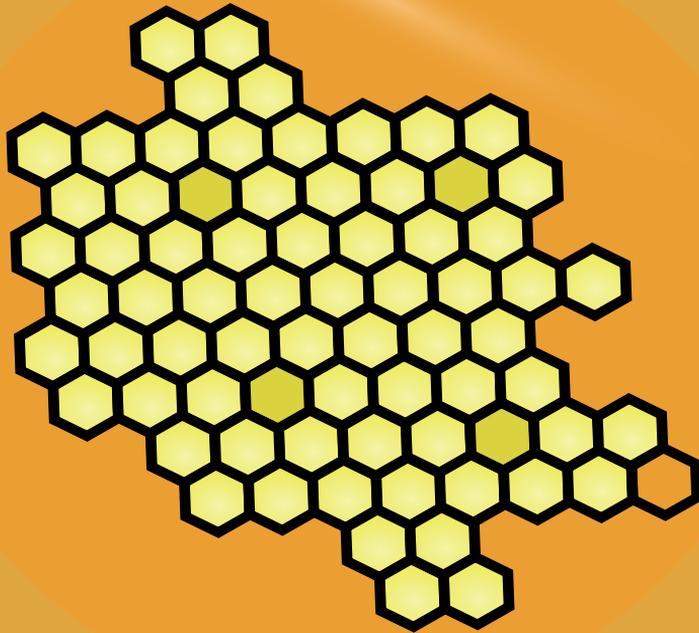


# International Theosophy Conferences

August 10 -13, 2017  
Philadelphia



## A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood – World's Healing Force –



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# A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood:

*World's Healing Force*



International Theosophy  
Conferences

2017

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood: World's Healing Force  
*August 10–August 13, 2017*

First edition © 2018

**Publisher**

I.S.I.S., Stichting  
The Hague, The Netherlands  
[www.theosophyconferences.org](http://www.theosophyconferences.org)

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ISBN 978-90-70163-77-8

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**Printed**

I.S.I.S. Foundation  
International Study-centre for Independent Search for Truth  
Blavatsky House  
De Ruyterstraat 74  
2518 AV The Hague, The Netherlands  
[info@stichtingisis.org](mailto:info@stichtingisis.org)  
[www.blavatskyhouse.org](http://www.blavatskyhouse.org)

*“...wedged as a stone with countless other stones  
which form the “Guardian Wall,” such is thy future  
if the seventh gate thou passest.”*



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# Conference Overview:

## A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood: World's Healing Force—and the “Philadelphia Declaration”

The 2017 International Theosophy Conference (ITC) in Philadelphia was designed as a working conference with the goal of determining what might be a further, more specific application of the Naarden Declaration that was created by ITC in 2014, which reads as follows:

Having respect for the diversity and freedom of the various Theosophical streams, we will endeavor to act as a Beacon of Light for bringing Theosophy in accordance with\* the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky and her Masters to the world. In an undogmatic manner and through harmonious cooperation we will strengthen the Theosophical Movement for the benefit of humanity.

In the spirit of unity and brotherhood, we endeavour to make Theosophy a living power in the world.

We commit ourselves through learning, training and cross pollination to popularize and keep the teachings alive for future generations.

\*in accordance with: in harmony with – in conformity with – consistent with

During the course of the conference in 2017, we did manage to produce a document — an explicit declaration of what is implicit in the more general, though very inspired, language of the Naarden Declaration. This document, produced in the City of Brotherly Love and the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence, has been fittingly entitled the “Philadelphia Declaration.”

This book is a record of the profound and inspiring lectures that were given on the deep relationships of Universal Brotherhood, a Nucleus and the Healing of Humanity, as well as lectures on the influence of *Theosophia* in the founding and shaping of The United States of America. The book contains the readings that were used as aids in the discussion circles, which were culled from prominent thinkers and writers of the various theosophical mainstreams. At the end of the book is featured the “Philadelphia Declaration” itself, representing our final harvesting and distillation of the conference as a whole. Very much the product of the entire group of conference attendees, yet crafted of compact, less-is-more, very caring language, the Philadelphia Declaration was shared on the last day of the conference in a very enthusiastic plenary session.

The reader will discern in this book (as well as in all of the previous reports of ITC conferences) what perhaps may be the rudiments of a new language of the sharing of Theosophy: a simple, honest, direct, yet joyous expression of truth that such a cross-pollination of diverse, earnest and inspired participants brings about. We hope you will enjoy reading this report as it reveals something of the organic, universal and non-sectarian *process* by which the Philadelphia Declaration was generated.

The Editors

How Can ITC be a Practical  
Example of Brotherhood, a  
Nucleus and Healing?

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# How Can Itc Aim at Being A Practical Example of Brotherhood, A Nucleus And A Healing Force?

Gene Jennings

By fulfilling these necessities: By understanding 1) our Roots, 2) the True Teachings, 3) Keeping the teachings pure and clear, 4) Respecting differences, 5) Engaging in Respectful communication, 6) Working together around a common purpose and goal, 7) Serving humanity and the world.

A nucleus is a dynamic center, representative of the entire scope of evolutionary potential, contained in code in the heart of the cell. It is a self-generative, self-organizing, intelligible force, a self-moving and reproducing monad, holding the power of a self-directive will. It is capable of becoming self-aware, self-reflective, and responsible for the expression of form and process based evolutionary unfolding. This it does either in harmony with the Law of existence, or disharmoniously, while guiding all operations in manifestation. The inward power and force of this monad, rests within the Divine Wisdom inherent in life, and its external Dynamic expression of Force works for the evolutionarily progressive and harmonious good, which is the highest healing possible, that related to karma.

The nucleolus, within the nucleus, literally is the messenger maker, that which puts together the amino acid sequence and codes that construct the proteins responsible for the functionality of the cell. It is the directing agent within, the inner heart responsible for all the information and knowledge concerning the growth, development and processes of that cell.

## What is our Theosophical Root?

The source, or Root from which all Divine Wisdom, as theosophy arises, comes through “The Arhats of the fire mist of the 7th rung”, which are one remove from the Root Base of their Hierarchy, the highest on Earth”. “This Root Base ... This Wondrous Being descended from a high region ... in the early part of the Third Age, before the separation of the sexes of the third race. ... These sons of wisdom ... were a conscious production, ... a portion of the race already animated with the divine spark of spiritual superior intelligence. ... It was at first a wondrous Being, called the Initiator, and after him, a group of semi divine and semi human beings. They are those in whom are said to have incarnated the highest Dhyanis, (Nirmanakaya’s), Munis, and Rishis from previous Manvantaras, to form the nursery for future human adepts, on this earth.

The Being just referred to, ... is the Tree from which, in subsequent ages, all the great historically known Sages and Hierophants, such as the Rishi, Kapila, Hermes, Enoch, Orpheus, etc. have branched off. As objective man, he is the mysterious personage about whom legends are rife in the East, especially among the Occultist and the students of the Sacred Science. ... It is he again who holds spiritual sway over the initiated Adepts throughout the whole world. ... It is under the direct silent guidance of this Maha Guru, that all other less divine teachers ... became the guides of early humanity.

And, as said by another “Great Teacher” concerning their duty to humanity, “The sun of theosophy must shine for all, not for a part. There is more to this movement than you have yet had an inkling of, and the work of the TS is linked in with similar work that is secretly going on in all parts of the world.”

The term Universal Brotherhood is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us, ... It (UB) is the only secure foundation for universal morality.” *ML* - 17)

Hence this world movement, although called Theosophic, belongs to, is for, and remains in the service of the world as humanity.

## **The True Teachings and Keeping Them Pure**

The teachings of theosophy then, are the “Secret Doctrine of the East”. The “Wisdom-Religion or Divine Wisdom, the substratum and basis of all the world religions and philosophies. ... It is divine ethics” and that force which harmonizes perfectly the Divine with the Human in humanity. (*Glossary* 328.)

Theosophy is a science of life and soul, reflecting the laws of nature and their intimate relations with and amongst all things. Theosophy is universal omniscience, while any theosophical society or organization at best is only a poor reflection, an imperfect concrete body, with its members, not entirely free from sin, blame, misunderstanding, misrepresentation, or inappropriate application.

The genesis of this wisdom religion dates from the era of the Primeval Instructors of the three earlier races, being led by karma, to incarnate in our humanity, striking the keynote of that secret science “which countless generations of subsequent adepts have expanded since then in every age, where they checked its doctrines by personal observation and experience.

The bulk of this knowledge, which no man is able to possess in its fullness, constitutes that which we now call Theosophy or Divine Knowledge. “It is from this Wisdom Religion that all the

various individual Religions ... have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. ... Every such religion, or religious offshoot, ... started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother Source.

The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions ... does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings.” (“Is theosophy a religion?”)

HPB goes on to say:

It is only theosophy well understood that can save the world from despair, by reproducing social and religious reform. ...”  
“The doctrines, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one’s reasoning powers and awakening the inner in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal.” ... Practical Theosophy is not one Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal coach, a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for the lives to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries within themselves, instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science. (“Is Theosophy Religion?”)

Therefore the only truth that we can know of Theosophy as such, clear and unconfused, is that given by HPB and her teachers through their writings.

Therefore it is this community of Spiritually Enlightened, if not Perfected souls, existing as Human Beings, working throughout the ages for humanity, whom we refer to as Mahatma’s and their message through HPB, typically unseen and most often

un-thanked, that ITC must rely upon, or else it has no foundation, no truth, and no inner nucleus from which to draw inspiration, to work ceaselessly in the world for humanity.

## **RESPECT Necessary for Nuclear Bonding**

To have good relations and communication, even amongst disagreement, it is important to have empathic respect. This is the ability to take on the perspective and belief of the other in order to examine such a position and facilitate understanding both pro and con. It allows one to respect the position, or frame of reference, of the other, even if we disagree with it. This guarantees a more genuine understanding, and position from which challenging concerns can be thoroughly addressed.

We must therefore be at least willing if not able, to take on the others point of view, their level of understanding from the tradition they were adopted into, and the expressions therein used.

Additionally, we must respect their efforts in the work for the Great Cause, the methods of working they have chosen to spread the word, their reasons and if possible their motives for doing so. With such respect, we can have a mindful and meaningful communication, perhaps clarifying at times unclear statements, doctrine, or words not in accord with the teaching as given. Without this, there is likely to be more confusion and antagonism, which are what the negative forces wish for us, to keep us separate and divided as a theosophic force for the world!

In a letter to AP Sinnett, our teacher states,

The only thing we deplore is the sorrow of the world, which can only be cut off by the philosophy you were such a potent factor in bringing to the west, and which now other disciples are promulgating also. This is the age of the common people although you may not agree ... and as we see forces at work

and gathering by you unseen, we must commend all efforts that give widespread notice to even one word of the philosophy.

Therefore our teachers appreciate all who work for theosophy, each in their own way.

## **The Importance of Mindful Communication Concerning a Common Purpose and Goal in ITC**

To establish genuine trust, and be successful with meaningful communication so that theosophic work can be fulfilled, we must keep in mind the “being of the other”. We must be flexible enough to be mindful of their expectations, points of view, frames of reference within which decisions are being made, depth of perception into the maya of the world, their desires, hopes, motives, and levels of understanding, for if these are not matching between communicators there can only be discord, misunderstanding and strife, as one will be speaking from a perspective that the other knows nothing of.

Meaningful and Mindful Communication necessitates deep listening, suspending premature beliefs, negating personal criticisms and judgments, checking assumptions, ensuring accurate representation, asking clarifying questions, respectful acceptance although not necessarily agreement; and what might be further helpful is perhaps understanding the culture within which words are used to better appreciate the expressions of a language and its meaning.

Communications should occur in a way that builds and reinforces, not destroying early bonds being forged through the influence of our growing nucleus and membership. We must

strengthen the cohesive force of this brotherhood, first amongst ourselves, then with humanity, through deep understanding, good will, compassionate recognition, altruistic service, generosity, charity, and love for the spiritual nature of humanity, while at the same time working to ameliorate the suffering of the world.

Although meaningful communication like this may seem, and can be extremely challenging, it cannot and should not be able to destroy our TRUE brotherhood and solidarity in the work of theosophy, but on the contrary, strengthen it!

When we arrive at communicating openly and honestly, questions, often difficult and thought in silence, may become vocally asked, to be clarified.

Such as:

- \* Whether others study the original writings of HPB, as coming direct from her
- \* Or questions concerning- misrepresentations of theosophical doctrine that might occur at times, either purposely or due to misunderstanding, instead of pure theosophy
- \* Allegations of communication with the “Masters” and their giving “orders” [which is not in the spirit of how they work, as they themselves have said they never order but influence and guide if conditions are ripe;]
- \* The mixing of non theosophical doctrine with teachings that are theosophical and presenting them to an unknowing public as if they were pure theosophy thus destroying the integrity of the original message
- \* Questions about discussing what are considered sacred and private teachings - in public and

indiscriminately - from the views of those believing these things to be sacred

\* Questions about successorship, alleged leaders, the claiming of occult status, and persons verbalizing that they are in communication with the Masters of wisdom, perhaps to sway minds, although this is not known for certain

\* Use of pictures and “sacred names”

\* And whether cross-pollination means the muddying of the original teachings with everything that wears the title “Theosophy”

All of these concerns, which can and have interfered with real communication, hindering true work together, at some time must be addressed so that no obstacles remain, able to prevent that sacred work from being done together, for the establishment of a true nucleus of Universal Brotherhood and moral virtue in the world.

Anything less than this type of mindful meaningful respect and communication, can only reflect a partial, prejudicial, obscuration by, and input of, personality and its desires for one reason or another. And we know that personality is a false illusion constructed out of ignorance, hence its views that create and activate a me versus you, right versus wrong, liking and dislike, better or worse, prejudice and bias, leading to deterioration in communication and genuine listening, is a negative demonic force we must rid ourselves of in this work. Putting it aside, HPB tells us, “UNION IS STRENGTH”; and for every reason private differences must be sunk in united work for our Great Cause” (Annual convention 1889)

It is only “True Theosophy in action – that - is a Teacher and a Power – for the world.”

## **How do we prepare ourselves to communicate meaningfully as a nucleus?**

By transforming ourselves. Instead of hiding behind anonymous comments, we must practice and exercise transparency, honesty, clarity, open communication, and have accountability for the life and meaning of our words and actions. We must be willing to change our minds if the truth of a fact has been presented with evidence. We should speak and work impersonally, dissolving that egoic presence which wants to be right not wrong, and avoid personal opinions not based on facts. We must not hold grudges based on differences but understand those differences with respectful acceptance, although not necessarily agreeing. We must cultivate the absence of every ill feeling, getting rid of backstabbing comments, non-virtuous emotional speech, and instead sending good will and compassionate understanding to all living beings.

We should be dedicated to negotiating all differences until we come to a conclusion that is in the best interest of the many. We should relinquish our vanities, greed, ambition, selfishness, egocentric views, hypocrisy, and sensuous addictions, fighting within ourselves national, cultural and individual prejudices. We should understand the implications of our words and the effect they have on others.

If we are able to do so, we will find ourselves becoming the impersonal reflection of our Spiritual Egos, and Great Teachers in the world, thereby becoming impersonal centers and foci through

which, and towards which, those higher benevolent influences flow for the benefit of humanity.

## **Putting it Together: Can we be a Nucleus of Brotherhood and a Healing Power?**

Yes, if we Know: For whom, and what Great Cause we do this work, knowing that it is a completely impersonal and voluntary work, ITC, in its efforts, should focus on those actions amongst theosophists, and also through theosophists, that establishes such a nucleus based on theosophical Principles. And through its members and associates, extend such influence in the world, helping to ameliorate the CAUSES, leading to the hardships and sufferings that humanity continuously and habitually encounters, over and over again, as well as helping to raise that same humanity upward and inward along its spiritual path.

For it is only by a deep sharing, understanding and work for the intents and motives of pure theosophy, as given by HPB and her Great Teachers, amongst theosophists, working together in and for the world, saturated by the soothing influence of brotherhood, along with the practical application of Buddha's esoteric doctrines, that the natural combative instinct inherent in all animal form, and the struggle for life and survival, can be overcome and relinquished. And if pure theosophy can rid humanity of such combative instincts and life struggles, which only lead to war, disease, death and useless dying, it is the Only truth that holds the solution of every problem!

And so we repeat; By understanding our roots; Knowing the original Teachings; keeping clear the Teachings and directives; respecting differences; respectful communication and

understanding; and by working together with a common purpose and goal, as we serve the world, ITC can become a practical example of brotherhood, as well as a dynamic power and force for healing a misunderstanding / struggling humanity, guided by the gentle influence of The Divine Wisdom of Our Teachers.

And we can only perform this sacred task correctly if we know the heart and soul, the core teachings of our Teachers, and their message, as they have given it.

We end on this quote from the Great Teachers:

He who does not feel competent to grasp the noble idea sufficiently to work for it, need not undertake a task too heavy for him. But there is hardly a Theosophist in the whole Society unable to effectually help it by correcting erroneous impressions of outsiders, (and perhaps amongst theosophists) by himself actually propagating this idea of the Brotherhood of Humanity.

*Namaste.*

# Hello Philadelphia, This is Brasilia Calling

Jan Nicolaas Kind

Gene Jennings, Herman Vermeulen and myself will put before you the question: How can ITC aim at being a practical example of Brotherhood, a Nucleus, and a Healing force? Well, you'll agree with me that it is a rather ambitious and challenging sort of take-off for this conference. From my point view ITC is a unique body. It is not another Theosophical Society, it is a platform where all who consider themselves Theosophists, belonging to one the various vehicles, but also nonaffiliated students come together.

A friend of mine once compared ITC and its platform function with the United Nations and although it comes close, I would rather draw a comparison with the Commonwealth of Nations, undoubtedly one of the most democratic organisations in existence. The Commonwealth of Nations is a voluntary association of around 52 sovereign states. Nearly all of them are former British colonies or dependencies of those colonies. No one government in the Commonwealth exercises power over the others, as is the case in a political union. It is an international organization in which countries with diverse social, political, and economic backgrounds are regarded as equal in status, and cooperate within a framework of common values and goals. Each member-country has complete freedom to express its own opinion about world affairs, and when the heads meet, they never take a vote. They discuss matters and come to an informal agreement. However, as is the case inside the Theosophical movement, the Commonwealth contains so many different sorts of people, from so many different parts of the world, that inevitably there are disagreements. But it does not seem unreasonable to say, as Prince

Philip said, that "the Commonwealth is the nearest thing we have to the Brotherhood of Man."

Many wise women and men have written about Brotherhood. What is there still to add?

As in the case with the Commonwealth of Nations, here on ITC's platform we meet and our backgrounds are diverse, Theosophically speaking even very diverse, and although we consider ourselves Theosophists, over the past, let's say 122 years, we've gone out of our way to act in a manner among ourselves you wouldn't expect from folks who are supposed to be tolerant free-thinkers, claiming that we should strive for Brotherhood.

Although it is a bumpy ride at times, we can all agree that Brotherhood exists, being a fact in nature, and in that sense it has always existed and it will always remain. But if we are talking about the realization of brotherhood it is a different question. In this context Adyar-icton Joy Mills often mentioned, that we went astray, we had left our "home", and that it is time to return to it, but in order to do so we need to heal and have a serious look at ourselves.

To return home, to heal and to become whole again in the broadest sense, we have to be aware of the Self which is the first step toward greater awareness of the divine dimension in oneself and in life. It's all about knowing who we really are, not what others might tell us we should be. To reach knowledge of our transcendental, spiritual Self, we must begin to perceive the obstructions in the personality. We recognize our habits and emotional reactions, our prejudices, fears, or better said, the psychological patterns that largely govern the ways we handle situations and our feelings.

These patterns are not necessarily harmful or bad, but we must find the ones that are obstructions to us spiritually. Because if we do not, they can blind us to other, freer possibilities for living more spontaneously in the moment and can distort the way we see ourselves, our lives and others. As we become less dominated by habitual patterns, we can learn to live increasingly from a higher perspective and our problems, differences, become less urgent and

we see our lives and our fellow seekers in an overall, balanced, and mature manner, and our work for ITC offers us a challenging possibility.

Meeting on the ITC platform, weeding out negative qualities, our prejudices, misunderstandings, but also having the courage to detach from our beliefs if needed, replacing them with other and positive ideas and the willingness to be open at all times is most certainly a long-range project so patience and tolerance are required.

Working with Theosophists from other streams, we learn that a system of knowledge, or a system of thought, per definition, is not absolute. We need to observe and investigate that what is handed out to us, explore, and verify it, but in the end, we must decide for ourselves what applies to us, never on the authority of someone else. That is why the FREEDOM OF THOUGHT principle, so clearly formulated by the TS-Adyar in a resolution implemented in 1924, gives us tools to always remain seekers for Truth, never proclaiming it.

After having participated in several ITC gatherings I came to realize that for some of us it is hard, if not impossible to open up for other Theosophical approaches, authors or ways of thinking. To be clear, to be open doesn't necessarily mean that we would need to have an agreement on all topics. There are elephants in the room, and those need to be addressed but on the other hand, our diversity could be our strength instead of our weakness. We all aim for the same, the roads toward that goal however might differ, but that should never be an obstacle for us to come together to share, to experience and above all to learn.

It might be easy to actually talk about the elephants in the room and that we need to deal with them, but it ain't that simple to break that dialogue open, so let me just dispatch four elephants to you and all based on apparent misconceptions and from an Adyar perspective:

1. William Judge or Mr. Judge as he is often referred to by ULT students, is fully recognized as one of the three principle founders of the TS. As such he is mentioned on the official website of the TS-Adyar. All of his works are available in Adyar bookstores and libraries.
2. Students in the TS Adyar do study the original works by H.P.B. It needs to be underscored here that the Freedom of Thought Resolution allows Adyar members to follow any line of Theosophical literature. There are no restrictions.
3. Although Annie Besant, C. W. Leadbeater and Geoffrey Hodson are distinguished authors, C.W.L. and Hodson typically representing the clairvoyant approach, in the Adyar environment it not so that they are all determining or exercise any authority over Adyar members. There are many other authors and leaders who follow different lines in high regard such as: N. Sri Ram, Joy Mills, John Algeo, Geoffrey Farthing, Shirley Nicholson and Ianthe Hoskins, just to mention a few.
4. Krishnamurti, who left the TS in 1929, is by many Adyar members considered to be an exceptional author, an authentic philosopher and an inspiring teacher, as there were many like him. Think of: Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, the Mother and Sri Ramana Maharishi and many others.

By working together, we will come to see that our diversity will work for, instead of against us. Each one of us, no matter what vehicle we belong to, must undertake that search for truth. Truth cannot be wrapped up in a book, or a teaching which solely functions as a pointer, or even an organization. The French novelist Marcel Proust in his book *In Search of Lost Time*, wrote:

We are not provided with wisdom, we must discover it for ourselves, after a journey through the wilderness which no one else can take for us, and effort which no one can spare us.

Within ITC context, upholding its purposes, after one hundred and something years of quarrels, splits, disagreements, and accusations, inspired by the full comprehension of what Brotherhood means, Theosophists ought to come home again, and sit at one table listening to each other without any preconditions.

For now, and the next couple of days the Friends Center in Philadelphia is our home; here is that podium where we meet. Our backgrounds are to be respected. In the discussions we will engage in during the study circles, following the dialogue principle, no one is right and no one is wrong, and any one can say what she or he sincerely feels should be said. ITC's second purpose also is very clear: we want to foster mutual, meaningful intercommunication, understanding and respect among the Theosophical mainstreams, stimulating thereby continuous spiritual Unity.

To be active in any Theosophical cell or group calls for responsibility. The commitment to serve cannot be taken lightly. If indeed we want to help this terribly fragmented world, if we really want to be that healing force, it is apparent that studying Theosophy alone is far from sufficient. Theosophical studies are often regarded as being purely intellectual exercises. These studies however should provide paths toward tools and practicalities to lend helping hands in the world around us, making others aware of the fact that there is a Divine Wisdom as old as the planet.

If Brotherhood is a given fact, then how are we to come to that nucleus?

This can only be accomplished by going out into the world, setting practical examples and by making Theosophy a living force in our own lives.

In her book *Human Regeneration*, the former International president of the TS Adyar Radha Burnier stated:

Theosophists do not seek wisdom for themselves but for the world they live in and the more deeply devoted they are, the more they can contribute to the regeneration of mankind, and the more ardently they seek to understand themselves and the world, they will find that they are able to penetrate further into the secret of life.

So far, I have spoken briefly about brotherhood and healing. Let's focus on the nucleus. William Judge at one point in time, referring to a discussion he had with HPB in London, remembered what she in her own candid way had told him regarding the nucleus:

You were not directed to found and realize a Universal Brotherhood, but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulations can begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view.

Joy Mills—I referred to her earlier in this presentation—a distinguished author and well-known Theosophist, wrote in her book *One True Adventure*::

Members of the Society have difficulty forming a nucleus (which surely means a living centre) of a genuine brotherhood. So, to what extent have we engaged in forming a NUCLEUS of brotherhood?

We are talking here about a cell, A living expression within an already existing and larger body.

Clearly a nucleus as such doesn't mean that there is any connection with an elite. In the past there has been some confusion about that. International Theosophy Conferences, that is all of you present in Philadelphia, but also those members who couldn't come, principally speaking, form that integrated nucleus: you are to be an inspired, motivated, active, unselfish group of women and men who are taking on the challenge to come together with

a goal to preserve, vitalize and keep the teachings accessible for those who knock, driven by an attitude of altruistic service.

If we, as partners in Theosophy, as seekers for Truth, are able to work and study together, with a clear objective to go out into world, not only through this ITC platform during ITC gatherings, but especially in the months which lie “in between the meetings”, making cross-pollination factual, we set out on a journey of which most of us will not see the end; didn't we learn that we must try to think in centuries?

Why are we doing all this? What is ITC's specific function here? Does it do something the main streams don't do?

Let me try to elaborate on this:

If in 1875 there was a good reason for the Masters to allow our vehicle to start off, to make known through their channel, H.P.B., that such a thing as Theosophy exists, although not all of them were equally enthusiastic, we can earnestly ask ourselves the question whether Theosophy is still relevant in our day and age. But let's first look at that year, 1875. The world had taken a materialistic turn and mankind erroneously thought it knew everything there was to know. It is a few decades after the finish of the industrial revolution: the first trains ride; Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone in 1876; Thomas Edison invents the tin foil phonograph in 1877; Charles Parson patents the first steam turbine in 1884 and in 1887; Emile Berliner invents the gramophone. Also, most of the social, political and financial systems we see in 2017 found their origin in that same era: socialism, communism, liberalism, parliamentarism, presidentialism, conservatism, capitalism and all those countless other “isms”; so much was going on in the world, when on November 17, 1875 in New York, the TS was founded.

So, we are 142 years on the road with our movement. That is just a tiny drop on eternity's hotplate. Is there an analogy with what happened around 1875? The answer, without a doubt is, yes: so much is going on right now. Technical developments are hard to follow, we're all interconnected through tablets, smartphones and computers. Medical science is able to cure many types of cancer

that 25 years ago were incurable, we can transplant hearts, livers and lungs. Through nanotechnology it might become possible that in a nearby future, radioation and chemo therapy won't be administered any longer, not to speak of what possibilities will come to light through stem-cell research. We send satellites into space that will travel far beyond our solar system in search of earth-like planets. Within a few decades we will send people on a mission to land on Mars.

But has the world really changed for the better, since 1875, in spite of all the so-called progress? Have we really been able to deepen ourselves? Has mankind demonstrated that it can let go of all things personal? Did we do away with the "I"? Was it possible for us, earthlings, to grasp the notion that, as much as this was the case in 1875, religious misuse, religious misunderstanding and religious misinterpretation have brought our civilization once more to the brink of a total collapse?

So, if in 1875 the Masters did have good reasons to initiate another impulse, I dare to state that in 2017 the motives are still there, but now a hundredfold, because since the founding of the TS we have been introduced to new phenomena such as corporate greed; inadequate educational systems; far reaching corruption; environmental disasters, which are fully ignored by a few who stubbornly deny climate-change; inequality among the peoples of this planet; severe famine; and the darkish grip that the almighty stock markets have on our daily lives.

ITC, through its gatherings, publications and cross pollination, aims, first and foremost, at being a practical example of Brotherhood, a Nucleus, and a Healing force. While I realize that we are in the midst of *Kali Yuga* still, consequently, it might take tens of thousands of years before we eventually will embark on the ascending arch, we as Theosophists, working from our own perspectives, and through ITC, can help, guide and nurture mankind—while pointing to a better comprehension of these disturbing processes I have just described.

The nucleus is who we are. A cell being a part of a larger body and within that concept, we're alike. We have taken it upon ourselves to overcome apparent hindrances from the past, without, and I must stress this, losing our own identities. Let's scare all those elephants out of the room. All streams are a fact, and it shall remain that way. Through what International Theosophy Conferences has developed into, thanks to all the input of so many, we are able to work hard towards a Theosophical future.

