

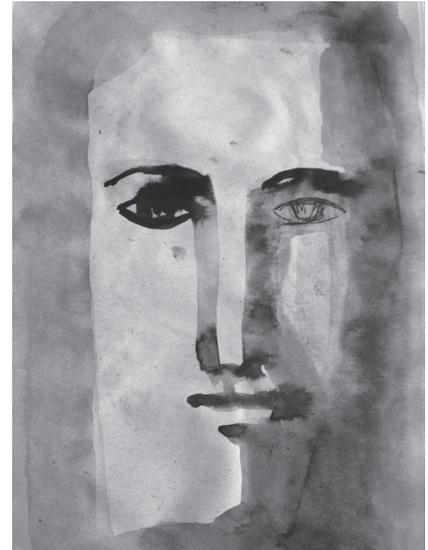
Changing Adversity Into Spiritual Growth

By Melanie Richards

If you have been part of this program and have done any reading of the lectures and books of Rudolf Steiner, you have certainly come across the concepts of reincarnation and karma, which of course are realities that influence our lives and how we understand the cosmos. Most people, however, certainly do not think much about things like this – often they are just trying to make ends meet, meanwhile wishing that they had more money, a different job, less pain, or that a certain event would not have occurred. I would like to address something which most people in today's world don't think about, that is, could the events that happen in my life, and the way I am as a person, be in some way "planned?" Could adversity, illness, pain, and other human suffering actually be a positive factor for my spiritual growth?

If we consider that "karma," a law of the universe which is basically neutral, doesn't look at you as a "good" or a "bad" person but evaluates your thoughts and actions only in regard to yourself, other people, and the world, we can come up with the thought that it must be related to the principle of "cause and effect." Indeed it is, but it is more complicated than that: we must move backward to the "cause" and realize that it too is an "effect" of something that preceded it. So if we dig a bit deeper, we must say, as Rudolf Steiner points out, that karma is created when the doer is affected by the action, not immediately, as in an injury, etc., but in the long term. This works independently of any intention on the part of the person activating the "cause." That all sounds very abstract, but it is necessary to understand that karma is a very complex, layered phenomenon. So can we understand it at all, or can we understand how to approach it?

Most of modern civilization is characterized by people wanting to "escape" from illness, pain, suffering, injury, arrest, even fear of death in the long run. Sometimes these occurrences for them cause reactions of anger, frustration, distrust, and even thoughts of suicide or revenge, which often lead to actions that they regret later. What if we consider that these human "ills" can actually be beneficial to our spiritual growth and maturity, and, as an extension, our quality of life? For most of these things that happen to us are in some way related to karma. We have planned, with the wonderful spiritual beings who help and support us between death and rebirth, a destiny for this life. It is a destiny that will provide for us the opportunities, sometimes activated by our choices, sometimes just happening, to work out the weaknesses in ourselves so that we can take advantage of the amazing consequences of learning from our mistakes and being able to understand, through working with Anthroposophical principles, why these things came to be. And the good news is, as we become more sensitive to karmic situations, we can project solutions to what we perceive as karmic debt that consciously help us to learn what we need to satisfy that debt. It is an upward and difficult battle, but we learn to be grateful for the "bad" things (as we see them) that happen to us because they, and the human beings in our karmic circle who are part of these events, are our teachers.



Artist: Sophie Bourguignon Takada

I find it a good exercise to go back over one's life, bit by bit, trying to look, as unemotionally as possible, at those things that brought us to places we didn't want to be in our lives. Then the question can be asked, What led to this event and what, if anything, did I learn from it? Can I learn from it still, even after many years? I have found that the resounding answer is yes; and the results, when applied to the present, can definitely help us never to go that route again. It involves understanding, willpower, love, and above all, the realization that one is part of the rich cosmic heritage of the evolution of the human being, and that each of us is responsible for advancing that evolution to its next stage. All we have to do is to raise ourselves out of our own pity and aspire to the stars. When we do that, we are consciously participating in the future of the human race!

Man is a bridge

Between the past
and the being of the
future.

The present is a moment

A moment as a bridge

A spirit that has become
soul in

matter's garment –

That is from the past

A soul that is becoming
spirit

In germinal sheaths,

That is on the way to the
future

Grasp the future

Through the past

Hope for the becoming

Through what has be-
come.

So take hold of being in
becoming

So take hold of what will
be

In the essence of what is
now.

Rudolf Steiner

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If you would like to submit an article for publication please submit by:
May 30
for our next issue

The articles featured in this issue of the *Illuminating Anthroposophy* relate to the concepts, so often spoken of by Rudolf Steiner, on Reincarnation and Karma. *Destiny and Karma*, by Kristina Kaine, speaks of how and why we are born again and what parts of us are eternal. Kristina opens up ideas about karma and destiny in a way that can explain why life can be so difficult at times, and to understand that whatever happens to us can be seen as an opportunity for positive change. In our other article, *Changing Adversity into Spiritual Growth*, Melanie Richards asks us to look at the times and events in our lives which we may see as negative, as possibilities for understanding the Law of Karma and applying it to self-awareness.

In this issue we are grateful to be able to share with you two stories from released participants. Richard Cloud and Chris DeRusse had been a part of our program while incarcerated. Both Richard and Chris have been out a number of years and continue to study anthroposophy. We loved that they wanted to share with you their strivings and to encourage you in your spiritual studies as well.

As with Richard and Chris, many of you tell us you have found our program by 'word of mouth' through a fellow inmate. It is wonderful to hear how someone new finds a way to this path of knowledge. We would appreciate hearing your stories of how you connect with another, share, communicate, and inspire each other.

We are happy to tell you we had an outstanding art and poetry event in CA where *Enter Light – Voices from Prison* was performed and spoken live by 22 youth poets, and Anthroposophical Society members. Some of your art and poetry recited that evening is featured in this issue! The performance was incredible and was received by the audience with positivity and grace. They gained a deeper understanding into the human struggle many of you face. As in our previous live event each poet recited your poetry, bringing your words to life and giving you a voice to be heard on the outside. We wish to continue these events in different parts of the country, and hope you will continue to send us your new poetry and artwork!

We continue to receive your awe inspiring *How to Know Higher Worlds Study Guides* as they are completed. We are grateful to witness the perseverance you show in your spiritual inner work of self-transformation through meditation, prayer, study and soul exercises. Keep up your good work!

Many Blessings on your path,
Kathy Serafin

Meditations

The meditative experiences I've had since my spiritual studies began are: clearer concentration, vivid dreams, spiritual independence, and stronger awareness.
Jeremiah, Winslow, AZ

Yes, I am doing the meditative exercises regularly. I have actively been working on openness and harmony. Those make a big difference, especially in this environment. The instructors are very patient, listen to all thoughts, and they answer all questions. *Mary, Ypsilanti, MI*

Meditation has totally transformed my mind and taught me how to be human. It enhances my intuition, and my capacity to love, to feel one with my whole environment.
Waldo, Florida City, FL

The book *Guidance in Esoteric Training* has provided me with invaluable insights to proper mediation methods suited for the development of our astral bodies and offers just as much for spiritual seekers on the path to become aware of such processes. *Jeff, Crawfordville, FL*

I have experienced a chemical reaction within myself to grow for the betterment of self and my people when I first got a taste to look into spiritual teachings. Meditation has made me more aware of what I am really doing, aware of my surroundings and energies. *Keenan, Kershaw, SC*

I hope to gain some small pebble of idea that I could use in my growth. I'm doing the 30 Second practices and also the first *Control of Thought* exercise in the *Self-Development* booklet. It says to practice the first for at least thirty days before adding the rest. So I gained quite a few pebbles, actually. Seeds might be a better descriptor word than pebbles. I want this experience, prison, to help change who I am. The wording in the resource guide of your listing grabbed my attention in a way because it mirrored what I felt. Life is sacred. I want to live sacredly. That's the meaning I want this experience to have and develop.
Michael, Henderson, TX

Yes, I am doing the six meditative exercises. I am healthier and it motivates me. I can think clearly and others do notice. I really love the class. *Dorothy, Ypsilanti, MI*

I have attempted on several occasions to pursue meditation to help control anger issues, but all attempts have failed thus far. Meditation mostly, and learning how to be in better control of my emotions. This is important to me because I am often not in total control of my feelings and emotions because I suffer from bipolar disorder. So anything that may help me learn more about myself in those aspects is good for me.
Thomas, San Luis, AZ

