SEATTLE WALDORF SCHOOL

DEEPENING OUR WORK TOGETHER

A TEACHERS HANDBOOK FOR HEALTHY MEETINGS

"The inertia of materialism is strong. Insidious are the ways in which spiritually striving men and women are opposed and foiled in honest attempts to do their share. And let us not forget it, at least half of the obstacles, hindrances, nay, attacks of the opposing powers come from within, from within our very own souls and beings. Thus, self-knowledge is the sword which hardens the steel of our WILL and INTENTION"

Magda Lissau
The Work of the Teachers

PRE-MEETING CHECKLIST

A. How is my mood? Will it be helpful to a good meeting?

B. Have I prepared myself for the meeting?

a. Have I contacted designated individuals for pertinent information?

b. Have I read suggested materials?

c. Do I still have sheets of reference material previously handed out? Do I have my study book?

d. Do I have pen/pencil for note-taking?

e. Do I have in mind the Angelic concept of our group work?

- Angels behind each individual
- Archangels in communication/speech
- Archai in the Spirit/Ideal

IN-MEETING CHECKLIST

A. How is the Agenda in relation to time allotted?
B. Is there a timekeeper?
C. Will I take notes? If not, why?

D. Am I talking too much? Am I listening too much?

E. Do I understand what's going on in discussions? If not, what steps do I take to find out?

F. Am I keeping track of the 'bigger objectives' of our meetings?

G. What initiatives am I supporting?
   a. Am I supportive of ideas from colleagues with whom I am not close or have some personal disagreements with?

H. Are colleagues seeing me as I wish to be seen?
   a. How can I alter untrue or unflattering perceptions?

I. Am I open to the possible 'mirroring' of my activity (active or passive) during REVIEW?

PRE-MEETING CHECKLIST : NOTES

- What is my mood prior to meeting? Am I rushed, angry, tired, pre-occupied. All of the above?

  Mood-Altering exercise: Find a quiet place. Take a deep breath, hold it and let it slowly exhale through the nostrils until the diaphragm is completely contracted. Do this for about 3 minutes or so.

  Take image of the last event in the classroom and follow images backwards as far back as possible, back to arising in the morning if possible. If you find yourself offtrack simply stop and breathe deeply and return to the last image.

  The idea is to calmly but persistently direct your thoughts towards a particular task for a small amount of time. By picturing events backwards it becomes an exercise of the WILL as well as a distancing from one's own activities as the days events are put in a nutshell.

- Work of the Angelic Realm

  The work of the Angels in human interaction is an important concept to keep during meetings – it helps us from personalizing comments and points of view too much.

  The images of their work is thus: Behind each individual in the circle stand their own Angel.

Angelic Realm (continued)

The clarity of each individual destiny is made through a relationship with Ego and Angel. In deep personal conflict the angel of the other cannot be seen or felt — the work of elementals and Luciferic forces. When negativity hardens into a concept of the other, this concept (picture) is of the DOUBLE of the person in question. The truest picture of the other is available through the grace of the Angelic world — it is with this image that the Angels work during our lifetime.

Archangels

Archangels work through human speech and they actually carry the 'seed' reality of what we intend to impart from person-to-person. When we speak and can experience that we are really heard by others, it is through the powers of the Archangels that this is possible.

Archai

The Archai work in realms most distant from Man in the 3rd Hierarchy. Let us say that they work in the realm of Will and

Angelic Realm (continued) Archai

what we must do in the future. The selfless intuition of what is best (even though most difficult) for us to do in regard to strengthening community life are given to us through the Archai.

The Archai can really only work in a hygenic group environment, in which basic spiritual concepts and techniques are consistently used. A Waldorf School college is set up in its structures and procedures to be visible to this angelic realm. This is to say that each person in a College of Teachers has taken certain inner steps and continues to maintain such work as to make themselves available to the work of the Heirarchies through that particular Waldorf School.

It starts, then by being aware of the Angels and Archangels in our working together with each other and in our meditative life.

IN-MEETING CHECKLIST : NOTES

- Check Agenda against time alloted for meeting.
  Is the agenda too big? Is it too small for the amount of time given? Are some sensitive items possibly undertimed? Are you personally involved with some agenda items — if so, do you know what you need to say? Do you want or need an immediate response from the group; or rather are they being asked to hold what you have to say?

- Balance your listening and speaking with note-taking
  Speaking (A MARS FORCE) makes it nearly impossible to take in the attitudes of others. We can only hear ourselves. We incarnate too deeply when this happens and need to excarnate a bit by listening.

  Listening (A VENUS FORCE) allows us to enter into others, but there is a danger of 'falling asleep' into others, so that our thoughts do not reflect a depth or precision. We do not help the group by not being able to speak when necessary. We need to incarnate a bit by speaking when we are drifting off into others words.

AFTER-MEETING CHECKLIST

A. Do I feel as if I was truly 'listened' to during the meeting?
   a. Did any colleague seem particularly sensitive to my needs / moods? Who seemed insensitive?

