seat", but move the process on to other members of the group.

Conclusion:

Our ability to work together as colleagues in Waldorf Schools predicates a consciousness awakeness to our relationships with one another in the social sphere. To be a “social” being is not granted to us as a birthright, quite the opposite, we have to actively work towards it as part of our task in human evolution. It is hoped that this chapter may have shed some light on this path.

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Chapter 10

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

What functions does a board serve? Why have one? How should a board be related to the College of teachers and faculty in a Waldorf school? What are typical patterns of development, and frequently encountered difficulties? How can we improve communications, reduce potential conflict and misunderstanding? What should be a board's composition? Who should serve on one?

In this chapter we will explore these and related questions which surface time and again in Waldorf schools. Given the astonishing variety of people and organizational arrangements in the schools, it should be clear from the outset that there are no "right" answers. Each school must sort these things out in light of its own particular circumstances. Moreover, as a school grows and evolves, so will its board's functions and its relationship to the organism as a whole. For these reasons, those hoping to find in these pages a "formula" they can apply to their schools are likely to be disappointed. Although we will offer numerous suggestions along the way, our goal is not to present a static picture. Rather we hope to bring the issues into focus in a way that will contribute to more productive discussion among schools' faculties and boards, where the final responsibility rests.

What Functions Does a Board Serve?

Why have a board in the first place? If the school is "faculty run" is there any need for one? If so, what is its role, other than to rubber-stamp decisions of the faculty and college (if there is one)?

At one extreme are schools where the board is seen as a somewhat awkward appendage, maintained because articles of incorporation require that there be one. Its function is to serve as the school's legal face to the world, to provide official signatures and approve policy set elsewhere, but it has no real part in making policy or running the school. In effect, the faculty or college exercise the real powers which by law are assigned to the board.

For a board to be so completely disempowered is uncommon; yet, fairly frequently one encounters, in the midst of a board-faculty conflict, indignation on the part of faculty members at the board's "presumption" to tell the faculty what to do. On the other side, among non-faculty board members, one encounters feelings of discomfort at being legally responsible for the school's actions while having little or no real voice in the decisions. Mindful of the fact that the legal authority (to hire, fire, and dispose of the school's assets, among other things) still rests with the board, some schools "protect" against the board's exercising this authority (and avoid potential conflicts with non-faculty board members) by filling all positions with faculty members or with anthroposophists who can be counted on to go along with the will of the faculty.

If all one wants of a board is to fill the legal shell, the above solution is reasonable. In most cases, however, schools are in fact asking that their boards serve other functions for which one needs the time and talent of non-faculty members. Fundraising and developing community connections are obvious tasks frequently asked of boards. Expert advice in legal or business matters is often sought for "free" by bringing on members with experience in those areas. The more talented, dynamic and committed to the life of the school these individuals are, however, the less likely they are to accept a role of "rubber-stamping" decisions made elsewhere. A tension can develop, a tug-of-war between board and faculty; where does the buck finally stop?

At the other end of the spectrum are those schools, frequently in their infancy, where the board exercises the primary responsibility for school governance; hiring and firing teachers, setting salaries, deciding budgetary issues including what positions will be funded, thus what curriculum will be offered. This is often the case with schools just getting started; a parent group takes the initiative, forms a non-profit corporation and advertises for a teacher. The teachers, fresh from training (or with no training!), have their hands full mastering their classes; the parent-run board must carry the school's administration and financing, and must continue to evaluate the new teachers and the evolving pedagogical work for some time.

While there may be good reasons a school would tend at one time toward the purely faculty-run model or at another time to the board-run model, it seems the long-term health of a Waldorf school is best served if there is a balance, a sharing of responsibility between the board and the college/core faculty. One approach, frequently used, is to divide the responsibilities: the board deals with legal and financial matters; the college/core faculty with pedagogical concerns (including staffing issues).

In the last analysis, there is no such thing as a pedagogical issue that doesn't have potential financial and legal implications, and there is no financial or legal decision that doesn't ultimately affect the pedagogy. There are inevitably areas of overlap: Can the school afford to make crafts a full-time position? How many hours of teaching will be compensated at full-time rates? What are the legal implications of the college's decision to deal with a complaint about corporal punishment in a certain way? There is a dynamic tension and the necessity for accommodation among the responsible groups.

Rather than viewing this "tension" as a problem, it can in fact be seen as an extremely valuable aspect of the life of a school. The board and the college/core faculty engage in a healthy dialogue in which each, by sharing different perspectives, keeps the other "conscious."

The board can be pictured most usefully, not as a board of "directors," but as a board of "trustees." The board holds a trust. Its primary task, in this light, is to see that the school fulfills its mission, and to keep it on course over the long

haul. The college of teachers (or the core faculty, if there is no college) has the same responsibility. Both groups are ultimately responsible for all aspects of the school's life; the college/core faculty entrusts the board to carry the primary burden of financial and practical matters, while the board entrusts the college/core faculty to carry the primary pedagogical focus. Each is responsible for communicating and listening to the other in carrying out its primary trust. Some suggestions to facilitate this process of communicating and listening are presented later in this chapter. But more important than any specific technique is keeping alive the recognition that this shared trust exists, with the sense of mutual responsibility and mutual gratitude that it implies.

Phases in the Evolution of the Board-Faculty Relationship:

As mentioned above, a frequent pattern in the life of a school is for it to start as an initiative of parents who form the corporation, become the founding board and hire the school's first teachers. At this point in a school's life the teachers are generally happy for any and all help they can get, and the fact that the board is in charge of most of the school's affairs is not an issue. In fact, without constant involvement and tremendous sacrifices on the part of founding board members, most schools would have a hard time surviving their pioneering years.