I hope to gain core strength, spiritual freedom, inner awakening, and I would love to actually meditate--something I'm missing and shouldn't: meditation. *Rusty, Corcoran, CA*

So far I've read the first exercise and am *very* impressed by its efficacy in cultivating contemplative concentration. I'd like to gain understanding on Rudolf Steiner's cosmology.
Matthew, Iowa Park, TX

I am hoping for better ways to meditate, anything to get me closer to oneness. Peace, a great urge to dig deeper spiritually. I've just begun, or as I feel, found my way to this path, and since then have found comfort and peace to a lot that I wouldn't before. *Jerry, Vanita, OK*

What grasped my attention is the facts about meditation. The learning of oneself from our own spirit and how we correlate with the cosmos. At this very moment, I hope to gain a better understanding of my life and my life's purpose. I wish to gain a better insight of enhancing my way of thinking. My thoughts may change even more deeply than I can express as I anticipate my full attention into the course of knowing who I am. *Paul, San Quentin, CA*

The meditative exercises helped me to change my way of thinking, and it has helped me to meditate as a part of my daily routine. I've learned some new ways of thinking with some great exercises. *Kelly, Ypsilanti, MI*

DESTINY AND KARMA

By Kristina Kaine

If you are part of the APO program you will be reading this from a prison cell, and in some way a life struggle has gotten you there. Is this fate, is it karma? You no doubt ask: How does this situation belong to me?

While in prison you have also found Anthroposophy. Again you ask: what can this mean? Can we look at our destiny and come to a deeper understanding and meaning behind the challenges and gifts we face? Can we see that each challenge is an opportunity with a purpose? So you ask: Can I live to a fuller potential while incarcerated? Can I experience deeper spiritual awareness, threshold experiences, in prison?

We cannot begin to answer such questions without understanding that every human being is a work in progress. Each day every human being has the opportunity to become greater than they were yesterday. Yet moving forward isn't always a continuous motion; sometimes we have to take a few steps backwards to be able to jump a bit higher. It is also true that the higher we climb, the more care we must take.

Usually these ideas are applied to the one life we live now and this can leave us with a sense of failure.

However, when we consider these ideas in the light of repeated lives on this earth, we can see that a backward step can be in preparation for much larger step forward in some future life. Not that this should become an excuse, but rather a motivation to see more clearly beyond the confines of a restricted view of life.

The biggest question to arise when we consider the possibility of repeated lives is this: Why would we want to live many lives on the earth, especially if this life is so challenging?

We live many lives for several reasons. One reason is to develop qualities for use in later lives, another is to experience what each time period has to offer—again to be used in later lives. To make sense of this, let's have a quick look at what constitutes a human being.

Most people who read Rudolf Steiner's books are aware that human beings are beings of body, soul, and spirit. To put that more correctly, we are beings of soul and spirit and we have a body.

Do we have a complete picture of a car by describing its shell, its shape and color, while ignoring the engine, mechanics, and the driver? The truth is that our physical body without our soul and spirit is just an empty shell. (Kaine)

I quote from my book *I Connecting: The Soul's Quest*, in which I explore in detail these three elements of every human being. How we function as human beings depends on how conscious we are of these three elements, as well as the way in which they interact with each other.

What I call the 'I-being' is often translated as ego in Rudolf Steiner's work. I prefer to call it the human 'I-being' because the term ego can be confused with our egotistical activity or our lower astral instincts. Here is a more detailed description of the three elements we are made of from my book:

Our body is the vehicle, our soul is the engine, and our 'I' is the driver.

When we say that feeling, thinking, and willing are soul faculties, remember that while they originate in the soul they are expressed in the

body. It is our body that carries the expression into the world; the soul is the engine and mechanical components, and the 'I' is the driver. The quality of the driving depends on the maturity of our I-connection.

To understand how we live repeated lives on this earth we need to acquaint ourselves with the driver of the vehicle. It is the driver who reincarnates, each time in a more up-to-date vehicle, hopefully the latest model, and who gathers together certain soul expressions according to the karma to be dealt with. These soul expressions amount to the way we feel, think, and behave.

Karma arises when we crash into things. We might not be looking where we are going and this distraction damages our vehicle or someone else's. We always have the opportunity to repair the damage - in this life or the next. Not that we should say, "better luck next time," we must always take full responsibility for the way we drive our vehicle.

So what is karma? Karma is a process of weighing and balancing; if we tipped the scales a little too much one way, now we can work out exactly what it will take to bring the scales back into balance.

This could be as simple as responding to someone with love and understanding when they back into our car. Or, on the other hand, by getting angry with them we give them the opportunity to feel ashamed for not being more careful - or, so that we can feel ashamed of our own feelings of anger for them, and so on. We can never judge what lies behind each person's karma, as we often don't realize what is behind our own karma.

How does karma arise in each life? When we died last time, we reviewed our life backwards, taking into account everything we did, and then we create a to-do

list of what needs to be done to balance out what we did in the past. Eventually we tick everything off and there is nothing more to be done, which signals that it is okay to take our last breath. Or sometimes, we were not able to get through the whole list, so some of the things are carried over to be dealt with in the future in another life.

The thing about karma is that we need to be conscious of it. Most of the time we are not conscious of it at all. If someone hits us, our usual response is to hit them back. What if we stop and ask: Why are they hitting me? What did I do to deserve this? The real answer could be that in a past life we hit them. The subconscious memory of events in past lives can give rise to the instinct to act. This is the instinctive astral at work. If we can raise ourselves up to our 'I-being' and pause to consider what is happening, this gives us the opportunity to think about the other person's position. This short circuits our instincts and instead of an "eye for an eye" we become thoughtful, and can consider a more appropriate response.

The kinds of things we might think of can vary according to the situation, not everything is about our own karma, we could just be an actor on the stage of their karma. If we steal from someone it could be that they stole something from us in a past life. If we are stolen from, the other person may be taking back from us what they think is rightfully theirs. It may not necessarily be a physical possession that is taken; it could have been my place in the temple that was stolen.



Artist: Sophie Bourguignon Takada

DESTINY AND KARMA

cont. from pg 3

Karma particularly plays out in our emotions. Anger can be the result of some injustice done in a past life. Love for others could be because we were unloved in another life. If we observe carefully, the pattern becomes clear and we always have the opportunity to restore the balance.

Another way karma emerges is through our likes and dislikes. If we really think about it, many of the things we like and dislike have no cause in the life we are living now despite what psychologists may say. How could we possibly explain not liking someone we just met? To understand this we need to look at the activity of our soul. In the book *I Connecting: The Soul's Quest*, I wrote

Our 'I' is our inner strength.

There are many ways to identify the I-connection. For instance, we may feel our 'I' standing in our being like the mast of a tall ship. We can also experience it as calm and peace as we try to raise our emotions to a higher level. For example, if we feel animosity for someone, we can try to lighten that feeling and make it less intense. If we can't eliminate it but can move to a milder dislike, or to a feeling of mild annoyance, then our 'I' is connecting and assisting us to be more objective. Another approach is to find one thing to like about the person. It is when we do things like this that we can become more aware of the experience of our 'I' in our soul. This will add strength to thinking. It will also assist us to create new habits, think about things in new ways, and then our 'I' will be in charge of our soul more often. This will also prevent the soul from excluding the 'I' which it is often inclined to do.

The purpose of our karma is to assist us to become aware of our 'I'; the more we resist this, the harder our karma will be. Deep within, every human being is driven to know their 'I', and until we do we experience deep dissatisfaction. We usually deal with this dissatisfaction by seeking to satisfy ourselves in many unhelpful ways. We can drink too much, take drugs, dominate other people, gamble, and much more. It is helpful to know that at the heart of it is the drive to experience our 'I'. If we can get a taste of our 'I' we will then become addicted to it and all other addictions will fall away.

All this can leave us asking why is the human 'I' so elusive. We find the answer when we understand that human beings have an evolving consciousness. According to Rudolf Steiner we developed the ability to have personal feelings during the period from 3000BC to 747BC. Then we began to develop the ability to think for ourselves which took us up to 1413AD at which time we began to work with our will, and this is where we are currently. We received our 'I-being' while we worked on our ability to think but we were not aware of it until we began developing our will. We will not be fully able to use our will consciously until 3573AD, so we have a way to go but that is no reason for not working with it now.

