

## Letter to the Editor

*Ernst Schubert*

### What do we have to do in order to spiritualize being on the way to become a Waldorf teacher?

To the Editor:

As David Mitchell described in the last issue of the *Research Bulletin*, 16 (2), the anthroposophical basis of our work as Waldorf teachers consists primarily of spiritual work. There are four different emphases that this work can take.

The first and most important one is self-education. The many indications that Rudolf Steiner gave to us are signposts along a path we may follow out of our own initiative. This path will never end, but its pursuit develops new forces in us that are prerequisite for the next steps.

Besides self-education we can study the human being in his relationship with the cosmos. Steiner's *Study of Man* lectures are a path of learning to know our human nature ever more deeply. Following this path the human being appears more and more as a wonderful temple, as a picture of the hierarchies and the divine Trinity. Developing our consciousness of human nature helps us increasingly to understand the nature of the individual child. It helps us to find individual answers to the questions that the riddle of each single child poses. Love and a healing impulse may have their sources in this spiritualized knowledge.

The third direction is to spiritualize the subjects we teach. There is nothing in the world that is not part of the divine order of the cosmos, be it math, grammar, gardening, or anything else. Actually, the subjects are the tools by which we stimulate the child's development. Waldorf education is not being

kind and friendly with each child; it is teaching breathing and sleeping in the sense Steiner intends these terms in *Study of Man*, using the different subjects as the mediums of action. How do we develop a living thinking that shapes the human brain in a different way than just memorizing knowledge? How do we enable the child's constitution to understand sense-free thoughts? When we succeed, the child will later be able to use his etheric brain to behold the world in a living and loving way.

Each subject has a different influence on the child's constitution and this leads to the fourth direction—namely, cooperation with colleagues and parents. Are we unselfish enough to acknowledge the accomplishment of somebody else even if we don't like him or her? Can we hold someone in high regard even if he or she seems to be our enemy? What is his or her task beside my relationship with him/her? Questions like these develop our interest in what is working around us—not only in our school. We are part of a specific time and place but also of mankind. What is needed in the world? Can I participate in bringing about something new for the future?

There are more directions for our work as Waldorf teachers. Only some are cited here.

Sincerely,

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