

Anthroposophical Society

in the Western Cape & the Basil Gibaud Library

18 Firfield Rd, Plumstead, 021 7619600 – info@aswc.org.za

Editorial

As the year comes towards its close, we stand feeling a world shaken by turmoil and suffering – we sense a spiritual battle of immense proportions. I feel I could not find my way without Anthroposophy.

How can I let Anthroposophy live deeper within my soul? How can I make a personal relationship to guiding Spirit Beings? Oh, to open my heart and stretch my soul into new, awakened thoughts, feelings and deeds. That I may become sensitive not hardened by the weight of materialism and fear.

Then I realise that in my life amongst the increasing demands and distractions, I am increasingly finding coincidences or meetings or moments of awareness that point to a delicacy, an intimacy, a potential unthought of before. At these times I feel the spiritual world's supporting presence. And I know others within our circle are experiencing the same thing. May we say that a little more love is entering into the world, through and out of our efforts?

"... for love, the social warmth of the future, arises only as a counterpart to self-love, and there is no other way of entering the new age than by a true love and interest in other people, felt as a burning fire." Rudolf Steiner GA 186 13.12.18

We can be grateful for all the contributions within this Newsletter that are filled with an interest for the other, for example Shelani's reflections from the Tanzanian Youth Conference, and Briar's Anxiety in Boys and Men. Other contributions shine a light on how to practice what it is to be human – Cobie's Listening and Love, and indications on the Soul Calendar and Holy Nights.

May all the exceptional events to come early in 2026, advertised here, serve to ignite our 'inner flame', individually and as a community.

With love

Caroline Hurner

Christmas Issue – 2025



Christmas Card by Artist David Newbatt

*"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today.
We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now.
In this unfolding conundrum of life and history,
there 'is' such a thing as being too late.
This is no time for apathy or complacency.
This is a time for vigorous and positive action."*

Martin Luther King

Marion Penfold's Birthday Event

We had such a blessed event at the close of this year in Sophia House's beautiful garden to celebrated Marion Penfold's 90th Birthday.

Marion brought together the communities of the Waldorf Movement (notably Michael Oak), the Christian Community, her family and the Society. Over seventy of us met to honour our beloved friend and wise elder. Three songs were composed for Marion for the event! One by Christiane Wigand, another by Charles and Annette Chouler and lastly one by Didi – Marion's sister. So many spoke of their love for Marion and the gifts her courageous life has bestowed upon so many: as teacher, storyteller, life-long explorer, friend, mentor and eternally curious and adventurous woman with such integrity.

This event will be remembered and treasured for a long time.

By Caroline Hurner



Reflections on the Tanzanian Youth Conference

by Shelani Van Niekerk



*In renewal of the African Soul,
I find myself a part of the African Soil.
On the horizon we see a new beginning
To feel, to listen, to follow
The road, opening with every footstep.
Hakuna Matata*

At the beginning of this year, I joined a WhatsApp group called Youth Initiative South Africa, and here, through Wilfried Bohm, I learnt of the Youth Conference in Tanzania to come in September 2025. Inspiration hit me almost immediately — I want to go!

To help this manifest I applied for funding and also organised 3 fundraisers. I wish to thank Caroline and the ASWC who supported me every step of the way.

Three of us from South Africa — Jed Aenmey, Khalil Roussouw, and me — attended and we were asked to bring something to the theme of “How Culture Meets Spirituality”. I worked with the book *The Grailstone in Africa* and the search for Prester John, read lectures on the Folk Spirits, and asked members of our community for their input on this theme. From this I created a presentation and through it I came to sense that something wonderful might be happening at this time in Africa and Southern Africa.

After an eventful journey I finally arrived at the conference venue — the Mwanangu Special Waldorf School, which is in

the town of Vikindu, approximately one hour’s drive South from Dar es Salaam.

I was greeted by the beautiful Stacieva who introduced me to her team of organisers — Neema, Gabi, Chloe, Paul, Tatenda, Savannah and Ruby. They settled me into my accommodation, which I was fortunate to share with the warm and gentle Katrina, who came with Nathaniel from the Youth Section at the Goetheanum.

On day 1, we danced into our dreams, starting with an opening circle sharing our hopes for the conference, then played games guided by Tatenda. We all connected effortlessly, feeling the thread that binds us After this, in the first keynote, I was struck by Stacy’s purposeful question: “What if Africa’s Youth could shape the spiritual future of this continent?” She also shared a strong statement: “We are not merely participants but also potential co-creators of history and the future.” The evening was spent in song, story, dance and drumming around the fire. It was so wonderful to hear the songs, to see the women in their African clothes, their life and energy. I dreamt that we carried on singing and dancing.

Day 2 we began exploring the transformation of the I in the whole, with stepping into a room elegantly put together: African material all along the floor, in the front a small chair, a calabash and small props that created a profound atmosphere. Mamma Vikindu, or Janet, told us the indigenous “Calabash Story”.

A widow is abandoned by her village and she finds a calabash in the ocean that would grant her three wishes if she tends the Calabash faithfully. Her first wish was for a garden, and she is granted one. The second wish was for a house and she is granted that. She then feels lonely and asks for children. The calabash gives her seven seeds, and out of the seven seeds different animals grow.



We spoke about the meaning of the story and one thread that appeared strongly was - the meaning of faithfulness and transformation — it was as if we all breathed in a little bit of this wisdom.

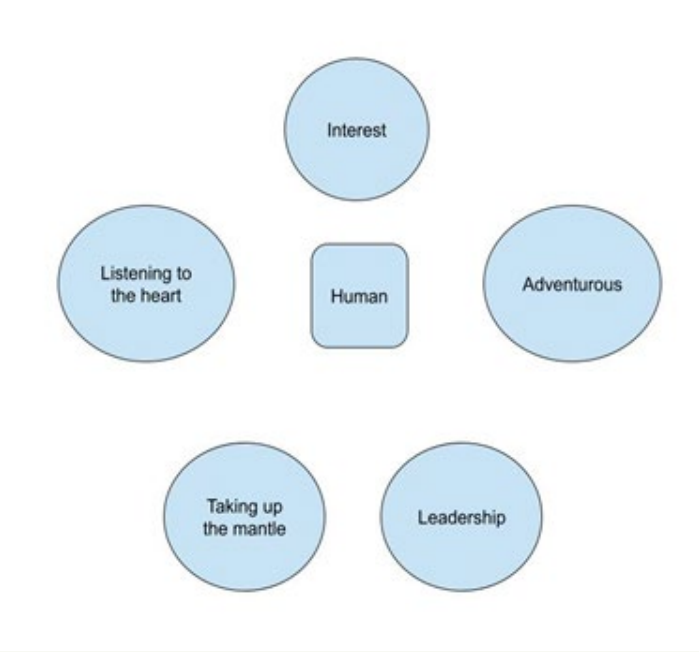
Then followed a workshop named “Who am I”. We looked at the power in a name. Everyone shared a nickname or their second name. This brought up the topic of earthly names and spiritual names. Janet shared with me her belief that your spiritual name shields you and connects you to your ancestors - and all that you have been. This struck a deep chord in my heart.

