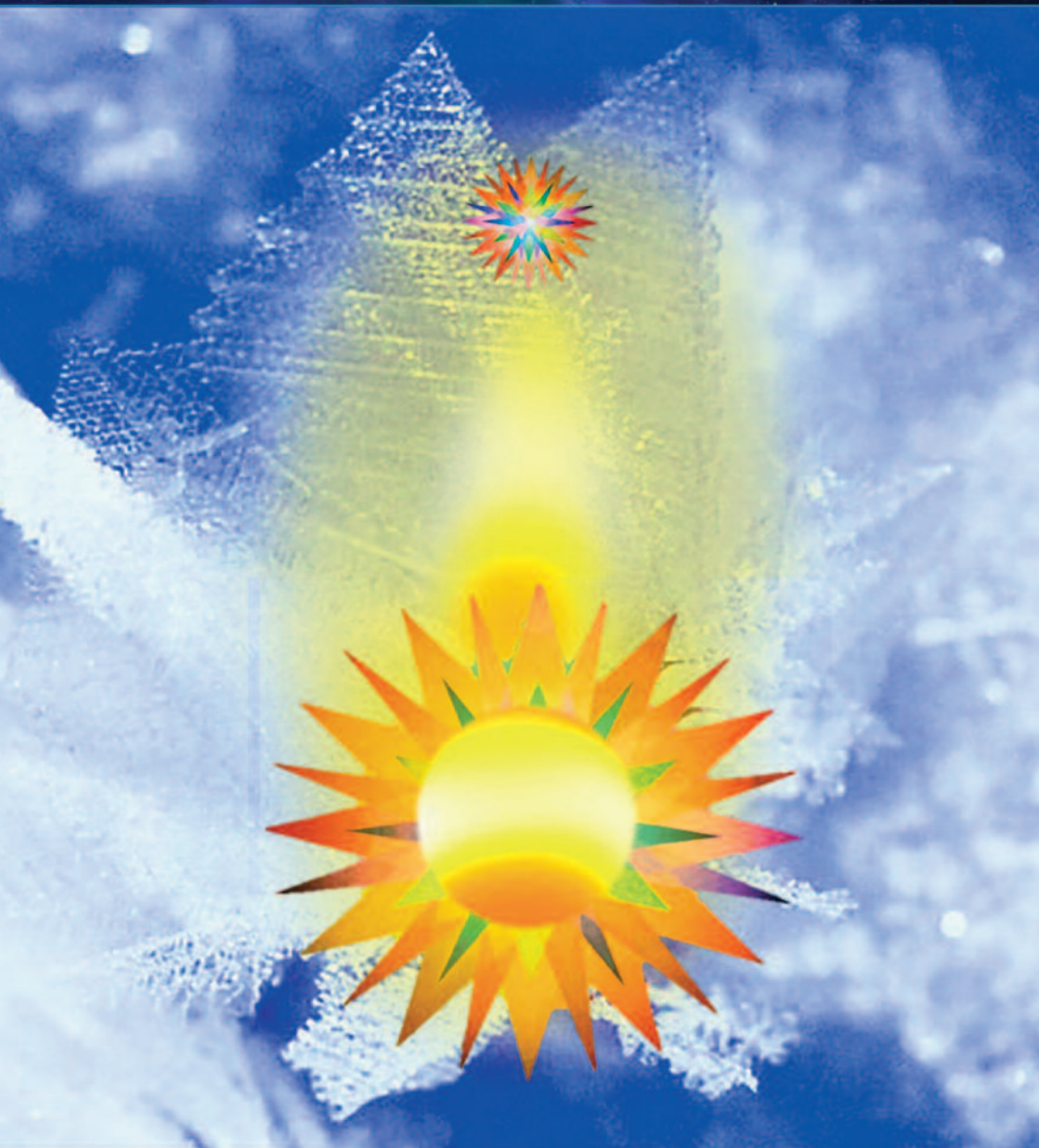


ESOTERICA

WINTER 2015

VOL 6 NO 1

PHILOSOPHY • SCIENCE • SPIRITUALITY



The Journal of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

From the first early challenges of making optical lenses to the photonics which today power the Internet and beyond, light technologies have revolutionized communications and created a global society. Light science is now taken for granted, from the tiniest of household objects to smartphones, medical equipment, and space technology.

Isaac Newton discovered that white light is composed of different wavelengths of coloured light. Max Planck and Albert Einstein proposed that light was a wave as well as a particle and later experiments confirmed that this duality is part of the nature of light. Einstein's theory of General Relativity showed how light was at the very centre of the structure of space and time.

2015 celebrates the International Year of Light and exoterically and esoterically, these visible and invisible aspects of light play a central role in our lives.

Reflections in a pool of water, in a mirror, or through the lens of a camera or space telescope, all require light to convey the image. A mirror may not count as the highest of technical feats, but it still holds its own mystery. In *Snow White*, the wicked queen has a magic mirror which always tells her the truth and every morning she asks: "*Mirror mirror on the wall who is the fairest in the land?*" What she wants to hear is that she is the most beautiful.

She later learns from the mirror "*My queen, you are the fairest here so true. But Snow White is a thousand times more beautiful than you*"¹. The queen becomes obsessed and tries to kill Snow White. In a later version she breaks the mirror and turns into an old hag, collapsing into dust, whilst Snow White and her prince are married. In another, Snow White becomes a warrior and overthrows the wicked queen.

There are many layers and esoteric meanings in fairy tales and stories which feature mirrors: *Ōkagami*, *The Fauna of Mirrors*, *Padmavat*, *Richard II*, *The Lady of Shalott*, *Through the Looking Glass*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Mirror of Merlin*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Magic Pomegranate*, and hundreds of others in folklore and throughout history. All illustrate the nature of human frailties and the difference between our lower and higher natures. The mirror becomes a metaphor for either truth or illusion.

So what do we see when we look in the mirror? Do we see what we wish to see, believe what we wish to believe, or do we experience with clear sight the actual image which greets us? Life, sages say, is the Great Illusion, a dream, a mirage. Yet every day we might believe what we 'see', accepting our own perceptions, false impressions or misconceptions. On deeper reflection we might understand more.

We all encounter everyday waking consciousness, dreaming and deep sleep. Through higher levels of consciousness we might experience a mirror of truth, the doorway through which we may catch a glimpse of Reality, no longer under the illusion of our lower selves. Pure consciousness is when the dualistic and relative is transcended and the clear window of the Soul opens to the Source of All.

In this issue there are a number of featured articles which look at different aspects of consciousness and the next issue will expand our interests in further directions. A number of unexpected delays have caused a postponement in printing this issue for which I can only apologise, we will be back on track next time.

Susan Bayliss

Editor

¹Jacob Grimm & Wilhelm Grimm: *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*; Band 1, 7. Ausgabe (children's and households fairy tales, volume 1, 7th edition). Dietrich, Göttingen 1857, page 264–273. Courtesy of Wikipedia.

Front Cover: "Winter Sun". Background image Schneekristalle by Matthias Kabel, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. Unattributed images have been provided by the Editor (copyright SB), other images are as sourced.

CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITORS DESK	2
SERVICE AS A SACRED LABOUR – <i>Cynthia Trasi</i>	5
TRANS-PENNINE WEEKEND – MANY PATHS TO ENLIGHTENMENT	7
BEING HAPPY	11
KARMA YOGA – <i>Jenny Baker</i>	13
A GIFT IS PURE	17
IF LIFE'S A GAME – WHO'S THROWING THE DICE? – <i>Olivia Stephanino</i>	18
SUMMER SCHOOL: THE RELEVANCE OF THEOSOPHY – SPIRITUALITY IN DAILY LIVING	21
THEOSOPHICAL EXPERIENCES – <i>Michael J Rush</i>	25
THE FLAME DIVINE – EXPERIENCE OF FIRE – <i>Jeanine Miller</i>	29
DIPLOMA IN THEOSOPHY	34
THEOSOPHICAL TALKS AND WORKSHOPS AROUND THE UK	35
THEOSOPHICAL STUDY AND DISCUSSION GROUPS AROUND THE UK	45
THEOSOPHICAL EVENTS IN LONDON	46
ESOTERICA - INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS	47

“Correcting oneself is correcting the whole world.
The Sun is simply bright. It does not correct
anyone. Because it shines the whole world is full of
light. Transforming yourself is a means of giving
light to the whole world.”

Ramana Maharshi



SERVICE AS A SACRED LABOUR

CYNTHIA TRASI

When I saw the word 'labour' in the title my mind immediately dwelt on the labour of giving birth throughout nature, laboured breathing, the various forced labour camps, child labour and The Labours of Hercules.

Sacred labour, that which is divine, dedicated, consecrated, sounds so much sweeter; yet it too involves hard work, suffering, even sacrifice. The Path is long and arduous, with many pitfalls. Master Koot Hoomi told us that all our bodies, the subtle as well as the physical, have to be strong and healthy for the journey. We have to have determination and will, like John Bunyan, who wrote: *"He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster, let him in constancy follow the Master. I'll fear not what men say, I'll labour night and day to be a pilgrim."*

In the world of Mythology Hercules can be seen as the Sun God, who passes through the Twelve Labours, which are linked to the twelve signs of the Zodiac. This is indeed service to everything 'under the sun', for what can we do without it?

But, as Geoffrey Hodson writes, the life-story of Hercules (Heracles) may be interpreted as a description of the experiences of every neophyte who successfully treads the Path. The Labours are a series of penances considered impossible to perform. Each Labour allegorically describes an interior task, which will help spiritual evolution by gaining victory over, and transmuting into power, every undesirable quality.

The first Labour is the killing of the Nemean Lion. The lion represents all the animalistic qualities we acquired in the animal kingdom. They are the least desirable attributes, but the hardest to transform into the opposite spiritual qualities. The fifth Labour is the cleaning out of the Augean Stables. Geoffrey Hodson says: *"look within and, evoking the inmost will, wisely, skilfully, direct the purifying powers – the fresh and clean river waters – of the higher, spiritual Selfhood into and throughout every thought, feeling and action of the 'stable' of the lower mortal personal nature, to cleanse them of all impurities".*

But, the task of self-perfecting is never undertaken by the aspirant for self-gain, but solely for the attainment of greater effectiveness in the service of others. The Hero is each one of us and we should serve both individuals and the whole of humanity.

H P Blavatsky (HPB) writes in 'The Voice of the Silence' that "to live to benefit mankind is the first step." Goodness me! That doesn't give me much excuse for leaving service till later. Oh well, at least I'm a Theosophist, and the Master KH wrote, *"None of you can be so blind as to suppose that this is your first dealing with theosophy."*

But what is it that HPB wrote in her little book 'Practical Occultism'? In comparing theosophy and occult science she states that *"it is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the metaphysical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbour than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasures for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer – is a Theosophist."*

Gulp! That description makes me feel ashamed that Master KH had to say, *"Remember you are Theosophists"*. It makes me realise that to be a true Theosophist is to live a life of service, a life of Sacred Labour.

Image p4: Fuchsia Tulip, D Sharon Pruitt, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Dr Annie Besant said that *"no one really is a thorough member of a society like ours, unless he or she has taken up some kind of service to others. The life of the Spirit consists in giving continually. You cannot hope that spiritual life shall pour into you from above, unless the life you are receiving pours out from you in every direction."* The service demanded is that unselfish service that gives everything and asks for nothing in return. Let us look once more at HPB's beautiful poetry in 'The Voice of the Silence':

"Let thy Soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

Let not the fierce Sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer's eye.

But let each burning human tear drop on thy heart and there remain, nor ever brush it off, until the pain that caused it is removed.

These tears, O thou heart most merciful, these are the streams that irrigate the fields of charity immortal."

Quite a lot is asked of us it seems, but we have not been left without help. Characters in mythology and fairy tales, and great souls who have gone before us, all teach by example. A Master or Adept is one who is a servant to all, seeking no reward. He uses his knowledge to help humanity. Masters show us what is possible and it gives us encouragement. Clara Codd wrote that like apprentices we should study and watch the technique of great souls. As we ourselves advance and create for ourselves new values, we shall the more readily recognise those who are living examples. But Clara warns that there will be stagnation unless the results of our study and meditation are applied in service. Steps along the Path are steps in understanding, expressed in action. All life should be our field of service, including the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms. Our hearts have to be big enough to take everything in. Whatever situation we find ourselves in, it is an opportunity for service.

Clara tells us that St Catherine of Sienna prayed that she would be granted the favour of seeing spiritually the beauty of every human soul. She was told that she would need to banish from her heart all anxious thoughts concerning herself and her salvation, so that she was not distracted from service to others. That is a very tall order.

T Subba Row called this a self-denial which is not time-bound, but must be eternal, and the object of which must be the spiritual enlightenment of the human race. Now that is the highest of all tall orders! And as the British playwright Tom Stoppard wrote: *"Eternity's a terrible thought. I mean where's it all going to end?"* Subba Row continues: so the motive is all important. If you give no space to your own troubles you have plenty of room for the problems of others. This divine insight is the greatest power of service the occultist can obtain; to such power we should all aspire, being aware that we should want to aid others in their way.

Sri Ram reminded us that we cannot be choosy about whom we wish to serve. It is my own experience that it is often the one whom others do not deem worthy of help and friendship, or the person I have to struggle to have patience with, that grants me the honour of friendship through kindness and service. Sri Ram wrote, most exquisitely, *"When all life becomes a poem of service, in the true, pure, inward sense, then all life grows exceedingly beautiful; it unfolds like a flower."*

And so it seems to me that Service is Sacred Labour and Sacred Labour is Service. I do not have the words to express well what I feel, so I will end with words from Ramana Maharshi: *"Correcting oneself is correcting the whole world. The Sun is simply bright. It does not correct anyone. Because it shines the whole world is full of light. Transforming yourself is a means of giving light to the whole world."*

Cynthia is President of Bradford Lodge, Secretary for the TOS UK and a well-known theosophical speaker. From "Service as a Sacred Labour", given at the International Theosophical Order of Service Conference 2013, Wheaton, USA.



TRANS-PENNINE WEEKEND

“Many Paths to Enlightenment”

17th – 19th April 2015

Whalley Abbey

Near Clitheroe

Lancashire

BB7 9SS

Guest Speaker Peter Barton

On our spiritual journey we must each find our own way and our speakers will explore various paths to enlightenment to help us discover what could be the right path for us. There will be a variety of speakers from the North Western Federation and other parts of the English Section of the Theosophical Society.

