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The editor's introduction to the previous issue of the *Research Bulletin* ended with a wish—originally hopeful, in hindsight naïve—that the Spring 2020 issue would reach the readers in a post-pandemic world. Well, here we are.

The experience we call 'life' has clearly undergone quite a transformation. For many, other people have reconfigured into possible sources of danger. So did the objects and surfaces that we touch in the world. So did our very own hands, with which we do such touching. Time goes on in an abnormal new normal: Like parents who cannot think of a time in which they were not occupied with kids, in our memories of past events everyone is wearing a mask. We already forgot how struck we were in April or May by the amazing relevance of what we re-read in Camus' *Plague*. The initial wave of anxiety has petered out into annoyance, impatience, then a new wave of fear.

But teachers, and the teachers of teachers, cannot afford to be idle in a time of crisis, even when the crisis is extending into its seventh or eighth month. And while the events of the time offer an abundance of content to be taught—from the historical epidemics that decimated entire populations in pre-Renaissance Europe and post-Columbus America to the renewed significance of a social contract based on mutual responsibility—the *how* of teaching became an issue.

To this we devote our current issue of the *Bulletin*. Focusing fully on the pedagogical and social challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions, we offer here a variety of accounts, fresh from the classrooms—both virtual and physical—of adaptations and experimentations while teaching under the constraints of distance, uncertainty, and at times even fear. From homebound seventh graders in Brooklyn, NY, to high school Zoomers on Maine's coast to hybrid classes in the San Francisco Bay Area, many of the accounts presented here tell the story of transformation from skepticism to pedagogical accomplishment.

An approach reflected in several of these contributions is captured in Douglas Gerwin's essay, with which we open the issue. Douglas, like so many of the teachers writing here, is appreciative of the emergency solutions

afforded by technological platforms, but he is wary of the temptation in making some of these temporary measures permanent. "To adopt digital online formats as the primary new paradigm for learning," he writes, "would be to impoverish education by recasting it as little more than instruction."

Our reports from the schools and from the experiences of teachers open in a lyrical, personal tone, with which Caroline Martin observes how both her high school students and her pre-K daughters at the Rudolf Steiner School of New York reach certain childhood heights just before the Corona shutdown. Martin proceeds to describe the set of adjustments to teaching, curriculum, and life itself in the first months of online learning. A geologist, a teacher of the natural sciences, and a lover of nature, Martin concludes with an apt image of the new task she and her colleagues embraced in facing the shutdown challenge: "Yes, the river may have run dry but our task was now not to idly watch as the waters returned, but to venture forth and map the bed."

This is followed by reports from the lower school experience, offered by two class teachers. Steve Simonak reports of the set of adaptations to his work with the seventh grade at the Brooklyn Waldorf School; Karen Atkinson, of the Waldorf School of Princeton, expands the view with a detailed review of the learning curve that aims to perfect the practices of online teaching in order to keep pursuing an education that is filled with love, warmth, and creativity.

We then turn to a set of descriptions, reflections, and recommendations coming from several high school teachers: Selim Tlili reports on science teaching during the shutdown as well as after school reopened for in-person learning. David Sloan gains a new appreciation for the capacities of teaching with technological mediation but repeats the cautionary note on the limits of technology. Carol Bärtges describes the experience of teaching *Parzival* online and especially the challenge of invoking the impulse of individuation when the learning situation appears to be a solitary one. And Stephen Sagarin underlines the opportunities of positive effects made available by the unfortunate circumstances of the pandemic.

Tucked in between these reports, Jamie York shares lessons from online teaching earned even prior to the COVID shutdown. York, a seasoned Waldorf teacher with 35 years of classroom experience, decided to shift to online teaching several months before the pandemic struck. His Math Academy for grades 5-12 was launched in the Fall of 2019, giving him a head start on the rest of us in terms of incorporating principles of Waldorf education into screen-mediated teaching. He was positively surprised by the results of his experiment and has several insights to share.

Alison Davis, of the Waldorf School of the Peninsula, grabs the opportunity offered by the pandemic to re-examine other pedagogical practices. “If there were ever a time to shed an old practice and try something new,” Davis writes, “it is now, when so much is up in the air and primed for new imaginations.” The change she advocates exploring is framed by the question: Can we find alternative forms to motivating students beyond the grades that are supposed to assess and reward their efforts? Her answer, based on the pragmatic experimentation process known as “active research,” and on measures implemented at her school is a resounding ‘Yes.’

Patrice Maynard also embraces the crisis of the moment to explore a wider question. In her thoroughly-argued opinion essay, Maynard takes a close look at the governmental intervention in public and private education systems in response to COVID-19. Such interventions, coming from governmental agencies as well as from the corporate world, she shows, are nothing new: they have been going on for decades through the imposition of federally-developed education standards, as well as in the form of an enormous spike in the diagnoses of Attention Deficit Disorder and the normalization of its treatment through powerful drugs. In what amounts to a scathing critique of a creeping process of such “normalization,” Maynard’s essay calls for a rethinking of a different “new normal,” one that “can also allow us to imagine an education that genuinely frees us all” to think with our hearts. She concludes with a call for the “new normal” to be assessed “on a human scale, not on a two-fold screen with high stakes performance of shallow testing. Let’s proceed with deep, three-dimensional, thinking, human hearts, intelligent hands, and flexible and wise minds.”

We end our offering of COVID-related articles with a long and rich essay by Dr. Michaela Glöckler—former Head of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum, an experienced pediatrician, and decades-long supporter of Waldorf education. In an article which is both descriptive and argumentative, Dr. Glöckler surveys the questions of diseases, viruses, and immunity from the point of view of anthroposophic medicine, and she criticizes the national and global responses that discount the roles of individual agency, community, and a deep sense of humanity in responding to the pandemic. Dr. Glöckler calls for mining the insights and resources of anthroposophy for a response that goes beyond symptoms and momentary crisis, a response that is invested at the outset in the interrelationships among society, education, ecology, and health.

The issue concludes with our usual reports from the world of Waldorf Publications, the Online Waldorf Library, and the Research Institute for Waldorf Education. As is our custom in the Fall issue, we include here an exhaustive index of the articles published in the *Bulletin* since its inception, most of which are available at the Online Waldorf Library.

We hope, as always and perhaps more than ever, that the reports and reflections presented in this issue will be able to offer support and insight during a time of challenge and experimentation. And we continue, hopefully and perhaps naïvely, to wish the coming of a post-pandemic reality, into which we hope to enter with the valuable lessons of crisis.

Authors who wish to have articles considered for publication in the *Research Bulletin* should submit them directly to the editor at: theresearchbulletin@gmail.com.