To conclude my presentation: active co-workers of ITC form the nucleus. It is a living entity and as such co-workers can connect with each other, commemorate together, study together, share literature and articles or support an initiative together. I am thinking of countless possibilities of support that could be given to one of the many projects the TOS is involved in. Hopefully ITC's platform encounters will cause us to be inspired and enlightened so that when the moment comes, after an ITC gathering and we're back in our own environment, in our own lodges, as Students of the ULT, as members of the TS Point Loma-Blavatsky House, as TS-Adyar members or as nonaffiliated students, we, fully energized and motivated, take on the task that is waiting for us.

In a nutshell:

1. On Brotherhood: let's come home again ...
2. A Nucleus: that's what and who we are ...
3. A Healing Force: we can heal others, if indeed we can apply that process on ourselves ... FIRST

# How can ITC be a practical example of Brotherhood, a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, and a Healing Force?

Herman C. Vermeulen

I just realized during the introduction of Gene speaking about how ITC started, that for me this is the 10th ITC Conference in a continued row.

Let us share some ideas on how this Conference can be a practical example of Brotherhood, a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, and a Healing Force — and that requires something. We cannot organize a Conference on this subject, with this title, without having a moment of intro-inspection about what we have to do for the members, the board and ITC as an organization in a greater whole. For it will not be constructive if we start to speak about how everything should be done, if we don't have some moments of self-reflection of what we as ITC are.

Is there a need for a healing force in the world? Yes, I think that there is an extreme need, looking into the world and seeing all the problems people have, and realizing that Theosophia has all the solutions to these problems while at the same time Theosophia is hardly known. Yes, there is a huge need.

Seeing all the problems in the world, we have to ask ourselves: where is Theosophy with all its wisdom; what is the reason that we are not sitting in the front row in all discussions to find solutions? Sadly we have to conclude that we have not developed the power to be a well-known source of help and support.

This shows that if we want to be such a source, we have to do something. We cannot force people to become a Theosophist, but we can work hard to make people aware of Theosophy's existence, and above all, of its tremendous value. This is to me an essential step in the process ITC is going through.

Let us see which steps have to be made to develop ITC into a powerful influence to make Theosophy worldwide known and respected.

## Coming From Different Theosophical Streams

Coming from different traditions can be seen as a problem. In the past 100 plus years Theosophists and theosophical organisations have not all developed in the same direction. Maybe it is even our strength — coming from different theosophical streams, different traditions, different backgrounds. Diversity stimulates us to become more universal. To overcome the walls between organisations is a first step in the process to spread Theosophy. How to overcome the differences and work from our common core? That is a learning process. We have already seen that studying together has helped us to overlook and even break down the walls which have been built over the many years.

And not only study but also real, practical co-operation makes us stronger in our task. One nice example of a better co-operation between the streams is the production of our ITC 2016 Santa Barbara Report. Jonathan Colbert showed us that it was a joint project, done by the Santa Barbara Theosophists (ULTSB) and the Blavatskyhouse Theosophists (TSPL), in creating this Report.

And it worked marvelously well — I think that this is a taste of what is to come.

## **A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood: a Definition**

If we want to be a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, let us first see what such a nucleus is. I am aware of the fact that the coming days we will have a number of presentations and discussions about what a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood is, but I need a simple working definition for making my ideas clear.

In a good dictionary you will find the following description of a nucleus: the part of something that is central to its existence or character: concentrating core activities. An essential or unchanging group of people forming the central part of a larger body.

What can we conclude from this, applying it to a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood? That within the Universal Brotherhood there is a core that is a living example of that fundamental principle of Universal Brotherhood.

Seen in the light of the ITC Purposes, this means: we have to radiate these principles into the theosophical world. A Nucleus or core, emitting the high, spiritual, mental ideas of Universal Brotherhood into the theosophical world — and that requirement is not easy. At Naarden in 2014 we formulated this in the ITC Purposes: four basic ideas, based on the Naarden Declaration — you can find them on our website. In the Naarden Declaration we defined what we want to be or have to be. And now it is our task and mission to actually be that.

## How Can ITC Inspire all Theosophical Organisations?

How can ITC be a radiating core for all theosophical mainstreams and for all people who are interested in Theosophy? We can only inspire if we as ITC are inspired ourselves.

We must realize that we can only be successful in healing if we as ITC are healthy ourselves. So we have to turn inwards and find our inner strength, our inner harmony, in order to be an inspiration to the outside world. What we have to learn is to be a living example, which means for us, homework: dedication, perseverance, and a lot of thinking.

Each of the theosophical mainstreams is a living expression of its active members

Besides their practically identical Objects, each of the theosophical mainstreams is a living expression of its active members, has its own *Swabhâva*. There is no problem in it, but to inspire each other, mutual contact and exchange of ideas between the theosophical organisations and their members is necessary. We have to deal with quite a wide variety of theosophical ideas, but the good thing is, that we have a strong common ground: the Three Fundamental Propositions. And all ideas circulating in the theosophical world, must be examined whether they can be traced back to the fundamental principles as expressed in the works of H.P. Blavatsky and her Masters.

As someone reasonably trained in mathematics, I know there are a number of mathematical principles (hypotheses), that are the fundamentals for all complex mathematical ideas. Sometimes people need 500 pages of mathematical equations to prove a very complex mathematical idea and to trace it back to the mathematic hypothesis. Sometimes it is challenging for theosophical ideas as well to trace them back to the Three Fundamental Principles of the SD.

## Being a Nucleus

Let us start with one of my favorite paradoxes of Lao Tse's *Tao Te King*: paradox 38:

A truly good man is not aware of his goodness, and is therefore good.

A foolish man tries to be good, and is therefore not good.

Good is something you are at your core; you can not be otherwise. Let us use this wisdom of Lao Tse. As long as we think we have to be a Nucleus, we are not a Nucleus. We simply have to act from the core principles and not try to be it, regardless of where we stand. Lao-Tse says 'a truly good man is not aware of his goodness' — and that is the reason why he is good. This means for ITC, that there is a critical mental step to be made.

For we may think from the above "we have to be perfect before we can 'enter the arena' and help to heal the world." No, I think we have to make the mental step to act from the core principles, and by working from the core we will become a better and better Nucleus. It's a state of mind: by being it we develop the needed skills. The same we see in Mahâyâna Buddhism: we have to act from the Other Shore, not try to go there. Being a Nucleus is a state of mind, and has nothing to do with technicalities.

## How do we Help Each Other to Give Theosophy the Right Place in This World?

Giving Theosophy the right place in the world is a very important and needed thing, and we have to support each other in this work.

As we already stated in the Naarden Declaration:

We commit ourselves through learning, training and cross-pollination to popularize and keep the teachings alive for future generations.

## **Cross-pollination**

As we have learned during the Naarden ITC Conference, where we have drawn up this Declaration, the term ‘cross-pollination’ generated a lot of discussion between the English speaking members, despite the fact that the word was suggested by an American lady. In these discussions we have given it a lot of thought, which was in itself a good process. For members from other language areas, it is a simple concept: it is the bee flying around and bringing from one flower something good and fertilizing to the other flowers, and so on. In fact a simple idea.

What has to be done is “Theosophical cross-pollination”, which means that we have to exchange bi-directional what we have. This is how we learn from each other. And if we say “I can learn nothing from others”, then we are closing ourselves off from any fertilization and we are more or less becoming a ‘closed system’, a closed vessel. You see: openness and willingness to share.

## **Learning, Training, Cross-pollination**

Let us look at the steps to be taken: learning, training, cross-pollination.

Studying literature is first; to understand the literature is second; to become the principles is third; and to cross-pollinate is fourth. Going through this process is what we need each other for.

First: How do we study our literature?

In the Theosophical Society Point Loma tradition we are very aware of the fact that we have to work and study together with many members. We have to exchange ideas in the group and support each other in how to understand the literature and how to express the theosophical ideas in a way everybody outside the TSPL will understand. The way to present these ideas is a continuous process of improvement. This takes time, much more time than when you work alone. But it is a very lovely learning process, in which we all grow. That is the reason why all our preparations of significant events, important presentations etc., are done this way.

In fact, our ITC Conferences are also a way to study together. If you read the ITC 2015 and 2016 Reports, you see that there is much theosophical knowledge brought together, presented in a modern way, in modern terms — and you can learn a lot from it. When you attend the Conferences and listen to these ideas, you will appreciate them for sure, but in reading over the Reports, you discover many more details and information, and you will come to a deeper understanding.

These Conferences are especially valuable to learn together to present Theosophy in a contemporary way. We must realize that if we want to go out and popularize the theosophical ideas without violating the principles — as the Maha-Chohan asks us to do — we have to train ourselves to bring these principles in easy, everyday words and sentences, with easy and everyday examples that everybody is able to recognize and understand. For we cannot expect from people outside the theosophical groups and circles, that they can step in and instantly understand *The Secret Doctrine* as their first studybook — or any other difficult book on Theosophy. This joint, impersonal training is what makes us grow into a Nucleus.

# Training: Belief, Trust, Knowing, Understanding

There are four phases, four steps in the process of obtaining wisdom: belief, trust, knowing, and understanding.

## What is Belief?

Believing an idea means that we accept or reject an idea without any investigation. We accept things blindly, passively, “because he says so” or “because I just like the idea.”

A first step is to examine what we believe and what we really know or understand. Everyone is free to believe as much as he wants, but this only gives us an idea where we currently stand. Please realize that we believe more than we think, that we just accept many ideas without any investigation.

For instance, a quote from some literature is not a proof of truth — we can accept it, but we need to work with it and learn and understand its value. To convince someone else we use quite often a quote, but however beautiful the quote may be or how much we like it, a quote is not yet a proof of truth. Exchanging quotes is not exchanging truth, even if these quotes are coming from the most trusted sources.

This means that we have to think it through and find its inner meaning. Just believing it will not help us very much in our development of Wisdom. To make progress in developing wisdom we must make ourselves insensitive; we have to be neutral, to the origin of the information. We have to be objective.

In that search a strange thing happens. When the information comes from our own background, we accept it without many questions. When it comes from another TS tradition, we often find it questionable, and we don't like it, without any investigation.

But when it comes from a source outside the theosophical world, we are more open; we are more willing to study it.

An example: information coming from persons like the Dalai Lama and Einstein. Not everything what the Dalai Lama is saying is fitting in the theosophical teachings — there are some things that definitely raise questions. The same with Einstein. Although in his private life he did not have quite a high moral attitude, we still believe him. But not everything that is coming from this source is by definition true. His relativity theory is very popular, but is only partly supported by investigations; not totally. There are quite a number of phenomena that cannot be solved with Einstein's ideas and theories. So we have to study every source of information thoroughly in all its details.

The point I would like to make is: The fact that we believe a lot of things in life is a handicap in our development. So we have to rise above 'belief' — we have to do the next step: we have to build 'trust.'

## **Rising Above Belief: Trust**

What is trust? We trust an idea when it comes from a reliable source. A, to me, reliable source is a source that I have studied before, and from a number of ideas coming from that source I was able to come to the conclusion that they were true. I could experience that they were true by testing them in my daily life. And when new ideas are coming from the same source, I can say "Yes, let me start trusting those ideas, because their source has proved trustworthy." But still we have to investigate and test them.

So trust is already more active than belief, but we have to rise above trust as well, by building knowledge.

## Rising Above Trust: Knowing

Believing is simple. Trusting is also relatively simple, but knowing that ideas are true is much harder. The idea must comply with the facts that we already know, always and in all circumstances. It must be logical, convincing our faculty of abstract and concrete thinking.

An example: we ask ourselves “is reincarnation true?” What do I need as proof? It makes our search easier when we realize that reincarnation is just an example of cyclic activity. And cyclic activity can be found in nature, around us and in our own life. We can find many examples: things that we already know. And by using the Hermetic axiom ‘as above so below’ we can begin to know that reincarnation is a true fact in nature. And from this point we can, step by step, build up this ‘knowing’: a continuous process that takes time and study and rethinking. And when our knowledge grows and expands, we discover that a more limited truth we already knew, does not become untrue but has its place within a larger truth. For instance, Newton’s law of gravitation within the larger scope of Einstein’s law of relativity

Another example: in the theosophical knowledge/wisdom there is no ‘chance.’ Everything has a reason. Everything is a karmic consequence of some cause. In this light, we should be able to explain why it is possible to park your car in the street and tomorrow it is not possible to park it there. There is a reason for that, maybe not simple to find, but I guarantee you: if you start thinking about it, investigate it, you will find that reason. And parking cars is a concrete activity, so imagine how much longer will it take us to really know and find proof of the highly abstract theosophical ideas.

But most important is, that we grow from knowing to understanding.

## **Rising Above Knowing: Understanding**

When we speak of understanding, of course we do this based on theosophical Wisdom. We see understanding as the buddhic aspect of our thinking, our ability to see the real, inner interrelations of our field of consciousness. Understanding in this sense is really having an overview, seeing and understanding the interrelation, the how and the why. It is an instant, inner recognition: like the panoramic vision at the end of life, when we fully understand everything we have experienced in our past life because we see it in the larger overview of many former lives.

It works the same with our efforts to find truth in important theosophical ideas. By going inwards and using our buddhic insight in things, we see all the principles we have studied come together in one large, clear, harmonious picture. This stage of understanding is so important, because it is at this stage that we have the natural ability to implement these principles in every possible situation in life. And it is only with this natural ability that we can be a healing force in the world.

This process of learning to recognize truth is a continuous process. Every time we understand an idea and expand our vision, the same process from belief to understanding starts on a higher level: an ever upward spiral. As Claude Bernard says: “Man can learn nothing except by going from the known to the unknown.” And on each higher level we have to cope with unknown situations, insecurity, lack of self confidence. Concentration on our aim — to be a healing force in the world — overcomes this.

## **Being a Healing Force: a Living Example**

All learning and training and cross-pollination prepares us as ITC to develop the characteristics to help, to heal, humanity. What comes into my mind are: Impersonal, Respectful, Harmonious, Helpful and Balanced, and of course understanding. We can

easily add some more, but this is the general idea. Concentration not on self, not on ITC, not on HPB or the Masters, but on the inspiring function we should have to help humanity.

Then, as a living organism, we radiate or emit that “healing influence”: the theosophical knowledge and wisdom, and the ability to live this wisdom. The better we work together for our goal, the more we support each other in this process of developing applied Universal Knowledge—the stronger we will be as a healing force.

That is the reason why I started my contribution by saying that we cannot speak about being a Healing Force without self-reflection. We can have the highest ethical and moral ideas, but if we are not living them, if we don’t emit them, then we are not a living example. For we can only emit what we are; not what we would like to be.

We are incarnated in a tradition that restarted its activity in 1875 to help humanity, not to create a society that studies Theosophy and that is inward directed, self-sufficient. We are coming from a source which is outward directed.

If we want to be the perfect Nucleus before we start—we will never start. There is always room for improvement. There are always things that can be done better. We as ITC do not want to become a Healing Nucleus, we are a Healing Nucleus. We are what we are: a growing organization, becoming better with every Conference. So let us work together, let us learn together, and bring that out in the world.

Thank you very much.

# What is Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing?

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# What is a Nucleus?

Kim Miller

I thought I would talk about what is a nucleus and leave everything else for others. In common speech we sometimes refer to a nucleus as if it is a seed, perhaps like a nucleation site of a crystal forming—the beginning, the source, the origin. We could think of a crystal forming in a super saturated solution. In order to grow a lattice, it requires a certain organized placement of atoms that form an ionic compound. Then more ions can accrete on to the original assembly to propagate and grow a larger and larger crystal. This is repeating a given pattern created by the organized structure of the initial ionic complex. That is one way to think of a nucleus, as a seed of a crystal.

When we speak of a seed, however, a seed is not a nucleus. Not that we need to get too literal on everything, but there is the idea of “As above, so below”. I thought it might be really interesting for us to think about analogy and correspondence and to investigate the difference between a seed and a nucleus and then go further into the question of what is a nucleus.

If we think of a seed—for example, a bean seed—it has basically two parts: first, an embryo, which is a tiny adult form, a baby plant. Second, it has a lot of food supply to nourish that embryo. Some seeds are very small, like a carrot seed. A carrot seed doesn't have much in the way of supportive nutrients, but it has that embryo inside of it, whereas larger seeds are generally larger because they have a lot more nutritive substance in them. Again, a seed, then, is made to encapsulate an embryo over a long term through harsh conditions and preserve that future generation, possibly for thousands of years. Some seeds have been known to be viable after several thousand years, which is quite astonishing

if you think about it. That seed is an embryo of that plant, that living being held in stasis, almost like a spore.

But H.P. Blavatsky did not say “a seed of brotherhood”. She said “a nucleus of brotherhood”. We will take her at her word: nucleus, not a seed. A nucleus is different than a seed. It is an organizational location of active control. It is dynamic. It is not in stasis. It is not holding something for the future. It is actively controlling all functions of the cell.

To introduce the structure of a cell, we need to understand the function of a nucleus. Here is a cell biology diagram from a textbook:

<https://youtu.be/xiiPrVYxhHA?list=PLGPFKUHgJqcZEmPBti4dVteET1-ecWwIV&t=279>

That large purple thing on the right is the nucleus. All cells of organisms that have more than one cell have a nucleus. By contrast, there are life forms that consist of only one cell, and many of them do not have a nucleus. They are very simple little bacteria. All of their cell functions occur inside of the outer envelope of the cell membrane.

A cell, in order to function, needs to do things. It uses proteins, built in a variety of complex shapes, to do daily tasks. The cell has to make proteins in order to function. The chemical environment for making proteins is very different than the chemical environment needed to create the energy to run this system, so this difference in chemistry presents a challenge to life: how to structure the operations of respiration, protein synthesis, and preservation of the information code most efficiently, when these three processes require very different conditions.

Eukaryotic cells, which are more advanced than single celled organisms, divide operations in the cell by membrane-enclosed “little organs”, or organelles. This allows the energy making portion, which is a highly oxidative, very reactive environment to be encapsulated into the mitochondria, a sub-section of the cell.

The protein manufacturing section of the cell is encapsulated in the endoplasmic reticulum. If it is a plant cell it has chloroplasts, little organelles designed to take energy from the sun and turn it into highly energetic compounds that are useful for the rest of the cell. This structure of the cell enables there to be protective barriers within the cell so that chemicals that are very strongly oxidative and might react with other chemicals won't do it. They will be in their own space. This is where another organelle, the nucleus, comes in.

The nucleus is necessary in advanced cells, those that are in dogs and birds and worms and humans and elephants. These more advanced, eukaryotic cells have a nucleus to protect that very important informational molecule called deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA).

<https://youtu.be/xiiPrVYxhHA?list=PLGPfKUHgJqcZEmPBti4dVteET1-ecWwV&t=463>

The nucleus also has a membrane around the outside. That membrane separates it from the cytoplasm of the cell, that goopy material that is all throughout the cell. There are pores, holes in the nucleus membrane. Those tightly control what comes in and out of that nucleus - “the citadel of the city”. Inside the nucleus, there is a lot of structure to it.... everything is not just sloshing around in there. Inside the nucleus is chromatin—a complex of protein, DNA, and ribonucleic acid (RNA). The chromatin enables the DNA to be very highly controlled packaged during cell division, and also unwound in an organized way during DNA replication and transcription. DNA must be perfectly preserved during millions of cell divisions, yet also copied perfectly for other molecules that transfer that information to the outside of the nucleus. So the molecules in chromatin that organize the DNA are vital for its function.

How are such long chains of DNA organized? Inside the nucleus are chromosomes. These are tightly bundled bunches

of DNA, the unique code that makes each sunflower plant a sunflower plant, and each finch a finch. Those long, wrapped DNA molecules can be unwound and looked at more closely and you will see the double helix pattern. This is highly suggestive, and reminds us that the nucleus, as a protective location for DNA, is a physical structure that can be used as a basis for analogy: why, this double helix? Very interesting if one considers H.P. Blavatsky's descriptions of *Fohat* as a spiral force.

The strand of DNA cannot get outside the nucleus. The nucleus is where it is kept. Its information has to be transferred out of the nucleus to make a protein.

How does it get that information out? This is through transfer ribonucleic acid (RNA). The code gets read by the transfer RNA. There are enzymes that go ahead and unzip the DNA and read off the pattern. As they read off the pattern, they create a little messenger molecule.

Proteins are formed in a few steps in different locations in the cell. The temporary unzipping of the double helix of DNA and the creation of a copy of a portion of it is called transcription. That little messenger molecule is small enough to go outside the nuclear pores. The messenger RNA goes into the cytoplasm where it enters the place where a protein will be made—the endoplasmic reticulum. Protein molecules are built off the message that they just received from the nucleus. That protein folds up and becomes a usable item, which then controls other functions of the cell. Maybe if this is a hair cell, it's going to be making hair. If it is a muscle cell it will be making more of that material that will allow the muscle cells to work. If it is a nerve cell it will be creating neurotransmitters. Then it travels to where it needs to go.

The DNA has a certain pattern of nucleotides. The specific letters, A, T (or U), C, G—those are symbols for different shaped molecules called nucleotides. We have adenine, thiamine, guanine, and cytosine. The interesting thing is: all life has these same nucleotides. Viruses and RNA have U instead of T, but that

the DNA is made of the same ingredients for all forms of life is interesting: a cat and a crocodile—the same.

The red RNA here is reading the opposite, creating a mirror image of this strand of DNA. These two strands of DNA are, in a sense, mirror images of each other. Since the bottom DNA strand is being read, its mirror image, this red RNA, is the same basically, as this other strand of DNA. They are both mirror images of each other.

The messenger RNA goes out of the nuclear envelope through a pore; then to a manufacturing place where there are a whole bunch of amino acids, the building blocks of the proteins (amino acids are in the protein powder supplements popular with body builders). At this point it is pure information, useless in the sense that RNA doesn't do anything except have information. RNA only has information as patterns: patterns to be mirrored in the protein world.

There are groups of three nucleic acids that form a codon. They will be read by the transfer RNA. They have specific patterns to start and end. The nice thing is that floating around in this cell are amino acids, which will build up the protein connected to a little pattern that will fit exactly in that little messenger strand. The anti-codon fits on to the strand. This C, G, and U is going to be matched up with the next anti-codon. Eventually the amino acids get stuck together. The pattern gets translated into a pattern of amino acids. The nucleic acid reflects and becomes amino acid pattern. This is called protein synthesis. Every cell does this. We end up with hundreds of chains of amino acids strung together to form proteins, which are coded to bend and fold in particular functional ways, a three dimensional structure forming out of a string of amino acids. Because so many three dimensional structures can be made from different arrangements of amino acids, proteins are able to act in diverse environments doing different jobs.

DNA contains every specific piece of information to make an organism, but which part of the code is being used at any particular

moment? There are different regions of the DNA that are read by the messenger RNA. Cell biologists are finding out about a lot of fascinating things right now regarding the control of transcription in DNA... this is an incredibly fast field of research. In the human genome project they researched the entire genome and they found that there are specific regions that enable the control of the DNA's transcription to happen. Some studies report that people's attitude of mind and state of consciousness can affect the frequencies of transcription of various sections of the DNA strands. This is the fascinating thing—DNA has all the information, but what is being used right now? That is being controlled by molecules who were themselves made by the DNA. The products of the DNA regulate itself; but what affects that process and how is that related to our consciousness?

The discovery of DNA, its spiral nature and how it controlled all of life, was based on Rosalind Franklin's work. DNA is one of those symbolic elements that reminds us of the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*, that Absolute, Be-ness, Perfection. It is transcendent because it is unavailable to the rest of the cell. It is beyond the cell. It is in the nucleus—abstract, untouched by the machinery of daily life. In a sense it is like the Pure Land Teachings of the Mahatma. When those abstract teachings come into the world, they have a vehicle, the vehicle for transcription. That vehicle in cell biology is mRNA. It goes through the membrane of the nucleus into the realm of activity, the cytoplasm of the cell. The mRNA is like *buddhi*. That messenger is like the divine ray coming from the Absolute, but then is embodied in such a way that can be useful. To be true and useful, it has to be true to that original pattern. That is instructive for us. Buddhist intuition is always mirroring the divine—truly—inspired and undefiled by what it enters into. Buddhist intuition, like mRNA, goes into a cell environment and interacts with the higher mind—like the tRNA—that can accept the message of that buddhic ray in such a way as to translate it into the materials that are present: the molecules that are there, the amino acids.

Those materials that are available in the physical world of manifestation become useful structures for the cell's active functioning.

A cell is responsive to its environment. It is not statically existing without any response from its environment. It is dynamic. The nucleus responds to the need of the day, of the moment. Hormones, other cellular signals, or the environment, may cause the cell to change what it is creating from the nucleus. The nucleus may transcribe different elements based on the needs of that particular moment.

In a sense, we could see the Three Fundamentals acting here. We could see the First Fundamental in the cell's DNA as needed to be absolutely perfect and to have total integrity in its message. The Second Fundamental we see as periodic flow, cyclic law. The nucleus is constantly involved in cyclic patterns of creation and destruction, of flow out and flow in. The DNA is constantly involved with either replicating itself, or pulling together tightly in the form of chromosomes and undergoing division. When it divides the cell nuclear envelope dissolves. When the nuclear envelope dissolves the cell splits in two. Then the cell nucleus reforms again. The DNA unfolds itself and begins to replicate again. There is always this flow of replication and congealing together in cell division. We see the Third Fundamental, that of Being, in the transfer of this divine pattern going into the realm of manifestation, the environment of the cell and dynamically creating all of the molecules needed for life. Our Earth's incredible of diversity of living structures and processes can be created through the action of the cell's nucleus, forming the Great Chain of Being. All of the various living things on earth are created, through all their diversity, through this process of translation of the DNA's message into amino acids and proteins.

*The Voice of the Silence* says, "Compassion is no Attribute. It is the Law of laws." The most fundamental commonality all life shares is the nucleotide molecules that form the pattern of DNA. The pattern of A, T (or U), G, and C can be found in every single living thing on Earth. These building blocks of the

physical pattern of beings could be understood to be analogous to fundamental Compassion, the law Absolute. *Kamadeva*, the *Logos* of the *Rig Veda*, links 'entity with non-entity', just as Fohat bridges the Formed with the Formless. The spirally shaped molecules that make up DNA reflect the Fohatic imprint bridging Ideation and Substance. Thus we can see that the basis for the dynamic nucleus of true human brotherhood is an active awareness of Compassion Absolute.

# What is Brotherhood, What is a Nucleus and What is Healing?

Joop Smits

Bringing harmony to a divided humanity by studying and working together.

What is Brotherhood?

The concept of the Boundless (1st Proposition of *SD*) is the basis for all Theosophical thought. The 1st Proposition starts with: An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle, which is described as the causeless cause of everything that is manifested.

The concept of the Boundless has the following implications: all manifested beings flow forth from this one Principle, which is their source. So the essence of each manifested being is identical to, *i.e.* is this one Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle;

In this line of reasoning we can therefore speak of the Spiritual Unity of all manifested life. In other words: Spiritual Brotherhood is a fact.

That is why one of the Objects of the Theosophical Society is: to form an active Brotherhood among men.

However, that Brotherhood is a fact in nature, is not something that the majority of people easily take for granted. Let us see if we can come to a better understanding and how this relates to the issue of a divided humanity. This requires understanding Brotherhood and the causes of a divided humanity.

We often think about the one Principle as one 'universal Principle' which is homogeneous in itself, because that is easier for us to grasp with our thinking.

However if we ponder upon the one Principle, we can come to the conclusion that the one Principle is the causeless cause of all

potencies, all beings and properties which appear to be possible in the manifested world.

This is an unusual, but very useful way of looking at the one Principle, because from this one Principle flows forth the enormous differentiation and the vast diversity of manifested beings. But we should go a little deeper.

It is not so easy to realize that this one Principle holds in itself the biggest possible differentiation you can imagine.

If we realize that this Principle is immanent in the manifestation but also transcendent, boundless, endless, and eternal, then this implies that the inherent possibilities of differentiation, the diversity in the one Principle should also be boundless and endless.

And that results in the image of the multitudes in diversity of the manifested universe that we perceive. That explains why it is so difficult for people to understand that Spiritual Unity, that Brotherhood, is a fact in nature, because people only perceive the enormous diversity. And indeed, if you focus your attention much on the 'outside' of life, on the expressions of life, on the differences in the expression of life, then it is difficult — yes maybe impossible — to see Unity and Brotherhood. And then you know that trouble is waiting for you. But there is a way out of this.

Human beings — in comparison to e.g. animals — have the ability to think and can make use of their discernment. Therefore we can make a distinction between two ways of perceiving and valuing the diversity in the manifested world:

## **All manifested beings exist 'separately' from all other beings.**

There is no connection between them and they exist on their own.