We are sure you will enjoy our residential weekend at Whalley Abbey. It is a delightful venue with beautiful grounds close to the ruins of the 14th century Cistercian abbey, a Scheduled Ancient Monument on the banks of the river Calder in the gorgeous Ribble Valley. This will be a lovely environment for our weekend and day visitors are welcome. Residential and Day Delegate application forms are on following pages and larger A4 versions are available from the Foundation, TS and Federation websites. Early application is advised as residential places will quickly fill-up.

There will be tea and coffee available on arrival and you may register from 4pm on Friday. Registrar Sandra Kelly will also be available to meet day visitors for registration on Saturday and Sunday until 9.10 am (after this time please see her at the coffee break). Refreshments, farewells and departures will be about 3.15 pm on Sunday.

To avoid any disappointment you should let our Registrar, Sandra Kelly, have your Registration Form **as early as possible**. ***Because of the accommodation priority must be given to those who are willing to share a room.***

If you require any further information please email: mla.gold@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01282 422278. nwffederation.org.uk

We very much look forward to seeing you there.

Maureen Atkinson
Conference Secretary



Photos of House, gardens and ruins at Whalley Abbey, by Craighthorner, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

TRANS-PENNINE WEEKEND

17th – 19th April 2015

“Many Paths to Enlightenment”

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY

- 4.00 pm - **Registration** - See Registrar Sandra Kelly.
- 6.30 pm - **Dinner.**
- 8.00 pm - **Welcome and formal opening** - Maureen Atkinson Federation Vice President.
- 8.15 pm - **“Enlightenment and The Spiritual Path”** - Donald Atkinson.
- 9.15 pm - **Refreshments.**

SATURDAY

- 7.00 am **Yoga** (optional) or stroll.
- 8.00 am **Meditation.**
- 8.15 am **Breakfast.**
- 9.15 am **“Irina Tweedie and her Sufi Master”** - Jenny Baker.
- 10 am **“Spiritual Discernment on our journey”** - Cate McMahon.
- 10.45 am **Refreshments**
- 11.15 am **“Facets of Enlightenment in a Septenary System”** - Peter Barton.
- 1 pm **Lunch**
- FREE PERIOD** **for exploring the beautiful grounds and surrounding countryside.**
- 4 pm **Refreshments**
- 4.15 pm **“Portals to the Divine”** - Cynthia Trasi.
- 5 pm **“Life on the Razor’s Edge: An Esoteric Adventurers Guide”** - Tim Wyatt.
- 6.30 pm **Dinner.**
- 8.30 pm **Theosophical Evening and refreshments to follow.**

SUNDAY

- 7.00 am **Yoga** (optional) or stroll.
- 8.00 am **Meditation.**
- 8.15 am **Breakfast.**
- 9.15 am **“Alchemy of the Heart: Sufi Path to Enlightenment”** - Wayne Gatfield.
- 10.30 am **Refreshments**
- 11.00 am **“A Path to Enlightenment: The Tau to Ankh Transformation and the Dynamics of the Theosophical Seal”** - Peter Barton.
- 12.30 pm **Lunch**
- 1.45 pm **“The Immortal Guest”** - Hugh Agnew.
- 2.45 pm **Chairman and Closing Thoughts** - Maureen Atkinson.
- 3 pm **Refreshments and Farewells.**

New and used books will be on sale during the weekend.

Recordings of the Talks on CD, DVD or MP3 Format, can be ordered at the bookstall.

There will also be a T.O.S ‘Bring and Buy’ Stall.



TRANS-PENNINE WEEKEND 17th to 19th April 2015

"Many Paths to Enlightenment"

Whalley Abbey, The Sands, Whalley, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 9SS

RESIDENTIAL APPLICATION FORM

ALL MEALS ARE VEGETARIAN

NAME/S		
ADDRESS		Postcode
Telephone:	Mobile:	Email:

FULL COST FOR THE WEEK-END £165.00

INCLUSIVE OF £20.00 Non-Returnable Booking Fee

£

EXTRA NIGHT: £48

TOTAL BALANCE

£

SINGLE

DOUBLE

TWIN

Special Requirements (e.g., adjacent rooms, disabled):

Special Dietary Requirements (e.g. Vegan, gluten free, Diabetic):

PAYMENT

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £_____ made payable to:

'TS TRANS PENNINE GROUP'

Send payment together with **an A5 stamped addressed envelope** for the programme
and travel details to: The Registrar:

Mrs Sandra Kelly, 28 Torrington Road, Wallasey CH44 3BU

BOOKINGS MUST BE MADE BY 29TH FEBRUARY, 2015 with payment in full.

The amount of refunds for cancellations is dependent on notice given
according to our contract with the Abbey.

Early booking is advised.

BURSARIES: Some bursaries are available. In confidence please contact: The Bursar, The Foundation for Theosophical Studies 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA for an application form. Or email bursar@theosophy.org.uk Please apply early as late applications may not be accepted.



TRANS-PENNINE WEEKEND 17th to 19th April 2015

"Many Paths to Enlightenment"

Whalley Abbey, The Sands, Whalley, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 9SS

DAY DELEGATE APPLICATION FORM

ALL MEALS ARE VEGETARIAN

NAME/S		
ADDRESS		Postcode
Telephone:	Mobile:	Email:

RATE INCLUDES REGISTRATION, LUNCH, MORNING AND AFTERNOON REFRESHMENTS.

DAILY no(s)

day(s) @ **£26.00**

£

DAYS ATTENDING (PLEASE SPECIFY)

(Lunch on Saturday and Sunday is three courses plus tea or coffee)

(Dinner on Saturday is a two course buffet)

TOTAL BALANCE

£

Special Dietary Requirements (e.g. Vegan, gluten free, Diabetic):

PAYMENT

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £_____ made payable to:

'TS TRANS PENNINE GROUP'

Send payment together with **an A5 stamped addressed envelope** for the programme
and travel details to: The Registrar:

Mrs Sandra Kelly, 28 Torrington Road, Wallasey CH44 3BU

BOOKINGS MUST BE MADE BY 29TH FEBRUARY, 2015 with payment in full.

The amount of refunds for cancellations is dependent on notice given
according to our contract with the Abbey.

Early booking is advised.

BURSARIES: Some bursaries are available. In confidence please contact: The Bursar, The Foundation for Theosophical Studies 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA for an application form. Or email bursar@theosophy.org.uk Please apply early as late applications may not be accepted.



**THERE IS NO DUTY WE SO MUCH UNDERRATE
AS THE DUTY OF BEING HAPPY**

Everyone is seeking happiness. What is happiness?

Listen well to what I say and think deeply about it. When a person sees that nothing and no one is separate from him, that he is one with all people, animals and objects and when he knows, sees and hears nothing else, that is the Infinite. But if he sees or feels some other thing, obstructing or separating Him, then that is the finite. Then he has not found the Infinite. The finite is transient; the Infinite is eternal. Knowledge of the Infinite gives everlasting happiness.

*There is no duty: Robert Louis Stevenson Seeking happiness: Chandogya Upanishad, Kvakutty, courtesy of Sulekha.com.
Double-rainbow in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, Alaska: photo by Eric Rolph, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.*





KARMA YOGA

JENNY BAKER

Although the first mention of Karma Yoga is in one of the Upanishads, the earliest scripture to teach Karma Yoga outright is the Bhagavad Gita. The word Karma comes from the root Sanskrit word KRI which means to make or do. It can be interpreted to signify 'work', 'action', 'effect', 'product', and other words with similar meanings. When the word yoga is added it indicates meditative action with total awareness of what we are doing. Annie Besant in her translation of the Gita describes it thus: "Karma Yoga is the consecration of physical energy on the divine altar; this means the using of one's organs of action simply in service, in obedience to Law and Duty".

It is the third discourse or chapter of the Bhagavad Gita that the Lord Krishna tells the warrior Arjuna about Karma Yoga. Using Annie Besant's translation of verses 4 and 5 we read that "Man wins not freedom from action by abstaining from activity, nor by mere renunciation doth he rise to perfection. Nor can anyone, even for an instant, remain really action-less; for helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities of nature." And in verses 19 and 25 we read "Therefore, without attachment, constantly perform action which is duty, for, by performing action without attachment, man verily reaches the Supreme. As the ignorant act from attachment to action, so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world".

Life is action. To exist is to act. Karma Yoga is founded on this fact. We need to realise that the whole Universe is a vast expanse of vibrating matter from the tiniest atom to the remotest star. We live in a world of complex patterns of energy in constant motion. Karma Yoga is about freedom in action and the transcendence of egoic motivations. Everyone is bound TO action and BY their actions. In Karma Yoga every action is turned into a sacrifice. What is sacrificed? The answer is the self or the ego for as long as the ego presumes itself to be the author behind the actions or inactions, these actions have a binding power. They reinforce the ego and thereby obstruct the event of enlightenment. As we know karma is not only action but also its invisible results which shape a person's destiny.

The underlying idea is that we are what we are because of what we do and how we do it. Our actions are the expression of who, or what we are, or presume ourselves to be. Our actions are a reflection of our inner being, but more than that, our actions act upon our self and contribute to the entire structure of the person we tend to be. There is a 'feed-back' loop between our actions and our being, meaning that if someone tends to be a good-hearted and kind person his or her actions are apt to be judged good or kind and they in turn reinforce that person's good-heartedness or kindness. On the other hand if someone tends to be mean or destructive, his or her actions are judged to be mean and destructive, thus reinforcing these qualities in his or her nature.

What we must not forget is that actions have immediate results and also invisible after effects. All deeds, and everything we think and what we say, set in motion invisible forces that shape and transform our being and thus our future destiny. In other words, we reap what we sow. The Law of Karma governs the Cosmos on all its many levels. So, action performed in the spirit of self-surrender has benign invisible effects. It improves the quality of our being and makes us the source of spiritual uplift for others. In Chapter 5 of the Bhagavad Gita, verses 10 and 7, we read: "Offer all thy works to God, throw off selfish bonds, and do thy work. No sin can then stain thee,

Image p12: Lord Shiva, Indian sculpture park Shramore, Wicklow, Ireland. photo Daniel Dudek-Corrigan, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

even as waters do not stain the leaf of the lotus... No work stains a man who is pure, who is in harmony, who is master of his life, whose soul is one with the soul of all”.

Mahatma Gandhi is arguably perhaps the best known Karma Yogi who ever lived. He worked tirelessly on himself and for the welfare of the Indian nation. In pursuing the lofty ideals of Karma Yoga, Gandhi had to give up his life. He embraced his destiny, trusting that none of his spiritual efforts could ever be lost, as is the solemn promise of Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, which Gandhi read every day. Gandhi believed in the inevitability of karma, but he also believed in the freedom of the human will.

It might seem that the Law of Karma encourages fatalism, but this is not so. It encourages an individual to take responsibility for his or her own destiny. We know that right action can improve the quality of our being and our destiny, and this is what intrinsically lies behind the teachings of many religions that state that doing good deeds and helping people results in a pleasant afterlife.

However, I must mention here that it is not only the deed which is done that is very important but also the intention behind the deed and the consciousness by which the deed is performed. The Bhagavad Gita clearly states that by abandoning attachment to the results of our actions and by remaining the same in success and in failure we will eventually attain Enlightenment.

How easy is it to abandon attachment to the results of our actions? For some it will be easier than for others. It depends entirely on one's attitude to life, on the level of spirituality one has reached and on the understanding of the meaning of renunciation. Renunciation OF action is good in itself, but better still is renunciation IN action. This could be described as “action-less action”, a phrase popular in various translations of the Gita. What exactly does this mean? It means letting go of the ‘lower self’, surrendering the ego. It means freedom in action and the transcendence of selfish motivations. A true Karma Yogin or Yogini not only assumes responsibility for appropriate action but also offers up the work and its fruits to the divinity within themselves.

Verses nine to twelve of Chapter 18 of the Bhagavad Gita says: “The man who does holy work, because it ought to be done, and surrenders selfishness and thought of reward, his work is pure and is peace. This man sees and has no doubts: he surrenders: he is pure and has peace. Work, pleasant or painful, is for him a joy. For there is no man on earth who can fully renounce living work, but he who renounces the reward of his work is in truth a man of renunciation. When work is done for a reward the work brings pleasure, or pain, or both, in its time; but when a man does work in Eternity, then Eternity is his reward.”

The human mind is the primary source of all action. If the mind is pure, without attachment to deeds, it cannot be defiled by them even as they are being performed. It is only attachment, not action as such, which sets in motion the law of moral causation by which a person is bound to the wheel of existence in ever new incarnations. The mind that is polished like a mirror and is completely free from the stain of attachment spotlessly reveals things as they truly are. And what they are is the true Self, the Divine within.

Verse 29 in the sixth chapter of the Gita states: “Whose self is yoked in yoga and who beholds everywhere the same, he sees the Self abiding in all things and all being in the Self”. Being able to see the sameness of all things and beings is the fruit of non-attachment. Actions must not only be performed in the spirit of unselfishness, they must also be morally sound and justifiable. The correct code of behaviour is crucial to determining the rightness or wrongness of one's actions. For action to be wholesome it must have two ingredients which are subjective purity and objective rationality. In other words, non-attachment and moral rightness.

The Bhagavad Gita stresses the need to devote all actions to the Divine. This means that ideally, one's daily life should be offered to the Ultimate Being so that everything that is done is done in the light of the Divine. This can be achieved by seeing the presence of the Divine in everything and by casting off all mundane attachments to the results of our actions. The Gita states that when a Yogi's mind is immersed in the Supreme, his or her actions are guided by the pure desire for the welfare of all beings.

The Bhagavad Gita says in Chapter 2, verses 71 and 72: "The man who, having forsaken all desires, moves about devoid of longing, devoid of the thought of mine, without ego sense; he approaches peace". It is a difficult thing to work and not care for the results. It is hard to help someone and never think that that person should be grateful for the help given. It is a difficult thing to do some good work and at the same time never to look forward to the fame or reward it might bring. It is also difficult not to seek praise for our actions when we are working for the welfare of others. If, however, we can overcome these difficulties and constantly care for the well-being of humanity, we will gain much that is required for our spiritual advancement.

