



If the student wants the Independent Lodge of Theosophists to be a silent witness to the decisions made, a copy of the signed commitment can be sent by email or airmail to the Lodge. [1]

In addition to proposing this practical action, the role of Independent Lodge is to act as a silent witness to the decision of each student who wishes to do so. In this way the pilgrim has a stronger access to a special magnetic field: the elevated territory of those who work for the good of humanity, and are spiritually benefited by the superior force of altruism. (CCA)

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## A Commitment to the Next Year

\* **I** am aware that depending on what I sow each day, I will harvest sooner or later.

\* **T**he existence of each human being is a spiritual fact. Every physical life has a sacred value. It would be a mistake to waste too much time or energy of one's life on dispersive goals.

Taking these facts into account,

- 1) I promise myself that in the year of \_\_\_\_\_ I will seriously take advantage of the opportunities for learning and for spiritual self-discipline that appear on my horizon.
- 2) In this period and beyond, I will try not to let time pass in vain. I will improve myself. I will act ethically. I will listen to my conscience.
- 3) I will win as a soul. I will see eventual failures as reasons to strengthen the rightness of my intention. I know that when the goal is valuable, the defeat of today prepares the victory of tomorrow.
- 4) I will use the strength of the smaller cycles. I will be aware of how I use time across the 24-hour period. Life is reborn all the time, and I can help rebuild it.
- 5) I will make room for the daily study of the art of living. I can dedicate part of the day to creating good habits. I will elevate feelings and thoughts in the direction of what is sacred. I am going to succeed.
- 6) At the end of each seven-day cycle, I'll dedicate some time to reflect on what has been done; to identify mistakes and successes, and decide on necessary actions in the coming week.
- 7) Regarding the monthly rhythm of life, I know that each New Moon brings favorable days to plant renewing and corrected action.
- 8) From the first days of next year and until the first week of the following yearly cycle, my vital energy will be used with as much wisdom as I am capable of. I will observe mistakes made and learn from them along the path to self-improvement.

9) There is an acceptance of the need for common sense. I'm aware of the fact that these decisions will be valid into the extension that I pay attention to them. I will calmly look at my failures and try my best. I will start again and again as long as it is necessary. I will take every opportunity seriously. I will remember that I am responsible for the future.

10) In addition to the above mentioned commitments, I am specifically determined to \_\_\_\_\_

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11) The Independent Lodge of Theosophists is a witness to these resolutions. I count on the speechless support of the Lodge. I include my name in the magnetic field of those who are guided by their good will and altruism, and of those who build a better world by following their conscience.

May I not forget the permanent presence on our planet of immortal Sages who patiently help mankind and the whole Wave of Life.

I hope such awareness of their existence and work helps me learn the highest lessons in the art of living, during the twelve months of the year \_\_\_\_\_ and until the dawn of the year \_\_\_\_\_.

I thank all beings: ethics and truth win.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### NOTE:

[1] For more information, write to [indelodge@gmail.com](mailto:indelodge@gmail.com) with copy to [aquariantheosophist@gmail.com](mailto:aquariantheosophist@gmail.com).

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**R**ead More:

