

The Path from Eurythmy to the Being of Eurythmy Therapy

**A Fundamental Approach to Rudolf Steiner's
Differentiated Concepts:**

Pedagogical-Hygienic

Hygienic-Eurythmic

Hygienic-Therapeutic

Elke Neukirch

Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Introductory Thoughts	4
The Beginnings of Eurythmy	10
The Introductions to Eurythmy Presentations	17
The Eurythmy Therapy Course	23
Appendix	31

Translated by David MacGregor

Foreword

Concern over certain developments in our eurythmy therapy movement has led me to undertake this research, in the hope that a consideration of fundamental aspects of the different fields of activity might lead to their being comprehended afresh through a differentiated view of their essential qualities.

My hope is that we — not just as individuals, but as a professional community based on destiny — can make it our developmental task continually to perceive and make our own the essential inner concerns of eurythmy and eurythmy therapy. One question which continually concerns me is: what forces coming toward us from the future are we called upon to develop so that we do not lag behind the challenges expressed to us in their silent language by the being of eurythmy and eurythmy therapy? What is the soil that we need to care for and prepare, so that this being may remain connected to our community with its full capacity and strength?

Elke Neukirch, 12.8.2013

The Path from Eurythmy to the Being of Eurythmy Therapy

Introductory Thoughts

When a therapy is being implemented that has been born out of an art — such as is unequivocally the case with eurythmy therapy — the therapist must not only *know* the art, but also be able to *do* it. In order to practise responsibly as a therapist, they must have in sufficient measure their own experience in the realm of the etheric formative forces; otherwise they will later lack the most essential instrument for forming differentiated perceptions of the patient.

The practice of eurythmy therapy requires eurythmic mobility, suppleness, permeability and gracefulness; these can only be developed through practice over many years. These qualities of movement are also a precondition for the formative forces to become effective in the ether body of the patient without hardening or stiffening it. This is particularly important when working with young children, as every movement of a sound that they see will be inwardly imitated and incorporated directly into their organ-forming forces.

The transformation of eurythmy into therapy does not imply a reduction or simplification of the therapist's ability, but a broadening and deepening of their eurythmic working. Metamorphoses can only occur when something has first been developed and matured to a certain degree. Apart from this, eurythmy is the precondition for the awakening of the spiritual processes in eurythmy therapy, which the practitioner first needs to live into artistically.

In eurythmy, one practises raising the physical body to the level of the ether body, which means training it in its mobility in such a way that it can transform itself to adopt and manifest the qualities of the ether body. It is just this transformed mobility that is able to invoke the activity of the higher parts of the human being more intensely. This process, which must be brought to consciousness, makes it possible to work in eurythmy therapy with the forces of growth — to call on them, to rein them in or to stimulate them. This can only be achieved when the physical body grows beyond its own laws and thereby attains a degree of permeability in its movement that enables spiritual healing impulses to become effective. This requires intensive practice over a considerable period of time in order to prevent the opposite

effect: that the movements of the ether body take on physical characteristics and manifest insufficient ensoulment.

In eurythmy, the human being's soul forces have the task of schooling themselves to become receptive for the spirituality of the sound. This can only succeed when the soul raises itself to the level of the I, for only then can the spiritual forces of the sounds reveal themselves according to their true being. From here they can permeate the whole human being, a process which in eurythmy therapy is concentrated to such an extent that it can be led over into healing. This is a long path of development, because this ensouling cannot be guided by the impulses of personal intentions of will and feeling, but can only be moved, felt and fulfilled by the divine, cosmic content of the sounds. Will and feeling pour themselves into the being of the sound without asserting their own life.

The I is thus educated toward selflessness, in order to be able to receive and take in the cosmic content of the sound, so that it may become effective in the processes of the body, shaping and transforming them. The I raises itself in devoted piety to the level of spirit that is becoming divine; for only the human spirit, developing toward the divine, can take hold of the body's and the soul's natural processes, which have become chaotic, and exert its mastery over them. The power of consciousness with which this can be brought to life and mediated to the patient by the eurythmy therapist will be decisive for the unfolding of the process of healing which has been embarked on.

If this whole inner transformative process is not taken hold of, the therapeutic ability to become active on the different levels of life will not develop sufficiently.

Rudolf Steiner's statement that eurythmy has a general health-promoting effect is based on how, through eurythmy, the I is put in a position to regulate the forces of the soul and integrate them in the right way into the whole human being. The human being thus becomes a source of radiating health. They give themselves over to the most holy forces, the creative forces of the Word itself. This encounter works back onto the whole human being so that a generally health-bringing, hygienic effect can unfold through eurythmy.

In the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner describes how eurythmy, "*...in the moment when the human being begins to be abnormal in any way, can also work healingly.*" (GA 315; 17.4.1921)

Crossing the threshold, as an occurrence for all humanity, causes the soul forces to lose their connection with each other. Through this, they separate into their different expressions in life, lose their orientation, and can easily fall prey to the human being's egoism. Thus they lose their relation to what is universally human. Through eurythmy, the soul forces are taken hold of and oriented toward the spiritual, in such a way that they may be placed once more under the guidance of the I. This has not only an educational but also, significantly, a hygienic effect. If the soul forces fall out of their structural interplay in their orientation to the body, resulting

in metabolic illnesses, part of eurythmy therapy's task is to deploy cosmic formative forces to master the inner human being.

Rudolf Steiner's concern was for eurythmy to permeate our whole humanity, there to unfold and develop. He even envisaged its ennobling power extending into the wider circumstances and conditions of the world, expressing the hope that the suggestions given in the Eurythmy Therapy Course might thus become effective for the health and healing of humanity. (GA 317; 17. – 18.4.1921)

Through eurythmy and eurythmy therapy we become bearers of a spiritual world which, without eurythmy, would be much more likely to remain closed to us. Through the spirit of the forces of the sounds, we educate and broaden our life of feeling and will.

Thus we can practise bringing our personality to utter silence, that is "*...to shed all egoism*" (GA 277; 25.1.1920). In this way, a transformation of feeling and will is initiated by the I. The capacity to reorganise the soul can develop further, for the cultivation and reshaping of one's own soul awakens the capacity for spiritual cognition.

If the eurythmist succeeds in allowing the transformed will, imbued with feeling, to "*rise from the heart to the head*" (GA 277a; 16.9.1912), this is the best precondition for these capacities to be able to germinate. The forces of the word or sound brought into movement expand from the heart over the whole human form as a radiating of life imbued with feeling. These streaming movements, when they rise to the head, become light which unites with the forces of thinking in order to enlighten them.

Rudolf Steiner specialises this process for eurythmy therapy, broadening it at the same time (GA 315; 18.4.1921) when he proposes bringing to perception through the "forming forces":

- unconscious, objective imaginations when forming consonants in relation to "anchoring or consolidating"
- unconscious, objective inspirations when forming vowels in relation to the "process of elimination"
- unconscious, objective intuitions in relation to the word or sentence.

Here it becomes clear how strongly the aspect of consciousness needs to be developed and the significance of a really penetrating faculty of cognition for the therapeutic process.