Then we think that this 'separateness' is the reality. The next step in our thinking is that we see different qualities in the

diversity of the manifested world. *E.g.* we see differences between characters and talents between different people. Subsequently we value and judge those differences. And often then the trouble starts.

We see the different characters and talents of others as a threat to what we want to accomplish in life and our way of living. And then we experience conflict. It means *e.g.* that we think we need to construct walls at the borders of our countries to keep immigrants out.

## **All Beings Interconnected**

It is important to realize that the differentiation, the diversity has its basis in the one Principle. If we really understand this then we can and should value those differences in a different way:

- we see that those differences in character and talents of people are a necessity to make the totality more complete and to get things done in this way.
- and we may even learn to appreciate the differences in character and talents and see this as an asset. In fact we can see it as a kind of completion of our own shortcomings. This is thinking and acting from the sense of Unity!

And of course, seeing others as expressions of the one Principle, of the one LIFE also means that we increasingly become aware of the interconnectedness of all life, of all beings. That One LIFE flows through all of us.

Fortunately, the awareness of interconnectedness is growing in the world, looking at such ideas as Fair Trade, Corporate Social Responsibility for commercial enterprises, care for the environment, etc. In practice, at an international level, it does not mean building walls, but having—as a country—an open

door policy to immigrants who are willing to contribute to the development of their host country on the basis of mutual respect and appreciation.

## **Brotherhood and the Theosophical Movement**

How should the idea of Brotherhood, of Spiritual Unity in diversity work out in the Theosophical movement? If we perceive diversity as an expression of the one LIFE, it means we should take each other seriously and accept each other. And especially that we – whatever the differences – should have respect for the ideas of others. It does not mean that we always have to agree. It means we have to show mutual respect. That is why there is an article in the constitution of the TS that one should have as much respect for the conviction of others than he expects for his own conviction. It is another formulation of the old Golden Rule of time past, which is known all over the world; ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you’ And for Theosophists this means of course: in the most unselfish way.

H.P. Blavatsky remarks on Brotherhood in an article on ‘Spiritual Progress’ that each member of the TS can foster Universal Brotherhood (*BCWVI* p. 336).

Each member should carefully consider what his possibilities of work are within his power and do something to aid the cause of truth and universal brotherhood. And it only depends on his own will, whether or not he makes of that something an accomplished fact.

## What is a Nucleus?

When we look at the 3rd Proposition of the *Secret Doctrine* we read that the first nucleus in the Boundless is indicated as the Universal Over Soul. All Souls are ‘sparks’ from the Universal Over Soul, *i.e.*, they emanated from this Over Soul, and are therefore essentially the same.

This process of emanation means that from a nucleus, from a source-being, a force—an inspirational field—emanates to a lower plane of existence where other, less developed beings are being attracted and can manifest themselves. Such as *e.g.* the Souls can manifest themselves in the emanated field of the Universal Over Soul. And every Soul is in its turn a nucleus, a source for other beings.

Combining these things, we get the image of a manifested universe of:

- countless planes of existence, that inter-penetrate each other;
- with endless diversity of living beings;
- all ordered in countless hierarchies

Each Soul in this hierarchy functions as a nucleus.

We can then define a nucleus as follows: a nucleus is a focal point from which a force of a higher plane radiates to a lower plane, thereby enabling beings on this lower plane to resonate with this force.

The task of each human being is to learn to transform the buddhic forces of a higher plane to this outer world. And in fact this is the basis of how the Hierarchy of Compassion can be an inspirational force in our outer world.

Take a human being as an example. If he tries to live according to the idea that all manifested beings are expressions of the one LIFE, his attitude will be to be serviceable to the interest of all

beings. He will have an open mind and heart for the inspiration that comes continuously from the higher planes of existence.

He will function as a *laya*-center: a channel between two subsequent planes of existence.

We know of all the examples of the inspired people, the sages, the Messengers. And we all have our own experiences with moments of inspiration where the inspiration of higher planes infills our consciousness.

If several human beings, nuclei of the right quality, join forces, they are able to form a channel to transform this inspirational force of a higher nucleus into this world. To indicate the importance of this cooperation of various nuclei for bringing harmony to a divided humanity, I would like to quote G. de Purucker (*Wind of the Spirit* p. 50):

There is an old saying that where two or three are together in my name, that is in the company of the Spirit, the Spirit is present with these two or three. There is a great occult truth in this, and if you will multiply the two or three fiftyfold or one hundred-fold, and realize, or try to realize, that the force of a unified spiritual will and understanding can do much good in the world, and keep this before you as an ideal of help and comfort, I think you will feel with me that it is not merely for ourselves that we gather in Theosophical meetings for consolation and comfort and light, but that wherever these meetings are held we gather together as aspirants to join the highest elements of the human race.

In these words there lies more perhaps than may appear on the surface.

## What is Healing?

Being whole, and being healed or well — means the same thing; the two words, health and wholeness, come from the same

root. How should we look at healing in the light of bringing harmony to a divided humanity?

We can contribute to the process of bringing harmony to a divided humanity effectively by learning to focus our thinking on the three higher aspects *i.e.*: the sense of unity; insight and the intellect. By stimulating those three higher aspects in our thinking, we open up at the same time the corresponding higher principles in our constitution and become increasingly more a channel for divine inspiration. *E.g.* by stimulating the Atmic aspect in our thinking we open up the *Atman* in our constitution.

Again I would like to quote G. de Purucker who described this so sharply in the *Wind of the Spirit* (p 216-18):

When a man is whole, he is well, he is healed; and this more than anything else is the work of the Theosophical Society, spiritually, morally, and intellectually speaking; to make men whole, to make every one of the seven principles in the constitution of the normal human being active, so that there shall be a divine fire running through the man, through the spiritual and intellectual and psychical and astral and physical — and best of all for us humans, the moral, the child of the spiritual.

Then we are whole; we are in health, for our whole being is in harmony.

Now then, is it not true that the work of the Theosophical Society is to change the hearts and minds of men such that their lives shall be changed, and likewise the lives of the peoples of the earth? What is this but healing at its very root instead of merely healing the symptoms? The god-wisdom goes to the very root of the disease, and cuts it; and the successful Theosophist is not he who can preach the most and say the most in the most fascinating way, but he who lives his Theosophy. “Theosophist is who Theosophy does.”

Bringing harmony to a divided humanity by studying and working together—summary.

I would now like to briefly summarize:

## Brotherhood

- we Theosophists state that Spiritual Brotherhood is a fact. Most people do not perceive or express this consciously.

- we can make this fact conceivable by explaining that the diversity of manifested beings is caused by the different expressions of the one Principle.

But most of all: we should learn to consider differences as an asset and not as a threat.

- how to get along with Spiritual Unity and diversity in the Theosophical Movement: apply the golden Rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you' .

## Nucleus

Each one of us is a nucleus and together, by joining forces in the right Spirit, we form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood and the Spirit will be there. The more we join, the stronger the force in the world. Together we can be the inspirational focal point for the benefit of humanity.

## Healing

What is healing: to support each other in harmonizing the 7 aspects of/in our constitution. What is healing the world: to learn to live according to fundamental Unity.

And now I come to my concluding words, that also serve as a stepping stone to the theme of this afternoon. According to H.P. Blavatsky (*BCW IX* p. 245), the TS is the lowest formal grade of the Great Ideal Brotherhood. What are the functions of this Brotherhood?

This Brotherhood serves, amongst others, as a Guardian Wall for all life on earth. The sages that form this Guardian Wall form in fact a living, spiritual and intellectual wall of protection around mankind. It guards men against whatever evil that, because of ignorance, men themselves are unable to ward off or neutralize. (GdP; *Dialogues*)

This afternoon Johanna Vermeulen will give more insight in how this Guardian Wall functions and what the role of the Theosophical Movement is—what our role and responsibility is to bring harmony to a divided humanity.

# What is Brotherhood, What is a Nucleus, and What is Healing?

Olga Omlin

I am grateful for this opportunity to represent the Theosophical Society, Adyar which I feel blessed to be a member of. Nevertheless, during this conference I would like to encourage us all to try to temporarily step away from the identification of belonging to a particular organization or group, and simply perceive each other as seekers of Truth united by our common aspiration for Universal Brotherhood.

I would also like to ask you to contemplate on the following question, “what has changed in me as I am learning what Theosophy is?”

Each one of us has their unique spiritual path. Some of us came to this life remembering the principals of Divine Wisdom. Some were reawakened by stumbling across the theosophical teachings via theosophical literature or being introduced to them through other people. In either way, study of Theosophy challenges our world perception, inspires us to explore ourselves and to question everything which inevitably ignites our intuition.

I perceive Theosophy as Life itself and to be a theosophist is the most natural way of living. I believe, understanding of Theosophy does not come from repeating what Blavatsky, Judge, Olcott or Krishnamurti or any other theosophist said, and presenting theosophical ideas in lectures and talks. We can accumulate knowledge of the cycles of cosmic evolution, of the human septenary nature, of reincarnation and karma but it will not necessarily contribute to our wisdom. Only through inward contemplation and by being

open to everything about us and our fellowmen, we can act wisely in relationships with other people and in harmony with life.

The present situation in the world is far and away from being harmonious. Needless to say, that fear, intolerance, hatred, false values and competition do not exactly contribute to the unity among people. Mankind as a whole strives to overcome hostility and foster friendship. However, hatred and anger still exist among people separating us from each other. Nowadays a nationalistic attitude prevails over a global cosmopolitan outlook; thus, the vision of humanity as a universal family is considered by the majority as a utopia. Yet, it is in our ability to come together as one Humanity. Herein lies our hope for a peaceful future.

Does Brotherhood imply one's participation in political, social or any other external reform? Not necessarily.

There are numerous organizations that promote brotherhood as a noble idea of human equality and unity without distinction of race, color, creed etc. Their work is certainly very helpful and important. And we as individuals often support such organizations donating our time and financial contributions. However, all these activities deal primarily with the consequences and not with the cause of the suffering we see and experience.

Theosophy, however, speaks of the Universal Brotherhood as a definite fact in nature, as essential unity of all life. It exists here and now. Nowadays, slowly, modern science is rediscovering the idea that life emerges from within. This gives us a broader outlook on the world.

Perhaps we can come closer to the realization of the unity of Life if we look at humanity as a state of consciousness. Just like our physical body is influenced by the physical bodies of other people, improving or worsening a common level of health, evident in the case of contagious diseases. In a similar way, our virtues and wisdom elevate the universal morality and human consciousness. We all have experienced the influence of our thoughts and emotions on other forms of life, not just fellow humans. Our

thoughts can either heal or injure, they can agitate or pacify, and their effect has no obstacle.

Each one of us is responsible for the wellbeing of this world. Thus, when we recognize that Brotherhood is not a mere cherished hope but a reality, our attitude towards life and our role in it changes. We naturally aspire to be more altruistic and tolerant. We recognize the opportunities to be of unconditional help to others, because it is the kind and right thing to do. And we include into the affinity of our goodwill other forms of life such as the animal and plant kingdoms. Moreover, we realize that our progress in spiritual development is not something limited only for ourselves but it fosters the evolution of others as well.

Gradually we begin to understand that not only our actions must be ethical but also the quality of our thoughts and motives. Our emotional nature needs to be harmonized and transformed in order that our capacity to love can be increased. For it is in love, that is, compassion, that lies our power of helping and healing.

Sometimes, I feel that we, those who aspire to be theosophists, try to give a structure to the ideas that can only be truly realized by living them. We have to learn to trust our inner nature that requires flexibility of mind.

I will probably now touch a topic that some of us try to avoid mentioning as members belonging to different theosophical streams, yet I believe it might be helpful for our common aspiration towards harmonious work together.

When I came across theosophical teachings it was of little interest for me to dive into the study of the historical events of the theosophical movement. Later on I read about the misunderstandings and arguments that arose among theosophists in earlier years of The Theosophical Society.

What have we learned from the past which none of us have even been a witness of, yet still haunts so many members and non-members? In my humble opinion, whenever we try to crystalize any teaching we close our mind. We also lose awareness of the present moment.

Living theosophical ideals through our heart awakens us from within because these virtues are our true nature. Our conscience is a proof of our innate goodness. In a way it is a link between our higher and lower manas, and our discernment comes from our common sense.

We are growing spiritually through relationships with others. This is where we have an opportunity through our experience to realize what the Universal Brotherhood is.

In the Western world we share a passion to argue. The majority of us are obsessed with the desire to impose our opinion on others, trying to persuade them that our point of view is the most accurate. If we are wise we realize that Truth has so many sides and that these different sides can be revealed in every opinion. The more we understand this simple fact, the less we want to argue because Truth lies in the unity within diversity. In our ability to think freely is the key to our intuition. It does not really matter what one believes, but whether one is noble, kind, sincere and true in the way one acts.

When we are at peace with ourselves we project tolerance and compassion towards others. It does not mean that we will feel kinship with everyone, but we will inwardly recognize humanity in every one we meet. It will not save us from the situations when we are hurt by others or when we choose to hurt others. But with practice, we will learn to make choices in harmony with our divinity and the laws of nature. Life is the greatest Teacher and each incarnation is a precious opportunity to learn to live wisely.

# How do Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing Function?

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# The Function of Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing

Steve Levy

As an independent associate of the United Lodge of Theosophists in Philadelphia, I welcome you to the “City of Brotherly Love” — an idea that inspires and an ideal toward which we aspire in the face of all obstacles.

A man and woman were talking to their son and daughter while enjoying dinner. The décor of the home and presentation of the meal showed that they were prosperous. Their apparent ease was based on their confidence in the just laws that governed their city and protected the peace. The daughter talked about her classmates and friends that came from nations all over the world and how much she enjoyed learning about different cultures. The son reminded her that many of her classmates came to the city to escape brutality in their countries only to find it very challenging to adapt and be accepted in their new homeland. Their father assured them that through trade and travel their country would improve the conditions in these other lands. The mother told her son to be more concerned about his studies so that he doesn't fail out of the army officer training program and tarnish the honor of the family name. She added with a smile, “after all, the world is not going to come to an end.” But she was wrong. The next day, the world, as this family knew it, did come to an end.

This is a fictional story, but maybe it sounds true or familiar. Maybe it reminds you of a family you know. But this is not a modern family. This story does not take place in August 2017. It

takes place on August 23rd, 410 A.D. The next day the barbarians launched a surprise attack, broke through the gate, and sacked their beautiful city of Rome—the light of the world for a thousand years. Their home was burnt to the ground. Many of their friends and acquaintances suffered. The family escaped with their lives by fleeing to Africa. But they each lost something important. The father lost his sense of moral integrity. The daughter lost her sense of moral innocence. The son lost faith in his heroes. The mother lost hope when she realized that worldly possessions and glory were temporary.

Rome may have fallen, but human nature and the human condition have remained the same. Our society and institutions, our world-view and self-identity, have been sacked by forces that have scorched human character and left many with a sense of loss of all that was good. The famous modernist, Virginia Woolf, wrote: “On or about December 1910 human character changed.” Why she chose that date is a matter of scholarly debate. However, she pointed to a truth that outward change of conventions and institutions is preceded by a change in character, feeling, and perspective, and to the fact that sometime around the beginning of the 20th Century, humanity entered an age of transition that would change everything and end the world of science, religion, politics, social conventions, and institutions as we knew it.

According to the teachings of Theosophy, souls incarnate on average every 1500 years. As souls incarnate together, they bring back with them the tendencies and characteristics of previous civilizations, which allows cyclic law to influence human affairs. 1910 was exactly 1500 years after the sack of Rome. When Rome was sacked, new empires grew out of its smoldering ashes and the survivors and inhabitants of the new world that followed needed healing from the immediate impact, prolonged influence, and memory of the trauma. Humanity in the 21st Century also faces great prospects, terrifying possibilities, and traumatic wounds that need healing. It is an opportune time to diagnose the pathology

that pervades modern civilization, examine its symptoms and causes, as well as to understand the healing function of a nucleus of universal brotherhood.

Human beings share a desire for happiness, peace and security because suffering is pervasive in this world. Suffering is the common condition of humanity and an ever present reality. Besides natural causes which are inseparable from human existence, suffering is aggravated by two self-inflicted wounds. First, there is the painful awareness of the apparent inequality and injustice of unmerited suffering which inflames anger, jealousy, and hate. Second, misery is amplified by those who are frustrated, despairing and disappointed because they cannot find enduring happiness, peace, and security in this world. They try to build their Camelot on the shifting sands of a desert. Failed attempts to reach their impossible dream incite their suffering and inflict further misery on others.

The problem of finding enduring happiness, peace and security in this world is rooted in the misuse of desire in accordance with our attitude towards ourselves and the world. If the foremost desire is to dominate and control the world, conditions and others in order to achieve happiness and build our personal empire of stature and wealth—a sense of enduring security and peace will continuously slip away. If the foremost desire is to hold on to security and peace in this world, then a sense of enduring happiness will be eroded.

The unrestrained desire to achieve enduring personal happiness in this world can transform into an insatiable lust that corrupts character, enslaves the will, distorts relationships, and creates conflict. If the foremost desire is to achieve enduring personal happiness in this world, it may come at a great personal cost. The individual may lose their moral compass and become blind and insensitive to moral evils. It is tempting for them to adopt an attitude that so long as it feels good now and fulfill the immediate need, what could be wrong with what they do.

The worldly life is good, but it does not secure peace. The social life is good, but it does not secure peace. Neither does the care of the body which is also a good thing. Enduring happiness is inner peace of mind. The religious life should secure peace of mind, but too often it is pursued for personal benefit, or to achieve otherworldly rewards. What passes for a religious life is too often based on blind belief and superstition, or merely going through the motions of a ritual. Peace of mind is knowing who you are. Enduring peace of mind is the child of a truer realization of the Self.

By far, the greatest cause of human suffering is ignorance, or rather a lack of knowledge to answer two very important questions. What should we do when suffering or when suffering is inflicted upon us? If this suffering is inevitable, can it be put to any good use? The saviors of the world have taught humanity how to endure suffering. The essence of their teachings and the examples of their lives are clear. Suffering is endured by selflessness which is the death of self-interest. This is a straightforward answer to the first question, but a torturous and difficult path to follow. Nevertheless, it is not enough to endure suffering. One needs to learn how to put their suffering to good use in the service and progress of humanity. The challenge is to partake of the happiness of the spiritual life while dwelling amidst the suffering of the physical life. How to be healthy in spirit and a force for healing in the physical world.

Brotherhood, a nucleus and healing function so as to solve the problem of suffering, find enduring happiness, peace and security in this world, and how to put suffering to good use.

Practicing Brotherhood in thought, word and deed, functions in three ways to solve the problem of finding happiness, peace, and security in this world.

First, where there is chaos and discord in the world, brotherhood restores harmony and balance. Second, where disassociation and separateness prevail, brotherhood inspires association

and unity. Third, where antagonism, ill-will, intolerance, hatred, and antipathy reign in the world or in the heart, brotherhood subdues them with benevolence.

In order for Brotherhood to have its restorative, inspiring, and subduing force, it must be focused and work through a vehicle. That is the function of a nucleus.

The nucleus is a vehicle for the manifestation of Brotherhood as a potent force in nature in three ways. The nucleus provides, the center, the core, and the basis for the influence of force.

As a center, it attracts that which lies on the periphery, exterior, or outside edge like the atomic nucleus in the center of a cloud of electrons. A nucleus of Universal Brotherhood attracts individuals of different nations, races, creeds, and conditions to a center of force whose power of coherence is a similarity of aim, purpose, and principles.

As a core, or essence, it influences and guides the whole like the nucleus of a plant or animal cell. A nucleus of Universal Brotherhood guides the Theosophical Movement as a whole through the influence of a fundamental principle which is its essence—universal unity based on the spiritual identity of all beings. In this way, a relatively small association of human beings can influence the progress of humanity.

As a basis, a nucleus functions as the model like the germ cell of a plant or animal which contains the latent potentiality for all the future generations of the species. A nucleus of Universal Brotherhood provides the basis, hope, possibility, and potentiality for the brotherhood of the future generations of humanity.

Healing functions to mend injury, ameliorate suffering, regenerate that which is weakened, and rejuvenate that which is decayed.

Healing takes place when the latent potential within becomes an active potency without.

Healing is a natural force that is effective only when it moves from within outwards. The body is not healed from without. All healers, trained or natural, know how to facilitate the healing

process. Those who wish to assist the healing of humanity have to begin from within by removing the ideas, perspectives, and motives that are responsible for most of our ills and suffering.

The healing force of any substance lies within its essential nature. In the lower kingdoms of nature, the healing force lies within the life essence common to all the kingdoms. In the human kingdom, the healing force also comes from the spiritual nature when appropriately directed by the mind. Remove the ideas that distort imagination and inflame fears, the inner healing force is released and half if not two-thirds of illnesses will be ameliorated.

The essential healing force of Theosophy is the force of spiritual ideas in action released through study, application and work. Spirit and spiritual ideas are centrifugal and centripetal, repulsive and attractive in nature. They repel ignorance, prejudice, dogmatism and selfishness like the essences of thyme, oregano, and rosemary repel bug. They attract wisdom, tolerance, open-mindedness, and altruism like the essences of rose, jasmine, and lavender attract bees.

This brings us back to the beginning—to the ideal and idea of a City of Brotherly Love, another term for a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. All that we know about human nature and the human condition, instructs that the City of Brotherly love as a nucleus of power, influence, and healing cannot be entirely of this world.

H. P. Blavatsky wrote that in the symbolism of the ancient wisdom, to build a city was to establish a center for the study, application, and promulgation of the truths regarding the hidden inner causes behind manifesting phenomena and transitory appearances.

As such, the true essence of the city of Brotherly Love, the true nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, is not of this phenomenal transitory world. Although, it can temporarily manifest in an individual, association, organization, or community. Whenever that city appears, its true center is eternal, universal and spiritual. Whenever that city is founded, its strength and endurance come

from the unity that exists on inner planes. Wherever that city is built, its force and influence come from the higher wisdom and discernment of its citizens.

Can such a city of brotherly love be built by human hands? Can the nucleus of universal brotherhood be formed on earth? It is the primary objective of the theosophical movement and the common aspiration of every theosophist to build such a city which would be a glorious thing to behold, the greatest wonder of the world, ancient or modern, far more spectacular than any magical power, and a healing force of relief that suffering humanity has waited for too long.

# How Brotherhood, a Nucleus of Brotherhood and Healing the World Function

Johanna Vermeulen

Following the contribution of Joop Smits on what brotherhood is, what a nucleus is and what healing is, we now focus on how brotherhood, a nucleus of brotherhood and healing the world function.

In order to get to know this profound process, it is good not to start immediately from what each of us already knows about Theosophy. It is better first to look carefully what Helena P. Blavatsky and her teachers, the Masters Morya and Kut 'Humi, have said about the subject. And from this deeper vision we can apply the Hermetic Axiom 'as above so below' and discover what we can contribute to this work.

From this perspective, let us go through the three questions one by one. How does brotherhood function? The answer is short. As Joop Smits already explained: brotherhood does not function, brotherhood IS. It is a fact in nature.

The second question requires more thinking. How does a nucleus of brotherhood function? How does a group of (human) beings who recognize brotherhood, unity, as a fact in nature and express it in their lives, function? For this we take the Brotherhood of Wisdom and Compassion as a starting point. This Brotherhood is the example for us Theosophists to understand the essence of that functioning.

Who are part of this Brotherhood of Wisdom and Compassion? It consists of those beings—and let us limit ourselves here to the humanity of this planet—of those human beings who have developed the highest potential of their consciousness. In other words, they express and actively use in their lives their divine and spiritual abilities, their atmic and buddhic abilities: their sense of unity and their inner wisdom. Members of this Brotherhood are the Buddhas, the Mahatmas or Masters, and the Messengers, of which Helena P. Blavatsky was one. At the top is the most advanced human being of this earth, who has nothing to learn anymore as a human being. And we humans are part of that Brotherhood, as far as we express this sense of unity and wisdom in our thinking. In other words: the spiritually awakened humans form the lowest stage of the Brotherhood of Compassion.

How does the Brotherhood of Compassion function?

When you search for what the members of that Brotherhood have said about it, you will find surprisingly little exact information. That is why we will have to ‘follow the breadcrumbs’ of information that can be found. Therefore, contrary to our custom, I give in this contribution a series of quotations, that are not the last words on the subject, but rather a start. When we pick up these sparse breadcrumbs, one by one, not just to take them in, but to thoroughly chew on the thoughts that are expressed in them and try to digest them, then we can build up a clear picture about the functioning of the Brotherhood of Compassion.

In that clear picture, we see three main ‘tasks’ or ‘duties’.

A. PASSING ON the ‘stream of inspiration’ from the Heart of the Universe to all living beings on this earth.

B. PROTECTING against the, for this earth,  
negative external influences (Guardian Wall).

C. HEALING: PURIFYING the polluted streams  
of thought in the mental sphere of this earth by  
ELEVATING the living thoughts therein.

Here we see that the subject of my contribution 'How does healing function' actually comes in third place, after the first two tasks, inspiring and protecting, have failed.

## Passing on the Stream of Inspiration

Let us see how one of the teachers of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Master Kut' Humi, describes how the Brotherhood of Compassion fulfills the first function. In this fragment, he also speaks clearly about the most advanced human being, the top of the Brotherhood of Compassion:

For countless generations hath the adept builded a fane of imperishable rocks, a giant's Tower of INFINITE THOUGHT, wherein the Titan dwelt, and will yet, if need be, dwell alone, emerging from it but at the end of every cycle, to invite the elect of mankind to co-operate with him and help in his turn enlighten superstitious man. And we will go on in that periodical work of ours; we will not allow ourselves to be baffled in our philanthropic attempts until that day when the foundations of a new continent of thought are so firmly built that no amount of opposition and ignorant malice guided by the Brethren of the Shadow will be found to prevail. (*Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, Letter July 8, 1881, last paragraph)

What does Master K.H. say about his own task here? That he and the other Masters are building a new continent of thought

in the inner 'planes' or 'spheres' of our planet. This continent is constructed out of the higher spiritual ideals and visions, which we can find in the books of all great thinkers.

Another breadcrumb, we find in Helena P. Blavatsky's *Voice of the Silence*:

Would'st thou thus dam the waters born on Sumeru [mount Meru]? Shalt thou divert the stream for thine own sake, or send it back to its prime source along the crests of cycles?

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

... Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of *Alaya*, be poured forth into another bed. H.P. Blavatsky, *Voice of the Silence* pp. 66-7

This is in line with the statements we find in G. de Purucker's *Dialogues* and his *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*:

The Masters of Wisdom and Compassion are the channels or vehicles for receiving the spiritual forces emanating ultimately from the sun. Those forces pass through the Silent Watcher of the Earth, and from him are distributed as rivers of life through the intermediaries, his channels, between humanity and him. He takes them from the sun. G. de Purucker, *The Dialogues of GdeP* Vol. I p. 163

This One is the Great Initiator, the Great Sacrifice, the Wondrous Being referred to by H.P. Blavatsky; the Supreme Head of the Hierarchy of the Teachers. From it originally come our noblest impulses through our own Higher Selves; from it come the life and aspiration we feel, stirring oft in our minds and hearts; from it, through our higher natures, come the urge to betterment, the sense of loyalty and troth, all the things which make life holy and bright and high and well worth

living. G. de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*  
p. 182

How they [modern chemists] caught this true idea is one of the exceedingly interesting mysteries of human psychology. The idea was in the air. Doubtless the thought currents emanating from Sambhala, our spiritual home, the home of the great teachers, must be permeating the world in greater intensity than perhaps we realize. G. de Purucker, *The Dialogues of GdeP* Vol. I p. 20

All of this gives us a picture of how the Brotherhood of Compassion functions. We can imagine a network of rivers through which spiritual nutrition flows, a network that encompasses the entire Earth. It begins with the nutritious spiritual life-streams that flow forth from the Sun, through the mystical mountain Meru, through Sambhala, through the Silent Watcher, the Buddhas and the Masters, finally reaching every part of the world.

It is good to build up in ourselves an image of this network or web of streams of thought, through which all beings on this planet are nurtured with spiritual inspiration. It is the first task that the Brotherhood of Compassion has — to pass on and keep pure the stream of inspiration.

