



Anthroposophical Society PORTLAND BRANCH

Newsletter

June 2020

On a Michaelic Attitude

By Bert Chase

As nature, as Natura, goes through her 'great breath,' all of humanity accompanies her. Across the northern hemisphere she breathes out life into spring. Across the south she breathes life into its autumn rest. Our own soul life accompanies her; quickening with life's awakening, turning toward its inwardness with life's waning.

In recent months this life process of the earth has been accompanied by another. Humanity has witnessed the advance of a mysterious, a secretive, presence. We have watched as it has extended itself, at first slowly, and then with ever increasing speed into every human community.

In an effort to understand this sweeping shadow we have become overwhelmed by the face it presents. On a daily basis we are given constant updates on its relentless expansion. We are told of the thousands of people infected; continuous revisions of its effects on humanity. It is as if, by overwhelming ourselves with its ever-changing footprints, we come closer to understanding it. Yet the more information we are confronted with the less we seem to know of its nature - the nature of this enigma that with unwavering insistence seeks us. How do we see it, beyond the surface of all the facts about it? How do we penetrate through the avalanche of information to what is secreted behind?

Pondering these questions, what confronts us ever and again is the doorway through which it has come. Images arise of wild animals - foxes torn from nature, held in small cages and sold for human consumption. The image demands attention. When given this attention, this attending to reveals our fractured relationship with nature. We are faced with the immeasurable suffering humanity inflicts on the animal kingdom. Our link with nature, our living connection with her, is shattered. We see her as a resource, as a commodity, whose sole purpose has become to meet our collective need to consume.

As we consider the wild animal, caged, sympathy for this specific animal awakens

in us. But what is our connection with the being whose outer manifestation is this individual animal? A living relationship with those divine beings who reveal themselves through nature is lost for us.

Similarly, how can we come closer to understanding the advancing hidden presence that overwhelms us? What is it that, with such insistence, seeks to merge with humanity, using the caged fox to do so? To approach these questions we must consider something fundamental about this entity we call 'virus'. This leads to the mystery of life itself for this presence is not yet fully alive. This not-yet-living entity is forever seeking what its own nature cannot provide. It exists at the threshold of life, unable to enter in. This is profoundly significant, an enigma whose evolution has not yet reached the kingdoms of life yet, having a fundamental need to become living. In this powerful unresolved tension this

entity forever seeks to merge, to become one with living beings, specifically living beings who breathe. It seeks to unite itself with organs of respiration, disrupting breathing, even inhibiting it to the point that life stops. Its insatiable need destroys what it most seeks.

The foundations of life for all sentient beings - for all animals, for human beings - is the gift of breath, a miraculous process wholly dependent upon the earth's green mantle. Without this cosmos of plants and its transpiration of oxygen, we could not breathe. As with our voracious consumption of the animal kingdom we devour the plant kingdom, choosing to not see its essential place in life's whole fabric.

Yet, this invasion of our breathing goes beyond the body - into our soul life, into our spiritual life. The soul breathing that sustains our very humanity is crippled. The communion from soul to soul, so essential for human community life, has been imprisoned. This shadowy entity has impinged itself into our 'social breathing' that nourishes our life of soul where our self is mirrored back to us. But this impingement goes further, not only insinuating itself into our

physical and soul processes, but extending into our capacity to sense into that realm beyond the senses, to open ourselves to those spiritual beings who would support us. A collective anxiety shrouds us, locking us into the surface of the world, the outer facts. We have stopped breathing.

How can we cultivate a way of comprehending what this being would press into every aspect of human life? How can we cultivate the capacities needed to meet



Rudolf Steiner working on his group sculpture "The Representative of Man"



the ever-changing challenges that humanity is facing?

Over the past year the Goetheanum Leadership and the Council of Country Societies – the circle of General Secretaries and Country Representatives – have carried this question in a specific way. We have asked ourselves how can we cultivate a stance, an attitude, that can meet the escalating challenges facing humanity, facing all life? The question has become, how can we cultivate an attitude toward world events that is Michaelic? What is a Michaelic Attitude and how can I embody it?

One doorway into this question might be to turn to the portrayals of Michael through time. How have artists sought the essential gesture, the mood of Michael, that can model for us a specifically Michaelic relationship to the world? What can arise out of such observations is the recognition of certain consistent elements in these depictions; the forward gaze, the direct connection with the Dragon, the right foot stepping forward. Pondering these layers of images, what can rise up as an integration of them all is the extraordinary great work of Rudolf Steiner – the Representative of Humanity. Though familiar to many of us, this great figure comes alive in a new way when we seek to inwardly experience, to embody its primary elements. With the representations of Michael as our guide, we can practice building up within ourselves its three significant aspects - the gaze, the heart, the step forward. How can these three practices guide us?

We turn to the countenance that Rudolf Steiner felt was so critical for humanity that he rose from his sickbed to work on in his final days. Its gaze turns neither right nor left, above or below, but directly ahead – a beholding that both sees the sense's horizon and perceives what lies beyond it. In the 1923 Michael Festival in Vienna, Rudolf Steiner points to the power of our gaze. He describes the intense longing of all of nature to be truly seen, truly beheld. This is not a looking at the surface of the visible world. It is a perceiving through the sense's surfaces into reality. He makes it clear that this true beholding cannot come from the head alone.