Through strengthening the soul forces on a path of schooling, one can experience how the very sculptural formative forces that are active in growth and in forming the physical body also develop higher stages of consciousness. In the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner describes how the human soul forces may be developed in such a way that they are able to progress to a beholding of the cosmic becoming of the human being. This leads to the recognition that the human form is built up through the same spiritual, formative forces as our consciousness. Only with the attainment of the capacity connected with this can one really gain insight into the spiritual and bodily processes with which we are presented in such

exemplary fashion in the Eurythmy Therapy Course. This "inner beholding" in turn enables a perception of the flowing, transformative, sculptural, living stream of the creative spirit. The "inner beholding" of the moved sound when forming a consonant represents an internalised pictorial form of this conscious process — as an inwardly created after-image of the objectively effective imaginations. Here the consciousness is prompted to intensify the healing process through the inner, beholding consciousness and to bring it to awareness. In the "*inner photographing*", we overcome the pictorial character which is presented to us outwardly, since we come into a living relation to the moved sound; this relationship leads us into the sound's inner activity. In taking hold of the movement, the practitioner transforms themselves into the being of the sound, merges with it to a certain extent. In the "inner beholding", one slips into the moved cosmic form of the sound with the formative power of one's own thinking, and reproduces it in one's consciousness. The consonant is thus internalised and intensified in its effectiveness on the organism. The imagination of the sound is thereby anchored in the body; at the same time, it consolidates the experience of how a creative, cosmic process in the movement of the sound encounters the body and permeates it.

In the movements of vowels — unconscious, objective inspirations — it is important to feel what flows into the movement and forms it. The practitioner should attain an awareness-in-beholding, which expands into an inner, spiritual and soul hearing of the vowel. After the exercise, the soul should listen for what moved it and for what entered into it through the spiritual being of the sound. With our consciousness we enter a realm of stillness and quiet in order, with our soul, to hear something inaudible, before the spoken sound is recalled again. In this way, the human being practises hearing spiritually what spoke to them through the vowel. This process enlivens the ether body and brings an inwardly organised mobility into the etheric organism which can then regulate its movements anew. The soul is stimulated to train an "inner sense" in order to hear the harmonious tone which resounds upward from the ether body through vocalic movement. Inner hearing of the resounding, organising power of the vowel intensifies the attaining of mastery of the life forces.

Both in the "*inner photographing*" and in the "*listening*", the consciousness of the perceiving soul is encouraged to enter the realm of the living, in order to intensify the sound's healing power for the body. The unconscious inspirations control the sculptural, formative dynamics and overcome the external vitality in the human organism, i.e. they strengthen and consolidate the higher parts of the human being, which they thereby bring to itself again, including organically. This happens from the sphere of cosmic morality, which penetrates into the soul of the practitioner like a sonorous, awakening call. From this call and in silent language the soul receives back its human divine archetype. The close relation between healing and becoming human can be experienced here.

Thus the creative powers of the Word are born again in the human being as mysteries of becoming, through vocalising and "consonantising": they are brought to a visible and invisible

beholding. We gain a glimpse of the realm of future mysteries of creation and formation of the human being and are permitted to participate in their forces of transformation. On the level of intuition, the human being is united with divine, creative powers, which create all existence from heavenly archetypal forms. Here the soul demands a new form which can be shaped from supersensible formative forces. The "intuitive formative forces" enable this divine form to be built up. The I thereby sheds completely its cloak of earthly heredity.

In eurythmy therapy, the unconscious, objective, intuitive forces are brought to bear particularly in cases of hereditary illness and those connected with human destiny and unbornness.

"And if one wishes to work, not on what takes place between birth and death, but on all that can be found in the human being as the remains of what materialism calls heredity, a large part of which however is brought along from the life of spirit and soul before birth; if one wishes to work, that is, on what one could term congenital imperfections and defects, one will do well..." (GA 315; 18.4.1921).

Attention is drawn here to the deeper causes of falling ill, and thereby to the body-forming forces of the I. These comprehensive "*formative forces*" are themselves inspired by the power of the Word, in order to work on the overcoming of such tendencies to illness. Eurythmy therapy induces a gradual overcoming of what the human being has taken on in the way of bodily inheritance. Formative forces which are able to bring a new organ into being are thereby also stimulated.

For the therapeutic process, it is of great importance that the patient, with all their concentration, practises attentive listening. The heard sound or combination of sounds should be brought intensely to consciousness — before it is brought into movement. The patient is guided toward hearing the formative power of the Word with strict objectivity, activated by accurate listening, and only then coming into movement. Everyday, habitual listening is not sufficient for this, it needs to be intensified. Thereby one learns to hear how the cosmic being does not speak to them just any old how, but rather from the strict lawfulness of its being. The whole creation of the human being has proceeded from this. Falling out of this lawfulness is the deeper causation of illness.

Devotion to and union with the lawful relationship between heard speech and moved sound in word and sentence-formation also works to remediate and heal a life of soul that forms its ideas out of the forces of what it emits from its own organs. It is as if the life of soul is thereby shackled to the forces that are released from the bodily organisation and rise into consciousness. The "suggestions" drawn from this process fill the soul with a life of its own, such that it loses the possibility of orienting itself in relation to objective laws that could mediate to it a healthy power of judgment. When ether body and astral body are filled with

objective, intuitive powers that are brought into movement which follows its own, inherent laws, the soul's unconscious lapse into and activity within the sphere of its own life forces may be countered. This is an expression of eurythmy therapy's comprehensive, organic, formative force of spirit and soul which regulates anew and consolidates the interrelation of the parts of the human being with the organs of the physical body. The loosened sculptural, formative forces of the soul which irradiate themselves are objectified through eurythmy therapy and brought to ray back into the body, in such a way that the life of soul can be led over again into a healthy stream of development.

Through the methodology and didactics of the Eurythmy Therapy Course, it can be experienced how crucial Rudolf Steiner's concern is to connect medical and therapeutic activity with inner development. This development will be necessary if the heavenly purity and spirituality of the cosmic sphere of morality that speaks to us in eurythmy and eurythmy therapy is to be perceived.

As the I awakens in stages and allows the creative powers of the Word to light up in consciousness, the yearning to practise pure devotion likewise becomes deeper and more earnest, so that we may raise ourselves to the place where divine, spiritual beings wish to communicate through the sounds. One may then begin to divine what the Angels wish to move in eurythmy, what the Archangels wish to speak and the Archai let stream into the will. In this way the path may be opened for us to raise our whole human form to the realm of the second hierarchy, so that in grace we may receive from the highest spheres the forces which, in eurythmy therapy, are able to stimulate these healing processes right into the physical body.

This attitude is not the source of arbitrary artistic forms or therapeutic concepts; rather they arise through living into eurythmy's and eurythmy therapy's mighty lawfulnesses themselves. The unconscious imaginations, inspirations and intuitions can thus be internalised so that they arise out of the inner forces of our human nature and raise us in their spiritual, body-free form into a true likeness of the Godhead. This development underlies the whole process; the great question is whether we manage to work at it in such a way that we can facilitate this development.

Part 1

The Beginnings of Eurythmy

The precondition for working on a differentiation of the **educational and didactic, the hygienic and the therapeutic value** of eurythmy and particular exercises consists initially in raising it anew into consciousness.

It is also essential to crystallise out what Rudolf Steiner connects with the "*pedagogical and hygienic aspect of eurythmy*", when he applies it, and how he describes it in its effect on the child. Compared with hygienic eurythmy work with adults, the developmental laws of different ages should be taken into account. Whereas bodily development as an impulse of incarnation coming from the spiritual predominates up to the age of 21, from the time of the birth of the I it is a question of developing and internalising the different elements of soul life. From 49, the primary task is to develop the higher spiritual aspects of the human being.

These are important perspectives for grasping the realm of hygienic eurythmy more exactly, and for differentiating it from the efficacy of eurythmy therapy.

In the very first beginnings of eurythmy (GA 277a), the exercises were largely not based on texts; attention was first drawn to **one's own form**, then to **forms in space** which were to be imbued with feeling and guided. **Agility** was to be trained ("*...beating a different rhythm with each hand and yet another with the feet ... one becomes very dexterous in this way and acquires mastery over one's limbs*"); this activity trains one to take hold of the body in a manner appropriate to the human being, and also has a "health-bringing effect that strengthens" (**rod exercises**). **Writing with the feet** should promote an appropriate and differentiated relationship to the earth, as well as finely differentiated movements of the feet.