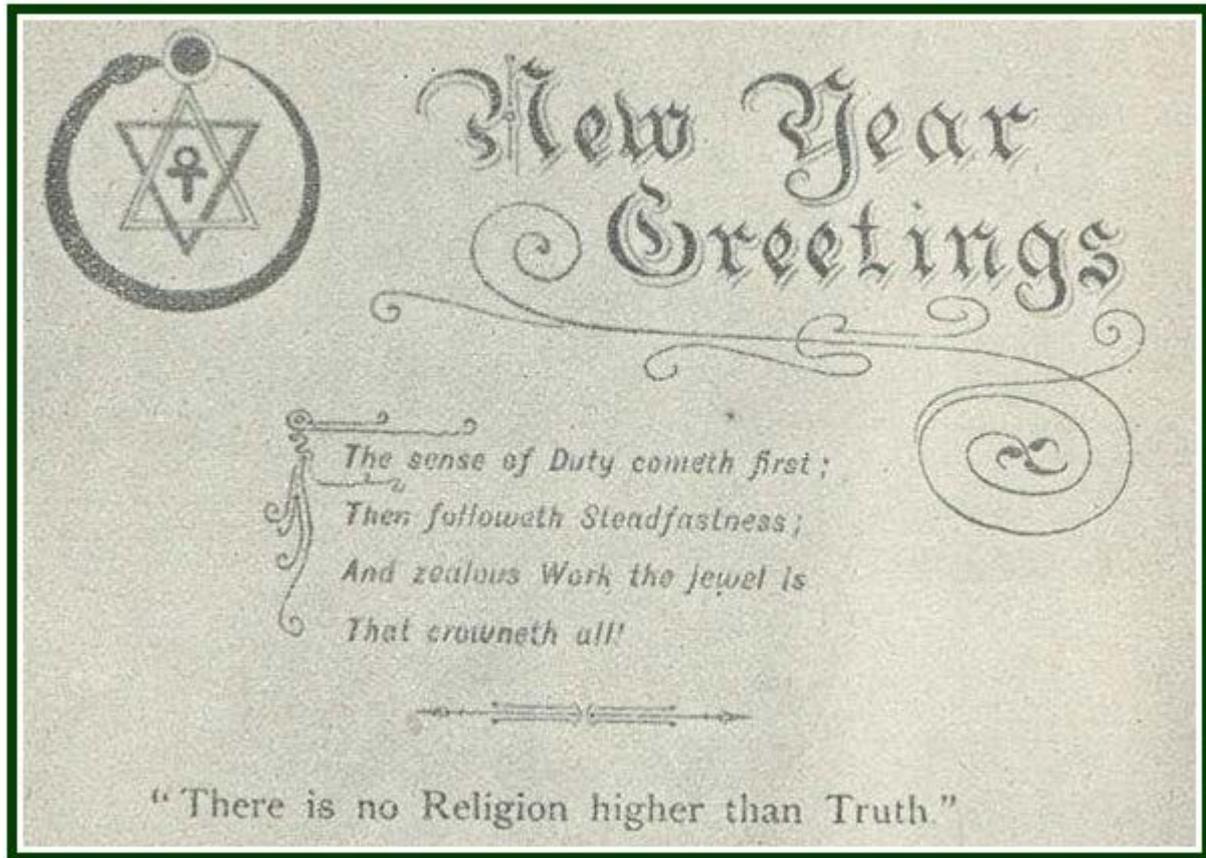
\* ["A Glance at the Future"](#) \* ["A Personal Commitment to Life"](#)

\* ["If Christ Comes Back This Christmas"](#) \* ["A Prayer Before the Future"](#)

\* ["Visualizing the Future of Mankind"](#) \* ["Don't Ask Who Is Born at Christmas"](#)

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## Blavatsky and the Birth of Right Action



The sense of Duty comes first;  
Then follows Steadfastness;  
And zealous Work the jewel is  
That crowns all!

*There is no Religion higher than Truth.*

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From the card with New Year Greetings for 1890, sent by Helena P. Blavatsky to Mr. José Xifré in Spain by the end of 1889.

Click to see the [Spanish language text](#) that reproduces both sides of the card, one of them having a handwritten message from Blavatsky to José Xifré, in French.

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Read the article "[The Theosophy of Abraham Lincoln](#)".

# The Qualifications Needed for Practical Occultism

T.C.C.



## A 2020 Editorial Note:

While reading this classical article one should remember a couple of facts regarding language.

First, that the essence of things is always invisible. “Occultism” is the science of the essential, invisible aspects of life. It investigates the *Occult* in its metaphysical and elevated dimension. Real Yoga or true Occultism has nothing to do with popular superstition and sorcery. It demands absolute altruism and perfect ethics from its students.

The second point is that the original Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 by H.P. Blavatsky, ceased to exist in the 1890s. Since then, all that we have is the Theosophical Movement in its contrasting plurality of schools of thought.

The article “**The Qualifications Needed for Practical Occultism**” is reproduced from “The Theosophist”, May 1892, pp. 470-474. (CCA)

## **The Qualifications Needed for Practical Occultism**

The following lines are addressed to all those who desire to follow the Path of PRACTICAL Occultism, especially to such as imagine that by paying an Entrance Fee and joining the Theosophical Society they acquire a *right*, or a *claim* to instruction in practical methods of psychic or spiritual development.

What follows has no reference to the Eastern School of Theosophy, or “Esoteric Section”, as it was formerly called, so far as the conditions of membership in that school are concerned. For, the special aim and purpose of that school is to *facilitate the acquirement of the qualifications set forth below*, to impart, in its lower degrees, the necessary theoretical training and to afford opportunity, encouragement, guidance and assistance to the aspirant in the all-important, but most arduous task of *making himself ready and fit* for actual practical training. For this reason the conditions of membership in the Eastern School are limited to the simplest and least arduous demands such as any one, whatever his previous life has been, whatever his present conditions of life may be, whatever profession he may follow, whether he is married or single, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, can comply with - if only he be sincere and in earnest.

