

Religious Exemption to Vaccinations

Anthroposophy and Vaccination

The soul-spiritual philosophy of Anthroposophy sees humans as passing through successive earthly lives incarnated in a physical body, "laying one's karmic foundation in one incarnation for the next." Illness comes to an individual not by chance but as an opportunity to come to terms with one's karma from previous incarnations. Illness provides an individual with a message which ultimately assists in self-growth and development. The responsibility of a healer is to assist the human being experiencing the illness to deal with it karmically. Thus, prevention of an illness may be beneficial in the course of one incarnation but may not be for the entire soul life and development of the person.

Additionally, Anthroposophy views that in early childhood years, soul-spiritual forces permeate the organism and have an organizing effect involving growth. With the change of teeth, these forces work to a lesser degree as an organizing growth force and are transformed "into something soul-spiritual, let us say, into the force of memory, into the thought-forming force ." However, if transformation of these forces is too weak, then the organizing forces remain and new formations, i.e., cancer, may be encountered later in life. Rudolf Steiner indicated that childhood diseases come about from the opposite tendency, i.e., there is too much of the organizing force during childhood, "...too much of the soul-spiritual from his pre-human, pre-earthly life; this excess then lives itself out in the childhood illnesses." It is believed that these forces, i.e., childhood diseases, need to be dealt with karmically. Thus, Anthroposophy has a dramatically different viewpoint as to what causes common childhood illnesses and whether vaccinations are in a child's best interests. Conventional medicine views childhood illnesses for which vaccines have been developed as a physical disease, inherently bad, to be prevented. Their main goal, therefore, is protection against contracting the disease making one free of illness. In contrast, these childhood illnesses are viewed by Anthroposophy as a necessary instrument in dealing with karma and the incarnation of the child. During childhood illnesses, anthroposophic medical practitioners administer medical remedies to assist the child in dealing with the illness not only as a disease affecting their physical body in the physical plane, but also for soul spiritual development, thereby promoting healing. In contrast, allopathic medicaments are aimed at suppression of symptoms and not necessarily the promotion of karmic healing.

From the spiritual perspective of Anthroposophy, therefore, Childhood diseases and their symptoms, such as fever, are considered as positive events in a child's life, enabling the child to incarnate in his or her physical body. This physical body is, in some sense, 'foreign' to the incarnating child, and through disease, the child is assisted in making this physical shell his or her own, to adapting it to his or her individuality. Childhood diseases actually act as a kind of regulative force; they help the child develop in a balanced way, according to anthroposophical beliefs. This is why childhood diseases usually appear during childhood, this is the time when they are needed. (When these diseases appear in adults, something more serious is amiss.) Also, the fever common in childhood and accompanying most

childhood diseases helps counteract premature 'hardening' — which is, anthroposophically speaking, a bad thing; it's associated with Ahriman. Fever is luciferic — that is, an opposing force to anything ahrimanic. Thus, vaccination deprives the child of an opportunity for assistance in the incarnation process and poses a risk concerning premature hardening processes. This is not insignificant, from a spiritual viewpoint. The spiritual risk of vaccination is, supposedly, higher before the first seven-year cycle of the child's life has ended. These first seven years are characterized by hardening of the organism, which culminate at the change of teeth; the key factor for natural development, anthroposophically speaking, is not that it happens but the pace at which this happens.

Another anthroposophical aspect worth noting in this context is the belief in karma. As already noted, Anthroposophy holds that the spiritual core of the human being is immortal and goes through repeated lives on earth. Before we're born, we choose which circumstances to incarnate into — with the aim of furthering our spiritual progression. This means, we also choose our diseases because we 'need' them, for reasons which may be inconceivable to us during our earthly existence but which appear clearly to us during the time we spend in the spiritual realm after death and before rebirth. Consequently, we can place ourselves in a setting where we will be confronted with a disease we need to live through (or, in some cases, even die from), either because of something — for instance, a personality flaw — from a past life which needs to be rectified or as a preparation for lives to come.

For further reading on Anthroposophy and illness and karma:

http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA235/English/RSP1972/Karm01_index.html

http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/ManfKarma/ManKar_index.html

<http://www.rsarchive.org/Medicine/>

http://www.rsarchive.org/RelAuthors/GlasNorbert/How_To_Look_At_Illness.php

http://www.informedfamilylife.org/2005/01/childhood_fevers.html

<http://goodlight.net/vacexpert/suportng.htm>

<http://www.anthromed.org/Article.aspx?artpk=764>

http://www.anthroposophischeaerzte.de/fileadmin/gaad/PDF/Aktuelles/Leitlinien/Masern-Leitlinie_2009.pdf

<http://www.skeptdic.com/anthroposophicmedicine.html>

http://www.acsh.org/healthissues/newsID.412/healthissue_detail.asp

<http://www.alternative-doctor.com/vaccination/west.htm>

<http://www.anthromed.org/Article.aspx?artpk=432>