Questions that came from the workshop: What happens when you are called something you are not? What happens when you feel you don’t fit in? Can I be an individual within a community?

In the group conversations, it was clear to me that some young people take up the mantle of the family and their sense of individual self is - in some ways- not possible. Whereas others expressed being fully supported for their own creative endeavours. In our small group of five we each shared a unique quality that belonged to us. When you bring those 5 together, it is as if a new personality is created. (see diagram) next column)

Alone we are only that one quality, but the strength is multiplied when we put those qualities together. I see the beating heart of Ubuntu: I am because we are. As far as I understand Ubuntu now, it is not a sacrifice of the individual, but when you put everyone’s strength or talent together, the whole is strengthened.

We reach the day of potential on day 3, and at this point of the week I found myself overwhelmed in a good way by the sounds, the chaos and conversations, the language, the music, the street food - it was all so much to



experience in wonder. So much love grows here in this community, among the small black bees that make no sound, the biodynamic farming, the Waldorf school and teachers that inspire me, the cows and the croaking frogs. I could so easily connect with this world, and I believe it is because they live a kind of practical anthroposophy: In their elder stories, in the warmth of the fire, in the deep connection you feel within their relationships, working diligently and faithfully. I felt a seed was planted in my heart, and a little bit of me heals. Two questions came to me: What is my heritage, my culture, that I need to tend to faithfully? And how can I serve more?

Sebastian, from Canada, shared an understanding of one aspect of the threefold social order, namely Economy, using the example of a stone soup. One individual can do little, but many can do much. The image is of a soup where each person adds a vegetable and then everyone in the community can eat from it. When a community has resources and each person adds a resource, then altogether it creates a stone soup of resources from which everyone can pull.

A question he asked: What if the foreign countries pulled their aid out of Africa? We all know that Africa is supported by the big superpowers of the world. If it should stop, the point that Sebastian was making, is that we have more than enough resources by ourselves. However, the view and perspective that most people hold is filled with fear. Because we are afraid, we hoard. We hoard money out of the fear that we might lose it and in being afraid of losing it we are not using it to invest into people. How do we let go and let money flow? How can we put resources together? There are some big places and initiatives in South Africa trying to create a sense of community, but the fear and distrust prevent fruition of these ideas. Perhaps the first step is to meet

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this fear within ourselves before we can try to build that trust with others - perhaps slowly changing our perspective to see what a healthy social life could be is the first step towards creating it for one another.

In the early morning of day 4, there was a medicinal walk on the property, and then Stacy (she is a medical student) shared an introduction to Anthroposophical Medicine. Her message focussed on the human being as a spiritual being, and that not only the physical body needs to be taken into consideration with regards to health and illness. After an early lunch we all took a bus together to the beach, where for the first time I felt the warmth of the Indian ocean. The water hugs you gently, the white soft sand is like cotton under your feet, and the blue turquoise of the water, almost viridian is magical.

We crafted together on day 5, working with beads to create an art piece summarising our growing up. We then moved into an art workshop where Katrina, asked us to think of a time where someone believed in us when we did not believe in ourselves, followed by a drawing and shared in groups of 3. It was wonderful to listen to these experiences. After lunch we were taken on a tour of the Waldorf

As the sun set on our gathering together, and the last day of the conference arrived my heart felt full having spent time with these beautiful people, their young hearts and their wishes. It was not an ending, but a beginning. We all weaved well.

Since then, the seeds that have been planted within me are growing. I have searched for the aspects of my heritage that I wish to tend to faithfully: Creativity and Spiritual Roots.

Looking Forward to ‘How can I be of service?’ In January I will share the presentation “How Culture Meets Spirituality” at Sophia House. The next evening, Liesl Haasbroek and I will bring the experience of exploring one’s own inner fire, to the community.

When it comes to the Youth, may we grow our WhatsApp group, bring more young individuals together, and initiate more experiences where they can contribute.



How will I be faithful?

Come, sit around the fire and let me tell you:

Like the morning cock-a-doodle-doo,

Will I, in obedience, call to you.

Like the wings of a butterfly pushes through pressure and darkness of a cocoon,

will I wrestle in every direction, to reach you.

Like the stillness of the mountain’s wisdom,

Will I show up in stillness of soul, and freedom.

Day after day, will I dance with you around the fire,

Stomp old beliefs from the heart, learn music

Of the eternal song, and sing

Till the sound echo in my dreams,

Till cold perspective becomes warm among the stars, and the sun rises again.

Asante Sana, Dankie, Thank you

Shelani

Remembering Our Shared Future

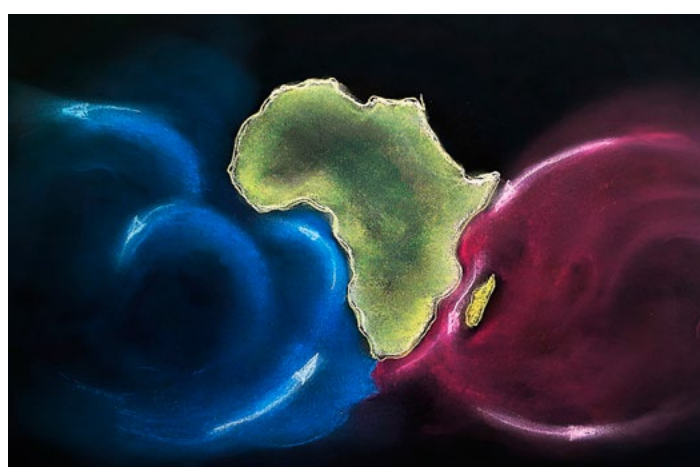
To Speak from the Stars
An Inter-Generational
Gathering in Cape Town
Hosted at Monkey Valley Resort
Noordhoek, 01 - 05 April 2026

The intention of this gathering is to open a doorway through which star wisdom may enter our shared understanding. Our vision is to shape new agreements between human beings and the wellsprings of spiritual traditions, so that life may once again be imbued with meaning. In this work, South Africa may re-member its task of co-hosting the New Mysteries, restoring humanity's trust for the future.

We are creating a ground in which seeds of imagination may be planted, nurtured, and grown into living possibilities for our shared future. We will weave together two powerful legacies: those of Rudolf Steiner and Sanusi VusamaZulu Credo Mutwa. By bringing their teachings into dialogue, we hope to bridge diverse cultural streams on a shared path toward the spirit.

