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INSIDE Coming to Wisdom and the Process of Aging
The Psychologist and the Magician
Brotherhood, Study and Meditation
A Gathering of Young Theosophists
Springbrook School Of Theosophy

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The Theosophical Society welcomes students or seekers from all walks of life, belonging to any religion or to none and who are in sympathy with its Objects. It was formed to assist in showing to people that Theosophy exists, and 'to ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities'. Wisdom is known by a mind that is completely open. Therefore freedom of thought and open enquiry are given special emphasis in the Society. **Theosophy** essentially refers to 'Divine Wisdom', Sacred Knowledge, which is a transcendent state of consciousness. In a secondary sense, Theosophy is an ancient yet distinct stream of enquiry, exploring and interpreting the truths of existence in terms suited to particular ages, e.g. in the teachings of ancient India, ancient China, Platonism, Neoplatonism, and, since 1875, through the contribution of the TS. At the core of Theosophy is the principle of indivisible Unity underlying the diversity of forms.

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Mission Statement of the Theosophical Society

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the Unity of all Life.

From the National President

Stephen McDonald



Wisdom, which is part of the name of our organisation, means more than acquired knowledge of the world. Wisdom transcends the words we use to express our thoughts and ideas. ‘Theosophy’ is referring to the ‘Ageless Wisdom’, which does not rely on learning or the accumulation of knowledge, it relies on insight. That insight arises from within each one of us who is aware enough to perceive it. We tend to look at the world around us hoping to find answers to our problems when those answers are far closer than they appear to be. This is not a process of self-criticism; it arises from self-enquiry and a deeper understanding of our true nature. When problems arise in our lives the solution is not to criticise others but to look inquisitively at our own reactions without any judgement.

I am often reminded that the population of Theosophists in Australia is an aging one. It worries many of the old stalwarts of our movement that there are not enough “young people” to carry the work into the future. In his article, our International President,

Tim Boyd questions the idea that with age comes wisdom. He explores the nature of wisdom highlighting the fact that its understanding lies not in what it is but in what it is not. He points out that ‘The view of the *Prajñā-pāramitā Sutra* is that wisdom cannot be defined or named, it can only be indicated by stripping away that which it is not’.

Another article in this issue, *The Psychologist and the Magician* by Ian Ellis-Jones, explores the nature of the thing we call “self” and the illusion of separation. In some ways, the article by Joselito Cendaña of the Philippines summarises some of the ideas of both Tim Boyd and Ian Ellis-Jones by discussing the true nature of wisdom through a deeper understanding of brotherhood and study from the Theosophical perspective. Meditation, Cendaña points out, leads us to ‘the technique of stilling the mind, of slaying “the great slayer of the Real” so we may awaken from our dream-world of separation’.

The theme of our National Convention to be held in Adelaide this January

is *'New Frontiers for an Ageless Wisdom: Exploring the powers latent in humanity'*. The Australian Section is fortunate to have a number of scientists in our ranks and Adelaide seems to be a nucleus for those individuals. Some will be coming from farther afield, such as our keynote speaker, Richard Silberstein, from Melbourne Lodge. To get a taste of some of the topics to be explored at the convention, the titles for Richard's talks can be found under the Calendar of Events section in this magazine. A full programme will be published in the November edition of *Theosophy in Australia*.

The theme of Ageless Wisdom will also strike a note at a national gathering coming up in October with an event at our Springbrook Retreat Centre in the beautiful Gold Coast Hinterland. This workshop will be led by Berry Dunston and Gayle Thomas exploring the stories and symbols that bring meaning to our lives. Springbrook gives us an opportunity to withdraw from the world for a few days and bring peace to our minds. There are still some places left for this event, which is open to members of the TS and to non-members. Contact me for a registration form.



The Freedom and Responsibility of Lodges and Branches

The freedom of Lodges and Branches is defined by the scope of the Society's Objects as well as its essential mandate to make Theosophy known as a practical living Wisdom, which can uplift human consciousness to a realisation of the Oneness of life. Therefore, although the Society has no official creed of its own and upholds freedom of thought, and while it is acceptable to invite some outside speakers who can contribute to the exploration of the Ageless Wisdom, it is not appropriate for our platform to be used by such speakers to actively promote other organisations or belief systems. Each Lodge and Branch was chartered by the International President to be a representative of the Society in its area. Its work and programme should reflect the character, altruistic ethos and spirit of the Theosophical Society.

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (2019)

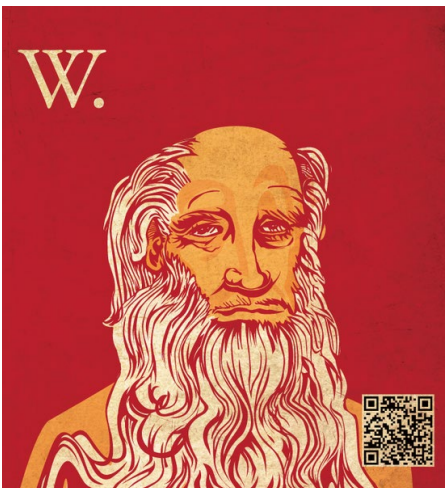
Coming to Wisdom and the Process of Aging

The Theosophist July 2017 pp4-8

Tim Boyd



Let us consider something that we all have some interest in – the process of aging, inherent in Nature. Everything has an apparent beginning when it appears in this world, a process through which it goes, and then it seemingly disappears from this world. It is one of the great mysteries that faces humanity in our thinking about our place in this universe. It is also one of the subjects to which the great minds throughout history have given their attention. It is central to an understanding of the deeper subject of wisdom.



A graphic personification of wisdom. Matt Lawler (2011), Creative Commons

We are all engaged in this process. There are many popular sayings comparing youth with age, but it seems that one of the distinguishing features between the person who is young and one who is deemed older, is the factor of experience. Activity is the hallmark of youth, but experience comes with age. This seems to be a distinguishing factor.

There is a humorous expression that “good judgment comes from experience, but experience comes from bad judgment”. One of the facts of life is that the nature of youth is being uninformed about the ways of the world.

That level of experience is what is generally regarded as the separating factor between the youthful mind, and that which has matured. If we examine more closely, we realize that the experiences we accumulate over the course of a lifetime tend to be of certain types. There are sensations that affect our bodies, which are repeated over and over again during the course of a lifetime. We “gain experience” in the world of sensations. We also

have all sorts of emotional encounters over the course of a lifetime and our emotional nature becomes experienced in the ways of that world of feelings. Then there is the constant stream and cycling of thoughts through our minds. Our interaction with this world of sensation, emotion, and thought builds up the body of our experience, which we then point to as “knowledge”. In normal terms the person who is said to be “knowledgeable” is experienced in the ways of these three worlds of the personality. This level of experience has great value. In *At the Feet of the Master* there are four qualifications, the first of which is discrimination. The body of experience and knowledge which comes with age is the basis for our recognition of that which is good, better, and best. The discriminatory capacities of the mind draw from this body of knowledge.

When we talk about wisdom – and “Theosophy” is the Ageless Wisdom – is that the same as knowledge of any kind? This is a question that we should come back to again and again, to ask ourselves: What is real knowledge, and what is wisdom? The traditions that have attempted to enlighten us on this subject describe wisdom in different ways. A valid teacher who is experienced in the realm of wisdom will always offer the caveat that the best that can be done is for some

words to be given. The attempt has been made over time to use language and symbol to dress up that which is beyond sensation, beyond emotion, beyond thought, and necessarily beyond words, so that we can perceive something of the outline of this profound, yet invisible wisdom.

