
From the Editor

— Nancy Blanning

We celebrate several things with this issue of Gateways. 2016 marks the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Dr. Helmut von Kügelgen, dedicated Waldorf class teacher in Stuttgart for thirty years and then advocate, champion, and protector of early childhood until his death in 1998. He was a major advisor to the development of Waldorf early childhood education in North America and also founded the International Kindergarten Association, which is now known as the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE). He was a man of incredible warmth and generosity who reassured others of the ever-present support of the spiritual world. It is an honor to celebrate his life in a brief biological sketch and share one of his lectures, “Love as the Source of Education.”

To mark the occasion of Dr. von Kügelgen’s anniversary, WECAN has published *Love as the Source of Education: The Life Work of Helmut von Kügelgen*. Lectures and articles accompany a more extensive description of his remarkable and very fascinating life. As a child he and his family were refugees. He later became a journalist, a conscripted World War II correspondent, a prisoner of war, husband and father to five daughters, beloved teacher and soul-friend and protector to young children. We think you will be delighted, moved, and inspired by the collection of articles and remembrances of this very special man.

With every issue we offer gratitude to our contributors, but there is something new to celebrate with this one. We took advantage of our ever-growing email list and sent out an invitation for submissions. The result was wonderful! We received many submissions, some from authors who are well known to our readers and some who are published for the first time. Thank you so much to those on our staff who worked to open the way to for the wider Waldorf community to share the insight and richness of their work. And thank you so much to those who responded to the call for articles. This issue has been especially blessed with your work.

As announced, the theme of this issue is Sensory Development. We had anticipated opening this issue with a report of Barbara Baldwin’s presentations on

the Life Sense from the February 2016 WECAN East Coast Conference. It was not possible to have this material ready with full richness for this issue; we can look forward to this article in Spring 2017. The main submitted articles seemed to cluster around Point and Periphery and the Sense of Self-Movement. We have Jane Swain, Aimee de Ney, and Lani Hill coming to considerations of Self-Movement (integrated, of course, with other senses) from different perspectives. Jane’s article deals with the process of the very young child moving between point and periphery to find the way into spatial security. Aimee addresses the sensory and postural development of our adult, teacher selves standing as imitative models before the children. Lani describes some of her work as an EC therapeutic teacher at the Washington Waldorf School. Louse deForest asks the question, who are the children coming to us? What is “normal?” She points out that these are the children of our time, and we just “gotta love them.”

On the “not healthy side” of sensory development comes an article from myself titled “Preventing Addiction.” So much of health in all regards—physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual—is related to the strong, integrated development of the senses that orient the human being with interest and initiative toward the outside world. Yet we see our children’s (and our own) development and activity being hijacked by screens. This article shares insights presented at the Transitions Conference at the Goetheanum in Spring 2015 about screen use and predisposition to addictive behavior. We hope the information here will provide more information to share with parents about the ego-weakening effects of screen use. This article was first published in slightly different form in *Lilipoh* last winter.

Articles on gardening, cooking and baking, and quiet rhythm and routine bring in further pictures of supporting the senses. Cindy Faught Sudan describes the many sensory opportunities that the Soup Kitchen Garden makes possible for her mixed-aged kindergarten class. Marcia Marquis shares how she has brought more sensory opportunities to class cooking and baking. She inspires us to love squishy, goopy, dough-covered hands on baking day as a

sensory, pedagogical delight. Astrid Lackner helps us to get a more fine-tuned picture of the elusive Life Sense, what it is and how to support it. This main topic section concludes with a contribution from Anne-Marie Fryer-Wiboltt called “Being within Sensing: Adult Meditative Thought.” This is a fitting, semi-contemplative piece for consideration of our sense lives in general.

Under **For our Growth**, we have an article from Holly Kouteen-Soulé on “Six Gestures for the Early Childhood Educator.” This was originally published in the *Research Bulletin for Waldorf Education* for Spring/Summer 2015. This wonderful article helps us to look more toward archetype in our gesture toward young children rather than curriculum specifics about “what we do.” We also include a harmonizing exercise created by Brigida Baldszun, therapeutic eurythmist. It involves an adult and child alone, so it is not “for the classroom” in the usual sense. But it is a therapeutically calming and relationship-building interaction between the two partners. It is pedagogical and practical. Put it into whatever category you find useful.

For the Classroom, Inside and Out has three offerings. Rose Maynard describes how she was inspired to join indoor circle time to more expansive circle-type movement during her class’s daily walk outside. Joanie Lackie-Callighan gives us examples of how she has added movement to nursery rhymes. Her article speaks about the pedagogical rationale and sensory integrating support that stand behind

these fun games. This section ends with a “Story for Advent” by Mary Knighton. We understand that we want our festival celebrations to hold universal content embracing a diversity of cultural and religious streams. This story was written with this intention in mind, blending archetypal images together into a lovely story.

The Spring issue of *Gateways* will continue with the theme of sensory development and health. We have more good content to share and invite your submissions about how you are understanding and working to encourage healthy sensory development in your classrooms.

Finally, there is one more important thanks to express. The last issue of *Gateways* on Gender Issues—particularly gender vs. biological identity and gender fluidity—has received more comment than any issue in my tenure as editor. It is so encouraging to those who prepare the journal to receive feedback—both questioning and supporting. Hearty thanks to each of you who took the time to write and share your questions and offer your gratitude that this topic is being addressed. This is a conversation we have just begun and must continue. Please write in to share your questions and experiences as we meet and companion these amazing, perplexing, challenging, endearing children of our time.

Best wishes to all,

~ Nancy