

## Faith, Love and Hope in The Classroom and Beyond

### Foreword

The following, added to this website on August 3, 2012, is a not-yet-complete written compilation based on lectures I've had the privilege to present to teacher groups at my own school (Aurora Waldorf School, in Buffalo, New York), as well as at teacher development sessions offered by the Association for a Healing Education. I will add to it in the next few months and I'd appreciate your comments, questions, examples, corollaries or suggestions in order to make this presentation more clear, complete and helpful. **Please email me.**

These lectures rely on an audience who are, at least for the most part, familiar with the fundamental ideas behind Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical indications, particularly his description of the fourfold structure of the human being, his advice about the "Pedagogical Law" and his conceptualization of the senses.

For readers who have not yet had the opportunity to begin a detailed study of these three areas of anthroposophical research – but who are perhaps wanting to forge ahead and learn about what can be done to bring Faith, Love and Hope into the classroom – I would recommend reading, at the earliest opportunity, Karl König's accessible and invaluable book, *The Human Soul*. A listing of sources and of possibilities for further reading can be found at the end of this article [soon].

For those who already have a working knowledge of these schema, I obviously don't claim to add to the weight of the treasure we have been given by such leading researchers as Rudolf Steiner, Karl König, and Walter Holtzapfel; rather, I simply offer, for you to evaluate, a certain diagrammatic way of looking at and interweaving this background material...or, call it a lens that I hope will add to your appreciation of their ideas and to your capacity to draw on them in working with children.

### Introduction

Let us begin with a brief review of three of Rudolf Steiner's fundamental topics that can be of such great help to us as teachers, or, really, in any dealings with other people in any walk of life. Firstly, the human as a fourfold being, comprising: the physical body; the etheric body or habit body or body of life forces; the astral body or body of motion and emotion; and the ego body. Secondly, Rudolf Steiner's "Pedagogical Law" that can and should guide us as teachers or adults in working with this fourfold architecture. And thirdly, Steiner's description of the twelve human senses.

Then, I would like to add two 'hidden gems' to our studies – two seemingly non-pedagogical lectures by Steiner. By this, I mean to say that these lectures are not in the traditional canon for teacher trainings or faculty meeting studies, as are books like *Study of Man* or *Balance in Teaching*. Yet, they add wonderful depth to our understanding of the fourfold human structure. These two lectures have helped me immensely in my striving to be a better teacher. They have helped me plan a better lesson rhythm; and they have helped me hunt down my mistakes when a lesson hasn't gone nearly as well as I had imagined.

My wish is that I might be able to give you some new perspectives on these topics, that I can point you to some new connections between them, and most of all, that you will leave inspired to continue your own research.

### A Happy Day at School

To set the stage, let us happily envision for a moment, a main lesson that all class teachers wish for, and should be quite pleased to approximate. Please place yourself in this story for a time today. The room is warm and sunny; nicely painted and decorated; plants and flowers adorn a corner; and the faint aroma of baking bread can be detected from the Kindergarten down the hall. By about 9:05 a.m. the class will have had a cheerful and lively session of warm-up activities, and are now quietly and expectantly sitting at their desks. They are all poised and attentive as the teacher stands in front and begins to lead them on a journey to a new land: depending on the class, this might be a tale with a queen, or a tutorial on quadratic equations. They follow this new path blazed by the teacher for quite some time, and the minutes fly by. Then, they get out their main lesson books and take up their individual work; their teacher walks around the room observing,

and providing help here and there. The next day, each student will be able to contribute something to the recall and review of this lesson.

As we shall see, this idealized description can be said to follow a very definite, four-fold pattern – a pattern that applies regardless of the class or the topic; it applies to an Extra Lesson with an individual student, and even to a gym class. This four-part process is based on the enormous wealth of contributions we have received from Rudolf Steiner.

My own early path of grappling with the imposing mountain of Rudolf Steiner’s educational indications received a motivational boost when, in 1995, I began studying Spacial Dynamics with Jaimen McMillan. One of my most memorable moments during this training was when Jaimen, in a notably serious tone, rhetorically encouraged every member of the class to examine the question: “By what right do you call yourself a Waldorf teacher?” What a well-put challenge, in both senses of that word!

“By what right do you call yourself a Waldorf teacher?” This important call for both self-examination and for inspired teaching, has echoed in my mind throughout the years since that evening class, held in the Library of Kimberton Waldorf School in 1995. We all need to remember that when Rudolf Steiner’s life was near the end of his life, he nominated a very small number of those who could speak for him and Anthroposophy; I’m so far distant in time and knowledge from that circle, that probably the most I can say is “... well, I’m trying to become a Waldorf teacher, or, at least, a predominantly nice person who studies the lectures of Steiner and other leading lights, and who teaches in a Waldorf School.”

