



In cooperation with the Section for the Performing Arts,
the Section for Literary Arts and Humanities, and the
Collegium of the School of Spiritual Science, Goetheanum

inscribing signs with a finger
dipped in light

towards a cultural-spiritual approach
to dying and death

Harmony Centre, Mittagong, NSW
course duration: march 24 - november 24 2024

*PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION - TOWARDS A CULTURAL-
SPIRITUAL APPROACH TO DYING AND DEATH*

This work is of great importance to us, thank you for your inquiry!

StoryVision

abn 654 254 494 36

Course convenors:

Iris Curteis 0487 719 476

an_lomall@bigpond.com

Irmhild Kleinhenz 0444 551 381

naturosophy@protonmail.com

Course duration: March 24 - November 2024

Modes of delivery:

Five 3-Day Intensives

Venue: Harmony Centre, Mittagong, NSW

Five Online Learning sessions [pre-recorded and posted by set dates]

Independent reading and engagement

Online Conversations, follow ups and questions [2 hours sessions, set dates]

Endorsement Presentations:

7 December

The fundamental condition for being able to describe life between death and a new birth is, that the Ahrimanic influence, which is omnipresent today, has to a certain extent been overcome.

(paraphrase, Rudolf Steiner, Lit.:GA 13, p. 287f)

Front cover Image: Liane Collot d'Herbois, *Threshold*

Introduction

Most of us do not understand how to die, how to consciously meet Death, prepared and with equanimity. Predominantly, conventional approaches to quality end of life care offer a way to relieve pain and suffering, to provide compassionate support to family, friends and carers and increasingly include information that directs the terminally ill towards voluntary assisted dying.

Death, in this stream of thinking, while it cannot be defeated can be ‘managed’ and scheduled – and therefore the spiritual dimension of the act of dying becomes an abstraction.

The consciousness, understanding and reverence that should surround dying and death and life beyond the threshold, have been silenced, misrepresented, denied and ‘dropped’ from the cultural-spiritual life of individuals and communities. It is often, at best, addressed with an ‘end of life plan’, ‘life insurance’ or ‘insurance’ that covers care or funeral costs.

As course presenters, we feel a deep need to build, cultivate and humanise a personal and communal awareness and out of this to develop a deeper relationship *with* Death, an understanding of the individual path of dying, and of the actual, autonomous moment of death.

If we look to earlier times, we find images and approaches to dying and death borne by imaginations, inspirations and intuitions, which we now need to approach in new ways. Using creative sources and insights offered by Spiritual Science, we discover death is the most sacred moment in our life; it is entirely individual. Out of this insight, that all life is a process of *stirb und werde*, Goethe’s ‘die and become’, this course will focus on Spiritual-Cultural approaches and use, as a ‘way of knowing’, Contemplative Inquiry and creative processes. These will include visual art, music, Creative Speech, poetry, creative writing, oral storytelling and folktale research, eurythmy, and meditation. We will offer inspiring, and deeply insightful presentations to encourage you to approach dying and death in your own life and so enable you, as a Companion, to use this transformative knowledge and spiritual awareness to support those journeying towards the threshold.

There is a further question we wish to explore. Our fear of death and dying has separated us from life imbued with Spirit and pushed us deeper into materialism and consequently onto a path of destruction we now know by the term of ‘omnicide’. Can we resolve to find new approaches to dying and death for the sake of Earth’s healing and to evolve humanity towards freedom and love? Our increasingly challenging times will provide us with opportunities to realise and to deepen our spiritual interconnectedness and responsibilities.

Who is this course for?

This Schooling Course is a spiritual pathway to understand death. It is a method and process of inner development for people dedicated to accompanying the dying. It equally provides personal and professional development for those seeking emotional intelligence, self-awareness and lifelong learning. We recommend it for: counsellors, health practitioners, carers, social and support workers, educators, and those who wish to care for the newly deceased, such as funeral personnel and celebrants. If your reasons are more personal and you wish to consciously prepare yourself, are grieving a loved one, seeking greater understanding of assisted dying, organ donation, or suicide this Schooling Course will aid you in an inquiry based on spiritual science and autonomy.