The exercises are never one-sidedly self-centred, but are brought into relation with the periphery (for instance, through rhythms and spatial forms), or brought into connection with another human being.

The energy dance: "*...gives the human being **energy for working together**...*"

The peace dance: "*...**quarrelsome children get on with each other again**...*"

Rudolf Steiner himself describes the "serpentine dances" as "**hygienically effective**". They lead to a "**strong consolidation of the I ... very good for anaemic people**".

Walking a horizontal lemniscate is applicable for children and adults who are **too strongly sanguine** and easily become **dizzy** — where there is a danger of their losing themselves to a certain extent.

The hygienic element becomes particularly clear in this example of treating children who are too strongly sanguine. One may find a form of this that is more pathological with "*fidgety and excitable children*" (GA 315; 12.4.1921) and as a possible pathogenic enhancement in the symptoms of childhood hysteria (GA 317; 28.6.1924).

Pedagogical and hygienic treatment in cases of temperamental extremes are further elaborated in Lecture 12 of *Eurythmy as Visible Speech* (GA 279; 9.7.1924), which has the subtitle:

"The Outpouring of the Human Soul into Form and Movement: the Curative Effect of this upon the Moral and Psychic Life and its Reaction upon the whole Being of Man."

Here Rudolf Steiner suggests treating abnormal soul conditions on the level of the soul — as long as they remain on this level. The exercise "I and You" is applied using the example of "envy and false ambition". This is intended to raise awareness of togetherness and social co-operation.

The following indications can be applied pedagogically and curative educationally:

- "... for children who brawl and get into scuffles",
- "... for phlegmatic and sleepy children",
- " ... for full-blooded children, in order to counter egoism",
- " ... for children whose I is weak or who are anaemic".

Lecture 12 (GA 279; 9.7.1924) shows how closely related are hygienic exercises in pedagogy, on the one hand, and eurythmy therapy on the other; in which connection Rudolf Steiner states clearly:

"And this is the basis of the therapeutic action of eurythmy, which may be effective, not only in the sphere of the moral, psychic life, but also in the physiological, physical life.

The therapeutic action of eurythmy upon the moral and psychic life will be especially apparent when certain eurythmic principles and facts are applied during the years of childhood. ...

... For this reason, the moment one enters the sphere of the pathological in children, one must clearly realise that, although this exercise may be applied with excellent results for children whose consciousness is dulled, it should never be used with children whose minds are overactive.

It is such things as these which prove that everything in the domain of eurythmy therapy must only be applied in close co-operation with a doctor and working under constant medical supervision; for as soon as we enter the domain of the pathological only a doctor is qualified to form an opinion."

(Compare Lecture 12 of the Curative Education Course; GA 317; 7.7.1924).

(The Curative Education and Speech Eurythmy Courses partially overlap chronologically.)

In this Lecture 12, Rudolf Steiner considers a series of exercises which he had already touched on in the very beginnings of eurythmy (GA 277a), and which he now takes up again in connection with pedagogical, didactic and hygienic aspects; he expands on these in the Speech Eurythmy Course (GA 279) and deepens and adapts them in the Eurythmy Therapy Course and also in the Curative Education Course, particularly in relation to pathology. Many exercises were done with several children of a similar type, in small groups, whereby the focus was on moving together on the form.

The exercise "**Expansion and contraction ... for unintelligent children without initiative**" is mentioned in connection with a "**... very important hygienic efficacy.**"

This consists in the way in which cosmic being is internalised through the contracting movement — engendering warmth — and the inner life opens up to this cosmic being during the expanding movement — bringing about brightening. This alternation between darkening and brightening, body and spirit, brings the soul into a breathing, mediating movement. It harmoniously unites inner being with outer. On the one hand, this strengthens initiative in the will, that is, the possibility for the spiritual to be effective through the will; and also promotes the intelligence, that is, the possibility to apply will in the spiritual.

The Eurythmy Therapy Course gives us an understanding of the pathological enhancements, both for "*phlegmatic, sleepy children*" (9.7.1924) and for "*unintelligent children without initiative*" (20.9.1912) "*who do not want to understand, everything passes them by*" (GA 315; 12.4.1921); culminating in a description of feeble-minded children.

These examples give us an opportunity to examine the transition from the hygienic and pedagogical element of eurythmy to its hygienic and therapeutic aspect. In eurythmy therapy, the "trochaic A" is implemented here, which is enhanced in its therapeutic efficacy through the factor of consciousness. In pedagogical and hygienic eurythmy, this is not implemented in the same way. Awareness is drawn, through the exercises, rather to social togetherness.

It continues with the word "**Halleluja-h**" (22.9.1912) — "*for consolidating the ether body ... after all, we also want to help ill people.*"

There then follow "**EVOE**" and the sacred dances/serpentine dances (23.9.1912), which Rudolf Steiner describes as **hygienic**.

On 26.4.1913, Rudolf Steiner brings the **principle of increasing and decreasing the tempo** into connection with the practising of rhythms: *"Slowly, gradually becoming faster, and then rapidly slowing down again."*

This principle is applied in various ways in eurythmy therapy: increasing the tempo consolidates the etheric efficacy, so that I and astral body can more strongly permeate the ether body in order, when slowing down under the guidance of the I, to allow this impulse to subside and be led over into stillness.

Then follows **"The One Who Fills Clouds With Light"** (26.4.1913), a "turning to the gods in entreaty" with the addition **"... deep power of this new mystery art to form and heal human beings"**.

"I am there" as an incarnating exercise; and **"I look up"** as a turning to the divine (31.8.1913), taking hold of the I in its active, dual nature: from the periphery into existence; growing far beyond itself from the inner life towards reverential devotion to the spirit.

"The Inner Has Triumphed" and **"The Outer Has Triumphed"** (28.6.1914).

Here it is a matter of feeling the overarching I-hood (circle form); this, differentiated in the other two forms, can be experienced as creative, both from within as a dynamic element of will, and from without as a shaping, sculptural element raying in. This experience reveals in its form processes a hygienic efficacy with which the practitioner should unite.

"And our soul begins to live with the form. We do not just look at it, rather we have a living feeling, surging up and down, of overcoming and incursion, overcoming and vanquishing; our soul becomes lively, it lives in and with the form. Experiencing the form in this way, becoming one with it, is the essence of artistic feeling and perception."

In eurythmy therapy, this experience of the form needs to condense to the point where it can mediate insight into the polar effectiveness of the I in relation to blood and nerve, so that it may be applied therapeutically. Through consonants and vowels, these forces are then steered toward specific organic contexts and processes.

When this experience develops into an enhanced and reliable competency in beholding both dynamics, it leads to a perceptual cognition, that is also imbued with feeling, of the pathologically active dynamics within the different organ systems of the ill person. For this, the eurythmy therapist must develop the **artistic constitution of soul** hoped for by Rudolf Steiner, in order to be able to treat the dynamics which have fallen away from the healthy organism, and which act differently in each organ, in an appropriate way — through a rational therapy (eurythmy therapy) that has been born out of the artistic. This refers to the polarity of

centrifugal and centripetal dynamics active in every human organism, which must be regulated (GA 315; 26.10. 1922).

In the introduction of the consonants, one can experience how delicately Rudolf Steiner shaped the transition from a pictorial feeling for the spirituality in nature to the spiritual nature of the sounds.

The experiences that should be gained from the exercises of "**bending and stretching**" (24.8.1924) lead beyond a perception of the physical body and are directed toward the human being's aura:

"Stretching releases force of life. — The surrounding aura is brightened."

