

LIVING THE TRUTH: UNIVERSAL UNITY

Hello friends, I was asked to prepare a talk for today on the topic “**Living the Truth: Universal Unity**”, and I have to say that the process of preparing and reflecting upon such a magnificent ideal has been very enriching on its own, so I’m very grateful for that already.

I will share with you some ideas regarding the keywords of this theme which are “Living” and “Universal Unity”.

- First, I will start with a few excerpts I’ve selected on “**Universal Unity**”, so we can set up a context of its role and its importance
- Then I would like to focus on “**What it means to lead a life embracing Universal Unity**” from a theosophical perspective and from the practical point of view, meaning questions such as how we can try to incorporate it in our daily lives, what would be the natural consequences of living it, and what are some of the obstacles we may face in the process.

To start with, I think we can agree that Universal Unity is probably the grandest ideal presented within theosophical teachings, as well as the fundamental essence in various ancient traditions.

When considering the words “Universal Unity”, even from the human intellect, I think we can all grasp an idea of the cosmic dimension that it evokes, far beyond our ordinary perception of life.

Here I have selected a few references which emphasize the utmost importance of Universal Unity from theosophical perspectives:

The first one is the first object of the Theosophical Society [1]: “*To form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color*”, which urges for every member to lie in sympathy with making a conscious effort to create a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, which is very much related with Universal Unity. I think this is so important to remember that this should be an active object, rather than a passive one. I’m sure we all agree with this statement, but we should also strive for finding ways and creating opportunities at every opportunity to make it active, to make of ourselves such a nucleus in our communities and in daily life.

The next one is the beginning of HBP’s diagram of meditation [2]: “*First conceive **UNITY** by Expansion in space and infinite in Time*”

This practice of conceiving Universal Unity in the Higher Mind, and its reflection and contemplation may be helpful to gradually develop an avenue towards perceiving perhaps a glimpse of such Unity.

Next, a quote from Robert Bowen’s notes [3] regarding the necessary approach to study the Secret Doctrine: “*No matter what one may study in the S.D. **let the mind hold fast**, as the basis of its ideation, to the following ideas: a) **The fundamental unity of all existence**...*”. Here again, emphasis is made upon the importance of letting the mind hold to the idea of Unity of all Beings.

Finally, The Voice of the Silence [4] also refers to the union with the “Silent Speaker” that is necessary before the soul can comprehend and remember, meaning to know what is Real.

*“Before the soul can comprehend and may remember, she **must unto the Silent Speaker be united just as the form to which the clay is modelled, is first united with the potter’s mind.***
For then the soul will hear, and will remember...”

Overall from these examples, and many others that can be found, it stands out how Universal Unity is so emphasized upon, and pervades as **the ultimate essence** of philosophical teachings and doctrines. Therefore, it is worthwhile to dwell on it on a regular basis.

And that brings us to the question of ‘What it means to lead a life embracing Universal Unity’. Here are a few aspects of what I’m going to talk regarding some ideas:

- The constitution of man and the spiritual path
- Requirements to advance on nivritti-marga

- Living and practicing
- Sense of responsibility

First, it is useful to have a proper understanding of **what are the obstacles** that prevent us in the first place from experiencing Universal Unity, as the ultimate goal in the spiritual path of perfection. For that, to consider the principles that govern the constitution of man can help to understand its dual nature, both in theory, and most importantly in practice.

Here I will use a graphical and simple **analogy** to represent the relationship between the Individuality and the personality (although we are all familiar with the 7 principles). If we consider the process of taming a horse, then:

- the *horseman* represents the Individuality, the observer, who knows; (upwards triangle)
- while the *horse* represents the personality and body, the doer; (downwards triangle)
- and the ultimate unity of both *horseman* and *horse* is the Perfect Man. (double triangle intertwined)

The horseman takes the horse for training when he sees some traits that qualify him and when the horse (or personality) shows a willingness to acknowledge and yield to his master; but before those conditions are there it's very difficult to tame the horse since it is still subjected to Avidya. But when training begins, little by little the horse learns to perceive his master's will and directions. And gradually, little by little, he learns to be more ready to respond even to subtler movements, until eventually it reaches a stage where he is completely aware and united with his master's will (which would be the Higher Self or the Divine Will). At that point they are One, meaning there is complete trust and renunciation by the horse because he acknowledges that his master Knows, and consequently takes care of what is needed. So there is no place for worrying, or self-centeredness, or having conflict, personal suffering, and so on, so the horse is free of all that and these things cease completely when the horse is One with the horseman.