As the school grows it becomes impossible for everyone to do everything, as was done in the pioneering days. Hopefully, the faculty is growing stronger and taking on a greater share of the school's day-to-day administration (eventually with the help of a business manager or administrator), as well as taking primary responsibility for the integrity of the teaching in each class and in the school as a whole. Ideally, as a core of dedicated teachers forms, a transition is made to the forming of a College of Teachers; even where this step is not taken, informal or formal structures evolve through which a "core group" begins to take the reins.

Often this is a time where problems crop up. Either the board is reluctant to let go, and a tug-of-war develops; or it backs out or is pushed out too soon, leaving overwhelmed and inexperienced teachers to struggle with things such as fundraising and financial planning for which they have neither the training nor the time. The ideal situation is one where a gradual shift occurs towards a sharing of

responsibilities as the college/core faculty becomes stronger. Obviously this requires maturity, tact and constant communication. The alternative, however, is that the board ends up in a power struggle with the faculty. Whichever group "wins," the school loses. Nearly as problematic for the school is the situation that emerges not from confrontation but from avoidance: where neither the board nor faculty feel they have the power to act, areas of responsibility are poorly defined, and no one knows "who's in charge."

Though less common, it can also happen in the life of a school that it finds itself with a weak or non-existent board (or one consisting of only faculty) and sets out to recruit new board members who can bring outside perspectives and exercise leadership in non-pedagogical areas. The issues are the same as above but in reverse, with the college/core faculty needing to make the transition to shared governance as the board becomes more capable.

In fact, it may happen during the full term of a school's life that at one time the board is stronger and more active, at another time the faculty carries more of the responsibility. Let us take as our starting point that both groups are in fact mutually responsible for all aspects of school life, trusting one another to assume the primary burden in one area or the other; then it stands to reason that if, for whatever cause, significant weakness exists in either the board or the college/core faculty, the other group will tend to step into the void. This could happen if there were a substantial loss of key faculty over a short period, requiring replacement with relatively inexperienced teachers; or, it could happen that for one reason or another many key board members step down, leaving mostly faculty board members still serving. In such cases (and they do happen) it is appropriate that the stronger group assume some of the duties normally falling to the weaker group, for the health of the school. What is most important, however, is that this be seen as a temporary situation, with the goal always to return to a condition of balanced sharing of responsibility.

The Composition of a Board:

Who should sit on a board depends in part on what you want the board to do – and on whom you're able to attract. Our discussion has mostly been concerned with the typical "working" board in which all members generally have duties as chairs or members of board committees, or provide specialized advice to

the board in areas of their expertise. There are, of course, also "advisory" boards which tend to meet one or two times a year over dinner, hear speeches about the work of the organization and pull out their checkbooks. Their purpose is to give and raise money, or to lend prestige to the undertaking by virtue of associating their names with it. They might or might not have a "legal" existence via the organization's bylaws; if they do have more than ceremonial functions, these are generally handled by a smaller executive committee which actually governs. Such boards can be very useful to a school. However, the issues involved in recruiting, holding and getting the most out of such groups are very different from the ones typically faced by a working board for a Waldorf school, which are addressed here.

In the working Waldorf board, as in other non-profit boards, there is a mix of qualities one is hoping to assemble. There are various formulations of this, such as the "3 W's" of Wisdom, Wealth or Work. Board members should be people who bring at least one of the above with them: individuals who have a demonstrated involvement in the life of the school (on committees, fairs, etc.) and a willingness to work, those bringing specific wisdom in the form of special skills (lawyers, bankers, real estate brokers, etc.), and others with recognized stature and community standing, who lend the "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" and can help open doors to those with influence and wealth in the community.

Every school dreams of recruiting the local equivalent of the Chairman of General Motors, or the wife of the head of the Kellogg Foundation. The reality, however, is that board formation is very much a bootstraps operation. Teachers poor as church mice and mothers working on the bazaar committee don't always have ready access to the Chair of General Motors. Rather, the initial pool of available talent consists of the parents of children in the school, the local anthroposophical community and the teachers. These are also, obviously, the groups who should form the core of any board, being most committed to and most knowledgeable about the school's mission and the impulses standing behind Waldorf education. If major foundation chairs are not among them, so be it. However, it is possible for this initial group to begin a process of reaching out to others whom they know, who might then bring on others whom they know, and thus eventually attract individuals with high visibility and community standing. This is and should be a gradual process, as those recruited should truly become

familiar with the school and committed to it before becoming part of a working board; they may, of course, be recruited for an advisory board using less strict standards.

Do all board members need to be anthroposophists? Or is it sufficient if they are just decent folk of good will? This question has been debated and answered in any number of different ways. Different circumstances may call for different answers. In general, though, it seems best not to tie the board's hands when it comes to recruiting qualified members. Clearly, not all the parents at the school are anthroposophists, nor necessarily are all those most involved and supportive of the school. What is necessary, though, is that all Board members recognize the Anthroposophical foundation of Waldorf Education and do not have any problems with this reality.

How should membership be divided among parents, college/core faculty and community members? Again, there are no hard and fast answers. Still, as a general principle, it would be best not to overload the board with any one group, nor to underrepresent any of them. Each brings valuable insights and different perspectives to the work of the board. Especially important, as mentioned earlier, is that there be college members (or core faculty) who participate fully in the work of the board and who carry the board work back to the college and faculty. Many schools use as a rule of thumb the principle that one third membership each be drawn from the teachers, parents and friends in the community.

