

# **The Forces of Life**

## **Introduction**

Every living thing has a biography – a story of its life and development from birth to death. Each cell, each organism on the earth as a planet and the universe itself. Rudolf Steiner called this force, with its determining patterns, processes and guiding intelligences the Etheric World. Through a process of interaction and artistic endeavour, the work seeks to identify the different aspects of this world, the kind of thinking and reflection needed to understand it: what distinguishes a living organism from inert matter.

## **Outline of the course**

### **Processes**

The fundamental life process of Breathing, Warming, Digestion, Excretion and Absorption, Maintenance, Growth and Reproduction.

### **Patterns**

The basic blueprints - continuously replicated forms, shapes, sizes, patterns, colours, scents, tastes, chemical composition and other qualities in Space. They are created anew through a link between each seed and each with the surrounding universe.

### **Phases**

The phases of development, which likewise adhere to set patterns over time.

### **Cycles**

The cosmic and earthly cycles determining existence.

The cycle of the day

The cycle of the year

The water cycle,

The carbon or carbohydrate cycle

### **Elements**

The word Element means three different things: the components or parts of a thing, for example the Periodic Table of Elements or the elements of a model aeroplane; the raging elements wind, rain, lightning and thunder; and four or five elements Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Aether in the sense of the Greeks or the Space of the Indians. Rudolf Steiner further divided the elements Fire and Aether into Warmth, Light, Tone and Life.

### **Intelligences and Powers**

The intelligences and powers of creation – an ever rejuvenating and mutating progress in a universal biography harmoniously coordinated and structured. Rudolf Steiner points names at least some of these as Gnomes, Undines, Sylphs, Salamanders and the beings of the angelic hierarchies.

### **Notes to the Program**

Each of these themes is dealt with in four steps – introduction, discussion in small groups, artistic work and sharing with the whole group.

The principle underlying the artistic work is not to create art but rather to discover the basic patterns, the overall images, the explanatory diagram, the archetypal movements or gestures etc. that can give us insight into the themes.