Course intention:

To facilitate a process through which participants develop their own healthy and integrated relationship to dying and death

To educate and mentor participants who intend to become trusted companions of the dying, offer specific care of the deceased, and accompaniment of those who have crossed the threshold

To enable participants to offer, where appropriate, artistic and contemplative activity for, or with, the dying and their loved-ones as ways to experience threshold crossings

Trusted companions are open to:

- Contemplating their own life, examine their relationship to dying or near-death experiences and, through personal exchanges of these experiences, actively practice perceiving, contemplating and engaging with death
- Actively engaging in stimulating and supporting transformative change in individuals and communities
- Participate in creating a community of people who support each other on this path in service to their families, friends and communities
- Learning about current developments, insights and research in cultural-spiritual approaches to dying and death

Application of enrolment:

To honour the spiritual nature of this course and the earnest, respectful bearing required to work with dying and death, we ask that you write to us and tell us why you wish take this course. Please elaborate [both options are possible]: Do you wish to develop your own relationship to Death and dying as part of Life, and consciously engage with dying and death on a personal level? Are you enquiring about this course to develop your understanding of dying and death to serve your family, friends and/or community as a trusted companion and to support them on their journey? Please include any experiences you have had that you feel are relevant to this field and send to: [Irmhild Kleinhenz naturosophy@protonmail.com](mailto:Irmhild.Kleinhenz@protonmail.com)

The course convenors will contact you to arrange an interview [in person or online] in which we can together assess the suitability of this course for you and answer questions. We guarantee discretion in all matters of the application process.

Internal endorsement and certificate:

To qualify for internal endorsement and certificate you will be required to complete a minimum of 90% of this course, including:

Participate in intensives, online learning and online conversation;

Develop your creative journal, which includes:

Artistic work [your selections]

Work with questions, tasks and completed set assessments demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of a cultural-spiritual approach to dying and death

Personal self-reflections [your selection] and reflections on your learning outcomes that critically assess and comment on your own work and learning outcomes

You can choose to replace some written assessments with an oral presentation of approx 20 - 30 min.

Our commitment

We will provide you with:

Individual, respectful and discrete feedback

Constructive comment on both your strengths and areas that need further development

Respond to questions related to the specific sessions and subjects we teach in the shortest possible time and provide you with your learning materials

Course fees and conditions

Fees

The course fees is a one-time payment of \$5500.00 or a bi-monthly payment of \$1200.00 in installments by March 1, May 1, July 1, September 1, and November 1.

Payable to Irmhild Kleinhenz, Iris Curteis BSB: 533000; Acc 02118934

We waive application fees, but we require the first payment [full or instalment] to be paid within two weeks of your acceptance into the course. Enrolments close 15 th of February.

Withdrawal and refunds

If you must withdraw for reasons of health or extreme personal circumstances [proof required] up to 21 day before commencement 80% of your payment will be refunded. If participants must withdraw from the course after commencement for reasons of health or extreme personal circumstances [proof required] the current installment needs to be honoured; 60% of the *remaining annual fee* will be returned. It will not be possible to refund individual Themes if participants withdraw.

Continued enrolment

Fees must be kept current [please contact us if there is a problem]. Please note: participants will not be able to attend Intensives, Online Learning or Online Conversations or receive learning materials if fees are outstanding unless we have entered into an honorable agreement.

Scholarship inquiries:

<https://www.ileenmacphersontrust.com/>

<https://www.anthroposophyau.org.au/members/members-grants-and-funding/>

<https://humanwisdom.org/ligma-kirpe-trust-fund/>

Course material:

Lectures and readings supplied by presenters and tutors; art materials provided in the intensives; suggested material is see below

Course commencement:

Weekend of the 8 - 10 March 2024

Intensive accommodation:

Accommodation is available for individuals or small groups at the Harmony Centre: Limited number of single rooms and a larger number of shared bedrooms. Harmony Village offers a beautiful, spacious retreat style centre, fully equipped with a stylish shared kitchen, bathroom facilities, bedrooms, in a serene orchard garden setting.

Contact: Francis Mougel

mob: 0410 657 420

email: info@harmonyfoundation.com.au

website: <http://harmonyfoundation.com.au/>

Enrollments close: 15th February 2024

Contact for further inquiries:

Irmhild Kleinhenz 0444 551 381 naturosophy@protonmail.com

Iris Curteis 0487 719 476 an_lomall@bigpond.com

*A connecting bridge is to be built through spiritual science, precisely in the near future,
between the living and the dead,
a connecting line
through which the inspiring elemental forces
of those who have made the great sacrifices in our time
can find their way across. [...]
So that our souls may become expectant,
expectant of the inspiration which will come from the dead,
but which in the spirit will become especially alive.
Rudolf Steiner,
The Mystery of Death. GA 159/169, Dornach 1980, p. 202.*

Course structure:

The course requires face-to-face and online study, participant presentations, and independent learning.