This process of taming can represent the opening of antakharana, the bridge between the lower self and the higher self. As we know, the personality or lower quaternary carries with it skandhas or strong tendencies from past causes, which may tend to be in disharmony with the Divine Self, so the task we have before us is to cultivate a connection with the nature of the Higher Self, despite the obstacles that represent past tendencies.

The next question would be, how to develop or to accelerate the process towards such state of union? How to set the adequate conditions to nurture it to tread the path of return -nivriddhi marga? It seems to me that one basic requirement to create fertile conditions would be **watchfulness** of the whole microcosm that we are. A **constant, vigilant watch** is necessary once one has decided to pursue the path that leads to Truth, since this is a process of changing one's nature from denser to subtler vibrations, and for that we need first to realize all the intricacies of our own characters, not just an intellectual understanding, but more an experiential awareness that comes into play with relationship, and when the personality reacts to whatever surrounds it.

Therefore, we must grow in **awareness** of the inconsistencies and conflicts that there are between that ideal of Universal Unity, Love and Wisdom, and on the other hand our daily behavior. We can ask, how well do they match? How far are we from that ideal on our daily behavior? Actually, the more we tend to observe, subtler disharmonious reactions may emerge to the surface of our consciousness, and that is the first step, to be aware of all these impurities of our character, so that we may choose to take charge if we commit to it for example by nurturing the opposite virtues. This is a long-term endeavor, of course, and there is no reason to be overwhelmed by the **realization of the enormous gap**, how far we are from being perfect, from the perfect man, as long as we put in the effort, and we TRY, just as the Masters say [5], to harmonize the multi-layered tendencies that pull us the opposite way.

There is a quote by HPB [6], that gives us some hope and she says: "*Conquered passions, like slain tigers, can no longer turn and rend you. Be hopeful, then, not despairing. With each morning's awakening try to live through the day in harmony with the Higher Self. "Try". One who does his best does all that can be asked.*"

A powerful consequence of this conscious watchfulness is to realize that if our past history of bad causes makes our way today very challenging at some point, then we are also in the position to **reverse our present choices** to the kind that will add up to an inner strength of the Higher Self tomorrow and from now onwards. Therefore, a keen watchfulness and awareness are probably the cornerstones, from which may follow a natural **process of self-transformation** and the growing development of **inner capacities**, such as the

following versus their opposites: abstract thought (concrete thought), generosity (selfishness), love (unkindness), compassion (self-centeredness), intuition (personal reaction), brotherhood (separation), discernment (personal will), responsibility (procrastination), among others. In the Mahatma Letters, it can be read “[*Adepts*] are not made, they become...” [7], which is a hint of the necessary active work involved in the process of becoming.

The next aspect that I want to talk about deals with **how to practice Universal Unity**, how to incorporate that essence into our daily lives, and make it a living reality. This question has already been put forward since ancient times and different traditions have described sets of good conduct in order to purify the character, while persevering towards Human Perfection.

A good example of such precepts is the *Golden Stairs* given by Madame Blavatsky in 1888 [8]:

A clean life
An open mind
A pure heart
An eager intellect
An unveiled spiritual perception
A brotherliness for one's co-disciple
A readiness to give and receive advice and instruction
A loyal sense of duty to the Teacher
A willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH
Once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it
A courageous endurance of personal injustice
A brave declaration of principles
A valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked
And a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts
-these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom

In a very little few verses there is a considerable amount of **valuable instructions that we can consider, test, investigate, and examine**, in order to discover their meaning not only in a superficial way but in ever deepening layers of inner realization, in all spheres of action during daily life (may it be at work, with family, friends, “strangers”... in daily life). This calls for continuous practice and is quite a task, but also a fascinating journey of discovery towards “*slaying the Destructor of the Real*” as referred to by HPB in *The Voice of the Silence* [9], meaning those causes in the Lower Mind which generate ignorance, separation, differentiation, resistance, and so on.

