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The Challenges of Keeping a Waldorf School Running Smoothly and Alive – *Working Through the Consciousness Soul*

Something is happening in the Waldorf movement that deserves attention. When I recall all of the Waldorf Schools I have visited in the past few years, more than half of them are implementing significant changes in how they run, often right down to replacing the administrative head of the school. Many of the schools are trying a model from another school, but if you visit the school whose model they are trying, you find that it is also struggling. It appears that the schools are searching for a manner of running themselves that meets everyone's needs—teachers, board members, parents, and most importantly, the students—without immediate success.

The new administrator is hired in hopes that a different person can solve the problems that former people could not. Often, the dismissed administrator is hired by another school with those very same hopes. There are good people in all aspects of these schools who are getting hurt. In some cases you have people who feel powerless while others may have too much authority. Some people get blamed for the lack of follow through of others, while others push through agendas that are not aligned with agreed upon methods of working or are in areas outside their responsibility. In the midst of this, the feeling within the community is unsettled. You often hear complaints that the school has lost some of its initially inviting warmth and caring, while at the same time others talk positively about it becoming more “professional.”

Clearly, something needs to change. The question is how to identify the right aspects of each situation to change so that the future is more constructive, and healthier, stronger schools are created as a result. The answer may not rely upon on a new organizational chart; it may, however, be found in creating a new way of working within the schools.

These challenges are widespread within the movement and not unique to Waldorf schools. They belong to the challenges of the times; they are found in virtually all organizational forms, whether economic, political, social or religious. However, in the end, there is still the question, what are *you* or *we* going to do about it in *our* school? If we seriously want to understand how a school or organization functions, we first need to see that the organization is an expression of the interrelationships of the people within it. It is not simply a sum of its parts.

Unless the essence of the school's or organization's deepest intentions are alive within a critical number of people, the school will likely be limited in its ability to bring a deep education. In reality, if the teachers, key administrators and board members do not fully grasp the essence of human potentiality, then the school cannot consciously educate students that are able to reach their potential. In short, if a school does not have adults who seek to realize the highest goals of being human, the school will either become stuck trying to implement some model thought of by others, or worse, will become a battleground for differing views limited by individuals trying to maintain personal control of the whole.

The path to a healthier school is not simply a better organizational chart. Instead, it consists of creating an environment in which the noblest qualities and already developed capacities of each individual are

acknowledged and utilized to the fullest extent in service of the whole, while the less developed aspects of each individual are identified and addressed in a supportive, yet objective, manner.

The functional result of such an objective yet compassionate dynamic would be a community where each individual gathers a picture of the whole through attentive discernment of those greater and lesser developed capacities in each person. The individual's development is fostered, but not to the detriment of the mission. Consequently, the strength or "virtue" of each one does live, because each person is placed fruitfully in service.

To work consciously with the intentions above, we will look through one of the lenses that teachers use in the Waldorf School to understand how human beings develop different qualities at different stages of their development. We will not do an exhaustive study but try to discern two aspects that will help us in our goal of developing a Waldorf School in a clearer manner. We will first try to make distinctions between aspects of the body, soul, and spirit. Then we will try to discern the three parts of the soul from each other: the sentient, intellectual and consciousness souls. It is my experience that differentiating the three latter qualities of soul can be very helpful for raising the level of human interactions, as well as for improving the overall functioning of the school. It is important to acknowledge that Rudolf Steiner often referred to these distinct aspects of a human being in much of his work. I have found these descriptions to be very insightful. To understand them intellectually and then experience them consciously can be helpful in understanding how to work in a more clear and collaborative manner.

