

The art of using one's own energies is directly linked to the third object of the modern theosophical movement, which is "to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man". This art is also inseparable from the other two objects of the movement. We need to live something of the first object (universal Brotherhood) and obtain a degree of progress as to the second object (universal Knowledge), in order to make any real progress with regard to the third object and develop our powers of thinking, acting, feeling and perceiving in a correct way.

The opposite is correct, too: it is necessary to develop the latent power of right thought and right understanding in order to attain the limitless knowledge which leads us to the practice of universal brotherhood. The three objects are closely interdependent.

To help humanity is the best way to help oneself along the spiritual path. The task ahead is not so much to worry about external obstacles faced by mankind, although one must keep a vigilant eye on them. The task is to permanently build, rebuild, preserve, and expand a worldwide nucleus of people who have this wider view of life.

The Proof of Real Learning

Ethics is the art and the intention of sowing good karma. There is no philosophy without ethics, for "love for wisdom" is more than words. The real theosophical movement is not an inch larger than its ethics. It is as strong as the presence in it of a sense of impersonal and impartial justice.

The ethical purpose of acting correctly towards all beings is the only proof or evidence that a student may indeed know something about theosophy in his heart.

Memorizing theosophical literature is no good, in the absence of goodwill. One may be able to recite "The Voice of the Silence", "Light on the Path" and "The Key to Theosophy" by heart with unfailing exactitude, and all one would deserve - if there is no Ethics -, is perhaps a gold medal for his parrot's skills.

The very same illusion about words that deceives theosophical parrots makes them especially proud of their abilities, and no one is necessarily above such a danger. One should always practice self-observation, lest one becomes a parrot and doesn't know about it.

The actual life one can find today in the United Lodge of Theosophists, the Pasadena Theosophical Society, Adyar Theosophical Society, Point Loma Societies and other associations is due to the existence in them and in their students of an impersonal Ethics. The relative lack of vitality one may see in any theosophical circle is the result of limitations in Ethics and Altruism. There is also a mayavic vitality, which is short-term: besides being unable to last, it produces self-destructive results. The movement needs the deeper sort of life, the one that is enduring and which emerges from a clear understanding of the original teachings. This "occult" vitality expresses a long term purpose, and it is at present quietly expanding as more people awaken from the old 20th century atmosphere and state of mind.



The Center of Pascal's Sphere

How Individual Responsibility Can Cause a Healing Chain Reaction



“...The primordial form of everything manifested, from atom to globe, from man to angel, is spheroidal, the sphere having been with all nations the emblem of eternity and infinity (...). It is the symbolical circle of Pascal and the Kabalists, ‘whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere’ (...).”

(Helena P. Blavatsky)

In all time and space, fellow truth-seekers need a shared understanding of a common task to be accomplished. Such a purpose must be wide enough and universal enough to respect outer differences and individualities, while being also clear, and challenging, and stimulating.

It is no use to complain about present times. It is a loss of time to ascribe the limitations and failings of one's theosophical efforts to the decay of this civilization or to the presence of materialism in the minds of “common citizens”.

The correct point of view is the other way around: it is our responsibility, as citizens of goodwill, if the world is as it is. Present humanity is subconsciously waiting for the healing chain reaction of buddhi-manasic activation. In fact, such a karmic chain reaction was started in 1875, and it has been taking place since then. What human beings are “waiting” for is but the moment when its due acceleration reaches enough critical momentum to help them awaken. It might take five months, say, or five centuries, from any point in time. This should be of no concern, for theosophists don't work mainly for short term results, and don't worry too much for them. It is up to the theosophists and citizens of goodwill to locate the point that changes it all, the center of the wheel of life -, and then to patiently act upon it, from it and around it, leaving aside the peripheral elements of planetary karma.

Since 1875, the general way to do this is to work for the universal goal of awakening oneself while awakening mankind, and of awakening mankind while awakening oneself, to the responsible freedom of a buddhi-manasic, universal-mind life.

A useful thing to do is to concentrate on understanding what is it that we can do to help more minds and hearts to get in a deeper contact with their own consciences, and in active cooperation with one another. The sharing process is challenging and stimulating. At first it tends to spread slowly.