The five *3-Day Intensives* will introduce and develop both experiential and theoretical understanding of the themes in a structured, engaging, participatory learning environment. Your lecturers and tutors will set tasks, to guide you through the material towards independent research, reflection, short essays and the preparation of creative presentations that further develop themes and skills.

The five *Online Learning* [basic skills required] offered between intensives will be recorded, by the presenters, allowing you to engage as it best fits you. The focus will be on Contemplative Inquiry, aspects of Salutogenesis, and *Occult Reading, Occult Hearing*, as per Rudolf Steiner.

The *Online Conversations* provide a space for discussion, questions and sharing of insights you've gained from the your independent work, Intensives and Online Learning.

Total course hours:

150 hours in total

82.5 hours Intensive

15 hours Online Learning

10 hours Online Conversation

42 hours Independent Learning

Course dates:

Five Three-day Intensives

7 - 10 March

9 - 12 May

11 - 14 July

5 - 8 September

7 - 10 November

Online Learning [these sessions will be pre-recorded and posted by] :

1 April

27 May

29 July

23 September

11 November

Online conversations and follow up [2 hours each:]

14 April

9 June

11 August

6 October

24 November

Themes:

All intensives include an exploration and experience of the themes through applied art: Visual Art, Eurythmy [movement art], Creative Speech [spoken word, working with planetary vowels, zodiacal consonants], Poetry and Creative Writing, Oral Storytelling
At this point in time, Music will be offered in the online sessions.

Please note: while we reserve the right to adjust this programme should this become necessary, we will ensure to do so only with appropriate consideration and inform you at the earliest possible time.

THEME 1: THE MEANING OF THE EXPERIENCE OF DYING AND DEATH

Themes: Dying; Death and the Death experience; The Ahrimanic; The immediate and autonomous moment of death; protective sheathing; an experience of individuality; The Breaking of the Silver Thread; The awakening of consciousness after death; Death and initiation; Wisdom and death; Near-Death experiences

Online:

Salutogenesis 1: Death at different ages. Why we die; Irmhild

Contemplative Inquiry 1: Introduction to Contemplative Inquiry; Bronwen

Occult Hearing, Occult Reading 1: Human Being and Our Relationship to the World;
Iris

Music 1: For the dying; Peter

THEME 2: OUR CHANGING SPHERE OF CONSCIOUSNESS - THE LIFE PANORAMA

The Nature and Mission of Pain - Methods to work with pain [exercises]; Care for the body after death; The Vigil; The etheric body after death and memory; The Soul experience; Tableau - Life Panorama and the experience of the Tableau with death at different ages of life, Meditation and Life Panorama; The Near-Earth 'Dead'

Online:

Salutogenesis 2: The Sense and the Life Processes; Irmhild

Contemplative Inquiry 2: Introduction to Creative Spiritual Research; Bronwen

Occult Hearing; Occult Reading 2; Iris

Music 2: for the departed soul, Peter

THEME 3: ACROSS THE THRESHOLD; THE PATH THROUGH THE PLANETARY SPHERES

Ethical considerations, social responsibility and community care. Suicide, euthanasia, assisted dying; Karmaloka; Overcoming desires, purification; Kamaloka on the border of the physical-etheric and the astral world; The consciousness of the 'dead'; Moral-Spiritual Physiognomy, Spiritual Constitution - Limbs of the "dead";
Overcoming 'Omnicide' Animal, Plant & Earth Transformations; The path through the planetary spheres; the work of the 'dead'

Online:

Salutogenesis 3: Alchemy; Irmhild

Contemplative Inquiry 3: Drawing Inspiration from Nature; Bronwen

Occult Hearing, Occult Reading 3; Iris

THEME 4 SOUL AMONG SOULS; SPIRIT AMONG SPIRITS

Ethical considerations, social responsibility and community care; supporting souls across the threshold; Creative Soul-force as inner light; Among souls and spirits; Between inner-life and outer-life, between Spiritual Loneliness and Spiritual Companionship; Dimming Light and Reverberations; Ascent to the Worldmidnight

Online:

Salutogenesis 4: Karma of Illness; the effects of illness and habits in the spiritual world