Body, Soul, and Spirit

The body of a human being is generally quite clear. We all have a physical body and each of us is usually aware of it. It is something unique to ourselves and it is the basis upon which earthbound consciousness is founded. If we look a bit closer, we will see that there are aspects of our body that are more subtle. They are connected with our wellbeing, and we notice them primarily when they are under stress, e.g. during illness or as a result of a lack of sleep. Additionally, if we look at different people we see that they are more or less sensitive to various aspects of their surroundings. Some are sensitive to sounds; the slightest noise distracts them as they tune in. Others are more sensitive to smells or have a keen eye for visual detail. In short, while the physical body is the coarsest part of our being, we can notice that there are more refined aspects of our being that can be brought to life and cultivated.

The soul and spirit are more difficult to discern. In many aspects of life they are used almost interchangeably. The soul is more connected with the mediation of our body with the immediate surroundings and events on a daily basis. Looking at how we select what we eat can help make this distinction. Part of the soul instantly reacts to what we like and don't like, unconsciously; part of the soul carries an understanding of the latest fads, trends and ideas about healthy diets; and part of the soul is more directly aware of the impact that each food will have on our wellbeing.

The spirit has a longer, if not timeless aspect. The word is a challenging one to use as it often is associated with a vague mysticism, some undefined altered state in which people have visions flash before them. Nor do I mean by "spirit" something simply "intellectual." That is NOT what is being described here at all. The type of spirit activity meant here arises out of a keen awareness, to even the subtlest details, and a clarity of thinking that finds the patterns and relationships within each particular situation. Those are the key attributes of the spirit's activity which Waldorf education is seeking to develop in the students and teachers.

The human spirit as described in this context is grounded, awake, and constantly open—alert to incorporating new observations and identifying new relationships. The spirit is a quality of being that is

able to discern multiple dynamics at the same time and sense the relationships among various aspects and the result each aspect may yield. When functioning at its highest capacities, it is able to determine not only the effects on its own soul and spirit of differing actions but begins to resonate with the dynamics of the entire situation, living into truthful relationships beyond its own personal being.

When the spirit aspect of our being is more developed, and hence more awake, it begins to sense how a decision in one part of the school will impact another, seemingly unconnected, area. It also begins to discern where the dynamics are a result of internal disharmonies versus those where external influences are more at play such as local culture or overriding issues of a global nature. This discernment enables one to live into truths that are of a higher order. It is critical to note that spirit is not the relationships themselves, nor the identified truths. Instead, spirit is the activity of discerning and experiencing these relationships as truthful realities on their own, along with the capacity to discern their harmonizing or discordant effects.

We can see from the descriptions above that the soul plays a crucial role in mediating our physical everyday experiences with the realities of the greater order of the world around us. We also see the power of working on the level of the truthful and harmonious aspects of life. The soul mediates these two extremes, from the earthly physical and sensory up to the subtle dynamics of relationships and the interaction of personal and collective intentions. This mediation can resolve into the perception of emerging unifying truths.

The three types of soul : Sentient – Intellectual - Consciousness

Understanding that the soul mediates in two directions simultaneously, toward the physical body and toward the spiritual relationships, makes it possible to distinguish three fundamental aspects of soul activity. We can then explore how they manifest in the workings of a school.

The first part of the soul that usually comes to awareness in an individual's development is the sentient soul. This part of our soul responds directly to the sense impressions that we experience initially through the body. For example, if we bring a plate of food that has fresh berries we may find we immediately are drawn toward eating some. A few half rotten apples may be less exciting and there may be some foods we have a strong aversion too, such as capers or anchovies. We can't say a food is simply good or bad, but we do find that we are drawn toward some foods and have an aversion to others. Here we see the key quality of the sentient soul: the capacity to initially be drawn toward or away from something or an action.

On a more subtle level, the sentient soul responds to the emotional dynamics of our everyday interactions with others. Some of us may find we are averse to disagreements while others find them constructive opportunities for working things out. The key to the sentient soul is that whether responding to some physical sensation, an interaction with other people, or even some people themselves, we find that if we only work out of the sentient soul, we react out of our initial attraction or aversion to the experience. Thereby, we seek the situation that provides us with the most sentient "comfort."