There is, however, a single point from which every student can cause his own and the world's awakening. It has to do with the circle of Pascal, and H. P. Blavatsky wrote about it:

“...The primordial form of everything manifested, from atom to globe, from man to angel, is spheroidal, the sphere having been with all nations the emblem of eternity and infinity - a serpent swallowing its tail. To realize the meaning, however, the sphere must be thought of as seen from its centre. The field of vision or of thought is like a sphere whose radii proceed from one's self in every direction, and extend out into space, opening up boundless vistas all around. It is the symbolical circle of Pascal and the Kabalists, 'whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere' (...).” [1]

According to his or her own capacities, each student of theosophy is the creative center of the whole wheel of life. The theosophical movement is itself a living, flexible, human, potentially decisive level of Pascal's sphere.

The secret to the *turning point* from which a “sudden” or easier enlightenment process can take place is to be found therefore in Pascal's Circle. [2]

The awakening spiritual soul in each citizen of goodwill must make the difference that changes it all. The theosophical movement exists in order to provide people with opportunities to act in that direction.

NOTES:

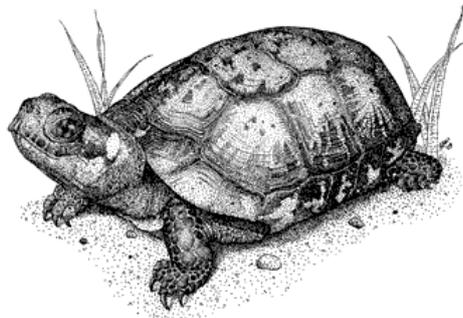
[1] “**The Secret Doctrine**”, H. P. Blavatsky, Theosophy Co., Los Angeles, Volume I, p. 65.

[2] To read more on Pascal's Circle, see the article “**Pascal's Sphere**”, by Jorge Luis Borges. It is easy to find through the List of Texts by Author at www.TheosophyOnline.com .

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See the text “**Meditation on the Awakening of Mankind**”, which can be located at the List of Texts in Alphabetical Order at www.TheosophyOnline.com and www.Esoteric-Philosophy.com . See also the text “**The Tree of Universal Brotherhood**”, by H. P. Blavatsky, in the same websites.

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Healthy Food for Thought

Why Should One Improve His Eating Habits?



Proper Food Brings Health

Automatic actions of one's physical or emotional vehicles and every act based on routine may make more difference in theosophy than is comfortable to think.

The delusional idea that the physical vehicle (*sthula sharira*) is “unimportant” and can therefore be ignored is positively harmful, for it induces students to ignore the process of self-responsibility before the law of karma.

The article “**Food as Sacrifice**” discusses in www.TheosophyOnline.com the surprisingly decisive relation between one's daily meals and the philosophical life one tries to attain.

Its author says:

“What has this modern age not made of meals, from the extreme of banquets of many courses, with dishes concocted to tempt surfeited gourmards, to the other extreme of nothing to eat, (...). Dinners are made functions for ‘entertaining’ people who exchange small talk, useless when not injurious to the reputations of others. In the family, its members bicker and squabble around the table. How many students of Theosophy, even, comprehend the part of food in life, and why the preparation of a meal has been termed a sacred function? Yet hints as to why are multiplied in the teachings, whether in the *Laws of Manu* or the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in the lore of Pythagoras, in the writings of the Neo-Platonists, of Paracelsus, of H. P. Blavatsky, or W.Q. Judge.”

The article quotes then from Iamblichus, on the Pythagoreans:

“And in the first place, indeed, they endeavored to learn the indications of symmetry, of labour, food, and repose. In the next place, with respect to the preparation of food, they were nearly the first who attempted to employ themselves in it, and to define the mode in which it should be performed.” (*Life of Pythagoras*, Iamblichus.) [1]

NOTE:

[1] “**Food as Sacrifice**” is easy to find at the [List of Texts in Alphabetical Order](#) in www.TheosophyOnline.com. It can also be read at www.Esoteric-Philosophy.com.

Impersonal Justice and Brotherhood



Justice Results From Impersonality

From Bandung, Indonesia, Ms. Maria Widjaja wrote to the Yahoo e-group **E-Theosophy:**

“It is our/everyone’s duty to unmask / to look into ourselves, that is the purpose of Theosophy. ‘Light On The Path’ says: *‘Intelligence is impartial; no man is your enemy; no man is your friend. All alike are your teachers’.*”