There are many words that have been used to describe wisdom. In contemporary English language we might call wisdom “the perception of reality” – a reality which extends beyond our five senses and



An Egyptian philosopher teaching his pupil the art of iconology. Etching. Wellcome Collection. Public Domain Mark.

encompasses the soul nature. In our traditional Theosophical literature we think in terms of *buddhi*, and the vehicle capable of experiencing *buddhi* we speak of as *buddhi-manas* – *the illumined mind*, or wisdom-mind. In *The Voice of the Silence*, and in Buddhist practice, there is the concept of perfections, or *pāramitās*. In Buddhist teachings there are six or ten *pāramitā*-s. In *The Voice of the Silence* H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) enumerated seven. The final one that is listed is the perfection of wisdom, *prajñā*. In the attempts to communicate what *prajñā* is, it is referred to in different ways. In Tibetan Buddhism there is a long mantra, or sutra, that is recommended to be recited and meditated upon, called the *Prajñā-pāramitā Sutra*, or the sutra on the wisdom perfection. That sutra is a description given by Avalokiteśvara, who had the experience of the wisdom-mind, trying to communicate it to Śāriputra – another disciple of the Buddha.

Avalokiteśvara attempts a description of wisdom in this mantra, which is both fascinating and powerful in its potential for realization. The way in which wisdom is described is completely in terms of negation, that is, only described as what it is not. The view of the *Prajñā-pāramitā Sutra* is that wisdom cannot be defined or named, it can only be indicated by

stripping away that which it is not. In the Sutra there is a masterful stripping away of everything that would hide a true perception of wisdom from us.

In speaking to Śāriputra, Avalokiteśvara says: “This is the original character of everything. It is not born, it is not annihilated, it is not tainted, it is not pure. It does not increase, it does not decrease. . . . In wisdom there is no eye, no ear, no nose, no body, no mind, no ignorance, also no ending of ignorance.” If this does not strain our mind, what does? Everything that our normal perception can grasp is not wisdom. This is one approach to try to communicate the nature, the value, and to bring about the experience of wisdom. This is the *via negativa*, the path that leads to wisdom through negation.

There are other ways of describing wisdom. Socrates was regarded as the wisest man alive in his time. Although he was exceedingly knowledgeable, and highly sought after for his knowledge, he was recognized as wise because he would tell whoever would ask that “I know one thing, that I know nothing”. His perception that wisdom is composed of nothing – no-thing – made him a wise man.

There is a book in the Bible called “The Book of Wisdom” or “The Wisdom of Solomon”. In that short book King Solomon describes his view of wisdom

and how he came to it. It is an often overlooked esoteric description. It is a very different description from the *via negativa* approach of the *Prajñā-pāramitā Sutra*. It is given in positive, or assertive, terms and personifies wisdom as feminine, as “she” or “her”. One of the reasons Solomon was regarded as the wisest of men was that when he became king of his people he was told by God to make any wish, and it would be granted. A normal king would have wished to extend his kingdom, or to have riches beyond any man who had lived. Instead, his wish was: “Grant me wisdom and understanding.” He recognized that all other virtues followed from these two. In this book Solomon describes wisdom in beautiful and poetic ways.



“KNOWLEDGE COMES BUT WISDOM LINGERS”
Robert Lewis Reid (1862–1929). Photographed by Carol
Highsmith (2007). Creative Commons, Public domain.

He says we should seek her like people seek after silver and gold, and search for her as a hidden treasure. He says that wisdom is “more moving than motion”, and “she passes through all things because of her purity”. He added that wisdom, being One, undivided, can do all things, and “resting in herself she makes all things new”. This is poetry, but also beauty, truth, and power. In Oneness, she is everywhere present. As he expressed it: “She mightily goes from one end of the universe to the other, and sweetly orders all things.” This is wisdom from the perspective of Solomon, a presentation of the *via positiva*. Neither the *via negativa* nor the *via positiva* is correct. Each is partial, but both of them are attempts to point us in the direction of what is described as a hidden treasure within each one of us. If we had to travel to distant lands to find these particular treasures, the teachings would be pointless.

There are countless sayings that repeat some aspect of the idea that “with age, comes wisdom”. It is a very popular expression that we might have even said ourselves: “Youth for activity, age for wisdom.” But is that saying true? Does the process of adding another year add some increment of wisdom? I doubt it! One of the things we notice is that when the wise describe this wisdom, it is as something which is

hidden; it is veiled. It is not discovered. We do not find it, and we certainly do not create it. It is ever present, but unseen, although its activity and potential are constantly available.

What is the veiling process that hides wisdom from our perception and our experience? In our present human stage of development, the greatest veiling agent to our perception of Truth or Wisdom is desire, and our deep involvement in the desiring process. HPB and others described the major focus of the human mind at our stage as the mind of desire, *kāma-manas*. We are in a continual process of repeating desires.

The capacity for our senses to pursue the many desires of the senses – taste, sight, touch, smell, and hearing – diminishes with time, with age. In a sense, the capacity to give expression to the desiring mind diminishes just by virtue of living in this world long enough. Of course, there is nothing virtuous in that process; it is just a fact. One may appear to be virtuous simply because with age our capacity to express our desires diminishes. But this is appearance only, not reality.

Part I of *Light on the Path* gives three different classes of instructions. If these three are pursued, it leads to experiencing the wisdom-mind. In the words of this booklet, we will then be able to look for and see the

blooming of the flower of the soul, which takes place when the storm has become silent. But attention to these three classes of instructions comes first, beginning with killing out certain ranges of desire – ambition, desire for sensation, for growth, for life, and so on. The next set of instructions are about cultivating desire – for things that are intangible, inexpressible in normal ways. Then come the instructions about seeking out the way. But “kill out” is the first category.

In the process of aging, the death of some of the things that *Light on the Path* advises us to kill out occurs in the natural course of things. They die out naturally from the death of one’s capacity to engage. So ambition, desire for sensation, and so on, die out with old age. But, again, to “die out” is not the same as to “kill out”. One involves the effect of the focused will, the other is simply due to the passage of time. The will that is focused over the course of many lifetimes has the capacity to kill out, to kill the root of the various kinds of desires that bloom life after life. In the case of any plant that dies in the autumn, its roots become strengthened during the winter, and it comes back with renewed fervor in the spring. “Kill out” is an admonition to one who would be a disciple.

We have the three Theosophical classics: *At the Feet of the Master*, *The*

Voice of the Silence, and *Light on the Path*. The last one is spoken of as the advanced course in the sense that it is not written for those who are trying to find their way to the Path, nor for those who are trying to cultivate certain qualities along the Path. Plainly written at the beginning, it is intended for all disciples who find themselves firmly rooted, committed in this way, then it will be a book that can speak to them. In the absence of that commitment it might be interesting, informative, but not useful.

Damodar Mavalankar, in some of his writings during the course of his brief time here with us, put the nature of the spiritual path in very succinct terms. He said that a complete description of spiritual progress is this: “Check your desires, learn to control your mind. This is the foundation of all spiritual progress.” In the Mahatma Letters much profound knowledge and many indications toward wisdom are given. They are so numerous that it is easy to overlook many of them. One of those indications that can actually be a practice for us to the extent that we can remember it and try to apply it, is: “It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world.” This advice was being given in a letter to A. O. Hume, advising him not to allow the mind to become disturbed.

That is part of the work, and it occurs through checking the emotions, learning to control the mind.

Another quote to close with, and to ponder over, relates to the unruffled mind – the capacity for it to be impressed from the invisible, and be expressed in the visible: “It is in the dead of night that Krishna is born.”

*There lives a Master in the
hearts of men*

*[who] Maketh their deeds by
subtle pulling-strings,*

*Dance to what tune HE will.
With all thy soul*

*Trust Him, and take Him for
thy succour...!*

Bhagavadgita
Chapter 18, verses 61–62

The Psychologist and the Magician

Dr Ian Ellis-Jones



This article is based on a talk given by the author to many Theosophical and other groups, including Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney in November 2008.

Self as illusion

Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), the founder of the system of religious thought known as Christian Science, wrote:

You command the situation if you understand that mortal existence is a state of self-deception and not the truth of being.¹

I would express that truth slightly differently. Each of us has an illusory sense of a separate selfhood, a false and misplaced view of who we really are. We cling to the ‘self’ as self and we even manage to convince ourselves that we ‘belong’ to this supposed ‘self’, that we are those myriads of ‘I’s’ and ‘me’s’ that make up our waxing and waning consciousness. We spend so much of our mortal existence in a state of self-deception or self-hypnosis. The truth is, there is no ‘self’, by which I mean we are not those little I’s and

me’s that we mistakenly take to be the real person that we are.