The thing about our will is that it gives us a sense of freedom. This is the idea that 'I can do anything'. In fact, the will combined with the 'I' is very powerful indeed. This is our challenge, to be aware of the will and its inclination to be instinctive, and to raise it up to its highest conscious expression through our 'I'. One of the best ways to become conscious of the will is through the backwards exercise. Rudolf Steiner describes it in this way:

An exercise which is particularly valuable is at evening to allow the experience of the day to pass in part vividly

before the soul, beginning with the last event of evening and progressing toward the morning. Everything must be taken as atomistically [in minute detail] as possible; one must go so far as to imagine the ascent of a staircase in reverse, as if it were a descent from the top to the lowest step. The more one forms ideas in this way in an unaccustomed sequence which is not dependent on the external facts, the more one liberates the will, which is accustomed to abandon itself passively to the external facts, from these, and also from the physical body. (From Reincarnation and Immortality, October 9, 1916)

Awakening to the will in our soul and body is a very valuable tool to assist us to connect with our 'I' and let go of our instinctive egotistical tendencies. When our 'I' is more active in our soul we become much more objective. We can look at our past passively and perhaps be grateful for the experiences that have brought us to this moment in time.

After doing such exercises, further support can be won through others which I would like to call "exercises in serious self contemplation and self education." One must be able to judge one's own actions and impulses of will with the same objective detachment as one can judge the actions and impulses of will of another personality. One must become in a sense the objective observer of one's own resolves and actions. (From Reincarnation and Immortality, October 9, 1916)

Another reason for strengthening our will is because as we connect more frequently with our 'I,' we begin to see our motives more clearly. This can bring up feelings of shame and regret—these feelings are not helpful. I often say that with the 'I' we can be the interested observer. I say 'interested' because we have to bring up some warmth of feeling, otherwise we can be too cold and hard, which disconnects us from reality.

The main purpose of all of this is to learn to see that the way we act in this life has its cause in a past life. Of course we can show that our upbringing and our circumstances in life led us to behave in a certain way, but the root cause is always in a past life. Our upbringing and circumstances simply facilitate our destiny and karma.

Further to this, Rudolf Steiner says,

What I prepare in this life will have its rewards in another. (February 9, 1906)

This means that we have this opportunity to prepare until the day we die. One wrong step does not cancel our opportunity to make the right step. Our karma can be so strong in certain areas that we are continually drawn to the urge to retaliate, yet we must also continually try to meet this urge with understanding and compassion (for ourselves first) if we are to free ourselves from the consequences of our actions in past lives. Yet often we don't, we are so blinded by the karma we unconsciously do the opposite of what is needed to create balance.

When it is all said and done, we must realize that:

In reality, karma is a redemption of man by himself, by dint of his own efforts as he gradually ascends to freedom through the series of incarnations. (An Esoteric Cosmology, Lecture 17: "Redemption and Liberation" by Rudolf Steiner)

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A Moment in Time

By Richard Cloud

There exists in each of our lives moments that are undeniably part of our destiny. These need not be life-changing at the time they occur. Often a seemingly insignificant event will hide its true nature within the subtle chain reaction it introduces. This was the case for me while serving time in the Texas prison system. I was about 8 years into a 14-year sentence. By this time I'd already worked my way up the levels of confinement and was being housed in maximum security (isolation), where inmates receive recreation one hour a day. Each "rec yard" was about the size of a small apartment living room. Only one inmate was allowed on a yard at a time, but the yards were arranged like a square divided in four parts by chain-link fence that ran from floor to ceiling, making it possible to talk with the inmates in yards adjacent to your own.

One day I went to recreation and struck up a conversation with the inmate in the yard to my left. Up to this point I'd studied a bit about paganism and considered this my religion. I knew the inmate beside me was also pagan so our dialog began easily and continued through the hour. As our time ran out and we were being hand-cuffed to return to our cells, the inmate who had been in the yard to my right called me over and said he'd overheard parts of my conversation and that he had an address he'd like to share with me. He said it was a Rosicrucian group that offered correspondence courses in esoteric Christianity, occult philosophy, and astrology. I had no clue what Rosicrucian meant but I wrote the address and began taking the courses. Within a week after obtaining their main book and completing their preliminary courses my life had changed. Never had something made so much sense or satisfied every question. I was hooked. I ordered and devoured every book the author had written, took every course they offered, began writing them and developed somewhat of a rapport. After becoming a student I began receiving their bi-monthly philosophy letter which was sent out along with the current happenings of group.

About a year into this group one of the bi-monthly letters spoke of a former high-ranking member being expelled because he claimed the teachings actually originated from Dr. Rudolf Steiner. I naturally had to find out who Steiner was. I began to investigate as best I could from that 9x5 cell and it wasn't long until I had the address of the Anthroposophical Society, and in particular to the Anthroposophical Prison Outreach. After writing them I was sent *An Outline of Occult Science* and *How to Know Higher Worlds*. I was stunned. This was the exact information I had received from the other group, but clearly Steiner was the source. Since that time I have become a devoted student of Dr. Steiner and have found his insights encompass far more than I had imagined.

I cannot picture my life now without the influence of Anthroposophy. I've been out of prison for over 6 years and often think back to when that inmate (who thereafter became my best friend) offered me an address that would change my life and ultimately lead me to the work of Rudolf Steiner. I marvel at the fact that in the midst of the darkest period of my life the light of the Doctor's teachings found me. Or perhaps I should say we found each other, the teachings and I. Because that really is how it works.

There is an old occult proverb that says, "When the student is ready the teacher will appear." It doesn't matter where we are: if we decide in our hearts to be students of Truth and strive for the Light; the Truth and the Light will find us. Inmates are the most isolated citizens of our country. Many of our modern prisons look like dungeons with electricity. Yet even there, winding its way through the years and cutting through the darkness like a sword of Light, the words of the great Doctor have found themselves in your hands. This is no idle occurrence, no passing moment to be tossed aside like Bibles left at prison on the way out. The moment the teaching found their way to you and you found yourself drawn to the work of Rudolf Steiner, in that moment your karma revealed itself. *In Light and Truth, Richard Cloud*

Dead leaves dancing in the Living Wind

By Chris DeRusse

Greetings to all my brothers and sisters, within the confines of the cold cells of Lockup. My name is Christopher DeRusse and I am here to share my story with you all. I can tell you that I am nothing impressive; I am currently still on parole for my past deeds (convictions for DWI). I started drinking when I was thirteen, graduated to marijuana, cocaine and various other stimulants. I got married and had a beautiful daughter in 2001...that didn't slow me down. I racked up convictions, paid fines, community service, etc. My family suffered from my nonsense, and I am ashamed for this. Eventually I was drinking whatever I could find prior to my incarceration.

Finally in 2010, I was convicted of a DWI Felony with a seven year sentence. I realized that I had suffered and taken it out on those I loved, and that alcohol and drugs were my tools. The feelings of despair and hopelessness were in my heart. Soon after I was confined, my wife made the decision that it was time for her to move on with my daughter. It was hard to hear, but it was good for them. I never harbored resentment. I began reading the Bible and other religious materials and participated in various church groups and prayers. Soon the alcohol and drugs left my physical body. I became a trusty in prison. Suddenly, something Spiritual awakened in me – and it was a shock. When you've lost everything with no hope and realize it's your hand returning upon you, it's very profound – I saw it as a Karmic revelation, grace. I kept silent about it because I thought they would think I was crazy.

In *How to Know Higher Worlds*, Steiner describes these occult symptoms that I was experiencing. Keep in mind that, at this point I had no knowledge of Rudolf Steiner or Anthroposophy. Moving further, I began more intense prayer and Christian meditations. At the prison I had a chance meeting with the librarian who handed me information on Anthroposophical Prison Outreach. He felt compelled to do this, because he always saw me in the metaphysical section, although we had never spoken before and he caught chain that very night. You might call it chance or Karma. I sent for and received a welcome packet with warm hopeful regards and encouragement. The first book I received was *Cosmic Memory*. I was stunned and hope began to fill me up. It sounds outlandish, but something within the writing and sincerity of Steiner was so powerful. I felt I was having a reunion with something so familiar.