### The fourfold structure of the human being

Let’s review the basics of what we know about Steiner’s description of the fourfold human being, from his thousands of lectures and writings. According to his audience and topic, Steiner used a variety of labels for the fourfold parts of the human being. A very lovely introduction to this structure is available in Chapter II of Walter Holtzapfel’s book *Children with a Difference*. (See Table 1, row 2.)

It is worth bearing in mind that Rudolf Steiner was, among many other things, an architect; so let us carry at least a little of the visual/spatial sensibility of the architect into our study today, and sketch out a schematic as we go along.

**[Schematic diagrams corresponding to this text are on the last two pages of this pdf. For the time being you may wish to print out both pages and tape them together.]**

We know that our physical body is what we have in common with all things in the material world; all things that can be measured, counted and weighed, including animals, plants and minerals. In addition to this visible, outermost body, Steiner points us to three others. He describes a supersensible body that he often called the etheric body, the body of life forces and growth, which we have in common with plants and animals. When you observe a family from behind (say a mother, a father and a few children), you can perhaps see why Steiner also labelled the etheric body the ‘habit body’. He indicated that our

etheric body has a relationship to our picturing-thinking process. And we know from *Balance in Teaching* and other books, that the physical and etheric bodies develop downward from above; this fact is verified by simple observation of the head/limb proportions during the first three years of life on Earth. (See Table 1, row 1.)

We experience joys, wishes and sorrows; we blush or turn pale; we make facial expressions; and unlike the plants, we move about freely. These are all related to what Steiner sometimes terms our astral body, that which we have in common with the animals. (And of course from time to time human behavior can become piggish or slothful or catty.) Steiner describes the astral body as the body of motion and emotion, and describes it as making a counter-movement; moving in the opposite direction from the direction of any movements made by the physical body.

And the fourth body is the innermost kernel of our being, our “I” or ego body. Holtzapfel describes this as:

*“We here encounter what is truly human within man, the spiritual centre of his being to which everything else relates and which provides him with inner steadfastness and confidence, which we designate with the word ‘I.’”*

We also know from *Balance in Teaching* that development of the astral and ego bodies together proceeds upwards from the outside. (See Table 1, row 1.)

### The Twelve Senses

I have offered a diagrammatic way of beginning to study Rudolf Steiner ([www.movementforchildhood.com/12senses.pdf](http://www.movementforchildhood.com/12senses.pdf)). If you have not yet had the opportunity to develop a strong working familiarity with this area of Rudolf Steiner’s research, I would recommend reading König’s *The Human Soul* as well as his *Conferences and Seminars on Arithmetic*. These and many other sources draw connections between the foundational senses of Touch, Life, Movement and Balance with the upper senses of Hearing, Speech/Language, Thought, and sensing the Ego of the other. König’s book on arithmetic adds a consideration of the relationship between Life, Movement and Balance with readiness for progress in math. (See Table 1, row 3.)

### The Pedagogical Law

In the lecture series *Curative Education*, Steiner provides a fundamental precept for all that we do not only as teachers, but really in any human interaction. He sets this out as follows:

*“Any one member of the being of man is influenced by the next higher member (from whatever quarter it approaches) and only under such influence can that member develop satisfactorily. Thus, whatever is to be effective for the development of the physical body must be living in the etheric body—in an etheric body. Whatever is to be effective for the development of an etheric body must be living in an astral body. Whatever is to be effective for the development of an astral body must be living in an ego; and an ego can be influenced only by what is living in a spirit-self, but there we*

should be entering the field of esoteric instruction. ...

*“The teacher’s etheric body (and this should follow quite naturally as a result of his training) must be able to influence the physical body of the child, and the teacher’s astral body the etheric body of the child. The ego of the teacher must be able to influence the astral body of the child. ... And I will show you how...the teacher’s spirit-self—of which he himself is not yet in the least conscious—influences the child’s ego.”*

Walter Holtzapfel paints this helpful picture:

*“The heat from the sun cannot directly change the shape of a stone, but it is able to warm the air; thereby stimulating the circulation of the water, which rises into the air and falls again as rain to feed a brook. The flowing water finally shapes the stone into a pebble.”*

## Two hidden gems for teachers

Now we come to the two lectures series that I believe contain golden, ‘hidden treasures’. In various venues around the end of 1911, Rudolf Steiner delivered a two-lecture series entitled Faith, Love and Hope: the Third Revelation. Have you read this? And shortly before the end of World War I, Rudolf Steiner gave a series of 33 lectures on the esoteric historical background of that human calamity (and perhaps every other). One might say that this very lengthy series, now published as *The Karma of Untruthfulness*, conceals one of Steiner’s most important lectures for anyone striving to succeed as a Waldorf teacher, and/or as a predominantly nice person. Who has read the 19th lecture from *The Karma of Untruthfulness*? Both of these readings are available online via the Rudolf Steiner Archive.