At its essence, the gathering is an invitation to enter a living process with others, artists, educators, activists, healers, and community builders who share the sense that our times call for something deeper: for connection that goes beyond the surface, for creativity that renews our inner and outer landscapes, and for the courage to act out of spirit. This is not a conference in the conventional sense. Rather, it is a meeting place where listening and speaking, artistic practice and shared reflection, weave together to form a vessel in which transformation may be carried.

The questions we carry into this vessel are not those that demand quick solutions, but those that invite us to walk new paths together. How can we learn to truly live in community with one another and with the earth? How can we carry the wisdom of the past in ways that shed light on the present moment? And how might the unique capacities



of each human being, each voice, each gesture, each act of courage, be recognised as essential for the healing of the whole?

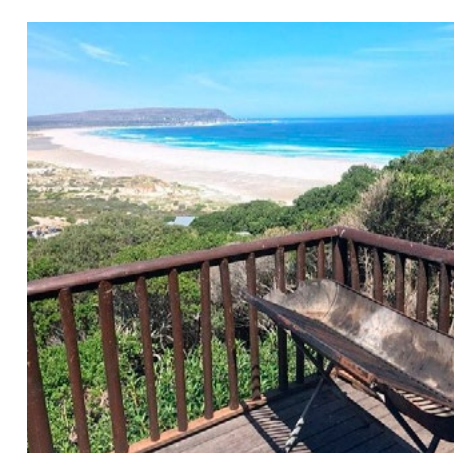
Those who come to the gathering will not find ready-made answers. They will find counterparts in the work of re-membering, to begin our task of gathering the scattered fragments of what has been lost, forgotten, or broken, and discovering how these may take on new life when held in community. Out of such a process, something far-reaching may begin to show itself: the possibility of a shared future that is at once truthful, creative, and hope-bearing.

FLOW OF THE GATHERING

Our days together are shaped to hold both depth and rhythm. The programme weaves keynote contributions, conversations, artistic activity, and time for reflection into a living whole. Each part of the schedule is designed to nourish thought, strengthen connection, and allow new imaginations to take root.

CONTRIBUTORS

This gathering is enriched by the voices and experiences of those who have walked diverse paths of practice, research, and service. Each speaker brings a unique perspective, not as an expert standing apart, but as a fellow traveller contributing to the circle of exchange.



Below you can meet the individuals who will help carry and deepen the conversations we are entering into together.

ORLAND BISHOP

Originally from Guyana, South America, Orland Bishop immigrated to Los Angeles by way of Brooklyn as a teenager. A community organizer, philosopher, healer and teacher, Orland Bishop works within a global social network of individuals and agencies engaged with the Ecology of Nature and Human Consciousness within the realms of life and death. His work in healing and human development is framed by an extensive study of medicine, psychology, naturopathy, phenomenology and indigenous cosmologies, primarily those of South and West Africa.

He is the Co-Founder of Shade Tree Multicultural Foundation, a Los Angeles-based organization dedicated to creating agreements of the heart for societal development where he focuses on mentoring youth and fostering social change through spiritual practices. Orland aims his work toward the development of consciousness and healing of cultures. His approach often involves bridging ancestral wisdom with visions of the future. He is the author of *The Seventh Shrine: Heart Cognitions on the African Spiritual Journey*

MAAIANNE KNUTH

Maaianne is the co-founder of Kufunda Learning Village, a learning center and eco-village in Zimbabwe dedicated to cultivating locally rooted pathways to community self-reliance. At Kufunda, communities engage their own imagination, collaboration, and cultural wisdom to meet challenges in education, health, and land stewardship.

Together with villagers from across Zimbabwe, Kufunda has founded a Waldorf-inspired school serving over 140 children from surrounding communities, where learning with head, heart, and hands is foundational. It has deepened into biodynamic farming, working alongside local farmers to restore relationships with the soil. It has also hosted transformative programs for women, men, and youth—nurturing leadership, healing, and community resilience. At the heart of it all is a living commitment to learning our way into the futures we long for. Maaianne is also a teacher of Movement Medicine, a conscious dance practice that supports people in becoming more whole in service of a more just and beautiful world.

She holds a master's degree in International Business and Finance from the Copenhagen Business School. Early in her journey, she became the first female president of AIESEC International, a global student organization spanning 87 countries. She later co-founded Pioneers of Change, a

global learning community dedicated to equipping young changemakers with the courage, capacities, and relationships to step forward with purpose. She now lives between Zimbabwe and Cape Town having followed her children's Waldorf education to the Cape.

JOAN SLEIGH

Born and raised in a Camphill community in South Africa, Joan is the Project Leader of the World Social Initiative Forum (WSIF), a global forum (network) of individuals, NGOs and institutions focussing on research and practice in questions of personal development, social change and human dignity. Joan has a background in Waldorf Education, as pupil, class teacher and teacher trainer in Cape Town, and served as a member of the Executive Council of the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach for 7 years. She returned to Cape Town, studied an Executive MBA and graduated in leadership research and development. Alongside the WSIF, Joan currently consults in teacher education, adult self-development and authentic leadership practices.

EZRA SULLIVAN

Ezra Sullivan is based at Threefold Educational Foundation in Chestnut Ridge, New York, where he works in spiritual research, social entrepreneurship, and organizational consulting.

Born in Los Angeles, he spent his early adult years exploring peasant wisdom and the intentional community movement across South America and the Pacific Northwest, including co-directing Sunfield Biodynamic Farm and Waldorf School in Washington State for six years. After studying at the Goetheanum in Switzerland in 2022, Ezra now focuses on renewing the meaning, legibility, and relevancy of the Anthroposophical Movement

EDGARD GOUVEIA JR

Edgard Gouveia Jr never tires of putting people to play. Architect and Urbanist and Post Graduate in Cooperative Games, he dedicates his career to mobilize children, youth and adults by designing and applying virtual games, scavenger hunts and collective actions that lead to small community revolutions. He is the president of Epic Journey, a company that promotes the regenerative communities in organizations such as companies, schools and NGOs. Co-founder of LiveLab hat specifically acts with the youth leading regeneration in their own communities, highlighting Jornada X and Primavera X

Ashoka, Berkana Exchange and TRIP Transformers Fellow, Professor of Post-graduation Cooperative Games Pedagogy at YIP, MSLS SWEDEN, Knowmads in the Netherlands and Gaia Training in Brazil. He is co-founder or partner of other organizations and programs such as Projeto Cooperação,

Elos Institute, Warriors Without Weapons Program and the Oasis Game.