Attending to the Representative's whole gesture, what becomes apparent is that

this gaze into reality is informed by a delicate rhythmic sensing of the heart. Beautiful harmonic pulsation weaves out from the heart into the outstretched arms. These extended limbs become organs of perception that 'see into' the two beings who would insinuate themselves destructively into humanity. We can sense how the Representative inwardly 'listens into' these great challengers of humanity. This 'inward hearing' becomes a deeper, fuller perceiving of the inner nature of these two beings.

So too is it for us. Can we so 'listen into' what is working throughout the world to impinge itself into us that we begin to 'hear into' it, begin to have an intuitive understanding of it? In this inward listening-perceiving, is our own heart awakened in such a way that we practice sensing beyond the sense's horizon? We send out what resides at the heart of our being; we truly feel, and this true feeling becomes a breathing into the activity of those beings who work both into nature and into us. This weaving heart breathing is central to, fundamental to the Michael- Representative of Humanity attitude that reveals the inner being of sense phenomena. We experience this heart breathing aesthetically. What flows rhythmically across the threshold of the senses awakens within us as Beauty. This aesthetic awakening informs us that we are perceiving what is True.

Can we comprehend out of the practice of 'heart-beholding', that breathes into what lives within and beyond sense activity, the clarity with which the Representative of Humanity is then able to stride confidently forward? There is focused power in this step, a stepping into what is unknown. All that we have to guide us is trust in what can sound into us out of a loving attention to the world. We can then act and our engagement can be affirmed, or not. We can recognize this affirmation when we see that what arises aligns itself with what is Good.

Turning to the world, to the far reaching impacts that the advance of this mysterious presence has had, can we recognize that what confronts us is the call to meet the worlds, both seen and unseen, with love-filled attention - to truly behold, to give ourselves the time to fully open our senses to the world. To truly feel, to send into our sense's revelations our essential humanity, our own warmth. To truly act, to step through our anxiety, our unease, and take the good next step. Are these three a stepping into the practice of embodying, in whatever small way that we can, this Michaelic mood - this open, fully conscious Michaelic 'being fully with' – this Michaelic Attitude?

As humanity has withdrawn from the world it has built for itself, taking all that we want from nature's kingdoms to do so, the streets of our cities have fallen silent. What we see as our great accomplishments, our monuments to ourselves, lie dormant. And in this stillness nature has stirred. The songs of birds seem more acute. Across the world the universe of animals has come out of its hiding. Boar roam the streets of Barcelona. Coyotes have quickly expanded into San Francisco. Jaguars, the most reclusive of animals, leave their forest shelter to prowl through seemingly abandoned Mexican towns. Equally secretive African lions rest unperturbed on empty roadways. Across western Europe, foxes move stealthily back onto ground that once was theirs.

With warm regards,
Bert Chase



Bert Chase is an architect living in Vancouver, Canada. He currently serves as the General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada.

'A Multi-talented Micronutrient'; Silicon and Atherosclerotic Disease

by Dr. Lisa Del Alba

The main features of atherosclerosis in a human being include thickening of the inner lining of blood vessels, inflammation, and vascular calcification; all of which are considered a consequence to vascular injury. This thickening, swelling, and hardening of the blood vessels lead to a loss of their elasticity, flexibility and resilience, and can even impede the flow of blood. While this process represents an unhealthy 'building up' activity in response to stress, it is possible to respond to stress in a different way. According to anthroposophical medical understanding, the human etheric body offers healthy upbuilding forces. Both human beings and plants have individual etheric bodies as part of their bodily organization. An 'etheric body' may be compared to a 'body of formative forces' and unfolds its activity primarily in the watery/ liquid realm. While an individual plant possesses an etheric body, minerals have only physical bodies and do not have individual etheric bodies. Silicon is a 'semi-metalloid' mineral which dietarily is present almost exclusively in plant foods and drinking water. According to anthroposophical medical understanding, it follows that silicon could contribute to healthy upbuilding bodily processes.

In relation to the plant kingdom, Sajad Majeed Zargar, et. al., introduced their 2019 study entitled 'Role of silicon in plant stress tolerance: opportunities to achieve a sustainable cropping system', by remarking: 'Silicon is considered as a multi-talented micronutrient because of its versatile role in providing several benefits for plant growth particularly under stress conditions.' According to this same study, some benefits that plants sustain from silicon include: 'enhancing growth, yield and crop quality, photosynthesis, nitrogen fixation and providing tolerance against abiotic and biotic stresses such as extreme temperature, UV radiation, metal toxicity, nutrient deficiency, drought, salinity, pathogen and fungus attack'. The authors further comment that; 'Since the silicon-derived benefits are more obvious under stress conditions, it is widely considered as a quasi-essential element.'

In an analogous situation pertaining to the human being, J. Loeper, et. al. in 1978 found that, 'Silicon is needed for synthesis of elastin and collagen, of which the aorta contains the greatest quantity in the human body'. Their research revealed a protective effect of silicon against hardening of the aorta. It found that 'silicon partially inhibits lipid deposition by maintaining the normal caliber of elastic fibers, with occasional thickening and proliferation of these fibers. It also conserves the integrity of mucopolysaccharides and heightens the impermeability of the endothelium, resulting in a reduced penetration of lipids.' With silicon, there is 'thickening', 'conservation of integrity', and 'heightened impermeability' in contradistinction to the above- mentioned thickening, swelling, and hardening! Indeed, it has been more and more so in recent years that silicon, with its strong relationship to the plant kingdom, has been increasingly recognized as a necessary nutrient in both plant ecology and human health.