One of the concerns that often stands behind the above questions has to do with protecting the fundamental Waldorf impulse, of avoiding the prospect that a board majority may form which chooses to change the school's mission in significant ways. Such "take-overs" have occasionally happened. It is prudent, therefore, when setting up the bylaws, to build in mechanisms to prevent this.[1] A common approach is to establish an "executive board" of college/core faculty board members and additional anthroposophist board members. This "board within a board" would be self-perpetuating, and would have veto power over acts

[1] See **Economic Exporations**, Mitchell and Alsop, AWSNA Economic Committee, Wilton, NH, 1988.

of the full board. Such an executive committee may be deemed unnecessary if the board itself is established as self-perpetuating and consists of no more than 12 to 15 members. The key to avoiding serious difficulties is to make the board self-perpetuating rather than elected by a general membership. Another important aspect to preserving continuity is to establish fixed terms (of 2 - 5 years) and to stagger their termination dates. Clearly, there should also be provision for replacement of board members who are consistently absent.

Avoiding Micromanagement and Other Pitfalls:

As was indicated earlier, the primary task of the board is to see that the school fulfills its mission, and to keep it on course over the long haul. The college or core faculty, as a governing organ, has the same responsibility, but with a pedagogical focus. Both groups, in fact, hold a trust.

One of the most common dangers for non-profit boards (and also for the college/core faculty) is overinvolvement with day-to-day affairs. This may come about as a result of a special interest a board member has in a particular area, or it may come as a kind of habit, or it may result from not having clearly defined levels of policy. The board (and the college) should be involved in the highest levels of policy; the board should concern itself with the big picture. It should avoid the temptation to meddle in the details of the administrator's job, or the job of committees or individuals with a mandate. Its concern should be in setting basic plans and policies, and in evaluating the results of plans and policies that have been implemented. The actual implementation, and the subordinate policies and procedures required for implementation, the details of how a task is carried out, should be left to those charged with the responsibility. The effectiveness of their work can and should be subject to periodic review, but not to day-to-day scrutiny and interference.

A test of this is how frequently the board finds it necessary to meet. A board that is meeting more than 4 or 5 times a year in full session is either doing too much direct administering, or enjoys its social interaction. Such a board might do better to limit its official meetings and schedule more social events. A related test for a college or core faculty group is to ask what portion of its time is devoted to deepening the pedagogical work in the school, as opposed to time spent on immediate concerns. For both the board and college, the effective

functioning of a committee or mandate structure is essential if they are not to be buried under the length of their agendas.

It should be noted, however, that both the board and college/core faculty will be involved in management at times of crisis. Such crises inevitably come in the life of a school. There are external threats, such as lawsuits over liability issues; and there are internal crises, such as the sudden loss or necessary dismissal of key faculty or staff, serious enrollment shortfalls, etc. In such cases, everyone gets involved and everyone pulls together. The important thing to keep in mind, however, is that once the crisis is past, the board and college/core faculty should pull back. Normal operations should be restored as quickly as possible.

In addition to micromanagement, another common pitfall is the failure to properly educate new board members, especially about the significant differences in the way a Waldorf school's board works. In particular, the fact that school governance is a matter of shared responsibility between the board and the college/core faculty (assuming the school has matured to this point) is something that needs to be spelled out, ideally before a new member joins. Clear expectations and a delineation of the role of a board member, and of the board itself in relation to other bodies within the school, need to be communicated. One effective way to accomplish this is to prepare a handbook for board members (as there should be a handbook for faculty members). Among the things this handbook should contain is a well-written history of the school (kept up-to-date); a statement of the school's mission; and a statement of the school's vision of the future, in its most recent formulation. This should not simply be handed to an individual; someone should go over it with new board members as part of an "initiation."

In many cases, of course, new board members are drawn from the ranks of those who have had an involvement with the school over time, as parents, helpers, and committee members. Such experience with the school is more valuable than any handbook; but the handbook is nevertheless an important resource, and useful when recruiting board members from the community who do not have long experience with the school.

Reducing Conflict and Misunderstanding by Improving Communication:

Let us assume the presence of capable and dedicated college/core faculty members and equally capable and dedicated board members, and a general agreement that both groups will participate as partners in charting the school's course. Will all go well? What are the pitfalls that can trip up the most promising beginnings, and how do we avoid them?

Much has been said of the importance of gaining clarity about which group has primary responsibility for a given class of decisions; for example, that the board should have responsibility for general administrative functions, the college/core faculty for pedagogical matters. This has been extended, rightly, to defining and creating job descriptions or "mandates" for any number of specific areas of responsibility: with faculty committees, board committees, faculty-board committees, mandate groups, etc. This is all necessary and can help to alleviate much frustration among those charged with the various responsibilities while freeing up the general faculty meeting (and board meetings) for dealing with the big issues rather than every niggling detail. Traditionally, Waldorf faculties get bogged down with everyone wanting to be in charge of everything, and the establishing of clear mandates is a necessary step in overcoming this problem.

But mandates alone are not enough. Necessary though they are, by themselves they can promote a tendency towards fragmentation and "turf battles" and can generate as much frustration as they are intended to relieve. This is because, in fact, very few of the big issues are cleanly defined and limited in scope. There are frequently areas of overlap. This is especially true, in the case of overlapping board and faculty responsibilities, and in matters affecting the budget. Many other areas are also of intense concern to both board and faculty, such as the presentation of the school's image to the public; compliance with governmental regulations concerning pedagogical matters such as qualifications of teachers, and legal issues arising out of discipline policies. If decisions on such issues are made by one group in isolation, without involving other concerned parties, all kinds of problems can arise. How can we avoid this and at the same time provide for effective division of responsibilities?

