

THE PHILOSOPHY OF
SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY
BY RUDOLF STEINER

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1923

The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity by Rudolf Steiner.

This edition was created and published by Global Grey 2015.

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This latter is a knowledge which is a necessary prerequisite for composing. In composing, the law of composition serves life, that is, it serves true reality. In exactly the same sense philosophy is an art. All genuine philosophers have truly been artists in concepts. For them, human ideas become the material for art, and the scientific method becomes artistic technique. Abstract thinking thereby gains concrete, individual life. Ideas become life-forces. We then have not just a knowledge of things, but we have made knowledge into a real organism, ruled by its own laws; the reality of our active consciousness has risen beyond a mere passive reception of truths.

How philosophy as an art is related to human freedom (spiritual activity), what freedom is, and whether we do or can participate in it, is the principal problem dealt with in my book. All other scientific discussions are included solely because they ultimately throw light on this question which, in my opinion, is man's most immediate concern. These pages offer a "Philosophy of Freedom."

All science would be nothing but the satisfaction of idle curiosity if it did not strive to elevate the value of existence of the human personality. The sciences attain their true value only through presenting the significance of their results in relation to man. The ultimate goal of the individual cannot be the ennoblement of one single soul-faculty only, but a development of all the capacities that slumber within us. All knowledge has value only insofar as it is a contribution to the all-round unfolding of man's entire nature.

Therefore, in this book the relation between science and life is not regarded in the sense that man must bow down to ideas and let them enslave him; rather the relation should be that man conquers the world of ideas in order to make use of it for his human aims, which go beyond the aims of mere science.

One must be able to confront the idea in living experience, or else fall into bondage to it.