Although I am omitting a lot of detail here, I began to adapt to Steiner's knowledge and to put the exercises into action. My experiences increased. I got released in 2012, have been on parole since, and soon to be over. I can testify about certain experiences to which Rudolf Steiner lectured about. The important point is this: the work that Rudolf Steiner left was to help man reconnect with The Divine. I am a convict who was desolate and lost everything...I was lost and I am found again. I no longer have the desire to cause misery or abuse substances that are wretched. APO provides so many wonderful exercises and lectures by Rudolf Steiner. I can tell you that these exercises in Thinking, Feeling, and Willing, if applied with great sincerity of heart and effort, really work! They improve the spiritual members that stream through the physical. The Spirit begins a healing process that improves and reconnects you with your True Self. I am 43 years old now, and feel free and open as a human being. I have been so devoted to this cause that it has become my lifestyle, and I believe that we must encourage each other to bring hope for a new day. I am just one of many on the Path, I suffered in those very cells with you, brothers and sisters. If one such as I can change, I am certain the impulse is within you all as well -- please never be without hope. I pray that my story inspires you that this endeavor is a true one. Devote yourselves to change and it will be so. Meditation, prayer, and the exercises will transform you -- we are purging and strengthening ourselves for perfection. I am thankful for APO for providing me with divine knowledge to help me overcome myself and my problems. If my words inspire anyone at all....Christ Be Blessed, and May the Divine Light of Christ Jesus shine on all of our brothers and sisters in lockup.

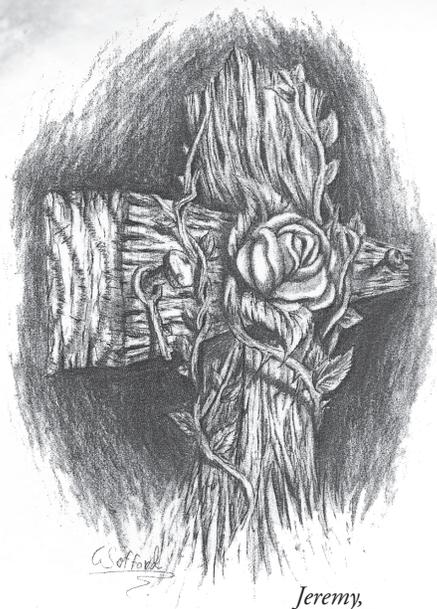
Sincerely, Clouddrunner

Art and Poetry

Compassion

While I was walking
On a dark and stormy
night,
I came upon a homeless
man
Cowering from the light.
I begged him not to be
afraid
And that I meant no harm
He looked at me with
sunken eyes
And reached up for my arm.
As he moved I caught a
whiff
And struggled not to show
it.
I knew I had to earn his
trust
And tried hard not to blow
it.
My hands were marred by
grease and grime.
In truth, his face was too.
But then I drew up closer
And saw 'twas black and
blue.
He whimpered as I helped
him up
And tears began to fall.
I gently led him to the
street,
Ragged clothes and all.
I asked if I could take him
Someplace warm and dry.
He backed away, ashamed
and hurt,
And so I asked him why.
He said that he's not been
shown love;
Not since he was a kid.
And all he wanted was a
hug,
And so, my friends, I did!

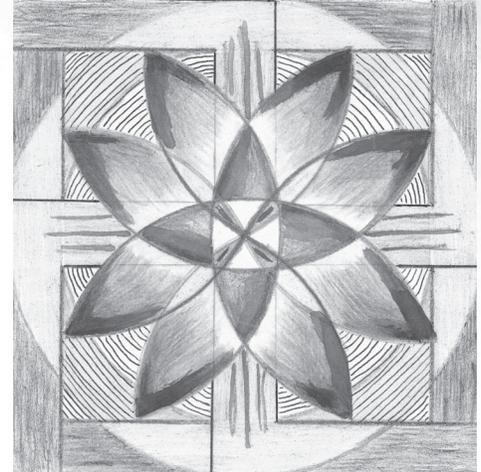
Chris, Loretto, PA



*Jeremy,
Wrightsville, AR*

During the quietness
I can imagine the light that is formed by the heavens
and...in that stillness
I become closer to the knowledge that regulates life
But once all has been set in motion
All becomes lost
lost in the commotion of the day-to-day necessities of
survival
lost within time that separates days turning into nights
As I bear witness to the beauty of the sunrise and sunset
My heart is suddenly overwhelmed by a mysterious joy
from witnessing the beauty of beginnings and ends
But as soon as dawn becomes day and dusk
becomes night
I become the victim of the envious, the jealous, the
greedy, the lustful
and...and the struggle to mortify my being
This has set my mind and heart amongst fields of
beautiful flowers
and under the brilliant colors and hues of the sky
But...has brought my spirit to a shore of uncertainty
a shore surrounded by an ocean
an ocean filled with approaching battleships of war
another island of despair.

Jimmy, Winnfield, LA

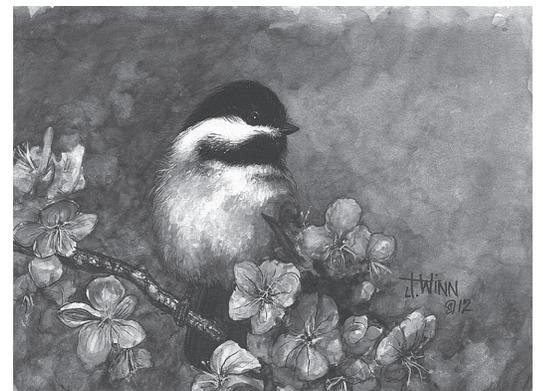


Eric, Palestine, TX

Star Twins

Our life is but a glimpse into the
universal mirror or our memories
Where our soul is reminded we're
truly meant to dream and fulfill our purpose
in an eternal grand reality.
But for now, it is enough for our hearts
to only touch the world with hope
and light from our soul etherically
for we have time
and so much more to do
Before we can truly see ourselves
and our greater cosmic destiny.
Still, one day we will know
when we look and recognize the stars
Watching over us with love and with light
So vast...yet they are such a part of us...we are
Reflected in the mirror of the universe

Shannon, Ypsilanti, MI



Jason, Holdenville, OK

How to Know Higher Worlds Study Guide Responses

Chapter One: Conditions

What do we need to be before we can receive treasures of the spirit? (5)

How do we find the strength to evolve to a higher level? (7)

What do we need in order to develop a meaningful relationship to the outer world? (13)

What is the result of setting aside some time every day for spiritual reflection? (20)

Before we can receive treasures of the spirit we must develop inner qualities to better prepare ourselves to receive such. Just as I would not “cast pearls before swine”, I would not receive treasures that I do not have a reverence or appreciation for.(5) We must first, within ourselves, develop a profound feeling that there is something higher than ourselves and upon this feeling we can build the strength to evolve to a higher level. We must humble ourselves in humility, devotion, and veneration before we can ascend the heights of the spirit and possess the strength to do so.(7) One must develop a rich inner life in order to possess a meaningful relationship to the outer world, for we must experience the divine within before we can find divinity in our surroundings.(13) Time set aside for spiritual reflection if applied correctly, will empower one to complete daily tasks.(20) *Kevin, Menard, IL*

To develop definite inner qualities to a specific high degree, we must become spiritual.(5) When we inwardly develop a profound feeling that there is something higher than ourselves we can find the strength to evolve to a higher level. (7) Learning to surrender ourselves less and less to the impression of the outer world. To develop a meaningful relationship to the outer world, we must learn to work with our own feelings and ideas. (13) Such moments give us the full strength for completing our daily tasks.(20) *Anthony, Nashville, TN*

To receive treasures of the spirit we need to be reverent, empathetic, able to listen to the inner world, and uncritical and least judgmental as possible.(5) By withholding our own enjoyment of things and learning how to work for the betterment of our fellow man and people.(7) *Terrance, Windsor, NC*

One must grow—mentally, emotionally, spiritually—and develop inner qualities to a specific high degree.(5) To evolve to higher levels I must first guide my heart into the depths of veneration and devotion.(7) You have to learn to work with your own feelings and ideas.(13) Calming yourself, maybe getting a little peace so as to not overburden yourself with a yoke too heavy.(20) *Mike, Susanville, CA*

A very strong and sincere devotion and reverence. It is not merely approaching the threshold of such potent knowledge, but being spiritually prepared to receive it.(5) We must find and discover a higher sense within. An individual must come to a point in higher existence where commitments and devotions are at the head of the table in which the feast of esoteric knowledge is served and consumed. It takes some different experiences, trials, and tribulations before they can be seated upon such a banquet.(7) A very rich and abundant inner life. We must learn to work with our own feelings and ideas, and not just learn, but apply such principles in everyday life as we continue to progress down the path of esoteric knowledge. To apply, means to base all aspects of living on these newfound ways of residing in this higher realm of existence.(13) It gives us, the pupil, a period of separate time to focus, view, and reflect on aspects not involved in our everyday lives and/or activities. Such time, to me, is as a spiritual workout, in order to strengthen our abilities. (20) *Jeremy, Lucasville, OH*