Contemplative Inquiry 4: Soul Research: Understanding Others; Bronwen

Occult Reading, Occult Hearing 4; Iris

Music: a bridge between the worlds

THEME 5 YEARNING, AS A CREATIVE POWER

Yearning, as a Creative Power - preparing a new incarnation; Out of the Darkness of Worldmidnight into New Light; Soul's Awakening through the Holy Spirit: Per spiritum sanctum reviviscimus; descent towards a new birth; the affect of post-death life in our next incarnation; Pre-Birth Intentions

Online:

Salutogenesis 5: The sacred privilege of the companion at the threshold; Irmhild

Contemplative Inquiry 5: Meditations on Words, Images and Situations; Bronwen

Music: towards a new life

Readings, Recommended Readings & References

Death as Care and Cultural Challenge, Irmhild Kleinhenz

We are in a global situation in which many human beings die without the opportunity to fulfil their destiny or develop appropriate ways to meet death. Caring for each other has almost vanished from our culture, medical-technological support that leads to bizarre and often disturbing options that confront our very humanity are being offered. Without a spiritual scientific understanding, we abandon souls that have crossed the threshold leaving them to struggle to maintain a relationship with the living. During these intensive sessions, my aim will be to reinstate the quality of care that we need to learn, and to teach to each other, to maintain our human dignity and create a new culture of care. I will use excerpts from:

- *Anthroposophical Care for the Elderly* by Camps, Hagenhoff, Van der Star - ISBN 978 086315 653 3 Floris Books.
- *The Influence of the Dead on Destiny* - Rudolf Steiner, volume 179 CW (GA).
- *Ethical Considerations in Medicine - conscience, social community building and the path of healing*: Gloekler, Debu and Heine - Persephone Press, Medical Section at the Goetheanum. <https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA219/English/AP1963/19221231p01.html>
<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA200/English/RSP1988/19201017p01.html>

Salutogenesis - An Anthroposophical Model of Care, Irmhild Kleinhenz

I will focus on understanding the whole human being, considering all facets relevant for care that enable the companion to look upon the individual as a transcendent being, originating in the spiritual world and returning to it. The aim: the companion will develop skills to support and collaborate within a team that includes carers, family and friends of the one crossing the threshold.

- *The Presence of the Dead on the spiritual Path* - Rudolf Steiner, 7 lectures April 17 - May 26, 1914 Volume 154 CW (GA).
- *Growing Old - The Spiritual Dimensions of Ageing* - Rudolf Steiner lectures collection, ISBN 978 1 85584 562 6 or Ebook: ISBN: 978 1 85584 505 3
- *Pain* - https://rsarchive.org/Books/GA004/English/RSP1964/GA004_c13.html and <https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA107/English/AN1946/19081027v01.html>

Occult Reading; Occult Hearing - Iris Curteis

I will present Steiner's lectures with a focus on developing our capacity to gradually perceiving occult signs, and in time read these symbols and discern the reality that stands behind them. This will enable us to come to a state of perception in which we can 'hear the spiritual world'.

Additionally, we will explore how occult signs relate to the images we encounter in folktales/myths, etc. and how these 'states' of reading and hearing relate to liminal space.

- Steiner, Rudolf (1914). *Occult Reading, Occult Hearing*. GA 156, Dornach

Contemplative Inquiry – Bronwen Haralambous

In this course I will share with you a framework of ideas and a practice ground for your inquiry into liminal experiences. I will present introductions to Arthur Zajonc's 'Contemplative Inquiry' and Coenraad van Houten's Creative Spiritual Research, as foundational research methods that you can apply in your course work in general, in the other modules. The meditation or contemplative exercises that we will explore, will also offer you guidelines that you can follow for your creative responses and writing in your reflective journals.

- Van Houten, Coenraad (2011). *Creative Spiritual Research: Awakening the Individual Human Spirit*. Forest Row, East Sussex: Temple Lodge.
- Zajonc, Arthur (2009). *Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When knowing becomes Love*. Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Press.

Recommended Reading

Music Thanatology – Peter Roberts

End of Life Report

Deakin University Report: Relief of Suffering at End of Life.

Nursery Report

Deakin University Report: The Use of Prescriptively Played Music in the Special Care Nursery

both available at: <https://www.reverieharps.com.au/product-page/deakin-university-report>

The harp and the ferryman / Helen Cox and Peter Roberts.

Melbourne: Michelle Anderson Publishing 2013

Description: This is a book of reverence. A book which pays homage to all of those who have been present to the healing power of music be they professional or patient. This title traces the life of Peter Roberts as he discovers the power of music in comforting those with a terminal illness and the joy he can bring to the loved ones of the dying.

