

The Foundation Stone Meditation as a Living Evolution of The Human Self

Introduction to an ongoing group, working with the foundation of the Anthroposophical movement.

The true foundations of Anthroposophy lie in what individuals do to pursue the goals laid out in Rudolf Steiner's life-work. The harmonizing of thinking, feeling, and will towards a deeper engagement of our spirit with the needs of earth life is the road of awakening he offers. A road most strongly available through community.

The Foundation Stone Meditation combines the patterns of incarnate life with the patterns of spirit that create life. Inwardly it tracks the coming-into-being of the sense of self, (the day-time ego,) then its dissolution or death (as happens in both joy and sorrow) followed by its resurrection as a vehicle for Cosmic Truth in the world. The verses then connect this with patterns-of-Being in the spiritual cosmos itself: The work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to weave past, present and future into a basket for the creation of Love in all that we do; and the work of the Hierarchies of angelic beings that support and apply that creation.

Seven verses, weaving three themes, through two worlds, as a meditation takes a lot of holding. Maybe that is why Steiner rewove and first-gave these themes in seven shorter "Rhythms." Through the days of the week, these make clear the patterns that weave the whole basket. Giving us a chance to breathe, more easily, into the movements of the whole. These seven verses also provide an additional pattern of seven developmental stages such as can be seen spatially in the carved seals of the seven pillars of the first Goetheanum.

To simplify finding your place in this work I have prepared some commentary on each of the verses in the Rhythms, setting you up to slip into this river more gently and not demanding that you dive in alone. These are not in any way a replacement, merely an introduction, a buoyancy aid as you find your pace with them. They are also like piano practice in that we take apart the complete music to practice the hands individually, or the tricky bits alone, only putting them back together later.

Another seven-day rhythm that Rudolf Steiner gives is the 7 grounding exercises. Taken from chapter 4 of *How to Know Higher Worlds* these little-known steps help the soul to remain grounded and present in the daily social context. Steiner's aside is to 'have these in place before setting out on the path.' My experience is that grounding the soul is like holding the string of a kite, a continual requirement. Without grounding, the kite/soul, flaps around with every breeze in place of rising strongly towards the light. I have prepared some commentary to assist members to bring this chapter into the 21st century and recommend that you work with this set as well as the Foundation Stone Rhythms.

The days of the week are a breathing and developmental rhythm in themselves, a miniature experience of the cosmic breathing of our eternal being from incarnation into pure spirit-being, between lives, and back into embodiment again. Both engage us in the seven planets, as the day-names both hide and reveal.

Birth occurs out of the Moon-sphere energies. The emergence of the light, and our earthly community of spirit beings are called upon in the Monday rhythm. Tuesday takes us to Mars – leaping from the first-'planet'-out-from-Earth to first-planet-out-from-Sun – Mars takes up what Moon gave us, energising and balancing the thrust to develop.

Wednesday bring Mercury's influence. Building on this progress with the energies of the second-planet-out-from-Earth. Communicative skills are tops here.

Thursday is the centre-point, three days before and three after. Jupiter, second-planet-out-from-Sun brings expansive generosity as gifts to this stage.

Friday we begin with the third- planet-out-from-Earth and find ourselves immersed in Venus's gifts of focus, sensuality, gentleness and more.

Saturday takes us to the furthers child-of-the-Sun. The Ring of Structure that helps us hold everything in place.

Sun-day is the last day of the week and resolves us into the heart of the matter with the call to bring our whole self to the *heart, head and hands* of creating goodness.

Apart from this opening and closing, the other five days have three verses. Each one a perspective on that day's stage of the process seen through the lens of: Birth, death and resurrection; Will, feeling, thinking; Father Son and Spirit.

Some have formed workgroups to support this ladder-into-Rhythms. Each has to do quiet inner work on these week/day rhythms, and follow this up with a little study. But doing so now adds soul-life to the group as well as to the self. We find our Way more fruitfully, then because of our commitment to, and sharing in the group. I can package the work into weekly segments that a group could take at their own pace, requesting the next package when they are ready. The full set is designed around 5 stages, 5 weeks or as fast/slow as you want to take it.

