



NORTH AMERICAN ANTHROPOSOPIHIC NURSES ASSOCIATION  
**NAANA**

CARING THROUGH WARMTH AND RYTHYM

**NAANA News**  
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## Denver Area Regional Nurses

by Tina Herr

### Denver Area Regional Group

The Denver Area Regional Anthroposophic nurses' group which consists of 5 members has reignited their enthusiasm and started meeting once a month for the past 3 months. We are currently reading from Manifestations of Karma by Rudolf Steiner, Chapter 11. We meet for 2 hours; we read for one hour and then we make time to experience an external application. The last time we gathered we experienced the sounding bath. The next meeting, we will practice and receive the calf and foot RE.

NAANA has 5 regional groups, some just getting started... Let me know if you are interested in joining or starting your own regional group. [tinaherrbear@msn.com](mailto:tinaherrbear@msn.com) or 303-521-0880. The areas with groups are

Eugene, Oregon; Kimberton, Pennsylvania; San Francisco, CA; Ghent, NY and Denver, CO.

Blessings on the rest of your Summer.

### Board of Directors

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**Denver Group sounding bath**

Tina Herr

# Rhythms

by Jeanne Schirm

Our bodies long for rhythm

All life processes in man and nature live rhythms and sequences of time. However, we do not come into life with all our rhythms regulated. The rhythms in the infant and child are still undeveloped and need the parent's support and guidance. Because we are free to control and influence many of these rhythms, we may fall into the error of disregarding their importance. However, a lack of attentiveness to rhythms for long periods can cause physical collapse resulting in illness. One of the major problems in this time of hectic lifestyle is finding a balance in our rhythms. Our bodies long for rhythm. All of our organs have their own rhythms, which need a schedule for sleeping, bathing, working, and rest. We have what is referred to as an internal clock, or circadian rhythm, that regulates all our body's functions over a cycle of 24 hours. It is known in Chinese medicine and Anthroposophical medicine that all our organs have a rhythm and times of the day when they function optimally. For instance, the liver has a regenerative time from 3 pm to 3 am. Considering this rhythm, it is best to eat our heavy meals, proteins, oils, etc. at breakfast and lunch, eat light at supper, and never late at night. Enough sleep is one of the most important prerequisites for good health. Sleep patterns should follow the rhythms of the sun. Ideally, we should get up early with the sun, no later than 8 am, and go to bed not too long after the sun sets for children and no later than 11 pm for adults. Problems with rhythms arise when the internal rhythms become out of sync with the surrounding environment. This can occur, for example, with shift work, long workdays, heavy workloads, high stress, or travel. It often takes several days to fully adjust our circadian rhythms to a new schedule. Going back and forth between schedules over a period of time can result in illness. Sleep rhythms that renew us physically and spiritually need to follow a regular time schedule uninterrupted as much as possible.

Regular rhythms foster good habits

Rhythms give us strength. Any rhythmically repeated action takes less exertion and energy than a one-time action performed at an unusual time or under unusual circumstances. Our rhythms and habits, develop our character and personality and

also strengthen our will. Learning to observe regular times for eating and sleeping, and structuring our day so that it allows for a breathing process, helps us meet the demands of life in a more productive way. As in nature, we need healthy rhythms to be healthy.

We find our connection to nature and the cosmos through rhythms

Rhythms connect us to nature and the cosmos. The rhythms that regulate the course of the planets against the fixed stars are also reflected in the life processes of plants, animals, and human beings. Living into the seasons, the sequence of day and night, and the life cycles of our biography bring healthy maturation. In this way, we can connect with all of creation.

Waldorf Education is founded on healthy rhythms

A model out of which one can connect to the importance of rhythms for children is Waldorf education. The very foundation of Waldorf education is based on rhythms. There are patterns of activity during the day. For example, the morning verse and circle time are anchors in the day children can count on and orient to. There are repetitive words in the verses and songs that are a part of the activities and games. The daily, weekly and seasonal rhythms of nature are brought to the child thru activities such as baking, gardening, nature walks, and creative play. These many rhythms help develop a sense of security in the child and help him to move through the world with confidence especially if also followed at home.