"Bending: force of life consumes me. — The surrounding aura is darkened."

In eurythmy therapy this ability is further developed and deepened in connection with the effects of vowels and consonants, in order that it may be applied therapeutically (GA 315; 17.4.1921).

Without going into all the exercises in detail here, eurythmy's development reaches a point where perception should be led beyond the boundary of the physical body. The gaze is directed toward the life forces, which are bound up with the will. The aura is darkened or brightened through a corresponding stretching or bending movement. Here we have the challenge of both a spiritual cognition of colour and an expansion of our perception. The handling in eurythmy of colours, which work directly on the life forces, is prompted indirectly through this. *"To experience the mood of life in the colours"* (26.8.1915), and to work with it, is an important and enlivening element for **hygienic work with eurythmy**. In eurythmy therapy, we need to be able to come to a cognition of health and illness through the colours, which shape themselves in the sounds into a corresponding, effective form.

In the Colour Course (GA 291), Rudolf Steiner spoke of how health and illness should be considered out of the colours and that *"through the colours, the gods recall their original, primal creating"* (2.6.1923) as a portal, so to speak, through which processes of healing may be quickened. The **eurythmy figure of the sound** becomes a means of cognition for **"psychological physiology"** (GA 300b; 1.3.1923), which in eurythmy therapy is led into efficacy for the body.

This is a field of activity in eurythmy therapy which still needs to be elaborated in its essentials.

On 7.10.1914 (GA 156), Rudolf Steiner speaks of the **being of eurythmy**, which has been created from the endeavours of the whole of anthroposophical spiritual life. It should not be confused with any of the bodily, sporty, gymnastic or terpsichorean endeavours that have

emerged from the age of materialism. In the sphere from which eurythmy proceeds, the human being can come to the most direct, inner experience of "how the spirit works". *"The human being must be guided to express in gesture, and in the movements of the physical body, what the essence of the ether body is ... the ether body lives on in the movements of the physical body."*

"A pedagogical, an artistic and a hygienic principle are expressed simultaneously in eurythmy. A pedagogical principle insofar ... as ...the gods feel really related to the earth. That is why it is so rightly a means of bringing about the relation between the divine, spiritual hierarchies and the growing child.

... We can try to bring the atrophied ether body — for it atrophies under the exigencies of the present day— to move in the eurythmic movements of the physical body, which are willed by the gods. This is what eurythmy should be offering in connection with pedagogy.

It is not at all surprising if many people today complain that something is the matter with them, without anything actually being wrong with them; for the human being of today does not try to create harmony, as the Greeks did, between the outer movements of the physical body and those of the ether body. And if he does it anyway, then he does something very odd."

Rudolf Steiner describes concretely what is odd in the way the Olympic games have been taken up in the present time:

*"Simply carrying what was Greek over into our time is the absurdest thing one can do; it is a sin against any trust in the development of humanity. If we seek today for what the Greeks in their way sought in the Olympic games, then eurythmy should find its way into the life of humanity; then human beings would have to try to bring about bodily health from out of their soul, in that they not let the ether body atrophy, but rather have the physical body make the movements called for by the ether body. **That is the hygienic side of eurythmy.** ...*

... one can define eurythmy as the fulfilment of what the human ether body, according to its natural laws, demands of the human being. Hence something is really given in this eurythmy that belongs to our spiritual life, that is conceived out of the wholeness of its being." (GA 156; 7.10.1914)

On 28.8.1913 (GA 277a) — six years before the founding of the Waldorf school — Rudolf Steiner spoke of the threefold will lying behind eurythmy.

1. **"an aesthetic element**, an element that one could describe as the element of beauty. Beauty is a direct expression of what takes place in the higher worlds in the way of movement. Enhanced movements of the higher worlds are therefore an artistic element. **At the same time**, however, a second element needs to connect with this:
2. **a pedagogical, didactic element.** The human soul, in its relation with the bodily, will come to an unfolding which, with the worlds to which it belongs, conforms to the vocalic and consonantal elements that flow through the world as the cosmic Word. And this will be transposed into visible movements of the physical body. ...

3. ... **the hygienic element.** *In that the human body conforms to the world of movement, and in that the thoroughly healthy mobility of the human being is poured into the didactics, so also is it possible to work healthily on the human organism and the human constitution of soul. For much that is unhygienic in the outer world today comes from the circumstance **that there is so little harmony between what the physical body does in conformity with the outer world and what the ether body, through its inner mobility, demands of the physical body. We would like to resolve this lack of correspondence through a capacity for movement of the physical body that corresponds to the ether body.** And so it would be nice if young people — up to the age of sixty or seventy — were to gain an understanding for this eurythmy, which the spiritual world would like to bring down onto the physical plane in ever different ways."*

This example gives a wonderful insight into Rudolf Steiner's understanding of the pedagogical and didactic and the hygienic value of eurythmy.

To summarise, it may be said that, up to 1915, Rudolf Steiner by and large takes the following path in "Eurythmy — Its Birth and Development":

First the relation of one's own soul and spiritual life to the periphery is taken hold of (the positions of Agrippa von Nettesheim); then its relation to one's own bodily nature through exercises for agility. Each exercise should express the aesthetic element and the beauty of the body's movement. The technique associated with this requires that everything external be shed and that the movements be taken hold of only from out of the soul — the soul itself must be able to live in the technique. This includes taking hold of space and the directions of space; a relation to the earth appropriate to the human being; and the path to the other human being, which needs to be sought through practice — including "conviviality in the highest sense" (Halleluja-h): the soul's encounter with spiritual beings.

The path to our own being of soul and spirit needs to be sought and taken up, in order to feel it in its relation with the divine, and thereby to find it.

In addition, we find in the individual exercises a preparation for the hygienic and pedagogical element, which Rudolf Steiner develops in detail in Lecture 12 of the Speech Eurythmy Course. It is all an expression of a hygienic approach, with the potential tendency to promote and maintain health— working from the soul and spirit in order to enliven the body also.

The exercises in this sequence have developmental significance: spirit, soul and body are taken hold of through specific exercises. This presupposes that soul and spirit are first experienced, before they can be brought into visible manifestation. This experience forms the foundation for the spirit to be able to unfold its healing effect right into bodily processes.

Part 2

The Introductions to Eurythmy Performances (GA 277)

In Rudolf Steiner's introductions to eurythmy performances, there is a wealth of differentiated descriptions for an understanding of the hygienic and therapeutic element of eurythmy, depending as to whether they were given before or after the Eurythmy Therapy Course.

At the beginning of the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner points out that "... **the didactic and pedagogical element of eurythmy will have gradually to evolve into a hygienic and therapeutic one.**"

The concept "**pedagogical and hygienic**" has a particular significance. Rudolf Steiner developed and elaborated the hygienic element to its greatest extent in pedagogical eurythmy. He had this to say about the child:

*"Particularly through the fact that one can bring ensouled movements to the world of the child, it will become apparent that this art of eurythmy also has a **pedagogical and hygienic significance**. If gymnastics strengthens the body, if not the whole human being, the will's initiative will be able to be strengthened through this eurythmy. Eurythmy will be able to develop such that we shall be able to add an element of play in ensouled movements by the child; this will be in addition to conventional gymnastics." (21.3.1920, speaking to physicians)*

Before the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner generally described the third aspect of eurythmy as the hygienic element, or the "**hygienic side of our art of eurythmy**" (21.3.1920) In a notebook entry of 15.5.1920 he wrote:

- 1. Art = the human being themselves the instrument**
- 2. Didactic side = ensouled gymnastics**
- 3. Hygienic side = harmony with cosmic being**

In the introduction on 15.5.1920 (GA 277), Rudolf Steiner describes an approach that leads to the purely hygienic element:

*"... and the **third is a hygienic element**. The human being is a little world, after all, a microcosm. And, when it comes down to it, every condition of ill health is based on the circumstance that the human being has uprooted itself from the great laws of the universe. ... Now, one may say that all that is unhealthy in the human being may be traced to the fact that what the human being does and gives effect to with their speech, if it does not conform to the*

essence of the era or of the human being, is in no position to conduce to the harmony that should obtain between the human being and all the rest of the world. But for the very reason that every movement in eurythmy derives from the human being's entire organisation, in the same way as do the movements of the larynx and its neighbouring organs for everyday speech, what is produced in eurythmy is something that can bring the human being into harmony with the world, with the whole macrocosm.