Combining study, daily inner work and offering one's efforts up can become like taking a daily dietary supplement, 'vitamins for soul-health.' Supporting us to penetrate further into Steiner's gift -- linking the Human Soul with the Sun of Christ, the fire of the Universe that brings Love to all Being.

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***1:1 consultation/coaching** on any aspect of your inner work and development, in the light of the structure of Self-in-the-cosmos, that Steiner makes so clear, is an additional part of what I offer. Coaching naturally assumes that the coached may actually be more skilful than the coach. The coach is familiar with the ground being covered, and the technique as a method of support, but the one seeking coaching is the leader.*

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Monday – Light Divine

Light Divine

Sun of Christ

The spirits of the elements hear this

In East, and West, and North and South.

May Human Beings hear it

Light cannot be seen. We see only what light shines upon. Though it pours through the universe, 'space' remains dark. The attention of the Gods is on us, their light shines upon us, illuminating the space around our bodies with a light that cannot be seen. If we amplify this light with our own loving attention, it then shines upon others. Even though the light itself cannot be seen, those who come into our circle glow.

Following the planetary rhythms that also illuminate our weekly cycle we can see how poetic this issue is by how the moon is lit-up by the sun. We receive the moon's light because of how well she reflects the light. We can shine into the lives of others somewhat like the moon without trying to be the sun for them.

The Sun is the heart of our planetary system. It is the rise and fall of each day, the force of love that conjures all of life, warming the cold ground till the plants spring forth.

Like the heart, the sun is a still centre, around which all revolves. If the sun did not rise and shine upon us each day, no life would be possible. This reveals the true nature of Christ. The Cosmic Christ is the I AM that lights up in the human heart, through whose love all life comes into being. This love, this warmth of heart is the basis of all being. We connect with this Love, Source of all Being, in stillness.

All around us Nature is aware of this. All beings in nature know that the sun is their heart/lover. They know that all that moves, and grows, owes its being to the sun. The spirits that move within all of this know, too, that this sun-centre lodges in the human heart. Watching us from the periphery, like a circle around us, they are waiting for us awaken, also to this Christ/Sun/Centre within, and become the Love that shines for all being.

Today's Rhythm describes the light, everywhere. I feel it particularly as a dome, like the sky, beyond which is the night-darkness, points of light alone. Though that two

is woven through, everywhere, with the light of consciousness. Everything is consciousness.

Then we see the sun, maybe as an eye, gazing down upon us, or maybe as a brother/sister, holding out Love to our heart – gift AND example.

Then we see spirit(s) all around us, in every corner of the world, forming a cross.

Then we see ourselves at/as the centre.

Beyond our dome of light the dark universe is filled with stars.

Our radiant Heart is the very source of all this light, that is gifted to us.

From every point in our periphery Spirit is caring for our awakening.

May we all hear this.

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Tuesday – progression

Human Soul!
You live in the Limbs
For the Father-Spirit of the Heights holds sway
In depths of worlds, begetting life.

Human Soul
You live in the beat of heart and lung
For the Christ will in the encircling around holds sway
In the rhythms of the worlds, Blessing the soul

Human soul
You live in the resting head
For the Spirit's Universal Thoughts hold sway
In the beings of all worlds, Craving for light

Oh Man, Know thyself!
(Oh Spirit-of-the-Human-Soul, Discover what you truly are)

In the Depths of this, our world, the Father Spirit begets life.

What am I, thus begotten?

This very question is a coming-into-being of my Self. The attention I pay to this question highlights that what I am – at this stage, anyway – is just this: the point-of-attention. Where I place my attention, there am "I."

My coming-into-being in the depths is this: I am present in my limbs. Embodied, is what I Am. Why? – Simply because the great I-process of the universal heights has brought me into this 'being.'

This begins the 'poetry' of this whole image of existence. The fact of my being aware is a weaving between the greater I and this little point-of-awareness, me. The first verse directs my point-of-attention to my experience of being embodied, then to my less-condensed awareness of being within this Father-process. This weaving from centre to periphery and back is a key element in all spiritual work. The spirits of the elements know this, and seek to weave with us to assist in our self-creation.