The theme of Faith, Love and Hope also appears in a beautiful way in Steiner’s second Mystery Play. Those of you who have read these 1911 lectures will recall that they have to do with the progression of the evolution of the Christ impulse from the Sinai revelation in which Moses received the Ten Commandments, to the revelation at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, to what is coming toward humanity in the current stage. In his online introduction to the 1911 lectures, Bobby Matherne notes that an important aspect of them is “what the words ‘faith, love, and hope’ mean to humankind for the next 5,000 years. These words,” Matherne continues, “following St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians are usually placed in this order: faith, hope, and love. Steiner makes an excellent case for the proper order of these words, considering the destiny of humankind, to be: faith, love, and hope.”

The subtitle of the first 1911 lecture, which I feel so privileged to talk about today, was “The Third Revelation to Mankind”. Here are some excerpts from the middle of this lecture.

*“Today we will begin by first saying a few words about man’s inner being. You know that if we start from the actual centre of his being, from his ego, we come next to the sheath to which we give the more or less abstract name of astral body. Further out we find the so-called etheric body, and still further outside, the physical body.”*

Steiner noted that many modern or scientific people now believe that:

*“...the ages of faith are long past; they were fit for mankind in their stage of childhood but men have now progressed to knowledge. Today people must have knowledge of everything and should no longer merely believe.”*

Somewhat later, he rebutted this modern attitude:

*“It is not for man to decide whether to lay aside faith or not; faith is a question of life-giving forces in his soul. The important point is not whether we believe or not, but that the forces expressed in the word ‘faith’ are necessary to the soul. For the soul incapable of faith [will] become withered, dried-up as the desert.”*

He subsequently stated that:

*“If we do not possess forces such as are expressed in the word ‘faith’, something in us goes to waste; we wither as do the leaves in autumn. ... By losing the forces of faith they would be incapacitated for finding their way about in life; their very existence would be undermined by fear, care, and anxiety. To put it briefly, it is through the forces of faith alone that we can receive the life which should well up to invigorate the soul. This is because, imperceptible at first for ordinary consciousness, there lies in the hidden depths of our being something in which our true ego is embedded. This something, which immediately makes itself felt if we fail to bring it fresh life, is the human sheath where the forces of faith are active. We may term it the faith-soul, or — as I prefer — the faith-body. It has hitherto been given the more abstract name of astral body. The most important forces of the astral body are those of faith, so the term astral body and the term faith-body are equally justified.”*

So we can add a new row to our diagram, and we can add the word ‘Faith’ in the column for the astral body. Steiner then proceeds to the etheric body:

*“A second force that is also to be found in the hidden depths of a man’s being is the force expressed by the word ‘love’. Love is not only something linking men together; it is also needed by them as individuals. When a man is incapable of developing the force of love he, too, becomes dried-up and withered in his inner being. We have merely to picture to ourselves someone who is actually so great an egoist that he is unable to love. Even where the case is less extreme, it is sad to see people who find it difficult to love, who pass through an incarnation without the living warmth that love alone can generate — love for, at any rate, something on earth. Such persons are a distressing sight, as in their dull, prosaic way, they go through the world. For love is a living force that stimulates something deep in our being, keeping it awake and alive — an even deeper force than faith. And just as we are cradled in a body of faith, which from another aspect can be called the astral body, so are we cradled also in a body of love, or, as in Spiritual Science we called it, the etheric body, the body of life-forces.”*

Steiner went on to state that it is impossible for any man to completely empty his being of the force of love; that one who is so egotistical will still, for example, at least love money.

*“This shriveling of the forces of love can also be called a shriveling of the forces belonging to the etheric body; for the etheric body is the same as the body of love. Thus at the very centre of a man's being we have his essential kernel, the ego, surrounded by its sheaths; first the body of faith, and then round it the body of love.*

And finally he described a health-giving force for the physical body.

*“If we go further, we come to another set of forces we all need in life, and if we do not, or cannot, have them at all — well, that is very distinctly to be seen in a man's external nature. For the forces we need emphatically as life-giving forces are those of hope, of confidence in the future. As far as the physical world is concerned, people cannot take a single step in life without hope. They certainly make strange excuses, sometimes, if they are unwilling to acknowledge that human beings need to know something of what happens between death and rebirth. They say: “Why do we need to know that, when we don't know what will happen to us here from one day to another? So why are we supposed to know what takes place between death and a new birth?” But do we actually know nothing about the following day? We may have no knowledge of what is important for the details of our super-sensible life, or, to speak more bluntly, whether or not we shall be physically alive. We do, however, know one thing — that if we are physically alive the next day there will be morning, midday, evening, just as there are to-day. If to-day as a carpenter I have made a table, it will still be there tomorrow; if I am a shoemaker, someone will be able to put on to-morrow what I have made to-day; and if I have sown seeds I know that next year they will come up. We know about the future just as much as we need to know. Life would be impossible in the physical world were not future events to be preceded by hope in this rhythmical way. Would anyone make a table to-day without being sure it would not be destroyed in the night; would anyone sow seeds if he had no idea what would become of them?*