Most important, perhaps, is to cultivate a healthy attitude: the recognition that the college/core faculty does have a legitimate interest in many issues which

have been entrusted to the board, and vice versa (this applies to committees, mandate groups, and administrators as well). In fact, as was stated earlier, both groups can be seen as co-responsible for the entire life of the school. Such an attitude can help to promote communication and cooperation among groups.

Second, the above attitude can be embodied in our procedures. Specifically, it should become routine to ask the following three questions about any issue which is to come before the board (or faculty, or committee, etc.):

1. Which group has primary responsibility to decide the issue or set policy in this area? (This requires that basic areas of responsibility have been clarified. It may be that the issue should be referred to another group to take it up first.)

2. Which groups or individuals should have input in the decision? Who's affected by it or needs to be heard? (All individuals/groups identified should be given an opportunity to speak to the issue before any final decisions are made.)

3. Once a decision has been reached, who needs to be informed of it? How shall it be implemented? (Frequently we drop the ball at this stage, so happy that at last we've come to a decision that we forget it needs to be communicated and carried through.)

Frequently, the chairperson can ask the first two questions before placing an item on the agenda, thus saving the time of the full group in taking up issues that belong elsewhere or that need others present to discuss effectively. The secretary can perhaps be responsible for asking the third question, before the item is closed. But all members should train themselves to ask these questions in relation to every agenda item.

Third, our structures should facilitate communication. In this respect it is essential that there be a reasonable proportion of board members drawn from the college (or faculty core group if there is no college). It is important that these faculty board members see their role in the board as full trustees, not simply as "watchdogs" for the faculty. Moreover, through them the board is represented in the college/core faculty. Their role in fostering communication and an appreciation for the concerns of each group by the other is essential.

Fourth, we need to make a commitment to fostering a sense of community and common purpose between the board and college/core faculty. People need time to get to know one another, to enjoy one another, to trust one another. The groups need time to explore and build up a common vision of the school's mission and its future. An annual retreat of the college/core faculty and board should not be seen as a luxury, but as essential. Other, informal opportunities for interaction should be built into the schedule: times to have dinner together, or to share in an artistic experience, for instance.

Rather than considering these things to be frills, we should recognize how essential they are. All of us who are involved deeply in the life of a Waldorf school are called upon to make great sacrifices; all are overworked and overextended. If we are to carry on, we need to experience, along with the work, a joy in striving together, a joy in the process. We need to know that we are not alone, to experience the deepening of colleagueship, the possibility of friendship, of human concern for one another. When these qualities are fostered, our meetings become something we can actually look forward to. Creative energies are freed, and there is a quickening of our vision of the possibilities in the work we do together. It is out of this experience, first and foremost, that we will find the spiritual forces to create the future together.

APPENDIX

Chapter 8

Chapter 10

Administrator
Sample Job Description

HIRED BY: Joint meeting of College of Teachers and Trustees
REPORTS TO: College and Board

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Provides administrative leadership to the faculty, board, and office staff; responsible for hiring, evaluation, and firing of office staff and support staff; assumes responsibility for the fiscal life of the school, including current finances and development work.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE POSITION: This position is a key faculty position, and as such requires the depth and commitment expected of all key faculty members. This means commitment to the study of Anthroposophy, and of striving to keep the spiritual foundations of the school intact. The essential nature of the work is resource management, including but not limited to money and non-teaching personnel. Direction comes from the College of Teachers and the Board of Trustees, in the form of policies and procedures which must be executed. This position is frequently the link between the school and public agencies. Internally, this position is entrusted with responsibilities which are highly sensitive, such as interactions with parents regarding late payments of bills, referring angry parents to the right place, etc. This position has considerable influence in many areas, including the public relations image of the school.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES PERFORMED: Depending upon assignment, duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Participate, as a member of the College of Teachers, in the development and direct implementation of goals, objectives, policies, and procedures of the school, including curriculum development, staffing needs and program modifications.
(2) Direct and manage the preparation and administration of the school budget.
(3) Interpret, analyze and explain policies, procedures and programs.
(4) Coordinate the work of the Administrative Committee; participate in meetings with the faculty, parent council and other groups and individuals having an interest or potential interest in the affairs of the school.
(5) Represent the school in community and professional meetings as required, and to other agencies and government.
(6) Respond to the most difficult complaints and requests for information.
(7) Select, supervise, train and evaluate non-faculty staff; participate in the selection and assignment of faculty staff.
(8) Administer all insurance plans.
(9) Oversee the Development function.

(10) Play a major role in fundraising and capital campaigns.
(11) Write grant proposals and reports to Waldorf affiliated foundations.
(12) Provide assistance to staff on computer problems

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ATTRIBUTES: Considerable knowledge of Waldorf school philosophy, including administrative and educational principles, techniques, and methods. Knowledge of principles of school administration, including finance, budgeting, and personnel administration. Knowledge of principles of effective public relations and interrelationships with community groups, private and public agencies, parents, and the general public. Some familiarity with computers and skill with spreadsheet program is required. Ability to work in an extremely busy environment, and to keep several projects going at once. Ability to analyze, interpret, summarize and present administrative and financial data in an effective manner. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Ability to deal with people tactfully and courteously.

DESIRED TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE: Any combination equivalent to experience and education that could likely provide the required knowledge and abilities would be qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be : Experience: Five years of progressively responsible experience in administrative, managerial or teaching capacity in a school organization involving responsibility for the planning, organization, implementation and supervision of varied work programs. Education: Equivalent to a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Completion of the two year Waldorf teacher training course is desirable.