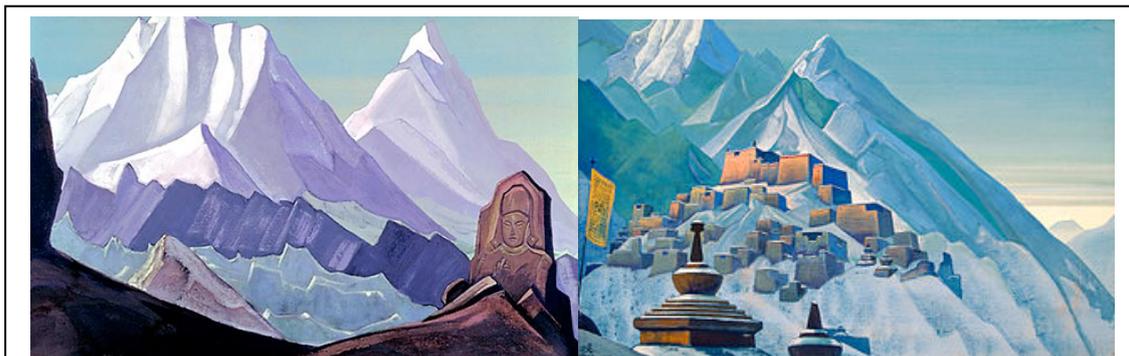
To which a student from somewhere in the Americas answered saying:

“This is, as long as I know, one of the most important lessons in theosophy, when we want to understand how to best relate to people around us. It prevents both illusion and disillusionment. It avoids deception as well as disappointment. It liberates us to a higher perception of the idea of ‘impersonal Justice to all’. It opens the way to the practice of universal brotherhood.”

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The theosophical movement is a long-term project aiming at an acceleration of the present human awakening towards universal wisdom and brotherhood. Those interested in actively participating in such a process may write to lutbr@terra.com.br asking for more information.

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Two images of the Himalayas, by Nicholas Roerich

The Blessing and the Effort

What Can One Actually Obtain, in Exchange for Being Altruistic?

Many a student asks himself what is it that he can really “obtain”, after all, by dedicating his “whole lifetime” to a noble ideal. There should be some compensation, he believes, for such a “terrible loss”.

The question is paradoxical, and so is the answer. Time-honoured experience shows: as long as there is the desire to obtain anything for oneself, there is not a noble ideal in the first place. The goal must be impersonal.

Yet there is another aspect to the mystery of “gain” and “loss” along the path. As the oxygen of life is dissolved everywhere in the waters of an unpolluted river, so the unsuspected blessings from the student’s own impersonal spiritual soul will enlighten and irrigate his lower nature, as a natural result of a long-standing, honest effort to live in altruism.

And just as the wind moves the leaves and branches of a forest, silent insights will renew the atmosphere of his mind.

Even in a dark night, a lightening can suddenly show the whole landscape, anticipating the light of dawn which will change in due time the entire sky, starting from the humble Eastern line of horizon. The lightening, or blessing, is silent: it is its lower and slower twin, the effort or thunder, that makes noise. And this occurs because of its probationary nature.

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Pralayas and Manvantaras

The Heart-Beating of Eternity

It may be hard to imagine Eternity as a literally endless succession of pralayas and manvantaras.

In the letter XII of “Mahatma Letters” (T.U.P. edition) a Master writes in a rather puzzling way on things which are far from easy to understand, and directly involve each one of us. He says:

“At the coming of the Pralaya no human, animal, or even vegetable entity will be alive to see it, but there will be the earth or globes with their mineral kingdoms; and all these planets will be physically disintegrated in the pralaya, yet not destroyed; for they have their places in the sequence of evolution and their ‘privations’ coming again out of the subjective, they will find the exact point from which they have to move on around the chain of ‘manifested forms’. This, as we know, is repeated endlessly throughout ETERNITY. Each man of us has gone this ceaseless round, and will repeat it for ever and ever. The deviation of each one’s course, and his rate of progress from Nirvana to Nirvana is governed by causes which he himself creates out of the exigencies in which he finds himself entangled.”

And the Master goes on:

“This picture of an eternity of action may appal the mind that has been accustomed to look forward to an existence of ceaseless repose. But their concept is not supported by the analogies of nature, nor - and ignorant though I may be thought of your Western Science, may I not say? - by the teachings of that Science.”

Manvantaras and pralayas are the heart-beating of Eternity. The metaphor does make sense for Eternity consists in endless, infinite Life.

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The Art of Repenting

Or the Ability to Give Up The Sources of One's Suffering

It is not too often that one can find a text on, or a reference to, the usefulness of repenting. [1]

The act of repentance could be defined as the ability to identify, acknowledge, observe, learn from and abandon – sometimes in disgust - one's own mistakes. This is an important function in theosophy. It also demands a degree of courage.