## **Protecting the Earth Against Negative Influences**

The following—scarce—breadcrumbs lead us to a better picture of this second task of the Great Brotherhood. Joop Smits has already pointed it out in his contribution. The Brotherhood of Compassion forms a protective shield around the earth, in

theosophical literature, also called the Guardian Wall. Master Kut' Humi already mentioned in the quotation I just gave, that something was being built and why. Just to repeat:

For countless generations hath the adept builded a fane of imperishable rocks, a giant's Tower of INFINITE THOUGHT, wherein the Titan dwelt, and will yet, if need be, dwell alone, emerging from it but at the end of every cycle, to invite the elect of mankind to co-operate with him and help in his turn enlighten superstitious man. And we will go on in that periodical work of ours; we will not allow ourselves to be baffled in our philanthropic attempts until that day when the foundations of a new continent of thought are so firmly built that no amount of opposition and ignorant malice guided by the Brethren of the Shadow will be found to prevail. (*Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, Letter July 8, 1881, last paragraph)

About this protective shield we find in H.P. Blavatsky's *Voice of the Silence*:

The 'Guardian Wall' or the 'Wall of Protection'. It is taught that the accumulated efforts of long generations of Yogis, Saints and Adepts, especially of the Nirmanakayas — have created, so to say, a wall of protection around mankind, which wall shields mankind invisibly from still worse evils. (H.P. Blavatsky *Voice of the Silence* Fragment III, fn 28)

We see that the Brotherhood of Compassion protects by building a wall. The next important quotation from H.P. Blavatsky's article 'On Secrecy' is consistent with this:

The essence of that subtle, traceless poison, the most potent in nature, ... could heal or kill every man in the world; the result depending on whether the operator was a Brother of the Light or a Brother of the Shadow. The former is prevented from doing the good he might, by racial, national, and individual Karma; the second is impeded in his fiendish work by the joint

efforts of the human “Stones” of the “Guardian Wall.” H.P. Blavatsky ‘On Secrecy’ (*Collected Writings* Vol. 12, p. 602)

Gottfried de Purucker elaborated on this:

Now, these greater duties that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion have consist in being what H.P.B., following the Tibetan expression, calls the Guardian Wall protecting humanity against cosmic invasions of elementary and cosmic influences which would be extremely dangerous to the human race were they allowed to play free and unhindered upon us. G. de Purucker, *The Dialogues of GdeP* Vol. I, p. 164

What does this scarce information teach us? These elementary and cosmic influences that Gottfried de Purucker talks about, are, on a smaller scale, thoughts of a personal and selfish character, that poison the inner sphere of our planet. It is not necessary to give examples of those thoughts and passions in that sphere. We all know them. Call them the mental germs, the mental pathogens of our planet. The Brotherhood of Compassion thus functions as the immune system of the earth, to prevent diseases: an important idea to work out further on our own.

Furthermore, we learn that Saints and Yogis, in particular the Nirmanakyas, are living stones in this Guardian Wall. But not only Saints and Yogis are stones in this wall. Gottfried de Purucker tells his members when they officially join the Theosophical Society:

In joining the T. S., members take their places like living building bricks in the Guardian Wall — that magnificent spiritual wall builded actually of human souls and cemented with their devotion, thrown around the weaker brothers of the human race, mainly for the purpose of preventing the intrusion of outside cosmic energies which otherwise would work havoc upon us.

One sometimes wonders if we realize with a sufficiency of clearness what function the T.S. plays in the world, and what

spiritual office we Theosophists hold as co-laborers with our Masters. (G. de Purucker, *Esoteric Teachings*, Vol. 2, p. 101)

There are probably but few members who actually realize that they are living stones in the Guardian Wall as dedicated members of the Theosophical Society. And although Gottfried de Purucker wrote this several years ago, it still applies today of course. So while the Saints and Yogis put to practice their protective influence on the inner planes of the earth, we as devoted Theosophists must transform their protective influence to the outer plane. There lies our task: to have the courage to speak up, to let the sound of unselfishness and wisdom and compassion be heard loud and clear when something in the world is threatening to go wrong: the spiritual immune system, to prevent a sick world.

## Healing the World

The third function of the Brotherhood of Compassion only is needed when things have gone wrong in the world: when a spiritual-mental infection spreads in the world, among us humans. Then it is necessary to heal. So when we have a conference like this one about Healing Force, it actually means that we have skipped two steps: we have forgotten to inspire and to protect in order to prevent disease. Healing is supposed to follow after this. Because — what is healing? It is the restoration of imbalance, of a pollution on the mental plane.

How does this healing process work? We can look again at the quotation mentioned earlier of H.P. Blavatsky in her article ‘On Secrecy’, but now with more emphasis on the first sentence:

The essence of that subtle, traceless poison, the most potent in nature, ... could heal or kill every man in the world; the result depending on whether the operator was a Brother of the Light or a Brother of the Shadow. The former is prevented from doing the good he might, by racial, national, and individual Karma; the second is impeded in his fiendish work by the joint efforts of the human "Stones" of the "Guardian Wall." H.P. Blavatsky 'On Secrecy' (*Collected Writings* Vol. 12, p. 602)

How can the same substance be both a pathogen and a healer? H.P. Blavatsky gives us another hint when she writes about *Kama Loka*, the Desire plane or sphere of our earth, a sphere that can somewhat be compared with the emotional sphere we humans have around us:

*Kâma Loka*: Here are strewed the seeds of epidemics of vice, of cycles of disasters, and general catastrophes of all kinds that happen in groups. (H.P. Blavatsky *Collected Writings* Vol.12, blz. 663)

Here we see, that epidemics of evil are the source of group karma, in fact of world-karma. Personal, egoistic thoughts are in fact the mental microbes of this planet Earth.

- \* They function on the mental plane of the earth.
- \* They weaken the mental resistance of the planet.
- \* They are as contagious as bacteria and viruses.
- \* They transport themselves through the streams of thought of this earth (see above).

Thinkers can become infected by them, which leads to actual epidemics. Whoever follows the world news, can in fact discover these epidemics of suspicion, hatred and aggression, just as easily as one sees flu epidemics spread across the earth.

With every personal, egoistic thought we think, nurture and make powerful, we strengthen a mental microbe that affects the

health of our planet. Have you ever seen a thought of irritation, jealousy or envy in this light? Hardly anybody realizes this while thinking, but it is worthwhile doing so.

The Brothers of the Light, the Brotherhood of Compassion, heal in a way that such personal thoughts do not predominate, but are neutralized instead. How do they do that? It is the way Helena P. Blavatsky repeatedly recommends and about which she is enthusiastic in all of her books: Homeopathy. She never talks about the ordinary old-fashioned medicine. She talks about the ‘new medicine of the future’: homeopathy and mesmerism. It is too much to deal extensively with mesmerism in this contribution, but we will try to show how the homeopathic principles work on a spiritual-mental level as a remedy for the world.

## **How does spiritual homeopathy work?**

What is homeopathy? Hippocrates says it: “By similar things a disease is produced and through the application of the like it is cured.”

Like cures like. Here we recognize again what Blavatsky says about the same substance, in the hands of two different qualities of Brothers, the selfish and the unselfish.

Hippocrates thus says: ‘like cures like’. We also apply this principle in our course, *Thinking Differently*, where we discuss the possibility of changing one’s own character. If your character has certain weaknesses and you want to ennoble your character, then you can do this by, every time when you think a personal thought about a particular subject, immediately thinking an impersonal, unselfish thought about that same subject. And if you consistently do this for a longer period of time, your unselfish impulses will neutralize your selfish ones.

In general, people think that ‘like cures like’ means that we have to put a personal thought of our own opposed to the personal

thought of someone else. National aggression is then answered by war. This is absolutely not what is meant by spiritual homeopathy. This is the ancient Atlantean 'an eye for an eye' method of problem solving, which only aggravates the disease. This method is a pitiful legacy from an earlier period of development of humanity, which we should have long since outgrown.

## **'Potentiating' a Thought**

The same substance can thus both make sick and heal. How does a homeopath make of a substance a healing substance? He potentiates it. This means that he dilutes the substance many times and shakes simultaneously. Nowadays this is mostly done by machines, but the best-working homeopathic substances are shaken by hand, so that the inner influence of the homeopath himself strengthens this process.

Eventually there can hardly be found a molecule of the substance in the dilution. "Quackery," science calls it, "it cannot work because there is nothing left to be found of the substance." What is overlooked, is the fact that every molecule is a living organism, a living being. And every living being has an outer side, the body that is visible to us, but also an inner side, a soul side.

When potentiating the substance the homeopath in fact shakes and dilutes the inner side of the molecule apart from its outer side. He activates the soul side which, liberated from its outer side, works much more powerfully. So in this potentiated substance, that is seemingly without any active molecule, the 'soul-power' of that molecule is not diluted at all, but is extra strongly present. We are familiar with this phenomenon ourselves as well. We also stand more universal and more powerful in life, when we no longer focus on our bodies.

Potentiating a thought follows exactly the same steps as potentiating a molecule. A personal, egoistic thought, a mental microbe,

is not attacked with aggressive means, “personal against personal”. Instead, a thought about the same subject is ‘fastened to’ this mental microbe, but then only the living soul of that thought, the inner power of that thought, the higher levels of that thought, that what we call an impersonal thought.

## **Healing From the Inside Out**

That is how the Brotherhood of Compassion works. By putting an impersonal thought next to a personal thought, you neutralize the personal thought. That is how you give a ‘sick person’ — and in this case a ‘sick world’ — the chance to find the strength to heal itself from the inside out.

## **How Does a Nucleus of Theosophists Function?**

The three functions of the Brotherhood of Compassion apply to any nucleus of Brotherhood:

- A. **PASSING ON** and keeping pure the ‘stream of inspiration’ that flows from the Heart of the Universe to all living beings on this earth;
- B. **PROTECTING** against the, for this earth, negative influences (Guardian Wall);

C. HEALING: restoring the harmony in the mental sphere or plane of this planet through spiritual homeopathy.

These three functions can therefore also be applied to us Theosophists—active, dedicated members of the Theosophical Movement. What are we to do? How can we fulfill these functions? Again let us follow a ‘breadcrumb’, this time written by William Quan Judge. This quote seems to be just a nice moral advice by William Quan Judge to his members, but it is more than that. He spoke the following in 1892, one year after HPB’s passing, when he and Annie Besant worked together in the Esoteric School. In his address to the European Convention in London—and when we read carefully—we see not only good advice, but in fact the essence of what a nucleus of Brotherhood is, and how we can function as a nucleus of Brotherhood.

W.Q. Judge in his Concluding Speech at the European Convention in London, July 1892:

This Society is a small germ of a nucleus for a real outer Brotherhood. If we work aright, the day must come when we shall have accomplished our aim and formed the nucleus. If we had five hundred members in the Society, loving one another with true hearts, not criticizing nor condemning, and all bent on one aim with one belief, we could sweep the whole world with our thoughts. And this is our work in the future, [so our present work as Theosophists now – J.V.] the work traced out for us by those Masters in whom so many of us firmly believe.

What does this quote tell us about what we have to do? If we try to read between the lines of what he says, then what is the meaning of: “loving one another with true hearts”? This means that our heart is active, in the mystical sense of the word. And this means that the two highest, the atmic and the buddhic elements in our thinking—our sense of oneness and our inner wisdom—must be active. This means that we are able to see the essential oneness of all members of a group; that we know that all

members are ourself. For a group of devoted Theosophists is not yet a nucleus. How can we turn a group into a nucleus? By seeing the oneness of each of us in the group, and by acting accordingly. Then the highest in us, the atmic-buddhic in us, is active, exactly like it is in all members of the Brotherhood of Compassion.

Then, what does “not criticizing nor condemning” mean? Criticizing and condemning is in fact the activity of desire-thinking, against which we must protect the group. It means having sympathies and antipathies, liking or disliking someone. In a group of people that try to form a nucleus of brotherhood, the members have to rise above that level of criticism and condemnation. Thus the desire-thinking is neutralized. And everyone can take up this ‘Guardian Wall’ function in his own group.

What does it mean when he says, “all bent on one aim with one belief”? Focusing on one aim with one belief means that our mind or thought power, together with that of all members in the group, are concentrated in one direction.

Of course we Theosophists do not concentrate on ourselves, because our aim is impersonal. But often in groups the mistake is made to focus jointly on the welfare, the survival of the group. Members in an organization who are only interested in the welfare of the organization, will never form a nucleus.

And there are groups that focus fully on H.P. Blavatsky and the Masters and the Brotherhood of Compassion. They will not become a nucleus, because the Brotherhood of Compassion is not focused on itself.

So a group of Theosophists that truly want to form a nucleus, must be focused on humanity and ‘forget’ themselves, ‘forget’ the group, even ‘forget’ their own organization and the Masters and Blavatsky, and instead focus on humanity, on relieving the suffering of humanity by inspiring, protecting and healing. Because that is the aim of our great example, the Brotherhood of Compassion.

## The power of a Theosophical Nucleus

When the members of a theosophical group do this, something magical happens in that group. A stream of higher spiritual thoughts starts circulating from the head and heart of one member of the group to a next member and to a next and to a next, and so on, along the whole circle of members. The heads and hearts of the members of that group start forming a channel for the cyclical movement and dissemination of ideals, and at that moment the group becomes a kind of spiritual magnetic field. This will function as an accelerator and amplifier of the inspirational energy of the Brotherhood of Compassion. We can call it a cyclone of ideals. The effect of it in the world is much, much stronger than the same number of individual Theosophists spreading Theosophy.

It can be compared with a tropical storm or hurricane. When you look at satellite images of a hurricane, then you see the powerful cyclical whirl of the storm. And everyone knows that the rain that such a hurricane spreads, is 10 to 100 times more powerful than the rainfall from a group of rain clouds.

I was delighted to find the same idea in another theosophical organization, in a quote of Raghavan Iyer, in which he compares a nucleus of Theosophists to a lens that bundles, directs and strengthens the light, to turn it into a powerful inspiration in the world.

Hopefully this contribution about how a nucleus of Brotherhood functions and how the world can be healed, has given sufficient food for thought and action.

# Work and Action

Maryanne Zarycka

Good Morning! Thank you for asking me to speak, and share my ideas on how a brotherhood, a nucleus, and healing function. There are so many quotes and literature I want to share, and it's a topic so close to my heart, it was difficult to narrow down my talk to 20 minutes. I am looking forward to discussing these topics at length and hearing other views in our groups this weekend. I see these three functioning in three phases:

**First: Starting with ourselves functioning as a primary nucleus**

**Second: Finding and working with other like-minded souls/people to create functional centers—brotherhood**

**Third: Multiplying our efforts using the ripple effect... and encouraging and inspiring others to do the same—healing force**

Madame Blavatsky uses the words WORK and ACTION over and over. If we are to be a successful functioning brotherhood, we must be willing to get up off our seats and WORK. Even if we would rather be doing something else, or it's uncomfortable, we must put effort into our mission or it will not function. We must be willing to take action and do the work. As it says in *At the Feet of the Master*, by J. Krishnamurti,

...to look at food and say that it is good will not satisfy a starving man; he must put forth his hand and eat.”

We must put forth our efforts as well. Efforts in what? Starting with ourselves, Madame Blavatsky gives us specific instructions,

“To obtain knowledge and make it available to everyone” We must discover the laws that govern nature and ourselves’...and “absolute unselfishness and unlimited devotion to the interests of others.” There is much WORK we must do to prepare ourselves for the task of becoming a healing force in our world. Mr. Judge adds,

There is, first, our own work, in ourselves, each one...the enlightenment of oneself for the good of others... by unselfish acts, by kind thoughts, by detaching our minds from the allurements of the world.

Working on ourselves first means: Finding the truth and gaining knowledge through study; conversations to broaden our perspectives; and connection with others to teach us more about ourselves. It also means using meditation and other spiritual means to realize our divine self and the interconnectedness of all. Once we have made a start, and a commitment to continue working on ourselves it is important for us to get out and connect with others. Removing judgment of others and opening our hearts to a true sense of brotherhood will allow us to function as a nucleus. We must teach ourselves to be accepting and tolerant of others.

Regarding judgment, do we really have enough information to judge? Dora Kuntz in 1955 told us,

We must practice on each other! Brotherhood is something we should live instead of talking about it...the testing ground for Brotherhood...place to let ourselves grow...to learn to get along with one another whether we like one another or not. You must be willing to have differences of opinion.

We must also pay attention to our own faults, rather than others.’ Judge explains that we have to watch out for “personal frictions”; we need to “watch and avoid” that friction of the personality which is:

inevitable, and if each one learns the great ‘give and take’, and looks not for the faults of others but for the fault he sees in himself ...then great progress can be made.

Theosophical groups are the pilot program, the testing ground for Universal Brotherhood. We are a living and breathing example to others of how people from all over the world can function together in a unified mission to heal and elevate the planet.

It’s wonderful to research and read in libraries of ancient wisdom, but to make this brotherhood function and to create a healing effect on the world, we must go to WORK and share it with EVERYONE we meet! Did I say everyone? YES! We need to find a way to touch every person we come into contact with: our words, our actions, our courage to discuss these teachings. One of the challenges is finding the effective and inspiring words and language to use. Finding ways to communicate the messages in a way they can understand, the words which will touch their innerself/soul. Madame Blavatsky wrote that,

We should seek to bring some Peace on Earth to the hearts of those who suffer, by lifting for them a corner of the veil which hides from them Divine truth.

Lifting the veil is sharing information in a way people can understand. The Theosophical Order of Service suggests,

We must live the teachings, and in order for it to survive, it must be kept vibrant and fresh so the teachings relate to what’s happening in today’s world.

I talk to everyone: in grocery stores, lines at the bank, salons, at work, at play. Every now and then, someone gets it! Will everyone get it? No, but the Mahatmas told us we must TRY, JUST TRY! How many people do I talk to in a day, a week, or a month—five, ten, twenty, more? Maybe two or three become interested and join us on the path. Just believing in Universal Brotherhood is not enough to make it function. We must be passionately dedicated

to awakening it in others, and as we are awakened, healing begins to happen.

Increasing the numbers of our brothers and sisters worldwide, and teaching the principals of theosophy, are keys to a functioning Universal Healing Force. Madame Blavatsky wrote:

...all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practicing in their daily lives true Brotherhood and true Sisterhood... is one of the fundamental theosophical principles that every theosophist should be bound, not only to teach, but to carry out in his or her individual life.”

Each one of us must WORK to spread the message in whatever way we can; becoming a walking and breathing example of brotherhood and love, and keeping Theosophy alive and vibrant is how we will function. Our ACTIONs will speak louder than words. Take a good look at your life and determine what ACTION and WORK YOU can contribute. Any amount of effort will help. Madame Blavatsky wrote,

ACTIVE cooperation of every one of its members...to consider carefully what possibilities of work are within his power, and then to earnestly set about carrying them into effect. Right thought is a good thing, but thought alone does not count for much unless it's translated into ACTION...each is able to do 'something' to aid the cause of Truth and Universal Brotherhood.

Mr. Judge wrote of “the nucleus from which HELP might spread to all the people of the day...” The way to spread it is to get off our *seats* and reach out to everyone we come into contact with, using practical words and concepts they can understand.

How can we function as a Healing Force? How about eliminating 2/3 of the world's evil? One way is to help the world understand the Laws of Karma and Nature—and the benefits and consequences of obeying these laws. Madame Blavatsky wrote,

With a confident conviction that our neighbors will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, two-thirds of the world's evil would vanish Into thin air.

Another way is to continue WORKing to create a Universal Brotherhood by our actions and example—opening our hearts and minds to everyone we come in contact with, and just TRY! Every person we touch with loving-kindness will heal just a tiny bit more. Madame Blavatsky wrote,

If this view of the kinship [Universal Brotherhood] of all mankind could gain Universal acceptance, the improved sense of moral responsibility...would cause most social evils and international asperities to disappear.”

How does a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood function as a Healing Force? It starts with us as individuals, and moves out like The Ripple Effect. Madame Blavatsky wrote,

...nothing, therefore, can affect One Nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. This is as certain and as obvious as that a stone thrown into a pond will, sooner or later, set in motion every single drop of water therein.

Thank you very much!

Practical Applications of  
Brotherhood, a Nucleus and  
Healing

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# The Practical Application of Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing

Henk Bezemer

Dear fellow students and workers for Theosophy.

Yesterday, we studied the theosophical meaning of universal brotherhood, of being a nucleus, and of healing. This morning we tried to fathom the work of the Hierarchy of Compassion. This afternoon, our subject is: “the practical application of Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing”. Consequently, our subject this afternoon is, above all, what do we mean by practical? What does practical theosophical work mean? When and how are we practically applying Theosophy?

This important question influences our whole life: both our duties as individuals in society, and our duties as members of theosophical organizations.

Thoughts make or break civilizations.

We will start our investigation by thinking over this hypothesis: thoughts make or break civilizations.

This important starting point flows forth from our theosophical teachings about human consciousness. We are beings that think, and thoughts are the roots of all our acts. In fact, according to the occult cycle “thoughts – acts – habits – character”. We create our own character. Our thoughts determine who we are.

Furthermore, we all know that we can direct our thinking in two ways, by thinking thoughts that are in harmony with the Universal Laws and with all that lives, or by thinking thoughts that cycle around our personal selves, viewed as separated and fundamentally different from everything else.

Everyone can experience the eventual impact of these two kinds of thoughts; the one restoring and building harmony, the other creating disharmony, divisions within humanity, creating suffering of 101 types and kinds.

That is why ideas rule the world, as Plato said. That is why our thoughts make or break our present and future civilization.

This means, that the only way out is: to introduce and apply universal ideas, ideas of unity, brotherhood and wisdom. Only in this way we can tackle the roots of disharmony in the world.

But before we can sow seeds in fertile ground, we firstly have to plough these grounds, we have to remove all weeds of ignorance and fantasy. There are, we think, three essential tasks and duties of theosophical organizations:

- first, to plough the mental grounds by showing the lack of proof and the inconsistency of popular opinions, and then,
- secondly, to sow the universal truths of Theosophy in the prepared soil, which will lead to,
- the third duty, to awaken compassion.

In this way, we help our fellow men to become WHOLE again, to become complete, healed beings, giving the spiritual-mental part in us the leading role that it naturally has — as we humans are reflections, or the microcosmos of the great Macrocosmos that is led by wisdom and compassion.

Our conclusion is: our main duty as organizations lies in the spiritual mental field.

The Masters who founded the Theosophical Society, worked on this by creating an instrument to popularize the universal philosophy of life, known as Theosophia. That is why, in order to answer this call of the Masters, each theosophical organization should be a nucleus of universal brotherhood, transforming the buddhic ideas and images from the spiritual-mental plane into inspiring impulses in our society.

This morning Johanna Vermeulen explained the character and working of the Hierarchy of Compassion. She distinguished three aspects, three facets of this great work. These three aspects are—and remember we are talking about spiritual-mental work—nourishing, protecting and healing.

We will use this threefold approach to answer the question of this lecture: what does “practical theosophical work” mean?

## Nourishing

The first aspect explained by Johanna Vermeulen is “nourishing”. What food is needed most, for present humanity? Humanity misses above all a philosophy of life that is trustworthy, compassionate and practical. In other words: a philosophy of life that is based on universal truths, that answers to our ethical intuitions, and is complete, and consistent throughout. As a final criterion: it should give the keys to solve all problems with which we are confronted. So, humanity needs above all, spiritual-mental food, because it is there that the hunger and deprivation is greatest.

Regularly we hear people ask: why is Theosophy so theoretical, why don't you do more practical work? We would ask those people: what is more practical than offering theosophical principles, that enable people to solve all problems of life themselves? That inspires them and nourishes their deepest ideals?

Theosophy will make them mentally independent, independent seekers for truth and justice. In our eyes, there is no work more practical than that—even if we have to continue with it during many ages, before Theosophy has renewed the mental atmosphere of the whole society.

That's why the main task of the Theosophical Movement is awakening compassion by universal spiritual thoughts. Therein lies our main duty, our greatest challenge.

Of course, as individuals we have a much broader array of duties in our lives, from material to spiritual duties, from personal to social duties, but our work as theosophical organization should be entirely directed to this spiritual mental plane.

In fact, if we fail to be in resonance with this higher mental plane of our Planet, then we will not be able to transform its influence to all parts of society, and to benefit mankind. Then we would fail in our main duty: to make Theosophy an active reforming influence in society.

## Spiritual Mental Nourishing

- Humanity is in need of a trustworthy, compassionate and practical philosophy of life
- What is more practical than enable people to solve all problems of life themselves?
- Only by being in resonance with the higher mental plane, we can transform its influence all around society

## Protecting

The second aspect of compassionate, wise work is protecting, in other words, to build a protective atmosphere of thought, and to keep the Universal Wisdom, the Theosophia pure. One of the theosophical teachings is, that unselfish thoughts form a protective atmosphere, not only for the thinker himself, but also for all people that are connected with him. In such an atmosphere, no personal, egoistic and illusionary influences can enter. We can recognize such a protective sphere by the fact, that no one indulges

in gossip, slander and shaky accusations. And furthermore, in such an atmosphere everyone is considered equal and is taken seriously.

What does this protecting duty mean for us Theosophists? We should try to create such an above-personal atmosphere in all our internal and public work, in fact in all our contacts in daily life, 24/7. We should never forget that we spread the Theosophia in order to awaken compassion in our fellow men, his ethical instincts and insights, and his willingness to help others. Theosophical study is never a theoretical, unbinding thing. In fact, we can view the complete structure of theosophical teaching as one great confirmation of the fact, that unity and brotherhood are the Heart of the Cosmos, and the most natural thing to follow.

We can reach the minds of others only as far as we practice the principles ourselves, in our own lives. As far as we are living examples, our words will hit their goal, will resonate with the higher consciousness of other people. And only then we will be able to keep the *Theosophia* pure.

Regarding “keeping the Theosophia pure” there is another vital requirement. If we wish to be successful in the long term, we should bring pure Theosophy, without compromising, without degrading it, to make it so-called “socially acceptable”. Let us never mingle Theosophia with limited thoughts, with the motive that it would make it easier for people to step in our direction. Because the reverse is the case: we make *Theosophia* inconsistent, and create a stumbling block. Every human being is an atmic center, a spiritual-mental nucleus, and can appeal to the Universal Wisdom in himself. So let us follow the example of the Hierarchy of Compassion, and stimulate independent thought.

All these ideas that we are now exchanging with each other, affect the way we prepare our Lodge members for public work. Clearly, no member can take up the spiritual responsibility of representing a theosophical organization in public, without a clear understanding of the inner attitude that is needed. So we wish to stress the importance of the question: what is a proper and

comprehensive training of our members? We will not go into details about this now.

## Spiritual Mental Protecting

- Unselfish thoughts form a protective atmosphere against a.o. gossip, slander
- Keep the *Theosophia* pure, without compromising to make it “socially acceptable”
- This affects the way we prepare our Lodge members for public work

## Healing

The third aspect of the work of the Hierarchy of Compassion, is healing: trying to restore harmony where disharmony reigns. For us as Theosophical members, this duty comprises several challenges. We will mention a few.

It means entering the arenas of social life, entering or creating ourselves suitable forums in which we have the chance to explain our theosophical insights, and its practical consequences. It means “ploughing the ground”, by showing the limited and illusionary character of many of the popular beliefs and “isms” in our society. But never stopping at that point, but subsequently showing the Theosophical principles as alternatives.

Many subjects on which we have to shed more light, are “socially sensitive” in some countries and in some periods. If we would avoid addressing these “socially sensitive” issues in direct terms, we would neglect our duty to point the way to greater truths, so we should not avoid them.

How to deal with this? It means that we should prepare ourselves well. Let us explain Theosophy by appealing to the universal faculties latent in everyone. Let us build up a logical reasoning, starting from universal thoughts. Let us bring it undogmatically, open for investigation. Let us use accessible language, to prove that theosophical teachings are universally applicable and can be understood by everyone on his own level. Then all seekers of truth will see that Theosophy offers another dimension of thought.

## Spiritual Mental Mealing

- Entering the social arenas, creating suitable forums to explain Theosophical insights
- Without avoiding “socially sensitive” issues
- using accessible language

## Our Duties as Cooperating Theosophists

Now we come to the question: what are the consequences if we apply the presented ideas to the collaboration within the Theosophical Movement, to the contacts between the theosophical mainstreams.

Let us remind ourselves of the great wish of H.P. Blavatsky, in one of her messages to the American Theosophists:

Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!” Theosophy first, and Theosophy last; for its practical realization alone can save the Western world ... Theosophy alone can save it from sinking

entirely into that mere luxurious materialism in which it will decay and putrefy as civilizations have done.

HPB's appeal was directed specifically to American Theosophists, but in our eyes its significance is worldwide.

So, Theosophy first and Theosophy last, in the light of brotherhood. We all stand for the same responsible task, a task on the spiritual-mental plane. Ever-lasting Theosophy is non-personal, standing above any personal illusions.

So, let us co-operate like chelas would co-operate: by telling the truth to each other, the truth as far as we have discovered it. If we wish to be spiritual and mental grown-ups, we should start to act as spiritual grown-ups: without pampering personalities, without fear for sensitivities, without fear that we may have to abandon our favorite little truths when we hear greater truths. We should co-operate in an undogmatic atmosphere of truth-seeking, of seeking ideas that are most fully in line with the principles of the *The Secret Doctrine*. Of course in a friendly way, which is, as real friends do, telling to each other the undiluted truth if it benefits our friend in the long term.