The next level of interaction is that of intellectual soul. Here we begin to notice our own patterns, including unproductive results of responding solely out of our sentient attractions and aversions. We may then use a bit of cleverness to avoid the obviously unproductive earlier consequences, and still stay within our sentient comfort level. For example, we may note that if we are nice to people, they will often do what we would like. We see this pattern and use it to our advantage. We begin to be nice to people not for their benefit, but instead we are looking to satisfy our own desires. Here we see the intellectual soul is purely working to satisfy the desires of the sentient soul. Later, with a bit more

development, we may overcome our sentient reactions through adopting an ideal out of which to work. We now gain our “comfort” from knowing that we have worked in a manner consistent with that ideal or take satisfaction in having avoided a “moral failure.” Within this dynamic, the motivation is still satisfaction of the self.

The unfortunate tendency is that ideals become fixed and inflexible; preconceptions lose vitality over time. The intellectual soul is generally not aware it has become stuck within the fixed ideal because it is feeling very “satisfied” with itself. This perspective can lose connection with the present. The “fixed” intellectual soul can filter perceptions so that it only “sees” what is consistent with the ideal, even if the reality is far different.

Such a person can often be seen as having great pride in doing “the right thing.” Unfortunately, he or she tends to do the “right thing” in all situations-- often missing the fact that the present context may be asking for a different approach. In the extreme, the tendency is to fall back towards sentient-based actions, but the self-deception is so strong that the intellectual soul clings to its “nobility” and yet no longer even acts consistently with the ideal. This is the fundamental dynamic leading to hypocrisy.

Finally we come to the consciousness soul. This part of the soul can be identified initially by its courage and openness. It goes beyond settling for the unconscious comfort of the sentient soul or self-satisfaction provided by the fixed ideal of the intellectual soul. The consciousness soul desires to be in harmony with what is true in each situation, which leads naturally to the highest good in the current context, free of all preconceptions.

The consciousness soul is always open to new possibilities. Over time, it is able to identify sentient soul attachments and aversions, as well as intellectual soul preconceptions, and move past them. The general pattern for consciousness soul activity is as follows: The consciousness soul courageously opens itself to the uniqueness of any situation and circumstances. It is willing to acknowledge that previous understanding can be applicable only when it has confirmed that the conditions are indeed not significantly dissimilar from the previous circumstances. The consciousness soul is acutely aware that the repetition of a set of circumstances without any meaningful change is rare!

In this state of openness, consciousness soul takes in all of the subtle details of the context in which it finds itself. It fully understands that insight can only be generated through paying attention to as many details as possible, both perceptive and conceptual. It seeks not a general answer, but to find the specific relationship that will unify all of the perceptive elements that it can discern. Additionally, the consciousness soul is able to flexibly build up an understanding and then to freely let it go—as circumstances change or if some additional aspect is perceived as a result of a conversation. It is sufficiently attuned to the situation and the underlying dynamics through active listening and perceiving, that it rarely overlooks a significant change.

Consciousness soul activity is not so much about being right, presenting a clever argument to convince others to join your position. There is no need for a political stance in consciousness soul working – it is much more about trying to come to the highest truth possible within oneself or amongst the group.

It is about speaking about the patterns that you discern and about listening intently to others. Through providing the details of your observations and describing the process of how it arose within you, one can enable others to arrive at a similar understanding. It should be noted that consciousness soul activity does not assume everyone IS working out of consciousness soul activity at any given moment -- but it knows that it is POSSIBLE that a person is, and unless you listen as intently as possible you won't be able to discern if they are or aren't doing so right NOW!

More importantly, asking others to point out any errors in your perception or understanding allows the consciousness soul to discern when the conclusions or perceived pattern is no longer valid. It can then seek a new synthesis. In aligning itself with the truth that is found within the context of the particular circumstances, the consciousness soul takes on the harmonic activity of something greater, and actions then taken from this perspective have a quality of rightness or goodness about them.