Develop inner qualities to a higher degree. I'm assuming love, patience, goodness, kindness, etc.(5) We can find this strength by developing a deep feeling that there is something higher than ourselves, and I personally feel that we are a sum particle of its wholeness.(7) We must then learn to work with our own feelings and ideas. We must experience within ourselves. All flowers fathered within are gathered with-out.(13) It gives us full strength for completing our daily tasks. It centers and balances us into peace and tranquility.(20) *John, Soledad, CA*

To receive treasures of the spirit one must use the specific, ancient, and definite development of inner qualities to a high degree. We must prepare a proper welcome for these secrets in one's soul.(5) Guided by their hearts into depths of veneration and devotion a person pass through the gates of humility. This is done by feeling there is something higher than our physical senses, by understanding there is a universal mind, body, and soul.(7) To develop a meaningful relationship to the outer world, we must learn to work with our own feelings and ideas. (13) Such moments give us the full strength for completing our daily tasks.(20) *Jared, Wartburg, TN*

~ STEPPING ONTO THE PATH ~

BETTER MEANS to bring inner peace and less fear of the future. In my studies that include both Buddhism and yoga, I've realized their similarities and the truth behind mindfulness and introspection. What I was able to read of Mr. Steiner, it seems as though the APO would be a boon to my studies. *David, Enfield, CT*

I WANT to better my inner self and improve my thinking and self-knowledge. To better my thinking, my communication skills, to be able to communicate without letting other feelings and/or problems affect me, to get my wisdom and to find myself. *Ezequiel, San Quentin, CA*

I WANT TO TRY a better way of living and succeeding. Hoping to try something different, that may help me to change my life. *Andrew, Winslow, AZ*

I KNOW that there is much more to life than that which we perceive with the limited senses. Through meditation I have had small glimpses of something greater. Something tells me Mr. Steiner's teachings will help me transcend the bounds of the limited mind I have been so attached to for so long. I am interested in becoming a better person, someone people can look up to, look forward to being around, and feel safe in my presence. I've spent my first forty years living a self-destructive life, selfish and self-serving. I want to do my best to spend the next forty selflessly, giving back as much as possible. Insight into the self and the other worlds. I am really

hoping that by reading this literature and following some of the practices it outlines, I may become more in tune with the cosmic consciousness. *John, Valdosta, GA*

I AM A SEEKER of truth, a student of knowledge, a man that adheres to universal law. I hope to gain new insight of self, God, and creation. *Tracy, Licking, MO*

THIS APPROACH to spirituality, gives concise steps to follow. It gives knowledge that engages the mind. I hope for spiritual growth through gaining understanding of my true self, and the spiritual worlds. *Daniel, Kershaw, SC*

I'VE STUDIED various spiritual practices and feel like they didn't fit my inner belief. I supposed the problem I run into with any religion is faith, or more precisely, lack of faith. I hope this program will help me in my quest to become spiritually whole. For a long time I've felt like there has been something missing in my life and as a result, I've tried to fill the void through a lifestyle which continually lands me in prison. I'm 35 years old and I have spent the vast majority of my adult life in prison. I am so very tired of wasting my life like this! *Joshua, Florence, CO*

I HOPE to make progress toward my goal of complete moral and spiritual reform. I hope to progress toward self-mastery and develop a higher level of self-awareness, self-observation, self-regulation, and self-discipline of my thoughts, attitude, emotions, and conduct. *James, Uncasville, CT*

The Call

Inside there is a yearning
A call to remember
To remember the past
Experience the present
And know the future
To not forget the purpose
Recall the lessons learned
Be clear about the now
Hope for all that is to come
Work on the self
As others do the same
Love all
For it is the highest law
It cannot be conquered
Be not disenchanted with life
It is a precious gift
A gift seen only with spiritual eyes
You, love, and life go hand in hand
There is no separation
It is all one
Listen to your heart of hearts
For that is the soul answering the call
And it shall lead you home.

Brandon, South Bay, FL

SELF AWAKENINGS

EduCareDo Correspondence Course Response Summaries

Lesson 1: Introduction

This lesson is a demonstration that provokes thoughts in my mind and creates a wave of mental activity that I've never experienced before. I appreciate the logical outlook and so forth, it has the accuracy and precision of a surgeon. The paradigm "a storm in a teacup" precisely demonstrates a liberal viewpoint. I've never thought about considering so many points of view in order to gain some perspective of an underlying circumstance. I conducted a social experiment, which showed that most of the inmates I live with are untidy, yet, they were prejudice towards one another's uncleanness. On the yard, I gave a speech using A Storm in a Teacup as an example. It was received well and positive results derived from discussing the topic amongst one another. *Benzie, Freeland, MI*

Lesson 1: Introduction

In the "Storm in a Teacup" scenario, I realized there are more than a few ways to look at a thing. The factors to go off of are limitless. Also, that by forcibly acting or imposing your will to "change" others/the world, you are harming all life force, even if you achieve your desired intention. Things are *not* what they seem to be in the material world in the spiritual. In the beginning of the lesson when I read "we have lost religion and morality as a concrete reality and have difficulty keeping our inner peace with outer development", it hit me that I've realized this already, but it saddens my spirit. I've attempted over and over to reach people with the message of "hope" and failed. It is hard to truly believe when I tell myself that quitting is the only way you can lose, but I feel it! I will persevere and when things seem the darkest, remember dawn has arrived and smile (metaphorically). Continue on and realize change is as constant as time and a "date" will eventually arrive (desired results). *Richard, Wartburg, TN*

Lesson 2: First Steps in the Light on the Path

I like the opening portion to this lesson on developing our connections to what I call our intuitive/imaginative link to God (collective consciousness), divine universal spirit, and the great responsibility elders have in contributing to the future of this world through teaching and guiding, paving the way to higher states of consciousness. I'm going to develop some visual aids to use as a tool to train the mind to perceive objects and situations in multidimensional ways in order to wake up the consciousness to the intuitive/imaginative mind. To take a metaphysical approach to all situations, whether the situation be of thought or action. I try to look at a situation in a multiple view. If we look at an object in nature of what Goethe experienced, to be looking at an object from the front, back, and each side, and also looking at the object by becoming the object itself, in order to see all possibilities and then determine its nature or purpose. From this we will have explored every possibility before taking action and determining the nature or intent. This, in my experience, seems to be the best way for an individual to understand the collective link to all life, whether this life force be of energy or seemingly stagnant matter, and to see the interconnectedness in all. This in return brings an inner harmony, as you may know, that transcends mere words or phonetic explanations. *Eyvind, Jarratt, VA*

Lesson 5: Watercolour Painting

The forms in the painting come to life after it is applied and dry. Forms turn into faces of all kinds if I meditate for long periods of time. Landscapes come and go no matter the color I choose to imagine. I find relief in the horizon view where imaginary sky changes color according to my senses, or activity going on around me. *Victor, Navasota, TX*

Lesson 6: The Threefold Human Constitution

New to me were the nerve-sense, rhythmic system, the metabolic-limb system equated as parts of our thinking, willing, and feeling. Most important was the exercise to concentrate on an object for at least five minutes without thoughts of other things. I'll do this exercise and examine an ordinary object for at least five minutes each day. *Lonnie, Umatilla, OR*

Lesson 7: The Human Being in its Relationship to the World

It was new to me how every breath I take is connected to the world. How my life is a day in the cosmic year, and that the nature of the soul is toward truth, beauty, and goodness. I found most important to be the difference between working and seeing, and without seeing, we will never see the path. The understanding between metamorphosis and variation is something I never even thought about. Without me understanding these differences, I could never understand intensification to fulfillment. This lesson also allows me to see the court system clearly. I'm learning that what I thought to be real—the court

system—is not real; and what I thought to be unreal—the spiritual walk—is real. These laws of polarity, metamorphosis, heartbeats, and breathing are real. As I learn more about these things, I'm learning what reality is. I feel as though I walked this earth in a dream world, and anthroposophy has woken me up to the real world. *Michael, Joliet, IL*