Lecturer in several TEDx and international consultants in countries in Europe, North America and Asia where he applies social technologies such as Cooperative Games, World Cafe, Open Space, Circular Dances, Nonviolent Communication and Jornada X. He is the creator of Jornada X, an online scavenger hunt that challenges children and young people in real-world tasks and aims to engage 2 billion people to restore balance in the Biosphere. He believes that changing the world can be fast, fun and without putting your hand in your pocket.

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REMEMBERING OUR SHARED FUTURE

With Orland Bishop, author of *The Seventh Shrine*, Joan Sleigh, Ezra Sullivan, Maaianne Knuth, Edgard Gouveia Jr and others.

In Partnership with OASA & the
Anthroposophical Societies in South Africa

[Register Here](#)



The Thirteen Holy Nights

Selected quotes

"The Archangels are bound to space... During the Twelve Holy Nights all Archangels are freed from the bondage to space. They make a kind of chorus going around the Earth. Every one of this choir of Archangels brings his part of the revelation of Christ to the whole world. Complete knowledge is possible at this time, as they go like a wind from country to country. This is a prophetic forecast of the future, because nationalities have to disappear. An unbroken circle of brotherhood is what humanity has to reach."
— V. Tomberg

"During the Thirteen Days and Nights between the Christmas Festival and the Festival of the 6th of January, the Epiphany, the seer can behold what must come upon human beings. ... the dearest vision of all this is in the mighty Imaginations which can come before the soul during the Thirteen Days and Nights between Christmas and Epiphany. the human soul is passing through its deepest experiences. The soul gazes at all that humans must experience in the spiritual worlds because, under Lucifer's influence, they alienated themselves from the Powers by whom the world was created.

This vision is clearest to the soul during these Thirteen Days and Nights. There is no better preparation for the revelation of the Christ Imagination, and by gaining victory over Lucifer. Christ Himself becomes the Judge of the deeds of humans during the incarnations affected by Lucifer's

influence. It is during these Thirteen Holy Days and Nights that the soul can grasp most deeply of all, the import and meaning of the Baptism by John in the Jordan."

Rudolf Steiner: the Birth of the Sun Spirit as the Spirit of the Earth, Hanover, December 26, 1911.

"The Nathan Soul incarnated as the Jesus of the Luke Gospel. The Paradisal Mary incarnated as the Mary of the Luke Gospel. Their sister souls, Adam and Eve were reincarnated with them: Adam as John the Baptist, and Eve as Mary of the Matthew Gospel. This mystery is the portal to the Holy Nights. The young Paradisal Mother, sister soul of Eve, from the region of the 'Virgin' filled with the wisdom of Sophia, holds the Paradisal Adam, sister soul of Adam. And the oldest human beings, Adam and Eve, supporting them to To achieve the great task ahead of preparing the vessel for Christ.

At the baptism in the River Jordan Christ brought with Him His macrocosmic ego from the highest reaches of the spiritual world and entered into the mortal physical body of Jesus. With His incarnation a seed was sewn within every human being bearing the capacity to attain the birth of a higher ego in their souls, to develop the virtues needed to enter into the Temple of Higher Wisdom."

Karen Rivers PhD. Within the November Newsletter 'Starlight' of the Sophia Foundation USA

Africa – The World Heart

Arjan Bogaers

Anthroposophical initiatives in Africa began from the mid-1960s onward, mostly represented by Waldorf Schools, Camphill Villages and Bio-dynamic farming, each with their associated groups of friends. Brought here and developed by relatively small groups of people, against a background so very different from Europe, these initiatives faced myriads of challenges unique to Africa, but have since grown into many successful projects, dedicated groups, and accredited training colleges.

We know from our studies that Africa, including its ancient history, its cultures and its task in the world, hardly ever featured in Rudolf Steiner's lectures, books and presentations. In fact, before setting off from Europe, I was often told that "Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education and such, do not belong in Africa; it's just another form of Western indoctrination."

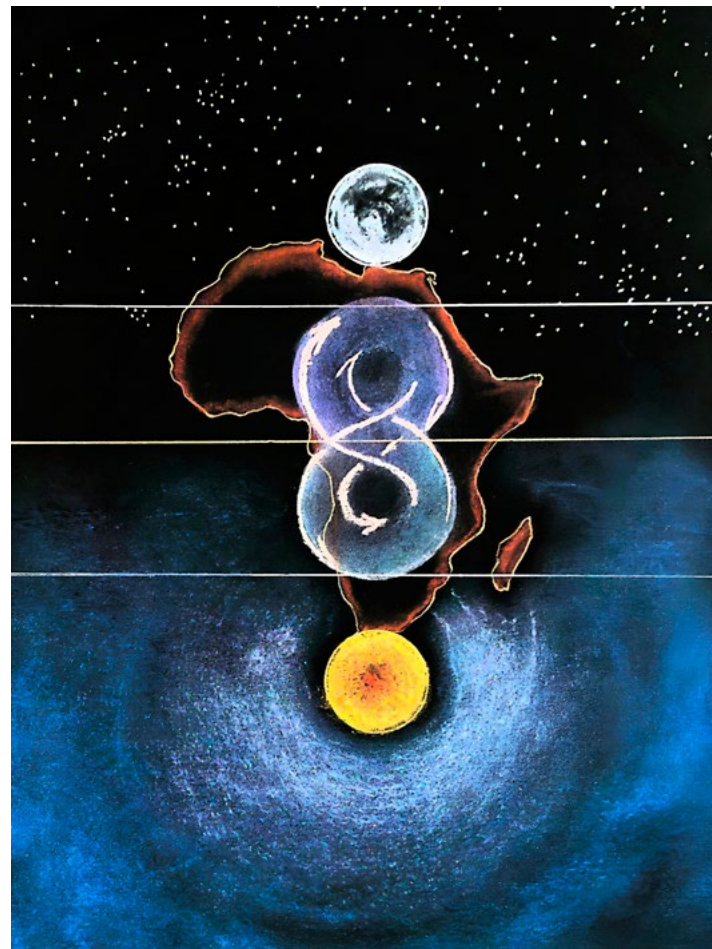
Yet, I have witnessed many stunning examples of the willingness and remarkable ability of committed people to explore and bring to fruition Anthroposophical wisdom and practicalities in Africa's context in a manner that meets and accommodates local situations and needs with both sensitivity and determination, without detracting from the essence of Anthroposophy. Think, for a moment, if you will, what amount of learning, labour, resilience and trust was needed to create a bio-dynamic farm in the ancient, sun-backed and unforgiving world of the Namibian wilderness. Or the vision and patience required to bring into existence a tiny Waldorf School somewhere in a dusty village 'where time stood still'.

These and many more examples taught me that it is not a matter of 'if Anthroposophy belongs in Africa' but rather of Africa's unique potential to receive and shape Anthroposophy and all its associated initiatives in a way that meets the special conditions of this world.

SO WHAT IS THAT UNIQUE POTENTIAL EXACTLY?