Furthermore, is the time not ripe to address all issues from the past and present of the Theosophical Movement: whether these are experienced as "sensitive" or not? Why should we restrict our cross-pollination to so-called safe, theoretical discussions? If we would do that, we would be building our collaboration on marshy grounds, on a shaky foundation. So, let us not fear to address all those subjects about which is spoken a lot in the past, but alas seldom in direct contact with the real persons involved.

To conclude: ITC may play an important role in fulfilling our theosophical duties in the world. It may become an example of spiritual mature collaboration, which means above-personal cross-pollination, or, to coin a brand new word, "nucleification."

# A Practical Application of Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing

Olga Omlin

When I was preparing for my talks for this conference, I decided to dare myself not to use any quotes. There is nothing wrong in quoting wise and inspiring words of others. Indeed, it might be very helpful sometimes to use the expressions of the ideas and thoughts that resonate with us, as long as it does not become a habit of lazy thinking. In order to explain what I mean we can take such example: as children we learn to ride a bicycle using detachable wheels for extra balance. With practice we become more confident in our riding and eventually have no need for such extra wheels. We let go off them to discover the freedom and joy of riding a bicycle on our own.

At school we are taught to include quotes and a variety of references in order to give additional credit to our dissertation. And we turn to apply the same principle of sound academic approach to Theosophy. Thus, we base our own conclusions on somebody else's insights and reflections. We quote Dalai Lama, Buddha, letters of the Mahatmas *etc.* anyone whom we see as authority. We even try to make such authority out of H.P.B. acknowledging her words as a common ground for theosophists around the world that we can all settle on without any argument.

Respect someone for their altruistic work, feel reverence, love and gratitude yet seeing them as the same expression of the same divinity and humanity as we all embody, without making an idol or authority out of them—is a path of true seeker of Truth.

Isn't it that *Theosophia* requires from us one thing and one thing only—an open mind—to challenge the solid ground of our conditioning?

Humanity lives in fear, it is a fact. Racism, violence, competition we see around us, is a result of our fear. The more we fear the bigger it will get. In order to bring change in the outer world we need to change our own way of thinking, our own perception. We need to learn to cultivate thoughts of love, goodwill and kindness, just as we so habitually generate thoughts of discontent, sadness and intolerance. To be the Healing Force for the world we need to think as being such already rather than focusing on what needs to be healed.

We all the time try to find some sort of external action to perform in the future. By doing so we are stealing our attention from the only true reality we have, here and now. Make it a daily effort to use our imagination our mental capacity, our intuition to realize, live and see the Brotherhood of Humanity we speak about as a reality. To use this positive impulse as a foundation for our actions we have to start with oneself!

Are we looking for a solution, some sorts of steps to take that will lead us to our aspired goal of Universal Brotherhood?

Spiritual evolution is an inner quest. As soon as we have created in front of ourselves a concrete system of beliefs we have reached a dead-end called dogmatism. Theosophy requires flexibility and openness of mind in order to be able to see things as they are including ourselves. Life can never be reconciled to preconceived ideas; It can only be understood by being experienced in the present.

What is “a Nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood”? For me it is not a bundle of people who think alike, for such brotherhood would have been another sect separate from the rest of mankind.

I see a Nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood as Life itself. All life is a nucleus because brotherhood is what unites us all, and it is here and now. It is not something outside of us that we need to create or form.

What are the obstacles that we need to address if we want to cultivate brotherly relationships and live in harmony with other people and nations? One such hindrance lies within ourselves – we want to be brothers and sisters only on our own terms and if others follow our vision. In my opinion, a sincere theosophist welcomes friendly and constructive criticism as an opportunity to awaken oneself from a trap of intellectual comfort.

Another obstacle is that we do not want to associate ourselves with those people who in our view are sinful and immoral. Sometimes our righteousness isolates us from others because we might think that we are better than “them”. And this is a perfect test to see whether our goodness is genuine or it is a role that we are playing. It is not in our power to change others. Nevertheless, when we acknowledge something positive in others we are helping them to see it in themselves.

How often do we ask ourselves, “am I a Nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood in my lodge, in my family, at work... and in any form of relationships I am part of?” What does it take? Perhaps, alertness and awareness?

We make a choice every moment and we can make it consciously, no one can make it for us, we cannot put this responsibility on someone else. Theosophy is not a refuge from our fear of life.

How often do we pay attention to the choices we make either it is a reaction, a thought or an action? For example, last Saturday at the Mall a mentally disadvantaged man was passing me by. In that moment I registered that I felt concerned, insecure and shifted my body away from him automatically. Simply by paying attention to my reaction, being honest with myself and asking myself why I chose to react that way, I made a choice to react with compassion rather than fear and to see him in a different light.

There are many paths to Truth. For another person it might be a different one than for me... as long as our common sense tells us that we act as a source of harmony rather than of discord we can follow that path.

The Theosophical Society was formed by and for people who not simply believe in the Universal Brotherhood but who aspire with all their hearts and souls towards the realization of this great Truth. There is a much closer connection between theosophists than we see it. Our inner intention to serve humanity unites us all and by working together in harmony we inspire each other.

But can we work in harmony exploring new ideas and challenging the established doctrines? A theosophist is an explorer who is aware of and curious to learn about the new discoveries in all spheres of life.

We aspire to be a healing force for the world but can we welcome as brother and sister theosophists those who interpret theosophical doctrines differently from us? My opinion and understanding of the theosophical doctrines can change tomorrow because there is nothing permanent in the manifested world. I will not be the same person tomorrow as I am today. Why to waste our energy and time on arguments and intolerance?

Can we respect the right of others to exercise the freedom of thought? Critical thinking is essential on spiritual path. Not only it helps us to recognize truth wherever it may be, it also gives us courage in the moments of doubt and despair that we experience at different moments in our lives. Theosophy teaches us self-reliance. For self-reliance understood as inner strength within each seeker of truth, brings understanding that without these earnest seekers there would be no Theosophical movement. It is also the foundation of the individual and common responsibility of each theosophist to carry on the work for humanity and to be an active helper to spread theosophical ideas which will help people to open their hearts and minds to the spirit of Truth.

Each one of us has to realize Life as a Nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood within our own consciousness in order to be able to manifest it in the world.

# Practical Applications of Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing

Susan D'Arbanville

Good Afternoon. It's wonderful to have the opportunity to reflect on the practical application of brotherhood and the concomitant ideas of the formation a nucleus of universal brotherhood (benevolence) and healing. I'm an associate of the ULT founded by Robert Crosbie as a means of bringing together students together without organizational trappings in order to study and reflect upon the teachings of the Theosophical Founders—and as such I speak only from my point of view.

We have heard and considered many similar ideas—as we realize that although we may come from different traditions in the Theosophical Movement, at the same time we do have similar outlooks on the topics of brotherhood, nucleus and healing. And, as Hermann pointed out we are fortunate that Theosophy provides a perspective we do not find in other teachings.

We know that the world suffers from the pangs inherent in the Transition Age: we strive to exemplify in practice the stirrings we feel from *Buddhi-Manas* or intuitive discrimination based on Unity, while we battle the instincts that helped us reach self-consciousness. But now impede our journey to conscious life in Spirit.

From our 21st Century perspective we can see the effects of the 19th c Theosophical movement. The great and the ordinary minds of the today recognize the process of Globalization. Some embrace the transition to a global consciousness, while others resist; but all are affected. In his book, *The Chrysalis Effect; The Metamorphosis of Global Culture*” author Philip Slater begins

with the analogy of the caterpillar transitioning to a butterfly (an idea we heard mentioned in Jim Tepfer's talk on Thomas Paine.) In the chrysalis, new cells, called 'imaginal cells' are formed in the caterpillar's body—the caterpillar's original immune system sees them as a foreign threat and attacks them. However imaginal cells continue to form and join together eventually outnumbering the older cells and use and transform the existing material into the butterfly. The 20th century's World Wars I & II show us that wars are the result of "threatened cells," while organizations such as the Commonwealth of Nations mention by Jan, stand for the "imaginal" or transformative cells.

We think this is an excellent analogy of the world today. HP Blavatsky, WQ Judge, and HS Olcott formed the Theosophical Society in 1875 at the juncture of three great cycles as we know. New ideas were abroad: the theory of evolution shook the scientific and religious communities of the day and was resisted, yet now it is the norm. Westerners thought the Judeo-Christian worldview superior, but ideas from Eastern religions began to percolate. The Great Masters Letter refers to Olcott's work:

That is why Col. H. S. Olcott, who works to revive Buddhism, may be regarded as one who labours in the true path of Theosophy, far more than any man who chooses as his goal the gratification of his own ardent aspirations for occult knowledge. Buddhism, stripped of its superstition, is eternal truth

Today we see unifying forces of interconnectedness: the Dalai Lama travels the world meeting with followers of all traditions and backgrounds, promulgating brotherhood, mutual respect, forgiveness, and compassion. Buddhists from different traditions have formed centers in the West, and followers of Hinduism have as well. There is cross-pollination among newer and older traditions: Christian monks meet with Buddhist monks, Rabbi's converse with Imams, neuro-scientists and psychologists study the effects of meditation, all with the aim of promoting dialogues about our common humanity, and the necessity for universal

ethics to guide us. The nuclei formed during the regenerative Theosophical impulse continue to grow, both among students of Theosophy and among those who know the ideas under other names. As WQ Judge notes:

The Theosophical Movement being continuous, it is to be found in all times and in all nations. Wherever thought has struggled to be free, wherever spiritual ideas, as opposed to forms and dogmatism, have been promulgated, there the great movement is to be discerned.

We also see the resistance to certain Theosophical ideas: the New Yorker reviewer of a new book on Buddhism, *Why Buddhism Is True; The Science and Philosophy of Meditation and Enlightenment*, calls the ideas of karma and reincarnation “supernatural” while praising the sensible approach based on evolutionary psychology and the fine delineation in the book between emotion and feeling. A conservative Christian writer bemoans the loss of worshippers and the failure of Christian ideas to permeate American culture—he writes wistfully and hopefully for a resurgence of monasteries as preservers of traditional values.

In an Address given by Wm.Q. Judge at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893 “Universal Brotherhood, a Fact in Nature, Mr. Judge’s words apply today:

If Universal Brotherhood had been a belief of this nation; then...we would not have had the persecutions that have stained the pages of history; and yet we have always claimed that we have had Universal Brotherhood. We have had the theory but not the practice. Now, then, has there not been something wanting? It is a beautiful doctrine. It is the only doctrine of the Theosophical Society, the only thing that any man is asked by us to subscribe to. What, then, is the matter with it? Why so many men who say that it is beautiful, but it is impossible, simply impossible? There are even some branches of the Christian church which say, “There is Jesus; why, the altruistic, noble teachings of Christ are beautiful; but no State

could live three months under such doctrine.” The reason that it has not prevailed in practice is that it has been denied in the heart.

Today the 2nd object of the Theosophical Society, “To encourage the comparative study of religion, philosophy, and science” is practiced in schools and colleges around the world.

But: In “Religion and Reform,” WQ Judge says:

None of the present attempts at reform will meet success so long as they are devoid of the true doctrine as to man, his nature and destiny, and respecting the universe, its origin and future course

How does the study of HPB’s writings help with the “Practical application of Brotherhood, a Nucleus and Healing?”

As we may know, the summer dates of the conference were chosen as a reflection of the great American citizen, HP Blavatsky’s birthdate, and the indication of her fundamental importance as the acknowledged source for the re-presentation of the ancient universal wisdom that she named “*Theosophia*” As an interesting side-note HPB also lived in Philadelphia and the restaurant, the “Whitedog Café” notes:

The restaurant’s name honors former resident Helena P. Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society (which emphasized altruism, unity and compassion in everyday life), who occupied the brownstone in 1875. The dog entered the story when Madame Blavatsky was laid low with a serious infection of the leg. Refusing to allow doctors to amputate, she addressed the problem by having a white dog lie across her leg at night, “curing all in no time.”

The ITC’s first statement of purpose is:

To maintain the principles of the Modern Theosophical Movement presented by H. P. B. as a living power in the minds

and hearts of Humanity, encouraging explorations in the light of her teachings.

Practically speaking, this leaves the individual free to engage with the material in the manner that best suits him or her. This is in keeping with the entirely non-coercive approach of theosophical teachings: individual liberty is the cornerstone of all true human advancement for we know that if one is forced to believe an idea, or forced to act in a certain way, the inner man rebels at this loss of sovereignty, even if the ideas be true.

WE find in HPB's: "Organisation of the Theosophical Society":

1) The Founders had to exercise all their influence to oppose selfishness of any kind, by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the Members—at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony, the great diversity of creeds notwithstanding; expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings; mutual help in the research of truths in every domain—moral or physical—and even in daily life.

(2) They had to oppose in the strongest manner anything approaching dogmatic faith and fanaticism—belief in the infallibility of the Masters, or even in the very existence of our invisible Teachers, having to be checked from the first. On the other hand, as a great respect for the private views and creeds of every member was demanded, any Fellow criticising the faith or belief of another Fellow, hurting his feelings, or showing a reprehensible self-assertion, unasked (mutual friendly advices were a duty unless declined)—such a member incurred expulsion. The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything, had to be encouraged.

This is also in accord with section 12 in HPB's *Key to Theosophy* on "Practical Theosophy" where she speaks of:

the slightest invasion of another's right—be that other a man or a nation; when there is any failure to show him the same justice, kindness, consideration or mercy which we desire for ourselves.

We begin with Unity and to explore HPB's teachings study is required: We are reminded that the object of Theosophical Study is not "Individual development, but study so that we can become true helpers of humanity." We may also find illumination and depth by studying the writings of her co-founder WQ Judge. In "Blavatskianism In and Out of Season," Judge warns against the slavish following of HPB as an authority without using our own discrimination and intuition, and at same time he points out that there is a proper time and place to emphasize HPB—the ITC as a gathering of HPB's students is that time and place. We come together as students of HPB creating a nucleus as we ponder her teachings and seek for ways to exemplify them in practice to promote healing. HPB's message serves as "course corrections" in the same way that an airplane's autopilot continually realigns the plane's trajectory when it strays off course. The truth behind the words touches the inner man and acts to stimulate divine potential. Because the ideas are presented holistically and comprehensively even a phrase can be life-changing and lead us to the path: from the *Key*:

ENQUIRER. How, then, should Theosophical principles be applied so that social co-operation may be promoted and true efforts for social amelioration be carried on?

THEOSOPHIST. Let me briefly remind you what these principles are—universal Unity and Causation; Human Solidarity; the Law of Karma; Re-incarnation. These are the

four links of the golden chain which should bind humanity into one family, one universal Brotherhood.

Mr. Judge serves as an exemplar of one who took metaphysical ideas and applied them practically.

On study, Mr. Judge in London, at the close of the European T.S. convention, July 15, 1892 says:

But what is study? It is not the mere reading of books, but rather long, earnest, careful thought upon that which we have taken up. If a student accepts reincarnation and karma as true doctrines, the work is but begun. Many theosophists accept doctrines of that name, but are not able to say what it is they have accepted. They do not pause to find out what reincarnates, or how, when, or why karma has its effects, and often do not know what the word means. Some at first think that when they die they will reincarnate, without reflecting that it is the lower personal I they mean, which cannot be born again in a body. Others think that karma is—well, karma, with no clear idea of classes of karma, or whether of not it is punishment or reward or both. Hence a careful learning from one or two books of the statement of the doctrines, and then a more careful study of them, are absolutely necessary.

This reminds us of a talk on the *Secret Doctrine* that we heard at the ITC last year—the speaker referred rather humorously to the “Blavatsky Code”—a methodology in *The Secret Doctrine* in *Volume i.*, in the Proem on pages 20 and 21.

Stanza I. The history of cosmic evolution, as traced in the Stanzas, is, so to say, the abstract algebraical formula of that Evolution. Hence the student must not expect to find there an account of all the stages and transformations which intervene between the first beginnings of “Universal” evolution and our present state. To give such an account would be as impossible as it would be incomprehensible to men who cannot even grasp

the nature of the plane of existence next to that to which, for the moment, their consciousness is limited.

The Stanzas, therefore, give an abstract formula which can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to all evolution: to that of our tiny earth, to that of the chain of planets of which that earth forms one, to the solar Universe to which that chain belongs, and so on, in an ascending scale, till the mind reels and is exhausted in the effort.

So we have a guidepost, a formula of analogy and correspondence, which we can use to thread our way through often abstruse metaphysics, but also a formula that helps in practical application.

When we consider the idea of healing, as we heard Joop discuss “healing from the root” we are reminded of WQ Judge’s statement on Karma (From “Universal Application of Doctrine”)

How much have you thought upon the effect of Karma upon the animals, the plants, the minerals, the elemental beings? Have you been so selfish as to suppose that they are not affected by you? Is it true that man himself has no responsibility upon him for the vast numbers of ferocious and noxious animals, for the deadly serpents and scorpions, the devastating lions and tigers, that make a howling wilderness of some corners of the earth and terrorize the people of India and elsewhere? It cannot be true.

In his writings Judge persistently addressed the suffering of the ordinary man. As wonderful as it is to know about the finer points of *Devachan*, knowledge of the doctrines of karma and reincarnation help to explain the vicissitudes of existence. As Judge says:

Our duty is to recognize the great human soul with which we have to deal and for which we should work. Its progress, its experience, its inner life, are vastly more important than all our boasted civilization. That civilization could easily be swept away, and what would be left? Your country could be frozen

up solidly in a few weeks, were the Gulf Stream deflected from these shores. Mines have honeycombed your land, and a good earthquake might easily shake all your material glories to destruction beneath the sea. What then could remain save the human experience, the experience of the soul? But no cataclysm can destroy your thoughts. They live on. And so all the work that you do for the inner life of man can meet with no destruction, even though records and books and all the ingenious works upon this outer plane were swept out of existence. If then you believe in this mighty doctrine of Reincarnation, do not be afraid to tell it.

Study leads us to Duty. Part of our personal duty is to cultivate and express the satvic qualities we hear Krishna advocate. In the article “How should we treat others” Judge says,

What then is the panacea finally, the royal talisman? It is Duty, Selflessness. Duty persistently followed is the highest yoga, and is better than mantrams or any posture, or any other thing. If you can do no more than duty it will bring you to the goal. And, my dear friends, I can swear it,

And HPB’s words from the “Organization of TS”:

Let us not forget that Theosophy does not grow in our midst by force and control but by sunshine of brotherliness and the dew of self-oblivion

And from H.P.B.’s *The Voice of the Silence*,

Self-knowledge is of loving deeds the child.

Thank you.

How do we Live Brotherhood,  
Form a Nucleus and Practice  
Healing?

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# How do we Live Brotherhood, Form a Nucleus and Practice Healing?

Jon Knebel

Good morning. It is an honor to be here this morning on HPB's birthday, to be among friends, here in the Friends Center and talking about some serious business. But we can take ourselves pretty seriously sometimes.

When I was thinking about this topic, these questions, the obvious dawned on me. I realized that each of these questions is the answer to each of the others. How do we live Brotherhood? We form a nucleus. We practice healing. How do we form a nucleus? We live Brotherhood. We practice healing. And so on. But it's certainly not that simple. We've heard so many quotes and technical details, today I'd like to do a more simple presentation. Just some ideas.

## **How do we live Brotherhood?**

Although it should always be part of our 'personal' practice — our *sadhana* — to become more brotherly, Brotherhood is a social experience — something we do together. An ascetic can practice Brotherhood in his cave with the crickets and wildflowers, but a Brotherhood of Humanity requires interaction with others. "I could while away the hours, conferrin' with the flowers. Consultin' with the rain." We need others — we need friends..

What are some characteristic behaviors of a person living in a brotherly way with other people? "People.. people who need people.."

Do you remember some of the words to that song?

We're children, needing other childrens.

And yet letting a grown-up pride

Hide all the need inside

Acting more like children than children

What are some characteristic behaviors, other than maturity—being spiritual grown-ups—of living in a brotherly way with others?

Respect – first and foremost. Everyone deserves our respect. Everyone is deserving of dignity.

Non-judgment – We do not have to agree with others, but we CANNOT judge them.

Tolerance—I don't like the word tolerance—it sounds like something you have to do when you don't want to.

Listening—being interested

Honestly caring—Empathy—Empathetic

Amity—Genuine Friendliness

Encouragement—Support—Defense

Kindness

Courtesy

Leadership

Inspiration

Generosity, both Spiritually and Materially

Compassion—the ever-unfolding Lotus flower

HPB tells us:

... the first requisites for getting there are absolute unselfishness and unlimited devotion to the interests of others, and complete indifference as to the world and its opinions. To take the first step on this ideal path requires a perfectly pure motive; no frivolous thought must be allowed to divert our eyes from the goal; no hesitation, no doubt must fetter our feet.

## How do we form a Nucleus?

By the way, we've heard the question—Is it “the” nucleus or “a” nucleus? I did some checking. The word nucleus first appeared in the objects in 1881. Up through the revision in 1894, it was ‘the’ nucleus. The final change in 1896 had ‘a’ nucleus. I could find no explanation for the change.

The two common analogies, the biological—the nucleus of a cell, and the analogy from physics—the nucleus of an atom, both describe a nucleus that is somewhat static in its nature. When we speak to others about this nucleus, we need to be careful they do not imagine this nucleus to be static, exclusive or elitist. We need to describe a nucleus that is expanding, encompassing, inviting.

A friend, a fellow student, recently wrote about this word. He said “The word, “nucleus” comes from the Latin, meaning “kernel.” It is the diminutive of nux or nut. It constitutes the central or essential part of something, around which all other parts are organized and brought together. It is the pith, the essence, the core, the gist.”

I like the idea of the nucleus being a nut or a seed—an acorn growing to become the mighty oak. Go outside and look at that oak tree. See if you can find the acorn that was its seed. You won't find it. The acorn has been destroyed in the creation of that mighty oak. The nucleus has become the Universal Brotherhood. In the

shelter business, where I work every Friday night, we have a saying: Our mission is to put ourselves out of business. So the forming of a nucleus should be only a first step, in putting ourselves out of business. In a wonderful world of Universal Brotherhood, there would no longer be a need for a nucleus. What a wonderful world this would be.

What do we do when a newcomer comes to our door? He had seen our flyer and now comes to our Lodge meeting, curious about Theosophy. Perhaps he or she has told us that they had read a book by Alice Bailey, or Crowley. How do we react? Do we react in horror and say, NO you should NOT read that book? Or do we welcome him, knowing that he is seeking the truth? Do we seek to include him, or push him away, saying “if you want to be a part of our nucleus you need to read Blavatsky or Leadbeater—or Judge or Purucker!” How can we expect to expand our nucleus by judging and rejecting others? A Master wrote “Do not be too severe on the merits or demerits of one who seeks admission among your ranks, ...”

Now, I do not mean that we should begin reading Bailey books in our Lodge meetings. There are other places one can do that. We must be careful to not let our efforts to expand our nucleus dilute or water-down these wonderful core teachings that we have discovered. We need to be ready to share those core teachings with the newcomer, just as someone shared them with us when we began seeking for the light. Perhaps we first discovered Theosophy after reading an Alice Bailey book or an Edgar Cayce book. Or Plato—or Nagarjuna. We were no different than this newcomer. So we must be welcoming; we must not frighten them off.

I recently saw an interesting quote from Henri Nouwen (a Dutch Roman Catholic priest). He said:

One of the main tasks of theology is to find words that do not divide but unite, that do not create conflict, that do not hurt but heal.

Do not hurt but heal. Not an easy task, but it is one of the main challenges of Theosophy as well.

## How do we practice healing?

In the Adyar tradition there is a saying that there are three pillars in Theosophy: Study, Meditation and Service. I believe it is from Annie Besant, but I cannot find the exact source. I believe that, along with our interaction with new, young, potential Theosophists in our groups, the best way to practice healing in the world is to serve. The highest ideal of life is to serve. Whether we serve at a local homeless shelter or food pantry, or at a shelter for homeless pets. Or if we engage in peaceful, nonviolent protest against environmental destruction. Or if we work to welcome immigrants or refugees to our community. Or if we work to bring Theosophy to those in prisons. These are all ways where, either as individuals, or better as a group—our little nuclei—we can practice healing in this troubled world of ours.

Annie Besant, as president of the Adyar Society, founded the Theosophical Order of Service as a separate, sidebar organization, knowing the political nature of service. Before she met HPB, she was well known as a social reformer. She was already notorious for standing up for the rights of women, matchstick workers on strike, and was condemned for publishing a book with Charles Bradlaugh recommending birth control. She was wise to keep her Society out of politics, and politics out of the Society. The TOS motto is “A union of those who love in the service of all that suffers.”

Her Theosophical Order of Service still exists today, and presents to us a wonderful opportunity for people to serve

together, to practice healing in the world. You may remember last year at Santa Barbara, Carol Nicholson spoke to us about the TOS. Remember that you do not need to be a member of the Theosophical Society in America or the Theosophical Society Adyar to be a member of the TOS. Many TOS members bring friends and family to TOS service projects. All are welcome.

I have a message from Ananya Sri Ram Rajan, current president of the TOS in America. She writes to us:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In keeping with the theme of this conference — A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood — A World's Healing Force — I'd like to extend a warm invitation to all of you to use the platform of the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) as a way to create a nucleus in your own community and a nucleus within our different theosophical schools.

The Maha Chohan stated that Truth holds the qualities of benevolence, philanthropy, and reform. This is the foundation of the TOS's work: to be a healing force in today's world. The TOS is open to anyone, from any walk of life, member or non-member of a Theosophical organization. What matters more than anything is the desire to lift a little of the heavy karma of the world. Our conferences are wonderful, but we must take our wisdom out into the world through altruistic actions. Thus following the mandate of the Maha Chohan and the Masters of the Wisdom.

I wish you all a wonderful experience at this 2017 ITC conference. Warm, fraternal greetings to all.

When we go out into the world and serve—our fellow man, the animals, the other kingdoms—people notice. Perhaps they are inspired. Without saying a word about Theosophy, we are making Theosophy a living power in our lives and a living power in the world. We become the world's healing force. We are expanding our nucleus by setting the example for others, inspiring them to

join us. We are growing the mighty oak tree of brotherhood. The world's healing force is, in a word, Altruism.

I will end by repeating a quote Helena used a little while ago. At the end of HPB's wonderful article 'Let Every Man Prove His Own Work' (*Lucifer*, November 1887) there is a note from her Master:

HE WHO DOES NOT PRACTISE ALTRUISM; HE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO SHARE HIS LAST MORSEL WITH A WEAKER OR POORER THAN HIMSELF; HE WHO NEGLECTS TO HELP HIS BROTHER MAN, OF WHATEVER RACE, NATION, OR CREED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE MEETS SUFFERING, AND WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE CRY OF HUMAN MISERY; HE WHO HEARS AN INNOCENT PERSON SLANDERED, WHETHER A BROTHER THEOSOPHIST OR NOT, AND DOES NOT UNDERTAKE HIS DEFENCE AS HE WOULD UNDERTAKE HIS OWN—IS NO THEOSOPHIST.

Thank you very much.

# How to Live Brotherhood, Form a Nucleus and Practice Healing

Helena Kerekhazi

Extraordinary alignments of the heavens are accompanying our conference this year. We have meteor showers, comets, planetary alignments. Was not the Esoteric She Madame Blavatsky like some magnificent comet, a top behind whom celestial beings we know as our Elder Brothers introduced themselves?

The most intelligent being in the universe, man, has never, then, been without a friend, but has a line of elder brothers who continually watch over the progress of the less progressed, preserve the knowledge gained through aeons of trial and experience, and continually seek for opportunities of drawing the developing intelligence of the race on this or other globes to consider the great truths concerning the destiny of the soul. (*Ocean of Theosophy*, Chapter One, William Q. Judge)

When you consider and remember those days in 1875 and after, in which you could not find any people interested in your thoughts, and now look at the wide-spreading influence of theosophical ideas however labelled—it is not so bad. We are not working merely that people may call themselves Theosophists, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. (“Yours till death and after, H.P.B.” William Q. Judge)

We are not working that people may call themselves Theosophists. In fact this habit of pointing out who is and is not a Theosophist has caused many problems within and among students of Theosophy. Why is this? We are here to study the teachings of Theosophy, not to judge each other. Wherever this habit of making

judgments about other Theosophists occurs, there the Movement is bound to wither and die eventually as would happen with any organization or community or even our own bodies. Once we start to attack ourselves we are like an autoimmune disease and self-immolate. Judge himself, strongly advised against judging others time and again — even with a name like that! He wrote,

This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing.

It may seem at times, yes, that the tides work against a Movement that seems so small on the surface as ours does. But actually, these efforts stretch back over many millennia, as Theosophy is a network of teachings, the One Wisdom Religion behind all religions and which they try to varying degrees to embody. It is the Spritual Science of the Soul's journey through the kingdoms of the One Life.