By meditating for instance on each day one verse, and by turning our attention regularly to the highest realities, by elevating our thoughts, as well as our noblest emotions, is a key exercise and practice, so that it may become a way of life. So it is as necessary as we have to eat and rest through the day, we should reach to a point that it's necessary, it's vital for us to nurture living in the elevated, the Higher Mind, by elevating our thoughts, and emotions too. Also, the **Law of Action-Reaction** can be observed in different planes of existence, because whatever we put in motion, there is a reaction always. So, when we direct our attention and power of thought to a specific question with due intensity and will, chances are that circumstances may result in unveiling some answers for what we are seeking if we have a keen eye for that. This is a beautiful aspect of the Universal Unity, because it is a living thing, we move and Life moves with it and the possibility of taking part by collaborating actively is a precious thing to imagine really.

Here I would like to share a fragment from Madame Blavatsky [10] regarding the **sense of responsibility**:
“The feeling of responsibility is inspired by the presence of the Light of the Higher Ego. As the Ego in its cycle of rebirths becomes more and more individualized it learns more and more by suffering to recognize its own responsibility, by which it finally regains self-consciousness, the consciousness of all the Egos of the whole Universe. Absolute Being, to have the idea of sensation of all this, must pass through all experiences individually, not universally, so that when it returns it should have the same omniscience as the Universal Mind plus the memory of all that it has passed through.

We should therefore always endeavor to accentuate our responsibility. *The feeling of responsibility is the beginning of wisdom, a proof that Ahankara [the sense of I] is beginning to fade out, the beginning of losing the feeling of separateness.”*

The sense of responsibility probably makes things easier for us as it develops, because if you perceive your place in the whole scheme of evolution, you become more aware of the interrelationships between all stages

and kingdoms of Life, so naturally one may feel more and more driven to **become a coworker with the One Life**—just as the horse ultimately surrenders with voluntary obedience to the horseman, in the analogy that was presented before. This renunciation of the I-ness probably is the most challenging, as it would be mean a revolution on how we perceive Life, but Unity knows no center, and therefore the sense of I must go eventually at some point.

In the meantime, since we are not yet there, I believe it's important to acknowledge the role of the heart, being the organ through which the Higher Ego acts, as said also by HPB in one of her quotes [11]: *“Occultism teaches that the heart is the organ par excellence through which the ‘Higher’ Ego acts – through the Lower Self”*. So, the motive of our actions should originate at the highest of our awakened principles, then if we persevere to embrace Universal Unity, it may become a beneficent underlying force in all that we do, in all the planes of existence in which we act.

To conclude, I would like to share this very familiar quote [12], I'm sure all of you know this, but it is one of the jewels I think that Madame Blavatsky left us, for those who are treading the path or want to go in this direction:

*There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind,
but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe:
There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer;
there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through;
there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount.
For those who win onwards there is a reward past all telling - the power to bless and save humanity;
for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.*

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REFERENCES

- [1] *Objects of the Theosophical Society*, Theosophy World article <https://www.theosophy.world/encyclopedia/theosophical-society-objects>
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- [3] *The Secret Doctrine and its study* (1891) pamphlet, Robert Bowen.
- [4] *The Voice of the Silence* (1889), H.P. Blavatsky, Theosophical Publishing House Adyar. Fragment I, verse 11-12
- [5] *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* (1923). Compiled by A.T. Barker, Theosophical University Press.
- [6] *Collected Writings (1874-78)*. H.P. Blavatsky. Volume XII, Letter to Esotericists, page 505.
- [7] *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* (1923). Compiled by A.T. Barker, Theosophical University Press.
- [8] *Collected Writings (1874-78)*. H.P. Blavatsky. Volume XII, Preliminary Memorandum, page 503.
- [9] *The Voice of the Silence* (1889), H.P. Blavatsky, Theosophical Publishing House Adyar. Fragment I, verse 4
- [10] *The Inner Group Teachings of H.P. Blavatsky* (printed in 1995). Compiled and annotated by Henk J. Spierenburg, Point Loma publications, page 203
- [11] *Collected Writings (1874-78)*. H.P. Blavatsky. Volume XII, Psychic and noetic action, page 370.
- [12] *Collected Writings (1874-78)*. H.P. Blavatsky. Volume XIII, There is a road, steep and thorny, page 219.