To be clear, of course there are times in our lives where sentient soul activity is sufficient, as there are times where intellectual soul activity is fine. To move away from a space in which you smell a strong chemical that has just been accidentally released is sufficient. To look both ways before crossing most streets is also sufficient. Yet, for the more conscious aspects of our life, can we strive to work out of a greater clarity and strive toward a greater level of possibility and freedom? How much potential might a human being be able to achieve? It would appear that human potential might indeed be limitless – but what are we aligning ourselves with?

The developing sentient soul capacities generate a greater awareness of the impact of different sensations upon us. The developing intellectual soul capacities lead to an awareness of how to apply a unifying thought within a given situation. Yet both of these are a foundation for an even higher level of discernment and activity.

We can observe that an adult instinctively pulling a child out of a dangerous situation has little awareness of his or her sentient soul activity. We can also see how working out of the intellectual ideal of traffic laws creates a driving situation that is safer than hoping for a fortuitous combination of individual reactions! Thereby, we can see the power of the intellectual soul over the sentient soul.

Similarly, we all can recognize and appreciate when someone truly “sees us” and understands our unique circumstances. Often an action results that meets our personal set of circumstances because someone perceived an applicable higher truth. Travel documents and arrangements come to mind for the latter case. I find it interesting that in most customer service operations, the regular operators work within the script of an intellectual soul way of being; it is often only the supervisor who is authorized to work within a consciousness soul way of being. I find that I gravitate towards those businesses that accord consciousness soul activity to the majority of their workers.

One Difficulty --Three schools – Three faculty meetings

The following descriptions are not about any Waldorf School in particular. The scenarios and depictions of each school are based on common situations found in a number of schools. Each school below may have some qualities that are similar to a school you know and others that are different. It is rare that a school is working out of only one set of soul qualities. But then again....

School One

The Difficulty

After 5 years of teaching her class, teacher X is having difficulties with them in 6th grade. While the class began first grade with 22 students, it is now down to 12 and only 5 were present in 1st grade. There has been a slow but steady decrease in enrollment; about 3-4 students left each year but 1 or 2 new ones were picked up. The teacher does a lot of singing with her class each morning, her daily presentations in main lesson are short, and then the students begin their main lesson book work. There are lots of beautiful illustrations in their main lesson books but little individual student writing. Some of the parents are complaining their students are bored and not challenged and are considering leaving the school, while other parents are strong defenders of the teacher and regularly help with carpooling for the many class outings.

The School

The faculty doesn't really know what to do about the situation in the 6th grade. The 6th grade teacher is a long time parent in the school and one of the founders. She became a teacher when the school was unable to find a first grade teacher for the class. The school feels indebted to the teacher for all of her years of work and commitment. One of the faculty members agreed to talk to the 6th grade teacher about the present difficulties; it was the 3rd grade teacher who is the closest colleague and friend of the 6th grade teacher. Two other teachers agreed to visit the class. The first was the 3rd grade teacher who said everything was fine. The second was the 5th grade teacher who was busy that day. She saw the class working quietly on their books for 15 minutes. She also reported that everything looked fine. The board is aware of the issue but leaves it to the faculty to sort out the difficulty because it is a pedagogical issue. The board is also busy trying to figure out how to get more money into the school because enrollment went down a bit this year.

The Faculty Meeting

Finally, it is agreed in the faculty that they will talk about the 6th grade in an upcoming faculty meeting. Everyone is a bit tense going in. The 3rd grade teacher begins the conversation by saying how wonderful the lesson was that she visited that day. One of the specialty subject teachers tries to share a few difficulties she is having in the class. The 6th grade teacher responds a bit defensively to the comments of the specialty subject teacher. The 5th grade teacher shares that everything looked fine when he visited. The room grows quiet. A few more comments are shared either supporting the teacher or focusing on the parents. It is finally stated by one teacher that this is just the same difficulty many teachers have in the 6th grade – we need to support her. No details about what that support will look like are given. A few more comments are made either supporting the teacher or mentioning comments that people have heard from upset parents. Finally, the meeting ends; no clear picture has arisen. The final comment is that, "we should all just support her and see how it goes."