The English neurologist John Hughlings Jackson wrote that consciousness is intermittent in nature and undergoes continuous fluctuations from moment to moment. True, we have a sense of continuity of ‘self’ but it is really an illusion. The self has no ‘substance’ in psychological reality. It is simply a mental construct composed of a continuous ever-changing confluence of impermanent components (‘I-moments’) that are cleverly synthesised by the mind in a way which appears to give them a singularity and a separate and independent existence and life of their own.

The Scottish philosopher David Hume wrote in his *Treatise of Human Nature*² that we tend to believe that the ‘self’ is real because of what we perceive to be the felt smoothness of the transition which imagination effects between one point and another. In truth, all that we are dealing with is a bundle of experiences having the illusion of continuity about them. Immanuel

Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell and J. Krishnamurti have all expressed a similar view.

The German cognitician Thomas Metzinger writes that ‘nobody ever was or had a self ... The phenomenal self is not a thing, but a process.’³ Within each one of us there are literally thousands of ‘I’s’ and ‘me’s’. For example, there is the ‘I’ who wants to go to work today and the ‘I’ who doesn’t. There’s the ‘I’ who likes ‘me’ and the ‘I’ who doesn’t. There’s the ‘I’ who wants to give up smoking and the ‘I’ who doesn’t, and so on. Now, how can the ‘I’ which wants to keep on smoking change the ‘I’ which wants to stop smoking? How can the ‘self’ change the ‘self’ if self is non-existent? It cannot. William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942 to 1944, said:

For the trouble is that we are self-centred, and no effort of the self can remove the self from the centre of its own endeavour; the very effort will plant it there the more fixedly than ever.⁴

A metaphysical story

Many decades ago, I was given a tattered old copy of a curious short story to read. The story, which first appeared in 1920, was called *The Psychologist and the Magician*⁵, and it was written by Ernest Christopher

Rodwick, an American practitioner of mental science. He was a painter and paperhanger by trade as well as an inventor. He even designed a suggested international flag which was copyrighted in 1918.

The story of *The Psychologist and the Magician* is set in 1910 and takes place in a mountain cave known as Black Cat Cave in the Himalayan Mountains. The story concerns a psychologist, Professor Herman von Scholtz, described as ‘one of the ablest scientists of Europe’⁶, and a magician/hypnotist, Marbado, who is said to have ‘no peer in India as a magician.’⁷ Like so many spiritual or metaphysical stories, this story also concerns a ‘journey’ or ‘quest’ of some kind. The psychologist, who is generally referred to in the story as either ‘the Professor’ or ‘von Scholtz’, agrees to undergo what is described as an ‘ordeal’⁸, actually the ordeal of life.

As one might expect in such a story, there is a ‘path’ of sorts, but it consists of moment-to-moment experiences. The ‘instructions’⁹ of the magician were as follows. The psychologist must ‘go to the end of this cave and out again regardless of what he will see, hear, feel or think.’ The magician, who is highly skilled in the art of illusion, assures the psychologist that no bodily harm will come to him, saying:

The cave will be lighted by our own personal presence, but if you are in any doubt, or suspect any trickery, take your light with you, though you will find it a hindrance, as it will interfere with your vision.¹⁰

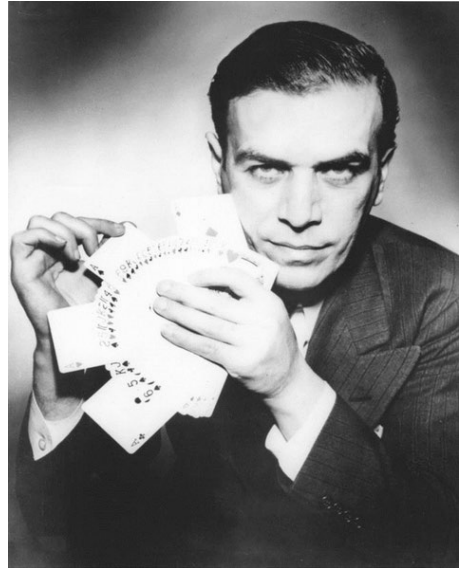
The story is an allegory illustrating the way in which we are so easily ‘hypnotised’, that is, led astray by things that have no power in themselves except the power we give them through our attention. One of my favourite lines in the story is this:

‘This surely is not magic,’ thought the Professor, ‘but life itself.’¹¹

Rodwick’s story tells us that every problem, difficulty or obstacle we face in life is an initiation of sorts by means of which we can either progress or regress, and reminds us that our environment is, for the most part at least, a shadow cast by our consciousness.

The ‘tigers’, ‘cobras’ and other horrible things inside the cave represent the thousands of I’s and me’s that make up our waxing and waning consciousness, that is, our ‘mental wallpaper’ or the so-called ‘self’. We think those I’s and me’s constitute who and what each of us really is, but that is not the case. The story tells us that these I’s and me’s, which take ‘shape’ in our mind as beliefs, ideas, opinions, prejudices and biases of innumerable

kinds, which can and so often do cause us pain, distress and suffering, have no separate, independent existence. They are certainly not the ‘person’ each of us is, even though they give these self-images a reality that in truth they don’t possess.



The magician John Searne, 1956, Creative Commons, Public Domain.

When the psychologist first goes through the cave, he sees that there is nothing in it that can harm him. However, things turn out differently after the magician starts his ‘magic’. When the psychologist and the magician first walk toward the cave, the magician refers to the presence of cobras and that they are ‘most lively at night’¹² Fortunately, the psychologist has already fortified his mind and, with

only a couple of lapses of attention, is mindfully aware at all times of what is taking place from one moment to the next. However, whenever the psychologist accepts the magician's suggestions, he experiences difficulties and pain. So do we, whenever we identify with our false sense of self. It is as if we are in a cave, walking in darkness, such that we don't know who we are or where we are going.

Every time temptations to believe the hypnotic suggestions of the magician come – of tigers, cobras and a fiery pit – what does the psychologist do? Well, he doesn't focus his attention on, for example, the size or colour of the tiger or cobra. Instead, he immediately turns his mind to what he knows is truly



Relief plaque of cobra on a nest basket (400 – 30 BC),
Creative Commons, Public Domain

within the cave. The instant he does that, the suggestion (the 'hypnosis') disappears. The psychologist says something like, 'These are not real cobras ... and they have no place in a normal mind.'¹³ In other words, he refuses to accept that the various mental projections constituting the 'self' have any separate, independent existence.

Pain and suffering are real

Now, pain, whether physical or emotional, is real and does hurt. There is an old limerick which goes like this:

There was a faith-healer of Deal
Who said: 'Although pain isn't real,
If I sit on a pin,
And it punctures my skin,
I dislike what I fancy I feel.'

In *The Psychologist and the Magician*, we read:

'These are not real cobras,' said von Scholtz aloud, as if addressing Marbado, 'and they have no place in a normal mind.' And as he spoke, he walked straight over their yielding bodies, but he screamed with pain as the cobras struck from right and left, but he kept right on going until he had passed over them.¹⁴

Pain and suffering are *very* real to our mortal senses. No religion or philosophy which purports to deny or trivialise their existence deserves

to have a future. In the story, the psychologist ‘screamed with pain’ as the cobras struck but he made it through the experience just the same. So can we, if we choose to live our lives mindfully in the one Presence and Power active in the universe which is the very livingness of life itself, manifesting itself in us and as us.

In *The Psychologist and the Magician* there is one occasion where the hypnotic effects experienced by the psychologist seemed so real that he went back to look to see if there was not actually something there. However, there wasn’t a thing! Interestingly, it is the so-called ‘good’ appearances that completely disorientate the psychologist. The psychologist can resist every effort of the magician to deceive him, when the suggestions come as abnormalities, as things ‘out of the blue’, so to speak, but the psychologist is tempted to yield to the hypnotic suggestions of things like the cravings associated with ordinary hunger and thirst.