*“It is precisely in physical life that we need hope, for everything is upheld by hope and without it nothing can be done. The forces of hope, therefore, are connected with our last sheath as human beings, with our physical body. What the forces of faith are for our astral body, and the love-forces for the etheric, the forces of hope are for the physical body. Thus a man who is unable to hope, a man always despondent about what he supposes the future may bring, will go through the world with this clearly visible in his physical appearance. Nothing makes for deep wrinkles, those deadening forces in the physical body, sooner than lack of hope.*

*“The inmost kernel of our being may be said to be sheathed in our faith-body or astral body, in our body of love or etheric body, and in our hope-body or physical body; and we comprehend the true significance of our physical body only when we bear in mind that, in reality, it is not sustained by external physical forces of attraction and repulsion — that is a materialistic idea — but has in it what, according to our concepts, we know as forces of hope. Our physical body is built up by hope, not by forces of attraction and repulsion.”*

He summarized this section of the longer lecture, with the following words:

*“Faith, love, hope, constitute three stages in the essential being of man; they are necessary for health and for life as a whole, for without them we cannot exist. Just as work cannot be done in a dark room until light is obtained, it is equally impossible for a human being to carry on in his fourfold nature if his three sheaths are not permeated, warmed through, and strengthened by faith, love, and hope. For faith, love, hope are the basic forces in our astral body, our etheric body, and our physical body. ... Are not these three wonderful words urged upon us in the Gospel revelation, these words of wisdom that ring through the ages — faith, love, hope? But little has been understood of their whole connection with human life, so little that only in certain places has their right sequence been observed.*

*“It is true that faith, love, hope, are sometimes put in this correct order; but the significance of the words is so little appreciated that we often hear faith, hope, love, which is incorrect; for you cannot say astral body, physical body, etheric body, if you would give them their right sequence. That would be putting things higgledy-piggledy, as a child will sometimes do before it understands the thought-content of what is said.”*

Now we can complete this new row in our diagram, adding ‘Love’ in the column for the etheric body, and ‘Hope’ in the physical column. (See Figure 2.) You’ll see that I’ve also added a note about the term ‘anticipation’ as described by Molly von Heider in her book *Looking Forward*. We’ll have to come back to this thought later.

I want to add two more rows to our schematic, and a side drawing, based on a wonderful chapter in Karl König's book *The Human Soul*, in which he describes the gifts of fear, shame and anger. [Note: this drawing will be added at a later date.] We want to add these three emotions to our diagram, in their proper place. Where do they belong? Well, here (Figure 3) is a picture of shame; Adam and Eve cowering as they are expelled from the Garden of Eden. I think this helps us to see that shame is related to our physical body, but in any event König gives us the information we need to locate all three, when he states the following:

*“Fear, shame and anger are our good companions. Before us walks anger, guiding our moral judgments. At the right side goes fear, at the left, shame. They never appear unless we are in need of them. They are the three good servants of our higher self.”*

*“When Adam and Eve left paradise, they were accompanied by fear and shame, and anger walked before them. ... The children of Adam and Eve have learnt to understand that paradise will again be opened to them when their souls have been transformed. When anger has changed into love, shame has turned into hope, and fear has metamorphosed into faith.”*

I find these thoughts so helpful; to think of anger, for instance, as a gift from our higher self, a small helping of holy wrath that alerts us when something is unjust and needs action. But then, our human task is to find action based not in anger, but, ultimately, ennobled by love. To correct the wrong; but then to forgive.



Doctor Martin Luther King Junior described this transformation when, during his famous “I have a dream” speech, he advanced something which to me is even more important than that well-known refrain. He said:

*“We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.”*

Rudolf Steiner gave a lecture entitled “The Mission of Anger” on December 5th, 1909, during which he pointed out:

*“For the spiritual scientist, anger is also the harbinger of something quite different. Life shows us that a person who is unable to flare up with anger at injustice or folly will never develop true kindness and love. Equally, a person who educates himself through noble anger will have a heart abounding in love, and through love he will do good. Love and kindness are the obverse of noble anger. Anger that is overcome and purified will be transformed into the love that is its counterpart. A loving hand is seldom one that has never been clenched in response to injustice or folly. Anger and love are complementary.”*

I would diagram these transformations as follows (see Figure 4). And because König has helped us to link shame to hope, and anger to love, and fear to faith, we can site them properly with our understanding of the physical, etheric and astral aspects of the fourfold human being.