But this smallness is no excuse to form cliques in our groups to hijack and attack other groups or other members. This is contrary to our purposes. We are urged to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood as a building block, an energetic center that radiates out, like the tiny mustard seed, and with the intention of serving humanity, aids the potential of humanity to rise to its god-like potentiality.

So then, how do you form a nucleus? What is the recipe?

HE WHO DOES NOT PRACTICE ALTRUISM; HE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO SHARE HIS LAST MORSEL WITH A WEAKER OR POORER THAN HIMSELF; HE WHO NEGLECTS TO HELP HIS BROTHER MAN, OF WHATEVER RACE, NATION,

OR CREED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE MEETS SUFFERING, AND WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE CRY OF HUMAN MISERY; HE WHO HEARS AN INNOCENT PERSON SLANDERED, WHETHER A BROTHER THEOSOPHIST OR NOT, AND DOES NOT UNDERTAKE HIS DEFENCE AS HE WOULD UNDERTAKE HIS OWN — IS NO THEOSOPHIST

These ideas are not new, but have been collected as an heirloom and passed down to us in various forms over ages and ages, as HPB opens *The Secret Doctrine* with these words:

A collection of palm leaves made impermeable to water, fire, and air, by some specific unknown process — is before the writer's eye. On the first page is an immaculate white disk within a dull black ground. On the following page, the same disk, but with a central point. The first, the student knows to represent Kosmos in Eternity, before the re-awakening of still slumbering Energy, the emanation of the Word in later systems. The point in the hitherto immaculate Disk, Space and Eternity in Pralaya, denotes the dawn of differentiation. It is the Point in the Mundane Egg (*Secret Doctrine*, Vol. 1, page 1, Proem).

The Hermetic philosophy offers a key to students of this mystery that “As above, so below.” In comparing the macrocosmic One Life with the microcosmic nucleus of a cell:

- Within the One Life : the germ within the latter which will become the Universe, the all, the boundless, periodical Kosmos, this germ being latent and active, periodically and by turns. The one circle is divine Unity, from which all proceeds, whither all returns
- The Nucleus of a Cell: also contains the, to us, invisible germ from which life proceeds, encoded in the DNA, to which the motion of the life of the

cell returns again and again to receive its encoded instructions to build proteins etc etc

It is hardly necessary to remind the reader once more that the term “Divine Thought,” like that of “Universal Mind,” must not be regarded as even vaguely shadowing forth an intellectual process akin to that exhibited by man. The “Unconscious,” according to von Hartmann, arrived at the vast creative, or rather Evolutionary Plan, “by a clairvoyant wisdom superior to all consciousness,” which in the Vedantic language would mean absolute Wisdom. Only those who realise how far Intuition soars above the tardy processes of ratiocinative thought can form the faintest conception of that absolute Wisdom which transcends the ideas of Time and Space.

## **How to Live Brotherhood?**

The Golden Rule is the simplified version of the *Golden Precepts*, of which H.P.B. had thirty nine memorized herself. *The Voice of the Silence* is a translation some of these treatises of a pre-Buddhistic origin. Instructions to students about daily practices are to be found enumerated there.

## **How to Practice Healing?**

First of all, it is necessary to form an alignment which corresponds to our Identification with the Oversoul, our third fundamental principle:

The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation (or “Necessity”) in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law.

We know that empathetic bonds are the most healing of all. Through empathetic connections, we look for those experiences of suffering in our past experiences and validate them for others. When we can identify and connect through shared experiences it is the most powerful connection that can aid in uplifting suffering. This is why groups of people coming together can be so powerfully healing and can amplify even the power of healing to reach those who might not otherwise be capable of even making a single one on one connection to others.

No defense is necessary. H.P.B. indicates that these teachings are self-evidenced. If we feel the need to defend, it must be then our defensiveness comes from our own insecurities. Why then should we give a further animus to these feelings between the so called traditions?

It would not be in place here to enter upon any defence or proof of their inherent reasonableness; nor can I pause to show how they are, in fact, contained—though too often under a misleading guise—in every system of thought or philosophy worthy of the name.

Once that the reader has gained a clear comprehension of them and realised the light which they throw on every problem of life, they will need no further justification in his eyes, because their truth will be to him as evident as the sun in heaven. *Secret Doctrine*, Volume 1, page 20

“You were not directed to found and realise a Universal Brotherhood,” we are told, this would have been far too great and incomprehensible of a task “but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulations can

begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view.”

Not to worry, The Great Workers are behind us as they are behind all sincere workers.

I know that their desire is that each should listen to the voice of his inner self...Then the unseen helpers are able to help all the more. (*Daily W.Q.J.* 20)

The concept of the *laya* center which HPB mentions in *The Secret Doctrine* corresponds to the germ idea earlier discussed here and is especially helpful in understanding how and why the work of the nucleus succeeds:

*Laya* Center: A Point of disappearance, the mystical point where a thing disappears from one plane and passes onwards to appear on another plane... (GDP)

Any point or spots—suddenly becomes the center of active life, first on a higher plane and later descending into manifestation through the *laya* planes on lower planes.

Each Branch is a centre:

...the whole a vast, whirling centre of light and force and energy for the benefit of the nation and the race.

Close up the ranks! We are exhorted. Each member is a centre.

Every day...often as you can, Judge urges:

Think, think think on the truth that you are not body, brain, or astral man, but that you are THAT, and “THAT” is the Supreme Soul...By persisting your daily thoughts each night to the judgment of your Higher Self, you will at last gain light.  
WQJ

Study the *Gita* and spiritual literature as a bridge.  
Are We Helping, Fixing or Serving?

Fixing and helping create a distance between people, but we cannot serve at a distance. We can only serve that to which we are profoundly connected... Service is not an experience of strength or expertise; but an experience of mystery, surrender and awe. Helpers and fixers feel causal. Servers may experience from time to time a sense of being used by larger unknown forces. (Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen on the healing power of service, UCSF Medical School, Cancer Help Program)

Theosophy's Time Has Come. We have been charged with creating a new impulse that will eventually lead to a connection to the Universal Brotherhood, the plane that the Masters and *Dhyan Chohans* operate on...

We have got this! Why Theosophy? Because they forget:

Because people in general have been in the habit of admitting to be real only what they can see with the physical eye, they have at last come to suppose that the unseen is neither real nor material. But they forget...water may exist in the air held suspended and invisible, until conditions alter and cause its precipitation.

We are really working for the future, laying the foundation for a day greater than this. We are all coming back together to carry on the work if we now take all our opportunities. We must act from duty now, and thus be right for the future.”  
(*Daily W.Q.J.* pp. 60 ff.)

# How to Form a Nucleus of Brotherhood, so that we can be a Healing Force in the World

Barend Voorham

Dear friends, fellow students of the Esoteric Wisdom,

Actually I hope we are not just students, because we must apply the teachings as well! For studying without applying the teachings is like thought without action. And thought without action is like a seed without any soil to sow it. Although it is our first duty to create mental images of universal brotherhood—spiritual and compassionate thoughts—we cannot just sit still in our armchair, or attend theosophical conferences, thinking and hoping that others will pick up the beautiful thoughts we are thinking.

Just like the sower in the parable in the Gospel of Matthew, we have to go out and sow thought-seeds. And although it may be easier to sow when the sun shines, Theosophists also have to go out when it rains. Being a Theosophist is hard work—no doubt about that.

## **Linking Mankind with the Source of Inspiration**

Genuine Theosophy is a source of inspiration, and the Theosophical Movement has the duty to link mankind with that source.

How do we do that? How do we form a Nucleus of Brotherhood that radiates its influence in the world? Well, a heart that doesn't beat is not a heart. A nucleus that is not active is not a nucleus at all. It must be active; we have to work for it.

We must present the image of Universal Brotherhood in all areas of human thought. And those mental images should be crystal clear to our listeners. We have to "translate" the theoretical theosophical tenets into all kinds of practical situations. We should present *Theosophia* with all types of examples and arguments, in such a way, that both the intellect and the buddhic heart can see the truth of it.

We certainly don't mean that we should impose theosophical thoughts on others. We respect everyone's free will. Moreover, if we were to impose our ideas, that would be the most ineffective way of spreading Theosophy, because then we would never touch the spiritual side of the soul. We should rather study the mind of our brother. And just like Socrates of old we must ask questions, so that our brother discovers the truth within himself. If Theosophy is true, we just need to show it and it will prove itself.

The way we present our ideas is therefore very important. We should never rely on feelings and emotions, because since they are so volatile, the ideas will never take root in the long term. If we can show the logic of our ideas and point out that you can recognize them in nature, humans will develop an inner confidence in their truth. Thus they will rely increasingly on their inner qualities, on their intuition, which ultimately leads to perception, to direct experience of their truth.

## **Practical Concretization**

We believe that this is the policy since the foundation of the TS. From the moment the TS was founded in 1875, HPB in particular published a massive number of teachings, which put

up a barrier against the advancing materialism of that time. That materialism denied the spiritual, divine part of human consciousness. Theosophy had to show the divine origin of the human race.

The founders, however, did not just publish the teachings. They also organized the practical concretization of those ideas. And they did that in all areas of society. Take the first cremation in the US in 1878, organized by the founders and with which they wanted to show/demonstrate the impermanence of the body. Later in India, they succeeded to reduce the division between sects, castes and races. At the annual convention of the TS in Adyar in 1889 there were present delegates of the Hindu, Parsi, Buddhist, Islamic, Hebrew and Christian religions. Brotherliness had begun to prevail.

Another practical concretization: in Sri Lanka there was, especially thanks to the hard work of the president-founder Colonel Olcott, a revival of the suppressed Buddhism. Another example: in London East End the first Working-Women's Club was founded. It was the first women's club in the UK that was entirely free from theological creeds and conditions.

## Thought and Action

Perhaps it seems contradictory that the theosophical application is the most important, while the main task of the Lodge of Wisdom and Compassion is to form mental buddhic images.

However, it is not a contradiction!

Because all of those activities are the results of thought — theosophical thoughts, thoughts of Unity and Brotherhood. Civilization is built on thought! If we change our way of thinking, we change society as well. Thoughts are not value-free. But if we regard theosophical thoughts as just a kind of spiritual rest, as useless in daily life, then we fail. If theosophical thoughts are for

any person just some kind of leisure activity, then they have no impact on society and are worth nothing.

We have to “translate” those spiritual and profound thoughts—which for most people are mere abstractions—into practical applications, but without any concession to the basic idea. For thought without action is laziness and sometimes also cowardice. In the worst case it is even hypocrisy. “The end of man is an action and not a thought, though it were the noblest”, thus HPB quotes Carlyle in the *Key to Theosophy*. But action without thought—that is, spiritual thought, based on the very laws of nature, is empty and doomed to fail.

## Nucleus of Active Brotherhood

So what is a Nucleus of active Brotherhood going to look like? We think like this: Theosophists worldwide, collectively and open-mindedly, open to the world, study and practice Theosophy with one another. They study in order to come into action. They help each other in developing creative ways to apply and spread Theosophy.

Are we ready to tread in the footsteps of HPB: to break the moulds of thinking by reintroducing Theosophy, not in a non-committal but in a practical way, to call right what’s right and wrong what’s wrong? Brotherhood doesn’t mean that we should cover evil or injustice with the cloak of charity. For example, if the majority of the population of a country does not want to accept refugees, then we do not need to go along with that out of fear that we would be less popular otherwise.

Are we, like HPB, strong enough to resist public opinion sometimes? Do we have the courage to enter the arena? We must stand up for our vision. We shouldn’t hide our theosophical light under a bushel. We must demand as much respect for our own ideas as we have for the ideas of others. And we must present and

disseminate Theosophy in the most creative way we can imagine. Everyone can and must do so in his own community, his own family, job/place of work, and neighborhood. But this work is much more powerful when we do it together. Then we will create a very powerful healing force. A force that not only heals, but prevents diseases as well.

## Examples of Practical Theosophy

We want to explain this policy to you with some examples from different areas of society. First, a religious example. In our world there is a lot of disagreement between the adherents of different faiths, such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism. We know that Master Koothoomi indicated/pointed out religion as the source of two thirds of all evil in the world.

But we also know that religious consciousness is the noblest aspect within us. We just need to understand the true meaning of religion, and grasp the idea that Religion is something very different than the degenerated derivatives of it. Theosophy makes that clear. The only way to bring people of so many different faiths together is to show them the core of their faith, which is Unity.

Here is another example. We all want to live in a just society. Injustice must be eliminated. But if social reforms are based on the illusion that people are satisfied when they have more earthly prosperity, such reforms will have temporary effects only. They should be based on the spiritual fact of unity.

We do not have to enter the political minefield, but we can show how Theosophy can solve all social issues. For example, concerning the issue of crime: we can make clear that it is not our duty to punish criminals. Nature—*e.g.* karma—“punishes” and “rewards” more effectively than the wisest judge can. What we need to do is to teach our weaker brothers to live according to the

natural laws. That's a much more effective way to deal with crime than locking people up.

## Two Examples from the Field of Science

Many scientific facts can be explained much better with theosophical hypotheses. New thoughts about gravity can be lifted to a higher level by involving the idea of consciousness. You should not do that to be proved “right”, but to sow the seed of another image in the minds of our fellow men. If you realize that you are an integral part of the living cosmos, you will surely develop a different mentality than when you think that the cosmos consists of blind matter with perhaps somewhere at a far distance another planet with living beings.

New scientific facts about DNA give us the opportunity to explain that our character is not determined by our DNA, but by our consciousness. It is the human consciousness that puts the ‘switches’ of the DNA on or off—*via* our *Linga-?ar?ra*, our astral body. The idea that your DNA determines who you are deprives you of the responsibility for your own life and choices. But we determine our own destiny.

Only Theosophy provides reasonable answers to this contemporary question, just like it provides the appropriate information to answer all questions on life and death, such as the issues of euthanasia, organ transplantation and genetic engineering. Mankind lacks essential information to draw the right conclusions about these subjects. If we can clearly apply the theosophical ideas about the processes of birth and death in all these ethical medical cases, not only will we inspire people to make other choices, but their mind will be more and more focused on the spiritual background of life as well.

Most if not all of life's questions can be solved with the doctrines of karma and reincarnation. We must explain how those teachings apply in all kinds of situations.

Finally, one last example, but one that is certainly not the least important: the issue of war and peace. The tremendous suffering because of the many wars is caused mainly by the false assumption that the end justifies the means. Theosophists know that an act always—without exceptions—produces consequences that have the same characteristics as that act.

If we want to clarify successfully to our fellow human beings the statement that noble goals need noble means, then we—Theosophists of all organizations—should be a living example of it. You cannot disseminate an idea correctly and effectively if you don't practice it. You have to walk your talk.

## Different Brotherhoods or One Movement?

In the light of that statement we should sincerely ask ourselves: are we different brotherhoods or are we ONE Movement?

Knowing that several cells can form ONE tissue or organ, we should be fully aware of the fact that Theosophists (inside and outside theosophical organizations) form the nucleus of the actual human brotherhood. But that nucleus can only be effective in the world, if it is in harmony with itself. If Theosophists are passive, dominated by the quality of *Tamas*, the nucleus will eventually shrink and disappear from the outer world. If we are too active, if we act without wisdom (dominated by *Rajas*), then we will fail to achieve our goals, and Theosophy will dilute. But if we act harmoniously (*Sattva*), our influence will steadily increase. But we have to act. Doing nothing is not an option. Together we have to shed the theosophical light on all issues with which humanity is struggling.

## Lodge-Force

It is important to spread Theosophy together. We can be a valuable instrument for the Masters only if we cooperate in a supra-personal way. The bundling of supra-personal thought and action creates a flow of the so-called lodge-force. That lodge-force is a very real power. It arises when Theosophists—who may think differently about the details of the teachings—act as a unity. They work together, like chelas, like the fingers of one hand. Compare it to a family. In family life everyone has to make his contribution. Such a close family—the nucleus—the gateway to esoteric sources on the one hand, and on the other hand it radiates a magnetic field to the outer world.

If that nucleus is divided in itself or if it is passive, it has little appeal to the outside world, notwithstanding any possible appearance. But if the family is harmonious, then each member respects the others, and everyone contributes in thought and deed. Our responsibility as Theosophists is great. If we do not contribute, if we think that someone else will do our job, we are weakening the nucleus. However, if we do our duty, the nucleus will become stronger and will have a greater appeal. For the more solid the nucleus is, the greater the appeal to others is and the greater the healing force is.

We consist of a relatively small number of workers. However, the strength is not in the number, but in having an open mind, a pure heart, a loyal sense of duty to the Masters and a sense of brotherliness for one's fellow Theosophist, one's co-disciple; in other words: our strength is our will to work together. A few grains of salt change the taste of soup completely. We can be the salt of the earth, or rather: the salt of the mind of the earth.

The influence of “*Theosophia*”  
in the Founding of the United  
States of America

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# Tom Paine: Theophilanthropist and Forerunner of the 21st Century

James Tepfer

It is a privilege as well as a pleasure to speak to you this evening about that courageous and magnanimous servant of the Theosophical Adepts, Tom Paine.

Before setting out the life and thought of Paine, let me say from the start that I am deeply indebted to Shri Raghavan Iyer, a profound Theosophical teacher, Oxford Don and political philosopher, who first introduced me to Paine many decades ago at the University of California. Paine's sparkling political insights were often cited in Shri Iyer's legendary classes on "The Dialectic", "Anarchist Thought" and "American Radicalism". More significantly, Shri Iyer's seminal book, *Parapolitics: Toward the City of Man*, includes a brief but telling account of Paine's prescient contributions to the emerging cosmopolis of the 21st Century.

I am also indebted to that noble and exemplary agent of the Mahatmas, William Q. Judge, whose article, "The Adepts in America in 1776", helped me to appreciate the wholesome and illuminating influences of the Brotherhood of Bodhisattvas on the receptive mind of Paine.

Turning to Paine, himself, we might say with great conviction that America was thrice blessed during its tumultuous Revolutionary period to have in its midst a noble visionary who saw the America-to-be as potentially embodying "a new order of the ages", as a living experiment in democratic principles, as a potential pointer to an emerging "universal civilization".

Let us begin with the simple question, who was Tom Paine? That is, how might we characterize this 18th century

enlightenment radical who appeared to be *sui generis*—a spontaneous phenomenon, an original?

Tom Paine was, first and foremost, a Theophilanthropist, an ardent lover of God and man, and, most importantly, a lover of God in man and in Nature. Paine was born in Thetford, England in 1737 and died in New York City in 1809—some seventy-two years later. He migrated to the American colonies in 1774 at the age of 37. Within a few short years after landing in Philadelphia, Paine became the most forward-looking visionary of the American Revolutionary period and one of the foremost advocates of the democratic spirit of individual liberty, social justice and limited government. He embodied the most admirable qualities of Franklin, Washington and Jefferson but with few of their foibles. He was daringly original, truly brilliant, supremely articulate in debate and in writing, indomitable in his service to the Cause of political independence and refreshingly free of the major vices of his age: slave ownership, monetary greed and political ambition. He was (and is) the gold standard of the true revolutionary: high principled, clear thinking, fearless, magnanimous to his enemies and genuinely inclusive in both thought and conduct.

If this is true about Paine the man, then what about his accomplishments and influence over the entire arc of his long and fruitful life?

Paine's contributions to his epoch—and beyond—were manifold. He was principally an enlightened revolutionary agent not only in America, but in France, and, to a lesser degree, in England. Paine may be seen as a luminous revolutionary because he consciously entertained an expansive vision of individual potential and social possibilities; he was, in fact, whole-heartedly committed to what Shri Iyer called, "the fundamental revolution from elitism to equality". Paine's radical political agenda became a Herculean task because, at its core, it was really a revolution in ideas—a challenge to the known frontiers of consciousness. Paine, as we shall see, proved to be worthy of his evolving

Promethean vision as he repeatedly initiated timely acts on behalf of a clearly apprehended “new order of the ages”.

Paine’s first important act in America, was to write a book called *Common Sense*. This fiery, innovative thought-piece became the catalyst that catapulted the thirteen colonies into the quest for political independence. *Common Sense* dispelled the inherited myths about monarchy and hereditary aristocracy by using common sense reasoning and by exposing their inherent institutional contradictions. More significantly, Paine deglamorized government by characterizing it as simply a necessary restraint on human vices. In contrast, he heralded society as a positive good because it cultivated human virtues and nourished social affections. Furthermore, Paine made the intriguing observation that since wisdom is clearly not hereditary, but spontaneously springs up like a seedless plant in all social classes, then the only rational and morally acceptable form of government is representative democracy with its emphasis on individual liberty, human equality and personal merit.

One of the fortuitous spin-offs of Paine’s immensely popular *Common Sense*, was that it laid the theoretical ground work for that marvelous ‘document of propositions’ called, “The Declaration of Independence”. After the signing of that forever inspirational document, the Revolutionary War began in earnest and Paine was an integral part of it.

In the early stages of the war, when the American troops were in continual retreat and were in fact deserting by the thousands, General Washington appealed to Paine to write something that might raise the spirits of his beleaguered soldiers. Paine responded and penned an essay called, the Crisis. He then sped to Philadelphia, had the article quickly printed and returned to battlefield headquarters. Washington read the Crisis with evident eagerness and was elated by its inspiring tone. He immediately ordered his officers to summon all remaining troops. The ragged soldiers soon huddled around camp fires on the snow-covered

plains in the dead of a winter's night and listened with increasingly rapt attention to Paine's rousing summons of their warrior spirit.

Let me read out some selected passages from Paine's *Crisis*. These mantramic sentences are penned in the cadences of unconditional commitment to the sacred cause of American freedom—a cause which Paine implicitly connects to the “wider cause of all mankind”.

Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and repulse it. Say not that thousands are gone, turn out your tens of thousands; throw not the burden of the day upon Providence, but ‘show your faith by your works’ that God may bless you. It matters not where you live, or what rank of life you hold, the evil or the blessing will reach you all. The far and the near, the home counties and the back, the rich and the poor, will suffer or rejoice alike.... I love the man who can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death.”  
(*The American Crisis*, pg. 10)

The effect of Paine's spoken words on the Revolutionary army was electric. Like Krishna, Paine invoked the Arjuna-like spirit of the journeyman soldiers. He appealed not to their fears or their interests but to their deeper sense of honor. He challenged them to think beyond themselves to the justice of their cause and to the potential benefits of victory for future generations. Not surprisingly, Paine's eloquent plea played a vital role in Washington's first military victory at the battle of Trenton on Christmas Day 1776—a few days after the *Crisis* paper was read out to his troops.

It is interesting to note that in 1926, some one hundred and fifty years later, so luminous a world figure as Mahatma Gandhi also read Paine's essay to Washington's troops. Gandhi was struck

by the convergence of the qualities needed by soldiers of war and soldiers of peaceful resistance. Gandhi commented:

It is remarkable how similar are the qualities required of soldiers of peace and soldiers of war. Thomas Paine's speech could be addressed almost word for word and with complete appropriateness to the (Indian) Congress volunteers of 1921.... Whether you secure freedom by the use of physical force or spiritual force, i.e., through self-suffering, the price to be paid must be heavy, if it is to be a valuable article." ("Price of Freedom", *Young India*, 9 December, 1926.)

It is important to pause and note here that Paine once stated that, "I never put pen to paper without my soul being present." The implication of this self-revealing comment is of great Theosophical significance; namely, that the noetic current that suffuses the words of one who is "great of soul" invariably has an uplifting effect on the ready and the receptive. Clearly, Paine's numinous mind was the source of his healing magic. Time and again Paine came to the rescue of the American war effort by virtue of the seminal, iridescent quality of his writings that tended to clarify the mind, re-focus issues and regenerate the lost enthusiasms of the heart.

Soon after the defeat of Great Britain, Paine left for France and then on to England to promote his original design of an iron bridge. While in Paris and later in London he personally conversed with many of the most eminent political leaders of his generation. Most significantly, he spent considerable time with the great British parliamentarian, Edmund Burke, an admirer of Paine but, at heart, a political conservative. Shortly after the French Revolution began in 1789, Burke wrote a scathing attack on the principles of the revolution which he saw as a threat to Britain and its revered institutions. Paine responded to Burke with a powerful rebuttal called *Rights of Man*. The latter created a sensation in Britain and America — especially among the working classes.

In *Rights of Man*, Paine took the British monarchy to task and argued that the only rational form of government which can bind its citizens is a representative democracy based on universal suffrage and a recognition of the natural rights of man. Paine's fertile mind – ever the servant of his compassionate heart—then set forth an array of politically heretical proposals such as universal public education, pensions for the aged, state relief for the unemployed and a graduated annual income. This was a quantum shift in Paine's thinking about the role of government in society. Paine moved from regarding government as merely providing security and ensuring political liberty to its being a primary contributor to positive social uplift. In addition to his radical political proposals, Paine also called for a “Congress of Nations” to settle international disputes. Predictably, *Rights of Man* was eventually deemed to be “seditious libel” by the British government. Paine was subsequently tried *in absentia*, found guilty and then hung in effigy.

Having escaped across the English Channel with the help of his poet-friend William Blake, Paine was hailed as a hero by avid citizens of the “new France”. In fact, Paine became one of only two non-French citizens to be elected to the French National Convention.

Initially, Paine was well received and treated with great respect. However, as the Revolution began to deteriorate into collective madness, Paine eventually fell into disfavor with the Jacobins in the National Assembly. He was finally arrested in 1793 and taken to the Luxembourg prison to be guillotined. He remained in prison for a year before he was finally released.

The reason for Paine's “fall from grace” in the French Assembly is worthy of pause. Paine was that rare revolutionary in whom moral courage and magnanimous feelings were easy companions. He was never bitter, self-righteous or vindictive. He was unfailingly magnanimous with those in need—whether foe or friend. It is true that he did not easily tolerate fools when it

came to issues of high moral or national importance. But that was equally true in relation to his supporters and as well as to his critics. Paine's allegiance was to the exacting goddess of justice and not to persons. With respect to addressing wrong doing, Paine was particularly impatient with retributive justice—including capital punishment. Therefore, when the French National Assembly called for the execution of King Louis XVI, Paine fearlessly rose to his defense. In his fervent appeal for the life of the King, Paine openly admitted that Louis XVI had committed treason and should be held accountable. However, argued Paine, the King had also been an ally of the American Revolution and contributed funds at a critical point during the battle with Great Britain. He was therefore entitled to mercy not retribution. It is just, thundered Paine, to kill monarchy but not right or civilized to execute the monarch.

As we know, Paine lost the argument and, in so doing, forfeited his liberty as well.

Shortly after being released from prison in Paris, Paine completed his most controversial work, *The Age of Reason*— a blistering critique of Christianity and of all institutionalized religions. As you might imagine, the public's reaction to Paine's trenchant criticism of formal religion led to the relentless vilification of his character—especially in America. When he returned in 1802 to the country of his second birth he was no longer seen as the trusted protector of Everyman but as an unscrupulous agent of the devil. He died almost friendless in 1809 in New York City, but his vision and optimism remained undiminished to the very end of his life.

In light of Paine's unconquerable soul, it is no wonder that W. Q. Judge feelingly salutes Paine as one who "... could be trusted to stand almost alone with the lamp of truth in his hand amidst others who in 'times that tried men's souls' quaked with fear..." ("The Adepts in America in 1776", *Theosophist*, October 1883)

Before we consider Paine's deeper historical legacy, it is important to briefly turn to his *The Age of Reason*. While Paine does not set out any systematic philosophical system, there are nonetheless gems of spiritual insight scattered throughout his work. In fact, his basic religious philosophy echoes the august and profound teachings of the Wisdom Religion.

Let me illustrate. Paine tells us that nothing we perceive in the whole of Creation, creates itself. This can only be explained by an Uncreated First Cause. We call this Uncreated First Cause, "God". However, God is not a material cause, but a spiritual one. It is an ever-present, endlessly fertile, cosmic intelligence working through material form.

If this characterizes God, what then is Nature? Nature is not patterned sense phenomena. It is composed of the intelligible principles behind sense phenomena. Nature is, essentially, a vast set of immutable laws that reveal the layered structure of reality. These laws are the focal points of Divine intelligence. They reveal profound, guiding truths for moral conduct as well as yield knowledge for practical, material purposes. Nature is thus the instructor, *par excellence*, of the human family.

If all this is true about God and Nature, then, what is man? Man is an immortal soul. He is also the rational hyphen between God and Nature. In fact, noetic reason is the Hermetic interpreter of Nature's code language.

In addition to the cognitive potential of reason, Paine acknowledges a para-rational faculty that fosters higher order thoughts and inspirational visions:

There are two distinct classes of thought; those produced by reflection, and those that bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat these voluntary

visitors with civility, and it is from them I have acquired all the knowledge that I have.” (*The Age of Reason*, pg. )

As Theosophists, we might call these “voluntary visitors”, ideational emanations from *Buddhi-Manas*.

