

YOUTH SECTION - SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

JUNE 2023

CO-WORKERS' GATHERING



A REVIEW

ABOUT THE GATHERING AND OUR INTENTIONS



Traditionally, members of the global Youth Section meet in person once every two years to work together. After a few years of social and travel restrictions due to the pandemic, as well as the transition in the leadership of the Youth Section, finally, new forces were gathered to make a new call.

There are countless young people who feel connected to anthroposophy and who are working in anthroposophically inspired initiatives around the world, trying to connect their university studies with anthroposophy or to find a vocation that can fully engage them. In their hearts, in their will, there is a drive to work toward spiritual knowledge and renewal in themselves, their localities, and globally. It is a task of our Section to support this, to see to it that these glowing embers are not snubbed out but are fanned to brighter flame by association, deepening, and collaboration.

"We want to find a form for mutual and clear affiliation and connection with the Youth Section for all individuals and groups who want to be active in a similar way. Moreover, the International Youth Section hopes to find out how best it can serve as the heart and lungs of all affiliated individuals and groups."

From the invitation letter.

"Connection...to feel, by the end of the gathering, that even though we're all going back to our corners of the world, we are part of a whole. That the spiritual being of our group, which will be formed at the gathering, will continue to hold us, and work with and through us."

An intention - Rosemary, co-worker.

In order for possibilities to become real we will need one another. It is a time to become more conscious of our tasks, of what is living in our hearts and will, and what can light up between us as possible collaborations and connections in the coming years. We will need to be more connected and we want to create a variety of ways for this to happen.

During our co-workers' gathering, we engaged in hands-on work on the Youth Section house, various artistic activities, singing, dancing, meal sharing, and facilitated discussions on crucial themes that concern young people, today. Setting intentions for the future was one of our main focuses along with a longer schedule of items that are better described later in this report.

The Organising Team.

CO-WORKERS

About 45 young people coming from 5 different continents, came together at the Goetheanum for the gathering. The diversity of socio-cultural backgrounds that came to work together is one of the highlights of our event. All these young people are engaged uniquely and authentically with Anthroposophy and other young people around the globe. Those who were able to attend this year are internationally connected and supportive of each other's initiatives and locally active in the following locations: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Ecuador, Germany, Georgia, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Peru, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, USA, UK and, Ukraine.

Each group is very particular in its identity, which makes our network incredibly diverse. Events, International conferences, Study groups, anthroposophical-oriented educational programs, and practice spaces for vocational and self-development, are some of the initiatives carried out by our worldwide Youth Section.

The simple peer-to-peer exchange of challenges, concerns, questions, and achievements became one of the reliable sources that created safe spaces for learning and finding new opportunities to strengthen our local and global work. The sharing of different understandings of the world in the service of working together revealed the potential and richness that can arise to shape a common future. Jacinta, co-worker.

"For the first time in my life, I had the opportunity to meet face to face with some of the most sincere young people on earth at this time who are committed to working with anthroposophy in their very different cultural and geographical contexts. They came from over 21 different countries! There was a palpable sense that we were committing to one another in support of our shared futures, and the future of anthroposophy on earth. We had the experience that nationality was able to be dropped in favor of the warm spirit of a truly global Youth Section for Anthroposophy, where each of our local initiatives would feel its meaning and find its support in a significant world context. The gathering implanted great confidence in me that anthroposophy has the possibility to not only sustain itself but to manifest in unprecedented ways in the 21st century, and respond to its unique ecological, technological, and socio-political challenges."

Gareth, co-worker.



"I was astonished meeting so many young, wise of heart and committed co-workers around the world burning with the same flame of Anthroposophy as we are. Although we are only 5 young people in Latvia holding this flame and sometimes it feels a little bit too lonely, here in our gathering I felt that we all together are so much, much more - a world wide web of light." Lāsma, co-worker.