[out of print, new edition available early 2024 - please *don't* buy though amazon etc.]

Storytelling – Iris Curteis

The Liminal Space – Storytelling a Conscious Approach to Thresholds

Voice, Gesture, Silence; The Importance of the Human Voice in the Telling of Life Stories and Folktales

A Shattering Joy – Thinking the Folktale in New Ways

I do not search, I find!
Searching is to go out from the old and in the new
confirm again the already known.
Finding is something completely new,
new, too, in movement, all paths are open,
and what will be found is unknown.
It is a risk, a holy adventure.
The un-certainty of such dares
can only be taken on by those,
who feel safely held in the un-secured,
who in the not-yet-known,
in the un-fixed,
the leaderlessness willingly are drawn,
who in the Dark surrender to an invisible star,
those drawn by an intention,
not restrained by human-limits,
nor narrowed-down their aim determine.
The Open-ness to every new insight,
for each new experience
in the outer world and within,
this is the essence of the contemporary human being,
who despite, in all fear of letting go,
still receives the grace of being held
in the revelation
of new possibilities.

Pablo Picasso

Educators and Artistic Presenters:

Beverley Clarke - Higher Diploma Secondary Teaching (H.D.S.T. Rusden); Masters in Experiential Creative Arts Therapy (M.I.E.C.A.T)

Studying ceramics and sculpture at the School of Arts and Design, Canberra, lead her to a Masters in Experiential Creative Arts Therapy at the M.I.E.C.A.T. Institute. Her experience includes work as Experiential Creative Arts Therapist, with people addressing addiction, mental health conditions, relapse prevention, post-traumatic stress disorder and family relationships. In the fields of Aged Care and Dementia, she provided Experiential Creative Arts Therapy at an award-winning, not-for-profit organisation. Additional studies in Anthroposophical Art Therapy, in particular the approach of Liane Collot d'Herbois (1907-1999) followed over a period of ten years.

Iris Curteis, PhD, B.A. BA Honours (English) Storyteller, Social Artist, Speech Artist.

Creative Practice: I will create an intense focus on folktales and the art of storytelling, Liminal Space, the power of Story to carry listeners across thresholds and the immense benefits this offers in our understanding of Death, in the care of the dying and their loved-ones. I will introduce you to the Art of Speech, creative work with sounds, listening/stillness, poetic metre and rhythmic breathing. Theory: Folktale Research, Liminality, Occult Hearing, and Spiritual Science.

Irmhild Kleinhenz, Anthroposophic Naturopath; Tutor and Mentor for International Postgraduate Training Anthroposophic Medicine.

Long term focus: Salutogenesis, grounded in a healthy humanistic understanding, reaches beyond pathology. Pain is often seen as an inescapable part of dying. Salutogenic work is to find a way to understand and overcome the pain. I will explore pain as a metamorphosis to higher knowledge, ethical and spiritual considerations, social responsibility and the healing community we can create with those across the threshold.

Bronwen Haralambous, PhD, Master Educational Leadership, BA (English and History) and Higher Education Diploma, Advanced Diploma in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy.

I currently teach in the Graduate Certificate in Steiner Education at the University of the Sunshine Coast. My main areas of research include Steiner philosophy and pedagogy, Contemplative Inquiry, Imagination in Education, Teachers' Research and Professional Learning, Curriculum Evaluation. I will be offering Contemplative Inquiry as a way of knowing.

Educators and Artistic Presenters cont.

Michelle Nicholls, RN, Dip. Eurythmy, Dip. Eurythmy Therapy

Michelle began her professional life as a Nurse, working predominantly with chronic renal patients, administering Haemodialysis. She began her artistic eurythmy training at Aurora Australis, Anthroposophical College of the Arts in Melbourne, and later attended Peredur Centre for the Arts in the UK to complete the Diploma of Eurythmy Therapy. Her practical experience includes working at Park Attwood Clinic, UK, based on Anthrosophic medicine. It was this experience that 'opened her eyes' to what is possible through holistic healing practices, when various appropriate therapeutic modalities work together for the benefit of the patient. On her return to Australia, Michelle worked as a practice nurse at *The Melbourne Therapy Centre*, as well as continuing her work as Eurythmy Therapist in her private practice and then at the *Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School*. Eurythmy and Nursing are both unique in the way they require the practitioner to have the capacity to sit comfortably with a patient / client, often during extreme threshold moments in their life. Michelle has had many years of service in both areas.