I grew up with impressions of silicon as a threat to health. News in the medical



Horsetail. It excretes silica in the form of opal along its stem.

world told of the devastating effects of lung disease from breathing silica dust and asbestos (a group of silicate minerals) and of systemic poisoning from silicone gel breast implants and cosmetic injectable silicone. There had been a pronounced lack of knowledge about how silicon and its compounds were employed in the healthy body, and to what extent it was even necessary for bodily function.

The words describing various 'silica-situations' can be confusing and may even be used interchangeably. 'Silicon' refers to the element itself in the periodic table. It very rarely occurs naturally in its pure form and, after oxygen, is the second most

common element in the earth's crust. When silicon and oxygen combine as the compound SiO_2 , it is called 'silica', 'silicon dioxide' or 'quartz'. In the earth's crust, this combination holds first place as the most abundant chemical compound! A 'silicate' is a silicon and oxygen combination which combines with a metal. These silicon compounds form the large majority of the earth's crust. Just add an 'e' at the end of the word 'silicon', and you get 'silicone', which refers to a man-made compound that includes silicon,

oxygen, carbon and hydrogen and has varied commercial uses.

In its pure form, silicon is extremely rare in the earth's crust. Its shiny, dark gray crystal is structurally similar to diamond, and extremely stable and strong. Promiscuity, at temperatures compatible with human life, is not one of its characteristics. Silicon allows only fluorine gas to corrode it. However, at extremely high temperatures, silicon will participate chemically with many elements and form compounds which are stable even upon return to normal temperatures. One of silicon's favorite partners is oxygen - with whose help it may become active in living processes. When active biologically in soil and in living bodies, silicon has a characteristic of participating as a selfless 'bridge' among various substances and systems. In the human body, the primary scenes of silicon activity are concentrated in connective tissues (such as skin, hair, nails, bones, the inner surfaces of blood vessels, and other tissues that support and delineate organs); and in the sense organs. A healthy sense organ transmits its impressions faithfully; it is we ourselves who can misinterpret or even consciously

In summer man is bound up with Nature, but, if he has the right feeling and perception for it, objective spirituality comes towards him from out of Nature's interweaving life. And so, to find the essential human being during the St. John's time, at midsummer, we must turn to the objective spirituality in the outer world, and this is present everywhere in Nature.

-Rudolf Steiner

contradict these impressions (as in with a lie - an 'ability' that is unique to the human being!). In the context of the senses, silicon acts again as a selfless bridge; this time between the outer world and our inner world.

It is in the semi-precious stone amethyst where silica/quartz appears in a form which most clearly reveals its relationship to thinking and to the higher nature of the human being. In Greek, methyo means 'to be drunk' and amethystos means 'sober' or 'capable of resisting the exhilaration of insobriety'. Amethyst ranges typically from clear to a translucent pink or purple color, and often takes its pure hexagonal column form which effects a special relationship to the play of light in and through it. Amethyst is dichromatic, which means that its crystal structures show different colors if looked at from different directions. Blue and red/magenta, in a nod to the blue and red blood of veins and arteries, give way each to the other, to result in a display of purple, with neither individual color dominating the scene. In general, silica-rich/quartz-like minerals are often found in granitic high alpine areas; and water flowing through these areas becomes rich in silica. In the animal kingdom, silica appears most prominently in bird feathers, showing yet another affinity of silica to the heights. In the human being and in nature, silicon indicates qualities of independence, stability, strength, idealism, purity, resilience, flexibility, and selflessness in relationship.

A very modern aspect in the repertoire of silicon's 'talents' lies in its ability to act as a semi-conductor. A semi-conductor has electricity-conducting qualities that lie somewhere between a good conductor such as copper, and an insulator such as glass. Silicon has such properties and is produced in laboratories for use in the semi-conductor industry. 'Doping', the process of adding minute amounts of 'impurities' to pure silicon, has the effect of altering conductivity; and when two differently doped pieces of silicon exist in the same crystal, a semi-conductor junction is created. This junction may act as a type of switch or amplifier, and is activated by applying a specific level of voltage that allows electric current to flow through the junction. This phenomena of 'voltage-gating' is at the very basis of modern computing and most electronic technologies. The semi-conductor and related electronics industries represent an enormously powerful force for enhancing human capabilities in certain areas of daily life.

However, this mighty new tool of humanity also presents us with equally mighty personal and environmental health challenges in the form of 'electromagnetic field (EMF) sensitivity'. The phenomenon of EMF sensitivity, which in some people extends to life-threatening health situations, ironically may even exclude participation for these people in activities of daily life. Dr. Martin Pall, through a thorough review of scientific literature, found that 'Voltage-gated calcium channels (VGCC's) are essential to the responses produced by extremely low frequency (including 50/60 Hz) EMFs and also to microwave frequency range EMFs, nanosecond EMF pulses, and static electrical and magnetic fields. VGCC's are found in our cell membranes and participate in essential bodily processes; especially ones which require immediate and/or large scale responses. For example, the two major coagulation pathways in the blood are triggered by the calcium ion acting as a 'messenger' which facilitates a 'coagulation cascade'; a process which causes rapid amplification of the blood clotting process.