By April, the 6th grade teacher is exhausted; she decides not to continue teaching in the coming school year. The teacher search committee put out postings on websites stating the school needs a new teacher. No one is really sure where the next teacher will be found. Seven students are enrolled for next year.

School Two

The Difficulty

After 5 years of teaching, the 6th grade teacher, teacher Y, finds that she is quite tired. It has been a lot of work over the past two years. There were some changes on the school recently and things are different now. Her class enrollment is generally good but something isn't quite right. She has seen a few of her fellow class teachers let go over the past two years. It's a lot better than it used to be, as teacher assessment is now done in a committee and not by the full faculty. Teacher Y notes that she is spending a lot of time writing lesson plans for the new Administrative Chair. The old chair was let go last year so the new one is asking them to document all of the classes they will teach in detail. This was also asked by the old chair but the format was different. She can cut and paste some of the old format but some areas simply require more detail. While things are more settled than they were 4 years ago, teacher Y finds that she isn't as enthusiastic about teaching anymore. She has decided to wait one more year and see how it goes. She notes that her students do complete their work but somehow they are always acting out a bit.

The School

The school has been very busy in the past few years. It was 4 years ago that they began an effort to make things more professional in the school. An Administrative Chair was hired and the school began to

put in place a number of processes and procedures. Admissions flows much more smoothly now than it used to. Teacher evaluation still remains a difficulty, so a policy of all teachers handing in their lesson plans before every block is taught was put in place. The kindergarten teachers are allowed to simply hand in their outlines on a quarterly basis. After some initial problems, all of the plans have been coming in on time. No one has had much time to look at them as things have been so busy. The teachers are pretty much responsible just for teaching these days. The board is working with the new Administrative Chair to boost enrollment. The original Administrative Chair was let go two years ago but the school managed to find another person with experience from another Waldorf School. It isn't quite clear why the new chair left her last position. Now, the chair and board are working hard to boost enrollment because their hope is that once this happens, salaries will be able to be increased. The school discourages any trips, as the board has informed the teachers that the insurance company isn't willing to carry the full liability of student accidents. It may be just as well as there is so much content that needs to be covered in order to meet the expectations of the parents. Then there are the weekly updates to write to all the parents. As teacher Y said, "It is so much work." Let's see how this year goes.

The Faculty Meeting

The faculty meeting is very tightly run. An agenda comes out in advance with times allotted down to 5 minute intervals. Generally, there is little time for discussion or at most three people are able to speak before the time is up and the meeting moves on to the next agenda item. It is interesting that most of the items are more like announcements. Those items that aren't announcements are sometimes presented in a manner in which it seems that a decision has already been made by some group of people. This used to bother teacher Y, but then she remembers she is only responsible for her own teaching. There still is a pedagogical portion to the meeting, a 30 minute reading of some article or lecture in common. Again, maybe 3 or 4 people have time to make a comment and then the time allocated is over. One final thing teacher Y notices: it is interesting how often when an issue comes up people describe what Waldorf School A or B is doing. It can be different schools at different times. As the next report is being read, she thinks, "I wonder what is happening in the meetings at other Waldorf Schools?"