In this study, several unusual and surprising observations of other researchers and myself have been brought together in a first-time methodical and cohesive whole. Admittedly, not a purely anthroposophical project only, it nevertheless reveals several esoteric aspects of Africa.

What is meant, for example, when it is proposed that a continent, a land and/or a nation plays a role and bears a task regarding the evolution of the world and humanity? What can this mean for Africa? Time and again, each avenue of reflection leads back to the same conclusion: that in its



development, physicality, essence, and potential, Africa is the World Heart.

Aspects such as the two opposing oceans, Africa's Cross and the Southern Cross, the body's circulatory systems, the absence of water, the heart as a sense organ, African mythology, the Dance of the Seasons, the Dance of Light and Dark, Alkebu-lan, the history of depletion, and the Eyes of the Heart are addressed in detail and woven together in a richly-illustrated tapestry.

In conclusion, we carefully examine the question: "If indeed, Africa holds potential life forces and spiritual healing forces, what is needed for the awakening of this potential, so that Africa can become the mediating and healing meeting ground for the world's opposites?"

"But if the heart within us as a sense organ also represents our spirit and conscience, then Africa certainly holds up a mirror to humankind."

This rather unique booklet offers an essential contribution to the existing resources in libraries, schools, societies and study groups.

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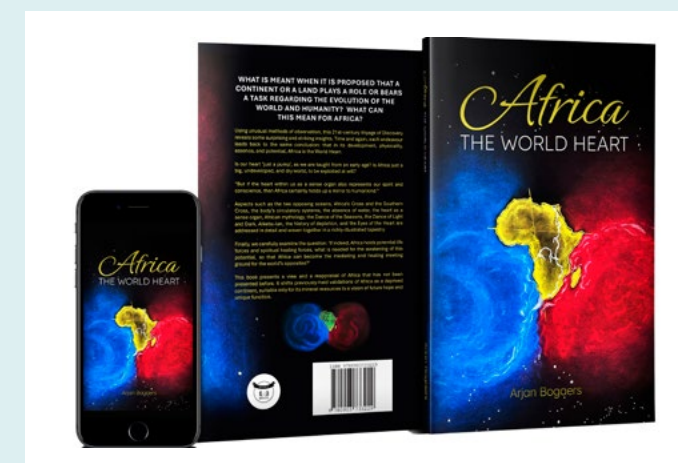
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The Etheric Healing of Fairy Tales

A workshop led by Julia O'Leary



On the 14th and 15th November Julia O'Leary led this wonderful workshop, previously presented by her at the Medical Conference, Dornach in September.

On the first evening Julia gifted us with a deeply moving telling of the Ugandan tale "Kintu and the Law of Love". The tale touched aspects of our soul not usually accessed and brought us deepest wisdoms and nourishment for living life. We all wished to bring more of this mood and substance into our circles. And why was this?

A quote from Rudolf Steiner helps answer this longing within us:

"The easiest of all transitions would be a thoughtful activating of the fairy tale mood which is truly the means to prepare Human Souls for the experience of what can shine into them from Supersensible Worlds - once more accepting the Divine."

Yes, we realised that what we find in the Fairy Tales is a bridge that opens us up towards the spheres of the spiritual world.

Thank you, Julia, everything you do is done with care wisdom and love. We are fortunate that you are so active within our community.



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Helga Ackermann

by Caroline Hurner

I would like to introduce you to one of our members, of whom I have the utmost regard for – Helga Ackerman. Many of you within our community may not have the privilege of knowing her for she lives out in Durbanville and hence through her life her anthroposophical studies have been done mostly in private.

Helga is the second daughter of a family of 13 children that were separated early in her life through the second World War. When they were reunited, she found herself taking care of her younger siblings from the age of ten. When she was 20 years old, she received her precious card of membership to the Christian Community in Hamburg. Her long search for a spiritual home on earth ended then.

Once Helga turned 21, she was ready to travel and discover her destiny, she courageously boarded a ship for South Africa, to make her own independent way in the world. This way she has forged with the utmost authenticity and depth of understanding for her fellow human beings.

On the 1st of January Helga will turn 90, and she says that every day she is full of gratitude that she has been given this time to learn and to get to know herself, flaws and all.

Below you will find a few words that Helga's granddaughter Nathania (also Anette Bestwick's daughter) wrote to honour her.

My grandmother, Helga Ackermann, is someone I look up to with the utmost admiration, respect and love - a sentiment that is shared by all her descendants, including 6 children, 19 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren (and counting!). Her courage, strength, resourcefulness, conscientiousness, humility, inquisitiveness and dedication to lifelong learning and anthroposophical study are a huge source of inspiration for me. Many of my most treasured memories are of conversations with her, where I inevitably learn something of value - whether it be lessons from her remarkable life journey or insight from a lifetime of introspection and inquiry. Her advice, motivation and support have been a guiding light throughout my life. I am who I am because of my grandmother and she is, and always will be, one of my life's greatest blessings.

Nathania

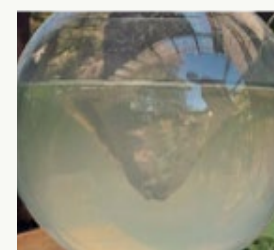
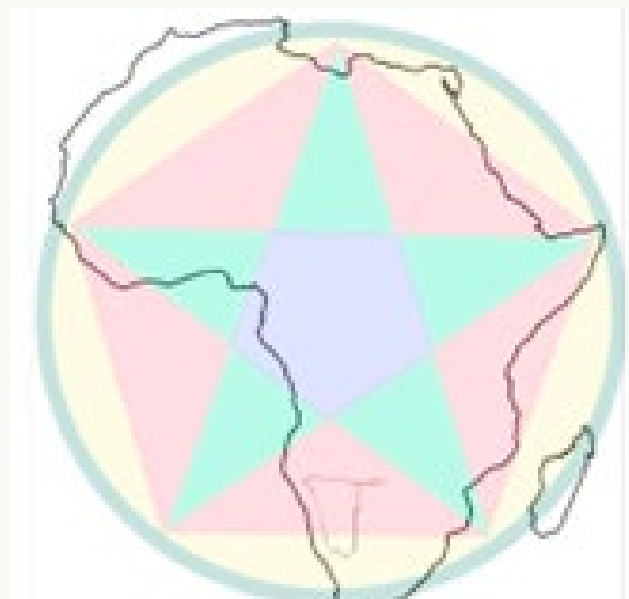


When she was 20 years old, she received her precious card of membership to the Christian Community in Hamburg. Her long search for a spiritual home on earth ended then.

Making our Assets Work

Anthroposophical Society in the Western Cape.