DUTY

All that I have said so far could come under the heading of duty. One dictionary definition of this word is "a moral or legal obligation". Duty also means "responsibility" and yet another meaning is "the binding force of what is right". Duty also means "that which is required of one". Whatever is our duty depends on circumstances which are different for each one of us. Swami Vivekananda says that to do one's duty requires fearlessness and that fear is a sign of weakness. To overcome this weakness one has to ignore criticism and ridicule. The general idea of duty is that every good man follows the dictate of his conscience. Any action that leads a person towards his or her Higher Self is a good action and is our duty.

How do we know what are the right things to do and what are the wrong things? It all depends on the circumstances, the people involved and the culture in which they live. What is considered acceptable in Western Society is different from what is considered to be acceptable in Eastern cultures. We need to remember that we should try never to judge the customs of other people and compare them with those of our own, for often they are very different.

No man should be judged by the mere nature of his duties, but all men should be judged by the manner and the spirit in which they perform them. When we act with a sense of duty we act unselfishly and with no motive other than for the benefit of others. Yet there has to be a motive behind our actions. That motive should be love. When we act out of love we are immediately drawn towards our Higher Self and by continuously denying low desires our true Divine Self will shine forth.

The correct performance of duties at any time and in any place, without attachment to results leads us to the highest realisation of the perfection of the soul. To the unattached worker all duties are equally good and when done in a selfless manner will lead to the freedom of the soul. What we must avoid while going about our duties is having a high opinion of ourselves; being competitive, selfish and grumbling about what we have to do.

SERVICE TO OTHERS

A person willing to serve others does not have to be 'god-realised' or to have spent years in an ashram or in a monastery or in a cave in the Himalayas. If we feel it is our duty to serve others what is the best way to go about it? We can serve on different levels, ranging from the physical through the intellectual to the spiritual. The ways to give service are many and various and can range from volunteering in a charity shop to teaching Theosophy; from working with disadvantaged people to giving spiritual succour to the dying; from delivering Meals on Wheels to praying for peace. We

can work alone or in a group when the power of prayer is more effective. We can send thoughts of peace to troubled parts of the world. As well as praying for the people who are suffering, we should also pray for those who are helping them. If we feel unable to travel to disaster areas ourselves then our efforts are best spent in praying for the relief of suffering. Even though we do not have to be enlightened being to give or ourselves, we do have to tap into our own spirituality before we can act unselfishly and do our duty with love and compassion.

Helping others on the spiritual level is the highest help that can be given. Spirituality is the true basis of all our activities in life. A spiritually strong and sound man or women will be strong in every other respect. Until there is spiritual strength in a person even physical needs will not be well satisfied.

As well as serving spiritually we can serve others on an intellectual level. How do we do this? We can give a gift of knowledge, for knowledge dispels ignorance and ignorance is the mother of all misery. Swami Vivekananda said this: "Let men have light, let them be pure and spiritually strong and educated; then alone will misery cease in the world. We may convert every house to a charity asylum; we may fill the land with hospitals but the misery of man will still continue to exist until man's character changes."

Work, whatever it is, must be done with non-attachment. We must be aware how easy it can be to become bound by our actions. It can be very easy to become attached to doing work especially if it gives us recognition and status. Here are some words of wisdom from Swami Vivekananda: "Work like a master and not as a slave. Work through freedom and through love. Every act of love brings happiness. There is no act of love which does not bring peace and blessedness as its reaction".

In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna tells Arjuna how he continues to work even though he does not need to: "look at me Arjuna. If I stop from work for one moment the whole universe will die. I have nothing to gain from work. I am the One Lord, but why do I work? Because I love the world.

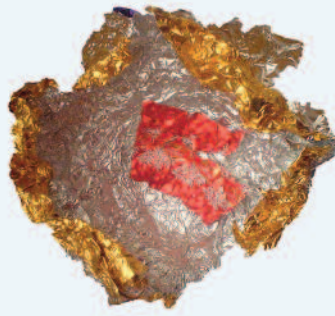
Jenny is a deep student of yoga philosophy, a yoga teacher, yoga therapist, and theosophical speaker. She is a member of the TS and for many years served as a Trustee on the Foundation's board. Jenny is director of the Foundation's Theosophical Summer School. Parts Two and Three of Karma Yoga will follow in the next issue.

WANTED

OCCASIONAL VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN CATERERS

**To cater for a Saturday buffet lunch for around 60 people for
Theosophical Society National Council meetings held at our London
Headquarters in April and October.**

Please email: secretary@theosoc.org.uk with details.



A gift is pure when it is given from the heart to the right person at the right time and at the right place, and when we expect nothing in return.



The three kinds of doorways to hell are lust, anger and greed, therefore these are so destructive to the embodied self and must be abandoned.



Knowledge is such a treasure which cannot be stolen.

1. From the Bhagavad Gita. 2. Painting by John Bower 1882–1918: "On the middle of the floor there was an open treasure chest with two horrible trolls sitting", public domain image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. 3. By Bharti-N ti atakam

IF LIFE'S A GAME – WHO'S THROWING THE DICE?

OLIVIA STEPHANINO



Looking at life as a game can bring an interesting dynamic to how we experience and interpret what happens to us. Take the children's game, "snakes and ladders" for example. Viewed as a metaphor for life, this popular board game takes us through a myriad of ups and downs – and all seemingly without our having a say in the outcome. The dice dictate our future! But then, who's choosing to roll the dice?

As the Buddhists know, it's our "attachment" to things, people and places which cause our suffering – but while this is an easy concept to get your head around intellectually, living it in practice is of course, far harder. But it's harder only because we take our lives – and everything in it – so seriously.

I have to confess that the whole "life is a game" philosophy seemed trite when I first heard it – great as an academic exercise but far less credible when you've just spilled coffee all over your new suit. But I began to get it when I found myself – looking for creative inspiration one day – playing solitaire on the laptop. (*Rather than viewing this as merely wasting time, I prefer to see this as a modern form of meditation!*). Having mastered the easy version, I knew that I'd win over and over again. But curiously enough, that took the fun out of it. In order to keep myself engaged with the game, I had to keep pushing myself to the next level of difficulty!

In one of those "aha" moments that in reality only ever seem to happen to other people, I recognized that it was me that was choosing to complicate the game and in the same way, I often choose to complicate my life in order to create an element of challenge. Without challenge, our life becomes the "same old, same old" – and ultimately pointless. Without challenge, we don't grow.

As human beings, we have free will – coupled with the ability to create our lives as we choose. And yet, how often do we actually blame "fate" for what happens in our lives, rather than taking responsibility? Of course, stuff does happen outside of our control – but it is how we choose to respond to it that makes the difference. All too often, we crave security – and yet once we have it, we complain of being bored.

The truth is, we're not here to repeat what we already know – instead we're being invited to create new experiences for ourselves. Each time we do the same thing over again, the thrill is diminished. And it's good that it is too – as our ennui leads us to be ever more creative, more experimental. Ultimately, security and freedom are at opposite ends of the continuum.

Try it for yourself – for the next month, every time something happens to you, remember that you're the one throwing the dice in your own game. How are the seemingly "negative" things going to help you in the long run? Use your imagination to fast forward into the future – and from this perspective look back to see how your experiences of today provided you with exactly the learning you needed to become the "you" of your future! Try it, I guarantee that you'll find it a truly liberating experience!

If the challenges we face strengthen us and provide the foundations for future “greatness”, then perhaps we should be encouraged by the seemingly insurmountable obstacles we find in our way. They’re the ladders to our future – and seeing the “snakes” in this way helps free our minds from whether the things that happen to us are “good” or “bad”. From this new vantage point, they’re all “good”! Seeing it from this perspective helps free the mind from its ego bonds – most of which are based around fear. And when we’re living in fear, we’re much more likely to put up with things that frankly, aren’t helping us on either our spiritual or emotional journey.

So, let me ask you a question – what are YOU tolerating at the moment? A friend from New Zealand asked me the very same question a little while back, and at first, I was somewhat taken aback. But once you’ve been asked it, it’s one of those questions which keep coming back to haunt you as you go about your daily business – and in fact, I was so provoked by my friend’s question that I was moved to ask it in a recent survey of my clients, and their responses were pretty interesting too.

So what did their answers reveal? Superficially, the answers were different – although many revolved around the age-old problems regarding relationships, money and health. But actually, most of the difficulties could be fairly easily resolved with a little will power, commitment and focus. And as a coach, I’d say that will power, commitment and focus are much of what I bring to my clients – but isn’t there something else which is actually more important? There sure is – and that “something” is the concept of “personal responsibility”.

I find that clients who understand that they have **personal responsibility for their success** are much more likely to succeed in their endeavours – and I’m sure that there are plenty of coaches out there who know just how hard it is to motivate and inspire someone when they hold onto a blaming attitude. **Why it’s important not to make blame the name of the game...** While blaming others for our own lack of success can be tempting, it’s worth bearing in mind that **when we blame others, we make ourselves powerless**.

And as shocking as it sometimes seems, not everyone is ready to make the shift from playing the blame game to adopting an attitude of personal responsibility. Attachment to our personal “stories” and the “labels” that we carry – often from childhood – can keep us stuck in the very pattern that we declare loudly that we want to leave behind. In fact, I’d go so far as to say that our personal stories (*after all, they form our identities*) are the number one cause of self-sabotage. If we’re to live up to our full potential, then we’re going to have to make the decision to let go of our attachment to our personal stories. Remember how I referred to the Buddhists earlier, who understand that “our sufferings come from our attachments”? Well, maybe our greatest suffering comes from our greatest attachment – the attachment to our identities! (*And of course, our identity is the great plaything of the ego!*)

It’s worth bearing in mind that our ego and our memories are all formed – and based – in the past – while our soul is calling to us from what we perceive to be the “future”, that which hasn’t yet manifested. And from this future perspective, we’re free to choose... free to choose how we’ll be, what we’ll create and how we’ll react to the “bigger world” in which we all play a part.

The path to enlightenment then, is revealed as we seek freedom from our self-perception, our identity, our past – and instead choose to surrender our “story” and become liberated to simply “be”... in the moment. Reaching this point of peace can only arise when we’re prepared to investigate our patterns, examine our beliefs and when at last we make **the decision** to forgive and let go. (*And make no mistake, it is all a decision. Peace arises after forgiveness – and the latter isn’t something that washes over you after a period of time. Instead, you have to DECIDE to forgive. And here’s a handy hint: the less you feel like doing it, the more you probably need to!*).

When we decide or choose, we're in our power. And when we're in our power, we're no longer prepared to tolerate aspects of our lives – instead we move on to fashioning our experiences in the best way that suits us, our vision and our goals. So, let me repeat the question: "What are you tolerating?" You just might be surprised by the answer. And then of course, comes the supplementary question: "What are you going to do about it?"

Olivia is a member of the TS and a theosophical speaker. She is passionate about helping others to become their own guru and much of her life and work has been devoted to integrating apparent opposites. With a personal mission to "bring unity where there is duality", Olivia has spent years studying a blend of western techniques and eastern philosophies – helping thousands of people around the world to choose a better future, irrespective of their past. Author of the book "Be Your Own Guru", you can find out more about Olivia on the web.

*© Olivia Stefanino 2010.

Image p18: Dice: Bambi79, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

INTERESTED IN FREEMASONRY?

Why not consider what the Grand Lodge of Freemasonry for Men and Women has to offer. Masonry is a fraternal tradition based on Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth; and on the Perfectability of humankind. The Grand Lodge has and upholds the equality of both men and women as practicing Masons, without distinction of race, creed, colour, gender or social conditions. Masonry recognises all those sincere seekers of truth, who work for humanity and wish to become better examples to others in the conduct of their lives. Freemasonry offers a rich and ancient cultural heritage and its spiritual insights a keystone of our work, preserving the tradition inaugurated by the Great Theosophist Annie Besant in 1902.



We are a forward-looking Order established in Britain and Europe with Lodges in London and around the country. If you wish to know more contact the Grand Secretary at: glf4m-w@tiscali.co.uk or jheaslewood@tiscali.co.uk or see our website at: www.grandlodge.org.uk

ADVANCE NOTICE EUROPEAN SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY

13TH – 23RD OCTOBER 2015

The European School for 2015 will be held on the outskirts of Birmingham in the United Kingdom, at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, based in ten acres of organically-managed woodland, a 'countryside in the city'.

Theme, details and speakers to be confirmed shortly.

www.europeanschooloftheosophy.com



THE RELEVANCE OF THEOSOPHY: Spirituality in Daily Living

SUMMER SCHOOL

FRIDAY 31ST JULY TO FRIDAY 7TH AUGUST 2015
HILLSCOURT, REDNAL, BIRMINGHAM B45 8RS

CHIEF GUEST SPEAKER:
TIM BOYD, INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Today's society has become increasingly secular as science has advanced into every aspect of life. There is a great need to infuse spirituality into everyday life so that people can live their lives in a much bigger context where concepts such as karma, what happens when we die and reincarnation become relevant.

Our lectures, study groups and workshops will follow the usual pattern and address these issues. On the next page you will find details of some of our talks, study groups and workshops.

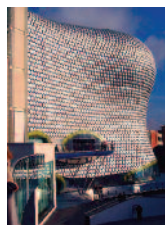
We are very pleased to welcome Tim Boyd, the newly elected International President of the Theosophical Society who will give the prestigious Blavatsky Lecture on the Sunday afternoon. Other prominent members of the Society will give talks and lead study groups and workshops in how to apply the esoteric teachings of Theosophy to daily living.

The venue, Hillscourt Conference Centre, is the Headquarters and Conference Centre of the NASUWT. It is set in acres of beautiful grounds in the lovely Lickey Hills west of Birmingham and is ideal for our needs.

The accommodation is all en-suite and includes both single and double rooms. The cost for the whole week will be £480 before May 31st and £500 thereafter. Day visitors will be charged £30.

Residential and Day Delegate application forms follow on the next two pages and larger A4 versions are available from the Foundation and TS websites. Early application is advised.

Jenny Baker
Director of Summer School
Foundation for Theosophical Studies



Selfridges building, Brindley Place: photos G-Man, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons. A glimpse of Hillscourt.