School 3

The Difficulty

Teacher Z is entering 6th grade for the first time. She is a bit scared but also rather excited. She has been with her class since 2nd grade; the previous teacher of the class was an experienced semi-retired teacher who had agreed to take them for just one year as the school initially couldn't find a 1st grade teacher. Teacher Z is glad they waited the year. She was finishing her training when her class was in 1st grade and now that she's been working with them for 4 years, she realizes she really enjoys the students she has in the class. Teacher Z had a long series of conversations with the teacher support group last year to determine if she should go on to 6th grade or not. This review happens to every 6th grade teacher. Last year's teacher, teacher W, didn't go on but is very successfully teaching the 2nd grade, having taken them last year as their new 1st grade teacher. Teacher Z has three key supports in place that suggest to her she will be successful. First, the 7th grade teacher who took over last year's 6th grade is a very experienced middle school teacher. The 7th grade teacher is very interested in environmental issues and has tried to bring this into the school in a very experiential and locally involved manner. Teacher Z really respects the 7th grade teacher because in addition to the experiential elements, the 7th grade teacher really seems to know how to get her students excited about just about anything including basic algebra and grammar! The second support teacher Z has is the newly hired Faculty Mentor. This person was hired last year to do nothing other than to mentor faculty members in all aspects of the school. She is an experienced teacher but also a very open person. The Faculty Mentor is assigned to any teacher that the Teacher Support Group feels could use additional support as they begin a new or

challenging aspect of teaching. Teacher Z met with the new Faculty Mentor a number of times during the summer. They agreed that they will work on some of her initial lessons together. This was a relief to teacher Z because now she no longer needs to keep writing all of these block write-ups (none of the teachers do), she is now able to work directly on what she needs to do to actually teach her class. What is more, the Faculty Mentor has stretched and encouraged teacher Z in ways she hadn't considered until recently.

That brings us to the 3rd exciting piece of teacher Z's support. Rather than simply go to a one week course on teaching 6th grade, teacher Z was encouraged to do a deeper multi-week course on some part of teaching that would stretch and enliven her. Some of the suggestions she was asked to consider by the Faculty Mentor were the Remedial Education course, two different movement courses, and one on teaching middle school science. Teacher Z began one of these courses and was amazed at how different such a course felt after 4 years of teaching. The questions being worked with in this deeper course were much richer than she anticipated. Now she had her first experience of understanding what it meant to help a child or student come to know the world out of his or her own experience.

The School

Teacher Z's school is doing fairly well. Enrollment is generally good but there were still a few empty spaces in some of the classrooms. They have a streamlined admissions process similar to School 2's but with greater flexibility on the actual outreach. There was still the challenge of getting good teachers but with a solid core of teachers, some of the new graduates from the training centers were seeking out their school in particular. The board was working closely with the Administrative Chair to find creative ways to work with local health practitioners to provide coverage for some of the faculty and staff's health care needs, given the necessity of the school to place their teachers on a high deductible health plan. There was also an initiative with board and faculty members that has resulted in a modest but growing scholarship fund to serve the minority and underserved aspects of the community so that some of their children could attend the Waldorf School at a major discount. Initially, it was the 7th grade teacher's environmental work in the community that helped to make the school visible to the initial donor and with the help of a board member the first contact was made. There are regularly scheduled meetings, but the board, administration, parents and faculty have regular informal conversations. When a new idea arises it is taken to the Administrative Chair. While she doesn't work on most of these projects personally, she loves the part of her job when once a week she reviews these ideas with a few key faculty and board members to see which are to be looked at further and what group is best to consider them. The school has a good feeling inside it and most of the time the people are smiling. If you listen carefully, you can often overhear some of these ideas being discussed by parents and others in the hallways.

The Faculty Meeting

The faculty meetings at teacher Z's school are an hour and 45 minutes long. The last half hour is dedicated to items of a logistical nature that involve the entire faculty and staff. Announcements are printed in a weekly listing, and the teachers know to read it and follow it. This has freed up a lot of time. Business decisions involving existing policy, and reasonable variations of them, are taken care of in a separate business meeting that only a few faculty members and administrative staff attend. This weekly business group is clear which areas they have the mandate to work within. The business group reports back regularly and openly, as requested by either the faculty or board. This has created a lot of trust in the business group's decision making. Those areas that require a new policy are sent on to the appropriate school meeting where the right people are present to develop the needed policy. Staff issues and the integrity of the teaching in the school as a whole are considered and discussed in a 3rd weekly meeting attended by the teachers who have their teaching in order and have been at the school for at least a year or two.