So, essentially, it is a healing element and one could actually say that what the human being could have, what they could acquire in childhood from eurythmic movements — which should, of course, be carried out properly and not in a dilettante fashion — that is something which could be considered from such a perspective as health care for soul, spirit and body."

A day later, on 16.5.1920 (GA 301), Rudolf Steiner spoke once more about the three elements of eurythmy:

*"And **because the human being's personality goes into these movements, but in an impersonal way**, through this an eminently artistic element, sensory and supersensory, comes to expression in the presentations. Then our eurythmy also has a significant **pedagogical and didactic effect** in that, at the same time, it is actually an ensouled gymnastics ... that affects body, soul and spirit and works, particularly in an educational way, on the will, the energy of the will. And the energy of the will is something that future generations will really need as life becomes ever more difficult!*

*Our eurythmy also has an important **hygienic side** ... through which the human being is best able to integrate themselves into the whole rhythm and harmony of the world. All that is unhealthy basically originates from the human being's having separated from this rhythm."*

Rudolf Steiner mentions technological achievements as the origin of these harmful influences, giving as examples road and rail travel, which tear the human being away from the rhythm of the cosmos, thereby undermining and eroding their health without their noticing. Here we need to find something to stop this tendency to illness in its tracks. The hygienic side of eurythmy corresponds to the human organism and to the proper evolution of humanity in our time.

As early as two years before the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner repeatedly drew attention to the therapeutic potential of eurythmy.

In GA 312 (Introducing Anthroposophic Medicine), in lectures given on 29.3.1920, 6.4.1920 and 9.4.1920, there are descriptions which cannot easily be understood without taking eurythmy therapy into our imaginative considerations. Rudolf Steiner came to the following formulation:

*"... **a significant element which one may actually seek in eurythmy**".*

"What happens in eurythmy is the opposite to what happens when we fall asleep: we become more awake than in everyday consciousness. The hypertrophy of the imagination that occurs in dreams is removed; instead a healthy development of the will is directed into the limbs. The will in its organisation is driven into the limbs. And if one begins to study how, for instance, eurythmic vocalising has different effects on the lower and the upper human being and how eurythmising in consonant formation acts differently on the lower and the upper human being, then one can see that a significant therapeutic element is to be found in eurythmy." (6.4.1920)

"However the regulation of this activity [Rudolf Steiner had just been speaking about the formation of teeth in connection with peristaltic movement in the gut] is particularly significant, and may be promoted through activity of the limbs in accordance with objective laws, as I have previously mentioned — of the arms and hands, the legs and the feet — which can be fostered particularly through the way eurythmy regulates movement, for eurythmic movements ensoul movement." (9.4.1920)

"It is striking how, **through eurythmy**, people can regain a healthy activity of their heart, because **doing eurythmy regulates one's own ensouled movement in a fundamental way, one could even say in an objectively right and proper way**. ...that, particularly from this point of view, we may draw attention **to those health-bringing exercises which eurythmy has to offer** when someone has irregularities in their heart function. ... Now it is true, is it not, that the human being is so constituted that you can prescribe some ensouled movement, if you suspect they have irregularities in their heart, but they are not so keen if you want to induce them to regulate their inner movement, as that has to do with their habits." (29.3.1920)

There are also plenty of references in the "introductions to eurythmy performances". [See Rudolf Steiner: *An Introduction to Eurythmy*. Steiner Books, Hudson USA.] On 20.12.1920, around four months before the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner said:

"... that is one side of eurythmy. There are two further sides. The first I would like to mention is **the therapeutic, hygienic side**. Those movements, which come out of the human form, are in the same stream where the human being's growth and forming forces are to be found, as well as all the normal movements of human circulation and breathing that promote and maintain health. **That is why, if one broadens the movements which here are expressed artistically, and further develops them, one can develop therapeutic- hygienic eurythmy. And it will be developed; without any doubt, it will come into our life as a therapeutic factor.**"

The hygienic side is here unquestionably bound up with the therapeutic side.

Three days before the Eurythmy Therapy Course Rudolf Steiner gave an address in connection with the second anthroposophical university course (GA 277; 9.4.1921), in which he dealt with a theme that would come up in Lecture 1: the aetiology of arrhythmias.

The concept "eurythmy therapy" is mentioned by Rudolf Steiner for the first time in connection with the Eurythmy Therapy Course.

In the "Introductions to eurythmy performances" (GA 277) given after the Eurythmy Therapy Course, the following expressions are used:

"... **therapeutic, hygienic side of eurythmy** ..." (18.8.1922)

"... **eurythmy therapy as an aspect of therapy** ..." (1.7.1923)

"... *in eurythmy therapy, we have to do with metamorphosed, reshaped movements. This is why we have developed **eurythmy therapy as a particular therapeutic form** in our clinics in Arlesheim in Switzerland and in Stuttgart. We have seen how useful it is **hygienically and for therapy.***" (18.8.1922)

Rudolf Steiner spoke in Penmaenmawr on the theme "Eurythmy and how it began":

"... *a considerable number of doctors found their way into the anthroposophical movement, and through their activities the art of medicine began to be cultivated from the point of view of anthroposophy. At this time the need made itself felt to apply the movements of eurythmy — movements which are drawn out from the healthy human organism and in which the human being can be revealed and manifested in a way which is in truth suited to their organism — to apply these movements in the realm of healing. ... Thus, **when eurythmy is applied as eurythmy therapy in the realm of therapeutics**, the movements, although similar in nature, differ from those of artistic eurythmy; for they must, when used therapeutically, work back with a healing influence upon some particular part of the organism.*" (GA 279; 26.8.1923)

Here the concept of "hygienic" is quite clearly connected with that of healing.

From then on, Rudolf Steiner used the concept of "hygienic" in his eurythmic vocabulary in connection with eurythmy therapy — other than when speaking of the pedagogic and hygienic side of eurythmy.

In the Speech Eurythmy Course, he described what was to be understood by **the pedagogical and hygienic aspect of eurythmy**. In Lecture 12 (9.7.1924), subtitled "**The Outpouring of the Human Soul into Form and Movement: the Curative Effect of this upon the Moral and Psychic Life and its Reaction upon the whole Being of Man**", Rudolf Steiner transposes into individual exercises his intentions with **pedagogical - hygienic eurythmy**. Here the boundaries between hygienic and therapeutic sometimes appear blurred. One has the impression that, during this Lecture 12, he had the content of the first two lectures of the Eurythmy Therapy Course before his inner eye.

In Lecture 5 of the Speech Eurythmy Course (30.6.1924), the **soul gestures** are considered **in relation to poetry**. Rudolf Steiner describes how the mood-content of the sound passes over into the feeling movement of the soul gestures, to enhance what is spoken and bring it more to expression.

In Lecture 6 (1.7.1924), different moods of soul that underlie the whole organisation of the human being are characterised. This is an indication of how, through these soul moods, the gods can be active in the creative processes of the human organisation. This fact finds its therapeutic application in Lecture 5 of the Eurythmy Therapy Course.