Rhythms can be daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly

There are many ways that we can cultivate rhythms in our lives and the lives of our children. We could start with daily rhythms, which could include all life's necessary actions such as bathing, eating, playing, and sleeping which should all be at regular times. Also, each day of the week could have a special meaning. For example, there might be certain chores and tasks for some days while Sunday might be more of a festive day in a family home.

In monthly rhythms, each month has its unique name. One could have a special calendar for the months or observe seasonal changes. The monthly rhythm can be one of recuperation, habit development, and stabilization. It takes at least four weeks for a new habit to form. Waldorf education puts

this to use by dividing instruction into four-week subject blocks wherever possible.

Yearly rhythms bring the possibility of adaptation. Anything we have experienced or done for a year truly lives and stays with us. Also, throughout a year we can follow the seasons and their meaning in our inner lives such as historical events, birthdays, and yearly seasonal holidays. These times also strengthen our relationships with family, community, and nature. Gardening is of course an ideal way to have daily, monthly, and yearly rhythms coming to know more deeply every year the natural world.

"Nature is an aeolian harp, a musical instrument whose tones are the re-echo of higher strings within us." Novalis

Bio for Jeanne Schirm

Jeanne Schirm is a registered nurse with certification also as a Anthroposophical Nurse Specialist. She lived in the Spring Valley, NY Anthroposophical community for 38 years before moving to Petaluma, California. In her early years she was a coworker at the Fellowship Community a multi-generational community whose focus is the care of the elderly. She was first introduced here to a general healing approach to caring through Dr. Paul Scharff. This laid the basis for her later interest and work in Anthroposophical nursing. She became a certified school nurse in New York State and worked for a number of years in the public school and Green Meadow Waldorf school. She developed and instituted at Green Meadow a medical program using Anthroposophical nursing principles as a basis. Recognizing the need for educational opportunities for parents, she developed and taught her natural homecare course. She gave a booklet out at the class for parents to refer to after the course. It was suggested by others that she expand on it and publish it which was accomplished. It is titled [Essentials of Homecare A Gentle Approach to Healing](#). Jeanne can be contacted at [holistice48@gmail.com](mailto:holistice48@gmail.com)



# Traditional Complementary Integrative Healthcare

by Elizabeth Sustick

Thanks to your efforts, almost 3500 individuals have signed the declaration and above 200 organizations have requested to become initial signatories of the declaration.

In the meantime, we have updated the website with a [Frequently Asked Question](#) (FAQ) page to provide information on frequent questions or to requests for information. We look forward to receiving your feedback on the page via a reply to this email.

Would you have any questions on the above, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Declaration Secretariat via this email address.

We will be in touch with you for facilitating further communications and advocacy efforts in the upcoming months.

Best wishes, TCIH Declaration Secretariat



<https://tcih.org/>

## Anthroposophic Nursing at the National Holistic Nursing Conference

by Eira I. Klich-Heartt, DNP, CNS, ANS, AHN-BC

At the 2022 national holistic nursing conference in Albuquerque, NM I had the delightful experience to present my topic on Goethean Plant observation. The topic of the conference was Butterfly Effect: Transformation, Rebirth and Renewal and I submitted my abstract in October 2021.

In December I was thrilled to hear that my topic was one of the chosen topics. What better way to renew oneself than through the observation of plants?

I gathered my resources, photos, materials and set about organizing my presentation. I chose three plants as exemplars of healing plants which we commonly use: chamomile,

yarrow and rosemary. I worked through the steps of Goethean observation, but also brought in the concept of drawing and sketching as a daily meditative exercise in order to sharpen our observation skills and know our plants better. I wanted to bring the artistic experience to the knowledge and understanding of the therapeutic essence of plants and their usefulness. I worked on my own drawings as part of this path. Drawing exercises taught me that I also needed to revisit botany lessons to be able to speak about these plants accurately.

I needed to submit my materials by April and was fervently drawing and photographing plants in Spring that really don't shine until high summer? Planting early did not work! I finished the power point support in April and submitted my materials.

From then until June, it was practice and polishing my presentation as I was still tending the plants in the garden.

The conference was exhilarating and refreshing after two years on not being able to exchange thoughts and ideas in person. The visits with other practitioners as well as presenters was very rich. The activities such as tai chi, mindfulness meditation and others

Helped to embed the theme of the conference into our bodies. I drove to a nursery for life plants and had brought dried ones from home.