The coagulation process must be kept in balance in order to maintain healthy blood flow. For this to happen, the blood vessels must offer guidance and minimal resistance to flow. The inner lining of the vessels, the 'intima', needs to be kept smooth in order to offer least resistance to blood flow. If the intima is damaged due to inflammation or injury from any cause, the calcium mediated coagulation pathway will kick in, and repair the potential breach by depositing cholesterol and eventually calcium onto the damaged area. Excessive activity of this coagulation process or activity in the wrong place or at the wrong time will impede the flow of life-bearing blood by either physically blocking the pathway, or causing the



Silicon is a hard, brittle crystalline solid with a blue-grey metallic lustre

delicate intima of the blood vessels to become hardened and brittle, thus making it vulnerable to even more damage.

Just as a tree doesn't 'need' its flexibility until the wind blows too hard, perhaps in a similar sense, we don't 'need' the silicon-processes as noticeably until we are under stress. In both cases, the silicon/silica process goes on working in its selfless way (without needing to put its own stamp on it) in connective tissues which provide support for interactions among our organ systems and in our senses which faithfully (and not adding anything of itself into it) transmit impressions of the outer world to our inner being.

With these ideas in mind, here are some suggestions for providing upbuilding, healthy support for the flow of our blood and therefore our life-forces.

1. Keep a balanced approach to your diet including plenty of foods high in silica. These include whole grains like millet and oatmeal (ideally soaked overnight before cooking), vegetables including beets and green beans, and silica-rich water (Fiji water is one example). Water from areas rich in silica has been shown to actually remove aluminum from the body when drunk daily for at least three weeks. Pectin (very rich in the inner peel of citrus - see recipe below) is exceptionally high in silica. This will help keep the inner lining of your blood vessels smooth, strong, and flexible and lessen severity of age and stress-related hardening of the arteries. Both nettles and horsetail provide awe-inspiring healthy archetypes of the silica process to our body. The Stinging Nettle plant, which may be used as a dietary green (cooked!) or as tea, are covered in tiny hollow hairs with little silica tips on them. These tips are broken off when you brush by them, and they act like a little needle which injects histamine, serotonin(!), and acetylcholine into your skin causing pain and inflammation. Also included in its 'venom' are formic, oxalic, and tartaric acids which may have the effect of extending the duration of the pain. Horsetail, which should be used only in limited quantities therapeutically, is also very high in silica. It actually excretes its silica in the form of miniature opals on the surface of its stalk!

2. Pay attention to the health of your skin. Skin is not just all about vanity! This silica rich organ maintains our boundary with the outer world, and is also very permeable to allow entry of both nutrients and toxins! Skin is also a good

indicator of general health. The skin tends to show stress in the form of rashes or boils only after the inner detoxification organs have become overloaded, and it tries to 'help out'. Sweating helps with detoxifying your body, and can save your inner organs some work. 'Dry skin brushing' can also help for similar reasons.

3. Practice good sensory hygiene. Just as we have to digest food and drink, we also have to digest sensory impressions. Rapidly changing or over-stimulating impressions cause our nervous system to have to work very hard, digitized sound and images are associated with the phenomenon of 'cognitive dissonance' which is highly stressful to our nervous system. The true, the good, and the beautiful nourish our nervous system. Stressful sensory impressions can be toxic to our health.

4. Check into what your electromagnetic environment is like. There are relatively simple things that can be done to greatly reduce unnecessary over-exposures to electromagnetic fields. Measures as simple as changing the location of your bed or favorite chair, putting your phone in airplane mode when not in use, or hard-wiring your computers instead of using wifi can make a big difference in your health. For more expert help with this complex field, contact a 'Building Biologist'. These individuals have focused formal training and experience in evaluating and guiding remediation and renovation efforts. [https:// buildingbiologyinstitute.org/ find-an-expert/](https://buildingbiologyinstitute.org/find-an-expert/)

5. Homeopathic medicines can offer significant support in this domain. It is often the case, as with both silica and calcium, that an individual is not actually deficient in the sense of how much of the nutrient is present in the body, but rather the nutrient is present in the wrong amounts in the wrong places at the wrong times. An example is when too much calcium is deposited in tissues and organs making them hard, brittle and impeding their function. This can happen even while a laboratory test shows a person to have normal or even deficient calcium available in the blood! Homeopathic remedies can provide to the body an archetypal image that can guide the bodily intelligence back towards healthy function. Silica in various mineral, plant, and animal forms is used homeopathically in anthroposophic medicine.

Our beloved member Beth Wieting most graciously left the Branch a vast collection of Anthroposophical Books and Publications. It is a large legacy—18 boxes with approximately 1300 books. And the Branch needs help, as we have nowhere to store them at this time! If anyone knows of a safe space that we might use for storing this legacy, kindly advise us ASAP at one of these 3 phone numbers: Tom Klein at 503-305-8270, Jerry Soloway at 503-908-7615, or Sara Genta at 503-358-4108.

The Portland Branch
of the Anthroposophical Society
Invites You to
Save The Dates!
As we navigate this opportunity for greater self-knowledge and freedom dates will be in flux for awhile. Please refer to the contact names in the Portland Branch Calendar and Ongoing Local Activities and Study Groups for current information.

Sub-Social Distancing

by Michael Givens

Here, I create
distance.

You may not enter
this sanctuary –
You may not even smell
the scented oils,
sweeter than Valerian's
white dome of tiny petals
the warmth of June,
You may not even hear a buzz
like the sipping of bees,
or the dripping wax
of one word –
You may not even speak
from your masked lips.

