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Where we are

*Dear Readers,*

*As we went about producing this volume, we – just like you – became swept up in the unfolding coronavirus pandemic. A recent piece by philosopher David Lauer for Deutschlandfunk radio spoke about how “the far-reaching standstill in our everyday world ... has not only robbed us of our ability to move physically, it has done even worse: we cannot even move forward in time. We simply cannot imagine our future at the moment,” says Lauer.*

*As you know, asking questions about future scenarios is of critical importance to STOCKMAR as well as all companies in the Neuguss Group. That is why we have taken the time to consider whether the content we produced pre-coronavirus would strike the right chord right now. We would like to share our articles with you and invite you to share your thoughts about them with us.*

*We would never have guessed that the subjects of illness and health could shape the public consciousness so dramatically. Our first article focuses on asking whether health concerns should also be thought of in figurative and comprehensive senses. After all, at STOCKMAR, I am not just in charge of running a business. I am responsible for an entire organism.*

*A lot has happened with us over the last year. We’re already getting mentally prepared for our 100th anniversary in 2022 and aren’t just looking deep into our archives but also far into the future. Our future orientation has been a tenet of our company since the very beginning. Even if this future is now bound to be different than the one we were expecting just a few months ago.*

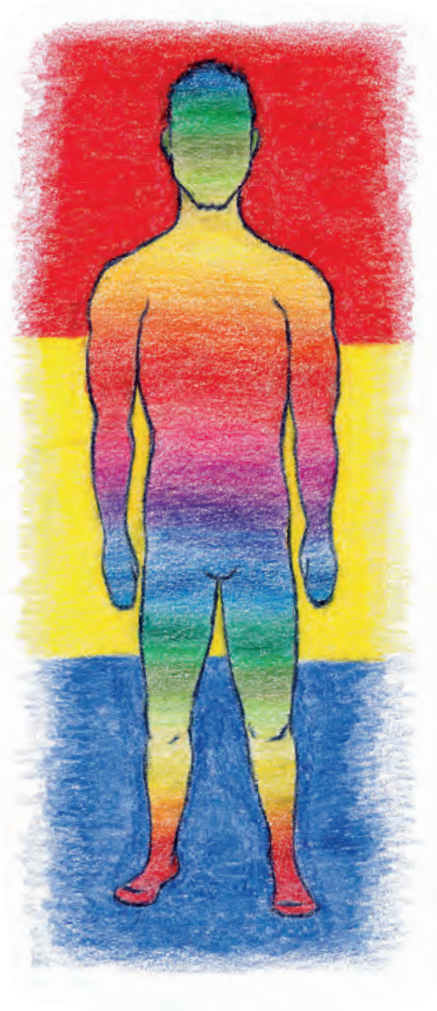
*Kind regards,*

*Inke Kruse*

# What is healthy?

Looking back on my first year as sole managing director of STOCKMAR, memories of moments both eventful and moving come flooding in. First, there was the big Waldorf 100, celebrating a century of Waldorf education. Strictly speaking, STOCKMAR came about as a result of the founding of these Waldorf schools when its teaching staff placed new demands on the quality of educational material and art supplies. Now, with 2022 just around the corner, we're gearing up for our own 100th anniversary. In light of this occasion, we have begun to reflect on our origins, our motivations and our role in the future. Last year, we took stock of our work for the greater good\* for the first time. This was quite an undertaking for an SME like ourselves, but one that encouraged us that we are on the right track, that our efforts are paying off.

And the question of what it means to be a healthy company—or indeed how far-reaching the term “healthy” should be—isn't only answered by looking back on all of these movements and pursuits. So this stocktaking doesn't just encompass the economic, but also the ecological and social state of a company. Perhaps it's no coincidence, then, that anthroposophic medicine is also turning 100 this year. Rudolf Steiner and the doctor Ita Wegmann developed the basis for anthroposophic medicine 100 years ago, declaring: “It doesn't run counter to conventional medicine, but alongside it.” In other words, it's not intended to replace conventional medicine, but to introduce homeopathic concepts to it. It's about answering the question: “Who are you and where do you come from?” This



## INSiGHTS

placed the focus (back) on the person and paved the way to profoundly individual methods of diagnosis and therapy. Just how pioneering this type of holistic medicine is becomes evident in the way it looks to the healing powers of nature and how to harness them. Anthroposophic medicine production takes into account not just how effective these treatments are, but also ecological and social components like biodynamic agriculture and development projects for improving the quality of life locally.

And this is precisely where we come full-circle. Even a company like STOCKMAR is only as healthy as it is aware of its economic, ecological and social impact. If we want to do healthy business, we can't be driven

solely by profit. This is how it has to be if we are to allow not just the world's bees to thrive, but our employees, partners and customers too.

# When is enough enough?

We as a society are becoming increasingly aware of the need to protect our environment and climate. Interestingly, this movement is being spearheaded by “Generation Greta”, a generation that itself has hardly left childhood and that is holding a mirror to older generations. The topic of sustainability is omnipresent, and the toy industry is also asking itself how to do away with disposable plastics and utilize recycling methods, thus eliminating toy waste by the ton. This inevitably leads to the question of whether it would make more sense to extend the service life of waste that can't be avoided. Just imagine repurposing things like boxes and other packaging materials into a

This poses the question of whether plastic is suitable for children at all, even in recycled form. We also have to ask ourselves the question “What do you really need?”