So it is with us. Somehow, most of us manage to surmount the big things in life such as bereavements, major illnesses and the like. It’s the ‘broken shoelaces’ that trip us up. It’s the little things that bring us down and that we find hardest to deal with. Like the psychologist, we are so deeply asleep in materiality and our false sense of

‘self’ that we lose our dominion as persons among persons.

At one point in the story, the psychologist walks up to a wall and slaps it with his open hand, then kicks it, then picks up a rock and pounds it, all to no avail, ‘for the wall stood as solid as the mountain itself.’¹⁵ The psychologist immediately knew what he had done wrong:

‘I see my mistake,’ said the Professor, throwing away the rock as if disgusted with himself at his blundering. ‘To try to knock the wall down is to admit that it is there and but adds to its solidity by hammering away at it. The truth is, the wall does not exist as an objective fact. I should have walked on and not slapped, kicked and hammered at it; and I should have looked on it only as a form of thought which the Magician would have me accept as an objective reality, but which I deny.’ So saying, he closed his eyes and walked straight ahead and passed the apparent obstruction without hindrance, the wall disappearing as mist before the sun.¹⁶

Rodwick is here espousing the philosophy of subjective idealism which asserts that Mind is the only reality and that there is no so-called ‘objective’ world independent of the human knower. Personally, I don’t accept that view. As I see it, there

is an objective world ‘outside’ of us that is independent of us in the sense of its not being constituted by our knowledge of it. Anyway, let’s not get too bogged down in the different forms of idealism nor take too literally what was said above by the psychologist.

Non-resistance and indirectness

The underlying spiritual significance of the ‘wall’ episode is simple. It illustrates the metaphysical law of non-resistance, which Jesus and all other wise teachers teach. ‘What we resist, persists.’ In the words of the old Oriental maxim, ‘What you think upon grows.’ There is another metaphysical law, which is closely related to the law of non-resistance, namely, the law of indirectness. That law says that we should never attempt to put a negative or otherwise troublesome thought or problem out of our mind directly but rather *let* the thought or problem slip from the sphere of conscious analysis. That is the right way to proceed. Do not try. Instead, *let*.

So, what *are* we to do when we see snakes, lions, tigers and deep crevices? Remember, our snakes and lions may take the form of cravings, attachments, obsessions, and appetites of various kinds. Simply say, ‘Who is speaking?’ No voice answers back. Hypnotic suggestion is neither presence nor power. We must release our belief in the supposed independent reality

of our mental states, being merely hypnotic suggestions of various kinds brought about by our illusory belief in the supposed separate existence of an ‘I’ and ‘me’.

When confronted with life’s difficulties and troubles, the instructions given by the magician to the psychologist are worth applying. We are to go to the end of the cave, figuratively speaking, and out again regardless of what we see, hear, feel, or think, and regardless of what becomes of us.¹⁷



Herbert E. Crowley (1873 – 1937) A Seaside Cave.
Creative Commons, Public Domain.

There is no magician

In truth, there really is no ‘magician.’ The magician isn’t a person. It is nothing more than our mistaken belief in the separate, independent existence of a ‘self’. Each one of us is a person among persons. We need to stop identifying with the thousands of I’s and me’s that make up the mental wallpaper of our waxing and waning consciousness. To quote Mary

Baker Eddy once more, we ‘must be oblivious of human self’.¹⁸

We can do no better than to live mindfully – *not* mindlessly – being fully grounded in the person, and *not* in those little selves, that in truth we really are. The author of *The Psychologist and the Magician* refers to that state of consciousness as one’s ‘normal’ or ‘right’ mind.¹⁹ The important thing is to remember to always stay mindfully aware, so that we aren’t deceived by anything other than reality. Indeed, we shouldn’t even be deceived by reality. It is within our power to conquer both illusion and ignorance and make it safely through the cave of life. We all must dehypnotise ourselves daily. In the words of H P Blavatsky:

The mind is the great slayer of the Real. Let the disciple slay the slayer.²⁰



Hypnotism Posters (ca. 1900) Public Domain Review <https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/hypnotism-posters-ca-1900>.

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- 3 Thomas Metzinger, *Being No One: The Self-Model Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p1.
- 4 William Temple, *Nature, Man and God* (London: Macmillan, 1949), Lecture IX: Freedom and Determinism, p243.
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- 7 *Ibid*, p6.
- 8 *Ibid*, p7.
- 9 *Ibid*, p8.
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- 12 *Ibid*, p8.
- 13 *Ibid*, p10.
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- 15 *Ibid*, p11.
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- 18 Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings 1883-1986* (Boston: Joseph Armstrong, 1897), p162.
- 19 *Ibid*, p10.
- 20 H P Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence* [1889] (Adyar, Chennai: TPH, 1998), Fragment I: The Voice of the Silence, §4-5.

Dr Ian Ellis-Jones is a retired lawyer and academic and the author or co-author of several books on the law. He is a member of Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney as well as the Northern Beaches Group. His interests and lecture topics include the mystery religions, mythology and the inner meaning of fairy tales.

Brotherhood, Study and Meditation

(Source: *The Philippine Theosophist*, January – March, 2018, p. 6-7)

Joselito B. Cendaña

That the Theosophical Society is “an unsectarian body of seekers after Truth, who endeavor to promote Brotherhood and strive to serve humanity,” as its very founders so gave the description, explains our inter-spiritual community’s commitment to brotherhood, study and meditation. Permit me to share some thoughts about these three theosophic practices as they are directly related to the Three Declared Objects of the Theosophical Society.

Brotherhood

The First Fundamental Proposition – there is “an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle... beyond the reach and range of thought” – established in that most comprehensive sourcebook of the Wisdom Tradition available today called *The Secret Doctrine*, is at the heart of the esoteric religious view that our true nature, it being the same true nature of all things, is none other than this unspeakable Boundless Principle, also referred to as the Absolute. It is in recognition of this fundamental

oneness of all manifestations in the Absolute that we embrace the Theosophical Society’s first object of “(forming) a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity regardless of race, creed, sex, caste or color.”

Although it is the third object that the Theosophical Society started with as its primary object during its founding one and a half centuries ago (at the time formulated as “The objects of the Society are to collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe”), it is the later added first one that has, in time, been rightly stressed most and even glorified as “the aspiration of the true adept,” as



Clasped Hands of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning - sculpture by Harriet Goodhue Hosmer (1853). Public Domain.

Master K.H. wrote of it. Nevertheless, the second object (“to encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science”) as well as the third one (“to investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man”) are complementary objects to the first in that in gaining through them a better understanding of ourselves and reality, we are more able to appreciate universal brotherhood as not something we want to achieve but as a fact of nature which we must act in accordance with, and also raise awareness about. Interpreting these three declared objects on a deeper level, therefore, we may say that our highest goal as dedicated members of the Theosophical Society, as it is the ultimate goal of every human being as monadic pilgrims, is really to wake up to Who we really are, for it is the only way of touching the truth of universal brotherhood directly and embodying it in our world. After all, Theosophia, in its highest aspect as transcendent Divine Wisdom, is the very light of mystical consciousness that the enlightened is able to unveil in himself during his divine awakening, and from which all authentic theosophical teachings emanate.

Now, it is because Divine Love is a twin aspect of Divine Wisdom (for

“Wisdom and Compassion are the two eyes of enlightenment,” as one Zen master put it), that the greatest occultist of our age, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, repeatedly emphasized altruism as the Theosophical Society’s most important work and, indeed, altruism is Wisdom applied in the field of action. Of Wisdom and Love (or Altruism) as aspects of Theosophia, I.K. Taimni, in his *Glimpses into the Psychology of Yoga*, wrote the following elucidation: “The perception of the Whole in which everything is seen in its proper perspective and true nature is Wisdom. The attitude towards the Whole and its different parts which results from the awareness of this unity and harmonious relationship is Love.” Brotherhood, as a theosophic practice, therefore, entails nothing less than the unfolding of Divine Wisdom/ Love in oneself for the ultimate benefit of all humanity and all life.