THE RELEVANCE OF THEOSOPHY:

Spirituality in Daily Living

CHIEF GUEST SPEAKER: TIM BOYD

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

On Sunday 2nd August Tim will give the Blavatsky Lecture, on Tuesday he will give a public lecture in Birmingham and on Thursday he will give a further talk for the School. He will be with us at the School for the whole week.*

TALKS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK INCLUDE:

MAGIC AND MAGICIANS ON THE PATH OF LIFE
LIVING THE MYSTICAL HEART OF THEOSOPHY
EMBRACING THE DRAGONS OF WISDOM
LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE SOUL
THE DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD
SOUL, PERSONALITY AND THE RAINBOW BRIDGE
A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY
BEING A THEOSOPHIST ON PRINCIPLE
THE POWER OF MAGIC

*Susan Bayliss
Michael van Buren
Ted Capstick
Wayne Gatfield
David Harvey
Gary Kidgell
Olivia Stefanino
Cynthia Trasi
Tim Wyatt*

STUDY GROUPS – SATURDAY TO MONDAY

DRAGONS AND SERPENTS -
SIGNPOSTS TO ESOTERIC WISDOM
HOW TO STUDY THEOSOPHY -
THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS
THE PSYCHE AND THE PATH - THE ROLE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS
AND MYTH IN OUR SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOURS
MEDITATION

*Susan Bayliss
Elizabeth Crofts and
Janet Lee

Gary Kidgell
Ron Wallwork*

STUDY GROUPS – TUESDAY TO THURSDAY

THE ESSENTIAL TOOLS OF PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY FOR TODAY
THEOSOPHY FOR BEGINNERS -
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WISDOM OF THE AGES
CLIMBING JACOB'S LADDER
THE SECRET DOCTRINE

*Ted Capstick

Pam Evans
Noeline Hart
Tony Maddock and
Janet Hoult*

WORKSHOPS IN THE AFTERNOON INCLUDE:

Healing, Reflexology, Chi King, Speaking your Mind (for inexperienced speakers), Yoga Nidra, and The School of Applied Wisdom.

*At the time of going to press we await confirmation of Tim's titles which will be in the next issue.



THE RELEVANCE OF THEOSOPHY - Spirituality in Daily Living

Summer School Friday 31st July to Friday 7th August 2015

Hillscourt Conference Centre, Rednal, Birmingham, B45 8RS

RESIDENTIAL APPLICATION FORM

All the accommodation is ensuite, single and some double rooms are available.

All meals are vegetarian

NAME/S		
ADDRESS		Postcode
Telephone:	Mobile:	Email:

A. I/we wish to book for the whole week: <i>Please tick</i>		YES		NO	
B. I/we require: <i>Please tick</i>	a single room:		a double room:		
C. I/we will be willing to stay off-site if necessary: <i>Please tick</i>		YES		NO	
D. I/we wish to enrol for part of the week (eg from Sunday lunch to Tuesday breakfast).					
Period required From:			To:		

The cost for the whole week is £480 before 31st May and £500 after 31st May.

Please telephone Colin Price on 07960 450316 for a quotation for part-time bookings.

E. Special Requirements: (e.g. adjacent rooms/ground floor) :	
F. Dietary Requirements: (e.g. vegan/gluten free):	
G. PAYMENT: I/we enclose a cheque/postal order for:	£
Please send this form with your cheque/postal order made payable to: "THE FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES", to Colin Price, Summer School Registrar, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA. <u>Also</u> send an <u>A5</u> self-addressed, stamped envelope for the full programme, joining instructions and travel details which will be sent to you nearer the time. If you require a receipt include an additional <u>small</u> stamped addressed envelope with your application. (The amount of refunds for cancellations is dependent on notice given according to our contract with Hillscourt Conference Centre.)	
H. A coach leaves HQ on 31 st July at 10.30am. Please indicate ONE box if you wish to travel by coach.	
Return journey of: £40	Single journey of: £25

If the accommodation at Hillscourt becomes overbooked, delegates will be allocated rooms at either the local Inn (5 minute walk away) or the local Premier Inn (5 minute drive away).

BURSARIES: Some bursaries are available, in confidence please contact: The Bursar, the Foundation for Theosophical Studies 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA for an application form. Or email bursar@theosophy.org.uk. Please apply early as late applications may not be accepted.

The Foundation for Theosophical Studies
Registered Charity No: 1014648



THE RELEVANCE OF THEOSOPHY - Spirituality in Daily Living

Summer School Friday 31st July to Friday 7th August 2015

Hillscourt Conference Centre, Rednal, Birmingham, B45 8RS

DAY DELEGATE APPLICATION FORM

NAME/S		
ADDRESS		Postcode
Telephone:	Mobile:	Email:

The Daily Rate of £30 includes lunch and morning and afternoon refreshments and all lectures and workshops. All meals are vegetarian.
An evening meal is available at £15 per person.

A. Number of Days:		Total @ £30.00 per person per day:	£
		Or Total for Six Days @£155.00 per person:	£
B. Days and dates attending: (please specify)			
C. Number of Dinners:		Total dinners @ £15 per head per day:	£
D. Days dinner/s required: (please specify)			
E. Special Dietary Requirements: (e.g. vegan/gluten free):			
F. I/we enclose a cheque/postal order for:			£
<p>Please send this form with your cheque/postal order made payable to: "THE FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES", to Colin Price, Summer School Registrar, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA. Also send an A5 self-addressed, stamped envelope for the full programme, joining instructions and travel details which will be sent to you nearer the time. If you require a receipt include an additional <u>small</u> stamped addressed envelope with your application.</p> <p><i>(The amount of refunds for cancellations is dependent on notice given according to our contract with Hillscourt Conference Centre.)</i></p>			

BURSARIES: Some bursaries are available, in confidence please contact: The Bursar, the Foundation for Theosophical Studies 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA for an application form. Or email bursar@theosophy.org.uk. Please apply early as late applications may not be accepted.

The Foundation for Theosophical Studies
Registered Charity No: 1014648

THEOSOPHICAL EXPERIENCES

MICHAEL J RUSH



A few years ago I wrote a dissertation on spiritual experience in the Western Esoteric Traditions. This was for the MA in Religious Experience at the then University of Wales, Lampeter*. I was particularly interested to examine the nature of both the experiences and their outcomes. Were they positive or negative, and did they differ from spiritual experiences from other traditions? I used three sources of accounts of spiritual experiences: published literature, the archive of the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre at Lampeter, and accounts submitted to me by contemporary Theosophists. The importance of experience was emphasised by HPB “But book

learning...will always prove insufficient even to the analytical mind... unless supported by personal experience and practice”¹ and the Voice of the Silence states: “But even ignorance is better than Head-learning with no Soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it”².

I did not attempt to verify the reported phenomena but took a phenomenological approach to the sources. Of the total accounts I collected from Western Esotericism, 44% were from people who identified themselves as Theosophists. 48% of their experiences were positive (as described by the experiencers themselves) and 42% were neutral, mostly due to basic descriptions of phenomena such as premonitions and spiritualistic or magical type occurrences. The remaining 10% were negative experiences and included physical pain or danger, mental discomfort, or fear. Annie Besant explained that as someone begins to develop their sensitivity to astral influences they will occasionally be, ‘assailed by a quite inexplicable and seemingly irrational dread’ and, ‘the uneasy dread of an invisible something, the feeling of a presence of “not being alone” due to hostility of the unseen elemental world towards humans’³. It is worth mentioning that even the negative experiences could often result in positive outcomes, for example around physical healing, spiritual guidance, bereavement or confirmation of a spiritual worldview.

However, what follows is a brief summary of the positive experiences of Theosophists. There were 35 accounts which could be classed as positive. All of those also had positive outcomes, apart from five where the outcome was unknown. Positive elements included: empathy with Theosophy and inner knowledge, a sense of guidance or destiny, awe and reverence, the feeling of being on a spiritual journey, love and ecstasy; and feelings of unity. Some Theosophists spoke about a sense of inner knowledge or empathy with the teachings of Theosophy.

Secret knowledge, HPB warned, is a two edged-sword, ‘Arcane knowledge misapplied, is sorcery, beneficently used, true magic or WISDOM.’⁴ William Kingsland wrote “*Theosophy struck a chord to which my inmost nature immediately responded... Underneath all this appeal to my rational faculty was an indefinable feeling - which so very many others have also experienced - that I was not now contacting this knowledge for the first time, that I was only recovering in my outer consciousness what was already familiar to my inner self*”⁵.

Rudolph Otto’s concept of the numinous⁶ a sensation of awe, overwhelming power, energy and ‘wholly otherness’, also seems to appear in experiences of some Theosophists, ‘There was a feeling of reverent awe’ says one account. Other Theosophists drew attention to the sense of guidance they experienced. Such guidance could be referred to an external impersonal destiny: ‘*This “sense of Destiny” is still with me – I suppose some people would call it “guidance” but that implies a personal “guide” which is no part of the experience; or a more personal guidance, ‘...an odd conviction that I had been taken under*

*the wing of something greater than I knew...'. Some Theosophists attributed such examples to Karma or the influence of the Higher-Self. Besant taught that various forces could influence us; the higher part of man's makeup could be experienced as "an imperiously compelling force"⁷, and a person's own habit of thought can have long-term, unforeseen results⁸. Another source of guidance could be the Mahatmas themselves such as when HPB was writing *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* "...the things I write are dictated to me, that sometimes I see manuscripts, numbers, and words before my eyes of which I never knew anything"⁹.*

Some Theosophists viewed their life as an ongoing spiritual journey. This account begins with distress and ends with a new-found spiritual freedom: *'... I realised that the search for Truth mattered more than finding it. At lowest ebb, apparently beyond help, I reached into the numinous and gained a spiritual freedom that others seem to envy'*. It is also interesting to note that a number of accounts begin with a distressing situation. This is referred to by Besant: *"The lives of a disciple are generally lives of storm and stress, in order that the qualities which are normally evolved in a long succession of lives in the three worlds may in him be forced into swift growth and quickly brought to perfection"*¹⁰. Or, in the words of *The Voice of the Silence*: *"There is but one road to the Path; at its very end alone the "Voice of the Silence" can be heard. The ladder by which the candidate ascends is formed of rungs of suffering and pain; these can be silenced only by the voice of virtue"*¹¹. A spiritual journey can be made in various ways. The experience above was a journey through different religions but such a journey can be understood in a two-fold sense: that of the ultimate evolution of the Macrocosm back to its origin; and that of the evolution of the individual, the Microcosm, towards either Liberation or Mahatmaship.

It also seems that the corresponding states of consciousness can be experienced through meditation. HPB lists the seven states of consciousness as: (1) waking, (2) waking-dreaming, (3) natural sleeping, (4) induced or trance sleep, (5) psychic, (6) super-psychic, and (7) purely spiritual¹². Ultimately, according to HPB, the journey is an evolutionary one and cosmic in scope as each individual's higher-self or Monad returns to its origin: *"Behold! Thou hast become the light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one, the VOICE OF THE SILENCE"*¹³. However, although the goal of the seeker's spiritual development is union with the divine origin, HPB and the Voice of the Silence make it clear that the path of the Mahatma is far nobler: *"Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of Self; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men"*¹⁴.

Some Theosophists have had experiences which may be classed as mystical. William James defined mystical experiences as passive, transient, noetic and ineffable¹⁵; qualities which are present in the following account: *'On one occasion I seemed to tap into the very power of the Universe. I was aware at once of the infinite might of it and at the same time of the incredible all-embracing love at the centre of it... I saw something too of the shattering glory of the very life at the centre of all being. In these moments of ecstasy one knows these things beyond question. Saying them in words is almost meaningless and surely not very convincing'*. Besant commented on the ineffability of such experiences: *"Words can give no idea of the exquisite beauty and radiance shown in combinations of this subtle matter, instinct with life and motion. Every seer who has witnessed it, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, speaks in rapturous terms of its glorious beauty, and ever confesses his utter inability to describe it; words seem but to coarsen and deprive it, however deftly woven in its praise"*¹⁶.

HPB stated that ecstasy was the only way that the divine could make its essence known to the finite Self, via the higher spiritual Self, whilst also denying that mere physical means could be used to induce it¹⁷. The Voice of the Silence suggests bliss is the aim and result of union: *"If through the Hall of Wisdom, thou would'st reach the Vale of Bliss, Disciple, close fast thy senses against the great dire heresy of separateness that weans thee from the rest"*¹⁸. Perhaps these examples belong to HPB's category of Buddhist consciousness with its *"beautiful inspirations of art, poetry, and music, high types of dreams, flashes of genius"* or even Auric consciousness where the memory of this consciousness

must be stored in the heart, "the seat of the *Buddhi*"¹⁹. Unity with one's surroundings, nature, other people or the divine is another common characteristic of religious experiences"²⁰.

The following account of a unitive experience covers not only other people and nature but also philosophical knowledge: *'I was lifted right out of myself into a state far beyond any such pallid description. I realised, as a living experience as an incontrovertible fact of nature, and not just intellectually, a sense of utter unity with my friends, with the rest of the audience, and with all humanity and nature. With this went a sense of total rightness and peace in all things, and a deep understanding of, and oneness with, philosophical principles previously taken on trust; henceforth they could never be doubted for a moment.'* The experienter also refers to profound knowledge (which cannot now be recalled) and the impact of the experience after forty years, and suggests it may have been an example of Richard Bucke's Cosmic Consciousness²¹.

The Voice of the Silence makes explicit the goal of union: *"When the six are slain and at the Master's feet are laid, then is the pupil merged into the ONE, becomes that ONE and lives therein"*²² and *"now thy Self is lost in SELF, thyself unto THYSELF, merged in THAT SELF from which thou first didst radiate"*²³. HPB's translation of a selection from the 'Golden Precepts' was probably aimed at a minority of Theosophists, as she states: *"Therefore it has been thought better to make a judicious selection only from those treatises which will best suit the few real mystics in the Theosophical Society, and which are sure to answer their needs"*²⁴. Charles Leadbeater also made a similar distinction *"Just so, there is a religious devotion which thinks mainly of what it will get for its prayers and lowers its worship into a species of bargaining; while there is also the genuine devotion, which forgets itself absolutely in the contemplation of its deity"*²⁵.