Thus the qualifications about to be mentioned are demanded only of such as seek actual practical training and demand to be taught those *real* methods, by the assiduous use of which the higher nature and powers of man may be developed with comparative rapidity in the *properly qualified* student.

But the very fact that these methods bring about the rapid development and speedy unfoldment of such mighty powers, implies that the possession of the qualifications demanded will be most rigorously exacted. Were they not, the powers which naturally accompany advancing spiritual development, would inevitably be used for selfish and evil purposes, with the result of bringing the most tremendous catastrophes upon Humanity.

All Hindu Shastras with one voice, all the mystical works of other nations and religions, unanimously lay down the following five qualifications as the *indispensable requisites* which must be possessed by the aspirant before he can receive his first initiation into the real methods of practical Occultism.

The aspirant must:

1. Love truth and be ever ready to sacrifice himself in order to uphold it.
2. Preserve purity of mind, speech and body.
3. Be ever active and industrious in helping others.
4. Sacrifice himself constantly and unhesitatingly for the good of others.
5. Strictly follow and practice justice.

As this statement of the qualifications is very abstract and general, there follows an elaboration of them in detail, setting forth *not* the full and perfect ideal of their attainment, but the lowest stage of their acquirement without which it is useless to demand even the first and simplest practical lesson in real Yoga, or “Practical Occultism”.

## **Sketch of the Qualifications Necessary Before Attempting the First Step of Practical Yoga**

### *I. Ethical qualifications.*

(a) The aspirant must always cherish noble desires and be free from vanity. He must be ready and willing to learn from all, regarding all his fellow-men as teachers.

(b) He must, above all, be *honest with himself*, and try to see his nature, his virtues and his defects, as they really are.

(c) He must possess patience and perseverance, and *prove* these qualities by actual conduct and life.

(d) He must strive to lead a pure life sexually, and must have succeeded to some extent at least, before he can take the first step in practice.

## II. *Karmic qualifications.*

(a) The aspirant must prove by his actions in ordinary life that he is animated by a sincere, earnest and devoted desire to benefit Humanity.

This must be shown and proved, *not by words*, but by actual self-denial and self-sacrifice for the purpose of helping others. But it is no *real* self-denial to give, for instance, money whose want one does not *feel*: real self-denial in money-giving means that one shall give so much money in proportion to his income that he will have to *go without* things he wishes for, or pleasures he desires. Real self-sacrifice means the doing of things one dislikes, the giving up of what one likes, *in order thereby directly to help or benefit others*.

(b) No arbitrary asceticism, performed for one's own self-advancement, and not for the good of others, is of any real use on the Path of true spiritual development.

(c) The aspirant must, therefore, live a life of *active* work and exertion in helping others, spiritually, intellectually, morally, and physically by all the means in his power.

(d) The aspirant must be, at least to some extent, master of himself. That is he must be able to control at least his bodily actions, *e.g.*, outbursts of anger, and so on.

(e) The aspirant must have *proved* his possession of these qualifications by his actual conduct before he has any *right* to expect practical instruction; for these ethical qualifications are the most important of all.

## III. *Intellectual qualifications.*

(a) The aspirant must have formed clear general ideas through intellectual study as to (a) the goal he aims to reach; (b) the means by which he is to progress; and (c) the facts in nature upon which these two rest: *i.e.*, the nature of man; the nature of the universe; and the relation between man and the universe.

(b) He must therefore have studied well during his period of probation, and have thought over and assimilated his studies, before he is ready for practice.

(c) He must - intellectually at least - recognise no difference between "self" and "others".

(d) He must be free from intellectual dogmatism and the sectarian spirit.

(e) He must have trained his mind by constant practice to occupy itself *exclusively* with *one thing at a time*. That is, he must ceaselessly endeavour, from the time he rises in the morning till he falls asleep at night, to keep his attention steadily fixed upon whatever he is occupied with, and to constantly recall his attention to the subject in hand whenever it wanders. This he must do constantly, at every moment, however trivial or unimportant the matter may be which

he is doing. Also he should never allow his mind to wander vaguely here and there, but always keep his attention steadily fixed upon some one subject or other.