In eurythmy, sensations in connection with colour should be condensed to the contents of feelings. This is not just important for artistic activity, but represents **to the highest degree a hygienic way of working**, in that the soul awakens for the objective revelation of soul-contents, with which it can unite its own life.

An example: soul gesture "knowledge"

"You see, knowledge is to possess something outside ourselves that we wish to unite with our own existence. ... It is only through the capacity for cognition that the human being actually becomes human."

In this connection, Rudolf Steiner sets us the task to discover the relation between cognition and a solemn mood of festive ceremonial. A feeling will for cognition is thus stimulated.

This challenge is not to be compared with the exercises in Lecture 5 of the Eurythmy Therapy Course, "which are related more to **what works** outward from the soul". Here expressions of will, imbued with feeling, are unfolded and condensed in connection with physiological processes. This also combines with the efficacy of the sounds.

Lecture 1 of the Speech Eurythmy Course (24.6.1924) was given for all **three aspects of eurythmy**. Rudolf Steiner describes the third aspect as the **"aspect of therapeutic value"**. It is vital for all three forms of eurythmy that those who take it up unite with its spirit in such a way that humanity is developed in connection with it so that eurythmy can become an expression of life.

All three aspects should be carried out gracefully (Lecture 14; 11.7.1924). This is particularly important for eurythmy therapy:

"... because everything that is carried out ungracefully, particularly in eurythmy therapy, conduces to a stiffening of the ether body and does not bring about what one would really like to see brought about."

In Lecture 11 (8.7.1924), Rudolf Steiner considers a similar aspect, that of suppleness. Here, in addition to zodiac gestures and planetary movements, Goethe's "Sorcerer's Apprentice" is adduced as a measure of ability in attaining the necessary suppleness in forming sounds. Anyone who has eurythmised "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" according to Rudolf Steiner's indications will know the demands it makes on the eurythmist's gracefulness, suppleness and mobility. The indication quoted above shows how important these qualities are for working in eurythmy therapy.

The **transition from working with young children in pedagogical eurythmy to work in eurythmy therapy** is described in Lecture 1 of the Speech Eurythmy Course (24.6.1924).

"If one has a child in front of one, not yet fully developed, still to become a mature human being, one should lend God a hand so that the form of the child, the seed of which God has planted in the child, is further developed in the right way — what kind of forms should one use in the lessons, in education? Eurythmy forms. They are the continuation of divine movement, of the divine forming of the human being."

The task of education in Lecture 1 of *"Foundations of Human Experience"* begins with the continuation of what the gods have done before birth. -

*"If the human being becomes ill in a certain sense, then the forms corresponding to their divine archetype become harmful. They become different here in the physical world. What should we do? We go **back** to these divine forms, lend a hand, get the human being to make these divine forms again. This needs to work back on them again, so that the harmful forms can be made good again.*

In eurythmy we are concerned with a healing art ... if you have a person carry out the movements corresponding to the forming of their organs — for which, of course, you need to know what those movements are; for example, certain movements of the feet and legs correspond to certain formative principles that reach right up into the head. If you get someone to recreate that, then you have this third aspect of eurythmy: eurythmy therapy. ... in order that **everyone** active in eurythmy has an archetypal feeling for what they are doing; and that they **do not take eurythmy as something they can just learn conventionally**, but that they take it as something whereby the human being can approach the divine more nearly than they can without eurythmy. ... What belongs in a proper eurythmy training? There must be a particular atmosphere, a feeling for the relation of the human being with the divine. Then real eurythmy is present. That is necessary." (24.6.1924)

On 26.8.1924 in Penmaenmawr (GA 279), Rudolf Steiner describes the wish to develop out of eurythmy an appropriate therapy for the art of healing:

"... what can proceed as movement from eurythmy is actually the overflowing of [the human being's] organ formation into movement. So that, in a quite different way to how it manifests here artistically, this eurythmy can apply movements similar to these, but transformed and differentiated as eurythmy therapy; so that one implements it as an aid to therapy in illness, where one knows that this movement works back on this or that organ in a healing way. ... However, this will only come into being, with all its specialised applications, when eurythmy is fully developed as an art."

Part 3

The Eurythmy Therapy Course; GA 315

Lecture 1, 12.4.1921

Lecture 1 is about grasping the idea of metamorphosis. This is initially explained in relation to the morphology of the larynx and its neighbouring organs. This is the precondition for apprehending metamorphosis, in the lively etheric human being, in speech and movement. It gives the basis for understanding transformation in the realm of life. Part of this is the transformation of eurythmy into eurythmy therapy:

*"And we shall see how certain pointers appear **that enable us to achieve something hygienic and therapeutic from eurythmy; how many an artistic form metamorphoses in one direction or another in order to become what one might call a kind of eurythmy therapy. ...***

*... But one can work toward a eurythmy therapy which can achieve much in the treatment of chronic and acute conditions; and which will also prove useful and important when we endeavour with eurythmy to treat prophylactically, as it were, illnesses that have not yet taken hold, tendencies to illness. Here we have an element **where the didactic, pedagogical element of eurythmy will gradually have to pass over into what is hygienic and therapeutic.**" ...*

*"... Additionally, as the following sessions will show, it will be necessary, in order to implement the hygienic, therapeutic element of eurythmy practically, to have **a certain physiological knowledge which can develop into a kind of feeling for the creation and formation of the human organism.**"*

This is an important indication as to the form in which eurythmy therapists should acquire medical knowledge.

The eurythmy therapy exercise "IAO" is described in connection with school children:

*"In order to make a transition from ordinary school eurythmy to what is already tending in the direction of hygienic and therapeutic eurythmy, one would need to take some children out of the different classes in order that they undertake such exercises. So one can take them out of many different classes and then do this exercise with those for whom it would be particularly appropriate ... if one **really wanted to do hygienic eurythmy, therapeutic eurythmy, in the school.** Even such a modest beginning would take us, would it not, onto a path which, were we to follow it further, would lead to our **studying certain movements which are only***

metamorphoses of ordinary eurythmy, and following their effects on the human organisation."

Lecture 2, 13.4.1921

Lecture 2 concentrates on developing the vocalic principle in eurythmy therapy, indicating that it must be clearly differentiated from the consonantal. When working with vowels, it is particularly important to gain a perception for what streams in from outside. This perception should be felt all the way through in the form of the vowel — both in the arms and in the legs.

The O-Exercise:

*"... This is something which may with great advantage be applied **hygienically and therapeutically**..."*

*"You can see that in all these things, to a certain extent, the important thing is for us to **broaden**, as it were, what is expressed **artistically in eurythmy**. This is particularly the case for the vocalic element.... **one's understanding of what is happening must be based on feeling and perception**. So with those whom one asks to carry out these things for the purposes of therapy, one must take great care that they feel these things ..."*

The therapeutic principle of repetition was introduced in connection with the **A exercise**. It is applied to direct or reflect the efficacy onto the inner organism:

"This exercise can really only become effective when it is **carried out quite often**."

It is only through repetition that the movement pours into the inner processes of the human being. (28.10.1922)

Lecture 3, 14.4.1921

Therapeutic principle: polarisation

Lecture 4, 15.4.1921

In Lecture 4, the consonantal principle in eurythmy therapy is deepened further; it works on the rhythmic system via the system of the metabolism and limbs.

Rudolf Steiner also mentions gymnastics in relation to education:

*"Now I usually say that in education one would have to replace conventional gymnastics, based as it is simply on physiology, with this **ensouled gymnastics**." (= pedagogical element)*

There are various statements by Rudolf Steiner in relation to gymnastics which, taken as a whole, paint conventional gymnastics in quite a bad light — particularly for small children.