Finally, the day came. The conference room was immense! The support staff were wonderful, and we had great support for the technology as well as extra paper and supplies. There were about 80 attendees. The talk went very well with enthusiasm for plants and some very knowledgeable herbalists offering their experiences. Afterwards many participants were enthusiastic about a new way to get to know plants.

I was not directive enough in the artistic aspect as I had hoped to bring but would have also needed more time to make that successful. As it was, time flew by, and I hope that all were enriched to have a new relationship and tools to use to understand plants and their medicine. The journey was very enriching for me as well. I would encourage all nurses to consider presenting to this supportive organization.

<https://www.ahna.org/>

GOETHEANUM



# Annual Conference of the Medical Section

By Elizabeth Sustick

Dear Community of the Medical Section,

With this email we would like to draw your attention to the Annual Conference of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum which will be held in 2 months and to share this message also in your professional networks.

The Goetheanum with its spacious terrace, the park, the possibility to visit the Representative of Humanity and Rudolf Steiner's studio and dying room offers numerous opportunities to meet and experience.

The conference will be opened by our dear colleague Machteld Huber, who has succeeded in Holland in introducing and establishing a new way of looking at the health issue. In fact, she has already been counted among the 100 "most influential women in Holland".

The specialist conferences will focus on different aspects of the rhythmical system - e.g., allergic breathing disorders, heart and circulation, emotional embodiment, and anxiety disorders, experiencing and coping with social conflicts - including one special conference for patient's advocacy and a common framework program.

The second part of the conference offers rich impulses on spiritual deepening, including the mantras of the 16th class lesson, freely held by Matthias Girke. Herbert Salzmann, an expert in dealing with social conflicts in anthroposophical medical institutions, will also be speaking and offering a working group.

The multi-professional conference over the weekend will address fundamental questions such as the current disputes about the image of the human being in medicine, which also form the background to the criticism of anthroposophy, as well as the challenges posed by robotisation in medicine and nursing. A variety of working groups provide insights into the work of an anthroposophical heart school (Jakob Gruber + Team), address current topics such as counselling for

transgender and gender dysphoria issues (David Martin), Long Covid therapy (Pöchtrager/Fitger), Chronic pain (Nina Klinger and colleagues), vaccination issues (Stefan Schmidt-Troschke, Georg Soldner), the transformation of medical practice and clinic towards a climate-friendly therapeutic center/clinic and a corresponding inner change of consciousness (Grah/Buldmann/Ruf) and much more.

It is definitely worth [having a look at the programme \(download\)](#).

[Registration](#) is done online and is possible for each conference section separately. The conference is dedicated to the human heart in a comprehensive sense - also to its changing role during biography (Karin Michael / Boris Krause / Anja Girke).

After these pandemic years, it is vital for us to meet in person, to learn with and from each other and to regain a more direct perception of each other after all the contacts by email and ZOOM!

With warm regards,

Matthias Girke and Georg Soldner

**GeorgSoldner**

Kinder-undJugendarzt

**Goetheanum**

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# Founding member: An interview with Margaret Rosenthaler

by Tina Herr

I had the great pleasure to speak with Margaret Rosenthaler via phone. I will start with a background on Margaret and then delve into a few questions I asked her. I hope you enjoy this fruitful article about Margaret, her destiny with Anthroposophic nursing and her wish for the future of Anthroposophical nursing.

"I felt as if I were standing in a dry stream at the age of 24, there wasn't anything in me to take me further. I had looked at myself, my capacities and could see nothing there that would carry me further. There were essential qualities that I lacked, and when I listed them, they seemed to be exemplified by nursing. I laughed. My mother was a nurse and had told me that I wasn't cut out to be a nurse. Perhaps I wasn't nursing material, but I had to learn it's lessons. To be sure about this, I took a job "sitting" with patients at the University Hospital, observed the nursing...and decided to enter a nursing program."