Mr. B. P. Wadia, one of the historical leaders of the United Lodge of Theosophists, wrote about repentance. Quoting another author, he said that repentance is:

“A nameless and super-sensuous power which keeps the heart pure. Man's stability depends upon his faith in this power, which also strengthens each good resolution.” [2]

Repentance has nothing to do with negative feelings about oneself. It is its opposite in fact. It requires a healthy and reasonable amount of self-confidence and confidence in life to be able to look at the sources of one's suffering - and give them up.

(C. C. A.)

NOTES:

[1] See for instance the article “Learning From the Feeling of Remorse”, which can be found at the [List of Texts in Alphabetical Order](#) at www.TheosophyOnline.com and www.Esoteric-Philosophy.com, and at the [Lista de Textos Por Ordem Alfabética](#) at www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com.

[2] From the article “Of Repentance”, by B.P. Wadia. The text can be found at www.teosofiskakompaniet.net.

Student:

She seemed to be telling you that there is a difference between forming and realizing a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. What did she do to form such a nucleus?

WQJ:

Her life since 1875 was spent in the unremitting endeavor to draw within the Theosophical Society those who could work unselfishly to propagate an ethics and philosophy tending to realize the brotherhood of man by showing the real unity and essential non-separateness of every being. [2]

Student:

How did she intend to attract these workers to the nucleus?

WQJ:

Her method was to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step; to seek out and educate a few who, appreciating the majesty of the Secret Science and devoted to “the great orphan Humanity”, could carry on her work with zeal and wisdom; to found a Society whose efforts - however small itself might be - would inject into the thought of the day the ideas, the doctrines, the nomenclature of the Wisdom Religion. [3]

Student:

If by Society, you mean The Theosophical Society, it does not seem to me that this Society is very large compared to most significant and influential organizations in the world today.

WQJ:

But was her object merely to form a Society whose strength should lie in numbers? No so. She worked under directors who, operating from behind the scene, knew that the Theosophical Society was, and was to be, the nucleus from which help might spread to all the people of the day, without thanks and without acknowledgment. [4]

Student:

Do you really think it is possible to find such workers and that they can have such a great effect on humanity in our times?

WQJ:

Once, in London, I asked her what was the chance of drawing the people into the Society in view of the enormous disproportion between the number of members and the millions of Europe and America who neither knew of nor cared for it. [5]

Student:

What did she say to you?

WQJ:

Leaning back in her chair, in which she was sitting before her writing desk, she said: “When you consider and remember those days in 1875 and after, in which you could not find any people interested in your thoughts, and now look at the wide-spreading influence of theosophical ideas - however labeled - it is not so bad. We are not working merely that people may call themselves Theosophists, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time.” [6]

Student:

It seems to me the nucleus is still very small and the problems of humanity are greater than ever before. What did she say that encouraged you to go on when the numbers of true workers seemed too small for the accomplishment of the task?

WQJ:

“Falter not so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing.” [7]

Student:

She seems to have understood that the nucleus she helped form would take time to be completely realized. I notice that her efforts were not confined to the formation of The Theosophical Society. She produced an enormous body of literature that is both profound and difficult, even for the modern reader to understand. The greatest moral reformers of the past did not write anything down themselves. Why was it so important for her to write and publish such books?

WQJ:

Her object was to make religion scientific and science religious, so that the dogmatism of each might disappear. [8] ... Her books were written with the declared object of furnishing the material for intellectual and scientific progress on those lines. The theory of man’s origin, powers, and destiny brought forward by her, drawn from ancient Indian sources, places us upon a higher pedestal than that given by either religion or science, for it gives to each the possibility of developing the godlike powers within and of at last becoming a co-worker with nature. [9]

Student:

Why is such a realization necessary for the continuing moral elevation of humanity?

