

The Karmic Equation

Sometimes the Sources of True Happiness Remain Hidden



In the life of a human being, each day contains blessings and probations.

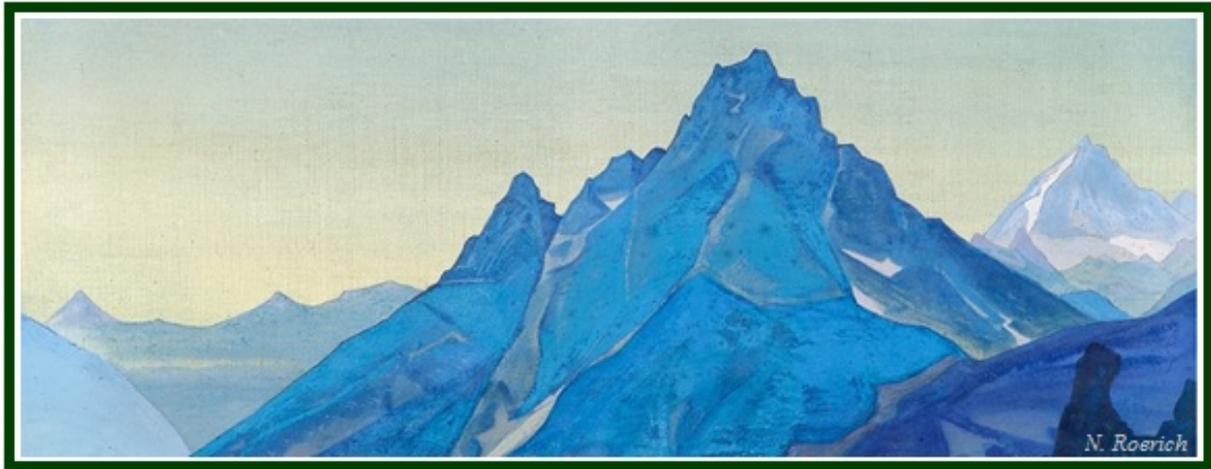
The relative weight and number of them will depend in part on the speed with which we want to learn about wisdom: for probations are lessons. On the other hand, it is wrong to think that life is “too painful”, or probations are excessively numerous and blessings, scarce.

Life is as hard with us as necessary for us to learn the lessons required by the Law. If the number of blessings one may see in life appears to be small, one has to re-examine his attitude towards life.

The sources of true happiness are hidden from the eyes of those who obey to personal desire. For the blessings are inside the probations. They are protected in their purity by suffering, just as the fruits of Nature are protected by their peels. Thus, people who look for comfort and run away from tests can't be able to attain bliss.

Blessings are everywhere, anytime. They come with the karmic requirement according to which we must deserve them, and be worthy of them. Otherwise they will remain dormant, until we ourselves are ready and have eyes to see.

The Masters, On Who Is Capable of Searching for Wisdom



* We want true and unselfish hearts; fearless and confiding souls, and are quite willing to leave the men of the “higher class” and far higher intellects to grope their own way to the light. [“The Mahatma Letters”, TUP edition, Letter 28, p. 214.]

* As for human nature in general, it is the same now as it was a million of years ago: Prejudice based upon selfishness; a general unwillingness to give up an established order of things for new modes of life and thought - and occult study requires all that and much more -; pride and stubborn resistance to Truth if it but upsets their previous notions of things, - such are the characteristics of your age, and especially of the middle and lower classes. [“The Mahatma Letters”, TUP edition, Letter 1, p. 3.]

* It is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to the possession of our secrets. He alone, such a man - will never misuse his powers, as there will be no fear that he should turn them to selfish ends. A man who places not the good of mankind above his own good is not worthy of becoming our *chela* - he is not worthy of becoming higher in knowledge than his neighbour. [“The Mahatma Letters”, TUP edition, Letter 38, p. 252.]

* How can you know the real from the unreal, the true from the false? Only by self-development. How get that? By first carefully guarding yourself against the causes of self-deception. And this you can do by spending a certain fixed hour or hours each day all alone in self-contemplation, writing, reading, the purification of your motives, the study and correction of your faults, the planning of your work in the external life. [“Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom”, First Series, TPH, 1973, p. 149, Letter II to Laura C. Holloway.]

You Never Can Tell

Ella Wheeler Wilcox



Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919)

You never can tell when you send a word,
Like an arrow shot from a bow
By an archer blind, be it cruel or kind,
Just where it may chance to go.
It may pierce the breast of your dearest friend.
Tipped with its poison or balm,
To a stranger's heart in life's great mart,
It may carry its pain or its calm.