He describes how gymnastics adapts the human being one-sidedly to the forces of the earth, and how the human being sinks down to the level of an earthly animal through the way sport is pursued. Sport, which developed out of materialism, continually tears the human being away from the spiritual. (GA 350; 30.5.1923)

In pedagogical lectures (GA 307; 10 & 11.8.1923), gymnastics are mentioned as an example of "externally induced movement exercises" and how devastating the effects are on very small children. In school children, the I-organisation is impaired for their whole development.

Lecture 5, 16.4.1921

What Rudolf Steiner suggests in other lectures and would like to bring into development applies equally to Lecture 5. The question being asked here recently is: what does one want to achieve with the exercises when they are divorced from the efficacy arising from their alignment with eurythmy therapy and offered in classes for non-professionals?

Towards the end of the lecture, Rudolf Steiner gives a clear statement on the question of implementation:

"If one has children carry out, in a moderate way, the movements that we have described today, and if one has them carried out quite energetically by patients for whom they are appropriate — you will be able to see from what has already been given which would be the appropriate patients — then the ether body will become supple, mobile in itself, and one will be doing something good for both children and adults."

That is a clear orientation for implementation, from which it does not emerge that the content of Lecture 5 can be implemented in classes for non-professionals.

The following, however, is particularly important for the cognitional basis of a movement therapy:

" These movements are actually such that one can really give them preference over conventional gymnastic movements, because **conventional gymnastic movements** in point of fact really originate only in physiology, in the body's physique, and basically **tear the physical body continually out of the etheric**, so that the physical body always does its own movements, which do not then draw the movements of the ether body after them in an appropriate fashion. And therefore conventional, merely physiological gymnastics is basically a **school of materialism**, in that materialistic thinking passes over into feeling; **and eurythmy has the effect that what the human being actually gains is more the capacity to know themselves in themselves, to master themselves in themselves. Such exercises thus have both a pedagogical, didactic value as well as a therapeutic and hygienic value.**"

By taking as an example the exercise **Hope-U**, we shall try to demonstrate this threefold effectiveness which, however, merges into one:

The **pedagogical, didactic value** of the exercise lies in the fact that the human being is educated from out of the future. In ordinary life the human being's life of wishes stems from egoism. Desire is focused on the attractions of the sensory world and on wanting to have. This deprives the soul of the warmth of selfless devotion to the world, with the result that the human life of breathing becomes cold. In the Hope gesture, the direction of the will is reversed: the gesture becomes a wishing that is wholly immersed in piety that turns to the spiritual. The power of the wishing forms an open chalice in the soul and spirit of the human being, which is filled with the substance of the U. The immortality of the human soul is experienced in the U. The spiritualisation of the will which is thus introduced spurs the soul to want to raise itself to the "HUMAN". This creates the seed for the inner human being to become whole and sound, as the wish is completely liberated from selfishness. Here lies the **hygienic value** of the exercise, which is converted into the **therapeutic value** through the soul's repeatedly turning toward this process in devotion. The ether body is strengthened through the soul's repeated devotion to a moral world content. The substance of Hope that pours into the "U" permeates the whole breath life of the human being, which is thus filled with resurrection forces. This brings about a warming of the breathing system. It becomes filled with a spiritualised element of will, which enlivens and deepens the breathing.

Our modern, one-sidedly intellectual forms of life draw the life of breathing one-sidedly up into the human being's conceptual pole. The breath thus brings forces of hardening and death into the human being. Thereby the inner organs are insufficiently enlivened by the breath. The whole organism becomes brittle. The Hope gesture is filled with the in-streaming forces of the "U" and forms a "*breathing-connection with the divine*", which not only gives the soul support and assurance, but also enters deeply into the body and unfolds a warming activity. The forces which shape the body are thereby encouraged, via the breathing, right into the formation of blood. That is an uncommonly fine and intimate process which here becomes condensed into a therapeutic process. As the breathing is such an individual part of the human being, this exercise is not appropriate for a group occasion. Through warming, the "Hope-U" spiritualises breathing processes of the senses, of the air and of matter.

The causes of being ill are concealed in the deeper layers of life, and therapeutic measures are intended to organise in a different way the conduct of the parts of the human being where destiny condenses to the tightest point, in a realm that is not initially openly accessible. Developments when becoming ill are conditioned by the individual human being. The riddle of illness is intimately connected with the riddle of becoming human. Illness is, to the highest degree, an enhanced wanting-to-become-human which is taken hold of individually through therapy. Through eurythmy therapy, consciousness can be awoken for what is individual in the process of healing.

Rudolf Steiner warns of generalisation in healing and the *"intoxicating simplicity ... of harmonising the unharmonious"*, for which reason *"eurythmy therapy should not be implemented without a sound diagnosis ... For here we have to do with a remarkably fine knowledge of the human organism."* (22.10.1922)

A sound diagnosis might well refer to a diagnosis of the whole human being, for only this can transform a healing process into an active event of the whole human being.

Lecture 6, 17.4.1921

Lecture 6 is concerned with the *"physiology of eurythmising"* and the necessity of considering the active, animated human being. Lecture 6 gives an intense experience that the spiritual is not to be found by means of what is sensory.

*"Today we should consider — bearing in mind that **there is so very much one could mention about the relation to eurythmy of what is hygienic and therapeutic — a physiology that is closely related to the spiritual**, that arises for us when we look at a eurythmy exercise. Of course everything that one can observe in this regard in artistic eurythmy confronts one more intensely when **one goes from eurythmy as an art to what we have got to know over the last few days as a certain intensification of eurythmy**. But what is **essential** can be observed when eurythmy is manifested artistically, and one then seeks, so to speak, the corresponding physiology for it.*

Rudolf Steiner then describes how essential it is for one first to make lively, mobile and nimble, through artistic work, the forces which one will then be using in therapy:

*"You can understand that habitual practice of eurythmy stimulates the sculptural, plastic forces of the organs so that the human being becomes a better breather within; so that they become in relation to their inner digestion — if I may put it like this — a better human being. They become a person who gets their whole organism more under the control of their will. They become an inwardly more skillful human being. **And all artistry really consists in making one's inner human being mobile, plastically sculptural and nimble.**"*

What was suggested in the beginnings of eurythmy in the way of **expanded perception** of human movement — brightening and darkening of the aura through stretching and bending — now becomes further differentiated and deepened with regard to working therapeutically:

*"It is of course particularly necessary, if one wants to apply **eurythmy for therapeutic purposes**, that one become adept at what I would call this physiological and psychological reading of what is actually taking place, so that one really knows that a person who eurythmises consonantly tends to call up a kind of aura around them which in turn works back on them and brings them out of an insubstantial flowing together with the world; while for a person whom one has doing vocalic eurythmy, their aura contracts, consolidates, which also happens during spiritual activity, so that the inner organs are thereby stimulated to bring the person to themselves."*

The therapist must decide, on the basis of the diagnosis and as comprehensive as possible a perception of the patient, whether and in what context the aura should, through the movement of a particular vowel, be more condensed and formed, or expanded. Should the aura flow out too strongly with the cosmic ether, its form is insufficiently available for activity of the soul and spirit. This is the case, for instance, with daydreamers and people who tend to be drowsy. Here the aura can be centred through working with vowels, so that the soul forces that have remained in the periphery may turn more toward organic life. Through this, the organic self becomes strong enough to support an alert soul life once more. Here the necessary interplay between soul function and organic activity, which is described in detail in its dual task in Lecture 8 (28.10.1922), becomes comprehensible: in its devotion to organic process, and in the task of forming consciousness.