As teachers, don’t we sometimes encounter these three emotions coming our way when we deal not only with our students, but perhaps even more strongly with their parents? How can we help the overprotective parent, the ‘mother bear’, the father who begins asking a flurry of questions about academics in sixth grade? How can we encourage the parent whose low expectations for his or her own child really come from the parent’s own struggles – and shame – in school many years ago? Haven’t many of us met a parent who has said something like, “I wasn’t good at math either?”

Now we can update our schematic a little more (See Table 1, row 4.).

## Lecture 19 from Karma of Untruthfulness – A “Hidden” Lecture

In 1917, as the horrors of the First World War dragged on, Doctor Steiner presented a remarkably lengthy series of lectures on the esoteric historical background of the conflict. Deep in the middle of this series is a lecture that I believe can serve (yes, in one single lecture!) as the cornerstone for a true modern psychology. He began the 19th lecture of this series, presented in Dornach on January 14, 1917, with the following:

*“The nature of man is complicated, and very much of what actually goes on within the human being remains more or less beneath the threshold of consciousness, merely sending its effects up into consciousness. True self-knowledge cannot be won without first obtaining insight into the working of the sub-consciousness weaving below the surface in the impulses of soul. These, it could be said, move in the depths of the ocean*

*of consciousness and come to the surface only in the wake of the waves they create. Ordinary consciousness can perceive only the waves that rise to the surface, and on the whole one is not capable of understanding their significance, so true self-knowledge is not possible. Merely pondering on what is washed up into consciousness does not lead to self-knowledge; for things in the depths of the soul often differ greatly from what they become in ordinary, everyday consciousness. Today we shall look a little into this nature of man in order to gain, from this point of view, an idea of how the subconscious soul-impulses in the human being really work.”*

When you have read this lecture, I hope you will see how much it underscores the importance of working on your own postural control, and on that of your students. (See Table 1, row 5.)

[A great deal needs to be added to the exposition in this section.]

## Arranging for Faith, Love and Hope in the Classroom

Everything I have said up to now has been a factual, chapter-and-verse outline of certain writings, which I hope you have found illuminating. But now I need to give a little warning: the following ideas that I take away from these lectures and will share with you today cannot be more than my personal interpretation. So, I hope I inspire you to carefully research these two less well known lectures, work with them, and draw your own conclusions.

I emphasize this because I am about to take it upon myself to temporarily change the sequence of the words ‘Faith, Love and Hope’ for the purpose of pedagogical analysis. In other words, what I’m about to present is just one possible lens. I believe that by taking this liberty, we can come to an archetypal fourfold pattern for ‘the what’ that must be included in every successful lesson...regardless of the age of the students or the subject being taught, and also in dealing with parents. I’ll cover ‘the how’ of this pattern in the next section.

Let’s look again at that happy main lesson we visualized at the beginning today, but now through a lens that in my opinion is suggested by the preceding fundamental concepts and citations. Please recall that after the warm-up session, we saw all the students sitting at their desks, with posture that was poised for learning. This is at heart a physical description; therefore, it points us (or at least me) to the fact that the first step in any lesson – the step that relates to the physical – is hope! Hope is where we must begin any lesson, in any context; the teacher must make sure there is hope. For the tale of the queen, the student’s hope might be, “I hope we hear the end of the tale today, and that the princess marries the brave lad;” for the tutorial on quadratic equations, it might be, “I hope my homework is correct; I think it is (I’m pretty good at this).”

And as we learned from König, the inverse of hope is shame. Isn’t it true that in any classroom, there are quite a few students whose starting point for at least some aspects of schoolwork, is shame? To put this in ‘mainstream’ terminology, students who are in shame mode are in shut down mode. So let’s be honest: very little progress can be made

with a student whose first feeling is: “I’m not good at this.” An example could be a student who hasn’t completed her homework, and is trapped in her anticipated embarrassment. Another kernel I gained from Jaimen McMillen was the adage that, “if you want to know what you’ve achieved, look at the bottom third of your class.” Especially with this group, hope-building has to be step one.

At a recent remedial teacher conference at which Joep Eikenboom was the lead speaker, an audience member asked (in so many words), “shouldn’t we honor the gift of dyslexia and not impose literacy expectations.” I would argue that as educators – especially as remedial educators – it is our duty to consider that every learning difficulty which has a physical/genetic component is or will become a part of the person’s biography that induces shame in both the student AND his or her parents.

**I emphasize: Our first task, our duty, our strongest tool as educators is always to bathe each student in hope.** We’ll talk in a few minutes about the ‘how’ of addressing this need.