The above organization created the space for faculty meetings in which the teachers are doing real work together. While they often read something together that has inspired one or more faculty members, the key to the faculty study has more recently become the actual perceptive and conceptual insights of the faculty into their students at this school at this time. The faculty as whole has a fairly solid understanding of the three types of soul and choose to keep striving toward greater clarity – they work out of the spirit of the consciousness soul. There is time for people to really share their insights and then to listen to the resonances or differing views of others. There is not a need to try to convince, only a way of working where even to newcomers it is clear that these people are trying to understand. The key goal of every meeting is to try to understand what is happening. They work with courage, with openness, with clarity and with interest. This way of working has spilled over into the administrative aspects of the school and is now present in the board and parent workings and interactions. Most importantly the working together of adults is witnessed by the children and students in the school. When the above conditions occur, perhaps then we can say – now I am working in a Waldorf School. This is what becomes of a school striving to work out of the consciousness soul.

Final Thoughts

What it takes to become a thriving, contemporary and relevant school:

Individually

- *Be as open and courageous as you are able.* Speak what you need to say as openly and clearly as you are able. Encourage people to respond to your comments. If you are accurate and truthful, people will agree, if you are incorrect, determine if you were simply missing information or made an incorrect conclusion. If people disagree with you and you believe you are correct, ask them to point out where there is an error. If you are more committed to what is universally true and not your own opinion, there is little to be defensive about.
- *Don't be afraid to make mistakes.* It is usually what we state when we aren't 100% sure of ourselves that has the most valuable insights. All new insights begin with uncertainty.
- *Listen carefully to what others say.* If it is truthful, you will likely learn something. If what is being said is not accurate, you have an opportunity to practice a balance of courage in speaking up and tact in speaking the right way.
- *Hold what is universally true higher than your own personal comfort.* If you align yourself regularly with what is true beyond your own personal opinion, in time you will feel more connected to your surroundings and others.
- *Try to keep developing your level of understanding.* The truths of today may or may not be true for tomorrow. How will you know? Only by paying attention to what is happening right here, right now.

As A School

- *Create the conditions in meetings where every person feels free to speak.* Every person needs time to be heard and be understood, and the others must be free to ask questions of clarification. It may first appear that meetings will run longer. In fact, they don't because there is no need for repeating, and people can get to the heart of an issue even if everyone hasn't spoken yet. The truth can often be shared with just a few comments in this manner of working, and yes, sometimes it will take more comments.

- *Be really frugal in requiring paperwork or any other documentation that isn't truly essential. What is critical must be documented clearly, efficiently and on time. Don't generate any type of written reporting that isn't really being read or isn't essential.*
- *Think of the specific task to be taken away any time you consider adding a new task or new responsibility.*
- *Make working groups as small as possible, whether responsible for working out the details of a general agreement or for administering agreed policy. For the former, generally consider a group of three:*

The two people who can each represent the views that are furthest apart and a harmonious 3rd person is usually sufficient.

This small group should make a recommendation with its rationale to the larger group. If the small group missed something, the larger group should say so and offer to fix it quickly or send it back for another round of small group work.

- *Volunteerism isn't always the best way. Stating who you think is truly the best person(s) for a task is usually better. In forming small group, diversity is generally desirable.*
- *Develop a culture in which commitment to finding higher truths is the guiding force, not politics—a culture in which it isn't about getting things my way, it is about doing things in a better way.*
- ***Work REALLY hard to create a culture of face-to-face communication.*** This allows the activity to be more simply task oriented – it also makes it social.
- *If someone does something well, acknowledge it.*
- *If someone is struggling, help them to do it better, but out of their own activity as much as possible.*

Working out of the consciousness soul is not about having the right thought. It is about developing a means whereby the right type of perceiving and thinking (and then doing) is actually happening—occurring in each individual and collectively within the group.

Working out of the consciousness soul means you speak your opinion less – but at the same time, you must speak what you believe to be true, not just true for you, but universally true. What is universally true requires an even greater responsibility to speak.

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