Few accounts differentiated between 'psychic' and 'spiritual' experiences. Mostly these were seen as unrelated although there were one or two exceptions. Very few of the Theosophical accounts actually contained references to terminology or ideas from Theosophical works. In the discussion above I have endeavoured to relate the experiences to ideas and terms from HPB, Besant and Leadbeater, in order to put them into context. However, it is important to note that the experiencers themselves, on the whole, did not do this. The reason for this may be due to the fact that anyone who agrees with the three objects of the Theosophical Society may join. These objects²⁶ do not necessitate acceptance of the whole body of knowledge set forth, for example, in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. Rather, what people seemed to get from Theosophy is an environment sympathetic to their beliefs and experiences and which does not judge them. This centres mostly on the phenomena as evidence for a non-material world and life-after-death. A minority of people have more mystical experiences, which Theosophy also allows for. It also seems to suggest that there are certain spiritual experiences, or elements of them, which are common to people regardless of whichever spiritual tradition they follow.

Michael, is Vice Chair of The Alister Hardy Society for the Study of Spiritual Experience. The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author alone. Correspondence regarding this article may be sent to mikerush@virginmedia.com.

Image p25: Mer de Glace Ice Cave, Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, Haute-Savoie, France, by Rémi, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

*I would like to thank my supervisors, the late Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, and Dr. Sarah Boss, and also any readers of *Esoterica* who sent me their accounts of spiritual experiences. 1. Quoted in N Goodrick-Clarke, Helena Blavatsky, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley 2004, p36. 2. H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena (1889) 1992, p25. 3. A Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom*, pp71-71. 4. H P Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena (1887) 1988, p588. 5. D Caldwell, *The Esoteric World of Madame Blavatsky*, Quest Books 2000, p341. 6. R Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*. 7. A Besant, op cit, p131. 8. *ibid*, p288. 9. D Caldwell, op cit, p305. 10. A Besant, op cit, p328. 11. H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, p15. 12. *ibid*, p168. 13. H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, pp21-22. 14. *ibid*, p43. 15. W James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp380-382. 16. A Besant, op cit, p124. 17. H P Blavatsky, *The Key To Theosophy*, p10. 18. H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, p8. 19. Quoted in Goodrick-Clarke, op cit, p174. 20. A Hardy, *The Spiritual Nature of Man*, p35 & p58. 21. R Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness*, Penguin, London/New York (1969) 1991. 22. H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, pp10-11. 23. *ibid*, p20. 24. *ibid*, pxi. 25. C Leadbeater, *The Other Side of Death*, p251. 26. The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society: 1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. 2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science. 3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

Magic of Awakening Retreat

(A two- day retreat)

A journey from experiencing the 'Self' to being established in 'Self Experience'



Discover answers to

Who am I ?

Where am I ?

Why am I here ?

What is Self Realization?

How to live in the present ?

- Break free from the twisting, turning, talkative, living-dying-living cycle of the egoic mind
- Learn practical methods to gain access to the pure presence at will
- Understand your body-mind-mechanism to attain freedom from its patterns
- Learn how to meditate in the marketplace
- Connect to the Source of all answers (the inner guru)
- Make a shift from mind centered living to consciousness centered living

Hosted by Northampton Theosophical Society. Delivered by Tej Gyan Foundation

2 & 3 May 2015

**(Timing: 9.00 a.m.- 5.00 p.m. on Saturday & Sunday)
at Park Inn, Silver Street, Northampton, UK.**

To book, contact Robert Woolley on 01327 842366 or robertwoolley@greenbee.net

Magic of Awakening is the flagship self-realization retreat offered by Tej Gyan Foundation where participants gain access to the experience of the Self and learn to live in the present every moment. The teachings of the retreat are non-denominational (secular).

The approach is essentially experiential; participants are brought to a deeper understanding and direct experience of their True Self, and learn practical techniques to deepen that experience afterwards. Magic of Awakening retreats are part of 'System for Wisdom' designed by the living Master Sirshree and have helped numerous truth seekers on their spiritual journey. They are delivered all over India, and are now held regularly in America, Singapore, Australia and mainland Europe. We are pleased to welcome the faculty from India who are trained and guided by the Master directly. You are invited to be part of this first ever Magic of Awakening retreat in the UK.

Booking for this retreat is essential. You can book up to and including Wednesday 15th April at £70 per person (includes lunch, tea and coffee) for the two days. Bookings may be accepted after that date based on availability. You are advised to book early to secure your place.

Whilst the fees is necessary to cover the expenses of the retreat, it is a matter of principle that the Ageless Wisdom should be available to all genuine seekers. If the fees is an obstacle for you, please speak in confidence to the organisers.

Visit Now: <http://magicofawakening.com>

THE FLAME DIVINE

Jeanine Miller

Part Three: The Experience of the Fire



But let us look more closely at this very core of our being which, like the hearth in the home that from immemorial times was the very centre of the household, is the living, sacred fire, the point of gravitation, of offering, of renewal of life, of irradiation. This centre varies according to the stage of the individual's evolution, but it is there, somewhere, whether at the level of the navel or the psychic level, at the heart or buddhic level, or at the brow or atmic. Everything is on fire within us. This is well brought out in the Fire Sermon of the Lord Buddha:

"And with what are these on fire? With the fire of passion, say I, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of infatuation, with birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and, despair are they on fire. . . The body is on fire. . . the mind is on fire. . . Mind-consciousness is on fire; impressions received by the mind are on fire; and whatever sensation, pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent originate in dependence on impressions received by the mind, that also is on fire!" To arouse a higher

aspect of fire requires contemplative exertion, discipline, austerity, self-sacrifice, tapas the inner incandescence. There are attested different kinds of manifestation of the inner flame, what we might call the darker and the lighter side of fire. To the former belong all those manifestations of wrath, fury, jealousy, passion, fits of temper, hatred, and so on. To the latter, all those expressions of inspiration, exaltation, ecstasy, self-sacrifice, love. As Lama Govinda explains:

"that emotion which in its lowest form is like a straw-fire, nourished by a momentary enthusiasm and blind urges, . . . in its highest form. . . is the flame of inspiration, nourished by spiritual insight, by true vision, by direct knowledge and inner certainty. Both have the nature of fire. . ." Emotion is thus not an altogether reprehensible side of our nature, it has its uses but like everything else should be under control. In contrast to the intellectual understanding which establishes a subject-object relationship and thereby remains outside the object, emotion alone allows us to be "seized" by the irresistible force of truth"; it is a "moving towards or with the subject of our contemplation, until we have caught up with its movement, until we have become one with it and are able to experience it from within, in its intrinsic nature, in its particular rhythm. To be moved is an act of spiritual participation. . . [that] finally leads to the inner unification, the great synthesis of all spiritual, mental, emotional, and bodily qualities of man: the state of completeness. In this highest state the warmth of emotion is transmuted into the flame of inspiration."

Among certain rites of initiation in warrior cults we find the heat of fury aroused by the fire of matter causing the hero, e.g., the Celtic Cuchulainn, to grow so hot that he had to be plunged in three successive vats of cold water — the first one having exploded, the second boiling up and only the third remaining endurable. Highly exaggerated, there is always an underlying grain of truth in these ancient stories. To this fire that seems to grant magical powers to the human being is ascribed some of the so-called miracles of yogis who appear to flaunt the known physical laws. Wrath in the Vedas is a personified power, called manyu, a raging fierceness that gives the warrior superhuman force, but it is a potency quite accordant with that ardour (tapas) by means of which the contemplation of the Supreme bore fruit and the universe was manifested, and the sage was able to vision the cosmic

Image: Entrance to the Cave of the Sibyl, Cumae, by Marcus Cyron, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

order. Glowing like fire to which it is closely akin, wrath or manyu is compared to Indra's destructive thunderbolt of which it has the killing power.

We touch here certain numinous qualities of the fire in both its creative and destructive energetic aspects, twin powers of the one all blazing Energy which Vedic man distinguished as tapas, creative fervour, and manyu, destructive potency, yet creative when allied to tapas, of which certain powerful radiances as well as vital energy are the offshoot. When it allies itself to mental power or skilfulness it becomes an irresistible creative energy which distinguishes the great gods such as the Lords of the Cosmic Order. By their fiery energy of wrath, their blazing one-pointedness, they are said to have extricated the cosmos from the chaos, the order from the disorder.

What is that strange expression, inconceivable to the rational mind, viz. the wrath of God? Such anthropomorphic projections of what appears as the irrational side of human nature abound in the Vedas, the Puranas, the Old Testament, the New Testament. How can God, either as the Absolute or as the Demiurge or even as the Atman, be offended, wrathful, jealous, indignant, vehement, vengeful?

These seem human passions projected on the Deity, but ones which, notwithstanding the rational mind's refusal to admit them, hide profound truths of the human psyche's reaction to the strange manifestation of its hidden fount of energy. That the wrong-doer, or the seeker after truth or God, is pursued by the voice of conscience or guilt, or is full of inferiority feelings which, under certain conditions, may culminate in a complete breakdown or warping of the mind or personality; that the human being, who turns his back to his inner light, scorns, ignores, represses the pull of that half of himself that demands recognition and is the seat of so much inspiration and spiritual insight as well as the storehouse of man's past, both good and evil, until relentlessly pursued by this incomprehensible half of himself, that will not let go in spite of all repression, falls a prey to madness; or that those strange uncanny aspects of divine visitations experienced in certain encounters with the numinous, fill the heart with sudden awe, dread, terror, burning heat; these are all attested facts of the psychological life of human beings and account for that most extraordinary infliction of irrational traits upon the Deity which we meet with in all the scriptures - all different aspects of that fire that whips us ever onwards: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God" (Ex.20.5). And St. Paul said "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men . . ." (Romans 1.18).

It is not that God is jealous, but that the Divine in us will relentlessly bring us back to Itself and finally will brook no other turning away from IT, no other worship: for two cannot walk together on the razor-edged path, one must go. No wonder that at contact with that all-compelling energy, that all burning, "dread-ful", devastating, relentless flame, the worshipper ascribes wrath, fury, jealousy to his Deity! As St. Paul exclaimed "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. X.31).

The other side of the fire of wrath or passion, is the fire of love. Here we espy similar symptoms as earlier recounted, e.g., St. Catherine of Genoa was again and again reported to be all aflame and in that state to cause water to boil by merely touching it. Many of the Christian saints mention this burning first as a purification, then as an ecstasy — as being totally consumed "boiling and burning in the fire which is God", as says St. John of the Cross: "O living flame of love how tenderly you force to my soul's inmost core your fiery probe!" (Poems, Penguin, 1960). Is not the one-pointed mind thus sharpened through the heart's desire, like an arrow tipped with fire that flies straight to its target?

Richard Rolle, the hermit of Hampole (1290-1349) has given us a detailed description of his own experience of the inner fire, and indeed like the Rishis of ancient India, refers to the "song" of the soul thus burnt with love: heat, song and sweetness, for him, sum up the experience of the fire. And it is that fire that burns the soul unto God: ". . . the heart that truly receives the fire of the Holy Ghost is burned all wholly and turns as it were into fire; and it leads it into that form that is likest to God" (*Incendium Amoris*." ch.XVII).

Jacob Boehme experienced it, and as a result wrote his great vision of the cosmos in “Aurora” wherein he joins hands with the ancient Vedic bards; and so have many others, Christian saints such as Gregory the Great, Augustine, St. Theresa, to name but a few, Sufi saints and Hindus whose experience is too well documented to warrant examination here. The very means that enabled the Vedic Rishis to vision and formulate what they had seen in one grandiose panorama of unfolding life and cosmic order, — basis of all subsequent religious philosophies — the practice of tapas, is well attested. Certain of our own members have experienced the onslaught of the serpent fire, its ravaging and devastating effects upon the un-purified mind, its revealing insight and finally its agonizing, purifying and exalting illumination.

For that fire burns away all our conditioning, it rarefies the etheric web, it activates the chakras, it grants that insight into the very core of our being without which man is but either animal man or intellectual man, but not divine man. To this fire H.P.B. refers in *The Voice of the Silence*: “*let the fiery power retire into the inmost chamber, the chamber of the Heart and the abode of the World’s Mother.*” In a note she explains: “The ‘Power’ and the ‘World-Mother’ are names given to Kundalini — one of the mystic ‘Yogi powers’. It is Buddhi considered as an active instead of a passive principle (which it is generally, when regarded only as the vehicle or casket of the Supreme Spirit, Atma). It is an electro-spiritual force, a creative power which when aroused into action can as easily kill as it can create.” (Fragment 1.) Fohat, kundalini, buddhi: three expressions of the one FLAME DIVINE: “The supreme energy resides in the Buddhi; latent — when wedded to Atman alone, active and irresistible when galvanized by the essence of manas”. . . (The Mahatma Letters 1924 ed. p. 341).

But we are afraid of the fire, afraid of burning our ultimate possession, this pigmy self; afraid of the realization that there is in truth no such thing as a separate I; afraid of accepting that there is no other I but God; God alone is this innermost I. To accept this, to say yes, or “amen” or “om” to the Lord, completely, irrevocably, means utter surrender, the letting go of this self that rears its head in one way or another at every turn of the spiral stairway; and utter surrender means to be left with nothing save that impalpable no-thing which we cannot conceive, to be left with nothing save the divine flame that burns up everything!

Part Four: Atmic Fire

This examination of fire both macrocosmic and microcosmic, is perhaps as near to any explanation and vision of fire and its action, both cosmic and human, as one may hope to get for such an elusive subject. It may leave us unsatisfied, for the fundamental meaning of fire, that which holds within itself the opposites of life and death, creation and destruction, the will-to-be and not-to-be, the origin and the end of all, somehow still eludes us. No definition or explanation can give it; no words can paint it; for not before the whole nature of man has been tried upon the bedrock of experience, the “burning-ground” — the depths and the heights — “not until it is held by the divine fragment which has created it . . . not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its Higher Self” (Light on the Path) can man touch and know, yield to and merge into the essence of that flame spirit which is the very core of his own soul as that of the cosmos; for “That thou art”.

The knowledge of the tree of life, the penetration into the mysteries of life and death, means trial by fire. To know is to have learned in the raw, and to have learned is to have been tried, and to try! Nothing can give us real knowledge except life itself and our evolving a right attitude to its trials, our right assimilation of experience, our right acceptance of what befalls us. Knowledge means power, but power means fire in both senses of trial by fire and wielding of fire for specific purposes. The crucial questions that surge in the consciousness of every committed person as to life and our relationship to all, demand an answer not in so many words, but in acts, in the very blood of life, in the very burning of that divine flame that is slowly turning us back to our home. As Rumi, the Sufi poet once said: “If your knowledge of fire has been ascertained from words alone, seek to be cooked by fire! There is no intuitive certainty until you burn; if you desire that certainty, sit down in the fire!” (Math. II. 858).