The second verse picks up this movement and turns it into a pulse. This "I" lives within the repeated movement of itself, heart and lung, rise and fall of breath and of sun and stars. Time becomes circular, becomes rhythm, becomes blessing, bestowing grace upon our flow-of-attention and all that builds within us from that process.

This whole meditation, even meditation itself, both are about becoming aware and making space for all that is happening within us. The Presence of Self, the Pulse of the Universe, both come to rest when we have the stillness to notice them happening. Coming to rest, in the head that rests upon our active body, does not mean ceasing, it means that the birthing, growing, self is no longer pulled around by the storms of life but sits within the glow of the process itself. To come to stillness, within the resting head and make space for the Spirit's World-Thoughts to shine upon us, even to shine within us, is the third stage. In this resting head we can bring this incipient Self into harmony with the Cosmic Process.

This second cycle of the Rhythms, for Tuesday, does not yet mention the self that we call I. Building on Monday's call to be aware of the light, the warm sun-centre, and the call from all around to awaken, it pictures for our point-of-attention, the weaving process: Down from above; Circling around; From below, seeking upwards. Imagine a needle and thread following that pattern. Step by step the thread-of-consciousness weaves a new being.

How does this relate to Mars? To the swelling and bursting of the seed? How do we understand this as the second stage in all patterns of development? How does becoming familiar with this strengthen my ability to flow with that second stage?

Day by day these verses assist and encourage us to weave this deeper and deeper into a fuller and fuller Presence in the World. In this way the Gods achieve their aims, creating Love in Matter through the Human Being.

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Wednesday – progression

Human Soul!
Practise spirit recalling
Your own I comes into being
In the I of God

Human Soul!
Practise spirit Awareness
Unite your own I
With the I of the World

Human soul!
Practise spirit vision
Bestow the Light of Cosmic Being
Upon your I, for free and active willing

...and today, the "I."

Coming into being – Expanding to unite itself with the world – receiving the light of Cosmic Being.

The practise of conscious memory, recalling – calling – ourselves into being

The practise of conscious Presence-Awareness, expanding the self into one-with-the-world

The practise of conscious vision, bestowing light on our creativity.

Within the pulse of Cosmic Being, that ebb and flow of processes so much vaster than my own consciousness, I find myself appearing, growing, and becoming light / enlightened.

When first it finds itself, the I wishes to grow, expand, discover itself in assertion. This under the guidance of the Father spirit in the heights.

Slowly it grows large enough to lose itself. Either in ecstasy or in catastrophe the self loses identity, leaves behind what it identified as. Jesus goes to the cross, either deliberately or under the coercion of the law. Either way, his death reveals the Christ.

The act of offering up our personal will, opinions, or desires: – not my will but thine (oh higher guides) be done, leaves the heaviness of our nascent ego behind and allows the Spirit of the Cosmic Thinking to illuminate the rebirth of our sense-of-self. The Cosmic Thinking IS the spirit of wholeness, the harmonic-structure of the universe. When we lift up our thoughts, feelings and decisions to this spirit, and open ourselves for imaginations, inspiration and intuition, we are, then, bestowing the Light of Cosmic Being upon our own I.

As a third step in a weekly rhythm of becoming this verse reminds our growing human self of the patterns that flow through our becoming. Mercury is my guide to expansion into my potential. The leaves of my soul-life burgeon forth. The father's Will, as above, so below. A weekly visit to this shrine refreshes, in my soul, a willingness and ability to flow with the endless growth-cycle of birth, death and resurrection that my everyday-self goes through. The more sweetly I can flow with this the easier life becomes. The more willingly I engage with this, through these spirit-filled practices, the richer-in-spirit my self becomes, serving the whole world by becoming its best potential.

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Thursday – weaving happens

Human Soul!
Your own I comes into being
In the I of God
And you will truly live
In human all-world being.

Human Soul!
Unite your own I
With the I of the World
And you will truly feel
In the human soul's creating.

Human soul!
Bestow the Light of Cosmic Being
Upon your I, for free and active willing
And you will truly think
In human spirit depths

The sense of movement in this is huge.

Let me start with pointing out echoes of Tuesday's Father-Spirit in the Heights, and my own I, small and low within His immensity. This focal point of 'I' making it possible for me to live, deeply and truly.