Study

Its noble ultimate objective notwithstanding, the Theosophical Society is, at times, criticized for the apparent emphasis it puts on intellectual study vis-a-vis spiritual practice such as one might see in its pursuit of its second and third objects. To those who have not made head or tail of it, the question arises: If the Absolute “transcends the power of human conception” and is “in the

words of Mandukya, unthinkable and unspeakable,” as the First Fundamental Proposition expressly states, is it worthwhile for the Society’s members to preoccupy themselves in intellectual discussions during lodge meetings rather than engage in some group spiritual practice? After all, didn’t many a saint and mystic say that the intellect is the bane of spirituality?

This objection arises from an utter misunderstanding of the higher end for which our Society’s second and third objects were conceived and of the entire process of the theosophic practice of study which goes beyond mere intellectual learning. First, it must be understood that before we can stand before the very gate of buddhi (the spiritual faculty of direct knowing, even of the Absolute) and attempt to open it, to put it metaphorically, we have to find our way to, and secure our place on, the high ground of our higher manas (unitive mind), for there is no other way between buddhi’s gate

and the miry field of our lower manas (separative mind). And the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science (both natural and occult) can help us in this regard for the more we recognize the timeless spiritual truths and principles that are common to all the world’s great religions and spiritual philosophies and that are confirmed by “the sciences,” the more we realize and understand the truth of the essential Oneness of all things beneath the appearance of separation. Albeit the understanding is only a “knowing about” for it is the most the intellect is capable of, and not a direct “knowing” (or knowing by direct experience) which is the province of buddhi and the goal of another theosophic practice called meditation, it is one that, if made to saturate into our collective consciousness, can help break down the walls that divide religions and nations, which is to say that the higher motive behind the second and third objects is to unite humanity in brotherly love.

Now on the personal level, study, as a theosophic practice, does not stop with mere intellectual understanding for its process includes the validation of the understood spiritual truths and principles by personal experience and finally, their assimilation into daily life. This way, the intellect, if used rightly (or perhaps it is more accurate to say if



Charles Sprague Pearce (1851–1914). Photographed 2007 by Carol Highsmith. Public Domain.

not allowed to use us, for thought is so compulsive, even tyrannical) serves as a bridge between our lower and higher natures – an all-important function in deed!

Meditation

As we increasingly enjoy glimpses into our true nature through the mindful, meditative life, the more we open our heart to Divine Love and are empowered to give back that love to the universe as a true brother (or sister) to all men and all beings.



Rishabh Natha seated in two stages of meditation: The San Diego Museum of Art Collection (Public Domain) via Wikimedia Commons.

Esoteric religion and cutting edge science now agree that our entire universe is not just made of matter and energy, but consciousness, and that we, as conscious beings, participate in the unfolding of reality. Hence, as co-creators of reality who envision a world of universal love and peace, the best way we can transform our present troubled world is at the level in which we are directly connected with it: consciousness, which means

that any success we can achieve in effecting a transformation of our consciousness into a more unitive one results in a corresponding positive transformation of our world. Indeed, mystic saints and sages have always said that our world is but a mirror of our own state of consciousness and that there is no saner way to transform the dark images we see in that mirror before us we call “the world” than to transform them in ourselves. And because “Authentic transformation (of consciousness),” as the world’s leading Integral philosopher Ken Wilber once wrote, “is not a matter of belief but the death of the believer” (articulating the difference between mere transformation of ideas and transformation of consciousness involving degrees of actual self-conquest and Self-Realization), the age-old spiritual practice of meditation – the technique of stilling the mind, of slaying “the great slayer of the Real” so we may awaken from our dream-world of separation – is of paramount importance. To put it metaphorically, the wave (the ego-mind) that sees itself as separate from other waves has to die down to know that it is the ocean (the Absolute) for it is in the silent depths of its true being, away from the restless waters (compulsive thinking), that this Truth is known. And the day “the believer” dies, “the great slayer

of the Real” slain, is the day the gate of buddhi, the vehicle of all-pervading Atma, is opened and the living truth of universal brotherhood, of Oneness, is known – by direct experience.

That said, the ideal practice of meditation is one that is not confined to the meditation seat but is always with its practitioner in the here and now of everyday circumstances, for “Meditation...is the essence of life,” as the revered spiritual teacher-philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti once said. As we increasingly enjoy glimpses into our true nature through the mindful, meditative life, the more

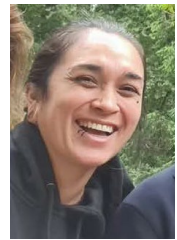
we open our heart to Divine Love and are empowered to give back that love to the universe as a true brother (or sister) to all men and all beings.

As the TS Adyar website states, “Theosophia is Divine Wisdom...a state of consciousness in which the sage or mystic goes beyond his or her mind and gets a direct, supra-conceptual perception of Truth ...the intellectual study and daily practice of Theosophy is only a means to reach the real theosophia, or inner enlightenment.”

Joselito B. Cendana is the chief editor of Peace Ideas.

A Gathering of Young Theosophists at Naarden International Theosophical Centre, The Netherlands, June 2022

Rachel Mellado



I had never heard of Theosophy until I came across a book, which led to a book, which led to another book and in trying to wrap my brain around the concept of inner alchemy and self-transformation, I found myself in the Theosophical Library in Melbourne in 2019. Imagine my face when I saw the books. To paint a picture, it was a mixture of pure excitement and existential dread. I was terrified at the

amount of brain juice I would need to muster, in order to grasp even an iota of the information provided. So, I did the only rational thing; I asked for a membership form.

It's 2022, I'm no closer to understanding the mysteries of life, even though I have more books, and I receive an email inviting me to a conference for young people on a similar journey. Several lectures and activities, with the

theme of 'Treading the Path to Self-Transformation', would be hosted at the International Theosophical Centre (ITC), nestled in the small city of Naarden in the Netherlands. I've never been to Europe, and the anxieties of travelling solo were taxing, but I'm thankful I was given the chance to experience a new leg of my self-transformation path.

I touched down in the Netherlands, and was fortunate enough to run into a young couple from the Philippines, who graciously accepted my offer to travel to the centre together. Already, I was feeling transformed. I'm not usually forward enough to reach out to people, but I was travelling alone and appreciated the company. After settling into our rooms and meeting a few other members, the group started the program with a walk through the surreal garden paths of the ITC, boasting copious amounts of greenery and a stillness only broken by the soft sounds of nature. We took moments along the walk, to acknowledge different areas of the grounds such as the Garden of Remembrance, St Michael's House and the various statues of spiritual leaders. Walking further into the grounds, we came across the cabins, one of which was occupied by the lead organiser Sara Ortega Van Vloten, unfortunate enough to catch Covid on her arrival. Pausing here to meditate, the collective sent healing energy to Sara to assist in

her recovery. Finishing up with tea and biscuits at Besant Hall, I could feel my eyes getting heavy with the jet lag and 20 hours of travelling from Perth, and decided to call it a night.

For the rest of the conference, we would meet in Besant Hall, or the Ashrama to hear lectures about different philosophical approaches to the Ageless Wisdom, complemented with activities to develop our skills in effective communication and processing inner conflict. We were privileged to hear from two quite distinguished and learned theosophists; International President Tim Boyd and Vic Hao Chin, former President of the Indo-Pacific Federation and the Philippines Section. Tim was captivating with his down-to-earth anecdotes and expressive language. He makes the ever daunting subject of Theosophy more easily understood by expressing complicated ideas in non-complicated language.

Vic's practical lectures provided us with useful tools to assist in navigating life on a daily basis, frequently checking in with our emotional health, whilst working towards becoming assertive and positive individuals. Utilising everything that was learnt and explored, it was possible to see how the many facets of Theosophy are shared and experienced in our daily lives.