For words and philosophy will not take us one step further into the arena of truth, but only the flaming sword that turns every way, leaving no corner of our being untouched. Those who study the grand, ageless truths with their minds and not with their hearts, theoretically, and not with the very fire and blood of life, will never experience the inner knowledge born of the burning ground, will never know in truth the abysmal depth of the human soul. If we would guide others we have to make the knowledge of the fire our very own, to accept to be burnt, to be cooked by fire. But how many dare to make the plunge into the abyss of self-naughting? Each step upon the way back to the Source is a deeper plunge into the fire, into the consciousness of the Atman, until the ultimate mystery of the Spirit, that which wills the form to be, that which holds it together and that which shatters it, is revealed.



For this we have to accept the burning ground, accept Agni that dwells in our hearts as the "one ocean, the foundation of riches, who shines forth from the hidden cave" (Rgv. X.5.1) who is both the "vehicle of the Transcendent" and our instrument of purification.

Purification does not mean merely the purifying of the outer physical shell, but that of the inner man, of the emotions, of the mind, its thoughts, aims, decisions, drives, motives, the seat of ambition, pride, selfishness. It means the cultivation of the silence of thought as was enjoined by the Lord Buddha, for then what is unwanted falls away of itself and the disciplines take care of themselves. Only in the silence can the Voice of the Eternal in us speak and be heard. Every effort does mean being burnt up, casting our fuel upon the altar of life, casting the "I" into the sacrificial fire. This is the real, the true, the only sacrifice; slowly surrendering this pigmy ego that we have built up with so much

care to the flame-spirit. This is the work of the fire. Then will the soul be able to say, as in the Rig Veda: "Ready is thy filter Lord of Prayer; supreme, thou pervadest each and every limb. A cold, unripened vessel cannot receive this; only vessels made ready, can!" (Rgv. IX. 83.1). Only when "mature" can we stand the impact of the spiritual fire and the ecstasy of Agni's gift, the nectar of bliss. Hence only vessels or vehicles made ready through purification which is maturity, are fit to receive this gift, the fire of the spirit, the at-one-ment with the Atman.

St. John the Baptist proclaimed: "He that cometh after me is mightier than I. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. . . He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (N.T. Matt. 3.11 & 12). H.P.B. commenting on this observed: "Water could regenerate the body of matter, fire alone that of the inner man" (S.D. IV. p.137). What is that unquenchable fire? The fire of longing, the fire of aspiration, the fire that urges you onwards always, the feminine aspect of love; it can be personified as the Eternal Feminine, or the Madonna, or the anima; it gnaws as it burns, it tears away, it uplifts and it shatters, but to start all over again until we turn completely to the Inner Ruler Immortal. An all-compelling energy, an all burning love, an irresistible urge, dread-ful, devastating, sweeps us forward relentlessly. It was that blazing fire of love that appeared to St. Paul as the vision of Christ and struck him blind for three whole days. Love is fire, love the dynamo; at the earthly level combustion, in the spiritual heights, love, yet that burning abyss of self-gift wherein the beloved is lost in the Beloved. It is the supreme act of life, the supreme offering of Deity!

"Why persecutest thou me" asked the vision of the Christ to St. Paul on the way to Damascus. Everyone of us has done so and keeps doing so every day, every moment. Kahlil Gibran expressed the action of this flame of love in unforgettable verses: *"For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning. Even as he ascends to your height*

and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun, so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth. Like sheaves of corn he gathers you unto himself. He threshes you to make you naked. He sifts you to free you from your husks. He grinds you to whiteness. He kneads you until you are pliant; and then he assigns you to his sacred fire, that you may become sacred bread for God's sacred feast." (The Prophet, p. 9)

This is life, the process of living. What is the result of this burning ground, this devouring flame, this purification? We are told in the Gospels that after six days — six days of preparation — Jesus took three of his disciples into "a high mountain apart" and he "was transfigured before them and his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light". (N.T. Matt. XVII. 1).

The kindled flame of spirit glowed so powerfully that it was perceptible even at the physical level; for the personality, soul and spirit vibrated in unison and flashed forth as the divine glory: the three fires, of matter, soul and spirit, fused in one glorious conflagration. Divinity was made visible by the effulgent radiance, the solar splendour. And the three disciples fell upon their faces, overawed at the Presence.

This is the stupendous moment when the mystic realizes that God is verily a "consuming fire", that "the Impersonal Self" is verily "fire" (S.D.IV. p.210) that all things are bathed in that ocean of quickening, transcendent flame, that all will be burnt up in it to emerge transfigured, redeemed. "The fire tries his work, of what sort it is, and he passes through the flame". He passes unscathed because only the pure, only the fire can stand the fire! And he understands those words of St. Paul that "the Lord . . . shall be revealed from heaven ... in flaming fire". (2 Thes. 1.7, 8).

For beyond the solar splendour is hidden a still more effulgent reality of which it is but the mirror, however wondrous to behold, which the Vedas symbolized by the lightning flash, the flame that for ever recedes as Light on the Path terms it, that something beyond even consciousness itself, that something which heralds the dynamic Lord of Creation, preservation and destruction, the Will divine. Agni's lightning flash is said to "whirl down from the lofty . . . realm of the Sun. Beyond this realm there is another glory". (Rgv.X.27.21). This glory is the very essence of this threefold fire, the knowledge of which made the Rishis equate the inner and the outer, man and cosmos: "He who is in the fire, and he who is here in the heart, and he who is yonder in the sun - he is one." (Maitri Up.16.17). This is atmic vision, knowledge, power. As one of our ex-members has expressed: "We have looked on at the transfiguration, but have not attempted to become actively transfigured. But that must some day happen to us, and only after the transfiguration can we dare to climb Mount Golgotha. Only when we have achieved expression of divinity in and through the lower personal nature shall we have attained to that of worth and value which can be permitted, under the divine plan to be crucified. This is a forgotten truth."

We are indeed still immeasurably far from capable of being admitted to such a revelation; yet the hour of death, or the hour of illumination may come at any moment; for there will surely come a time when through the power of the flame divine in our heart we shall kindle the fire of the spirit; when transformed through and into the fire we shall know absolutely that from the furthest stars right down to our own innermost, our heart of hearts, throbs the same dynamic pulse, the fire of creation, the warmth of preservation, the bolt of regeneration, the spirit that maketh all things new. Let us make our own the great secret of the Fire, that we may be able to penetrate into its fundamental meaning, be transmuted by it and be its transmitters; and sing of our own knowledge with the Yajur Veda:

"I have known this mighty Purusha refulgent as the sun beyond darkness. Only by knowing Him do we overcome death; no other way is there to go." (Yajur Veda. 31.18).

Jeanine was an internationally renowned Theosophist and The Flame Divine was delivered at the Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in England at the College of Ripon and York, St. John, Ripon, Yorkshire on August 4th 1984. These images used here were not part of the original lecture. <http://jeaninemiller.org>

THE ORIGINAL AND FOREMOST ORDER FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN FREEMASONRY

You can lead a happier, more fulfilling life

There are spiritual riches to be earned

Learn the benefits of Co-Freemasonry

This is where men and women work and belong together on a truly equal footing



The temple at our Surbiton headquarters

Annie Besant brought our Order to England in 1902, following her initiation in France. Through her contacts with the Theosophical Society and later the Liberal Catholic Church, she formed comasonic lodges in various parts of the country and soon became the head of the British Federation of the International Order of Freemasonry for Men and Women Le Droit Humain (formerly known as International Co-Freemasonry). She led the British Federation until her death in 1933. Her traditions and legacy remain, as do her regalia and photographs which are on display at our headquarters in Surbiton.

Our Order emphasises the spiritual content of Freemasonry, which is an initiatory system containing the keys to the ancient mysteries. They are experienced through a series of mystery dramas designed to open up and deepen awareness and understanding.

If you are interested, please visit the website:

www.freemasonryformenandwomen.co.uk

Email us at

membership@freemasonryformenandwomen.co.uk



Find out more – telephone us on: 020 8339 9000

THEOSOPHICAL TALKS AND WORKSHOPS AROUND THE UK

Please Note: the opinion of speakers or group leaders, and any views expressed at these meetings do not necessarily represent the views of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies or The Theosophical Society.

MARCH

SWANSEA

CAUSE, EFFECT & REBIRTH - KARMA AND REINCARNATION

Tim Wyatt

Saturday 21st March, 10 am – 4 pm

The day will be suitable for beginners, intermediates and experienced Theosophists and will include exploration of our subtle bodies, cycles and evolution.

Swansea Theosophical Society, Peace Mala Centre 122 Clydach Road Morriston, Swansea, SA6 6QB

Enquiries: 01792 774225 info@peacemala.org.uk

BOLTON

THE Gnostic GOSPEL OF MARY

Stephen Lingwood

Sunday 22nd March, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society, Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU.

Enquiries: 01257 401152 Ichrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gawayne7@yahoo.co.uk

<http://nwffederation.org.uk>

LEEDS

MYSTIC OR OCCULTIST - THE TRUE NATURE OF ESOTERICISM

Ted Capstick

Sunday 22nd March, 2.30 pm

Esotericism is shown to be the Science of Redemption and we all have to resolve our unredeemed psyches before going on to understand the realities of the Science of the One Life.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

BRISTOL

FATE AND REINCARNATION

Jens Rohrbeck

24th March, 7:30 – 9:00 pm.

Bristol Theosophical Society, 14 Tyndall's Park Rd, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1PY. Enquiries: 0117 907 7357

CHESTER

SACRED GEOMETRY AND THE GOLDEN LOZENGE (tbc)

Philip Main

Tuesday 25th March, 7.30 pm

Chester Theosophical Society, Quaker Meeting House, Union Walk, Frodsham Street, Chester CH1 3LF.

Enquiries: 01244 377170 or 01244 370461 chestertheosophy@gmail.com <http://chestertheosophy.org>

LEICESTER

THE INNER JOURNEY

Gary Kidgell

Saturday 28th March, 2 – 4.45 pm. A study day, bring food to share.

Theosophical Society, Quaker Meeting House, 16 Queens Road, Clarendon Park, Leicester LE2 1WP.

Enquiries: 0116 270 7293 jrholden9@hotmail.com www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

NOTTINGHAM

ISIS UNVEILED

Barry Thompson

28th March 2 pm.

Nottingham Theosophical Society, Theosophical Hall, 73 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham, NG1 6AJ.

Enquiries: 0116 289 5882 (evenings) info@theancientwisdom.co.uk www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

LEEDS

EXPLORING NATURE'S KINGDOMS

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 29th March, 2.30 pm

Over vast aeons of time rocks evolve into plants, plants develop into animals and animals eventually become part of the human kingdom. And human beings are destined to join an even more elevated species at some far distant time.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

CAMBERLEY

TREADING THE PATH

Andy Trompeteler

30th March, 7:30 pm.

Camberley Theosophical Society, St Francis' Church, Tekels Avenue, Tekels Park, off Park Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 2LF. Enquiries: TSCamberley@aol.com www.theosophycamberley.com

BRISTOL

THE HUMAN SHADOW AND THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY

Marianne Hill and Steve Onyett

31st March, 7:30 – 9:00 pm.

Bristol Theosophical Society, 14 Tyndall's Park Rd, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1PY. Enquiries: 0117 907 7357

APRIL

WINCHESTER

HELP ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH

Elizabeth Croft

Tuesday 7th April, 7.45 - 9.30 pm

Winchester Theosophical Society, Talks held St Lawrence Parish Hall, Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9HL (next door to Quaker Meeting House). Enquiries: 01962 772 361 or angioenden@hotmail.com or Laura 01962 772 361 www.theosophicalsociety.org

CHESTER

INTUITIVE VOCAL SOUND HEALING

Helena Hawley

Tuesday 8th April, 7.30 pm

Chester Theosophical Society. Quaker Meeting House, Union Walk, Frodsham Street, Chester CH1 3LF. Enquiries: 01244 377170 or 01244 370461 chestertheosophy@gmail.com <http://chestertheosophy.org>

HOLYHEAD

THE DHYANI BUDDHAS, DRAGONS OF WISDOM - AS RECORDED IN THE *SECRET DOCTRINE*

Janet Hoult

Wednesday 8th April, 2pm

Holyhead Theosophical Society. Harvest Moon Shop Newry Street Holyhead LL65 1HP

Enquiries: 01407 760062. tholyhead@gmail.com theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

COLWYN BAY

THE *SECRET DOCTRINE*

Tony Maddock

Thursday 9th April, 2pm

Colwyn Bay Theosophical Society. Park Way Community Centre Rhos Rd, Rhos-on-Sea LL28 4SE

Enquiries: 01492 585348 or 01492 545587 eldersofthetribelive@live.co.uk theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

SHIPLEY

RESONANCE

Dori Kirchmair

Saturday 11th April, 2.30 pm

'Resonance' is an inspiring talk/story about connecting and aligning more with our own truth and authentic self. It demonstrates the power of our emotions and potential struggle when trying to follow what resonates with us in life. This story is combined with a range of poems that address various related themes to offer an engaging basis for exploration.

Bradford Theosophical Society. Room 2, Shipley Library, 2 Wellcroft, Shipley BD18 3QH

Enquiries: 01274 598455 info@ts-bradford.org.uk www.ts-bradford.org.uk

BOLTON

GURDJIEFF AND THE FOURTH WAY TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Tony Mcneille

Sunday 12th April, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society. Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU

Enquiries: 01257 401152 Ichrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gawayne7@yahoo.co.uk

<http://nwffederation.org.uk>

LEEDS

LIFE ON THE SEVEN PLANES

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 12th April, 2.30 pm

The Ageless Wisdom tells us that human beings consist of seven bodies - including the physical. Once we come to discover their existence we can begin to explore the unseen planes of reality and build up a more complete picture of the universe.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

TORBAY

ARE GUARDIAN ANGELS OUR EXTENDED FAMILY?

Steve Freeman

12th April, 11am - 1pm Part 1. 2-4pm Part 2. Bring and share vegetarian lunch.

Morning: love transcending the grave. Afternoon: evidence for contacts with Guardian Angels. With workshop/participation element. Exploring Guardian Angel phenomena, and possible relationship links.

Torbay Theosophical Society, 26 Park Hill Road, Torquay TQ1 2AL.