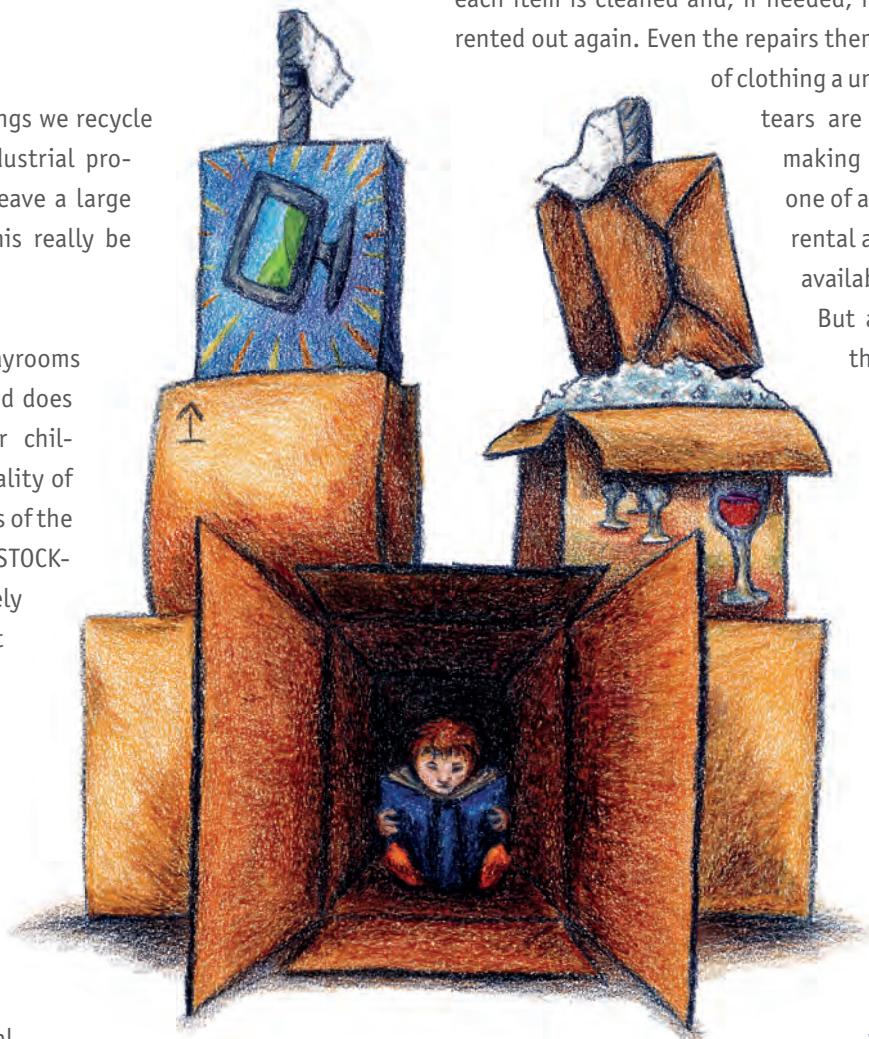
In addition to the question of “how much”, the question of “from where” seems to me to be of paramount importance; as we know, things that are made cheaply are often produced under catastrophic ecological and social conditions. The good old flea markets have experienced something of a renaissance both online and offline in recent years. The clothing company Räubersachen, for example, shows how parents' demand for high-quality, sustainable clothing can be turned into a wildly successful start-up idea by offering ecological clothing for babies and toddlers to rent. After the clothing has been returned, each item is cleaned and, if needed, repaired before they are rented out again. Even the repairs themselves give these items

of clothing a unique charm as holes and tears are colorfully patched up, making each piece absolutely one of a kind. Räubersachen is a rental and repair service that is available throughout Germany. But as with all good ideas, they often take flight on their own.

## PROSPeCTS

playhouse. But if the things we recycle were produced using industrial processes that necessarily leave a large carbon footprint, can this really be sustainable and healthy?

Do the shelves in our playrooms really need to be full, and does that actually foster our children's creativity? The quality of a given material as well as of the final product is part of STOCK-MAR's DNA. This is closely related to the effect that is felt by holding the product in your hands, the sensory experience we have when using it. Diversity in both perception and application sparks our imagination. In this sense, plastic is a rather one-dimensional material.



# Where we are

Over the last few months, we have been hard at work redesigning our website

As we watched our previous website grow organically throughout the years, we had to admit that, despite our best efforts, it was no longer the beautiful English garden it once was. We asked ourselves fundamental questions when determining how we should present ourselves online. Specifically: What is it, exactly, that makes a website? This has less to do with the “where” than it does with the “how” and “what”. And just as it is with our physical presence, our web presence takes into account how we want to be perceived at first glance. What is STOCKMAR’s aesthetic? We also asked ourselves questions like who should find us, who is trying to finding us and how can they find us?

We may take some detours (albeit very exciting and creative detours) when answering these questions, but the answers allow for more simplicity, compactness and clarity. In that respect, the text on our new website is much more sparse, but all the more clear. There are more eye-catching pictures as well, showing who we are, what makes us unique and what we (and our products) have to offer. As a global brand, we are using the re-launch to stick to our commitment to internationality. The new STOCKMAR website is in seven different languages.

And the underlying artistic process wasn’t just crucial to the illustrations; the true art was in placing the focus on people and their needs, and giving shape to all of the surrounding structures. Text, imagery and meaning. The very principles on which this brochure is based.



## ART & MOre

Our new website will be online this June at [www.stockmar.de](http://www.stockmar.de). We look forward to your visit—both here and there—and to your questions, comments and suggestions!



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