Within the 'World-All Being of Man' – This takes me back into the heights. From the Father, that is All, I arise, here and small, finding myself within the All. --- My focus is led from a vastness, into this experience of self-hood, then woven again into a vastness. Roll with that image for a while.

Then the call to expand this point of "I" into the World I. To flow-with those moments when time stops and I lose myself, in joy or fear. Flowing out into the "Way the World Is," feels horizontal by comparison with the Father/"I" process above. Just as I am fully expanded into the World I, comes an image that brings me back to centre. "You will truly feel" from being lost in the World I, to the subtle moving of my own heart and lung. Amidst this soul-weaving my human feelings become a newly creative force. Expanding to the horizons and falling back into me, - the ebb and flow of joy and fear re-enliven the self my Father-processes, and Memory-processes made so firm. Real experience softens me.

Within the Son-god's encircling around I am supported to expand and contract without the ultimate loss of self. The father-born I learns to die, as nature dies, all around us, only to be reborn.

"Bestow the light of cosmic wisdom" and tomorrow's "In the beings of all worlds, craving for light" image the responsive gesture to the Father's top-down embrace. Here the active principle is at the centre-bottom and the answers we reach for come from above. Yet the final line "In human-spirit depths" comes full circle to touch on the image on verse one. This is a gentle hint at the extraordinary relationship between embodiment and wisdom, between the will and the thinking, between the nascent ego gifted to us through recall, and the enlightened spirit-self that arises as a resurrected self, lit by Cosmic Thinking, once we accede to losing the separated ego.

Thursday is the key point. 3 days behind me, 3 in front. The Grounding Exercise for today is responsibility for what flows into and out of my soul life. In the menorah image of the 7-branched candlestick this centre point is the one that touches the ground and rises higher than the others. "The world is All centre" said Giordano Bruno, and Steiner reiterates that in many ways. Both in space and time the centre is where we always are. In the lords prayer this is food/nourishment that we receive "superabundantly in all the ages of our lives" as Steiner put it in his transliteration of the Lords Prayer. Zeus/Jupiter is the Lord of Superabundance. Can you feel this power in today's rhythm?

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Friday – Craving for Light

Human Soul !
Practise Spirit Recollection
For the Father spirit in the Heights holds sway
In depths of worlds
Begetting Life

Human Soul !
Practise Spirit Mindfulness
For the Christ Will in the encircling-round holds sway
In the rhythms of the world
Blessing the Soul

Human Soul !
Practise Spirit Vision
For the Spirit's Universal Thoughts hold sway
In the beings of all worlds, Craving for Light

We create ourselves within the God's creating. Far from being a finished being, we humans are a process-of-becoming. The Gods, Father, Son, and Spirit are the space within which we are creating ourselves.

Practise spirit recalling *because* the Father, from the heights, begets life in the depths.

Practise spirit mindfulness/sensing/awareness, *because* the circling rhythms of the Christ bring life into form, repeatedly blessing us.

Practise spirit vision/ beholding for the *very reason* that I, in my depths, am imploring light from this sacred spirit of wholeness that calls me into being, into harmony with the Gods.

To enact these calls, is to open myself to this flow, through which I become more of, closer to, what I am offered, and destined, by the Gods, to become.

Amidst the turmoils of life lie these calls. Despite all distractions the soul is invited, without cease, to follow the deeds of the gods within their own soul-practice, and thus-doing, accept those gifts.

For the Gods are holding out their love to us, hoping we, for all our freedom will choose to accept.

Venus is Friday's ruler. The imploring sensuality of this message and the intensity of the huntress within it, both bear witness to Aphrodite/Venus and to Freya, Odin's wife and queen of Valhalla. Be aware of her gifts in this step of 'flowering and fading,' as you experience this step, weekly.

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Saturday – Spirits of Strength

Human Soul !

Practise Spirit Recollection

Spirits of Strength - *Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones:*

Let this ring-out from the heights,

What in the depths is echoed

Human Soul !

Practise Spirit awareness

Spirits of Light: *Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exhusiai*

Let this be fired from the East

What in the West is given form.

Human Soul !

Practise Spirit beholding.