Arend and Peter, local members and facilitators at the ITC, were gracious

and hospitable, sharing stories of their youth as Theosophists and coordinating the activities at the centre, both past and present. We were able to spend parts of the day, volunteering around the ITC, fixing the fence line, collecting wood, and gardening around the perimeter. This time spent with other young Theosophists was rich with conversations; swapping stories of our lodges back home and dreaming of better futures for more young Theosophists. Provided by the talented Kabir Catering, nutritious and delicious vegan meals were taken at Crystal Hall, where friendships began to bloom, ideas and invitations were spread and laughter filled the tall ceilings. After dinner, everyone would gather around the tables with a cup of tea; some people singing and playing music, others playing card games or discussing books we've read and which parts of Theosophy attract us most. Although I am introverted by nature, I challenged myself to have conversations with each of the members of the group, gathering

snippets of Theosophical wisdom from all corners of the globe. It was these conversations that made the path of "self"-transformation, less lonely and more inspired.

The youth-led activities included brainstorming in small groups; what we each see and hope, for the future of Theosophy and young people. The group listened intently, as members from around the world shared their experiences, knowledge and discoveries; displaying the many facets of Theosophy and what it means for each individual in attendance. The bonds formed, through sharing and being vulnerable with one another, enriched the experience, showing that all across the globe, there are people who are working towards building better lives in service to unity and brotherhood.

A massive thanks to the team who organised this event, I look forward to many more.

Rachel Mellado is a member of Perth Branch.



Springbrook School Of Theosophy

Jim Scrivener writes about a road far ahead,
encountering Snakes and Ladders...



21-25 APRIL, 2022

About an hour's drive from Gold Coast, Australia, the road rises via tortuous routes about 600m. to the Springbrook Theosophical Society Retreat¹, the temperature dropping 5°C on the way, and because of its location amongst subtropical rainforest away from civilisation, there is a sense of arrival at a special paradise. The noise of traffic is replaced with birdsong² and the rainforest envelops one. A short drive away and worth visiting are Purling Brook Falls and Best of All Lookout³, both in Springbrook National Park. At the retreat itself, there is a pleasant seven-minute bush walk to the top of a waterfall. On the large lawn, pademelon⁴, magpie and brush turkey graze.

In addition to organisers Australian National President Stephen McDonald, Education Coordinator Simon O'Rourke, presenters Pedro Oliveira and Linda Oliveira, 18 keen students from up the coast down to Tasmania, with one from across the 'ditch' (commonly known as New Zealand), converged on Springbrook to study *The*

Voice of the Silence: Inner Preparation for the Bodhisattva Path. Pedro and Linda had selected verses relating to the path of renunciation, a path less travelled⁵ – a choice we can make only after our personal karma has been dealt with and we've become pure enough – to choose to delay our own further evolution by staying back to help all living beings.

As with most Theosophical gatherings, there was a good age range, in this case from early 40s to a sprightly 87 and similarly a wide range of life experiences. The camaraderie, common purpose and sense of humour among the group was evident instantly. Also, the great atmosphere was enhanced further by the wonderful catering. The normal live-in caretaker and her daughter provided meticulously crafted vegan meals with menus influenced from around the world.

The routine for the four full days started with a 7:30am meditation, two morning study sessions, free time after lunch, 4pm interactive sessions presented by Simon and Stephen to do with practical skills for Theosophists – developing programmes, presentation

skills and voice training, using Zoom and PowerPoint, giving our own five-minute presentations, chairing meetings in dealing with difficult situations. For the 7:30pm evening sessions there were music playlists, interesting videos and time around the wood fire in the dining room.

In the study sessions Linda and Pedro had chosen specific verses to study. Their method usually started with questioning people on their understanding of certain words and phrases with no right or wrong answers – this was a real sharing by presenters and students not just one-way lecturing – that gave us a wider view of the possible meanings, then expanding on them and in Pedro's case including interesting anecdotes about major figures in the TS both in early times and from his own experience, which

made for very enjoyable sessions. The required five-minute presentations were probably daunting to us all – we chose one of ten topics mentioned in the book and conscientiously did our best. The result didn't matter – it was a supportive audience and it was all good practice in helping us to be better at sharing our Theosophical interests with others, which I think is the main point of being a member.

It occurred to me that while most of us were probably nowhere near the beginning of the Path, nevertheless the incredibly poetic roadmap shown in *The Voice of the Silence* was still useful in giving us an idea of where we are all headed and the qualities we need to develop to approach the Path and then, probably in many lifetimes, becoming one with the Path. Being the last book Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB)



wrote, it deserves special importance. Linda and Pedro pointed out that it can be returned to again and again picking on a verse that resonates, to use in meditation. Throughout the book it mentions the difference between the Doctrine of the Eye – meaning Head learning about external transient things (even from Theosophical books) and the Doctrine of the Heart – Soul-Wisdom to do with the embodiment of true divine wisdom, permanent and everlasting.

It seems that when we have won our right to put a foot on the Path by balancing our karma, the work is not over. One perceptive student likened it to a divine game of Snakes and Ladders. Perceptive indeed. I found out later that the game originated in ancient India about the second century BC, so a connection with more ancient writings is probable. *The Voice of the Silence* refers to setting our foot on the first rung of the ladder: “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 pain⁶ ;” and warns we must be free of all vices. In the second Hall – the Hall of Learning – “In it thy Soul will find the blossoms of life, but under every flower a serpent coiled⁷ ...” We are tested all the way and like the game, even at the end a snake can take

you back to start again if there is a hint of pride or other vice.

It was a wonderful experience of meeting like-minded people, sharing ideas and learning with sincere and talented presenters Linda and Pedro Oliveira, in a beautiful facility and setting, excellently co-ordinated by Stephen McDonald and Simon O’Rourke.

My thanks go to the Australian TS for sponsoring the course fees and accommodation of a Kiwi participant each year, and to the TS New Zealand for sponsoring the cost of travel. I would encourage anyone who has the chance, to attend one of these Schools of Theosophy.

Finally, some comments from other participants:

“Atop the mountains amongst the clouds we entered *The Voice of the Silence*.

Linda and Pedro were our guides through the Three Halls to discover the path of transformation in the Seven Portals of virtues to develop the qualities of concentration, meditation and Samadhi.” **Bruce**

“Great opportunity to meet like-minded people; all got on. Speaker/teachers worked with the student attendees, not just for the students – all/both were learning. Non-TS teachings were very useful – presentation

tips: tongue-twister exercise, voice adjustments... word sentence making – managing/chairing tips.” **John**

“I have attended many schools, but this is the first where interaction was so much better from co-ordinators and students; two opinions definitely better than one. Hope this continues.”

“I am very grateful. Great food, great people, great insights. Loved it!”

“Coming together with like-minded people with a common purpose is powerful and we shared a wonderful energy.”

“Good stuff!”

“Mindfulness, thoughtfulness can awaken divine inspirations.”

“Inspiring and uplifting. Gratitude.”

“The Path for Truth is fraught with snakes and ladders, even at the door to Enlightenment.” **George**

“See you in October.” **Diane and Lily, Brisbane NYC**

“Delicious food. Stimulating discussions. Great company. Being in paradise. Wonderful experience.”

“The most wonderful thing about the retreat was the feeling of the oneness of each other and appreciating the unique expression of love and inner wisdom of everyone in the group.”

“Delightful exploration and exchange.”

“I came to the Voice of the Silence and heard Nothing.”

“This retreat ticked all the boxes.”

Jim Scrivener has been a member since 1988 and is currently President of the New Plymouth Branch in New Zealand.

‘Don’t you want to go away sometimes to be quiet and take stock of things? Don’t you want to do that some time, don’t you want to be quiet, don’t you want to know more of yourself?... It is essential sometimes to go to retreat, to stop everything you have been doing. You would then let in fresh air into your minds... That is why it is good to take a retreat, to go away, and to stop the routine—not only the routine of outward existence, but the routine the mind establishes for its own safety and convenience’.