Business Manager
Sample Job Description

APPOINTED BY: Board, upon recommendation from and ad-hoc Faculty/Board group

TERM: Indefinite, with annual review by the Faculty

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

(1) Ensure proper and efficient operation of all business related matters to include:
   a. Financial, legal and insurance matters;
   b. business office operation;
   c. overseeing plant manager in the maintenance of buildings and grounds;
   d. purchasing and contracting;
   e. staff personnel matters and liaison between faculty and business office staff;
   f. meeting all health and safety standards;
   g. maintaining student and staff medical records;
   h. annual review of all non-teaching & maintenance staff;
   i. maintain policy books and records of decisions.

(2) Make decisions based on existing financial policies and procedures as drafted by appropriate committees.

(3) Be sufficiently knowledgeable in the areas of insurance, state and federal regulations, legal and other matters to be in a position to advise, along with other members with particular expertise, the Board and Faculty Chair in such matters.

(4) Serve on the Board, the Faculty and the Faculty Finance Committees, Investment, Financial Aid and on such other committees as may be appropriate.

(5) Review and implement school policies and practices as they effect or determine business and administrative functioning of the school.

(6) Monitor approved capital expenses and budgets.

(7) Insure dissemination of information where it would be important for overall school operation.

(8) Be involved with the formation of grant requests, bequests and fundraising.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY (Advisory): Serve as resource for Faculty Chair, Admissions Office, parents, Development Office, Faculty and staff personnel.

ADVICE PRIOR TO DECISIONS: Confer with Faculty Chair and other relevant persons/committees.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Business Manager is accountable to the Board and Faculty Chair.

Development Officer
Sample Job Description

Parent Relations:

Record relational activities - work toward smooth transition of leadership - maintain ongoing review of management systems to ensure they are meeting needs.

Volunteer Enlistment:

Track enlistment - provide background on prospects to enlisters - prepare job descriptions - evaluate volunteer job performance.

Alumni Relations:

Assist in planning, coordinating and evaluating events - provide catalyst to develop sense of family.

Solicitation, Annual Fund Campaign:

Track solicitation process - provide background on prospects to solicitors - prepare reports regularly to inform workers of progress - train volunteers - ensure effective interface with office - provide all necessary written materials - manage annual fund drive - develop donor lists, biographies, update giving records - receive, record and acknowledge all gift income - prepare annual report - monitor budgets of all events and notify of potential over-run.

Computer:

File management and maintenance.

Events:

Transition leadership - assist in planning, coordination, budget and evaluation.

Meetings:

Attend Development, Board and Faculty meetings, as well as related committee meetings as needed.

Assist Admissions:

School tours, open houses, observation mornings.

THE WALDORF SCHOOL

Child's Name _____ Sex_____ Birthplace_____

Applying for (circle): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Birthdate_____Present Age__

Fathers Name_____ Business Name_____

Address _____ Address_____

_____ _____

Phone _____ Phone _____

Mother's Name _____ Business Name_____

Address_____ Address_____

_____
_____

Phone _____ Phone_____

Parents: Married _____ Separated _____ Divorced_____

Names and Ages of other children in the family:

1. _____Age____ 4. _____ Age____

2. _____Age____ 5. _____ Age____

3. _____Age____ 6. _____ Age____

If child has had previous schooling, please answer the following:

Name of last school _____

Address _____ Dates Attended _____

Present Grade, or Last Grade Attended _____

Please state where you heard of the Waldorf School. _____

_____

Parent's Signature _____ Date of Application _____

(Please note: This application form is not a binding contract.)

Please write, and attach to this form, a biographical sketch of your child – describing the pregnancy, birth, early childhood, health & illness, eating and sleeping habits, social interaction and any other information which you believe will help us come to a better understanding of your child's needs.

Admissions Director
Sample Job Description

HIRED BY: The College of Teachers
REPORTS TO: The College and the Administrator

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Provides first contact with Waldorf School to the public. Creates initial interview with the parents to explain the Waldorf philosophy. Generates interest in the Waldorf School by advertising and outreach.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES PERFORMED: Depending upon assignment, duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Take and return phone calls from prospective parents.
(2) Mail out school information packet.
(3) Arrange and conduct school tours.
(4)Arrange and conduct school interviews.
(5) Arrange subsequent interview for class teachers and visits for students.
(6) Bring recommendations for admissions to the College.
(7) Keep track of applications in progress and overall awareness of the school's enrollment situation.
(8) Be responsible for re-enrollment and tuition aid
(9) Conduct exit interviews with parents of children leaving the school.
(10) Plan and oversee in-house public events such as: open houses, talks on Waldorf Education, parent orientation, parent education evenings, visitor's days, etc.
(11) Plan and arrange publicity for the above.
(12) Arrange ongoing advertising for the school in consultation with the Development Officer.
(13) Update and refine and order school "PR" materials such as: brochures, flyers,posters, books, etc.
(14) Collect material for school displays for talks conducted outside of the school.
(15) Participate as a colleague in office meetings, faculty meetings, college meetings, enrollment committee meetings, tuition aid committee meetings, Board meetings, etc.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ATTRIBUTES: Considerable knowledge of Waldorf school philosophy, including administrative and educational principles, techniques, and methods. Knowledge of principles of effective public relations and interrelationships with community groups, private

and public agencies, parents, and the general public. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Ability to deal with people tactfully and courteously.

REQUEST FOR RECORDS

To the Principal or Headmaster, ____

____

____

With regard to: ____

The above named student is applying to the Waldorf School for entrance into the _____th grade. Would you please send us a transcript of record, including any standardized test scores that are available. If your policy permits we would also appreciate a descriptive statement about this student by you or a counselor who knows the student well.