*Note:* This he must also continue to do, even more assiduously, after he has commenced actual practice.

#### IV. *Physical qualifications.*

(a) The aspirant must abstain entirely from all intoxicating liquors and drugs, such as alcohol in all its forms, opium, bhang, ganja, &c.

(b) He must abstain entirely from meat, and if possible, from fish [1].

(c) He must eat for the sustenance of his body, and *not* to gratify his palate.

These are the “preliminary steps” which *must* be taken; but it is NOT AT ALL either necessary or advisable that one should leave family, or active life in the world, either in order to accomplish them or when he has accomplished them. In fact they *must* be accomplished *in* the world, for there *only* is it possible to acquire the qualifications demanded for the higher life.

In order that one may judge his own qualifications and see how far he is fit and ready to take the first step on the road of practice, the following signs are the best indications.

The aspirant is ready when:

1. He feels *as his own* the miseries of others, about which he was formerly careless; and is indifferent to his own sufferings considering them in the same way he formerly regarded the sufferings of others.

When reached, this will show itself in the face and appearance of the aspirant.

2. He does *everything* concerning his outer life merely as a duty or for others, not from any desire of his own; just as he formerly did certain things with complete indifference merely as duties or to give pleasure to others.

3. He has learnt to forget his own virtues and to magnify his own faults.

Finally, it must never be forgotten that all these qualifications, even the first five, express only the conditions requisite for actual *entry* on the path of practical training, and by no means cover all that the aspirant has to accomplish before he can graduate in Occult Science.

(T. C. C.)

#### NOTE:

[1] The reason for this is that animals and fish possess *mind*, so that in eating their flesh, one assimilates their “mind” also, and the first step towards occultism is to free the mind from animal tendencies. Eggs, however, are permitted as in them “mind” is only present in germ. In the order of the hindrance they cause to progress, meat is most injurious, then fish, while eggs are only slightly so. But the proper diet is the *least important* of all the steps towards the acquirement of the five qualifications. (T.C.C.)

# Thoughts Along the Road

## The Practice of Silence Strengthens the Value of What We Say



\* Sincerity is no synonym to transparency. Whoever seeks for wisdom must be always sincere. His duty is to be transparent when the circumstances make it possible. If a child raises questions, there are certain topics regarding which you will have to keep silence. When some forms of knowledge get to the wrong hands, the result is unnecessary suffering.

\* It is easy to see if children are prepared to know more and if they have a sense of responsibility and an ability to understand that which you may say to them. You are responsible for the words you pronounce. On the other hand, your intention must be always sincere. Such an honesty has to be tempered - and protected - by the right use of silence.

\* In “Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom”, a Mahatma reveals the importance of silence: “*To dare, to will, to act and remain silent*” is our motto as that of every Kabbalist and Occultist.” [1]

### **The Right Kind of Silence**

\* There are many kinds of silence, and not all of them are well-intentioned. Along the way to divine knowledge, one can only employ those forms of silence that are connected to an honest purpose.

\* Examining our intentions on their various levels is a basic duty.

\* Keeping silence saves magnetism and expands the efficiency of those who understand each other, thus avoiding mental dispersion. The advantages of not speaking too much are great as

we seek for wisdom. However, the practice of silence must go side by side with sincerity and never part from it.

\* The practice of silence strengthens the value of what we say.

\* Transparency is practiced whenever the circumstances and the tide of Karma allow it. A valiant declaration of principles must be made. We have to be as clear and transparent as we can, but good sense is necessary.

\* Along the spiritual path, keeping silence is an important tool, yet abandoning sincerity is an entirely different thing. In the territory of true philosophy, it is not possible to leave honesty aside in any moment. The Karma of falsehood takes the pilgrim away from the Path, and his relation to the Ethics and essence of wisdom becomes but superficial and ornamental.

\* The motto of the theosophical movement includes the idea that “there is nothing higher than truth”. And truth is inseparable from sincerity. An honest heart entirely rejects the practice of falsity, because it knows that untruthfulness makes the pilgrim become disoriented and confused to say the least.

\* You can't keep an inner silence unless you have internal equilibrium.

\* The right kind of balance establishes itself in a symmetry whose substance is Justice. In such conditions real silence is possible.

\* In love, in deep understanding and in the world of yoga, a combination of balance and symmetry produces plain insight or contentment. Many a sound is then unnecessary.

## **Being Sure About the Victory**

\* What guarantee does a Theosophist have as he walks on the steep, narrow, uphill path to wisdom?