This year the ASWC, with our fund "Making our Assets Work" was able to support 9 workshop leaders travel to Namibia where they contributed to the All-Africa Anthroposophical Training (AAAT) that happened this year over eight days from the 23 to the 30 August in Namibia. Below are some messages with feedback and gratitude.



All-Africa Anthroposophical Training (AAAT) happened over eight days from the 23 to the 30 August in Namibia.

LIESL HAASBROEK

After years of hearing about this event, I finally found my way to this gathering. It was a life changing experience for me, and it was my privilege to be a small part of an enormous undertaking where 120 people from 18 African countries joined. We were reminded that this was not a conference or a retreat; this was training – and that it was. My mind and thinking were most definitely expanded by the carefully put together aspects, the people and the place. I feel so inspired by Africa and her role in the evolution of our Mother Earth.

Making the Invisible, Visible was co-led with Aletta Venter and Frank Bockmuhl was the guest (Namibian hydrogeologist), where we explored water through thinking, feeling, and willing.

We invited participants to bring stories, songs and objects connecting their biographies to water. Aletta shared the Genesis lectures by Rudolf Steiner and her insights about hydrogen and oxygen from an anthroposophical perspective. I shared water phenomenology and Goethean observation. We also brought ritual and the mystical to our session through silence, singing, meditation on water quotations and images. I found the reflections and emotional, personal and practical contributions within our group very touching and expanding. The images and quotations that each participant – including my own – worked with, seemed karmically chosen. I lead us in the freezing of water and biodynamic milk with the Veda Austin crystallography technique.

In one of our sessions, we walked through the landscape around the venue and explored the idea that 'we observe water when we are observing Nature

Aletta, I and our group were invited to join the biodynamic training session for one afternoon. Our session was called: The Vortex as the dynamo of biodynamics. We studied and experienced the dynamics of the vortex, and we stirred and sprayed the biodynamic preparations together.

I continue to have contact with some of our participants and these friendships will lead to further collaboration in the fields of biodynamics generally and water specifically.

It was such a pleasure to guide this workshop with Aletta, who has been a mentor and friend of mine for many years. The unfolding of the programme of our session was generous and generative. Combining our Water Course with the Biodynamic group also allowed me to get to know Angela Hoffman from SEKEM as well as join forces again with Helen van Zyl who I worked with for 7 years at the BDAASA. There have been many midwives of biodynamics in Africa, and these women have surely been some of them. When we work together, so much can be accomplished.

My wish is that the vital role of water in agriculture in general and especially the vortex in biodynamics be given more attention. Our farmers are the scientists and teachers and mentors and healers of our lands and her beings. May all biodynamic farmers be supported and empowered to do the significant work that they are called to do.

WILFRIED BOHM

Running the Sustainable Building workshop provided opportunity for participants from Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia to discuss the ecological, social and cultural implications of the way we plan and build at present. Techniques and materials were reviewed. A visit to the 'Habitat Center for Research and Development' in Windhoek, where many ecologically and socially sustainable methods are exhibited, concluded the workshop.

ALETTA VENTER

It was great to reconnect to people from previous AAAT's and also to meet so many new faces. It is always a powerful experience to be fully immersed in spiritual science for the whole week, every day. Also awe inspiring to witness Africa's spiritual awakening. Many thanks to all involved.

COBIE COELVERT

The 2025 AAAT was a special experience, largely due to the great work of the core group and the warm welcome and care from our hosts. It was great that so many people from a variety of countries could attend and it was inspiring to experience how individuals from different cultures connected with the content. I truly enjoyed the level of participation in the morning eurythmy sessions!

NASIPHI NKUMBESI

Attending the AAAT brought about light and shift with regards to my perception of the world and the life that surrounds me. It revealed to me that if we are to honour our individual beings and our own life processes of opening up, growing, excretion, sustainability, maintenance and growing, prioritising order and flow within in ourselves we would not only surpass our own expectancy, we would in fact nurture, dignify and honour the life processes of the plants and animals that surround us.

KIKI SANNE

The AAAT is an amazing learning and exchange platform for anthroposophical applications and social connection - spanning so many countries and cultures. Finding 'forward ways' together, which was addressed in a variety of workshops, finds increasing interest and the AAAT helps to spread it. Thanks to the generosity of donors, it was possible for the next generation to come, experience and facilitate. What an amazing opportunity! Now new, valuable and intentional friendships bring two-way growth opportunities. Deep gratitude lives in my heart for all the contributions that made and make this yearly spiritual, cultural and social nourishment possible!

ASWC

Members

Meeting

– The Soul Calendar

by Caroline Hurner

Throughout 2025 members have met twice a month to gently create a space amongst us where the wonders contained within the soul calendar verses reveal themselves. We can recognise that each participant leaves calmer, their soul widened and refreshed.

This is a true gift when we live in a time when every day makes new demands on our soul life –complex news from all over the world that is difficult to process, our fast-paced daily obligations, the diverse channels of communication and so on.

The Soul Calendar verses help us remain in touch with our inner soul. One's relationship to nature, to oneself, to thinking, feeling and will is newly balanced with every week. Each verse appeals to our own openness and flexibility of soul with our personal life situations and challenges weaving into this.

NOTE ON THE USE OF THE SOUL CALENDAR IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

Rudolf Steiner's two prefaces to his Soul Calendar show that his weekly verses were completely oriented towards the finer moods of nature in the course of the year. They even lead beyond the purely physical sense-perceptions. In his first preface he refers to "light" and "warmth" in connection with the half-years of summer and winter. But in his second preface he only writes about "life" in the course of the year, i.e. something supernatural, purely ethereal: "The course of the year has its own life. The human soul can sense this life. If the soul allows itself to be effected by what speaks variously out of the life of the year from week to week, only then will it really find itself through such participation." [Anthroposophical Society in America, Los Angeles Branch](#) Click here to read full article

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 39

Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul Verse 38 – Birth of Spirit Child, as at a physical birth, the soul awakens in the physical world, so in spirit birth our soul awakens each Christmas in the spiritual world.

*Ich fühle wie entzaubert
Das Geisteskind im Seelenschoss;
Es hat in Herzenshelligkeit
Gezeugt das heil'ge Weltenwort
Der Hoffnung Himmelsfrucht,
Die jubelnd wächst in
Weltenfernen
Aus meines Wesens Gottesgrund.
original German by Rudolf Steiner*

*Iris Sullivan My Higher Self
I feel the Spirit Child
Set free from spell in womb of soul;
The holy cosmic Word conceived
In clarity of heart
The heaven-fruit of hope,
Which joyous grows toward farthest
worlds
Out of my being's godly ground.*

tr. by Daisy Al

Peter van Alphen

Our fellow member, Peter, at the beginning of December relocated to Holland. One bonus for him in this move, is that he will be much closer to all his children and grandchildren in the UK.