Margaret is currently 71 years old. She learned about anthroposophy and decided to go into nursing at the same time. A twenty-four-year-old, she was living in a tourist home, which was directly below the University of Michigan Hospital, in Ann Arbor, and was managed by two musicians who were active anthroposophists. From the beginning, she wanted to do the program in anthroposophical nursing offered at the Ita Wegman Klinik in Arlesheim, Switzerland. After completing a short track BSN program at the University of Virginia (she already had a BA from the University of Michigan in cultural anthropology) She returned to Ann Arbor working on a Neurology/Neurosurgery

step down unit there. She said the nursing on that unit was exemplary and those nurses remained for her models of the art of nursing. During that time, she took workshops in Rhythmical Einreibung.

After four years, she arranged to study in Switzerland. Not knowing German, she worked for 6 months in a nursing home in Dortmund, Germany, as an aide, immersed in the language and studying it and the plants in a local herb garden in her spare time. She then joined the anthroposophical nursing program at the Ita Wegman Klinik where students worked five days a week and had the class on the sixth. Workers in the Klinik were allowed to participate in picking medicinal plants in the wild. She remembers picking Arnica in the Vosges Mountains in France. While she was there, she also did the hydrotherapy and rhythmical massage courses in Boll, Germany...which included a 6 month massage practicum with Jenny Josephson in Forest Row, England.

On returning to Ann Arbor, where there were no Anthroposophic physicians there at that time, she worked part time as a visiting nurse in the Detroit area, volunteered as a nurse at the local Waldorf school, and slowly built a private practice. She moved to Harlemville, NY, then, to work with Philip Incao, MD, and sequentially with Steven Johnson, DO, and with Margaretha Hertle, MD (all anthroposophical physicians) as well as doing nursing in Triform and Copake Camphill Communities.

She continues today with her private practice doing nursing, oil dispersion, and rhythmical massage therapies.

She said in her late teens she had come to the realization that there was a spiritual

world and that one could know about it and was searching for a spiritual path that would help one to change one's thinking to allow an understanding of spiritual truths; it was clear that spiritual science was such a path. What was also important was to have a path for service in the world that would be consistent with these thoughts, that could realize spiritual truths in the world. "It was a grace to have found Anthroposophical nursing.

I asked Margaret how it is being an Anthroposophical nurse in this modern world. She said that even working in a non-anthroposophic setting, it was possible to do more than one would think. She gave two examples which occurred when she was



working as a visiting nurse.

The first was an elderly woman with severe COPD who was on oxygen. Her husband was primary caregiver taking beautiful care of her. The patient had cold legs and feet; just as the oxygen was not

entering her blood, the higher members weren't penetrating to her legs. Margaret had her husband apply Birch Arnica oil to her calves and feet. After she stopped visiting this woman, the husband periodically would call Margaret and ask for more oil which she would send to him (she thought he would have trouble putting it together to order it). After some time, she finally thought to ask



him why he continued to use it and he said that when he put it on her she could walk and when he didn't, she couldn't.

Another example was when she arrived the day after a stroke patient had been discharged and found that he had kept his wife awake all night due to the sensation of having to urinate (post Foley catheter removal). The wife had been told she couldn't manage him at home, and she was afraid that might be true after a sleepless night. Margaret taught the wife the eucalyptus bladder compress, which helped him sleep through that and subsequent nights when the sensation of having to always urinate ceased. That compress may have been critical to his remaining at home; the two of them managed well after that and he recovered well. He had himself been a director of nursing and was impressed.

I asked Margaret about the importance of Anthroposophical nursing in these turbulent times.

She stated that "we are being cut off from the spiritual world in various ways, due to environmental factors and by the way we treat our bodies with medicine and food. When the body hardens, this interferes with the ability of a person to reach for spiritual thoughts, even to think at all. Biodynamics helps and Anthroposophical nursing teaches people to care for themselves and others out of pictures of spiritual realities giving bodily and soul support which opens more possibilities for them to connect to the spirit. Anthroposophical nursing could hardly be needed more than now; it maintains the bridge and supports the I organization. When we we teach parents to care for their children, we are teaching them to raise children who are able to have spiritual thoughts, real thoughts...and to act on them."

"Steiner said that when a nurse working this way walked into a room, the patient would feel better. What are you bringing when you walk into a room? You bring what you carry within you of spiritual realities. What a relief to the soul that has been living in drought! The physical drought in this country is a reflection of the spiritual drought that people are experiencing. People are inwardly thirsty due to this lack, and the anthroposophical nurse and the care she/he gives could possibly spark something new for them."