Lesson 8: The Human Being and the Four Kingdoms of Nature

I enjoyed the exercises and how the human, plant, and animal kingdoms all share some of the same qualities. I also enjoyed the practices of our will. That has been one of my most difficult things to do, but with the exercises, I now know how I can master it and get on track. The most important in this lesson to me is being able to grow toward self-knowledge—the "I am" which will help me understand myself and others a lot better. I will continue to grow, allow myself to love my being and understand my ways so that once I've accomplished that, I can share the great gift of love and understanding with others. *Ruben Berrios, Milton, FL*

Lesson 9: Development and Care of the Four Members of the Human Being

All the relationships and dependencies as one matures and develops, were new to me, as opposed to independently growing. The relationships between movement to speech, etc. I particularly paid attention to the manifestations in later life of deficiencies in development, whatever the cause, pushing too soon, too early, too dry, etc. that are observed in many. But how to correct, overcome these attributes or pediments? In my communications with others, I use awareness of what some actions and behaviors are manifested, other than simply choice. *Lonnie Glinski, Umatilla, OR*

Lesson 10: The Human Being, the Four Temperaments, the Four Elements, and the Four Ethers

The three stages in the four temperaments. How we can go from the ultra-negative of our type to the usefulness in stage three. Also I did not know that my outward expression of feelings was a result of me being a choleric, which I learned how to deal with by limited expression extrovertly. Also to not repress my feelings as I erroneously did in the past, but to express them differently in working towards the path to self-knowledge. With this, learning that I hold choleric, melancholic temperaments, both with the ability to help others, can craft a state of being that can do much in changing the world we live in. *Jason, Florence, CO*

Lesson 11: Elements, Ethers, the Origin, and Evolution on Earth, Part 2

I liked reading about the naming of the elements and their origin, and evolution in the various realms of the universe, and how the four elements relate to the human being and how I can try to develop new capacities that will enable me to work with the elemental beings in a higher conscious way. I can take this finding and use it to not only develop my own higher state of being, but the higher state of others as well. *Christopher, Milton, FL*

Lesson 12: Experiments with Elements, Ethers, and their Effects in Nature and in the Human Being

I learned a greater comprehensive understanding of music, work of creation in the planetary spheres, and the meanings of conjunction, appreciation, and "trigon", and quadrature. Trigon was completely new to me. This lesson greatly enhanced my understanding of the interplay between the polar opposites, as well as interactions between all people, separate in form but connected in essence. In my surroundings, I am interrupted and distracted constantly by other people. I will continue to practice patience and compassion with them, to allow them to be heard without any emotional attachment on my part. *James, Walla Walla, WA*

Lesson 19: Ecological—Social—Economy, Part 1 of 2

That we should have as much trust in our dealings with other people as we have in a person whom we love. To be free means to realize oneself in actions one loves. Develop trust to rule social life—develop love for what we have to do. Change from domestic and local to universal. The second system is of that of common rights, where one is dealing with purely human relations between one person and another. Here, one must strive to realize the idea of equality. In the spiritual field, which stands in comparative independence in the body social, it is the idea of freedom that needs to be realized. I'll use ecological social economy to self-create eco-organizations to serve the needs of the individual and build a workforce for work cooperativity and responsibility. Not out of judgment of individuals, but out of the communality of brotherhood

Book Reviews



The Festivals and Their Meaning Rudolf Steiner
The Festivals and Their Meaning is a very enlightening book. Therein, one will find the esoteric meaning behind Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun Sunday. The reader will undoubtedly be taken on a journey over hills and into valleys of perspectives pertaining to these most commonly observed but least understood festivals, whose spiritual import and symbolism are now submerged beneath ritual, superstition, and dogma. This book shows

the fallacies of Christmas and Easter as propagated by “orthodox” religion from their days to their ways of celebrating the same. If the light shed by Steiner in this work was the common ideology of the masses, our holidays would be spiritual experiences, perhaps mystical intoxication rather than physical inebriation, which is ignorantly associated with the observance of holidays. Furthermore, in this title the reader is given the true meaning of Christ and “its” relation to Jesus. The Mystery of Golgotha is expanded upon in such a manner that it invokes a desire to think better, do better, and *be* better because he or she will learn that the story of Christ and the resurrection is their very own potential. Man is the cross and simultaneously the sepulcher from which Christ (the Sun-Son) must be risen, but will forever remain buried until each of us, individually, illuminates our minds (Golgotha) with truth; that everlasting light that shines even at midnight. *Bruce, Victoria, VA*

Celtic Christianity Christopher Bamford and William Parker Marsh
Celtic Christianity’s portrayal of Brigit is full of pagan lore. It is interesting to read early Germanic and Celtic Christian writers because you can tell that their adherence to the new faith was political. The old ways shine through to those that know how to look. Snorri Sturluson, in the poetic Edda, through a Christian priest, descended from Icelandic gentry who themselves descended from Nordic kings, wrote the myths conscious of the Christian audience. It is clear he was cautious, but people familiar with esoteric principles can see the pagan in his heart. *Joseph, Tennessee Colony, TX*

Theosophy Rudolf Steiner
Theosophy really revealed how the truth is truly eternal and how this really is why we yearn deep within for this. To strive for truth is honorable, especially spiritual truths as the spiritual world decides when we are ready or prepared to receive them. The truth seems so divine and those of us who find truth and error in our own previous conception feel closer to God. Because truth is eternal it will never stagnate or get old because we will always be perceiving and experiencing it, or at least I hope and truly desire this from eternity. *Jeffrey, Crawfordville, FL*

Rosicrucian Wisdom Rudolf Steiner
The Master of Wisdom, Rudolf Steiner, propels you through fourteen lectures of deep discovery of who you are, where humanity has been, and where humanity is headed. The Path is shown in esoteric mastery that speaks to the soul, and hits home our responsibility to ourselves and mankind. The Rosicrucian Path is today

the appropriate path that leads to soul consciousness and the second birth. In my humble, opinion, it is a vital step in truly becoming, in a safe and logical way. *Rosicrucian Wisdom* enlightens a being to realize The Great Work is a process that will bring humanity into God-like beings, thus, establishing Heaven on earth: “Oh death, where is thy sting?” To me, death does not exist, rather, it gives a becoming soul opportunity to further learn from its earthly experiences, and what must be done to perfect thyself. Desire in *Rosicrucian Wisdom* becomes a tool to hone the spirit using the law of attraction, much like the blacksmith uses the forge and tools to perfect his creation. It is medicine for humanity, now and in the future. Finally, Mr. Steiner stresses the importance of implementing this wisdom into everyday life to shift vibratory forces that propel the soul upward into the spirit realm. For when I return again, I know through my desire to complete The Great Work, the law will provide parents who desire a becoming soul. I thank all Rosicrucian souls for this much cherished wisdom!

Wayne, Richmond, TX

The Fifth Gospel Rudolf Steiner
I found this book to be a testament to the clairvoyant gift Rudolf Steiner had. His ability to read the Akashic record and be able to fill in the blanks of Jesus Christ’s early years not given to us in the Gospels was most informative. The structure of thirteen lectures was smooth, each one building upon the previous lecture and enhancing the understanding. The discussion about the Essene’s I found to be good, as I knew very little, apart from their name, what they were about. The temptation of Christ in the wilderness shed new light on this aspect of Christ’s life. *Robin, Petersburg, VA*

The Celestine Prophecy James Redfield
This was a refreshing pedant in awakening awareness to another world in which we live in. I was in search for an explanation to circumstances that have happened in the past that have remained just out of reach of understanding. This book has confirmed an intuition I’ve had for years. It was recognizing patterns emerging and learning to seize the opportunities to (self-actualize) find one’s true self. A purpose-filled self without recreating childhood (or learned) dramas. Then to slowly start teachings others to do the same, thus propelling us higher on the spiritual path. Staying connected into the synchronicity. *Daniel, Daytona Beach, FL*

An Outline of Esoteric Science Rudolf Steiner
This book on occult science had me in a state of awe, how the planets of beings are responsible for the human makeup. Man and evolution of this world, with our makeup is the same as the world we live in, as are the four elements. I can truly say that we gain also from the planets we’re involved around which gives us characteristics, as we speak about Imagination, Inspiration, Intuition, thinking, feeling, and willing, and so on. It is amazing when I really think about the complexity of how perfectly we’re made. And also how the Luciferic spirits bought man the power to unfold a free activity in our own consciousness, and brought us at the same time the possibility of error of evil. Now when reading I only see the word “Doer” only one time. I myself am the doer and I have the I-ness of freewill to take any spirit of any kind to the doer. But only I take in good spirits to the doer. Wisdom was prepared all through Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolution, and lives in the physical, etheric, and astral bodies of man. Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and soon when man’s astral body is drawn away in sleep, it belongs not only to the Earth and earthly conditions, but to the worlds in which other cosmic realms stellar worlds. These worlds penetrate into man’s astral body even in the waking state, the Fifth element is “Ether”, and it also spoke about. *Jonathan, Huntsville, TX*

