

Some excerpts from:  
**THE MYSTERIES OF SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS:  
THE ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIAL IMPULSE**  
by Dieter Brill

If we have any kind of relation to other people, or any communication with them, then a force flows between us creating a bond. It is this fact which lies at the basis of social life. The impression which one person makes on the other has the effect of lulling the other to sleep. On the other hand something else is also working. A perpetual struggle and opposition to falling asleep in social relationships is also present.

Rudolf Steiner, *Social and Antisocial Forces in the Human Being*

This always happens in the meeting between two people: a tendency to fall asleep, a tendency to keep awake. The tendency to fall asleep represents a social force in the human being, analogous to our sleeping state when our soul and spirit freely intermingle with the soul and spirit being of others, unencumbered by the physical body. The waking-up force is antisocial in nature as we become aware of our identity, our thoughts, feelings, and intentions as earthly beings.

Rudolf Steiner, *Social and Antisocial Forces in the Human Being*

As ego meets ego we are in the supersensible realm, sub-consciously experiencing pictures of both past and future destiny, but our ordinary consciousness is still unable to deal with this, so we withdraw into our own soul. Rudolf Steiner suggested that the growing self-consciousness of the modern individuality necessarily is antisocial. As a force of evolution this self-aware, antisocial tendency will continue throughout the consciousness soul age. All social instincts will be lost, and more and more the human being will be like a hermit wandering through the world. This natural tendency brings with it the possibility of self-knowledge and self-development, but it has the social consequence of separating individuals and groups so that we are as strangers to each other. The resulting misunderstandings, conflicts, and forces of social fragmentation are visible in every sphere of life, blinding us to our connections of destiny.

Understanding the antisocial nature of modern consciousness, so visible in our every conversation, is the beginning of a healing process for ourselves and society. The balancing forces pointed to by Rudolf Steiner are a new form of social understanding and society, and a process of individual inner development through spiritual science. A new, spiritually-based social understanding can enkindle interest and warmth of heart for in the study of temperaments, life phases and soul orientations, we can begin to learn to see each other. Collegial institutions and the threefold social order are social arrangements through which we need to meet, struggle with each other, and develop understanding. All of Rudolf Steiner's work on the threefold social order and in economics can, I believe, be seen as providing a

necessary outer balance to the antisocial forces working with the human soul. The antisocial forces must work inwardly so that human beings may reach the height of their development. Outwardly, in social life structures must work so that people do not totally lose their connection to life.

Christopher Schaefer, Ph.D. from the Introduction p. 20

Unless otherwise stated, in this book social means: to make another person's need the motive of one's own action. The social impulse, then, is accurately defined as a moral force, a moral force to be found only in individual human beings.

Dieter Brüll, p. 28

One comes closer to answering the question How can one be social? if one starts by looking for the basic requirements. On one hand, I must give the other person the opportunity to express himself within me. In the same lecture, Steiner describes this as a process where the other puts me to sleep, thus totally filling me for a moment. On the other hand, I must have the ability to bring to my consciousness what he really wants; that is, I need to hear the developing question of the other's self behind his wish-nature.

Dieter Brüll, p. 36

Simply because we are all human, we are forced to be antisocial several times each day. Out of the plethora bestowed upon us by the earth and available for all living beings to share, we pick out and use up something for ourselves whenever we eat, dress ourselves or find shelter. Our existence is bought at the expense of others. Today it is literally true that human beings take something away from their fellow beings by merely living and breathing. Antisocial behavior is a universal phenomenon of inter-human behavior, because the natural urge to stay alive happens at the cost of another human being.

Dieter Brüll, p. 36-37

Here the word asocial is meant in its linguistic intent, namely, out of contact with human society.

Dieter Brüll, p. 41

Asocial behavior, like antisocial behavior, is an indispensable condition for humans on earth. In fact, the person striving for knowledge must be asocial. He must separate himself and devote his whole being to the search for the unknown.

Dieter Brüll, p. 41

We have made the acquaintance of the antisocial person in the consumer. In the same way, we can see the extreme example of the asocial person in the meditator. He could never arrive at

meditation were he not to disassociate himself from his fellow men indeed, from all of nature.

Dieter Brüll, p. 41

The antisocial drive has its origin in the human instinct for self-preservation, the asocial one in the will to develop and unfold a life of the soul.

Dieter Brüll, p. 42

It is rare that a person who has found a truth (or at least thinks he has found it) will be content to keep this for himself. Usually he is not satisfied to simply make it available to the public. He wants to spread it around. His truth makes the ideas of other people be untruths or at least half-truths. Now the missionary in man awakens. He wants to bestow his truth on all mankind. He does not merely want to create; he wants to convince.

Dieter Brüll, p. 43

Thus the asocial nature of all earthly spiritual life carries intolerance within itself.

Dieter Brüll, p. 44

The weaker the individual's soul life, the more it will seek recognition for its own truths. Modern man considers his soul life assured if other people's world of ideas is shaped according to his own truths. His being must be resurrected in every other human being.

We find the asocial gesture is the opposite of the antisocial one. An antisocial act is to grasp something and take it from another person; in asocial behavior a person spreads his soul out within others. He wishes, as it were, to become resurrected in his fellow men.

Dieter Brüll, p. 45

"Either a rebel or a robot will be created if one prevents a human being with the elemental need for self development from unfolding his soul forces."

Dieter Brüll, p. 46

"As a natural being, man must follow the antisocial drive. As a being with a soul, he must follow the asocial drive. There is no necessity to follow his social drive, to live within rights and obligations in relation to his fellow human beings. In this realm, he is free."

Dieter Brüll, p. 50

We make our fellow human beings need for development the motive of our actions. This I can do only if I abstain from overwhelming them with what I have gleaned from the life of the spirit, namely with my own truths. I can succeed only if I invite them to unburden themselves in my own soul. Self-surrender does not imply imprinting oneself on the other person. One

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able to grasp equality as a principle of justice in its primal source.”

Dieter Brüll, p. 53

“The freedom of spiritual life on earth is always the freedom of others who think differently, not my freedom. I experience my own freedom in the relationship to my fellow beings in the life of rights.”

Dieter Brüll, p. 53-54

“The social aspect of the spiritual life demands that I open myself to the other person, invite him to express himself in me. In this way I am able to experience his questions of inner development as my own...Yet along with the social aspect, a piece of freedom enters into the life of the spirit. To be sure, I cannot take over an opinion differing from my own and living within the other person. But I am free to accompany him in his thoughts with my own. I can even help him to grow, based on his specific view of the world, even if it in no way matches my own.”

Dieter Brüll, p. 58

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Therefore, whatever comes up is either black or white, good or bad, right or wrong. The human middle is missing a society with heart.

Dieter Brüll, p. 68

“Now we can say: face to face with our fellow human being we encounter... ourselves. I am face to face with my own reality, with my own inadequacy. But this is not the end of it. If it is an encounter in the true sense of the word, a new light will dawn in my consciousness. I will see that the sorrow and want on the part of even the very last unknown human being are my sorrow and my want, even as I experience it as my inadequacy to transform knowledge into action. It dawns on me that the want and pain inflicted on other humans is inflicted on them by me, because I no longer feel the asocial and antisocial forces in society outside of myself but within me as my asocial attitude and my antisocial behavior. The encounter with the other person becomes the encounter with my self.

Dieter Brüll, p. 74

Today it is not a matter of looking for theoretical solutions of the social question but rather to seek the conditions under which humans can live in a social manner.

Dieter Brüll, p. 87