From Paine’s perspective, the rational observation of Nature combined with intuitive openness can yield profound spiritual insights. As a case in point, let me share with you Paine’s brilliant, intuitive argument for the immortality of the human soul. Immortality, as defined by Paine, is continuity of consciousness maintained throughout variations in form and material. Analogical evidence for this can be found mirrored in Nature. To illustrate this, Paine describes the transformation of the caterpillar into a butterfly.

The slow and creeping caterpillar of today passes in a few days into a torpid figure and into a state resembling death; and in the next change comes forth in all the miniature magnificence of life, a splendid butterfly.... No resemblance of the former creature remains; everything is changed; all his powers are new, and life is to him another thing. We cannot conceive that the consciousness of existence is not the same in this state of the animal as before... (*The Age of Reason*, Thomas Paine, pg. 178)

By analogy and correspondence, human consciousness—like God-consciousness—must be continuous despite changes in mind, matter or form.

Now, if we look back at Paine’s incredible life through the enriching, wide-angle lens of the Theosophical Movement, it is not difficult to understand that when Paine declared in *The Age of Reason*, “My own mind is my own church”, he was, unknown to himself, preparing the way for H.P. Blavatsky. It was she, of course, who ultimately slew the invidious Minotaur of materialism that was devouring both religion and science. Nonetheless, Paine’s

attempt to democratize religion and to fight for a “universal republic of conscience” was a heroic preamble to the coming of the powerful Sixth Impulsion.

You will be happy to know that in the past seventy years, Paine has been gradually accepted by historians as a major creative force in the American Revolution. This is good. But, it is not sufficient. Why? Because, beyond all Paine’s marvelous achievements, there is a deeper truth about him. He was not simply a benevolent revolutionary, an incisive political thinker, a gifted pamphleteer, a serious student of science, a committed Deist or a brilliant visionary. He was certainly all this. But, more than that, he was a forerunner of the world citizen of the future. He was a paradigm of the ‘man of tomorrow’ because he wove together in his very standpoint and actions the golden threads of impersonal spirituality, universal responsibility and intellectual originality. Paine was always more than an 18th Century enlightenment figure. He was, like Lincoln, meant “for the Ages”. The resurgent interest in Paine is because the thinking of the world has finally moved in his direction.

Clearly, modern consciousness is becoming more global and increasingly concerned with the needs and rights of all members of the human family. The ubiquity of human suffering has increasingly forced us out of our sectarian and ideological shells and made us appreciate the importance of human interdependence and international cooperation. Perhaps we see less through a ‘glass darkly’ than at any other time in the last two thousand years. We now realize that the ‘City of Man’ is the true focus of the pioneers of the future. This is precisely why we can turn to Paine for instruction and inspiration. He was always forward-looking and able to make eternal principles contemporary. It is no wonder that the most oft quoted phrase of Paine’s is: “My country is the world and my religion is to do good.” He was a ‘prophet of the future’ as well as a luminous figure of the American and French Revolutions. To honor him is to salute the best in ourselves and

all men and women who dedicate their lives and their fortunes to  
the civilizations of tomorrow.

# The U.S. Declaration of Independence: a Theosophical View

Maurice Bisheff

The Declaration of Independence begins “When in the course of Human Events...” When the time of a particular cycle ripened, the American experiment, on behalf of all mankind would commence. Welcome to Philadelphia, the city of Brotherly Love. In this two square mile district of the largest cosmopolitan populated city of the colonies many of the Founding events of what became the United States of America occurred.

As William Quan Judge writes in several articles, this is where the Mahatmas found a new and receptive soil. This is where they crowned it with wisdom and the brotherhood inherent in its Founding expressions. Judge wrote,

This experiment was not conceived alone by mortal minds, but is a part of the evolutionary plan, for here the next great movement has already begun and reached a high development.”  
P. 127 Vol. 2 Theosophy Company, 1980

H.P. Blavatsky indicates the American experiment has the imprint of Masters work,

Born in the United States of America, the Theosophical Society was constituted on the model of its mother country. The latter, as we know, omits the name of God from its constitution, lest, said the Fathers of the Republic, this word someday afford the pretext for a State religion; for they wanted to grant absolute

equality in its laws to all religions so that all would support the State and all would be protected.”

It was felt these principles would provide a unity through which fellowship and fraternity could blossom.

This is where they brought and impressed the fire of manasic thought into a new continent of thought and statis highly suggestive of the myth of Prometheus. It was reflective in the adept, Thomas Paine’s, stirring words which sparked a new age of thought and reason, “We have it in our power to begin the world over again.” Further HPB wrote “that a new kind of thought has arisen, fostered by the evolutionary forces. This thought differs from all that ever been produced by the 19th century; yet it is identical with what was the keynote and the keystone of every century, especially the last one, “Absolute Freedom of Human Thought”.

William Quan Judge writes that in order to work toward this aim, the Theosophical Adepts hovered over many of the U.S. Founding Fathers and other brave citizen freemasons who were inspired by “the light of daring”. They did this to found a free Government in the West. They cleared the receptive minds of certain individuals “from the dross of the dogmatism and inspired their pens...” In Judge’s article, “Adepts in America in 1776”, Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson joined with other Freemasons “whose minds through the teachings of the symbolic degrees of masonry were fitted to reason correctly, and to reject theological conservation.” (p.70 “Adepts in America in 1776” *Theosophical Articles, Volume II*, Theosophy Company, Los Angeles 1980). Judge continues,

Although the Puritans and others had come to America for religious freedom, they were still very dogmatic and tenacious of their own peculiar theories and creed... yet no attempts to dogmatize or place formal religion into the American founding

documents, including the Declaration of Independence, were laid.

Thus, the Declaration of Independence reflects and instantiates the principles of “non-dogmatism” and “non-sectarianism” as a basic philosophical foundation as the political conditions for the development of the higher manas. The document also includes a long list of reasons why the American colonies should be separated from the Mother Country, England.

While those who participated in the drafting and signing of the Declaration of Independence were influenced by many philosophical streams, the Declaration of Independence was not a systematic philosophical declaration but a political statement. Political actions were deemed necessary due to a variety of historical circumstances. In general, thirteen British colonies with varying charters from the British crown began to exercise their own self-governance an ocean away from England. British aid in the form of military protection was a critical factor in Anglo-French and Anglo-Indian wars especially impacting the Northern colonies. British slave trade impacted the Southern colonies and Northern coastal trading cities too. Britain wanted a particular form of tax to support its “protective” activities in the colonies. The colonists protested the tax. The colonists argued that taxation for the purpose of raising revenue, without the consent of the taxed, jeopardized the British constitution itself, that, as a law-abiding community, they had the right to self-determined rule and taxation.

These and other rationales were contained in the Olive Branch Petition as the colonists sued for a reconciliation with the British crown in 1775. Nonetheless, after initial skirmishes that year in Concord and Lexington in the North, British war ships were ravaging colonial sea towns. However, in January 1776 the first printing of an anonymous and treasonous pamphlet, *Common Sense*, later disclosed to be written by Thomas Paine, was read by one out of four colonists and many more in Europe. The last pages

of the document were a preview of a Declaration of Independence. General George Washington later mentioned Paine's pamphlet and his other writings as ones which "helped change the minds and hearts of men."

A series of initiatives were already previously taken in the colonial assemblies along the lines of the Declaration. For example, Virginia passed a resolution "That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent States, and the Virginia Declaration of Rights adopted by the Virginia legislature declared "All men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights", these including what George Mason referred to as "pursuing and obtaining happiness."

There were at least three major three drafts and 86 amendments to the drafts. The adopted version was signed of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. It signaled the birth of a new nation. It transformed subjects into citizens. It was unique in that the new nation was founded upon a fundamental abstract philosophical proposition. These beginning paragraphs state:

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect of the options of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles

and organizing its powers in such form, as to them seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes...

Let us look at these phrases more closely which can be viewed from many standpoints.

In the first paragraph, the appeal for breaking up with the Mother country in the Declaration are based on propositions that have a universal character. They are rooted in the light of natural law. The opening paragraph of the Declaration refers "to the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them...". They specify what it means to be a human being in association with others. This universality is pointed out in a quotation from H.P. Blavatsky a century later, "As mankind is essentially one and the same essence, whether we call it God or Nature or nothing, therefore we cannot affect one nation without affecting all nations...as we are all man." The phrase "Nature's law or nature's god entitles them" connotes the idea that nature is ordered as it is because of nature's God. The God invoked in the Declaration is not a Christian God. It is an appeal to the universal basis of human nature where through reason these truths could be found, as Jefferson discovered, in all the great religions and in Deism.

The phrase beginning the second paragraph, "We hold these truths to be self-evident", does not necessarily mean that when you hear a proposition you think it is true. Rather, if you look into the proposition, if you entertain and reflect upon it, you will inevitably come to affirm it. From a Theosophical standpoint, the Declaration is going to declare propositions which resonate with Plato's idea of reminiscence--that souls from many previous incarnations will awaken to the inner knowledge of self-evident truths, through Atma-Buddhi-Manas which naturally inspires the heart and mind.

The next phrase, "that all men are created equal" is a most revolutionary one in nations of inequality and feudal organization.

The concept of equality has many dimensions. In general, equality does not mean identity. If that were true, how should we treat sentient beings equally when they are uniquely different in their paths of development and possible social needs? From a Theosophical standpoint, equality is not a reference to human personalities or the separative self. Equality points to the Higher Self. The latter is the changeless “spectator of the spectacle” inherent in every reincarnating human being. Equality points to a set of similar potentials, derived from reason based on an essential unity as human beings involved in a collective pilgrimage of the unfolding faculties of the soul. The expression of equality can be seen as a power which is intrinsic to human beings. Any thinking person has the potential to reason and speak the moral truth in a relevant context.

Raghavan Iyer in *Parapolitics* writes,

Thus, it is plausible to accept that human beings at birth are equal in reference to moral virtues than in regard to intellectual or functional skills. At least we have no way of knowing which of many babies will show heroism and courage. And if in a society valuations are ultimately based on those heroic virtues, upon integrity through individuation, and upon conscience and the moral excellences, there is no predicting which person is going to achieve them. (P.90 Concord Grove Press)

The next phrase of the Declaration establishes natural equality because it asserts that men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness..” The word “endow” eventually came to mean “to enrich or furnish with any quality or power of mind or body”, and that human beings have been equipped with these potential powers of spirit, mind, and body necessary to live, to be free, and to pursue happiness. These can be seen as reasons why citizens enter into a compact with government with natural and basic human rights necessary to pursue these aims.

What is meant by the concept of “happiness”? Happiness has many streams of philosophical and religious meanings. Jefferson, in a letter late in his life to Henry Lee, wrote that his core principles could be traced to Aristotle and Cicero, who lived long before Locke. For Aristotle, happiness was a flourishing of the individual in a self-directed life affirming human dignity in the company of others. The Greek word for happiness is *Eudaimonia*. In the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle writes that the happy man lives well for we have practically defined happiness as a sort of good life and good action. Happiness is not, he argued equivalent to wealth, honor, or pleasures. It is always an end in itself. In Greek and Roman ethics *Eudaimonia* is linked to ‘arte’, the Greek word for “virtue” or “excellence”. Inner virtues and deeper contentment could be cultivated and demonstrated in a theater of political participation.

For Cicero “We are servants of the law in order to be free... He who does not obey the law of nature flees from himself.” Cicero elaborated that since the order of the cosmos was universal reason, true law was a natural law arising from the universal element of man; and therefore one ruled to benefit the whole. Another Stoic philosopher, Epictetus, wrote, “What, then, is the service to which the citizen is summoned? It is to take no thought of his own private interest, and never to think and plan as an isolated unit, but to act as a hand or a foot would act if they had reason and could understand the material constitution of the body, and were moved by no impulse or appetite which had no reference to the good of the whole.” (Earnest Barker, *From Alexander to Constantine*, Oxford, Clear don Press, 1956, p. 314) Thus, through speech and reasoning, even disagreement, a citizen can develop a wider identification with others and a deeper reflection on natural law. They can be moved toward an attitude acting toward a common good imperfectly expressed in a political community. Jefferson and other revolutionaries believed that every person, regardless of rank or education, had a natural social or moral instinct that tied them by affection to their fellow

human beings. This natural feeling of benevolence flowed from citizens' participation in society. Government was the necessary scaffolding of impartial laws to support sociability. Thus, life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness instantiates the basis of human dignity as the inalienable right to self-definition, self-discernment and freedom in thought, self-correction, and self-improvement in the company of others.

It is the freedom to reason and reason together that governments have been instituted among men, based on the consent of the governed to secure those rights, and that when governments fail to secure these rights, the people have the right to change their government and set up a new one. The definition of republic, *res publica*, is about doing the public business through the consent of the governed in contrast to the arbitrary, private whim of a monarchy.

It is said that America can be viewed as a "Republic of Conscience". Paine said that "the knowledge of morality exists in every man's conscience". The nature of conscience is one of an inner reflection of what is true or just, tempered by individual reason and reason-giving in the company of others. This idea of conscience is not John Locke's *tabula rasa* or blank slate to be socialized into a consensus of personalities, propertied interests or dictated by a legislature.

Thomas Paine wrote a few years after the *Declaration in Crisis Paper III* that "We hold the pure doctrine of universal liberty of conscience, and conceive it our duty to endeavor to secure that sacred right to others, as well as to defend it for ourselves." Thus, the idea of government is not absolute. Rather government is contingent on society's dynamic needs to deliberate and address the common good. Governments are changeable. Thus, "after a train of abuses "and reasoned deliberation, they are replaceable since they do not adhere to basic principles of natural law. The Declaration of Independence thus is a moral touchstone, a basis of moral appeal, for a more just society, based on principles which

awaken the heart and mind beyond the everyday play of passion seeking particular interests.

Alphonse de Lamartine stated that “An ideal is only truth at a distance.” The Declaration became not simply an historical document, but a living moral code for those who are inspired and attracted to its self-evident truths. American President Abraham Lincoln, for example, in the 1850’s, prior to his Presidency, did not rest his argument against slavery on religious or biblical grounds. The authoritative criterion that Lincoln did use was the Declaration of Independence. “All men are created equal” would be the phrase Lincoln would draw upon as evidence of national, moral premises. Lincoln used moral reasoning as political speech, including appeals to our makeup as human beings and from that basis appealed to our human sympathies and to our natural sense of justice and unity, our Higher Self.

If the Declaration of Independence can be said to be part of the vision of the American Dream, a magnetic ideal, then we must distinguish it, despite its influence, from the American Political System. A century after Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., in his uplifting “I Have a Dream” speech” said, “in a sense we’ve come to the nation’s capital to cash a check. When the architects of our Republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all Negroes; black men as well as white men — would be granted the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note in so far as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring its sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked “insufficient funds”. But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity in this nation. So we’ve come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand

the rights of freedom and security of justice...Now is the time to lift our situation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solidarity of brotherhood. Now it is time to make justice a reality for all of God's children."

The Declaration is still viewed as radical (i.e. drawing us back to basic principles), as referred to by the modern revolutionary Ho Chi Minh. The French Declaration of the *Rights of Man* (which Paine contributed to) in 1789 and the more modern United Nations Declaration of Human Rights illustrate the idea of unalienable human rights.

The modern Theosophical movement can also be viewed as radical. It points to a radical, inner principle of "equality of duty" or as Judge points out, Duty or SELFLESSNESS. H.P.B. writes that duty is that which is,

...due to Humanity, to our fellow man, neighbors, family, and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves. (P.229 *Key to Theosophy*)  
When asked further, H.P.B. said "full recognition of equal rights and privileges for all and without distinction of race, color, social position or birth." P.230

The great pilgrimage of the reincarnating souls manifest to work out individual and collective streams of karma. Since we cannot separate our karma from others, we should work to relieve the karmic burden on others including our obligations as citizens to employ principles to unify our community, globally as well as locally. As Carlyle is quoted in the *Key to Theosophy*, "The end of man is an action and not a thought, though it were the noblest unless he sets and models his daily life upon this truth."p.230 We are now asked to go beyond untested beliefs, reasoning from a universal light within, kindling a love of Humanity tested in concrete expression. We can view ourselves as a global family while using knowledge and wisdom to ameliorate suffering in its various forms.

Through love and human solidarity of human beings as souls, we can inspire minds and hearts through creating “buddhic fields of consciousness” expressing elevating, principled ideas and compassionate speech. Universal fraternity, through more detached and conscious choice, can manifest wider circles of creative thought and uplift public culture, education, and family life to round out and enrich the moral and legal frameworks and guiding declarations of the eighteenth century. Citizens can express principles with a Theosophical spirit and fellowship, radiating benevolent love, light, and with higher aspiration, reasoned thought and timely action as a friend of humanity.

# Study Circle Readings

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What is a Nucleus?

What is Brotherhood?

What is Healing?

### Substance-Principle

The fundamental Law in that system, the central point from which all emerged, around and toward which all gravitates, and upon which is hung the philosophy of the rest, is the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause.

“Some few, whose lamps shone brighter, have been led

From cause to cause to nature’s secret head,

And found that one first Principle must be. . . .”

It is called “Substance-Principle,” for it becomes “substance” on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a “principle” in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. Its impersonality is the fundamental conception of the System. It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself.

*The Secret Doctrine, i p 273*

H.P. Blavatsky

## Laya Center

A “point of disappearance” — which is the Sanskrit meaning. *Laya* is from the Sanskrit root *li*, meaning “to dissolve,” “to disintegrate,” or “to vanish away.” A laya-center is the mystical point where a thing disappears from one plane and passes onwards to reappear on another plane. It is that point or spot — any point or spot — in space, which, owing to karmic law, suddenly becomes the center of active life, first on a higher plane and later descending into manifestation through and by the laya-centers of the lower planes, or rather of substance.

*Occult Glossary*

Gottfried de Purucker

## The Nucleus as Monad

The complex structure that we call “Man” is made up of a congeries of almost innumerable “Lives.” Not only every microscopic cell of which the tissues are composed, but the molecules and atoms of which these cells are composed, are permeated with the essence of the “One Life.” Every so-called organic cell is known to have its nucleus, a center of finer or more sensitive matter. The nutritive, all the formative and functional processes consist of flux and re-flux, of inspiration and expiration, to and from the nucleus.

The nucleus is therefore in its own degree and after its kind a “monad” imprisoned in a “form.” Every microscopic cell, therefore, has a consciousness and an intelligence of its own, and man thus consists of innumerable “lives.” This is but physiological synthesis,

logically deduced no less from the known facts in physiology and histology than the logical sequence of the philosophy of occultism.

“The Synthesis of Occult Science” *The Path*, February, 1892  
William Q. Judge

## Brotherhood of Humanity

The principle of the Brotherhood of Humanity is one of the eternal truths that govern the world’s progress on lines which distinguish human nature from brute nature.

*The Key to Theosophy p 43*

H.P Blavatsky

## No Idle Phrase

The term ‘Universal Brotherhood’ is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us. . . . It is the only secure foundation for universal morality . . . and it is the aspiration of the true adept.

*The Mahatma Letters Letter 5*

Mahatma K.H.

## Brotherhood Has a Meaning

Brotherhood has a meaning in the reality of things which we miss when it becomes an academic doctrine. It means, on the psychological plane, a positive interest in and feeling for others, also an understanding of them. From that base, rising to deeper and subtler realizations, it can become an expression of all the beauty, which St. Paul conveys in his letters to the Romans and Corinthians. St. Paul speaks of charity of heart or, as translated by some, of love, which is always beautiful. Love as well as affection is real when it exists, because it is definite and pointed. It is as real as a ray that penetrates or as a current of electricity which rearranges a magnetic field and sparks various physical reactions.

“Depths in Brotherhood” *The American Theosophist*, November, 1967  
N. Shri Ram

## A Brotherly Feeling Towards All

Brotherhood means something profound and lasting. It is a truth which each has to understand and realize for himself. The great teachers of the world did not speak about the numerous problems with which men concern themselves in the world. They went to the fundamental questions, the knowledge by which “all else is known”. The realization of the basic, essential things in life brings about that state of mind which is able to solve all problems. To go to the depth of understanding of what brotherhood is, is the task of a lifetime or more. It is a vast field, as vast as life itself. If the world is full of maladies, of illnesses from the spiritual point of view, surely we do not want merely to alleviate the suffering. Every

disease has to be treated at its source; the cause has to be known. It is the real cause of man's ailments that we should primarily deal with...

Brotherhood has a much greater meaning than, let us say, being affectionate to one's immediate family and friends. We all love our children, husbands, wives, particular individuals, but not other people. We love our country, our fellow nationals. But to realize universal brotherhood may be different from the worldly affections so commonly experienced. Universal brotherhood has a quality into which the feeling of "my" does not enter at all. To have a brotherly feeling towards all people irrespective of the external relationship which they have to us is a way of exploring brotherhood.

"Brotherhood and Freedom" *The Theosophist* June 1968

Radha Burnier

## The Spiritual Brotherhood of all Beings

Universal brotherhood as understood in the esoteric philosophy, and which is a sublime natural fact of universal nature, does not signify merely sentimental unity, or a simple political or social cooperation. Its meaning is incomparably wider and profounder than this. The sense inherent in the words in their widest tenor or purport is the spiritual brotherhood of all beings; particularly, the doctrine implies that all human beings are inseparably linked together, not merely by the bonds of emotional thought or feeling, but by the very fabric of the universe itself, all men — as well as all beings, both high and low and intermediate — springing

forth from the inner and spiritual sun of the universe as its hosts of spiritual rays. We all come from this one source, that spiritual sun, and are all builded of the same life-atoms on all the various planes.

It is this interior unity of being and of consciousness, as well as the exterior union of us all, which enables us to grasp intellectually and spiritually the mysteries of the universe; because not merely ourselves and our own fellow human beings, but also all other beings and things that are, are children of the same kosmic parent, great Mother Nature, in all her seven (and ten) planes or worlds of being. We are all rooted in the same kosmic essence, whence we all proceeded in the beginning of the primordial periods of world evolution, and towards which we are all journeying back. This interlocking and interblending of the numberless hierarchies of beings forming the universe itself extends everywhere, in the invisible worlds as well as in the worlds which are visible.

Finally, it is upon this fact of the spiritual unity of all beings and things that reposes the basis and foundation of human ethics when these last are properly understood. In the esoteric philosophy ethics are no mere human convention or rules of action convenient and suitable for the amelioration of the asperities of human intercourse, but are fundamental in the very structure and inextricably coordinated operations of the universe itself.

## Compassion Absolute

But stay, Disciple . . . Yet, one word. Canst thou destroy divine COMPASSION? Compassion is no attribute. It is the LAW of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya’s SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting Right, and fitness of all things, the law of love eternal.

The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which IS, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE. (1)

(1) This “compassion” must not be regarded in the same light as “God, the divine love” of the Theists. Compassion stands here as an abstract, impersonal law whose nature, being absolute Harmony, is thrown into confusion by discord, suffering and sin.

*The Voice of the Silence* pp 75-76

H.P. Blavatsky

## Non-Referential Compassion

At some point, non-referential compassion becomes a state that you can generate in your mind, that can pervade your mind without being distracted by other thoughts. You focus on the understanding that suffering may happen at any time, that impermanence is always there. Then the feeling of altruism and compassion remains even if you don’t see suffering right then. And you think that as long as beings are enslaved and entangled in destructive emotions, they must be the object of your compassion.

As cited by Sharon Begley, *Train Your Mind, Change Your Brain*  
Mattieu Ricard

## Radical Healing

Through continuity of consciousness there is a radical healing that takes place within one's whole nature, and an authentic gain in self-respect. Like a person who late in life learns a new language and is thrilled that he can learn the alphabet and write his first sentence, so too any human being at any age can so strengthen the antaskaranic connection with the Higher Self that life takes on a new depth of meaning and expression. It is a difficult discipline initially, but if one faithfully keeps at it in a non-strenuous way, doing it only out of love for one's fellow men and out of gratitude to one's Teachers, there will be infallible help from the Eye of Shiva and the Flute of Krishna. If the motive is to make a potent contribution to the grandchildren of one's grandchildren, and if one lets go of the mayavic tension of the personal self, then the sense of the sacred deepens until one is able to make holy resolves and charge them with a silent power for good.

"The Eye of Shiva" *Hermes*, July 1982

Raghavan Iyer

## A Regenerating Practical Brotherhood

It is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to the possession of our secrets.

*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*

Mahatma M.

## Regenerating the World

The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of the spring; having crossed the ocean of embodied existence themselves, they freely aid all others who seek to cross it. The very essence and inherent will of Mahatmas is to remove the suffering of others, just as the ambrosia-rayed moon of itself cools the earth heated by the intense rays of the sun.

Shri Shankaracharya

# How do a Nucleus, Brotherhood and Healing Function Together?

## Union and Harmony

It is a law of occult dynamics that “a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence.” This state will last till man’s spiritual intuitions are fully opened, which will not happen before we fairly cast off our thick coats of matter; until we begin acting from within, instead of ever following impulses from without; namely, those produced by our physical senses and gross selfish body. Until then the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony—a Brotherhood *IN ACTU*, and altruism not simply in name. The suppression of one single bad cause will suppress not one, but a variety of bad effects. And if a Brotherhood or even a number of Brotherhoods may not be able to prevent nations from occasionally cutting each other’s throats—still unity in thought and action, and philosophical research into the mysteries of being, will always prevent some, while trying to comprehend that which has hitherto remained to them a riddle, from creating additional causes in a world already so full of woe and evil.

*The Secret Doctrine* i. p 644

H.P. Blavatsky

## Universal Brotherhood of Humanity

This is the Society's first, fundamental and only doctrine. The T.S. was organized for the purpose of creating a nucleus of such a brotherhood. Observe, a nucleus is to be formed. It is not thought that the final realization of a universal brotherhood is possible in this age.

A Nucleus is the central part of a body around which matter is collected. If the effort to form this nucleus is not made, there will be no hope for the future. But if the nucleus is formed now, the progress of the cycles will show its growth. Universal Brotherhood is a law and not a vague unattainable.

“Suggestions for T.S. Branch Work,” *The Path*, April, 1889  
Anonymous (Judge?)

## Clarification on Nucleus

A nucleus we say; not even the nucleus, but only a nucleus of universal Brotherhood; for, just as the nucleus of the cell is that through which the life-forces manifest, so do the life-forces that build this great Brotherhood seek to manifest through the Theosophical Society, and every one who comes amongst us is added to the nucleus.

*Theosophy and the Theosophical Society*

Annie Besant

## Unity, Emanation and Learning

An important conclusion that can be drawn from the doctrine of emanation is that the divine is not outside but within us. When all is One, there can be nothing but Oneness. So every being is rooted in the Oneness. Rooted in a common divine Source, the divine is in all. Nevertheless, there is a great variety of beings in the world. Humans are different from animals, animals differ from plants, *et cetera*. And mutually men also, of course, differ from each other. The doctrine of emanation explains that too. Every entity gives in its own unique way shape to the unity. Therefore beings always differ in their outward form from each other and due to those differences they can learn from each other.

“Esoteric Islam” *Lucifer*, March 2015

Barend Voorham

## Celebration of Diversity

In a sense, the *Dharma* is a medicine whose effectiveness can be judged only in relation to the treatment of an illness. Since there are so many diverse mental dispositions, or spiritual and philosophical inclinations, among human beings, there should be equally corresponding numbers of teachings. The idea that there should be only one teaching—a kind of panacea that is valid for all beings—from this point of view is untenable... Even with one and the same patient, a skilled physician needs to be sensitive to how the patient responds to the dose, as well as different compositions of the medicine, so he can adjust both the dose and the

composition as the patient progresses along the path of healing. In the same manner, a skilled spiritual teacher adapts his or her teachings, always maintaining deep sensitivity to the specific needs of a given situation...

Seen from this angle, the diversity of religion becomes not an awkward problem; rather, it becomes an adornment of the human spirit and its long history. It is something to be celebrated rather than bemoaned.

*Toward a True Kinship of Faiths*, pp. 154-55  
Fourteenth Dalai Lama

## The Control of One's Speech

This progress of the essential doctrine takes many forms, but its basis is the control of one's speech, so as not to extoll one's own sect or disparage another's on unsuitable occasions, or at least to do so only mildly on certain occasions. On each occasion one should honour another man's sect, for by doing so one increases the influence of one's own sect and benefits that of the other man; while by doing otherwise one diminishes the influence of one's own sect and harms the other man's.