Enquiries: 01803 203195 www.torbay.theosophical-society.org.uk

CAMBERLEY

THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY – Part 1

Al Ritsema (DVD presentation)

13th April, 7.30 pm.

Camberley Theosophical Society, St Francis' Church, Tekels Avenue, Tekels Park, off Park Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 2LF. Enquiries: TSCamberley@aol.com www.theosophycamberley.com

BANGOR

PARALLEL WORLDS & MULTIPLE REALITIES

David Harvey

Tuesday 14th April, 7.30 pm

This talk investigates the evidence that is building of the possibility of parallel worlds, Universes & multiverses from the investigators of lucid dreaming, out of body experiences & remote viewing.

Bangor Theosophical Society. Hiraal Meeting Room, Ambrose St, Bangor, North Wales, LL57 1DF.

Enquiries: 01248 600267 toddyalc@gmail.com theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

www.theosophywales.com

LEEDS

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE SYMBOLISM OF MYTH

Gary Kidgell

Sunday 19th April, 2.30 pm

Gary shall draw upon the wisdom teachings, the works of Joseph Campbell, Carl Jung and Roberto Assagioli for the purpose of outlining the archetypal process of spiritual transformation. He will outline the nature of the spiritual path whilst

describing various myths which symbolise the archetypal process of spiritual transformation.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

CHESTER

LORD DOWDING – THEOSOPHIST, SPIRITUALIST SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD?

Richard Dell

Tuesday 22nd April, 7.30 pm

An advanced soul with an extraordinary life mission. We glimpse the workings of higher powers woven into Lord Dowding's great task for humanity. This illustrated talk is both serious and hopefully entertaining.

Chester Theosophical Society. Quaker Meeting House, Union Walk,

Frodsham Street, Chester CH1 3LF.

Enquiries: 01244 377170 or 01244 370461

chestertheosophy@gmail.com <http://chestertheosophy.org>

NOTTINGHAM

THEOSOPHICAL SELF-CULTURE

Rafael de Albuquerque

25th April 2 pm.

Nottingham Theosophical Society,

Theosophical Hall, 73 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham, NG1 6AJ.

Enquiries: 0116 289 5882 (evenings) info@theancientwisdom.co.uk www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

TORBAY

HAVE YOU WOKEN UP TO CONSCIOUSNESS?

Julie Faber

25th April, 2.30 pm

Torbay Theosophical Society, 26 Park Hill Road, Torquay TQ1 2AL.

Enquiries: 01803 203195 www.torbay.theosophical-society.org.uk

BOLTON

THE HIGHEST PURPOSE OF MAN

Roy Forman

Sunday 26th April, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society.

Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU

Enquiries: 01257 401152 lchrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gawayne7@yahoo.co.uk [_http://nwfederation.org.uk](http://nwfederation.org.uk)

LEEDS

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MAN

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 26th April, 2.30 pm

The Ageless Wisdom identifies the start of human evolution at a point far earlier than either Western religion or neo-Darwinists, charting the gradual development of man through a series of groups often referred to as 'root races'.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

BANGOR

MEDITATION AT THE FULL MOON - AN OPEN DOOR

Ted Capstick

Tuesday 28th April, 7.30 pm

At the full moon energies are radiated from the Hierarchy of the Masters and are most contactable by humanity at this time. This talk looks at the process involved in receiving these energies and distributing them to wherever they are needed on planet Earth.

Bangor Theosophical Society. Hiraal Meeting Room, Ambrose St, Bangor, North Wales, LL57 1DF

Enquiries: 01248 600267 toddyalc@gmail.com theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

www.theosophywales.com

MAY **DURHAM**

THE WEB OF KARMA

Colin Price

Saturday 2nd May, 2 - 4.00 pm

The Law of karma is described by H. P. Blavatsky as the ultimate law of the Universe. In the Mahatma Letters it is described as "This terrible law". The complexity of Karma and its operation in human life are discussed.

Durham Centre for Theosophical Studies. Shakespeare Hall, North Rd, Durham DH1 4SQ

Enquiries: 0191 386 0492 durhamcentr4ts@btinternet.com www.theosophicalsdurhamcentre.com

LEICESTER

THE STORY OF THE MAHATMA LETTERS

Barry Thompson

Saturday 9th May, 2 – 4.45 pm.

Theosophical Society. Quaker Meeting House, 16 Queens Road, Clarendon Park, Leicester LE2 1WP

Enquiries: 0116 270 7293 jrholden9@hotmail.com www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

SWANSEA

THE SEVEN RAYS

David Harvey

Saturday 9th May, 10 am – 4 pm

The Seven Rays have appeared in many religions and esoteric philosophies. What effect do they have on each one of us during our soul's journey? A fascinating exploration of Theosophy's understanding of this occult concept.

Swansea Theosophical Society. Peace Mala Centre 122 Clydach Road Morriston, Swansea, SA6 6QB

Enquiries: 01792 774225 info@peacemala.org.uk

BOLTON

WHITE LOTUS DAY MUSIC READINGS & MEDITATION

Sunday 10th May, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society. Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU.

Enquiries: 01257 401152 lchrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gwayne7@yahoo.co.uk

<http://nwffederation.org.uk>

LEEDS

HIDDEN FORCES AND LATENT HUMAN POWERS

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 10th May, 2.30 pm

Everything is consciousness masquerading as energy and matter. Science has identified four main forces – electro-magnetic, gravity and strong and weak-nuclear. As yet unseen by the microscope or particle accelerator, are other exotic subtle energies identified by esoteric seekers down the ages and which science has yet to re-discover.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

TORBAY

WHITE LOTUS DAY—WESSAK, BUDDHISM AND THEOSOPHY

10th May, 2:30 pm.

Torbay Theosophical Society, 26 Park Hill Road, Torquay TQ1 2AL.

Enquiries: 01803 203195 www.torbay.theosophical-society.org.uk

HOLYHEAD

THE LIFE AND WISDOM OF RAMANA MAHARSHI

Atma Trasi

Wednesday 13th May, 2pm

Holyhead Theosophical Society. Harvest Moon Shop Newry Street Holyhead LL65 1HP

Enquiries: 01407 760062 ts-holyhead@gmail.com theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

COLWYN BAY

THE SCIENCE OF YOGA

Atma Trasi

Wednesday 13th May, 2pm

Colwyn Bay Theosophical Society. Parkway Community Centre, Rhos Road, Rhos-on-Sea, LL28 4SE.
Enquiries: 01492 585348 or 01492 545587 eldersofthetribes@live.co.uk theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk.

NOTTINGHAM

THE UPANISHADS

Atma Trasi

23rd May 2 pm.

Nottingham Theosophical Society, Theosophical Hall,

73 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham, NG1 6AJ.

Enquiries: 0116 289 5882 (evenings) info@theancientwisdom.co.uk www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

BOLTON

LEY LINES AND SERPENT PATHS

Julian Websdale

Sunday 24th May, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society. Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU.

Enquiries: 01257 401152 lchrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gawayne7@yahoo.co.uk http://nwffederation.org.uk

LEEDS

ALL CHANGE - HARMONY THROUGH IMPERMANENCE AND CONFLICT

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 24th May, 2.30 pm

Many supposedly "spiritual" people shy away from conflict believing it to be the enemy of spiritual evolution whereas it could well be its closest ally. Conflict is often necessary to destroy the old order to make way for progressive evolutionary change.

The 20th Century signalled the biggest expansion of human consciousness the world has ever seen.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

PADIHAM

A THEOSOPHICAL VIEW OF MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

Donald Atkinson

Sunday 31st May 2 – 4 pm

Blackburn Theosophical Society. Unity Rooms, Unitarian Chapel, Padiham BB12 8JH.

Enquiries: 01282 422278

JUNE

DURHAM

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

Ted Capstick

Saturday 6th June, 2 - 4.00 pm

A talk, which is intuitive and partly astrological, looks at the future in the short, medium and long term, including the crucial transformative phase of Pluto in Capricorn from 2008 until 2024. This is a must for all serious students of Theosophy, Esoteric Astrology and Esoteric Psychology.

Durham Centre for Theosophical Studies. Shakespeare Hall, North Rd, Durham DH1 4SQ.

Enquiries: 0191 386 0492 durhamcentr4ts@btinternet.com

www.theosophicalsocietydurhamcentre.com

LEICESTER

AN EXPLORATION OF THE TAROT

Paul Findley

Saturday 6th June, 2 – 4.45 pm.

Theosophical Society. Quaker Meeting House, 16 Queens Road, Clarendon Park, Leicester LE2 1WP.

Enquiries: 0116 270 7293 jrholden9@hotmail.com www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

LEEDS

BASKING IN THE SEVEN RAYS

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 7th June, 2.30 pm

Although still controversial for some esotericists, there is a growing recognition of the pivotal creative role of major cosmic forces which individually and collectively shape human beings and the wider physical world. These Seven Rays – three major forces of “aspect” and four lesser ones of “attribute” – mould the visible and unseen planes of existence.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

LONDON

THE GOLDEN SECTION – NATURES GREATEST SECRET

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Thursday 11th June, 7 pm

Blavatsky Theosophical Society, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA. Enquiries: 020 8429 3506

MANCHESTER

SACRED WAVES AND THE FOUR WINDS

Susan Bayliss

Saturday 13th June, 2 – 4 pm

Within the waves of the ocean lie the Secrets of the Universe – a Dragon of Wisdom sailing on the Breath of Life. In our own sphere we are the boatman on a journey of discovery in this Great Mystery. Drawing on the “Secret Doctrine” by H.P.B., this talk reveals how we live and breathe in the One Life whose Great Breath reaches the four corners of the Kosmos

Manchester Theosophical Society. The Quaker Meeting House. Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS.

Enquiries: 01942 608368 or 07899 896887 www.nwfederation.org.uk

SHIPLEY

ZEN WISDOM - THE SEARCH FOR THE BULL

Atma Trasi

Saturday 13th June, 2.30 pm

This talk is based on an ancient Taoist/Zen fable of a herdsman losing control of the bull in his charge and his attempts to recover it. The fable is an allegory for our own spiritual search.

Bradford Theosophical Society. Room 2, Shipley Library, 2 Wellcroft, Shipley BD18 3QH.

Enquiries: 01274 598455 info@ts-bradford.org.uk www.ts-bradford.org.uk

LONDON

THE NEW RENAISSANCE: PEAK EXPERIENCES AND THE QUEST FOR THE HOLY GRAIL

Sunday 14th June, 2 pm and at 7 pm:

OBES, NDS AND OTHER TRANSFORMATIVE STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Theosophical Society Headquarters, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA

Enquiries: 020 7563 9817

BOLTON

NEW HOPE FOR HUMANITY - THE REAPPEARANCE OF THE CHRIST AND THE MASTERS OF WISDOM

Carol Baxter & Anne Barr

Sunday 14th June, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society. Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU.

Enquiries: 01257 401152 Ichrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gawayne7@yahoo.co.uk

<http://nwffederation.org.uk>

LEEDS

MULTIPLE WORLDS AND PARALLEL REALITIES

David Harvey

Sunday 14th June, 2.30 pm

The talk will look at the consideration of the future being in the nature of ‘probabilities’ and that there may be multiple copies of ‘us’ out there.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ. Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

TORBAY

THE SOUL'S JOURNEY FROM PERSONAL TO SPIRITUAL POWER

Diane Bellchambers (Guest speaker from the Australian Theosophical Society)

14th June, 11am - 4pm. Part 1: 11am - 1pm. Part 2: 2-4pm. Bring and share vegetarian lunch.

Torbay Theosophical Society, 26 Park Hill Road, Torquay TQ1 2AL.

Enquiries: 01803 203195 www.torbay.theosophical-society.org.uk

CAMBERLEY

CONSCIOUSNESS: TRANSPERSONAL & TRANSFORMATIVE STATES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

15th June, 7:30 pm.

Camberley Theosophical Society, St Francis' Church, Tekels Avenue, Tekels Park, off Park Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 2LF. Enquiries: TSCamberley@aol.com www.theosophycamberley.com

BRISTOL

BUDDHA, PLATO AND THE PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Tuesday 16th June, 7:30 – 9:00 pm.

Bristol Theosophical Society, 14 Tyndall's Park Rd, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1PY. Enquiries: 0117 907 7357

SWANSEA

GOLDEN SECTION AND SACRED GEOMETRY

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Thursday 18th June, 11 am

Swansea Theosophical Society. Peace Mala Centre 122 Clydach Road Morriston, Swansea, SA6 6QB

Enquiries: 01792 774225 info@peacemala.org.uk

LEEDS

BIG BEASTS OF THE OCCULT WORLD

Tim Wyatt

Sunday 21st June, 2.30 pm

Although massively influential in occult circles and in determining the societies in which they lived, many of the individuals reinterpreting and disseminating esoteric ideas remain largely unknown to the public. Many are derided, ridiculed and falsely accused of fraud. All have been influenced and overshadowed by a hidden hierarchy of advanced individuals.

Leeds Theosophical Society, 12 Queens Square LS2 8AJ.

Enquiries: info@ts-leeds.org.uk www.ts-leeds.org.uk

BANGOR

THE DA VINCI CODE FROM AN ESOTERIC PERSPECTIVE

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

23rd June, 7.30 pm

Bangor Theosophical Society. Hiracl Meeting Room, Ambrose St, Bangor, North Wales, LL57 1DF

Enquiries: 01248 600267 toddyalc@gmail.com theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

www.theosophywales.com

COLWYN BAY

CONSCIOUSNESS - TRANSPERSONAL & TRANSFORMATIVE STATES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Wednesday 25th June, 2pm

Colwyn Bay Theosophical Society. Parkway Community Centre, Rhos Road, Rhos-on-Sea, LL28 4SE

Enquiries: 01492 585348 or 01492 545587 eldersofthetribelive@live.co.uk theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk.

LIVERPOOL

YOGA, DREAMS AND OTHER STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND CONSCIOUSNESS, RESONANCE AND SELF-IDENTITY

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Saturday 27th June 2 pm

Merseyside Theosophical Society. Friends Meeting House, 2 School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BT.

Enquiries: 0151 327 3872 hugh.agnew1@btinternet.com nwefederation.org.uk

NOTTINGHAM

JYOTISH: THE VEDIC SCIENCE OF LIGHT

Paul Barker

27th June, 2 pm.