\* According to Marc Edmund Jones, life offers enduring rewards “whenever it is taken seriously in its own fundamental terms or accepted with a realization of the underlying friendliness of the world at large”. There is, he says, “an encouragement on which any individual may count, knowing that his unflinching courage in pressing forward on his pilgrimage from darkness to light is the best of all guarantees of his achievement”. [2]

## **The Cycle of 24 Hours**

\* The solar cycle of 24 hours, including as key moments the sunrise and sunset, has great significance in theosophy because of its syntony and interaction with the great cosmic cycles - manvantaras and pralayas - during which both universes and solar systems emerge, live and get asleep again.

\* We must always keep in mind the fact that each new day of 24 hours brings us valuable opportunities to renew and to deepen our experience of life.

\* Classical theosophic philosophy teaches that the act of awakening, in the morning, is like being born. To sleep, at night, is potentially to become one with the universe as a whole, for a

few hours. Thus, H.P. Blavatsky wrote: “My nights are my manvantaras.” [3] Blavatsky worked as a soul on the subtle plane while her physical body was asleep.

## NOTES:

[1] “[Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - Second Series](#)”, Letter 65, p. 118.

[2] These words are from the book “[The Sabian Symbols in Astrology](#)”, by Marc Edmund Jones, Aurora Press, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA, Copyright 1993, 437 pages. See the commentary to the 28th degree of Libra, on p. 177.

[3] Quoted at the third paragraph of “[How Far Away is H.P. Blavatsky?](#)”.

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## E-THEOSOPHY AT GOOGLE GROUPS



**E**-Theosophy Group at Google offers a regular study of the classic, intercultural theosophy taught by Helena P. Blavatsky.

Those who want to join **E-Theosophy** e-group at Google Groups can do that by visiting <https://groups.google.com/g/e-theosophy>.

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## Blavatsky on the Will to Live and Longevity



It is the will of man, his all-potent will, that weaves his destiny (...). It is among our commonest experiences that the determination of physical life or death depends upon the will. Some people snatch themselves by force of determination from the very jaws of death; while others succumb to insignificant maladies. What man does with his body he can do with his disembodied *psychê*.

(Helena P. Blavatsky)

[From the 1878 article “Views of the Theosophists”, published in “The Collected Writings”, H. P. Blavatsky, TPH, USA, volume I, p. 299.]

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## Change in the Poles of Our Planet

### Classical Theosophical Teachings and Recent Facts

[Click to read the article](#)

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## The New Items in Our Websites



From the article “The Lesson of the Sun in Libra”

On 07 November we had 2789 items in the associated websites, including texts, books, poems, audios and videos. Of these, 03 items were in [Italian](#), 20 items were in [French](#), 203 in [Spanish](#), 1269 in [English](#) and 1294 in [Portuguese](#).<sup>[1]</sup> The following items were published in English and Spanish between 16 October and 07 November 2020:

(The more recent titles above)

1. **Why Humans Are Brothers of the Trees** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
2. **James Rickards and the Economy of Ethics** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
3. **La Teosofía y el Bardo Thodol** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
4. **Carta de Blavatsky a José Xifré** - *Helena P. Blavatsky*
5. **The Role of Tapas in Raja Yoga** - *I.K. Taimni*
6. **El Misterio de los Templarios** - *Helena P. Blavatsky*
7. **The Lesson of the Sun in Libra** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
8. **The Aquarian Theosophist, October 2020**

### NOTE:

[1] These are some of our associated websites: [www.HelenaBlavatsky.net](http://www.HelenaBlavatsky.net), [www.HelenaBlavatsky.org](http://www.HelenaBlavatsky.org), [www.TheosophyOnline.com](http://www.TheosophyOnline.com), [www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com](http://www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com), [www.CarlosCardosoAveline.com](http://www.CarlosCardosoAveline.com), and [www.TheAquarianTheosophist.com](http://www.TheAquarianTheosophist.com).



On the other hand, we know that an interest in discipleship does not always arise after someone joins the ILT. In many cases it starts before that. For some, the more meditative practice of getting in tune with the anonymous substance of lay discipleship deserves attention from the first moment of contact with the Lodge. As a result, we have organized in recent years a few open courses on the search for discipleship, lasting 10 weeks.