Spirits of Soul: *Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi*

Let this be prayed in the depths

What in the heights is answered

Nine hierarchies of Beings, three levels of three. Each one supporting those below them to fulfil their purpose, setting the example that Christ showed us in the washing of the feet, they bow to serve our becoming.

Each of these levels of being is also the very substance of vast cosmic processes. In truth they are beyond our comprehension, yet they show themselves in our world, where we see them as space, time, and relationship, or as past, present and future. When we use the terms Father, Son and Spirit we allude to these processes that weave every aspect of our existence, yet they remain beyond our understanding. Heads were not made for this.

That which we take to be our soul is constantly being woven by the actions of these beings. When we make a decision, in freedom, theirs is the substance that supports that. When we take up an action, theirs is the strength that completes it in and for us.

Theirs is the call: "Oh Human Soul." Theirs is the space we create when we meditate. Memories that arise, joys that we feel, thoughts that occur when we seek them: All are gifts of, the very substance of these beings.

The gifts of these hierarchies are integral to our being. Just as air flows through me, and water is the main part of my body. Just like warmth keeps me alive, the Being-nature of these sublime beings flows through us, engendering the very experiences we identify as our own. The fact of experience itself, is in them. The flow of life is through their gifts. The very sense of self arises through their flow within our spirit-nature.

This penultimate prayer in this meditation is the grateful acknowledgement that our actions are their actions. Their call to being is our route to the life that makes everything worthwhile.

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Sunday – Practice for Good

Human Soul !
 Practise Spirit Recollection
 Practise Spirit Mindfulness
 Practise Spirit Vision
 That good may become
 What, from our hearts, we would found
 and from our Heads, direct
 with Focussed Will

You might consider these 8 lines as seven held within the first one. This whole rhythm of seven that we are following is held within these lines. Sun is the central force in all our world. Sun (today's ruler) holds the other six principles within Him/Herself. Like seed holds the entire plant, body and process, so Sunday is the day we balance the other six stages of our development. Once we see this we see "That Good may Become" as the central line/principle. The rooted Jovial energy of the whole pattern. – What else do any of us want?

We, Human beings are the seed-hope of the cosmos. All their energy has been put into this development. Did you know that DNA in an apple seed is scrambled, plant a Braeburn apple seed, the resultant tree will have a completely new type of apple. Anything from a tiny bitter wild to a sweet and buttery new variety. We human beings are such a wildcard in the cosmic mix.

At this stage in the cosmic progress the problems of Human Freedom are more in the news than the gifts. These problems arise because we are out of harmony with the cosmos - Freedom gives us that. The gift of Fire burns things.

Religions often ask us to dampen our fire, draw back, engage only contemplatively. Or to obey the statutes of church and law so as not to cause problems. The left hand of politics also demands 'conformity for the greater good.'

Anthroposophy asks that we step into the fire within us and align this with the Cosmic flame, the I AM of the entire universe, the Christ. When we act purely from the Holy Spirit all our deeds harmonize with the Greater Good, even if they

cause waves when we act. Heroes such as Nelson Mandela or Joan of Arc show this.

Today's, closing rhythm of the Foundation Stone, celebrates the three-stage fire of becoming a self, aligning that self with the world, then filling the space-between with the existing cosmic patterns. This celebration consists of affirming the good that Humans can do from this space of three-fold connection.

Mostly we live, not in ourselves but in our desires. That is to say our soul looks only outward. What the soul wants, both in what comes towards it and in what it achieves, become the focus. Whereas the tools by which we achieve both of these things, and the self that makes the deep choices, are ignored.

Those tools are the powers of the soul. This self is the True I Am

When we attune these powers of the soul to the Cosmic Love-Centre-of-All-Being, the Christ-I-AM, they become a tool for the Universe to achieve Her/His aims.

Practise Spirit Recollection	-	with Focussed Will
Practise Spirit Mindfulness	-	directed by our head
Practise Spirit Vision	-	See from our hearts
That good may become		
What, from our hearts, we would found	-	clear vision
and from our Heads, direct	-	mindfully
with Focussed Will	-	recalling ourselves within

This is the purpose of the Foundation Stone meditation: To attune the powers of our soul to the spiritual aims of our own purposes in coming here, to this life.

.....That Good may become