What comes after “physical”? We have always heard the sequence as “physical, etheric, astral, ego” but let’s look at step two in our lesson: the teacher, quote: “begins to take them on a journey to a new land... They follow this new path blazed by the teacher for quite some time, and the minutes fly by.” Did you notice all the movement words? The teacher is inviting the students to follow her along in an exploration of the unknown (just what I’m doing right now!); to take a leap of what? A leap of faith! So, I would assert that our second task as teachers is to deal with the students’ astral bodies; your presentations will engage their feeling life, both sympathy and antipathy. Rudolf Steiner points us to the hard fact that no education is possible without struggle and suffering. Our second task, then, is to inspire our students to have faith, and to put fear, the inverse, at bay. Perhaps this, step two, is one reason it can be so difficult to be a substitute teacher; the class has no history of trust, of safely following this person into unknown territory. (Also, it’s fun to see if you can run circles around him.)

And if we follow Jaimen’s idea a little farther, we will see that the middle third of a class will need extra consideration or teacher focus at this step of the process. They may have confidence in themselves (hopefulness, not in shame mode), but less readiness to follow the teacher. A student with ADHD characteristics would be an example.

What happened next in our idyllic lesson? “... they get out their main lesson books and do their individual work; their teacher walks around the room observing, and providing help here and there.” Clearly, the teacher is now in gardener mode, lovingly walking around her classroom, giving a little more sunlight here and weeding there; the students are thinking and synthesizing. So, it seems that our third task is to tend to the students’ etheric forces. Ideally at this point, they are digesting, processing all that you presented, and coming to love it and make it their own. Anger is the inverse of love; especially if you’ve just given a lesson on something like quadratic equations, you can probably expect at least one angry question like, “Why do we need to know this!” or to see a main lesson book that is being rushed through. Have you ever tried to pleasantly digest a meal while

angry? I don’t think it can be done.

Our little lesson story ended when, the next day, each student was able to contribute something to the recall period of this lesson. When students can contribute to recall, this means the material is being brought into balance, and balance is the realm of the ego. This points to our fourth and final task, during which we may try to draw on a nascent part of our humanity beyond our current fourfold development: our evening meditations, and our Logos-filled speech in the classroom, can become the part of the lesson that helps students bring things into balance.

In summary, your students were able to begin your lesson in a physically comfortable, hope-filled manner; to trust you to lead them to a new territory; to find something to love in the material; and then take the fourth step to bring the lesson into balance. That is the ‘what’ of our job as teachers.

In closing this section, I would like to offer the following from the back cover of a collection of lectures by Steiner entitled *Love and its Meaning in the World*:

*“Although Rudolf Steiner does not often explicitly speak or write of love, love is the very heart and ground of all his teaching, the foundation of all he did, and all he hoped that we would do. Steiner teaches that, without love, nothing is possible; but that with love, we can do everything. Love is always the love of the not-yet. To love is to create; it is to enter selflessly into the current of time that flows toward us from the future.”*

## Combining Faith, Love and Hope with the Pedagogical Law

The preceding section suggests one way of contemplating classroom needs and rhythms: a pattern for the ‘what’ of hygienic teaching. To this, we must look to add the ‘how’ – how can we promote hope at the start of a lesson, faith when we are leading along, and then love when students are going about their work with the material?

Well, we modern people can easily fall into the “Have–Do–Be Trap”. In other words, we enjoy identifying problems, and once we find a problem, we begin right away to look for the solution in having material possessions or conditions, because then we can do what’s needed to solve the problem, so then we can be all that we can be. Examples of ‘have–do–be’? Very often in early January, people decide they absolutely must have gym memberships and new workout clothing, in order to do exercise, in order to be in shape. Isn’t that what Nike sells? You need to buy the gear so you can “just do it” and then you’ll be more muscular and speedy? Or, the federal government identifies gross inequalities in public schools (which there certainly are), so it decides that America must have national standards for education, in order for teachers to do measurable instruction, in order for the end product, America’s students, to be successful in the global economy.

However, much, much more can be done and needs to be done with education. The beginning of a powerful answer to how we can improve our approaches at each step of the fourfold lesson pattern I described, is – again, in my opinion – given to us by Rudolf Steiner if we work to combine his Pedagogical Law with his architectural description of

man's relationship to Hope, Faith and Love. (Please refer to Table 2 for the following.)

## 1. Hope and the Pedagogical Law

I recently Googled the phrase “boosting your child’s self esteem” and found that 107,000 web pages of advice on this topic are available for parents. There is indeed a bit of truth in the common modern parenting concern about ‘boosting self esteem’; that’s sort of like saying, “strengthening hope.” And it is part of a parent’s job to be sure that his or her children’s teachers are helping students to see their individual strengths. Encouraging words are certainly part of what is needed in the realm of hope.

When we begin a lesson, we need to work with the etheric forces – our own and what surrounds the class – to support the students’ physical readiness and hopeful state. This is why that little tale of the main lesson included a brief description of the classroom (quote): “The room is warm and sunny; nicely painted and decorated; plants and flowers adorn a corner; and the faint aroma of baking bread can be detected from the Kindergarten down the hall.”