The regular members meeting had a farewell for him, where we spoke together of his tireless work for over 50 years within the pedagogical movement here in Cape Town. His comment to this was "I have enjoyed every moment of it!" What a gracious man.

Peter started his career as a music teacher at Michael Oak Waldorf School. Then after 16 years of rich Waldorf experience, he became a Waldorf teacher educator (teacher trainer) working in Cape Town, South Africa and Nairobi, Kenya.

In 1993 Peter co-founded the Centre for Creative Education and was its managing director for 9 years.

One of Peter's specialises was the development of teacher education programmes in African settings and was honoured by being given the African name of 'Sipho,' meaning 'Gift' in the Xhosa language.

Peter, we all wish you well, as you find your feet in Holland, we know that you will be a gift there, just as your kind, insightful, faithful life of service has been here.

Caroline Hurner

WITH GRATITUDE

Naureen Ngubela and Howard Chiriseri have worked throughout the year to keep Sophia House clean and tidy. Each task they do is done with care and respect. Our garden and home and also the activities we have on the property, I feel, benefit immensely from these two remarkable people.

PHOTOS:
Naureen and Caroline in the Library
Howard up a ladder



Listening

If you have ever been listened to and truly heard, you would know how it feels. Growing up with evening meals as an opportunity to hear everyone's stories of the day, and to listen – and be listened to – with interest, instilled in me a love of conversation and meaningful encounter. To experience how you can discover deeper-lying truths, including about yourself, your own thoughts or potential, on hand of someone's dedicated, attentive listening is a very special aspect of consciously held conversation.

Like many, I have been intrigued by the way that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (in his tale *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*) ranked conversation as "more precious" than both light and gold. Thanks to great conversation partners, I have come to appreciate the relationship between these three: conversation, light and gold. In conscious conversation the gold that is hidden by our shortcomings or misgivings, or clouded situations, can come to light and so aid the process of coming to wholeness and freedom, bringing our small self and capital-letter S Self into relation with each other.

I sense how our willingness and ability to engage with the disruptions that a world of complex challenges brings us centres around the kind of conversation spaces that we are able to hold and enter.

My quest for understanding how good conversation happens has led me to a number of inspiring sources. In his seminal book *Speaking, Listening, Understanding: The Art of Creating Conscious Conversation*, teacher and teacher-trainer the late Heinz Zimmermann made an in-depth study and created a helpful guide towards having better and more productive conversations. Nancy Kline, a pioneer in the social field of leadership, has developed the *Thinking Environment*, recognising how awareness of and mindfully using such a framework facilitates a space where listening serves the speaker's capacity to discover further layers of their thinking.

Otto Scharmer, originator of the Theory U framework, applied keen observation in the understanding of the different levels on which listening happens. These play out on a continuum between presencing (towards connection) and absencing (towards separation). Learning to become aware on which level I listen and from which inner source I operate can have a significant impact on the kind of conversations that I have.

Lastly, my eurythmy work - particularly with the Kairos-qualities of eurythmy developed by the eurythmy trainer Ursula Zimmermann - has taught me to embody living with increasing openness and living questioningly, both hallmarks of listening that serve deeper knowing.

In the last five years I have trained in Scharmer's Four Levels of Listening, completed Nancy Kline's Foundation Course, and a course in Listening for Decision-Making with Dr Tessabella Lovemore. In addition, since August 2024, I have been fortunate to take part in over thirty Coaching Circles of the Presencing Institute's u-school. These circles, happening online and with participants from different cultures, languages and places, highlighted for me how paying attention to listening can facilitate truly meeting in spite of differences, and can ignite heart intelligence.

Listening is also a key component in the Active Practical Love Initiative (APLI) courses offered in South Africa, Europe, and the UK.

I feel blessed to be engaged with this work towards deeper connecting and relating, with appreciation for how Listening is a force that can transform the way we work, teach, learn, live and grow in our respective circles and communities.

"The longing to be seen and heard in our full reality has arisen in every human soul since the beginning of the 20th century and will grow increasingly urgent." Rudolf Steiner (lecture unknown).

Currently I create opportunities for practising Listening and for Generative Conversation, and I teach the APLI How to Love course.

- Listening Practice, a 7-week course (14 hours), 4 times from February to November
- One-on-one Generative Coaching Conversations: co-creating a heartfelt space where deeper knowing can happen for individual questions and challenges
- The Peer Coaching Circle, a 6-week course (12 hours) for learning and applying a framework that enables listening for meaningful change in the workplace and communities.
- Hoe om Lief te Hê – to start in the first quarter of 2026.

Cobie Roelvert

Cell 074 030 5251 (also on WhatsApp and Signal)
linkedin.com/in/cobie-roelvert-opencircle
For APLI: <https://www.tessabellalovemore.com>



Generative Coaching Conversation

I hold an open, dedicated space where you bring a challenge or issue that is important to you. In this safe, shared moment, through deep listening, stillness, and a generative conversation, you gain access to your inner knowing and the innate wisdom of your future potential Self.

In person: 60-75 minutes

(in Plumstead, Cape Town, or your home / office)

Per session: R550 / Three sessions: R1 600

OR

Online: 60-75 minutes

Session: R550 / €35 / \$40 / £30 // Three: R1 600 / €80 / \$95 / £70

Payment packages are available.

**Complimentary 20-minute call or online introduction.
Get to know what to expect.**

With acknowledgement to the Presencing Institute.

WhatsApp / Signal: 074 030 5251

Cobie Roelvert



BA Dance (Eurythmy)
Levels of Listening (Presencing Institute)
Leading from the Emerging Future (MIT Learn)

I work extensively with the Theory U presencing methods and tools in my daily life.

I facilitate the "How to Love" course since 2024 and have held "Listening Practice" circles courses and Conversation Circles since 2020. I have led public eurythmy classes for 20+ years and am a eurythmy lecturer and mentor.

What gift do YOU bring as a human being?



Anxiety in Boys and Men

by Briar Grimley

In a previous article I mentioned how Tessabella Lovemore is constantly doing research, and encourages us to do the same. Inspired by the tragic situation in the world, she has recently picked up the work of Allan Schore, neuroscientist, which helps to unravel the mystery of what plays into the present condition of the world.

Allan Schore highlights significant gender differences in early development, causing more boys to be born anxious than girls. Significantly higher levels of testosterone are found in male brains during specific developmental phases, beginning in-utero. This unfolds into boys being more vulnerable at birth, missing vital learning experiences which can bring about relational difficulties, and even aggressive behaviour.