Peter Roberts, Certified Music-Thanatologist

As a certified Music-Thanatologist, I trained in this specialised discipline for two and a half years in a hospital-based school in Montana, USA. I have offered this form of care in Australia from 1997 until now. This approach includes live, prescriptively played music (harp and voice) for the seriously ill, the dying, their families and friends, and I have loved playing for babies in the critical care nursery. While the focus of the training was entirely for palliative care, I have broadened the application of my music to include recovering patients. During the course of my studies, I learned to offer music in a careful, thoughtful manner, I was challenged to consider what will work in individual situations in response to the person's need, and develop and express compassion and an attentive, loving presence through the music. That means, I read patients, not music, paying close attention to their physical, psychological and emotional changes, and play in response to these cues. I can best describe it as dancing with a stranger in the dark. As their rhythm, their rate of breathing, changes my playing changes. We synchronise with each other; it's not clear who is leading who. The effect can be profound. The movement is always from music towards a comfortable deep silence and I leave them in the embrace of music, and the beauty and gentleness of this quiet.

Peter is the Founding Director of the Institute of Music in Medicine [IMIM]; received the 2008 Annual Tattersall's Enterprise and Achievement Award for his commitment and pioneering spirit in establishing the field of Music-Thanatology as an essential component of end-of-life care in Australia.

The value of Peter's musical form of care was affirmed publicly through the findings of research conducted by Deakin University. 2006 Peter and Professor Emeritus Helen Cox jointly presented these research findings at the prestigious Mayo Clinic in the USA. In 2010 Peter became the co-creator of a soothing therapeutic musical instrument, playable by anyone without musical training [for Reverie harps please see website].

During the Intensives, Peter will offer several online, creative and inspiring sessions to the themes:

The Harp and The Ferryman; An introduction to the theory of Music-Thanatology – Spoken Word [Iris] Harp, Film, Stories and Lived Experiences (Peter).

Relief of Suffering at the End-of-Life. Deakin Report; The Significance of music, silence and an attentive, loving presence; Qualitative research as presented at the Mayo Clinic Spiritual Care Research Conference; Music vigils; Examples, stories and reflections.

Website: <https://www.robertsmusic.net>

The Sanctuary, Music video, Peter Roberts <https://www.reverieharps.com.au/media>

Night Song, Music video. Peter Roberts <https://www.reverieharps.com.au/media>

ABC TV's Australian Story: <https://vimeo.com/236029945>

From Music into Silence, a 2019 full-length documentary, revealing the background to Peter's musical journey was screened in cinemas across Australia and in Oregon USA.

<https://vimeo.com/263142820>

Gillian Rogers, M.Ed (Steiner), Grad Dip Adult Ed., English (Hons).

I will work imaginatively to provide experiences that sensitise participants to the poetic in language and to further the development of a 'Poetic Soul' that can, with greater sensitivity, accompany those approaching the threshold. We will explore: What makes poetic language different from prose? How does it create deep understanding while working on the feeling life of listeners? There will be time for speaking, sharing and appreciating poetry in order that inspiration is there to accompany the creative process of composition.

Pippa White has worked in palliative and home-based care for fifteen years and for eleven years and as an Anthroposophical Nurse in both general nursing and palliative care. She has facilitated many workshops on topics of dying and death gaining the respect and admiration of those working in close association with her who value her dedication and commitment. Pippa has been a respected colleague of Irmhild's for several years during which they practice and develop anthroposophic health care at the Melbourne Therapy Centre, and presented in public talks and workshops to promote a better understanding of the role of anthroposophic palliative and death care. Working in concert with Irmhild, she will introduce core principles of the laying out and preparation of the vigil.

ANTIDOTES TO FEAR OF DEATH

Sometimes as an antidote
To fear of death,
I eat the stars.
Those nights, lying on my back,
I suck them from the quenching dark
Till they are all, all inside me,
Pepper hot and sharp.

Sometimes, instead, I stir myself
Into a universe still young,
Still warm as blood:
No outer space, just space,
The light of all the not yet stars
Drifting like a bright mist,
And all of us, and everything
Already there
But unconstrained by form.

And sometimes it's enough
To lie down here on earth
Beside our long ancestral bones:
To walk across the cobble fields
Of our discarded skulls,
Each like a treasure, like a chrysalis,
Thinking: whatever left these husks
Flew off on bright wings.

Rebecca Elson, Aug 15, 2022