Nottingham Theosophical Society, Theosophical Hall, 73 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham, NG1 6AJ

Enquiries: 0116 289 5882 (evenings) info@theancientwisdom.co.uk

www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

BOLTON

ALCHEMY: THE GREAT WORK OF SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Scott Olsen (Guest speaker from the American Theosophical Society)

Sunday 28th June, 2.30 pm

Bolton Theosophical Society. Bank St Chapel School Room, Crown Street, Bolton, BL1 2NU.

Enquiries: 01257 401152 lchrislowe@yahoo.co.uk gawayne7@yahoo.co.uk

<http://nwffederation.org.uk>

TORBAY

KRISHNAMURTI AND THEOSOPHY

Bob Earney

28th June, 2.30pm. Torbay Theosophical Society, 26 Park Hill Road, Torquay TQ1 2AL.

Enquiries: 01803 203195 www.torbay.theosophical-society.org.uk

AUGUST

SHIPLEY

AN OVERVIEW OF THE AGELESS WISDOM

Tim Wyatt

Saturday 16th August 2.30 pm

There is a body of sacred knowledge that underpins all religions and philosophies. This Ageless Wisdom speaks of an unending, interconnected and constantly changing universe as well as vast, non-physical realms of existence. Even hard-nosed science is beginning to admit that we don't live in a clockwork cosmos. In this interactive discussion Tim Wyatt will present a broad overview of the fascinating synthesis of ideas embodied in Theosophy.

Bradford Theosophical Society. Room 2, Shipley Library, 2 Wellcroft, Shipley BD18 3QH.

Enquiries: 01274 598455 info@ts-bradford.org.uk www.ts-bradford.org.uk

BANGOR

AT THE FEET OF THE MASTER - THE LIFE OF KRISHNAMURTI

Ted Capstick

Tuesday 26th August 7.30 pm

Bangor Theosophical Society. Hiraël Meeting Room, Ambrose St, Bangor, North Wales, LL57 1DF.

Enquiries: 01248 600267 toddyalc@gmail.com theosophywales@yahoo.co.uk

www.theosophywales.com

SEPTEMBER

BOURNEMOUTH

MANTRAS IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Cynthia Trasi

Saturday 6th September 1.30 pm

"The speech of men cannot reach the Gods. They must be addressed in their own language. It is composed of sounds, not words. This language or the incantation of mantras being the most effective agent and the first of the keys which opens the door of communication between Mortals and Immortals." – H P Blavatsky.

Bournemouth Society of Art, Philosophy and Theosophy.

Bournemouth University, Cobham Theatre, Talbot Campus, Poole, BH12 5BB.

Enquiries: 0800 612 7282

bournemouthsociety@yahoo.com www.bournemouthsociety.org.uk

DURHAM

WHY A CONSCIOUS CREATION?

Stuart Trotter

Saturday 6th September 2 - 4 pm

An explanation of why a conscious creation is the only creation that can exist and the implications for human psychology.

Durham Centre for Theosophical Studies.

Shakespeare Hall, North Rd, Durham DH1 4SQ.

Enquiries: 0191 386 0492

durhamcentr4ts@btinternet.com

www.theosophicalsocietydurhamcentre.com

Diploma in Theosophy

The Diploma is a one year open-learning course by the Theosophical Society in England, designed to assist students' understanding of the basic Principles of Theosophy. Students undertake the course by home study and have contact with Course Leaders and Course Tutors based around the country.



Who Can Take the Course?

There are no entry requirements other than membership of the Theosophical Society and the course is available to any member who wishes to gain knowledge of basic Theosophical Principles.

Cost:

The Fee for the Diploma is £20 and for those without printing facilities who require paper copies the fee is £30. This modest fee is to make the course accessible, concessions and some bursaries are available. Students will be provided with two core reference books and guidance will be provided on appropriate free or inexpensive sources of information.

TS Membership

Membership of the Society is £40 a year (£20 fulltime students/unemployed/ pensioners). For further information and an application form please contact Colyn Boyce: office@theosoc.org.uk, 020 7563 9817 or write to: The Theosophical Society in England, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA.

Prospectus:

To receive a prospectus please contact Colyn Boyce: office@theosoc.org.uk, 020 7563 9817 or write to: Diploma in Theosophy, The Theosophical Society in England, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA.

Applications:

Diploma Application Forms can be downloaded from www.theosoc.org.uk or may be obtained from 50 Gloucester Place - see contact details above. Application Forms and Course Fees must be received at 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA by **19th January 2016**. Applications received after that date will be held on file for the course commencing in 2017.

Content:

The course is centred on basic Theosophical Principles and covers subjects such as: Karma and Reincarnation, Human Constitution, the Seven Planes, Universal Laws and Cosmogogenesis. It commences in February and students must pass the end of year examinations held in November.

Awards:

The Diploma is awarded to students who have completed the course and shown that they have not simply learned the course material but have truly understood it. Diploma certificates will be awarded in 2017.

Applications for January 2016 are now invited

THEOSOPHICAL STUDY AND DISCUSSION GROUPS AROUND THE UK

Please Note: the opinion of study leaders and any views expressed by the group do not necessarily represent those of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies or the Theosophical Society.

DURHAM

LIFE AFTER LIFE - Study and Discussion 2 - 4 pm

Led by Jim Blakey with group discussion.

Saturday 21st March - Session 5. Devachan.

Saturday 16th May - Session 6. Rebirth.

Durham Centre for Theosophical Studies. Shakespeare Hall, North Rd, Durham DH1 4SQ.

Enquiries: on 0191 386 0492 durhamcentr4ts@btinternet.com www.theosophicalsocietydurhamcentre.com

NORTHAMPTON

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

For meetings please see www.meetup.com/Northampton-Theosophy-Group

Northampton Theosophical Society. Quaker Meeting House, Wellington Street, Northampton NN1 3AS

Enquiries: 07791 082161 northeos@hotmail.com

MANCHESTER

O LANOO - THE SECRET DOCTRINE UNVEILED - Study and Discussion

Led by Mark Crowshaw with group discussion. Regular meetings - please ring for dates.

Manchester Theosophical Society. The Quaker Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS.

Enquiries: 01942 608368 or 07899 896887. www.nwfederation.org.uk

NOTTINGHAM

HP Blavatsky's THE SECRET DOCTRINE - Study and Discussion

Monthly Every Third Saturday at 11 am

Nottingham Theosophical Society, Theosophical Hall, 73 Maid Marion Way, Nottingham, NG1 6AJ.

Enquiries: 0116 2785856 (evenings) info@theancientwisdom.co.uk www.theancientwisdom.co.uk

SIDMOUTH

THEOSOPHICAL Study and Discussion at 2.30 pm

Saturday 11th April - Drumming and Chanting

Saturday 16th May - Krishnamurti

Saturday 20th June - Forgiveness

Saturday 18th July - Mamhead Common Retreat

- led by Bob Earney

- led by Suzanne Claremont

Sidmouth Theosophical Society. Enquiries: 07967 167984 01395 488627 <http://sidmouthtslodge.jimdo.com>

SOUTHPORT

NEW ENQUIRERS GROUP - Study and Discussion.

If you want to know more about the fundamentals of Theosophy, this will provide an opportunity for asking questions on all aspects of Theosophy.

Led by Noline Hart and Paula Young

Wednesdays fortnightly at 7.30 pm.

Southport Theosophical Society. Enquiries: 01704 574505 noline@live.co.uk <http://nwffederation.org.uk>

SWANSEA

SECRET DOCTRINE - Study and Discussion

Tuesday afternoons 1 - 3 pm

Swansea Theosophical Society. 122 Clydach Road, Morriston, Swansea SA6 6QB, South Wales.

Enquiries: 01792 774225 pam@peacemala.org.uk www.theosophywales.com

WINCHESTER

STUDY COURSE ON THEOSOPHY

Based on "The Ageless Wisdom of Life" by Clara Codd

Saturday 21st March

Saturday 18th April

Winchester Theosophical Society Study meetings held St Lawrence Parish Hall, Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9HL (next door to Quaker Meeting House). Enquiries: 01962 772 361 or angi_ovenden@hotmail.com

THEOSOPHICAL EVENTS IN LONDON

COURSES, TALKS AND WORKSHOPS.

Theosophical Society 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA

Telephone 020 7563 9817 www.theosoc.org.uk

Please Note: opinions expressed at these groups does not necessarily represent the views of The Theosophical Society or the Foundation for Theosophical Studies

SUNDAY TALKS AND WORKSHOPS SUNDAYS 6 - 7.30 pm

We have a full programme of talks each Sunday, as well as occasionally on special weekdays, and with some workshops 2-4.30 pm on selected Sundays. For full details and booking please go to www.theosoc.org.uk or ring our London HQ on 020 7563 9817.

THEOSOPHY: HIGHWAY TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

SUNDAYS 4.45 – 5.45 pm to 25 March For future dates please see www.theosoc.org.uk

An informal session in which the basic teachings of the Divine Wisdom are explored and discussed. Everybody on this planet is in the Great School of Life - of spiritual development. Over the weeks we shall look at the great hidden truths, which make sense of our lives and which, gives them purpose. This is a basic grounding in the Eternal Mysteries, and it has absolutely no strings attached! The book 'The Key To Theosophy' is recommended for newcomers. Leader: Edward Archer, a member of the TS in England for 35 years. Free admission.

ISIS UNVEILED Study & Discussion Group

MONDAYS 7.00 – 9.00 pm to 30 March For future dates please see www.theosoc.org.uk

This term the group will be systematically reading and discussing 'The Perfect Way' by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. This is a key work of Theosophy and is widely acknowledged as "Pure Gnosis". Anna Kingsford was interested in Buddhism and Gnosticism, and became active in the Theosophical movement in England, becoming President of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society in 1883. This is an on-going group and newcomers are welcome at any time. Copies of the text to be studied will be available. Leader: George Wood is a former teacher of Religious Education who has regularly led courses on Gnostic Christianity. Free admission.

MAN, GOD & THE UNIVERSE

WEDNESDAYS 7.00 – 8.30 pm to 25 March For future dates please see www.theosoc.org.uk

This course examines the way Theosophy explains some of the fundamental questions of life. Including: Who are we in origin? Where did we come from and where are we going. Where is the "other" world of spirit? What is the purpose of life? When will it all end? The course is based on the book, Deity, Cosmos and Man, by Geoffrey Farthing. Leader: Colin Price is the National President of the Theosophical Society in England. Free admission.

THE JOY OF MEDITATION: Beginners

DHYANA CENTRE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Courses for beginners teach the theory and practice of meditation as a spiritual discipline: these consist either of seven consecutive Tuesday evenings 7-9pm or two workshops on Sundays 11am-4pm. Newcomers must join a course in its initial week; it is not possible to join without attending the foundation session. Course places must be pre-booked; this can be done online at www.dhyanacentre.org (see the Calendar page).

Course 3/15: Tuesdays 3rd March - 14th April

Course 4/15: Sundays 19th April & 17th May

Leader: Alan Perry Free admission but donations welcomed.

The Dhyana Centre also holds OM Healing chant sessions weekly on either Thursday or Friday (open to all without booking) plus meditation retreats and other activities. Full details at www.dhyanacentre.org, or emailinfo@dhyanacentre.org

RECORDINGS: We record most of our Sunday lectures on audio MP3, CD and cassette and occasionally on video. For details of recordings available for purchase contact: books@theosoc.org.uk or see our website at www.theosoc.org.uk.

Full details at www.dhyanacentre.org, or emailinfo@dhyanacentre.org

The Foundation for Theosophical Studies
Headquarters: 50 Gloucester Place, London, W1U 8EA

Esoterica is published by The Foundation for Theosophical Studies
Editor: Susan Bayliss

**ARTICLES, ADVERTS AND OTHER MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF ESOTERICA
SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY EMAIL TO:**

esoterica@theosophy.org.uk

or by post to:

Editor Esoterica, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA

Next Issue: CLOSING DATE 17th April 2015

ADVERTISING

To advertise in Esoterica please contact us for rates, space and availability:

esoterica@theosophy.org.uk

Adverts should be in sympathy with the aims and aspirations of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Articles on the Ageless Wisdom, spirituality, philosophy, science, letters, obituaries on long standing theosophists, can be sent to the Editor. All material submitted is on condition that this material can be accepted or rejected in part or in full, or it can be amended or sections deleted on grounds of content, space and suitability without any reason given. Please note there is no guarantee that an article, information, obituaries or other material will be included. Any manuscript sent by post cannot be returned. Note: we receive occasional requests for articles to be reprinted in other theosophical magazines around the world so when submitting an article please let the Editor know if you do not consent. Please be sure to include your name and contact details with your submission.

Every effort has been made to correctly attribute all images contained in this edition including those which are courtesy of Wikipedia Commons. Some materials may have been donated or obtained from individuals or organizations and may be subject to restrictions on use. Some images we would like to include are unavailable due to copyright restrictions. Esoterica is Free 'not for profit' magazine.

Editor's note: Contributors should make sure their articles have been proof read by a competent person prior to submission and that every attempt has been made to ensure reasoned argument, correct grammar and spelling and clarity of style etc. Consideration should be given to the use of definitive statements in order to avoid stating as fact that which is actually speculation. Thank you.

**For further information on self-discovery, meditation, unity of all people,
national speakers, articles, study, history, media and links go to:**

www.theosophy.org.uk

Foundation for Theosophical Studies 50 Gloucester Place, London, W1U 8EA

Email: office@theosoc.org.uk • Telephone: 020 7563 9817 • Monday to Friday 2-6.30 pm

Printed by Premier Print Group, London E3 3QQ



FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

The Aim of the Foundation is:

"To help people understand and discover the essential truths at the heart of all philosophy, science and spirituality, especially the fundamental unity of all people"

The Foundation provides theosophical speakers who are active throughout England, Wales and Scotland, giving a host of talks and workshops for afternoon events, day conferences and weekends.

The Foundation runs an annual Theosophical Summer School with talks, lectures, meditation, and many experiential workshops and discussion groups.

The School and other theosophical events provide a beautiful oasis for meeting fellow spiritual travellers, as well as being a great opportunity for learning more about the essential truths of life.

Throughout the Foundation's programme of activities you will find not only information for the mind but also inspiration for the heart.

For further information on self-discovery, meditation, unity of all people, national speakers, articles, study, history, media and links go to:

www.theosophy.org.uk