*The Twelfth Major Rock Edict*

King Ashoka

## The Law of Fellowship

A branch cut off from its neighbour branch cannot but be cut off from the whole plant. In the very same way a man severed from one man has fallen away from the fellowship of all men. Now a branch is cut off by others, but a man separates himself from his neighbour by his own agency in hating him or turning his back upon him; and is unaware that he has thereby sundered himself from the whole civic community. But mark the gift of Zeus who established the law of fellowship. For it is in our power to grow again to the neighbour branch, and again become perfective of the whole. But such a schism constantly repeated makes it difficult for the seceding part to unite again and resume its former condition. And in general the branch that from the first has shared in the growth of the tree and lived with its life is not like that which has been cut off and afterwards been cut off and afterwards grafted on to it, as the gardeners are apt to tell you. Be of one bush, but not of one view.

*Meditations*

Marcus Aurelius

## The Living Body

Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole. Each cell in the living body must sacrifice itself to the perfection of the whole; when it is otherwise, disease and death enforce the lesson... Harmony is the law of life, discord its shadow; whence springs suffering, the teacher, the awakener of consciousness.

*Gems From the East*

Compiled by H.P. Blavatsky

## Hierarchy, Harmony, Health

Health of the body as a whole depends on the integrity of all its parts, and more especially upon their harmonious association and cooperation. A diseased tissue is one in which a group of individual cells refuse to cooperate, and wherein is set up discordant action, using less or claiming more than their due share of food or energy. Disease of the very tissue of man's body is neither more nor less than the "sin of separateness." Moreover, the grouping of cells is upon the principle of hierarchies. Smaller groups are subordinate to larger congeries, and these again are subordinate to larger, or to the whole. Every microscopic cell therefore typifies and epitomizes man, as man is an epitome of the Universe.

"The Synthesis of Occult Science, *The Path*, February 1892  
William Q. Judge

## Healthy Condition of the Nucleus

The growth and the very life of any political, social or mystical tradition can be seen as a body, (or cell) which is directly and continuously dependent upon the presence and healthy condition of the nucleus.

"The Cell" *Hermes* July 1978

Anonymous

## An Inner, “Magnetic” Harmony

Letter 10 (*ML*) again emphasizes the central aim of bringing about a genuine brotherhood, which KH defines as “an association of ‘affinities’ of strong magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities, centered around one dominant idea.” Such a definition indicates that there may be differences of view, even strong opinions, within a group, but when an inner, “magnetic” harmony, a deep “affinity” for one another is present, then a true brotherhood exists.

*Reflections of an Ageless Wisdom* p. 14

*Joy Mills*

## Brother Pupils

...bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother.

Of teachers there are many; the MASTER-SOUL is one *Alaya*, the Universal Soul. Live in that MASTER as ITS ray in thee. Live in thy fellows as they live in IT.

*The Voice of the Silence* p 53

H.P. Blavatsky

## Widening Our Circle

As we push back the boundary and enlarge the area of our consciousness, our “self” grows and expands in the same proportion, till at last, when we have so widened our circle of interest and removed back our threshold of consciousness that it embraces the Universe, then, in the language of *The Light of Asia*, “The Universe grows I, till the dewdrop slips into the shining sea.”

“The Second and Third Objects of the Theosophical Society as Related to the First”  
Bertrand Keightley

## Draw the Larger Circle

The point is not whether a person goes this far or adopts that way, but whether at any level he is able to develop the fruit of his study and meditation into an authentic capacity to draw the larger circle. We should truly try to put ourselves in a proper mental relationship—for some of us this may come naturally, for others this may be a strain, but every man could attempt it—to the Brotherhood, to the Mahatmas, to Beings like H.P. Blavatsky. We should see her in a long lineage of Teachers and do the same in regard to one or all the Teachers. We may choose any as our particular *Ishtaguru*. If we could really do this, then it would truly be possible to become capable of negating those thought-forms that become divisive sources of human suspicion.

“Universality and Sectarianism” *Hermes*, June 1976  
Raghavan Iyer

## The Soul-Echoing Vina

Disciples may be likened to the strings of the soul-echoing Vina; mankind, unto its sounding board; the hand that sweeps it to the tuneful breath of the GREAT WORLD-SOUL. The string that fails to answer 'neath the Master's touch in dulcet harmony with all the others, breaks—and is cast away. So the collective minds of Lanoo-Shravakas. They have to be attuned to the Upadyaya's mind—one with the Over-Soul—or, break away.

*The Voice of the Silence* p 57

H.P. Blavatsky

# How can we Form a Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood so that we can Become a Healing Force in the World?

## A Noble Ideal

No one is so busy or so poor that he cannot be inspired by a noble ideal to follow. Why hesitate to blaze a trail toward that ideal through all obstacles, all hindrances, all the daily considerations of social life, and to advance boldly until it is reached? Ah! those who would make this effort would soon find that the “narrow gate” and “the thorny path” lead to spacious valleys with unlimited horizons, to a state without death, for one rebecomes a God! It is true that the first requisites for getting there are absolute unselfishness and unlimited devotion to the interests of others, and complete indifference as to the world and its opinions. To take the first step on this ideal path requires a perfectly pure motive; no frivolous thought must be allowed to divert our eyes from the goal; no hesitation, no doubt must fetter our feet. Yet, there are men and women perfectly capable of all this, and whose only desire is to live under the aegis of their Divine Nature. Let these, at least, have the courage to live this life and not to hide it from the sight of others! No one’s opinion could ever be above the rulings of our own conscience, so, let that conscience, arrived at its highest development, be our guide in all our common daily tasks. As to our inner life, let us concentrate all our attention on our chosen Ideal, and let us ever look beyond without ever casting a glance at the mud at our feet....

Those capable of such an effort are true Theosophists; all others are but members more or less indifferent, and quite often useless.

“The New Cycle” *Lucifer*

H.P. Blavatsky

## Unswerving Devotion

An embryo is not remarkable for itself, but for what it will become. The marvel of the nucleus is disclosed by the full cycle of development, by the unfolding before our eye of its hidden promise. If the seed could doubt its power, it would not develop. The brotherhood of man will grow as surely as flower from seed, if there is a nucleus of men to hold unswervingly to that great ideal, in conscious faith in the Law they have invoked, and constant devotion to the body they would bring to life.

“The Nucleus” *Theosophy*, February, 1940

Anonymous

## Brotherhood as Experience

Brotherhood as an idea is powerful. Brotherhood as an experience is profoundly different from any mere idea. Due to the force of habit during this and previous lifetimes, we associate understanding and wisdom with the lesser knowledge. In many ways, we are spiritually immature and our appreciation of the difference is still undeveloped. This deeper appreciation that

moves us from idea to experience is the direction in which the first Object points.

“The First Object of the Theosophical Society”      Tim Boyd

## Study and Attunement With Others

The effort to form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood should begin with each member.

In this respect: the atoms of the body, and all the different departments of the nature of each person, are intended for component parts of the Universal Brotherhood which each man should be in himself. There should be a harmony and adjustment among these, in order that the man may, in turn, be a fit unit in the larger brotherhood. Between the members of a Branch or group the same harmony should prevail. This can only be brought about by toleration and an absence of self-assertion, and by the members giving continued thought to one theosophical subject at a time, during several meetings; they then all become attuned to each other.

“Suggestions for T.S. Branch Work,” *The Path*, April, 1889  
Anonymous (Judge?)

## Attraction and Transmission

What is a nucleus of Brotherhood? The practice of brotherhood implies that we have the highest principles active in our lives, principles of compassion, justice, chivalry, consideration for the feelings of others, and a constant attention to what we are doing to the people around us. The strength and usefulness of our organization depends on this understanding of differentiated brotherhood. It depends on our ability to cooperate, on our understanding of the law. Without all this, the nucleus cannot work; it can neither attract nor can it transmit.

*The Theosophist, April 1974*

*John Coats*

## Nucleus of Spiritual Influence

The multiplication of local centres should be a fore-most consideration in your minds, and each man should strive to be a centre of work in himself. When his inner development has reached a certain point, he will naturally draw those with whom he is in contact under the same influence; a nucleus will be formed, round which other people will gather, forming a centre from which information and spiritual influence radiate, and towards which higher influences are directed.

“Five Messages to American Theosophists”      H.P. Blavatsky

## A Channel for Transmission

When such men and women, aflame with the spirit of Love and Wisdom, group themselves together for the noble and impersonal ends which they recognise and follow in common, there indeed, among them abide the Spirit of Truth and the holy Fire of Brotherhood. Such a nucleus, indeed, is a fit and adequate channel for the transmission, not only to themselves, but to their fellow-men, of that stream of inspiration flowing from the aśrama of the great Teachers.

*Messages to Conventions*

Gottfried de Purucker

## A Great Lens

It is possible to focus that light of universal wisdom, continual contemplation and eternal ideation within a matrix created by the love, unity and joint heroic efforts of a nucleus of human beings formed over a period of time. Thus, it is possible to bring down onto the plane of mundane human existence glimpses and rays, sparks and flashes, of that divine light of wisdom that is all-potent on its own plane but is otherwise latent and unavailable. Collectively, a group of human beings can become like a great lens for the drawing down of the light of unmanifest wisdom into our globe to meet the cries of pain, the hungers and the longings of myriads of minds and hearts.

“Dhyana Marga” *Hermes*, April 1985

Raghavan Iyer

## The Mango Principle

Ere thou canst settle in *Dhyana Marga* and call it thine, thy Soul has to become as the ripe mango fruit: as soft and sweet as its bright golden pulp for others' woes, as hard as that fruit's stone for thine own throes and sorrows, O Conqueror of Weal and Woe.

*The Voice of the Silence*, pp 65-66

H.P. Blavatsky

## The Fields of Theosophy

In the fields of Theosophy none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him. Do not be too severe on the merits or demerits of one who seeks admission among your ranks, as the truth about the actual state of the inner man can only be known to Karma, and can be dealt with justly by that all-seeing LAW alone. Even the simple presence amidst you of a well-intentioned and sympathising individual may help you magnetically. . . . You are the free volunteer workers on the fields of Truth, and as such must leave no obstruction on the paths leading to that field.

“Some Words On Daily Life”

Mahatma K.H.

## A Conversation With H.P.B.

Once, in London, I asked her what was the chance of drawing people into the Society in view of the enormous disproportion between the number of members and the millions of Europe and America who neither knew of nor cared for it. Leaning back in her chair, in which she was sitting before her writing desk, she said:

“When you consider and remember those days in 1875 and after, in which you could not find any people interested in your thoughts, and now look at the wide-spreading influence of theosophical ideas however labelled – it is not so bad. We are not working merely that people may call themselves Theosophists, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing. You were not directed to found and realize a Universal Brotherhood, but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulations can begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view.”

“Yours till Death and After” *The Path*

William Q. Judge

## Going Into Action

Reading books and listening to talks is comfortable for most of us. But all the books and lectures in the world are dead letters as long as we go back to our basic behaviour as soon as we stop reading or listening. Going into action requires the overcoming of this inertia. It requires a warrior attitude, not to go to war, but to develop a strong and unshakable willingness to understand the whole process of Man's evolution on earth, and from that, to act accordingly. Basic, concrete steps can be achieved individually, once we start sensing and connecting to our profound inner nature. Simple actions, based on respect and compassion, can have an impact whose magnitude can be multiplied exponentially if we just behave as living examples of compassion in action. This is our individual and collective responsibility as heirs of the Ancient Wisdom.

“Theosophy, a Remedy for a Sick World”      Jacques Mahnich

## Action and Inaction

Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake...Shalt thou abstain from action? Not so shall gain thy soul her freedom. To reach Nirvana one must reach Self-Knowledge, and Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child.

*The Voice of the Silence*

H.P. Blavatsky

## A Lemurian Cure for an Atlantean Illness

We might well ask, are truthful and loving actions even possible without reverence for our parents, our teachers, our friends, our benefactors, and even our enemies? Isn't everyone our teacher? In an age of rapid disillusionment with every form of authority, we should not let ourselves slip into the sleep of spiritual forgetfulness. We should remind ourselves daily that reverence for the soul as well as respect for the virtues and limitations of each and all is the key to learning, is the key to happiness and is the key to moral and spiritual growth. Reverence for the sacred can alone restore a lost but recoverable spiritual innocence and make us all once again, "children of light who go forth into the world to render gentle service to all that lives."

If all this is true, then we might venture to say that true reverence is the Lemurian cure for Atlantean illnesses still mutating in our Fifth Root Race as we rapidly approach many crucial "moments of choice" in the 21st Century and beyond.

"Gandhi on Theosophy, Modern Civilization and  
Social Reform"

James Tepfer

Talk given at ITC 2016, Santa Barbara, California

# Can ITC be a Practical Example of a Nucleus, Brotherhood and Healing?

## Manas and Buddhi

The Masters have said this is a transition age, and he who has ears to hear will hear what has thus been said. We are working for the new cycles and centuries. What we do now in this transition age will be like what the great Dhyān Chohans did in the transition point—the midway point—in evolution at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. They then gave the new impulse for the new types, which resulted later in the vast varieties of nature. In the mental development we are now at the same point: and what we now do in faith and hope for others and for ourselves will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed. Thus in other centuries we will come out again and go on with it. If we neglect it now, so much the worse for us then. Hence we are not working for some definite organisation of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the Race.

*Letters That Have Helped Me* p 72

William Q. Judge

## The Great “Give and Take”

Many times have co-operative households been tried and failed. One was tried here and is famous. It was called the Brook Farm, but it had no such high aim and philosophy behind it as you have, and thus the personal frictions developed at any place of close intimacy broke it up. That should be a guide to you to enable you to watch and avoid. Yours may alter in number and in personnel, but can never really be broken up if the aim is high and the self-judgment is strict and not self-righteous. I am not accusing you of this, but only stating a common human danger, from which the Theosophist is not at any time exempt. Indeed, he is in danger in your centre from the fact that strong force revolves around it. Hence all must be ever careful, for the personal element is one that ever has a tendency to delude us as it hides behind various walls and clothes itself in the faults, real or imaginary, of others. Your centre being the only one as yet of such size, it is useful to think how you may best all act as to make it truly international...

In a place like yours, where so many of all sorts of nature are together, there is a unique opportunity for gain and good in the chance it gives one for self-discipline. There friction of personality is inevitable, and if each one learns the great “give and take,” and looks not for the faults of the others but for the faults he sees in himself, because of the friction, then great progress can be made. The Masters have said that the great step is to learn how to get out of the rut each one has by nature and by training, and to fill up the old grooves. This has been misconstrued by some who have applied it to mere outer habits of life, and forgotten that its real application is to the mental grooves and the astral ones also. Each mind has a groove, and is not naturally willing to run in the natural groove of another mind. Hence comes often friction and wrangle...

General human nature is like the engine, it is flanged and run for a certain size of track, but the occultist or the would-be one should take off the flange and have a broad- faced wheel that will accommodate itself to the other mind and nature. Thus in one life even we might have the benefit of many, for the lives of other men are lived beside us unnoticed and unused because we are too broad and flanged in wheel, or too narrow and flanged also. This is not easy, it is true, to change, but there is no better opportunity than is hourly presented to you in the whole world, to make the alteration. I would gladly have such a chance, which Karma has denied me, and I see the loss I incur each day by not having it there or here. You have it, and from there should go out to all the earth soon or late, men and women who are broad and free and strong for the work of helping the world.

*Letters That Have Helped Me* pp 69-70

William Q. Judge

## An Open Heart

In the Society it is very important, I feel, to have openness, not only of mind but of heart. It is easy sometimes to have an open mind but it is not so easy to have an open heart. There are people who are clever and who will accept theoretically that freedom must exist, but they do not open themselves inwardly to respond to another's ways, to appreciate him from a heart which is free of reaction. What we need is an understanding heart and if we have that, which means having the right attitude, we can do a great deal.

“Brotherhood and Freedom” *The Theosophist*, June 1968

Radha Burnier

## Broaden Your Sympathies

Beware then, of an uncharitable spirit, for it will rise up like a hungry wolf in your path, and devour the better qualities of your nature. . . . Broaden instead of narrowing your sympathies; try to identify yourself with your fellows, rather than to contract your circle of affinity. . . . Friend, beware of pride and egoism, two of the worst snares for the feet of him who aspires to climb the high paths of knowledge and spirituality.

*Mahatma Letters (Chronological Edition)* Letter 131  
Mahatma K.H.

## Hierarchy, Integration and Responsibility

H. P. B. came forth from her Masters into the world to do a great work; she was charged to found a Society, and this Society was originally intended to have as its fundamental principle of government the utmost freedom for every individual member thereof, combined with individual inalienable responsibility; because only in this manner can a true hierarchical government exist. Tyranny is not hierarchical government; autocracy is not truly hierarchical government. Either involves a deprivation of essentially hierarchical elements. Hierarchy means a delegation of authority — and of identically the same authority — from top to bottom, to use human words, making every individual composing the army of beings in the hierarchical system responsible for what each such individual does; and just because each individual is as an integral part responsible, is the system a hierarchy.

*Message to the European Convention, London*  
Gottfried de Purucker

## Theosophical Fraternization

Genuine Theosophical fraternization is the polar antithesis of mere sentimentality or emotionalism. The very core of the spirit of fraternization is the seeing in others of the same lofty Theosophic sentiments that exist among ourselves; it is the feeling, likewise, that other Theosophists can, as much as oneself, have the spirit of devotion to truth and the love of high-minded and honorable dealing. Fraternization will be a farce unless it is based on principles of mutual confidence, mutual trust, and on genuine brotherly love.

*Messages to Conventions*

Gottfried de Purucker

## A Brother in Truth

Now, this is, as I said, an era. I called it that of 'Western Occultism, but you may give it any name you like. But it is "Western. The symbol is the well-intended American Republic, which was seen by Tom Paine beforehand as "a new era in the affairs of the world." It was meant to be, as nearly as possible, a brotherhood of nations, and that is the drift of its Declaration and Constitution. The T.S. is meant to be the same, but has for many years been in a state of friction. It has now, if possible, to come out of that. It cannot be a brotherhood unless each, or some, of its units becomes a brother in truth, And brother was the noble name given in 1875 to the Masters. Hence you and I and all of us must cultivate [brotherhood]. We must forgive our enemies and those who assail us, for only thus can the great brothers properly help by working through us. There seems to be a good deal to forgive,

but it is easily done, inasmuch as in fifty years we'll all be gone and forgot.

*Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 95-96      William Q. Judge

## Our Unity

It is only natural that Theosophists would be soul-searching at a time when it seems that so many divisive elements are still at work in society. Upholding the ideal that "Brotherhood is a Fact in Nature," it seems mankind as a whole has not yet acknowledged this Fact. While mouthing allegiance to "Unity in Diversity," the diverse elements have not yet been brought into a balanced perspective, much less unity. We observe with the ancient Taoist precept that "The Great Way is very simple, but the people love the by-paths." Also from the Chinese philosophy we have been shown, that to have harmony in the world one must first have harmony in the individual, the family and the nation. So harmony begins with us, in our hearts and daily lives, by mastering the negative tendencies which have cut us off from our True Being.

My thinking on the unity of various Theosophical traditions is, that we already have in place a group of cooperating societies and lodges, in the International Theosophical Conferences organization. Aside from this group there are many efforts at cross fertilization within the Theosophical Movement. Here in California several lodges reach out to other traditions for their speakers. They welcome non-theosophical persons who are in harmony with our ideal of Universal Brotherhood. In our individual lives and

professions our striving and practical application of Theosophia promotes the unity of One Life in all beings.

Dara Ecklund

## Where Two or Three are Gathered

There is an old saying that where two or three are together in my name, that is in the company of the Spirit, the Spirit is present with these two or three.

There is a great occult truth in this, and if you will multiply the two or three fiftyfold or one hundred-fold, and realize, or try to realize, that the force of a unified spiritual will and understanding can do much good in the world, and keep this before you as an ideal of help and comfort, I think you will feel with me that it is not merely for ourselves that we gather in Theosophical meetings for consolation and comfort and light, but that wherever these meetings are held we gather together as aspirants to join the highest elements of the human race.

*Wind of the Spirit*

Gottfried de Purucker

## If We Had 500

This Society is a small germ of a nucleus for a real outer Brotherhood. If we work aright the day must come when we shall have accomplished our aim and formed the nucleus. If we had five hundred members in the Society loving one another with true hearts, not criticizing nor condemning, and all bent on one aim with one belief we could sweep the whole world with our thoughts. And this is our work in the future, the work traced out for us by those Masters in whom so many of us firmly believe.

Address given by Mr. Judge, European T.S. convention, London July 15, 1892.

## Work in the Present

Regret nothing, not even the greatest follies of your life, for they are gone, and you are to work in the present which is both past and future at once. So then, with the absolute knowledge that all your limitations are due to Karma, past or in this life, and with a firm reliance ever upon Karma as the only judge, which will be good or bad as you make it, yourself, you can stand anything that may happen and feel serene, despite the occasional despondencies which all feel, but which the light of Truth always dispels.

*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p 18

William Q. Judge

## Unconditionality of Commitment

One of the paradoxes of our time is that those who cannot maintain continuity of consciousness even for a week preach spiritual tenets for their own psychological survival. But out of such will not come the forerunners of the coming civilization, the alchemical agents for the radical transformation of modes of thought and action. These rare souls define themselves in an unmistakable manner, by unconditionality of commitment, magnanimity of mind and reverence for all the spiritual teachers of humanity.

“Drawing the Larger Circle” *Hermes*, August 1978  
Raghavan Iyer

## Push the Nobel Work Along

I say this to every Lodge to which I speak. It is my duty to call to your attention that your membership in the Theosophical Society is something that you should be proud of, and that legitimately you can be proud of. You are, each one of you, a member of a Brotherhood which is universal, which is world-wide, and which, although numerically small as compared with the enormous masses of humanity who know naught of our sublime teachings, nevertheless is a compact nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood; and this nucleus will grow in strength, particularly if each one of you takes it unto himself or unto herself to push the noble work along.

*Messages to the Convention, London Lodge*  
Gottfried de Purucker

# ITC 2017

## Impressions of a Moderator

From *Theosophy Forward*

Jonathan Colbert

ITC participants at the Friends Center in Philly this year bore their hearts on their sleeves. “Lets get to work,” they said. “Lets get off our backsides and apply these true and healing ideas!” Members and newcomers did not attend as emissaries of their respective organizations or as promoters of old agendas. This year we were more like so many Promethean rebels bent on overcoming anything resembling stasis or inertia. What was the precipitant of this benign restlessness? Have the ill-mannered actions, words and tweets of a petulant president scared the hell out of Theosophists? Or is it that the whole world now seems in such desperate need for the healing message, the soothing, soul-satisfying balm of pure Theosophy? Could the precipitant have been the theme of the conference itself: “A Nucleus of Universal Brotherhood: World’s Healing Force”?

We came expecting to learn and, I think, did learn quite a lot about what a nucleus is, how do we form a nucleus of brotherhood, and how does healing come into play in all of this. Is a nucleus something that is static and preservative like a seed? Or is it a center of action, something resourceful, productive and dynamic? Is brotherhood a theory, a feeling, a fact or a movement? Is it something we create anew or does it already exist as a fact in nature? Do all true nuclei of universal brotherhood mirror, as through a

lens, the healing energies of the Brotherhood of Bodhisattvas into this, our troubled world? How might ITC be a part of this?

And yet, while our conference, itself having to do with healing, was going on in the City of Brotherly Love, the ugly and deadly face of violence and bigotry appeared just a few hours away in Charlottesville, Virginia. What is it about the power and fact of brotherhood that, if its proponents will not stay true to universality, they turn toxic? Only the expression of universal brotherhood is healing; partial brotherhoods, invariably, go terribly wrong.

Philadelphia itself was, of course, a splendid city and it was a treat to be there. Walking the few city blocks from the Downtown Sheraton to the Friends Center, you could experience downtown Philly in all its glory: landmark buildings of brick and stone nestled in and amongst modern monoliths of steel and glass. Big old trees, beautiful parks, trendy cafes, popular pubs—all were part of the mix. Most interesting, there was the presence of the old beginnings and foundational institutions of the U.S.A., perhaps echoing something of the mystery of 1776, but all melded with the beautiful and multi-cultural splendor of the present. In the Friends Center there is a fantastic mural-painting signifying the struggle for equality and the demand for recognition of human dignity: the spirit of 1776, I thought, mirrored in 2017.

One evening, three veteran pros from Santa Barbara ULT delivered outstanding talks highlighting the influence of *Theosophia* in the founding of the United States of America. Thomas Paine became the brilliant hero who everyone wanted to know more about. The Declaration of Independence emerged as a model for the world. The U.S. Constitution was upheld with precision, knowledge and vision. Everyone wanted to learn more of what was and is the real nucleus of America, especially given America's apparent abandonment of vision, conscience and even cohesion.

As shifting breezes can cause a jet of light to flicker and “cast shades deceptive,” a conference concerning the auspicious convergence of such self-luminous subjects as a nucleus,

brotherhood and healing might risk exposing old, long held misunderstandings between the Theosophical organizations. From what I could see however, not many of these “elephants in the room” were able to find their way to the conference. Open-heartedness and magnanimity carried the day. The talks given were in earnest and served to generate deep conversations in the respective study circles following each presentation. As the guy responsible for making sure the conference stayed on schedule, I had the unfortunate job of going around to each of the study circles at their ending times to let them know that their time had come to an end. I almost couldn’t bear the task. I felt like I was pulling souls out of devachanic bliss back into the world of time and objectivity! The only consolation was witnessing the beautiful sharing of ideas harvested in the plenary sessions from these very potent circles.

Last year at the ITC conference at Santa Barbara, we tried the innovation of featuring study circles based mostly on the writings of H.P.B. This year we tried a new innovation: providing study circle quotes from many other Theosophical authors. This too could have stirred up more elephants. However, because the quotes were in line with H.P.B., with each other and with the threefold theme of the conference—nucleus, brotherhood and healing—the challenge of the varied authorship of the readings became secondary or non-existent. Furthermore, listening to and participating in the exchanges in the study circles, it became evident that like each individual student of Theosophy, each of the Theosophical traditions, mainstreams and organizations represents a unique genius, a special soul-quality manifesting its own self-chosen duty, its *svadharma*. Diversity, then, became our strength.

ITC 2017 was a working conference dedicated to creating the “Philadelphia Declaration,” a more concrete advancement of the Purposes of ITC and of the Naarden Declaration of 2014. As the conference proceeded, many phrases emerged such as “it is time that we put ideas into practice,” “service is eliminating the

gap between the server and the served,” “study without action is hypocrisy,” “let’s not hide the light of Theosophy under a bushel” and “if we do our duty, our nucleus will become stronger.” These all began to cohere first as a consensus among ourselves and then as our commitment to the world: to harness the unique genius of all mainstreams, organizations and independent theosophists to create working conferences dedicated to solving and doing something about the world’s most pressing problems. This is the gist of the Philadelphia Declaration.

Through unity, study and work, the pure teachings of Theosophy need to be translated into specific contexts, modern language and simple terms, fit for meeting the daunting challenges of present humanity. The conference participants arrived wearing their hearts on their sleeves—and left dedicated to rolling up those sleeves to do the hard work worthy of the altruistic heart. Many thanks go to the three presidents of the ITC who labored so indefatigably to prepare this conference. Huge thanks also go out to the Dutch team who so steadfastly provided support behind the scenes to the practical workings of the conference (registration, meal-tickets, audio-visual and up-streaming the conference to the entire world). So cheerfully and beautifully, they exemplify Theosophy in action.

# The Philadelphia Declaration

**We commit ourselves to facilitate the creation of working conferences harnessing the unique genius of the various theosophical streams, by:**

1. identifying suffering/hot topics that need a solution from theosophical perspective
2. studying and contemplating the theosophical teachings and selecting the relevant principles
3. translating these into modern language/ putting these into context
4. developing pure and simple applications (products)
5. inspire, encourage or facilitate theosophical branches or organizations to enter the arena\*, to offer these solutions

*“we have it in our power to begin the world over again”* – Th. Paine

\* The Letter of The Maha Chohan

To be true, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem. That the world is in such a bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies, those of the *civilized* races less than any other, have ever possessed the *truth*. The right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles — right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism — are as impossible to them now as they were 1881 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were; but to these there must be somewhere a consistent solution, and if our doctrines prove their competence to offer it, then the world will be quick to confess *that* must be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives *truth* and nothing but the truth.

Maha Chohan





This book is a record of the profound and inspiring lectures that were given on the deep relationships of Universal Brotherhood, a Nucleus and the Healing of Humanity, as well as lectures on the influence of *Theosophia* in the founding and shaping of The United States of America. The book contains the readings that were used as aids in the discussion circles, which were culled from prominent thinkers and writers of the various theosophical mainstreams. At the end of the book is featured the “Philadelphia Declaration” itself, representing our final harvesting and distillation of the conference as a whole. Very much the product of the entire group of conference attendees, yet crafted of compact, less-is-more, very caring language, the Philadelphia Declaration was shared on the last day of the conference in a very enthusiastic plenary session.

ISBN 978-90-70163-77-8



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