(Recommendation forms will be given to the student for his/her English and Math teacher.)

- -

I hereby give my permission to ___________________School to release the records of ___________________________________ and other requested information to the Waldorf School.

____
Signature of the parent

____
Date

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

COMMUNICATION

Caller's Name:_____ How did caller hear about the Waldorf School?

Address: _____ Friend , Newspaper , Phone bk , Radio ,

City _____ State_____ Zip_____Other _____

Home Phone:_____Business Phone _____

Child's Name_____Sex_____ Birthdate_____

Entering Grade _____

Comments:

FOLLOW UP

Information sent by:_____ Date mailed:_____

Follow up phone call by:_____ Date called:_____

Comments:

Teacher Interview scheduled? Yes___ No___ Teacher_____

Date/Time of Interview:_____

Enrolled? Yes___ No____ Date_____

Entered on Computer Mailing List? Yes___ No___

BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEES

THE GREAT BARRINGTON RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL

I. Efficient means for Board to do its work
- A. Delegation to committees
- B. Specialization by committees
- C. Ideally all Trustees serve on one or more committees
- D. Representation of broader school community encouraged:
  - Parents
  - Faculty
  - Friends
- E. Trustees should chair committees
- F. Develop committee mission
- G. Report at each Board Meeting
- H. All meetings are minuted

II. Committees
- A. Human Resources
- B. Development
- C. Executive/Finance
- D. Buildings and Grounds
- E. Educational Support

III. Human Resources
- A. Compensation
- B. Benefits
  - Pension
  - Disability
  - Health
  - Tuition Remission
- C. Personnel Policies
- D. Employee Contracts

IV. Development
- A. Coordinator
- B. Annual Giving
- C. Capital Campaign

D. Public Relations
E. Alumni
F. Long-Range Planning
G. Parent–Teachers Association
H. Publications
I. Enrollment

SAMPLE FACULTY MEETING AGENDA

December 19, 1991

Snack and Clean-up: Sherry, Lorey, Yvonne
Next Meeting: Merilly, Anniken, David

Place: 4th Grade Classroom

If you are not able to attend the faculty meeting or will miss any portion of it it is your responsibility to notify the faculty chairperson prior to the meeting. Please be prompt.

Chair: Arthur

Verse	1:30 P.M.
1. Who is not here? Minutes College Report Board Report Administrative Report and Preview	1:35-2:00
2. Last minute announcements about Pageant	2:00-2:10
3. Advent Singing	2:10-2:25
4. Advent Reading – Stephen	2:25-3:00
5. Child study (John S. from 5th grade)	3:00-4:00
6. Wrap-up from Christmas Fair	4:00-4:15
7. Closure: Open Time Meeting evaluation	4:15-4:45
SNACK	4:45-5:15
8. College Study	5:15-6:00
9. College Meeting (College Members –see Agenda in envelope in your mailboxes.) Meeting Evaluation and ending by 7:45 P.M.	6:00-7:45

Note: Please submit to Catherine any business items which need to be listed at the bottom of the faculty agenda.

A. Check early duty chart for February.
B. The Christmas party will be at the Auers on Dec 23 @ 7:30PM
C. All middle school report descriptions are due in the office by Dec 20
D. Place all abandoned clothing in the bin in the hall before the break.
E. Snack preparation must not keep faculty from being on time to the faculty meeting!

Faculty Chairperson
Sample Job Description

APPOINTED BY: College of Teachers

TERM: Two years, with annual review at Easter by the College

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Faculty Chairperson is the external representative of the school. S/he stands before the full faculty, the parents and the children as the official spokesperson in all public gatherings and is the primary contact between the school and the community.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

(1)Official school representative "Figurehead" who presides/represents the school in public meetings.

(2) Responsible for resolution of parent-teacher difficulties.

(3) Carries overview of Kindergarten, Lower School and Middle School Meetings.

(4) Oversees class evenings (plans calendar and is aware of class issues)

(5) Is the embodiment of "Corporality Chair" for personnel and for children (makes sure school is clean!). Ensures timely arrival, participation in school activities for personnel.

(6) Is a member of the Executive Committee and helps plan weekly Faculty Agenda. Is responsible for, or delegates chairing of Faculty meeting.

(7) Serves as AWSNA Delegate, if possible.

(8) Serves as a member of the Board and College.

(9) Acts as host for all school visitors.

(10) Is the liaison between the Pedagogical Coordinator and the Executive Committee.

(11) Serves a two year term and rotates in alternate years with the College chair at Easter.

(12) Two hours/week administrative hours are scheduled along with time for Executive Committee.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The Faculty Chairperson is accountable to the College.

PROPOSED MANDATE

for

___ Committee_

Date 20_ _

Chairperson:

Members:

A. Area of Responsibility:

B Area of Responsibility: (Advisory):

C. Advice Prior to Decisions:

D. Accountability:

E. Recommendation for Change:

F. Responsibilities to be Added:

HIRING LETTER

April 12, 199?

Dear _____,

The College of Teachers at the Waldorf School would like to offer you a position as a class teacher and other related duties as determined by the College for the academic year 199?-199?.

We are excited about your joining us in this important work and we hope that your upcoming years will be rich and meaningful.

We are prepared to offer you a salary of $_____ which is arrived at by taking our base pay $_____ plus dependency allowance $_____ plus and experience increment of $_____ based on ____ years experience. Additionally you will receive as benefits medical insurance $_____ per month, dental insurance of $_____ per month, and a pension allotment of $_____ per month.

We would expect that you would agree to participate in all aspects of our self-evaluation process. Enclosed is a Teacher's Handbook which details the tasks of teachers at our school.