In 2020, the Lodge's research and investigation into the process of seeking lay discipleship reached the point when such short courses should be replaced by a stable process of study, a Circle in which the seekers of novelty can stay for a few weeks, until they see that nothing spectacular happens, and in which - on the other hand - students who have a real affinity with the teaching can actually prepare themselves for an effective *informal learning* regarding the work of the Masters.

Taking these points into consideration, in November 2020 the Lodge decided to create a new tool for the theosophical work, a group dedicated to the study of discipleship that is open to anyone of our readers. Its name is CSD, or Circle for the Study of Discipleship.

What is the difference between the CSD and the other fronts of the public work developed by the Lodge?

The priority of the CSD is harmoniously building the inner condition of the soul by which the student - besides knowing the original proposal of the theosophical movement - also comes into personal harmony with it.

Such a direct affinity is built through self-purification, self-knowledge, self-control and the practice of silence.

These elements are already present in the different work fronts of the ILT. The Lodge has as its central reference the teachings of Blavatsky and the Letters of the Masters, and this gives us a broad horizon. Everything human interacts with us. Ethical and good-willing thinkers of all times and of every nation, who follow different religions or philosophies, are seen as friends by theosophists who have good sense.

We are brothers of the ancients and the moderns.

From Confucius to O.S. Marden, from Erich Fromm, Karen Horney or Sigmund Freud to Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius and Musonius Rufus, many are the great thinkers who have something of fundamental importance to tell us. Wen-tzu is our contemporary. Plato belongs to modern times. Cicero has a lot to teach in the 21st century. Pitirim Sorokin is our brother. Ivan A. Il'in is a significant author in esoteric philosophy, as are Paul Carton and Visconde de Figanière.

Only the master key is given by the Letters from the Mahatmas and the writings of HPB.

The Circle for the Study of Discipleship is part of the wider tradition of the esoteric schools and the internal studies of the theosophical movement. The daily life of each student is seen as the place for him to correctly understand his own existence and the practical lessons that must be taken from the esoteric literature of all time. The CSD believes that no speech can be stronger than the daily practice from which it emerges.

The Letters from the Masters and Mahatmas and the esoteric school created by Blavatsky in 1888 are the central and main reference to the Circle.

An unfortunate distortion of the esoteric school began a year or two after Blavatsky's death. The process of the school is worth studying. One must learn from its original proposal, from its experience, without falling into any bureaucratic or authoritarian scheme, but centering the process on an independent, self-taught and self-responsible effort. Each student has to act as his own master, while being a humble disciple of his own conscience.

The work of the CSD is public and open. No formal requirement of secrecy is made. The great secret of the search for discipleship is not verbal: it is experiential. It is revealed in the soul of each student, as long as he silently understands the teaching - and begins to live in greater harmony with it.

The most important things in life do not always attract attention externally. In the CSD no one can find spectacular facts or great novelties that are much different from what is given in E-Theosophy and other fronts of our public work. Yet the topic of discipleship and the experiential process of *self-preparation for the learning of that which is eternal* will be more directly focused.

Those interested in participating in the CSD can write to [logindeteosofos@gmail.com](mailto:logindeteosofos@gmail.com), with a copy to [indelodge@gmail.com](mailto:indelodge@gmail.com).

In his initial message, the student should tell us something about his or her journey so far, saying why he is interested in lay discipleship and what he knows already about the work of the Independent Lodge.

The work of the CSD will start in a date to be announced during November.

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## **About the Coordination of the CSD**

Born in Brazil in 1952, the coordinator of the Circle for the Study of Discipleship is a member of the theosophical movement since 1980 and lives in Portugal with his wife.

A formal aspirant to discipleship since October 1986, he was the text-editor of the Portuguese language edition of "**Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom**", series one and two (Brasília, 1996). He is the responsible for the editorial work of the two-volume 2001 Brazilian edition of "**The Mahatma Letters**" ("[Cartas dos Mahatmas](#)", Ed. Teosófica, Brasília).

Author of several books, he translated from English to Portuguese and edited classic works such as "**Wen-tzu**", "**Tao Teh Ching**", "**Dhammapada**", and "**The Voice of Silence**". The main founder of the CSD is also the general editor of the associated websites. His 2013 work "[The Fire and Light of Theosophical Literature](#)" examines the struggle between common sense and ignorance in the history of theosophical literature, [from the 19th century to the 21st century](#).

A long-time practitioner of the [art of walking meditatively](#), he is the general editor of "[O Teosofista](#)" and "[The Aquarian Theosophist](#)", and maintains a Theosophical blog in "[The Times of Israel](#)".

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