In this space, I am free
To feel human,
and I gather with two
or as many as would come
to love one another,
Without you and your eye,
together –
As though sitting alone
beneath the fig tree
encircled by thousands
of fruiting branches,
That you cannot wilt or blacken –

For I will
not let you in, here
and you have no technology
to close the space between us,
or to lay your needle-point finger
upon the light that shines evenly,
and more brightly than the solstice sun,
between my love and I.

A Real Jack of All Trades

by Leonard Ablieter

That's what Rudolf Steiner calls the stinging nettle, *Urtica dioica*, in Lecture 5 of his Agriculture course. It contains sulfur, which, he says, plays an important role in assimilating and incorporating the spiritual. It also carries the radiations and currents of potash and calcium, but in addition, it has a kind of iron radiation that is nearly as beneficial for the whole course of nature as the iron radiations in our blood are for us. And it contains silica, which gives it its strength of form and uprightness, and is likely involved in the structure of the tissues lining the surfaces of the lungs and blood vessels, giving them their resiliency.

I did not know all this when many years ago I tried to get a stinging nettle patch established in a shady out-of-the-way spot in my garden. I knew the plant as the ingredient in BD504 and used it for making compost but hadn't gotten into the details. But for some reason I thought it would be nice to have a nettle patch, especially as I really couldn't grow vegetables in this spot. So I bought some seeds, sowed and waited.

Nothing happened. Two or more years went by with similar results, except that eventually two or three single nettle stalks appeared. Encouraged, I sowed again. And again, no result. So I let it go until much later when during clean-up I discovered underground roots spreading under a walkway with a few nettle shoots sprouting up on the other side. Big aha! moment. So that's how they propagate. After that it was just a matter of digging up roots from under walkways and re-routing them. Some I cut off and replanted in bare spots further away and today there is a beautiful dense stinging nettle patch of some 120 square feet which, of course, is just a weed patch for the uninitiated.

Similar to my earlier struggles with nettles were my efforts to grow spinach. It would fail to come up, the slugs got it or the weeds choked it. I just never was able to manage a good spinach crop. Finally I gave up, rationalizing that with all the oxalic acid spinach contained it might not be worth it anyhow. So much for spinach.

But now I have been using nettles just like spinach. They can be creamed or made into soup with stock, though a salad would likely be painful. But cooking gets rid of the sting. And unlike spinach nettles can be used to make tea, a tea with significant health benefits. Dried or fresh nettles may be used to make this tea, with the former offering an opportunity for long term storage. The soup may easily be canned for storage as well.

For additional perspective on the health benefits of stinging nettles I want to point to Rudolf Steiner's description in the Agriculture course of how stinging nettle adds intelligence to the soil so the latter individualizes itself to the particular plants present. This intelligence is inherent in *Urtica dioica*, which makes insertion into an animal sheath during the process of making BD504 unnecessary. So we have here a plant with innate intelligence, the stinging nettle, a plant which is also importantly



Pl. 291. *Urtica dioica*. *Urtica dioica* L.

involved in the assimilation and incorporation of the spiritual. What more powerful characteristics could we want in a plant we might use for its healing potential. One condition in the treatment of which nettle tea has been reported useful are allergies, which I feel compelled to mention because of the wide-spread incidence of this condition.

Back to the garden. Nettles come up early and thus provide a very early source of powerful vegetable nutrition, probably the earliest one. Asparagus almost compares in earliness and overwintering brassicas may come close. But nettles need no care! Once established they come up! They overpower weeds. And when cut off they re-grow. About a month ago I cut my whole patch with a scythe. That harvest is now awaiting winter well preserved as soup in canning jars. A few days ago I hand-picked tips and leaves of the new growth to dry and store for tea. And for the next month at least there will be enough continuous growth for occasional meals and many cups of tea.

So as Mr. Steiner said, because it is such a good influence, the stinging nettle we find growing wild really does not deserve our customary scorn. It should actually be growing all around our hearts, since the role it plays in nature by virtue of its marvelous inner structure and way of working is very similar to that of the heart in the human organism. Stinging nettle is indeed a great boon.

Nettle Soup Variations

by Leonard Ablieter (L.A.) and Benjamin Bell (B.B.)

1 lb. nettle

(B.B.) This will make a health-giving medicinal tonic.

Or you can try 1/4–1/3 lb. (per 4 c of stock) and stretch out the bounty for a larger volume.

4 c chicken broth

(L.A.) I used 2c of my own condensed beef stock thinned with 2 c water.

Vegetable stock is a good substitute.

1 onion

(B.B.) 1-2 cups of carrots and celery (optional) for color and taste.

2 T olive oil (per online recipe); We both used ghee.

1/4/ c basmati rice; (L.A.) I used 1/2 c potatoes

(B.B.) Try substituting any grain of your choice. I usually have some kind of cooked grain on hand that has been soaked overnight (with a little whey) before it is cooked. The batch that we made with wild rice was especially good.

(B.B. & L.A.) garlic to taste

Salt and pepper

(L.A.) Par-boil 2 minutes (discard water), rinse in cold water, stems removed (B.B.) try only removing the larger stems) and then chop coarsely. The purpose of the parboiling is to take away the sting. That way the chopping etc. can be done without gloves.

(B.B.) I choose to leave my gloves on for the chopping and skip the par-boiling.

Onions are sautéed until golden, garlic added, and sautéed just a little.