Please be so kind as to write a confirmation of your intention to accept this position which will acknowledge this letter and be kept as a permanent part of your personnel folder.

We are all very happy to have you join us.

Sincerely,

_____
For the College of Teachers

EVALUATION CRITERIA
IN HOUSE VISITATIONS

Date: _____

Teacher Visited:_____ By:_____

I. **DISCIPLINE:**

a. teacher's authority, presence before class
sympathy vs. antipathy in relation to children
holding the whole group

b. children's behavior

c. children's work habits

II. **TEACHER'S SPEECH/ SPEECH WORK WITH CHILDREN:**

clarity intonation variation projection

III. **FORM AND CONTENT OF THE LESSON**

a. threepart lesson: head, heart and will activities
how is the balance?
is it challenging?
circle work?

b. two day rhythm
presentation
review
book work (pictures, text)

c. work with and attention to individual children

IV. **APPEARANCE, DECORUM, HYGIENE**

a. classroom appearance, orderliness

b. teacher's and children's dress, general appearance

c. ventilation, etc.

V. **EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S WORK:**

a. oral

b. written

COMMENTS

STRENGTHS:

AREAS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Evaluative Criteria For Teachers

The aim of the College is to promote ever higher standards in teaching through conversation with colleagues, visitation, and continual self-evaluation. The areas listed below should be seen as "signposts" — applicable to varying degrees depending upon the teacher, subjects taught, or grade level.

We ask that teachers speak with a colleague before and after a visit, using these criteria as a framework. Please also report to the Teacher Development Committee within a week of the visit.

I. Content of Lesson
- a. Appropriate for age level?
- b. Challenges the student?
- c. Clarity of presentation
- d. Enthusiasm in presentation?
- e. Responsiveness of students?
- f. Is there a "sense for the whole?"
- g. Artistry in presentation

II. Form and Discipline
- a. Is the lesson formed in a way that allows the students to receive the content?
- b. Teacher's authority and presence before the class, i.e. the whole group.
- c. Teacher's response to individual disciplinary problems, difficult situations.
- d. Threefold balance of head, heart, and limbs in lesson
- e. Appearance of room, students and teacher.

III. Teacher/Student Relationship
- a. Is there a "breathing" in the lesson?
- b. Warmth in teacher/student relationship?
- c. Student/student interaction.
- d. Does the teacher promote positive social interaction within the class?
- e. Is the teacher available for one-on-one help, conversation, etc.?

IV. Academic, Artistic and Pedagogical Standards
- a. Is the class as a whole working hard, performing at grade level, eager to acquire new knowledge?
- b. Does the teacher promote high academic standards?

c. Quality of good book work.
d. Does the teacher follow through on homework, correction, etc.?
e. Teacher's artistic work (blackboard paintings, singing, recorder.
f. Does the teacher delve into the curriculum and thoroughly prepare his/her lessons?

V. Colleagueship
a. Is the teacher easy to work with?
b. Communicates regularly?
c. Willing to help others?
d. Take on non-teaching tasks?
e. Promotes good will and fellowship among colleagues?
f. Can take advice?

VI. Parent Relations
a. Regular conferences with parents?
b. Accessable?
c. Able to communicate goals and share program of students?

VII Teacher's Relationship to Anthroposophy
a. Does the teacher appear to work out of Anthroposophy?
b. Participate actively in faculty study?
c. Willing to ask questions and hear the advice of other?

PROGRESS CHECK FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WITH ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES

Name: _____ Date:_____

Advisor's Name:_____

To All Teachers:

In order to keep a close watch on this student's progress, and thus be able to help them in a more timely manner, I ask that you answer in an appropriate manner to the following questions. Please use the reverse side if you would like to make additional comments.

Name of class: _____

1. Has his/her effort been satisfactory? Yes ☐ ☐ No
2. Has he/she been attentive? Yes ☐ ☐ No
3. Are his/her assignments complete? Yes ☐ ☐ No
4. Has he/she reported for extra help? Yes ☐ ☐ No
5. Does the student use his/her time well? Yes ☐ ☐ No
6. Has the student been tardy to class within the last five days Yes ☐ ☐ No
7. How many classes has the student been absent in the last five days? ☐
8. What is the students approximate grade thus far this term? ☐
9. Can you determine if the student has been working adequately in study hall? Yes ☐ ☐ No

Teacher's signature: _____

Students: Please take one copy of this form to each of your teachers and then return to your advisor.

To the College of Teachers:

By signing this letter I indicate my agreement to participate in an evaluation of my teaching at _____Waldorf School.

I understand that I will be visited by _____ and that I will meet with him/her after each visit for a conversation, where I will get feedback about my strengths and areas in which improvement is needed.

I agree to write up my notes of this conversation and give them to the person evaluating my work to read and then sign.

I also agree to read and/or share in a verbal report all of this content with the College of Teachers at an agreed upon time and date.

This evaluation will then be placed in my personal file in the office.

Signature:_____

Date:_____

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE EVALUATION AND DESCRIPTION

Student: Main Lesson: Chemistry

Grade: 7 Teacher:

Course Description:

Chemistry is the science dealing with the composition and properties of substances and with the reactions by which substances are produced or converted into other substances.

After an introduction to chemistry and a brief look at its historical background, the seventh grade looked at how substances combusted or burned. We observed the opposition of light and weight and observed many different types of flames, smoke, and ash. We contrasted the burning of sulphur and phosphorus and studied the consuming ember within carbon. While we were doing this the children were writing accurate observations. These were shared the next day and conclusions were reached.