If, on the other hand, the ether body of an organ or system of organs falls out of its connection with the cosmic ether, which is the case with all morphological changes, the eurythmy therapist must guide the patient to bring their aura once more into an appropriate connection with the cosmic ether through consonantal movement. With deformations of the physical body, the human aura's connection with the cosmic ether has atrophied. If a human being continues to close themselves off from their divine, spiritual foundation, this can reach a stage where they are unable any longer properly to build up their body with their plastically-sculptural, architectonic forces from before birth.

Lecture 7, 18.4.1921

Lecture 7 considers the acquisition and development of capacities that enable the therapist to see into the spiritual and bodily processes taking place during eurythmy therapy. These capacities are linked to a higher development of the human being. In order to raise the forces of the becoming human being to the level of perception, they must gradually be brought to

consciousness. Only when knowledge of anatomy and physiology is shone through with the light of this consciousness, *"do we begin to understand the organs and their function"*.

On the anthroposophical path of knowledge, all experiences that go beyond the sensory rest on the self-knowledge of soul and spirit. Through eurythmy, higher soul forces can be experienced in a wonderful way. Only, however, through rigorous education of the soul by the spirit do they become one's own substance: organs that can perceive independently.

At the end of Lecture 7, Rudolf Steiner invites us to consider that there is a tendency, particularly in anthroposophists, not to get beyond egoism, but sometimes to become even more egoistic than ordinary people. This happens when, from personal aspirations, we set ourselves challenges and take paths that damage the whole movement. This egoism disturbs the task of healing which should be initiated through anthroposophic medicine: to bring about a healing process for the whole of medicine.

Lecture 8, 28.10.1922

A year and a half after the Eurythmy Therapy Course, Rudolf Steiner spoke to doctors and began by saying again that *"... it [eurythmy therapy] has become separate from the purely artistic, which is how it initially evolved; to a certain extent, artistic eurythmy must provide a kind of basis for the right understanding of eurythmy therapy."*

The following quotation makes clear how artistic eurythmy works in a generally hygienic way:

*"The sole physiological consequence for the human organism of doing ordinary, artistic eurythmy is that **an inner harmonisation of the human functions is strongly evoked, insofar as these functions form a wholeness in the human organism.**"*

If a eurythmist undertakes further development to become a eurythmy therapist, this inner harmonising is the best precondition for practising their profession. The eurythmy therapist continually has before them the ill movement human being — physical, etheric, astral — who has fallen out of the harmony of their forces. The therapist must have the capacity again and again to balance their own forces, which are also the forces they perceive working one-sidedly in the patient, and that are in need of treatment. In this task, eurythmy is the indispensable helper in leading over what is specialised once more into what is generally health-bringing.

Rudolf Steiner goes on, as if summarising, to describe that, in **artistic eurythmy**, the eurythmist practises giving all their human devotion and attentiveness — *"...and thereby all the processes in the human physical, etheric and astral organism, which are the bearers of attentiveness..."* — to the artistic shaping of the sounds and to the periphery.

In eurythmy therapy, this devotion and attentiveness are directed wholly inward in their full scope:

*"As far as **eurythmy therapy** is concerned, what lives in artistic eurythmy as devotion to the shaping of sound, word and sentence **is reflected inward**. One way it is reflected inward in eurythmy therapy is through the way a sound, A for example, **must often be repeated several times**. ... It is now a matter of **seeing into** the actual healing process that can take place with eurythmy."*

There follows a consideration of the necessary capacities and forming them:

*"One must awaken what I would call **a feeling for the interplay of the artistic in the dynamics of the whole human being**. One must acquire an **intuitive eye** for the artistic."*

The challenge is to put oneself in a position "to practise proper physiology". This includes being able to observe both the whole human being and each individual organ in their polarity of centrifugal and centripetal dynamics.

*"These two dynamics must certainly be reciprocally regulated, and one can hope that **eurythmy therapists become trained** who will develop a fine feeling for what can happen in individual cases. This will depend to an extraordinary extent on an **artistic disposition of soul**."*

Rudolf Steiner goes on to describe the necessity of being able **to compare massage and physiotherapy through observation**:

*"Just think what the various effects of **massage** have been. However, such **external scrabbling at the human being** —and I certainly do not mean to criticise or say anything against it; I recognise its significance — is **very insignificant** by comparison with the kind of massage you apply when simply, **by means of the factors of eurythmy therapy**, you bring the whole interplay of the system of organs into a different inner movement. That is after all a very inward kneading of the whole organism, connected with effects in the etheric, in the astral and in the organism of the I. So that one can say: what one can recognise as right in massage is made inward in the strongest way through this eurythmy therapy. And one will in fact only be able to shed light on the **health-bringing effects of gymnastics** when one considers the similarity between callisthenics and eurythmy therapy. For what is healing in gymnastics is only **a secondary analogy to what is significant in eurythmy therapy**. ... When one begins to look at these matters, I think there will be a certain conflict in this connection with orthopaedists. Although they achieve significant successes in their field today, they hold hard to their view of the **human organism as a kind of mechanism** and act on that basis."*

From the Appendix to the Eurythmy Therapy Course

(Fifth revised edition 2003)

In her essay "Eurythmy Therapy 1921–1971 — Its Birth, Development and Task", which appeared in the periodical "Beiträge zu einer Erweiterung der Heilkunst nach geisteswissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen" (1971, No. 4), **Erna van Deventer-Wolfram** wrote:

"From the 12th to the 17th of April 1921, during the second course for doctors, Rudolf Steiner gave the Eurythmy Therapy Course for physicians and for **eurythmists who had completed at least two years of training**. None of us guessed what form this course would take! Rudolf Steiner stood on the podium, Frau Baumann and I sat on chairs in front of him. We felt very uncomfortable, as the whole thing was our idea; and we had heard nothing from Rudolf Steiner between February and April as to how he intended to realise this new branch of medical science with us, who had not the slightest notion about anything medical!

We certainly brought nothing with us in the way of the necessary knowledge for working with eurythmy therapy — would it not have been much more practical were Rudolf Steiner to have selected a small group of doctors for this work? Or was it that Frau Baumann and I as eurythmists brought with us something from our past which he considered important? The answer appeared in the indications which he gave me, shortly after the course, about the necessary training for eurythmy therapy.

This was his answer to our question:

'The precondition for the profession of eurythmy therapy is that you first know and master the whole of artistic eurythmy in its foundations. You must be in a position to present a dramatic poem artistically in eurythmy on the stage: for example, Goethe's "Sorcerer's Apprentice", with all the eurythmic lawfulnesses for the meaning of the words and the formation of the sentences, with forms and bodily positions, as you have learnt them. Only then, when you have mastered all the aspects of artistic eurythmy, can you take up eurythmy therapy.'

He described to us how we would first have to master all the possibilities of artistic eurythmy, to find it in the cosmos as the forces of planets and stars, then as its reflection in human speech and music, and through the movements of the human body itself; and thus to learn to know the human being — ourselves in other words — as the being that mirrors macrocosm and microcosm in its own body. Only once we had understood the significance and task of eurythmy could we advance from the periphery of eurythmy to the centre of the healing aspect of eurythmy. But 'first one must actually know the periphery; only then could one advance to the centre of the human being!' What a perspective for us: yes, we might have been active in artistic and pedagogical eurythmy for eight years, but more from the practical point of view and through learning as we worked, than by understanding the whole thing

consciously. The vowels, consonants, parts of speech, rhythms — how much more significant they appeared to us now! ...

Rudolf Steiner also outlined what the eurythmist should know, by telling me what I should learn from my husband's textbooks: the "Spalteholz" [W. Spalteholz, Professor at the University of Leipzig]; and Professor Broesicke's textbook [Dr. Gustav Broesicke, Breslau 1920]!

Rudolf Steiner explained this to us shortly after the Eurythmy Therapy Course, so it was with a deep feeling of responsibility that we left Dornach again.