



helpful social environment must be created that gives them independence and fulfilled lives. The term 'social therapy' does not really reflect this, especially as the interpretation tends to be more clinical today. Great caution is, however, indicated when it comes to changing an established term, particularly as no one has yet come up with a truly apt alternative.

association. A finance group made up of representatives of all countries has been established in addition, to inform the Council on existing needs.

2) The structures of the Fund which have evolved no longer meet the current situation. Thus every centre is now involved in meeting the financial needs of our movement. The basic outline of a just and brotherly/sisterly system of contributions was presented and advocated. It is to be worked out in detail in the months ahead, in concord with the different countries.

## Does the term 'social therapy' still reflect the work we do with adults? Are there alternatives?

Talking with Council members it became apparent that the term 'social therapy' does not meet with general acceptance. Its origins go back to a time when inflationary use was made of the term 'therapy'. Yet the basic impulse for working with adults with disabilities actually also included the conviction that adults should no longer be given therapy. Instead, a

An educator is like someone who helps to bring something to realization, who asks, analyses, awakens abilities that have been buried under many different obstacles. Which calls for absolute trust in the human individual, but also for humility; a humility that permits one to keep the necessary distance, not to judge another, to be aware that the other will always have his own integrity, someone who cannot be totally subjected, analysed or understood.

Alexandre Jollien, *Lob der Schwachheit*. Zurich 2001 (original: *Elogio de la faiblesse*. Paris 1999, p. 61-2)

## International Curative Education and Social Therapy Conference

The theme for the conference, to be held at the Goetheanum in Dornach on 13 – 17 October, will be insight into polar opposite disability syndromes in Rudolf Steiner's curative education course, with a view to the developmental problems and the disabilities we see in today's children, young people and adults.

A preliminary announcement of the Conference will be sent out in March 2004, the Conference programme in June 2004.

## Date of next Council meeting

The next closed meeting of the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council will be in Dornach on 10 – 12 October 2004

Ruediger Grimm, Secretary  
Curative Education and Social Therapy Council  
(Translation: Anna Meuss)



## Closed conference of the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council 13 – 17 September 2003

The closed conference of the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council was again held as part of the anthroposophical medical movement's annual conference. The theme of the latter was 'Meditation and professional practice leading to diagnosis based on the four bodies and treatment'.

## Completely open and inner core. Curative education and social therapy between adaptation and holding on to tradition

C. 550 curative education and social therapy centres, 60 training centres, more than 30 national and international associations in more than 40 countries have made anthroposophical curative education and social therapy a large, heterogeneous movement offering a wide range of different services. What is actually holding it together? It would be premature and too facile to refer simply to common sources in anthroposophy and Rudolf Steiner's curative education course, for although we do share this source, we relate to it in very different ways. We are thus working in a heterogeneous field held together by collaboration, initiative, commitment and by feeling ourselves to be brothers

and sisters whilst also aware of the differences, and the provisional nature of our thinking and doing. An inward field of tension in the positive sense.

Representatives of other approaches in the field of curative and special education, of associations or authorities still tend to see anthroposophical curative education as a homogeneous world, complete in itself, effective in practice, and guided by standards that lend uniformity. On the other hand it is evident that the anthroposophical centres and services are public establishments that serve social needs. The work has a scientific basis, and they are open to everyone. This places them in the focus of civilizational and social change and makes it necessary for them to formulate their own way, their goals and ideals in a dynamic way. They are under pressure to adapt (some appear over keen to adapt) or suffer under fast-living trends that keep presenting new conflicts (some do continue in fundamentalist attitudes). Individual presentations, plenum and group discussions took us more deeply into the subject matter. Below are some of the thoughts offered by Dick Tibbling (Sweden), Bente Edlund (Norway), Andreas Fischer (Switzerland) and Richard Neal (North America).

## Inner core, values and spiritual activity

Dick Tibbling spoke of how impulses coming from outside can help a centre to gain greater awareness of itself. He described an official inspection which encouraged staff to develop a new relationship to their own traditions and ways of organizing things.

In Jaerna, taking part in the 'Goal three' EU project led to the development of further training programmes for the staff in 40 centres. When the people working in the centres were asked to say which themes were of interest to them, requests came also for courses in anthroposophy, and this from staff who had not had information on it before. After a year, the various courses concluded with a festive gathering. One of the themes had been the question: What are the basic values in anthroposophical curative education? Someone thought that empathy was most important. In the course of the conversation it emerged, however, that empathy cannot be considered a value; it is a process based on inner activity. The inner core of anthroposophical curative education as spiritual activity has to be evolved anew and given impulses by each individual. It cannot rest on its laurels as something one 'has'.