Other ingredients are added, all brought to a boil and then simmered until potatoes (or rice) are done, about 15 minutes.

(L.A.) You can puree it in a food processor or with an immersion blender. Voila! Creamed nettle soup. That's what I did with one batch. Another one I did with rice, I prefer the one with potatoes.

(B.B.) Or you can leave all the textures alone w/out the blender. Our teenager commented "I like the texture of the cooked nettles".

Bon Appetite,

Benjamin and Leonard

Midsummer Eve

All day the mountain boldly
displayed its white splendor,
disavowing all ambiguity,

but now, the long June day
just closing, the pale sky
still blue, the risen moon
well aloft, the mountain
retreats from so much pomp,
such flagrant and superficial pride,

and drifts above the horizon,
ghostly, irresolute, more akin
to a frail white moth

than to the massive tension
of rock, its own bones, beneath
its flesh of snow.

By Denise Levertov, from her book
*The Life Around Us, Selected Poems
on Nature*

She comments in her brief forward,
she has "shared with most poets in
every time and place an ardent love
of what my eyes and other senses
revealed to me in the world we call
'nature.' And yet in this collection
"celebration and fear of loss are
necessarily conjoined."

"Both art and faith are dependent on
imagination; both are ventures into the
unknown."

Urban Biodynamic Gardening:

Let There Be Light!

with Sandra Burch

When there is something challenging going on, the best thing to do is something that is a challenge. We get to build our 'challenge' muscles. We can learn new skills. We may observe ourselves and see how we react to difficulties. We can learn to ask for help, perhaps from someone who knows how to deal successfully with the particular hardship we are encountering. Certainly, we can strengthen our 'connecting with the ever present help of the spiritual world' muscles. We hopefully will learn that it is possible to do the hard thing and come through the struggle strengthened.

I propose that at this 'entering into summer' time of year, biodynamics presents us with just the perfect little challenge, just the right amount of nerve-wracking difficulty to get us focused in the present moment. Here it is in an innocuous looking white powder - BD #501 - Horn Silica.

I admit, I have never used this prep for it's first purpose, and by itself. There are other ways to use it, but that is for another article. I have bottles of what looks like fine white sand sitting on my window sill, a collection of units of #501. I just have not had the gumption to apply this prep. So, I have gathered some info and this essay is first of all a pep talk to myself. If it helps you take the step and use #501, then all the better for all of us and our planet earth.

Support and help exists for our planet and for us. Light exists. Do we know how to utilize it? Rudolf Steiner teaches us how to connect with the spiritual world and BD #501 helps our plants use light. If we are worried about pollution then biodynamic practices are a remedy. If we are concerned about weaknesses in our own bodies, then biodynamically produced food is a help.

Here is something our friend Beth Wieting wrote about #501, also called ground quartz spray: "In general, 501 encourages the plant to do whatever it is doing at the moment above ground, or whatever it is on the verge of doing: to leaf out and to utilize light well, to form a bloom stalk and to flower, to develop sugars and vitamins, to form strong viable seeds."

So, the first thing to look at is what kind of plants are you growing? Are they plants that have a leaf crop - like spinach? Or are you growing a root crop - like carrots or beets? Or is it a plant with a flower crop - like artichokes? Or a fruit or seed crop - like squash, or tomatoes? Knowing this will give you a start toward knowing when to use the #501 spray. Next you can look at your BD calendar, to find out what is a root, leaf, flower or fruit day. Here is a link for an online calendar: <https://www.rhythmofnature.net//biodynamic-calendar>.

Ok, that's a bit tricky, but do-able. Now comes the "I wish I was a decent chess player' part. Keeping the type of plant and the helpful time for that type of plant in mind, look at what the plants are doing and decide if you want them to do more of whatever that is. If your spinach is quite leafy and happy, and you go ahead

and give it a dose of #501, it could bolt into seed production. In addition, it is not recommended to spray #501 on new transplants, since this prep helps plants to grow. They need a nicely established root system to be able to support vigorous growth.



Now, 501 gets stirred just like 500, but it

needs to be sprayed in a very fine mist. The best thing is to go to that aisle in the garden store that you probably never go to and buy a weed sprayer; it can be handheld, or a backpack one, if you have a lot of acreage to spray. This sort of sprayer will give you a fine mist and you will be able to spray from below upwards, so the droplets get to the underside of the leaves.

The other hugely important thing is to stir and spray the prep in the early morning; at dawn is what is recommended. This may be another reason that this prep does not get as much use as #500. But really dawn is an amazing time of day to be up. The value of watching the sun rise, these days, cannot be underestimated. For you night owls, this won't help, but it is fine to stir and spray #501, not at the break of day, but a bit later, some say not after 10 am. I would go with trying to have it all done by 9:00 am. If you spray the prep later in the morning, or after noon, then it is likely that the leaves of whatever plant you are trying to help will get burned.

But what is it that makes 501 so easy to skip, or makes it so hard to actually use? Well, we can address the fears about harming the plants; by making sure to stir and spray the prep before 9:30am. Also, if we use a misting bottle or weed sprayer contraption, so as to get a fine mist that we can spray onto the undersides of the leaves, we know we won't put too much on any one leaf or plant. If we decide to jettison perfection and allow that we can use certain info to choose the best days to spray, while experimenting and observing results, all in the service of learning, then there is only one more big stumbling block to using #501.