We explored the nature of crystallization. The limestone cycle was studied and this led us into an understanding of acids and bases, how they react and how salts are formed.

The children wrote up their observations of the many experiments that we did in class as well as original essays from material that we discussed.

***Key**: Outstanding, excellent, good, fair, poor, incomplete*

Homework: Class participation:

Ability to observe: Behavior:

Spelling tests: Final Chemistry Test:

MAIN LESSON BOOK:

Appearance: Aesthetics:

Completeness: Quality of essays:

Comments:

Final Grade_____ Teacher's Signature_____

TEACHER EVALUATION POLICY

1. All teachers should evaluate themselves and maintain a written record of their reflections which is reviewed and updated once a year. These self-evaluations will be kept in the office personnel files in the College Chairperson's office.

2. All teachers should have, as a required part of their schedule, time to observe other teachers at Pine Hill (or in other schools when appropriate) and to discuss their observations and questions with the teacher visited. Each teacher will have at least one such visit scheduled per year.

3. Outside observers — master teachers — will be invited to observe and evaluate the teachers and discuss their findings with them, based on at least two visits in the classroom. Records of these meetings should be kept as part of the teacher's evaluation file and should be signed by the teacher and the outside observer. Outside observers — either class teachers or specialist teachers — will be invited in alternate years.

4. Teachers should share their self-evaluations in the College of Teachers at least once a year. Everyone in the College is free to comment on these presentations in the spirit of mutual growth, affirming strengths and helping to improve weaknesses.

5. New teachers should have a mentor to assist them with self-evaluation and to serve as liaison with the college. They should meet with the College by Thanksgiving and Easter to review their work. If by Christmas of the second year, any significant problems have not been worked out, the College should decide by February whether or not the teacher should continue the following year. The mentor should arrange regular meetings with the new teacher, and visit classes before Thanksgiving and Easter, in order to keep the College informed as to how things are going. In the case of a new class teacher, the mentor should also be a class teacher and, if possible, from the grade immediately ahead of the new teacher's.

6. The College of Teachers is the form for evaluating teacher competence. Significant problems which raise doubts about competence should be presented in the college in the presence of the teacher concerned. An evaluative discussion should follow; whether or not the concerned teacher remains for that discussion should be left to the free decision of all. Either the teacher may decide to leave, or a College

member may ask that he leave; otherwise, he will take part in the discussion. A written record should be kept of recommendations and decisions, and these should be communicated to the teacher if he was not present for the discussion.

Parents and/or teachers wanting to raise questions about teacher competence should address them to the College Chairman or a College member, who will then arrange for a discussion to occur. Parents should be informed through the Parent Group and Handbook that they have this avenue to raise questions.

7. The main criteria for teacher evaluation, which should be addressed by teachers in their reports, are the following:

a. Classroom management and discipline
b. Teaching style — voice, self-presence, authority, give and take, children's reception
c. Teaching methods — form, order and content of the lessons (correct rhythms, content for age group, artistic handling of the subject)
d. Children's work — care for materials, order and form of workbooks, displays, etc.)
e. Aesthetics and hygiene in the classroom — order, neatness, displays, dress, room temperature, circulation of air, etc.
f. Parent interaction — quality of communication
g. Colleague interaction — Do you have ability to work in a cooperative way with colleagues? How else are you participating in carrying the overall organism of the school?

Self-evaluation report should be written with the above criteria in mind. If the report is insufficient either in length or in quality, the College Chairperson will request that it be re-written.

Reports should conclude with some mention of those areas being worked upon and of anything the teacher thinks that he needs to improve his work.

8. The College Chairperson would serve as facilitator of the school evaluation plan.

TEACHER SAMPLE CONTRACT

Dear _____,

On behalf of the College of Teachers, we are please to offer you a position at the Waldorf School for the 199?-199? academic year.

Your salary of $_____ per annum is calculated as follows:

Base salary . . . . . $_____
Dependents allowance . . . . . .$_____
Experience increment . . . . . .$_____
Total $_____

In addition to this salary you will receive the following benefits:

Tuition Allowance for children. ._____
Medical Insurance . . . . . _____
Dental Insurance . . . . . _____
Pension . . . . . _____

Pay will be given monthly, in advance over a 12-month period beginning on September 1, 199?.

The School's expectation is that you will follow the school work calendar which begins on the third Monday of August each year, two weeks prior to school opening and includes all professional days, faculty meetings and workshops. Duties will cease one week after the closing of the academic year, upon submission of your grades and reports and main lesson books, or at such time as the College of Teachers deems necessary.

It is understood that as a colleague in the Waldorf School you join a group of teachers who work under the direction of the College of Teachers with the philosophy, purpose, and curriculum of Waldorf Education and who seek excellence in the teaching of children. Further, a colleague participates in the life of the whole school, and contributes to its working as required, meetings of the whole, committee meetings, and other duties commonly expected of teachers, including activities such as self-evaluation, conferences with parents, Faculty work days, participation in teacher conferences, recess duty, receiving colleagues into your classroom, occasional substitution, and the filing of student reports in good order and in a timely fashion. Main lesson teachers agree to be in their classroom at least 20 minutes prior to the beginning of the academic day. It is expected that each January you will make clear to the College your intention for the upcoming academic year. Exceptions to any of the above must be agreed upon by the College chairperson.

It is further expected that you will fulfill any legal obligations required by the school, such as medical tests. Your performance as a teacher will be

evaluated by the College of Teachers whose determination will be final and binding upon you. If you agree with the above expectations and conditions, kindly sign and return both copies of this letter. One will be returned to you for your records.

Accepted (signed) _____ Date:_____

Received by the College of Teachers by: _____