## The more deeply we go to reach the core, the more we are able to open up

Bente Edlund talked about the way in which our identity can become visible in dialogue. Young people at a Norwegian Waldorf School were to be included in a vaccination programme to prevent meningitis epidemics. When the parents refused to accept this, a leading scientist came to talk to them, hoping to gain their agreement. As the talk went on, his understanding of and respect for the parents' attitude grew. He finally said that society needed people who did not simply do what everyone else was doing.

To be different can be a justifiable basis for existence, since wanting to be like everyone else means loss of personal identity. Anthroposophical institutions make an important contribution to society in maintaining their identity. They should not adapt too much, but also enter into dialogue with society.

Where does the core lie, however? What is limited to a given time? What needs to be changed? We cannot give such questions proper consideration if we only and exclusively know our own centre and are unable to broaden our horizons. Karl Koenig and Bernard Lievegoed were exemplary in the way they established the relationship between openness to the



public domain on the one hand and the inner core on the other. Their researches showed that we are able to open up and be transparent to the degree to which we also approach the core, our own substance.

## Transparency and commitment

Andreas Fischer referred to the fact that under present conditions, the field of tension between openness and inner core has increasingly become a matter of individuals and communities being able and prepared to enter into dialogue. Outer transparency does at the same time call for inner commitment, e.g. to the guiding principles laid down for the centre in question. Developing a capacity for meeting others plays a central role in this if we consider that in the work with people with disabilities people are increasingly asking about methods and recipes and not so much about the authenticity of the encounter and the sources of inner strength for the work in curative education. In terms of the *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, a central capacity for dialogue comes with awareness not only as to how we act the way we do but also why we do so.

## Interesting practical consequences of the way we see the human being

Richard Neal drew attention to the fact that the field of tension between public domain and inner core was also a problem for the centres. He quoted the example of Carlo Pietzner who was completely open about everything that went on in the communities in the USA, so that there were no secrets but absolute transparency. The relationship between groups and circles within a setting is therefore also affected by these issues.

We are continually being asked who we are. Even in transparent communication we must not lose our own language. Instead we should make it a major factor in building bridges, so that others may come to know our identity. Yet being in dialogue with them also always means to convey the practical consequences of the way we see the human being—in curative education and social therapy work, in dealing with finances and with staff.

'We must take the concept of curative education in a sufficiently wide sense if we are to perceive its true aim and purpose. It is not only the application of child psychiatry and educational and psychological efforts to cope with environmentally damaged children and young people who have fallen by the wayside. Curative education aims to be a world-wide activity to counter the ubiquitous threat to the individual person and give help. The curative education attitude needs to come to expression in all social work, in pastoral care, care for the elderly, the rehabilitation of mentally ill individuals and people with physical disabilities, in the guidance given to orphans and refugees, to those contemplating suicide and to people who are in despair, and also in developmental aid, the international peace corps and similar endeavours. ...

It needs the help one human being gives to another—the encounter from I to I—becoming aware of the other individual without asking about their religion, world view and political affiliation—simply two individuals meeting eye to eye—to create the curative education that will meet the threat to our inmost humanity and bring healing. This will, however, only be truly effective if there is also a fundamental perception that comes from the heart.'

Karl Koenig

## Establishing an international publications group

The function of the international publications group is to develop common awareness of the situation concerning specialist literature in different countries. It should encourage new publications and see to it that current literature is translated into other languages.

There is as yet no list of literature on anthroposophical curative education and social therapy covering all languages. The secretariat of the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council is maintaining a databank on literature in the German language. This is now to be extended and developed into an international databank that can be accessed on the internet.

The international publications group works in a decentralised way. Communication concerning current tasks is once or twice a year, in writing or electronically.

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## Paper on integration

A group of members of the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council have in the last two years been considering the integration issue. It is evident that the situation varies greatly from country to country, and that these social issues affect individual curative education and social therapy centres in different ways. In the paper, integration is seen as an important social motor to improve the life situation of people with disabilities. It says, however, that there cannot be just one way as this would limit pluralism in ways of life. Existing centres for people with disabilities are also making an indispensable contribution to the integration of children, young people and adults. These will at the same time have to take steps in developing further individualization, and communication with and integration in society.

The paper will be translated into the languages of the different countries. Concepts do, however, differ considerably from country to country, so that there has to be a degree of freedom in the translation process.

The paper may be obtained from the secretariat of the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council.

Download: <ftp://khsdornach.org>

## New form given to Curative Education and Social Therapy Fund

From its inception, the Curative Education and Social Therapy Council has been supported not only in spirit but also materially by the curative education and social therapy movement. Legally it has been maintained by the 'Fonds fuer Heilpaedagogik und Sozialtherapie' association. Two important changes in direction were made at the Council meeting:

1) The 'Fonds fuer Heilpaedagogik und Sozialtherapie' association is made up of a small number of people working in the curative education and social therapy movement who are geographically relatively close to Dornach and competent to represent the legal and financial commitments of the