To have a good start on the warm summer days in Dornach, we had an early breakfast in the Youth Section's house. All of our meals were served there, and the rest of the program was in a big hall in the Holzhaus, a beautiful wooden building on the Goetheanum Campus.

We started each day with a 15 min. **movement session**. Playing games, learning dances, getting into our bodies, and arriving in space. After that, Nathaniel Williams gave each day a 30 min contribution: the **Focus** sessions. Knowledge, thoughts, and insights were shared on the following topics: 'The spirit of the Youth Section and the School for Spiritual Science', 'Technology and the digital revolution', and 'Alternative ways of association'.

Following the Focus session, we created time to sing together! We learned songs from all corners of the world. These will all be collected in a songbook for future Youth Section gatherings. A couple of co-workers were asked to host a **'Future session'**, where they could share their living questions on issues that are important for the Youth Section's network in the coming years: 'Affiliation', 'Communication & Connection', and 'Between Life and Form' were the three themes of these sessions. After a short tea, coffee, carrots, and crackers break, **workshops** were facilitated by co-workers on individual topics of interest and expertise.

Our lunches for 45 people were heated on a big gas stove outside of the Youth Section House. The weather mostly allowed us to enjoy our meals outside! As well, we hoped to meet everyone's needs for rest, action, socializing, work, and creating by having 2.5 hours of open space after lunch. During this open timeframe, a group would already prepare dinner, other people would take a mop and clean our common space, and others engaged with a service project in the Youth Section House. Cracks in the walls were plastered and windows repaired. A wonderful experience of community living.

PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES

We all met again at the Holzhaus for coffee, tea, cookies, and fruit afterward, and then went into the **'Global Perspectives'**. These sessions were created so that all groups could share their work as well as the questions they were bringing. Each person present at the gathering was able to share some words about their work, questions, challenges, and opportunities they are facing. The themes were *'Spiritual Work'*, *'Culture of Encounter'*, and *'Practical Challenges and Opportunities'*.

Finally, dinner and then the evenings were filled with different activities. A walk to the Dorneck Castle, a lecture from Peter Selg held in the context of the St. John's Conference at the Goetheanum, a eurythmy performance as well as an open mic where people shared a broad palette of music, opera singing, storytelling, improvisation with the audience, and much more.

Gabriele, co-worker.

"One of my favorite moments from the Co-workers' Gathering was the session on "Culture of Encounter", moderated by Jacinta Gorchs and Gabriele Nys. The activity started with us resting peacefully on the chairs, without knowing what was going to happen. The girls carefully took us by our hands to a certain place in the room. Everyone was quiet. We opened our eyes and we all saw a nice circle and lots of curious faces.



After everyone was around the circle and we got the strings, we had to imagine our path and start walking toward it. This is how our strings got tangled. Our task was to untangle them and go back to our original places without letting go of the string. It was a difficult activity, but after it finished I went back to my chair and felt a very deep feeling of peace and happiness.

While I was sitting with everything that just happened inside of my being, I had a clear vision of how this activity portrayed karma and God's work. Sometimes I find myself doing things without knowing why- I linked it with the beginning of the activity. Even though I didn't know what was going to happen, I had trust and walked with a peaceful heart. I linked this moment to the moment in life when I started to follow my dreams and desires and found myself in the middle of situations that felt overwhelming. When we started to find ways to untangle and go back to our initial places I had a strong feeling that I will have to act like in my own life when I have to solve a problem: be present, think, use my will, and find

proper ways to work with other people. After we got back to our places, I was so happy to see what an amazing experience I had with the people that tried hard as I did to finish the task and also found joy and meaning in it. I linked that moment to the revelation of my own life actions, relationships, and tasks when I know clearly in my heart that things were supposed to happen this way."

lasmina, co-worker.





SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE

The recent co-worker gathering at the Goetheanum was the first that I was able to participate in since I arrived as the new Section leader. The gathering was prepared with co-workers from around the world. An arc of intentionality was at the foundation of the event. The first days were held in such a way that we could hear everyone's voices in a variety of contexts; through presentations, panels, games, and songs. Allowing the diversity in the group to come to the fore naturally spoke to an innate longing: "The human soul – especially when young- is naturally drawn to and attempts to unite with, that which is foreign to it." (R.S. GA 217a) Allowing the desire to connect non-nationally, around common deeper challenges and ideals, was a first step. Through this, by the end, we hoped to have enough awareness of one another to frame new intentions we could realistically carry together in the coming years. On Sunday morning our cardinal question was:

"What can we take up as a non-national, global Section that will not weaken, but strengthen the local efforts around the world?"

The main response was:

Articulating and deepening our understanding of the spiritual work and culture particular to our Section through common inner work and study.

Developing a Cosmopolitan Fund (Youth Access and Project Fund) dedicated to working with finances collectively, in order to support participation of diverse youth groups in events and programs. This involves requesting support from country societies,

individuals, and foundations, to give to a fund not dedicated to national-local support, but directed where there is need.

Shaping the Section newsletter(s), website, social media, and publications so that youth groups from around the world feel the Goetheanum works as a heart of a global spiritual movement in which they see their unique contributions reflected and through which they receive meaning.

Convene annual co-worker gatherings, hosted by different youth groups, to deepen the work and maintain connection.

Agree to a simple process of affiliation for youth groups:

1. Regular ongoing work with 14-35 year olds related to anthroposophy
2. Regular contact with the network through communications and the team at the Goetheanum
3. Annual prudent contribution to the Youth Access and Project Fund (non-national youth-led fund promoting the Sections work around the world)

At the point of this writing, at the beginning of August, I am glad to report that all these intentions are in movement and at different stages of development. I am hopeful as to how these efforts will unfold in the coming years.

-Nathaniel Williams, leader of the Youth Section,
Goetheanum



"The youth gathering helped me gain a new perspective.

This new perspective gives me many opportunities to explore different ways to solve and encounter the many challenges in our youth group in Tanzania.

The networks that I've been able to establish with different youths around the world during the gathering are something that I will cherish the most, the friendship and togetherness as youth in Anthroposophy are outstanding and so I personally would like to thank the organizers for such a wonderful establishment "

Stacy, co-worker.

"A picture that would recreate the gathering will look like a sky full of stars that are distant at first, but all of a sudden they converge and create a beautiful light dance.

It made me really happy to see people reconnecting with one another or even some of them meeting for the first time in person in Dornach after working together online. Also, I experienced this as well and I really enjoyed how during the week we combined work with the time for getting to know each other. It is always inspiring to find out and see what people from other places are doing and creating together."

Ilinca, co-worker.

"It was incredible to see how the 4 days together helped in touching lives through connections, shared challenges in the respective Youth Section of each country, shared meals, cooking together, cleaning/preparing, singing together, dancing our way through the day, and waking up to the light of the sun with inspiration, shared knowledge and wisdom.

To witness each one in their own individuality carrying the impulse of a community of Youth and questions that touched the heart, soul, and mind of each one. The space was filled with presence and cocreation allowing for learning and development to emerge as we progressed.

Exchanges filled our hearts and will to re-energize to new possibilities, and intentions of how can we be the best versions of ourselves to be the instrument for warmth, love, and nurturing.

An image that emerged is each one carrying the fire of their will to light the new fire that formed in the middle." Avani Shah, co-worker.

"We already entered a new realm of possibilities and needs as human beings and world. But, will we find our individual path to the consciousness that can lead us to new social forms? I feel that we as youth are carrying the will and impulse of the future. It still has to be received and polished to an understanding, clarity, and strength. Therefore, I see that the youth gathering was a very strong call for action that we did not see before. Despite the ending agenda of the world, we must bring the beginning."

Leonards, co-worker.



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