'Love is that condition in the healing spirit so profound that it allows us to forgive'

Maya Angelou

I joined her ten-week course on this work and then attended her one-day online seminar hosted by the British Gestalt Journal. She explored how boy's right brain development can be impacted, and how this can affect their capacity to find a confident sense of self and to develop emotional literacy. The baby's right brain develops in pregnancy and in the first year of life, when mothers are often poorly supported and alone at home with their babies. She examined the consequences of early years experiences and how this is lived out later in life and in our world. The facts regarding male prison populations, male suicide rates and male early deaths in general, demonstrated the depth and breadth of the issue.

She engaged us in the possibilities of what we might be able to do to make a difference for newborn babies, especially for boys, for new fathers and for parents in general. I felt like veils were lifted from my eyes, that my heart gained a new pulse, and a resolution welled up in me to spread this work in whatever way I could.

I will be integrating this into how I live my life, and into my How to Love courses. A group of us from South Africa will get together to find ways in which we can make this available to the wider public.



Tessabella Lovemore

Tessabella's presentation on boys born anxious has integrated into my understanding of the world like a missing piece of the puzzle. It has connected so many dots in my personal and professional life, answering questions I hadn't realised were unanswered. Now I feel able to understand boys - and men - in a new, more compassionate way, and to take on the responsibility this information places in my hands.

Various forthcoming events in 2026

Warmth and Light
17th JAN

A Karma Drama Weekend
30th JAN - 1st FEB

How to Love
14th April

A KARMA DRAMA WEEKEND



Exploring Karmic Journeying and Kamalok

In addition, **Karmaloka Drama**, developed by Mike, is an embodied interactive process enabling the karma researcher to process and digest past-life traumas, doubles and personalities. This process using masks and psychodramatic action methods, helps work with unconscious parts of oneself by exploring what the past is asking one to transform for the future.

Workshop:

Friday 30 January 2026, 6pm to 9pm
Saturday 31st January 9am to 6pm with a bring and share lunch.
Sunday 1st February, 9am to 1 pm
Costs: SAR 2000 bursaries available. **Bookings via** info@aswc.org.za
Venue: Sophia House 18 Firfield rd. Plumstead.

Book Launch:

Karma Drama, Karma and Past-Life Research Methods Inspired by Spiritual Science.

Mike Chase's new book will be launched in Cape Town, on **Thursday 29 January 18:30 – 20:30**. The evening will include a talk, and demonstration, followed by several preparation exercises for Rudolf Steiner's Four-day Karma Exercise. The results of this exercise will be explored on the Sunday morning during the workshop. (Other options will be available to support those not attending the workshop).

Mike Chase at Sophia House
30th January to - 1st February 2026

The Workshop includes Karmic Journeying developed by Jostein Saether. This is a richly imaginative exercise that supports the karmic question of the researcher in finding an answer. Working with the imagination of the spiritual hut, described by Rudolf Steiner in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, this process invites one to develop a rich imaginative relationship with one's angel. By asking the Angel for support to find the answer, a journey is undertaken, initially through moral imagination, and then intuitively, across the threshold to the time and place where the answer lies.

How Culture meets Spirituality

A Firebird, the Grail and seeds for a Southern Future.

Wherever man voyages
Be sure that he will find
Symbols and images
Of what he left behind.
Under the Southern Cross
The flying fish whirr and dip;
The moonlight waters toss
Argus the southern ship.
The shy chameleon hides;
The Centaur Phoenix glides
Up through the reborn sky.
-From R.N. Southern Stars

Cost: Donation

Where have we been? Where are we going?
You are invited to a presentation of story, image and inquiry, inspired by the exploration of *The Grailstone in Africa* and the *Search for Prester John* by Heleen de Villiers, looking into the question of how culture meets spirituality. This inquiry presented a unique opportunity to research the weaving of South Africa's shared life in the past and the inner striving of individual human beings in the present, taking into consideration ancient images such as the Firebird of Arabia, to African cultural myth and the Grail mystery of the west; pre-Christian, ancient spiritual foreshadowing to future spiritual realities.
How might this inform the shaping of an evolving culture in our time?

Warmth and Light

An evening experience with fire

'I want with Cosmic Spirit
To enshroud each Human Being
That a Flame they may become
And fiery will unfold
The Essence of their Being'
-Rudolf Steiner

Workshop
Date: Saturday, 17 January 2026
Time: 17:00 - 21:00
Place: Sophia House, Plumstead

Bring an object that represents your connection to fire.

Out of the imagination of the Firebird and the Grail, we cultivate a shared space in inquiry and companionship where you are invited to consciously work with the element of fire as an earthly expression of inner warmth, light, enthusiasm, transformation and will.

Fire can represent many things: from the body's heat and metabolism, to the fire of creativity and courage; it can be destruction, purification or renewal.

This workshop invites you to bring your own connection to fire and explore it through the creative sphere of shaping a firebird out of clay, participating in a fire-lighting ceremony (offering something you have created in the workshop), returning to an ancient practice of gathering around the fire listening to a story, witnessing a fire performance, and finally lighting a palm candle and being guided into movement with your fire.

An offering facilitated and held together by Shelani van Niekerk and Liesl Haasbroek
For any queries whatsapp +27730494471 or Call +27615126622

How to Love

With Briar Grimley



A one year, twelve session, online course to help you develop life-giving relationships ... and blossom

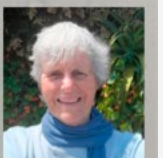
You will grow the capacity for unconditional love, forgiveness, and emotional steadiness.

Starts Tuesday 14 April 2026 at 11:00 or 19:00 SAST
2-hour sessions on 2nd Tuesdays each month, with a conversation session on 4th Tuesdays, and 1 buddy session per month

ZAR 5200 Global South residents
ZAR 3200 McGregor residents
£380/€450 Global North residents
Reductions available
kallosophiabg@gmail.com



Based on
Dr Tessabella Lovemore's work
www.tessabellalovemore.com





Christmas: A Festival of Inspiration

“Why then was the Divine Child placed before humanity for hundreds and thousands of years as the highest there was for the human soul to revere? For the reason that when man looks at a child and sees the child not yet able to say ‘I’ to himself, he can know that the child is still working on the human body, the Temple of the Eternally Divine, and because the human child who cannot yet say ‘I’ nevertheless clearly shows the sign of his origin from the spiritual world. Through this contemplation of the child nature man learns to have full trust in human nature. Here, where he can most easily foregather, when the sun shines least and warms the earth least, when he is not busied with the ordering of his outer affairs, here, when the days are shortest and the nights longest, when the earth gives him the best opportunity to foregather and to enter into himself, when all outer brightness, all outer beauty withdraws for a while from the outward view—here, the Western civilisation places the Birth-Festival of the Divine Child, that is, of the Human Being who enters the world pure and unsullied—and through the innocent entrance into the world can give to man at the time of his closest assembling with others, the strongest, the highest confidence through the knowledge of his divine origin.”