J Krishnamurti

National Calendar of Events

SPRINGBROOK EVENT – OCTOBER 2022

For TS Members and Non-Members

Dates:

Thurs 27 October – Sun 30 October

Theme:

Ancient Wisdoms in a Modern World: a contemporary exploration of the stories and symbols that bring meaning to our lives

About:

Making sense of our human experience can bring meaning to our lives. These sessions will help us become conscious of the meanings we have assigned to things and the effect it has on our behaviours. Reflecting on the reasons for our thinking and feelings may help to calm our behaviour and bring peace of mind.

Presenters:



Berry Dunston – *is President of the Hobart Branch of the Theosophical Society.*

She was formerly a Lecturer at the University of Technology

Sydney. Not long before moving to Tasmania in 2005, she became a Clinical Counsellor and Psychotherapist.



Gayle Thomas – *is National Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Australia.*

She worked as a Chaplain of Theosophy in the hospital and hospice sector in

Queensland. Spiritual Care dovetails nicely with Berry's practice, as it facilitates the exploring of an individual's story. Through selfless listening a safe space is provided and the person listened to can express their sense of the world and where they have found their own strength and spirituality.

Cost:

\$180 (members), \$220 (non-members) – includes all sessions, accommodation, catering and airport/station transfers.

Enquiries to:

Stephen McDonald
pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au
or (02) 9264 7056.

2023 NATIONAL CONVENTION

For TS members

Dates:

Wed 25 January – Wed 1 February 2023

Venue:

St Mark's College, University of Adelaide

Theme:

New Frontiers for an Ageless Wisdom: Exploring the powers latent in humanity

Featured Speaker:

Professor Emeritus Richard Silberstein

Keynote Address:

Time, Consciousness, and the Enigma of Precognition.

Second Talk:

The Self, an Illusion, or the Reflection of a Deeper Reality?'

A very popular and engaging speaker, Richard Silberstein is a long-time member of the Theosophical Society.

The title and role of Professor Emeritus at Swinburne University, Melbourne, was conferred upon him in 2014. His long and distinguished career there spanned forty years of service, which



included roles in teaching, research, management and services to the scientific and broader community. He developed Steady State Topography (SST), a new and unique method for imaging brain function. Richard will be featured twice on the Convention programme, including a discussion on his latest research work.

Other Speakers will include:

Victor Gostin

Olga Gostin

Phillipa Rooke

Dara Tatray

Simon O'Rourke

Barry Bowden

Accommodation (subsidised) Rates:

\$700 for 7 nights, standard single rooms (or \$770 for airconditioned rooms). This tariff includes all meals and morning and afternoon tea. Both room styles have shared bathrooms.

For those travelling together, a limited number three-bedroom apartments are available at a similar cost. Please email us for further information about this options.

If preferred payment may be made in 2 or 4 equal instalments. For further information about instalments, please contact the National Secretary, Gayle Thomas, natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au or on (02) 9264 6404.

Registration Fee:

\$40

Registration Forms:

Are available from our website –
theosophicalsociety.org.au

Registration Deadline:

For guaranteed rooms, live-in
registrants – Wed 30 November 2022.

Enquiries:

Jennifer Hissey, Convention Secretary,
catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au

Early registrations are encouraged.
We look forward to meeting you in
Adelaide.



News and Notes

Vale – Judith James (Lunnon) **(22/10/26 – 16/7/22)**

My mother, Judith James, joined the Theosophical Society (T.S.) in her 20's after listening to their broadcasts on 2GB radio station since her late teen years. Subsequently, she was the Secretary of the Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney for many years.

Judith was invited to join the Esoteric School, but sadly declined because she was married and a bit daunted by the offer. I know in later years she told me that she regretted not doing so – she felt it was a lost opportunity spiritually. She lived in Dee Why on the Northern Beaches of Sydney and commuted to the Lodge to attend classes and do her work as Secretary.

I (Janice) did study courses at Clifton Gardens as a ‘Young Theosophist’ with Linda Oliveira for some time but sadly drifted away from the T.S. due to child rearing, work and a busy life. Mum was involved right up into her 60’s when our dad, George Lunnon died. She then moved down to Berry on the South Coast of New South Wales and married Ray James, who she had met at T.S. conventions. Sadly, Judith lost contact with the T.S. due to distance and her age (in her 70’s).

She attended many T.S. conventions including Canberra, Bali, and Adelaide. She was a friend of Erica Patient (who now lives in New Zealand) and other well-known members of Blavatsky Lodge, such as Gladys MacCarthy and Celia Novy. Mum died at the age of 95 and is survived by her daughters, Pamela Lunnon and Janice Lunnon of Berry NSW.

This information was provided by Judith’s daughter, Janice Lunnon.



Vale – Max Brandenberger

Max Brandenberger was a passionate learner and lover of Theosophy. He was President of the Atherton Lodge in Queensland until the Lodge closed down. His joy in a robust discussion of all opinions was apparent not only in Theosophy but biodynamics and many of his learning loves in life.

Max enjoyed the time in later years thinking and pondering on the ways of the universe and took much enjoyment in his constant desire to understand life. He was not a fan of small talk; he preferred discussing epigenetics, quantum physics and Theosophy with family and friends.

When Max received a pacemaker at 85 and it was possible that he may not get his driver’s licence back, he considered going to university to study. Such was his enduring passion for knowledge. Max passed away peacefully on 26 June 2022.

This tribute was supplied by Max’s daughter, Vanessa Allen.





ONLINE EVENT:
**15th Indo-Pacific Federation
 Conference**

Dates:

Sat 12 November - Mon 14 November
 2022. A 3-day online event hosted by
 the Malaysia Selangor Lodge

Theme:

Finding Joy Amidst Uncertainty

Details:

Register as soon as possible or
 by 31 October 2022 by the
 latest at the following link:
www.theosophicalsocietymalaysia.com/post/ipf15tsmalaysia

**147th International Convention
 of the Theosophical Society,
 Adyar, India**

Theme:

*Our Responsibility in the
 Interconnected World*

Venue:

International Headquarters, Adyar,
 Chennai 600 020, India.

Main programs will be broadcast online.

Convention website:

Further information is available at
<https://convention.ts-adyar.org/>

All members of the Society are
 welcome to attend as delegates.

Non-members can register for the
 Convention and meals for the Canteen
 but are not eligible for accommodation.

For more information and assistance
 please contact Stephen McDonald
 (National President) on 02 9264 7056
 or at pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au

International Youth Convention, Adyar, India



Theme:

The Hidden Side of Things

Dates:

27 to 29 December 2022

Age limit:

18-45 years

Venue:

Blavatsky Bungalow, International Headquarters of the TS

Sessions:

Will have a mix of contemplative discussion-based study and reflection, as well as interactive recreational activities like walking tours around the campus and the now well-known campfire gathering on the last day.

Fee:

The package rate is 3000 INR or 40 USD for the whole time with proper accommodation and all meals. The package starts from lunch on the 26th ending at lunch on the 30th of December 2022, but the room needs to be vacated immediately after breakfast.

Registration:

<https://www.ts-adyar.org/event/hidden-side-things>

For more information and assistance please contact Stephen McDonald (National President) on 02 9264 7056 or at pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au

The School of the Wisdom, Adyar, India

Theme:

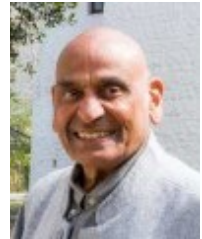
The Necessary Journey of Self-transformation

Dates:

9 – 20 January 2023

Facilitator:

Prof. Emeritus Ravi Ravindra



Venue:

Blavatsky Bungalow, Theosophical Society Campus, Adyar

Times:

Monday to Friday

Meditation: 8.00 to 8.30 a.m.

Classes: 8.30 to 11.00 a.m. and 3.30 to 5.00 p.m. (or 2.30 - 4.00 pm)

More information and Application Form: <https://www.ts-adyar.org/event/necessary-journey-self-transformation>

For more information and assistance please contact Stephen McDonald (National President) on 02 9264 7056 or at pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au

When we recognise that unity of all living things, then at once arises the question - how can we support this life of ours with least injury to the lives around us; how can we prevent our own life adding to the suffering of the world in which we live?