Since we know that the etheric body can also be called the habit body, the necessity of creating a hope-filled environment confers on us as teachers a duty to work on our own habit bodies; our humours or temperaments. This is the basis for the well-known Waldorf school mantra, “Who you are is more important than what you teach.” My friend Mary Jo Oresti has given me what amounts to a corollary of Steiner’s pedagogical law: “Every single step forward pedagogically requires two steps forward in personal development.”

In The Spiritual Ground of Education, lecture 4, Steiner presents the following:

*“In a Waldorf school, who the teachers are is far more important than any technical ability they may have acquired intellectually. It is important that teachers not only love the children, but also love the whole procedure they use. It is not enough for teachers to love the children; they must also love teaching, and love it with objectivity. This constitutes the spiritual foundation of spiritual, moral, and physical education. If we can acquire this love for teaching, we will be able to develop children up to the age of puberty so that, when that time arrives, we will be able to hand them over to the freedom and the use of their own intelligence.”*

So, first, last and always, we must work on our inner habits. It’s not about: you have to have a warm, sunny classroom with the faint aroma of breadmaking, in order for you to do effective teaching, in order for the students to be educated; rather, it’s about you being a person who tends to the environment. If you decide to be a person who likes to make your surroundings a little more lovely, you will do nice touches here and there; and then the children will have a setting for hope.

What other personal habits can we think about here? I for one know I can tend to rush along and thereby place students in a hope-deflating situation; I need to temper my temperament. It’s also in my nature to be a little, uh, concise with people at times, so I have to work very hard to keep potentially short and therefore shaming responses out of my repertoire during unguarded moments. I’m also relatively organized and goal-oriented; teaching gives me the opportunity to slow down and be involved in a process that takes

years to even know what progress is happening. I bet we all have a few that we could change.

Walter Holtzapfel, in Chapter 3 of Children with a Difference emphasizes two key words to guide us in developing our own etheric bodies, so that we can positively influence the students’ physical bodies: “humor” and... “humour”. First of all, a little broad humor (h-u-m-o-r) gets things going nicely and warms up the room; an age-appropriate riddle, tongue-twister, anecdote or joke. Secondly, h-u-m-o-u-r, the older spelling of the word, which meant fluids, or what is in the air. More than half of our physical bodies consist of water.

Our knowledge of the twelve senses can also be put to work here, in building a general feeling of hope in the classroom. The four middle senses—the ones Albert Soesman refers to as the soul senses—are smell, taste, sight and warmth. Doesn’t the pedagogical law make it clear that caring for these four senses is vital to the success of schoolwork, or really in any setting where we are hoping for growth? I believe it does. Making sure that students are situated in a pleasantly clean classroom where snacks are healthy, where lighting is good, where account is taken of viewing and hearing angles (including consideration of eye and ear dominance), where students are appropriately dressed and the aura is sunny: that’s job one.

In summary, we can strengthen hope with everything that surrounds and supports the setting, the atmosphere, for learning.

## 2. Faith and the Pedagogical Law

Next, according to the way that I’m suggesting of looking at the four steps in the learning process, we need to strengthen faith, to support to students’ astral bodies as you lead them along with new material. This confers on us as teachers a duty to be ready with our enthusiastic ego presence. Holtzapfel puts it this way:

*“What must be the condition of the teacher’s ego in order for him to work in a strengthening way on the child’s astral body? ‘Have enthusiasm! – that is what counts’ said Rudolf Steiner during the holding of the Curative Education Course, when discussing the pedagogical measures to be take to stimulate a child’s astral body to greater participation. The fire of enthusiasm lends strength to the ego of the teacher of work upon the astral body of the child.”*

During the same course, Steiner also indicated that this attitude should include enthusiasm for the truth; that our students should feel that we are excited in our heart and soul for the truth in the material we present. And as you know, Steiner drew attention many times to the connections between the ego and the blood.

When evaluating teachers, don’t we often use the phrase “classroom presence?” Even a very experienced educator confronts issues of self confidence almost every day. An experienced teacher realizes he or she has cultivated a persona or a presence in the classroom that seems to work most, if not all, of the time. Every once in a while, what may seem like a power struggle will arise and the teacher will have self-doubts. “Could I have handled that situation differently? Did I lose control of my emotions and/or actions? How

can I go back into that classroom after what happened and regain my authority?”