And that is: who has time to stir a bucket of #501 every few days when it is time for the lettuce to get support, and then again on a different day for a rutabaga crop and then on another day for the ground cherries, and then...? Well you get the idea. It would take way too much time. Hugh Courtney has a solution: BD #501(5x) this 501 has been prepared to the 5th potency and only needs 20 minutes of stirring. Woohoo! A game changer for sure. Check out the products at www.earthlegacyagriculture.com.

When the world situation seems overwhelming, biodynamic practices help us pay attention to the locale where we can have some impact, our backyard garden. I encourage you to consider using BD #501.

Calendar of the Soul

Week 9

Forgetful of my self-determin'd will,
World-warmth, heralding the summer,
Fills all my Soul and Spirit-being.
To lose myself in light
My Spirit vision summons me,
And divining forcefully proclaims,
'Oh lose yourself, to find yourself anew!'

Week 10

To lofty summer heights
The sun lifts up its radiant being,
It takes my human feeling
Along into its wide domains.
In depths of soul sensations stirs,
And my divining darkly tells:
'In time you will come to know
A being Divine has felt you now.'

Week 11

In this Sun-hour it rests with you,
To comprehend wise tiding's call:-
While to World-beauty wholly given
And feeling Self within – experience
'The I of man can lose itself
And in the I of worlds can find itself.

Week 12

The world's fair shining glory
Compels me from the depths of soul
To let my being's God-given powers
Soar out into the Universe –
Abandoning my Self,
And trusting only, seek myself
In light of worlds and warmth of worlds.

Calendar translation
by Liselotte and William Mann

The Portland Branch Newsletter is published monthly to serve Branch members and friends. To learn more about the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society, contact Diane Ramage at 971-271-7479.

To submit an article or a calendar item email it to Christopher Guilfoil: c.guilfoil@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Items selected for publication may be edited for style, content and length.

To sign up for our newsletter/email list go to:

<http://www.portlandbranch.org> and click on the button at the top of the right hand column on the home page.

The newsletter and calendar are posted on the Branch website, www.portlandanthroposophy.org. Paper copies are available at the Pohala and Healthbridge Clinics; and the Cedarwood, Michael, Portland and Swallowtail Waldorf Schools.

Our current newsletter team: Editor, design, layout, and illustrations: Christopher Guilfoil; Editing and proofreading Wes Burch; Calendar: Jeremy Davis; Printing and distribution: Jerry Soloway; Webmaster Angelica Hesse; Treasurer: Ruth Klein

The Portland Branch thanks the following Members & Friends for their Dues and Generous Donations in 2020:

Virginia Berg, Wes Burch, Sandra Burch, Jeremy Davis, Stacy Durych, Sara Genta, Deborah Ham, Marsha Johnson, Lauren Johnson, Tish Johnson, Lisa Jones, Donna Patterson Kellum, Bob Kellum, Tom Klein, Ruth Klein, Timothy Kennedy, James Knight, Anne Kollender, Martin Levin, Judith Levin, Robin Lieberman, Patricia Lynch, Lisa Masterson, Brian McClure, Jennifer McNeal, Cheri Munske, Padeen Quinn, Robin O'Brian, Nancy Peirce, Jeff Rice, Walter Rice, Susan Rice, Diane Ramage, Rebecca Soloway, Jerry Soloway, Elizabeth Webber, Brian Wickert

Your 2020 dues will be gratefully received:

Thank you for helping to make our lively community life possible. A typical contribution is \$50, but no amount is too large or too small. You can send a check to The Portland Branch, c/o Ruth Klein, 12286 SE 41st Court, Milwaukie, OR 97222. Or you can donate online at portlandbranch.org.

You can also make your contribution online, by clicking 'pay here' toward the bottom of the right-hand column on the home page of our website, portlandbranch.org.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the following who generously provide spaces for our many activities: Dr. Joan and John Takacs for their long-standing donation of Bothmer Hall; the Portland Waldorf School; and the Cedarwood School.

Another Way to Donate to the Portland Branch

If you shop at Amazon and use the following link, a small donation, .5% of the price of your eligible purchases will be donated to the Portland Branch. smile.amazon.com/ch/93-1269233

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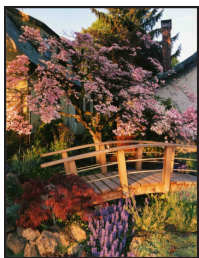
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Contact: Editor c.guilfoil@gmail.com

First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Sunday, June 14, 9:30am • Blue card required. • Contact Cheri Munske, cherimunske@gmail.com, Diane Rumage, drumage@comcast.net, or Rebecca Soloway, rrsoloway1@gmail.com

During this time of physical distancing, we greatly appreciate your joining in meditation with each other spiritually from your homes. Our suggestion is to meditate on your favorite mantra each month at the time of our usual 9:30 a.m. First Class gathering. A reminder will be sent each month so you are aware of which Sunday we would otherwise be meeting (the 2nd or the 3rd).

Portland Branch Council Meeting

Monday, June 8, 7pm • Conducted via Zoom • Contact Valerie Hope, 503-775-0778, valerieannhpdx@aol.com

All Branch members are welcome to attend, and/or call us with agenda items, proposals, suggestions, or to observe. Please contact Valerie to let her know you'd like to attend. Meetings are normally held on the second Monday of the month.

During this time of physical distancing, please contact the group organizer for each ongoing activity to confirm if the group is still meeting and what protocols they might require.

