

Inner Awakening Through Encounters with Others

This quotation is taken from the first of Rudolf Steiner's two Delegiertenvortraege, held on February 27, 1923, his birthday, in Stuttgart. He begins by mourning the recent loss of the Goetheanum in the New Year's Eve fire, saying that the Goetheanum was much more than a physical building and that members must try to resurrect it in indestructible form in their hearts. The best way of honoring the Goetheanum, he continues, is by continuing to foster the strong community feeling which built it. Leading over to the passage quoted below, he describes three states of consciousness, awareness, lucidity, on which such community feeling rests. The first is the sleeping state; the second, that of being awake to outer phenomena, including the outer side of others, and the third, the state of being awake to, aware of, the souls and spirits of others. This state is a gift which must be prepared for.

As the lecture continues, it becomes clear that the future of anthroposophical members' meetings, which had all too often been lacking in true communication and respect for individual members lately, also depends on this enhanced awareness of others.

Here is my retranslation of a passage from this lecture. For the the new year, a new window on an important passage.

Wherever common blood runs in the veins of a group of people, there will also be a group spirit. Similarly, our joint study of Anthroposophy will create -- not a group spirit of the blood, but a true spirit of community, nevertheless. If we are able to feel this, then -- then, we bind ourselves, as human beings, into true communities. We must simply make Anthroposophy reality, give it reality by developing in our anthroposophical groups an awareness that it is not until we join together in study that we awaken, through our encounter with the souls and spirits of others. Members awaken in their encounters with each other, and since they meet over and over again, they will, meanwhile, have increased their insight and understanding, therefore meeting in ever differing states. Such awakening is budding and sprouting! And when you, dear friends, have been able to experience how human souls awaken souls and spirits awaken spirits, then attend anthroposophical meetings with this powerful awareness: It is only here that we can learn to awaken sufficiently to come to understand Anthroposophy. And then, when, on the basis of this understanding, you take up anthroposophical ideas -- not into an everyday soul asleep to higher reality, but into a thus awakened soul -- then a true, common spiritual presence will descend to the place where you are working together... There is no outer structure that can create such anthroposophical community. You must create it yourself, drawing on the innermost resources of consciousness itself.