WQJ:

She wished all men to know that they are God in fact, and that as men they must bear the burden of their own sins, for no one else can do it. Hence she brought forward to the West the old Eastern doctrines of karma and reincarnation. Under the first, the law of justice, she said each must answer for himself, and under the second make answer on the earth where all his acts were done. [10]

NOTES:

All of the responses in the above dialogue may be found in “Theosophical Articles”, by William Q. Judge, as follows:

- [1] “Yours Till Death and After, H.P.B.”, Vol. II, pg.4.
- [2] “The Esoteric She”, Vol. II, pg. 35.
- [3] “A Lion-Hearted Colleague Passes”, Vol. II, pg. 8.
- [4] “Yours Till Death and After, H.P.B.”, Vol. II, pg. 3.
- [5] “Yours Till Death and After, H.P.B.”, Vol. II, pg. 3.
- [6] “Yours Till Death and After, H.P.B.”, Vol. II, pg. 4.
- [7] “Yours Till Death and After, H.P.B.”, Vol. II, pg. 4.
- [8] “The Esoteric She”, Vol. II, pg. 35.
- [9] “The Esoteric She”, Vol. II, pg. 35.
- [10] “The Esoteric She”, Vol. II, pg. 35.

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The Torch-Bearer and Light-Bringer

One’s True Self Is the Watcher and the Silent Thinker

N. C. Ramanujachary

We need to be grateful to Madame Blavatsky, the Torch-bearer and the Light-bringer, **each day** of our existence for the service she rendered to Humanity.

A Willing Obedience to the Behests of Truth is one of the vital reasons to remember her:

“All is impermanent in man except the pure bright essence of Alaya. Man is its crystal ray; a beam of light immaculate within, a form of clay material upon the lower surface. That beam is thy life-guide and thy true Self, the Watcher and the silent Thinker, the victim of thy lower self. Thy soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body; control and master both, and thou art safe when crossing to the nearing ‘Gate of Balance’.” [1]

She laid the Path for us; became the Path for us to contentedly journey on.

NOTE:

- [1] “The Voice of the Silence”, H. P. Blavatsky, Fragment III.

Precariousness and Compassion

Theosophy is a Branch of the Music of the Universe

“... In our sight an honest boot-black [*is*] as good as an honest king, and an *immoral* sweeper far higher and more excusable than an *immoral* Emperor...”

(A Master, in “Mahatma Letters”)

For someone who worked for a long time with public policies regarding law enforcement in environmental issues, the degree of institutional precariousness everyone can see in the modern theosophical movement, since 1875, is not irrelevant.

One may ask oneself: “Is there a direct relationship between altruism and lack of organizational skills? Is the *policy of the heart* impossible to harmonize with the policy of institutions?” The question may also emerge: “What is the degree of impersonality people need, in order to effectively manage an institution whose goal is universal brotherhood?”

And someone might say that as long as there is generosity, ethics is present and one is guided by a universal view of life. flexibility should be our rule in bureaucratic issues. The policy of inflexibility leads to failure: the destruction of esoteric noneries is welcome. The institutional life of the theosophical movement must be flexible for it is probationary and subject to a variety of karmic tests.

Groups and individuals should carefully calculate their forces in every aspect of life, and have clear priorities. Prudence is as necessary as courage. Independent action is the best method. Each individual and group must be responsible for what he or it does. Compassion can be combined with rigor: severity is most important for ourselves, and compassion, mainly for others. It is the mark of an idiot to look for personal and formal positions of power. One should look for self-improvement, instead, and a Mahatma of the Himalayas wrote:

“... In our sight an honest boot-black [*is*] as good as an honest king, and an *immoral* sweeper far higher and more excusable than an *immoral* Emperor...” [1]

The theosophical movement is about understanding the laws of the universe. It is about research and sharing. It evolves by learning from its mistakes. Theosophists should be encouraged to talk about the lessons they need to learn as a movement, and as individuals. Outer diversity is part of their strength. Unity is *inner* and non-bureaucratic.

The use of common sense is as necessary as the practice of listening to one’s own individual conscience.

The individual world is not separate from collective life. It is possible to act in unison as a group, preserving due respect for individualities. The very concept of unison, in music, combines diversity and harmony, and someone might say that modern Theosophy is an earthly branch of the universal music of the spheres.

(C.C.A.)

NOTE:

[1] “The Mahatma Letters”, TUP, p. 223.

Unity in Dialogue and Truthfulness

Real Brotherhood Results From Similarity of Goals

**“We live in an age of prejudice,
dissimulation and paradox (.....).”**

**“Sincerity is true wisdom, it appears,
only to the mind of the moral philosopher.
It is rudeness and insult to him who regards
dissimulation and deceit as culture and politeness...”**

(H. P. Blavatsky) [1]

From time to time, some new and well-intentioned initiative takes place to promote the unity of the theosophical movement, considering unity as a goal in itself.

Then people typically start trying to forget and forbid any practice of mutual criticism, so that only “good things” can be seen. They try to convince themselves - and to convince others as well - that if they don't look at mistakes, the karma of errors and the repetition of unseen mistakes will end, or at least will be forgotten. It won't. It can't.