B. How do I work with what remains unresolved in our meetings?

C. Do I have the willingness to talk with those colleagues with whom I have personal difficulty or 'critical' antipathy?

D. Do I really support colleagues who have taken on tasks? Do they know this?

E. Withovt taking notes how will I 'hold' what occured in the meeting until the following week?

F. Am I helping to transform the possible feeling that meetings are a chore into something enlivening? How?

G. Did my trust in others deepen?

H. Were the planetary influences visible to me? How?
   a. What steps did I take to balance perceived inbalances?

THE PLANETS IN GROUP WORK

The dynamics of group work are largely dictated by the interaction of planetary forces inherent in our life of Soul. Our consciousness of these forces can aid in the balancing out of inequities in our group process as well as give us individual experiences in developing a wider choice of responses to group perceptions.

☾ MOON — The quality of mirroring, silvery; observing, collecting & bringing observations to group. Summarizing.

☿ MERCURY — The messenger, go-between, brings movement. Healing, humor and communication.

♀ VENUS — Supportive, active passivity. Listening to where everyone is. Mood-intensive.

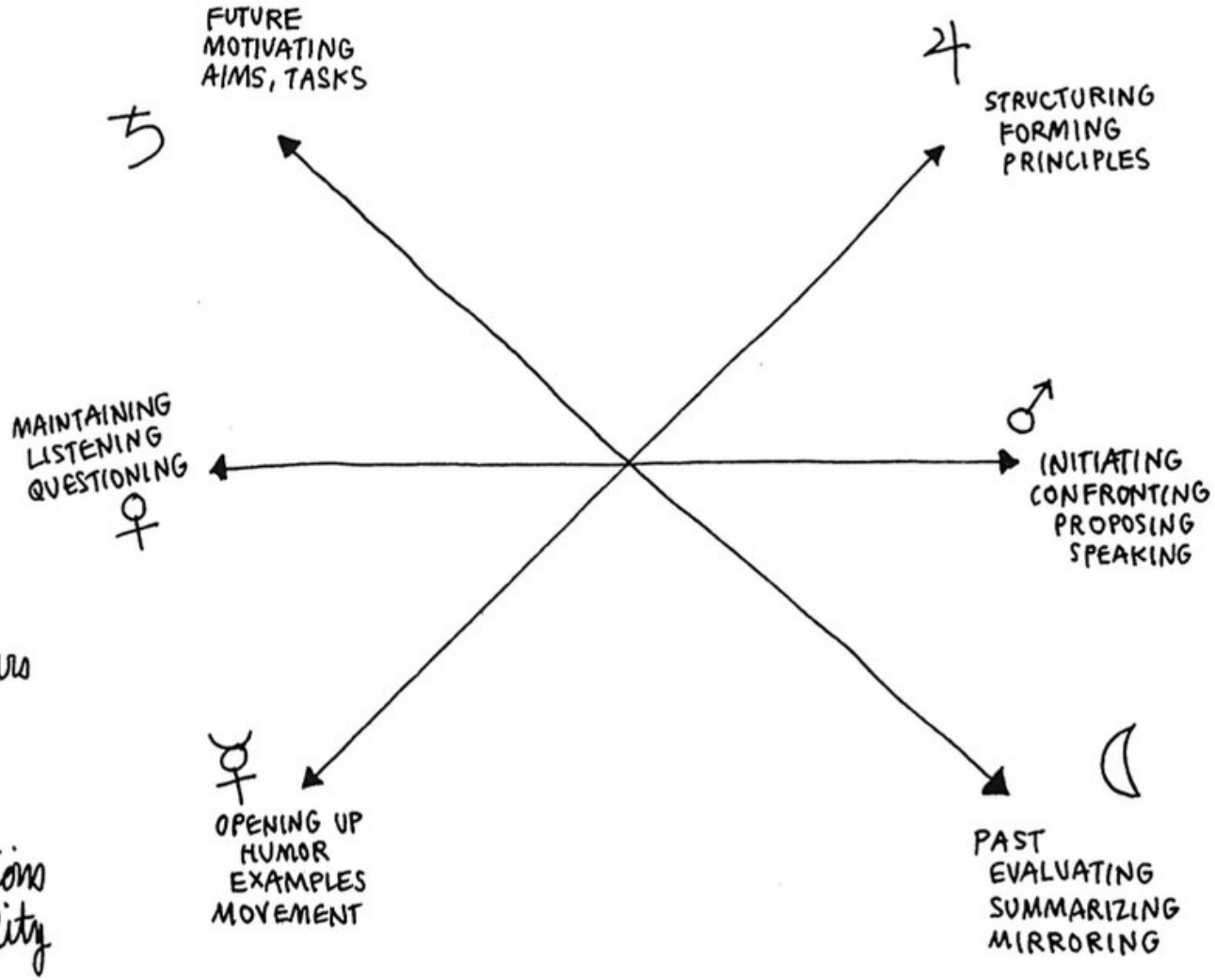
♂ MARS — Outgoing, initiating, natural leader, starter, brings speech.

♃ JUPITER — Thinker, sees totality, gives direction out of the whole.

♄ SATURN — Confirms direction and aims. Brings conscience and consciousness of the past.

☉ SUN — Brings all qualities together, harmonizes and clarifies processes.

LEADING FUNCTIONS OF A GROUP

This chart may make clearer how the planetary forces balance each other

☉ is absent as it can really only be present through particulars of group process. The conscious utilization of all above functions brings a ☉ quality to the group.