### **3. Love and the Pedagogical Law**

The teacher’s astral body/emotional state will strongly influence the resting pulse, classroom focus, and health of each student. In *The Art of Educating the Young Child*, Steiner says the following:

“Then we come to the part of a child’s development based primarily on the rhythmic system. As we have seen, here we must work artistically in teaching. And we shall never accomplish this unless we can join an attitude of reverence toward the child with a love of our educational activity; we must saturate our teaching with love. While children are between the change of teeth and puberty, all our teaching must be done out of love for teaching itself, otherwise it will have no good effect on them. We must tell ourselves that, no matter how clever a teacher may be, the lives of children reveal infinitely significant spiritual divine matters. But, for our part, our love must surround our spiritual efforts toward children in education. Consequently, no pedagogy should be purely intellectual; the only guidance we should engage is that which helps us teach with loving enthusiasm.”

#### **In summary...**

As mentioned, the above is the beginning of a work in progress; much more needs to be said. In the meantime, I’d be very appreciative of any response from you.

[Here’s my email.](#)



## Exploring four-fold aspects of the human being

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**Table 1**

	<b>Reference</b>	<b>Physical</b> Minerals, Plants, Animals & Humans Outermost	<b>Etheric</b> Plants, Animals & Humans Picture Thinking	<b>Astral</b> Animals & Humans Movement - Feeling - Emotion	<b>Ego</b> Humans Willing – Innermost
1	Balance in Teaching	Develop down from above Nerve-sense		Child's development is controlled from above and yet directed upwards; gaining uprightness. Below, the antithesis – (pillars) linear/angular bones, and the capacity for constant motion and regrowth.	
2	Children with a Difference, Chapter II	Growth development from above, downwards; "the capacity for self-determined will-movement starts from the head and works downwards." At the top (dome) are rounded, immovable bones, and brain cells that never regenerate.		Child's development is controlled from above and yet directed upwards; gaining uprightness. Below, the antithesis – (pillars) linear/angular bones, and the capacity for constant motion and regrowth.	
3	12 Senses; the 4 lower senses	Touch Sense Connected to the Ego Sense (other's)	Life Sense Connected to the Thought Sense	Movement Sense Connected to the Language Sense	Balance Sense Connected to the Hearing Sense
4	König, Human Soul	Shame	Anger	Fear, care, anxiety	
5	Karma of Untruthfulness, Lecture 19	Note: 3 forms of soul sickness; "why don't we think good thoughts about everything?" Following can also be characteristics of a group.	If not properly anchored in the cerebral system/head, subject to the influence of Ahriman, causing envy, jealousy, disordered thought, being asleep to reality, spreading out into the environment, creating one's own world	If not properly anchored in the spinal cord/middle, subject to the influence of Lucifer – and some Ahriman - , causing manic/depressed behavior, lack of cohesive thought, withdrawal, hypochondria	We experience our Ego in the head, as waves washing up on the shore, but it needs to be anchored in the ganglia radiating from the area of the solar plexus. If not, subject to infection by Lucifer, causing spite, fraudulence, mendacity, cunning, lying, putting oneself on a pedestal; madness, inability to cope.
6	World as Product of the Working of Balance			Feeling of constricted breathing, nightmares, questioning, riddles, the Sphinx.	

Note - align this page with Table 1 above

**Table 2 – Combining Faith, Love and Hope with the Pedagogical Law**

		↑ <b>Student's Physical Body</b>	↑ <b>Student's Etheric Body</b>	↑ <b>Student's Astral Body</b>	↑ <b>Student's Ego Body</b>
7	Children with a Difference, Chapter II	<b>Teacher's Etheric Body</b> Humor, the humor of life. Opposite- saturnine heaviness. Laughter and tears in every lesson.  Summary: Humor and humour	<b>Teacher's Astral Body</b> Interest in the mystery of the human organism. Compassion through understanding. Intense sympathetic experience of the child – this is why Child Study is effective – often, even when we're perplexed, the child is strengthened. Summary: Knowledge of man.	<b>Teacher's Ego</b> "The fire of enthusiasm lends strength to the ego of the teacher to work upon the astral body of the child." Enthusiasm for the truth – in head, feelings and will. Self-education.  Summary: Enthusiasm for the truth.	<b>Teacher's Spirit-Self</b> (... an aspect we don't yet possess) The 'language geni' – the word. Visible speech of eurythmy, the gestures which accompany speech. Moral stories.  Summary: Cultivation of the Word.
8	Common sense – parents provide...	Nourishment and physical protection	Keep a sense of humor; constancy	Boundaries and guidance	Moral support; prayer
9	Summary	(Note – "Who we are is what is important, not what we say! Who we are affects those around us much more strongly than the lessons we deliver and the speeches we make!")  <b>Summary: Humor/hope</b>	Objective, empathetic relationship.  <b>Summary: Interest/love</b>	Example – meeting "the undisciplined and perhaps challenging quirks and needs of adolescence out of the realm of the ego. This is no small feat!" Warmth.  <b>Summary: Enthusiasm/faith</b>	Steiner's subsidiary and other exercises  <b>Summary: Language/idealism</b>