Illusion and “politics” tend to dominate places where one can't hear a word about discernment, tests or probation.

The motto of the theosophical movement is the search for truth, and not for artificial unity. The basis for true unity is the study and research, respect for the facts, and an ability to learn from defeats. This must include the mistakes of our own theosophical associations as well as those of other schools of thought.

Although unity can't be based on fraud, illusion, or “the doctrine of the eye”, it will last if it emerges from frankness, truthfulness and mutual help. Its foundation must be discernment and courage to choose the narrow way leading to the inner learning. Its source is the Doctrine of the Heart”.

Unity needs detachment from any pet ideas, and a free honest examination of actions. Brotherhood respects contrast. It acknowledges the fact that the theosophical movement is a living probationary field and not a church or public relations exercise.

NOTE:

[1] These are two quotations. The first one reproduces the initial words in H. P. Blavatsky's article “**A Paradoxical World**” (“Theosophical Articles”, H.P.B., Theosophy Company, Los Angeles, volume I, p. 187.) The second quotation comes from her article “**To the Readers of Lucifer**”, in “**Theosophical Articles**”, H.P.B., Theosophy Company, vol. I, p. 279.

Open-Mindedness in Theosophy

Why Undogmatic Minds Use Their Discernment



Dead letter study is no good. Theosophical literature is septenary: one should look for the inner, higher and transcendent levels of meaning in it.

However, detachment from mere outer wording does not mean that unexamined texts and ideas could be accepted as part of the esoteric literature just because one wants to “transcend dead letter”. Many read all kinds of pseudo-esoteric books because they think they “should not be dogmatic”. One is not supposed to be dogmatic, but we ought to use our discernment.

Well-known authors say that “the future of the Theosophical Movement depends not on the authors it reads and studies, but on the lives that theosophists live.”

The idea may seem to be elegant, but it is wrong. In reality, the life theosophists live depends precisely on the books they study. While the study of an authentic body of literature is certainly *not enough*, it is a primary factor in the future of any theosophical association.

One must test the literature we study and make sure it is authentic to the best of one’s knowledge, and frankly abandon false teachings. Of course, this demands political courage and detachment from routines. Yet no real theosophist ever thought, or taught, that the Path is easy, cozy and comfortable.

Obstacles and failings are rather big if we study the authentic teachings. And they are larger, if one falls victim to pseudo-theosophical texts or delusional practices and beliefs. Students of an authentic body of literature must not be afraid of truth. Right action is the art of sowing good karma. As soon as one individual gets to this active and creative condition, he sees clear signs emerging of a reawakening of right action around himself.



Two Paragraphs on the Personality

Robert Crosbie

1) Theosophists often speak of “getting rid of the personality,” and, so far as observed, do not appear to have any clear idea of what they mean. Without personalities, there would be no field, no evolution. It is not the personality that is in the way, but the personal idea in regard to it. This is particularly fostered by the present civilization based on Samvritti (relative truth), “origin of all the world’s delusions.”

2) To “forego and forget personalities” means to regard truth, only, by whomsoever presented. So it seems wise that we should not think ill of personalities, and this includes our own. If they are our weakness, by doing our duty, which is in our case the promulgation of truth, pure and undefiled, our weakness will finally become our strength. The Masters do not look at our defects, but at our motives and efforts.

[Reproduced from “**The Friendly Philosopher**”, Robert Crosbie, Theosophy Company, 1945. Paragraph one is on page 38. Paragraph two, page 39.]

The Pedagogy of Confidence

Positive Feelings and Actions Emerge
From a Wider Notion of Space and Time

The theosophical movement is a pedagogical effort. In it, researching, learning and teaching are three inseparable phases of one single process extending over millennia.

A direct experience of the theosophical effort in the last few decades and the study of its historical evolution since 1875 can demonstrate that the theosophical effort must include that Optimism and that Confidence which inevitably accompany pioneer actions.

Less than 200 years old, the movement is yet too young to show all its fruits. Being a forerunner, its effort requires a lasting determination from those who understand and share its purpose.

A Broader and More Confident Look at Life

Confidence in life emerges from contact with that which is true, good and enduring. Lack of confidence as such is limited to the unenlightened and fleeting portions of one’s lower self.

One must be severe with mistakes, for otherwise there is no learning. At the same time, one must be kind to the persons who make mistakes, and that includes ourselves.