SELF AWAKENINGS

cont. from pg 8

and sisterhood for production and distribution of goods (economical geography). *Mario, McAlester, OK*

Lesson #21: Introduction to Biography Work
I find in this lesson, everything is new to me. From life writing to the changed dimension of consciousness. How we create our tomorrow guided by our own curiosities; embracing the newness of each day, being a creative partner in our own biography, making a graph of our life, understanding the importance of such study. What was closest to my heart is to understand karmic knots. How past lives, romances, relationships can carry over into this incarnation and manifests in the many relationships, with its hardships, joy, and sorrows. Some too hard to explain or deal with, yet others can be explained, revisited with ease and joy. I will include what I have read, the gist of especially the karmic knot and include it in my personal writings. Maybe one day I’ll have a complete manuscript by publishing, for all to read. I have included this

chapter as being of significance to my understanding of anthroposophy. I am in the process of learning what the inner self can instruct one on concerning the karmic knot and how to right this life and forgive as I wish to forgive the karmic uncertainty that has loomed for some time. *Alan, Nelsonville, OH*

Lesson #22: Getting in Touch with Astronomy
What was new to me in this lesson was that the greater the darkness, the more we are subjected to mineral (substantial) laws, and the greater the dark, the more we are subjected to life (qualitative) laws. What was most important to me in this lesson is that it’s better to approach the heavens at first with humility and wonder than rushing to analyze everything. I want to begin to “speak” to the stars by adopting Rudolf Steiner’s daily and monthly meditations (as found in Start Now!) into my daily meditation and prayer life. *Carl, McAlester, OK*

Inspired by your Reading

I feel that *The Archangel Michael* was one of the most insightful books I have ever read. It was as if Michael was speaking to me himself. Like I was picking up somewhere I had left off. It was a very familiar feeling, having many “aha” moments! I will surely have to reread that book. *Mystery Knowledge and Mystery Centres* was a very detailed and concise book that took me through the dynamics of different stages of initiation during different time periods. I found it amazing that the Saturn period is responsible for the ability to have memory. There is so much to absorb, I will surely need to read it again and again, like most of Steiner’s books.

Brandon, South Bay FL

Bastiaan Baan quotes in *Old and New Mysteries*, “it is undoubtedly more important how a human being bears his fate, than what their actual fate is.” Having the choice to make, prisoners divide themselves into the two camps, the negative and the positive. These are the choices framed by Viktor Frankl from his time in a concentration camp, quoted by Baan. Those who are engrossed in negativism view this debited time as simply a burden that must be borne until they can get back to that from which they came—Maya. They look for ways and means to just waste time, feeling this time doesn’t matter. In this other “camp” are those who embrace positivity; those who even in the midst of severe trial, strive to better themselves, to transform themselves into that metaphorical butterfly. This is the calling card of the mysteries. I’d like to propose here that a semblance of the mysteries can be had in the prison. The various stages of the mysteries (or initiation) have been summarized as follows: Separation; location in a sacred place; death and burial; revelation; testing; resurrection; reintegration into the tribe. So I mean that the prison can fulfill some of the aforementioned stages of initiation. In my humble opinion, I believe this is the reason why you see the widespread interest in the mysteries in the prison population. There is that latent potential for undertaking the work, and fruit is produced when guides such as APO and other such organizations show the prisoners there is a path open to them. Horace, Beeville, TX

The Seer’s Handbook by Dennis Klocek gives an extremely well written account on how modern alchemists can attain the elusive alchemical wedding as he explains step-by-step, the process of moving up the alchemical mountains. Klocek gives examples and simplifies as much as possible to allow the esoteric student full access to the human soul, through the elemental trials on a fully conscious level. I cannot wait to review his other books that I’ve just now become aware of. Robert, Rosharon, TX

I particularly enjoyed *An Outline of Esoteric Science*. It did a good job explaining the evolution of the cosmos and man. I felt it took the subject a level deeper than what I am accustomed to studying of the subject, but maybe it is just a deepening of my perception which made it seem that way. As with every book I read concerning the Mysteries, I take a lot of notes. I began this practice a few years ago as I began studying the Mysteries from the perspective of various occult organizations. Right now, I would have to estimate I have over a thousand pages of cited notes, including many of the writings of Rudolf Steiner. A few years ago I felt compelled to begin recording what I am studying and learning, and have been doing that ever since. These notes contain many layers of knowledge, from hundreds of hours of research I have gained thus far in my spiritual journey. Jonathon, New Castle, IN

In *A Way of Self-Knowledge* here, a master humbly offers a way to suprasensory knowledge. It’s a whisper among the deafening offers of complete guides that promise the same thing and fall far shorter. While one can be initiated, no one can walk the path but you. As Steiner highlights, the most prudent guru will abandon the pupil to self-discover, which can only begin with the ‘I’. *Theosophy* was my favorite selection this round, Truly, there is not one in his collection that does not enrich the next. And he never leaves his earlier work, if he discovers something that could benefit the reader, he reedit it all to seamlessly integrate into his path presented for development. He is as mindful of detractors as he leads us on, to banish doubt in any form, always leading by example in mindfulness. Domenic, Waynesburg, PA

I just finished reading *The Archangel Michael*, which arrived during the perfect time in my present situation. As I had mentioned before, the Archangel Michael actually came into my life and saved me from taking in an element of pure evil, which would have done damage on a massive scale through my vessel. The experience was beyond words and the advice he left me with was beneficial and inspiring. Since his actual manifestation, he has only spoken through subtle avenues unto my gamut, such as this book, or a random thing said by a random person. He is ever present, at least for me, even though I tend to buck against his guiding light. My eyes have been opened to a grand battle in which Michael wants what is just and right for all. He wants us to develop to our full potential rather than waste endless amounts of time and energy on destroying ourselves and all that surrounds us. I began my active role in this battle unknowingly serving the other side - against Michael. Since catching a glimpse of reality, I’ve chosen the path of Michael, though I’ve yet to destroy my own dragon, which drags me down and wins the majority of my personal inner battles. I cannot righteously claim the title of “Christian”, nor say that I’m on “the right hand” for that would be a lie. Until I gain personal mastery, how do I expect to be anything? I do seek out mastery though, and every second of my existence is a battle. “Ahriman” and “Lucifer” usually have the victory in this battle due to my pettiness and perversions from what is natural and ordered. I just recently rebuked the sinister path of Satanism after years upon years of dark practice. I still hold tendencies of sadistic sorcery and dangerous levels of egotism. Slowly the tides are changing and I give thanks to Michael each time I banish and fight these evils. Wilbur, New Boston, TX

The Twelve Senses was a revelation in and of itself. I’ve been having weird parallel universe time distortions. What I mean by this is the concept of true faith belief, mustard seed moving mountains. I begin to see the truth in the reverse mirror of death to birth. I’ve been having thoughts, ideas, and I’ve put them into my meditations. I’m talking ten, twelve months ago before I read *The Secret Doctrine* or knew what the Kabbalah was. Then I read something that hits home, rings true, and I am like, wow, a month ago I wrote this, now I am reading about it. Makes me think that I am clairvoyantly pulling out of the ether. It goes back to the “does it happen because I believe it and think it, or do I believe it and think it because it’s already happened?” What of free will? Nathan, Susanville, CA

I have the *Bhagavad Gita* and I do read it, however Mr. Steiner’s book *The Bhagavad Gita and the West* gave me a much deeper understanding of what the *Bhagavad Gita* is actually describing beyond what words can describe. I love how it poetically describes our spiritual enfoldment while experiencing life, coming to a deep understanding of who we are, why we are here, and where we are going, and why we go through and experience the things we do. James, Carrabelle, FL

I am writing to thank you for your service and effort in sending the books. *Freemasonry and Ritual Work* helped shed light on Rudolf Steiner’s works and how he contributed to promoting enlightenment to others for their betterment rather than his own. Nathaniel, Beeville, TX