I asked Margaret about her vision for the future of Anthroposophical nursing.

"There is the fact that the external applications and the understanding of them

out of spiritual science can heal illnesses when standard medicine fails (eg. we are losing our antibiotics). But I think about what will bring us through this troubling time. In pictures of Michael, the gaze of Michael is usually straight ahead. He holds the dragon under his feet. He is not putting all his focus on the dragon. Working with Anthroposophical nursing is focusing on the things that can work and help. We need to be aware of the troubling things in the world. But one can be too focused on them, looking too much at the dragon who then pulls you down into its coils. It's important for us to keep our view straight ahead. There is a goal. There is the aspect of Michael that sees the way through all of this. Sometimes it's hard to imagine how things can turn out right, but Steiner gives us a wide and distant perspective...and that gaze is important."

"My wish is that every nurse who is seeking this path has a chance to work out of Anthroposophical nursing and has the means and ability to bring it to expression. It would be wonderful to have more clinics and inpatient places to provide therapies. But in the absence of such opportunities, a nurse can work out of the healing pictures and principles he/she has learned in most settings. (A marvelous example of that is Barbara Cavanaugh in her postoperative work in a hospital.) Nursing is good, supporting life and the healing forces of the human being. A nurse can take what is inside of her into any situation."

Margaret closed with a verse by Rudolf Steiner given to her by a nurse, Lotte France, who worked in the CCU until retiring at 65 yo. to become a Waldorf teacher and take one class through. Lotte was also a First-Class reader. This is her translation out of German of a verse which she used to carry her in her work. She described that when things were especially critical "it was simple enough" that she could call it up. For instance, there was a man who had had bypass surgery (his sternum had been cut and was wired) who arrested. She said that by the time you reached for the equipment they would often have slipped away, and the protocol involved giving immediately a sharp blow to the sternum. She said "every bone in my body resisted hitting him there" ...she called up this verse calling on Christ to work in her arm and gave the blow. When his heart rhythm was restored, she said "I almost went down on my knees."

"Christ speaks to you from the star above your head..."

Let your soul be carried by My mighty strength.

I am with you,

I am for you,

I am in you,

I am your I,

I AM."

# Editorial

by Eira I. Klich-Heartt

## Writing articles for the newsletter

We welcome all articles, papers, conversations, insights of interest to our anthroposophic nurse members. Please consider writing a short piece about meetings in local regions, insights into patient care – while being mindful of privacy concerns, or studies that you have undertaken.



## A picture is worth a thousand words

Please consider including some photos that would assist in conveying your writing. Plant pictures, scenery, members at work/practice in a course or lesson again being mindful that we have everyone's consent. I am sure the plants do give us their consent. It is a wonderful sight for the eyes to view all of us at work, learning and sharing our experiences as we prepare baths, compresses, doing rhythmical einreibung!

## Sending materials

Articles can be as short as 300-500 words, although longer articles will be considered as space allows. Articles are best in a Word document. Timelines are to be sent by July 1 for Spring/Summer newsletter consideration, Dec. 1 for Fall Winter consideration.

Materials may be sent to [heartt@yahoo.com](mailto:heartt@yahoo.com)

I look forward to your contributions!

# From the Board

by Elizabeth Sustick

As our 2021 NAANA strategic plan described, we are launching an East and a West Coast Foundation in Anthroposophic Nursing Course. For details, please see [anthroposophicnursing.org](http://anthroposophicnursing.org)

After these pandemic years, it is so good for us to be able to meet in person and to learn with and from each other.

The planning for both courses is rich, innovative, and imaginative.

In addition, an Introduction to Anthroposophic Nursing is being offered as a series of Webinars this Fall, pending approval of CNE's from AHNA. The course will begin on Tuesdays September 23, 2022. More information is at <https://www.anthroposophicnursing.org/page-1075354>

Our thanks to the teaching teams for their professional contribution to spreading the good work of AN and for welcoming Rhythmical Massage Therapists and Health Care providers to join.

Blessings on our continued efforts and to the many generous individuals involved in manifesting these actions.

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