Annie Besant

Guidelines for Contributors

Deadline For Submissions

Should be received by the first Friday of the month prior to the particular edition (e.g., Friday 4 February for March edition).

Selection Criteria

Contributions to Theosophy in Australia are welcome on any aspect of Theosophy or related subjects, including historical articles and poetry. Preference will be given to original pieces written by Australian authors.

Feedback

After being reviewed by our Editorial Committee, you will be informed that your article has been accepted, that it has been accepted pending modifications, or not accepted for publication.

Referencing

Theosophy in Australia uses the APA style of referencing. Please go to: libguides.newcastle.edu.au/apa-7th.

Length

Please ensure your article is not more than 2300 words in length. Where space is not available in a particular edition, the article may be considered for subsequent issues of the magazine.

Format

Keep the formatting as simple as possible, without too many indents or other emphases (bold or italic) except where necessary. Indents may be used for longer quotations.

Pictures

You are welcome to include a few relevant photos/images; however, you must provide an attribution and they must be copyright free.

Contact Information

Please include your full name, telephone number and email address at the top of the first page of text only.

Section Directory

It is advisable to check in advance to confirm resumption of meetings.

AUSTRALIAN SECTION NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 6404

Fax: 02 9264 5857

Email: tshq@theosophicalsociety.org.au

Web: theosophicalsociety.org.au

Campbell Theosophical Research Library:

Email: catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au

Facebook: @TheTheosophicalSocietyInAustralia

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Canberra Group, Certified 16/11/2019

Meet: Friends Meeting House, Crn. Bent and

Condamine Streets, Turner.

2- 4 pm, 3rd Saturday of the month

Coordinator: Gordon Herbert

Tel: 0466 464 064

Email: canberratheosophicalsociety@gmail.com

Secretary: Barbara Harrod

Tel: 02 6254 1415

NEW SOUTH WALES

Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:

Postal Address: PO Box 319, St Leonards NSW 1590

Meet: Suite 8, 599 Pacific Highway, St. Leonards

NSW 2065 (entrance in Albany Street)

1.00pm Wednesdays + many others activities

(see website for full program)

Telephone: Reception: 02 9267 6955

Email: contact@tssydney.org.au

Web: sydney.theosophicalsociety.org.au/

President: Rosanna Sheridan

Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Facebook: @tssydney

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:

Meet: Wallsend Railway Goods Shed,

76 Cowper Road, Wallsend

President: Patricia Bolsover

0421 699 631, pat_bolsover@optusnet.com.au

Secretary: Jane Wilson

zoisite888@gmail.com

Email: anthonybuzek61@bigpond.com

Web: newcastle.theosophicalsociety.org.au/

Blue Mountains Group, Certified 13/5/1997:

Meet: Members' Lounge, Blue Mountains

Cultural Centre, 30 Parke Street (above Coles),
Katoomba NSW 2780

Due to Covid meetings are currently suspended

Acting Coordinator: Jessica Gemmell

Email: tsbluemountains@gmail.com

Gosford Group, Certified 11/11/1997

Meet: The Narara Community Centre,

Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250

8.00pm 2nd Tuesday of the month

Coordinator: Vivien Wareing

Tel: 0429 088 995

Email: vivienwareing@hotmail.com

Secretary: Roni Ostergaard

Telephone: 02 4358 1413

Northern Beaches Group, Certified 2/4/1996:

Postal address and meeting address:

c/- 31 Riviera Street, Avalon NSW 2107

1.30 pm 1st Saturday of the month

Please email to confirm meetings

Coordinator: Nila Chambers

Email: nilachambers@bigpond.com

QUEENSLAND

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:

355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000

Tel: 07 3839 1453

Meet: 7.30 pm Wednesdays, bookshop and library

open Monday and Friday 10.30 am - 2.30 pm and

Wednesdays 6 - 7.15 pm (see website for other events)

President: Bruce Cassidy

Secretary: Dianne Manning

Email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au

Web: brisbane.theosophicalsociety.org.au

Facebook: @brisbanetheosophicalsociety

Logan Group, Certified 9/4/2019:

Meet: Logan Hyperdome Library (meeting room

downstairs) 66 -70 Mandew St, Shailer Park.

Bimonthly on the first Thursday (4 - 8 pm -

including talk 6:30 - 7:30 pm) and the third

Thursday (9:30 am - midday).

Tel: 0418 755 496

Coordinator: Christine Gwin

Email: logantheosophy@gmail.com

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 14/10/2003:

Meet: Maroochy Community Centre, 4 George Street,
Maroochydhore on first and third Sundays at 2 pm.

Email: theosophy.sunshinecoast@gmail.com

President: Kerry Oldfield

Secretary: Jean Carroll/0402 805 127

Facebook: @theosophysunshinecoast

Toowoomba Group, Certified 10/7/2007:

Meet: East Creek Community Centre, 43 Kitchener St,
Toowoomba QLD 4350, Sunday 2 pm fortnightly

Annual Springbrook retreat each Spring

Co-ordinator: Anna Robb

Tel: 0427 751 464

Email: nemesisbarry@gmail.com

SOUTH AUSTRALIA**Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:**

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000

Tel: 08 8223 1129

Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au

Web: adelaide.theosophicalsociety.org.au

Meet: 10.30am, 4th Saturday, Science Group, 7-9pm
every 2nd Thursday.

(Please contact Lodge for additional meeting dates.)

President: Kevin Davey

Facebook: @adelaidetheos

TASMANIA**Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:**

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000

Tel: 03 6294 6195 (please leave message)

Web: hobart.theosophicalsociety.org.au

Meet: 7.30pm Mondays

President: Berry Dunston

Secretary: Patrizia Bini

Facebook: @theosophyhobart

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

Meet: Room 4, 8 High Street, Launceston 7250

(School for Seniors building)

Usually on the 3rd Saturday of the month,
commencing at 1.00 pm

Postal address: Launceston Lodge Secretary,
c/o 66 Flinders Street, Beauty Point TAS 7270

Email: launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com

Web: launceston.theosophicalsociety.org.au/

President/Secretary: Ruth Holt

Tel: 0448 397 246

VICTORIA**Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:**

Meet: 1st Flr., 234 Flinders' Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000

Tel: 03 8638 9007

Email: info@melbournetheosophy.org

Web: melbourne.theosophicalsociety.org.au

Meetings: Every Saturday from 1.30 pm

President: robert@melbournetheosophy.org

Secretary: Stephen Fiyalko

Facebook: @MelbourneTheosophicalSociety

Mornington Peninsula Group, Certified 8/2/2000:

Meet: Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House,

Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday of the month,

(12.30pm meditation + library – 1.30pm presenter +
questions and comments)

Acting Co-ordinator: Alice Opper 0439 563 313

WESTERN AUSTRALIA**Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:**

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000

Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104

Email: tsperth@inet.net.au

Web: tsperth.com.au

Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays

Library hours: Tues 6 – 7:15 pm, Wed - Fri 1 – 4 pm,
Sat 10 am – 2 pm.

President: John Davey

Secretary: Jean Dawson

Facebook: @TheTheosophicalSocietyInPerth

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082

All enquiries to Perth Branch

Tel: 08 9328 8104

**THEOSOPHICAL EDUCATION AND
RETREAT CENTRE, SPRINGBROOK, QLD**

2184 Springbrook Road, Springbrook QLD 4213

Tel: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211

Email: info@tsretreat.com.au

Caretaker: Kay Schiefelbein

Freedom of Thought

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

*Resolution passed by the General Council
of the Theosophical Society (1924)*



Freedom of the Society

The Theosophical Society, while cooperating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such cooperation possible, is and must remain an organisation entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title, ‘The Theosophical Society’.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organisation.

*Resolution passed by the General Council
of the Theosophical Society (1949)*



The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society

I. To form a nucleus of the **Universal Brotherhood of Humanity** without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

~

II. To encourage the study of **Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.**

~

III. To investigate unexplained laws of **Nature** and the powers latent in the human being.