I read *How to Know Higher Worlds*. I read slower than most and it is very deep and inspiring. I just love the way it breaks down the path and how to be a student of the supersensible worlds in full consciousness. It’s the most realistic book I’ve ever read, it’s a book I can read over and over. You all are helping me open my eyes more and more. Kenneth, Susanville, CA

Thanks for sending *Nutrition and In Place of the Self*. Both books were filled with new knowledge which has deepened my understanding of these subjects. Anthony, Fort Worth, TX

After reading *Old and New Mysteries*, it seems there is so much more going on in this world than what is normally revealed in other books published by mainstream religion. Rudolf Steiner and other anthroposophists have definitely pulled back the veil and have shown us whole new worlds and new ways of perceiving and understanding the world we live in. Robert, New Castle, IN

Illuminations

Thank you so much for your library for us who are incarcerated by our own bad decisions in our past, but are looking toward the future and beyond. By using this time I have to do, I chose to use this for a means to better myself by getting to “know thyself”, as is said in the past, but is so relevant in these times as well. *Joe Luis, Pollock, LA*

Studies, knowledge, and basic moral-balance of theosophy, anthropology, philosophies of Mysticism, esoterics, etc. I love to learn, hoping my life-lessons and knowledge could make a difference in elevation of any kind and understanding! *William, Indian Town, FL*

Thank you so much for the books and your letter. They always make me smile and encourage me. I'm excited about the possibility of soul science and the impact on my life. The path has changed my life in only the way the spiritual path can and I'm grateful and positive for this always and every day. I know to complete my goals I will require this for it's my lot in life to help humanity to the divine. Please don't forget about me – ya'll have helped change my life. *J. S., Wartburg, TN*

I thank you exceedingly for the prison outreach program making the literature available to me. This was my first issuance of books, I both enjoyed them and profited so much knowledge from them. This material has brought a beginning and form to a life time of inquiry, both conscious and unconscious. The literature has begun to clarify an expanse of thought, bringing an element of order to chaos. I'm anxious to continue my study and am certain of fruitful harvest from every book I've been blessed with from the society. Thank you. *Eli, Benton, AZ*

The necessity to properly place Christ into the modern stream of thought was only ever recognized by Rudolf Steiner. I say that only as I have not come across any other historically accurate writing that places the proper perspective. As I always knew that much more was unsaid in the currently accepted Bible. We are at a crucial stage for further development and all must realize and build upon what has gone before to properly expand upon human evolution. I love how Rudolf Steiner always gave scientific procedure its proper place! My soul cries and moves in the tempo of how this draws as possible upon all the mysteries, which lies behind all occult knowledge as it tips into current world events and situations. Much praise! *Christopher, Smyrna, DE*

Thank you so much for your services, I am learning so much about myself. *Jason, Palestine, TX*

I have witnessed a lot of change internally. For me the struggle is with solitude, a part of me wants to sink completely into myself, while the other is responsible for maintaining relationships.. I say it's a struggle because, for my case, after ten years in here my sense of society has been replaced, and that has turned into a development of disassociation. Anthroposophy, I admit, has been a type of saving grace because of what has grown into a very fortifying impulse to serve in some way... At the very least, to share, and this has kept me from detaching completely. I have really experienced a lot of growth in the last year as I have consciously chosen to devote myself unconditionally to another's emotional and spiritual needs. *B.J., Corcoran, CA*

I battle hard with my thoughts, my actions that continue to fade into my thoughts. I take one step each day to change. I find it harder now than when I was younger to live as free as I did when I once sought after a God. I hear an inner voice; it shook my heart at first because it was so different from my own voice I'm used to hearing when I read or think to make decisions. It was that different. Now I'm 35 years of age and sit with 10 months left on this sentence. Sometimes my thoughts want to lead me back to the actions that led me here in the first place. I take it step by step, each day I look to change the outcome of this life after reading, and the little practice I have on this path. Who was I in my past life and others that in some way I think I still think as a child Wow! This is me being true. *Sheldon, Hagerstown, MD*

I have been very busy here—knocking out a lot of writing! Taking notes as I read and doing this material with you all—now I am getting on a regular sleep cycle, and it's helping. I haven't got it down yet, it's varying one or two hours either way now, but I am holding it there at least. Like cleaning plaque out of the teeth! It's a daily thing, like I said through these communications, these books really help me step back

and become more observant of the self-defeating talk going on in this brain. *David, Iowa Park, TX*

I wish to thank you for including me in your program. It is comforting to know that you are concerned with our spiritual growth and development when others would prefer to turn away. There are a lot of us in here who are trying to better ourselves. The books you have sent are amazing, I enjoy them very much. *John, Brunswick, NC*

My main interest is finding the truth, the hidden truth. I've read so much and learned so much in the last few years that I know this is the life for me. I want to learn certain types of divination, living the right way of life, have more insight on how to live a truly good life, more knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. I want to make my next life (reincarnation) a better life than this one. *Christopher, Huttonsville, WV*

Who am I, why am I? From where did I come, to where am I bound? These questions have been piqued for thousands of years.. Only, it hasn't been this way. We knew, once, the answers to all questions, big and small but somehow, as a whole, we lost our way. Sentenced to an existence of un-fulfillment, A sentence imposed of our own free will. Oh, but to reclaim what was once taken for granted! To never thirst, for all has been quenched. Rudolf Steiner says – “you can reclaim that state of existence once again for all the answers lie within! Over the years of reading Steiner's work, I find this to be true, in its sincerest form. Steiner cares for nothing more than the illumination and elevation of the consciousness of man. A true god amongst men. I am so happy to have found this Anthroposophical society and I encourage all to read his work. *Robert, Hunstville, TX*

I would first like to thank you from the bottom of my heart, for responding and taking the time to answer some of the questions I had. I would like to be fully committed to these studies. I have been reading the *Verse for Meditation* both day and night. I feel it has been helping me. As well as the meditation of watching the second hand on the clock count down from 30 seconds. It helps get the chatter of my mind and helps ease my worries and anxiety. This prison here in Ely, NV is a maximum facility and is locked down 24 hours a day with hate and foolishness surrounding my cell from every direction. It is sometimes difficult to focus with all the noise on the tier. I speak with my celly and a few trustworthy friends of my excitement and what I've learned in quieting the chatter of my mind. I try to find my 'inner ruler' in not letting other people affect my feelings or mind. While reading the booklet by John Cunningham “*Compassionate Communication and Empathy's Awakening*” I am learning other ways of viewing people and my communication with them. It is helping me discipline myself. In hopes of acquiring higher knowledge and mastery over my mind and thoughts. Please continue to help me learn and become a better person. *Kenneth, Ely, NV*

I was signed up and apart of your program working with you back in 2012-2013, I was in a different prison but due to the problems I been having, I haven't been able to keep in contact with you. Now I will love to get back in the program to build my mind and help me cope. I also ask that you all keep me and my family in prayers. Take care and don't stop being a blessing to a lot of people lives. *Corinthian, Railford, FL*

Well I can now see a more connectedness to all forms of existence rather than place humanity as the primary force of earthly existence. Without all other life forms, humans would not be what we are, and we tend to take for granted our interdependence on all of earth which is why we abuse her graciousness and the result is all the destruction we see from nature disasters. *Steve, Menard, IL*

I've had a chance to read Steiner's *How to Know Higher Worlds* and I am now trying to incorporate the lessons from APO's initial packet into my daily walk. I've been on a spiritual journey seeking knowledge since 2012. There was a “feeling” of what was right and wrong about my connection with “God” and a higher consciousness. The teachings I've read from APO resonate within me as truth; Truth of my place in the universe, truth of my soul and spirit and my capabilities as a human. A better understanding of my connection with the divine presence. Help in understanding my goal in life and the knowledge necessary to plan/walk in my future and to help as many people as I can to live in truth and love. *Dex, Huntsville, TX*

Illuminating Anthroposophy
Anthroposophical Prison Outreach Newsletter

Meditative Poetry

*God fashioning my spirit,
Spirit bearing soul of me,
Soul through-warming breath,
Breath enlivening form,
Form extruding body;
So wrap I me in sense existence.*

*In every life there lies
life's new seed:
the soul dies from the old to ripen
immortally towards the new.*

*However lowly, every single
earthly human being
springs from eternity,
continually vanquishes old death
in each fresh life!*

*In pure rays of light
Shines the divinity of the world.
In the pure love of all beings
Rays the godliness of my soul.
I rest in the divinity of the world;
I will find myself
In the divinity of the world.*

Rudolf Steiner