

A GOETHEAN SENSIBILITY FOR DARKENED TIMES

Two weekend gatherings at Towerland Wilderness

June and August 2021



In response to the darkness that is encroaching, we offer two four-day processes – one following the other but accessible separately – over two extended weekends, as immersions in Goethean practice, building the foundations of a perceptive intelligence.

At the beginning of the first world war, in response to being asked, “What can I do in this crisis?” – Rudolf Steiner responded: “Endeavour to understand. See through things – nothing else is of any use”.

For many years, we have been working on, practicing, writing about, *teaching* the Goethean approach specifically as it may illuminate, and act upon, human situations in the social realm. Our work has been called a *delicate activism* (after Goethe’s ‘delicate empiricism’), also a *reflective social practice* (after the way of self-observation proposed through *The Philosophy of Freedom*), as well as an *artistry of the invisible* (which seems to call forth the meeting between Goethe and Steiner). We have worked with social practitioners in many countries; our work has largely been an attempt to enable access to ways of seeing through to spiritual and living essence in the social realm – to observe the formative forces active in the social realm.

Our work has not primarily been ‘conceptual’, we have always worked experientially, in pursuit of *making meaning of observed experience*. One of anthroposophy’s challenges has always been the danger of applying a conceptual understanding to the world around us, instead of awakening an enlivened sensibility truly *observing* that which is coming towards us. We know, phenomenologically speaking, that the way we pay attention to the world changes the world we pay attention to. As Steiner said, “the essence of thinking always requires that it *be willed*”. An anthroposophical intelligence is active *seeing*, rather than remaining with concepts and thoughts.

As the times darken around us, we try to “see through things”, strengthen what Goethe called our ‘organs of perception’ – but, in this instance, our organs of perception attuned to the social world. A socially active practice of observation may shine light into the darkness. So that we may infuse darkness with light. Enter the darkness with our light.

All of us having lived isolation, social distance, masking and the ubiquity of online communication for so long now, we offer one or two extended weekends during which, accommodated in simple comfort (single rooms or double), eating wonderful food, immersed in the wilderness, we will, through nature and through ourselves, immerse ourselves in the *practice* of Goethean observation and thinking, thus strengthening and enabling the life forces within us to develop the resilience with which to meet the future, and participate in its emergence.

DATES: 4 – 7 June and/or 6 – 9 August 2021.

Arrival evening before, departure day after.

COST: each weekend R 4500, fully inclusive

If this resonates, we look forward to hearing from you: proteusinitiative@gmail.com