Ongoing Local Activities and Study Groups**First Class of the School of Spiritual Science • Second Sunday of the Month**

9:30am sharp (no admittance after the class starts) • Bothmer Hall, 5919 SE Division St, Portland, 97206 • Blue card required. Contact Cheri Munske, 503-772-2632, or Rebecca Soloway, 516-850-1027

Council Meetings of the Portland Branch • Second Monday of the month

7-9pm • 2606 SE 58th Ave., Portland • Contact Valerie Hope, 503-775-0778, valerieannhpdx@aol.com

All Branch members are welcome to attend, and/or to call us with agenda items, proposals, suggestions, or to observe.

School of Spiritual Science Study • Second Thursday of the Month

The First Class of the Michael School and its Christological Foundations by S. Prokofieff • For Members of the School of Spiritual Science 7:30-9:00 pm • Contact Rebecca Soloway, 516-850-1027, rrsoloway1@gmail.com

Manifestations of Karma Study Group • First Monday of the Month

7:45-9pm • Temporarily conducted via Zoom • Contact Jerry Soloway 503-908-7615, jrsoloway@hotmail.com

Please join us in lively discussions centered on Rudolf Steiner's *Manifestations of Karma*.

Adult Eurythmy Class with Jolanda Frischknecht

Tuesdays 6:30-8pm • Bothmer Hall, 5919 SE Division St., Portland 97206 • Cost: \$20/session; paid monthly, sliding scale on request • Contact Jolanda, jolandamf44@gmail.com, or 503-896-3345 Feel free to drop in, invite friends.

Eurythmy for Waldorf Alumni: Wednesdays

Study, 6:30-7:30pm; Eurythmy; 7:30-8:30 pm • Eurythmy Room, Portland Waldorf School, 2300 Harrison St., Milwaukie • Contact Carrie Mass, Carrie.mass@portlandwaldorf.org If you've ever attended a Waldorf High School, this is for you!

Eurythmy, Portland Waldorf School Community: Thursday Mornings

8:45-9:30am, Eurythmy Room, Portland Waldorf School, 2300 Harrison St., Milwaukie • Free - All are welcome. Contact Sarah Rem, sannerem@gmail.com 503-729-1740

Pacific Eurythmy, Open Classes for the Community in Anthroposophy and the Arts: Monday Evenings

For details please see our website, www.PacificEurythmy.com or call Jolanda, 503-896-3345 or Carrie, 415-686-3791

Festivals Study Group: First and Third Friday Mornings

10am-12pm • 2606 SE 58th Ave, Portland • Contact Suzanne Walker, 503-208-2426 zzwalker@mac.com • We are working with various of Dr. Steiner's lectures in an effort to better understand the festivals and how we may come to observe them according to his indications. This study is also greatly deepening our experience of the Calendar of the Soul and the cycle of the year.

Knowledge of Higher Worlds by Rudolf Steiner • Friday Mornings beginning October 4

9:15-11am • Contact Patricia Lynch at patriciahomanlynch@gmail.com

Singing Circle at the Portland Waldorf School • Friday Mornings

8:45-10:15am • Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison St., Milwaukie, in the Orchard Room • all voices are welcomed. Contact Julianne Renzema at momartist@yahoo.com. No practice during school breaks.

Speech Formation and Mystery Drama Group • Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday

7:25-8:55pm • 8654 NE Boehmer St, Portland, OR 97220 • Free. New participants accepted. No experience necessary, just enthusiasm and a love of the Word. • Contact Diane Ramage 971 271-7479 drumage@comcast.net

Friday Book Study in Corvallis beginning October 4

5:15-6:15pm at the home of Renate Joy • 1020 NW 25th Street, Corvallis • Our new study is Rudolf Steiner's "Occult Science: An Outline" (If you are planning to buy this book, we suggest the classic translation by George and Mary Adams.) This is a great way to study anthroposophy in community with others, where different perspectives are shared, and understanding can deepen.

Study of Gospel Lectures • Every Sunday

9-10:30am • Please call for venue • Free. Long established group of researchers reading and discussing Steiner lectures on the Gospels. • Contact Cliff W, 360-750-4858 or Suzanne W, 503-208-2426

Waldorf Education and Teacher Training Lectures and Courses

Conducted throughout the year by the Michael Institute. Contact Jen Davis, 503-449-7387 jennifer@micha-elinstitute.com

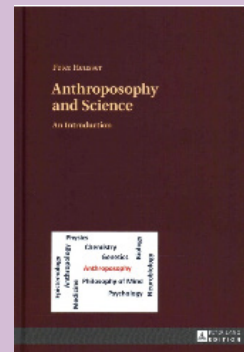
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Visit Suspended

A Gathering in Seattle
of our Cascade Community
with special guest
Dr. Peter Heusser



Meanwhile...

It will come as no surprise that we had to suspend Dr. Heusser's visit to the States due to restrictions on travel and social gatherings. Nonetheless, we now announce that you will soon find month-by-month in the Natural Science Section newsletter, *Correspondence, a précis* of each chapter of *Anthroposophy and Science*, together with Dr. Heusser's chapter summary.

<https://www.naturalsciencesection.org/correspondence/>

It is hoped that this will encourage you and help you to read Dr. Heusser's book and to be all the better prepared for our eventual gathering—in person and online—for important work on bridging natural science and spiritual science.