You never can tell when you do an act
Just what the result will be;
But with every deed you are sowing a seed,
Though the harvest you may not see.
Each kindly act is an acorn dropped
In God's productive soil
You may not know, but the tree shall grow,
With shelter for those who toil.

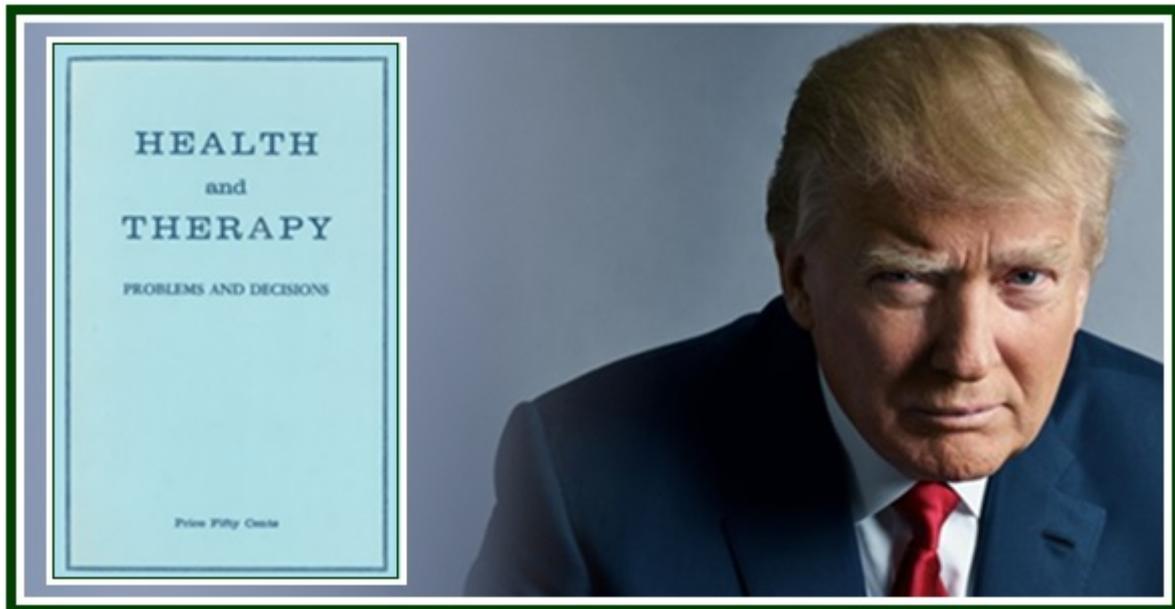
You never can tell what your thoughts will do,

In bringing you hate or love;
For thoughts are things, and their airy wings
Are swifter than carrier doves.
They follow the law of the universe -
Each thing must create its kind,
And they speed o'er the track to bring you back
Whatever went out from your mind.

[Reproduced from “**Custer And Other Poems**”, by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Copyright 1896, W. B. Conkey Company, Chicago, USA. Available online.]

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Donald Trump, Theosophy And the Practice of Vaccination



The 48-pp. pamphlet “Health and Therapy”, first published by the Theosophy Co. in the 1960s, is available online since October 2015. [1]

The book discusses health problems from the point of view of original theosophy, and questions the widespread use of vaccines in the present civilization.

The idea sounds strange to many. One would tend to think that vaccines are above questioning and theosophy makes a mistake in discussing such a topic. This is, however, not true, judging by facts now taking place in the USA.

A website dedicated to Natural Health examined in September last year the position of two Republican candidates to US presidency: Donald Trump and Ben Carson. Trump links the occurrence of autism to vaccines. [2]

Theosophists do not aim at being politically correct: they look for truth, and truth is often surprising. The fact that the discussion on Vaccines has surfaced again in 2015 is one more evidence that classical theosophy belongs to the future, as much as it belongs to the past and present.

NOTES:

[1] See “Health and Therapy”, Various Authors, in our associated websites.

[2] This is the link to the discussion:

http://www.naturalnews.com/051213_Donald_Trump_vaccines_CNN_debate.html

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Another text on Trump discussing vaccines can be found here:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-says-vaccinations-are-causing-an-autism-epidemic-10505087.html>.

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There Is a Time for Renewal When Higher Degrees of Sincerity Emerge



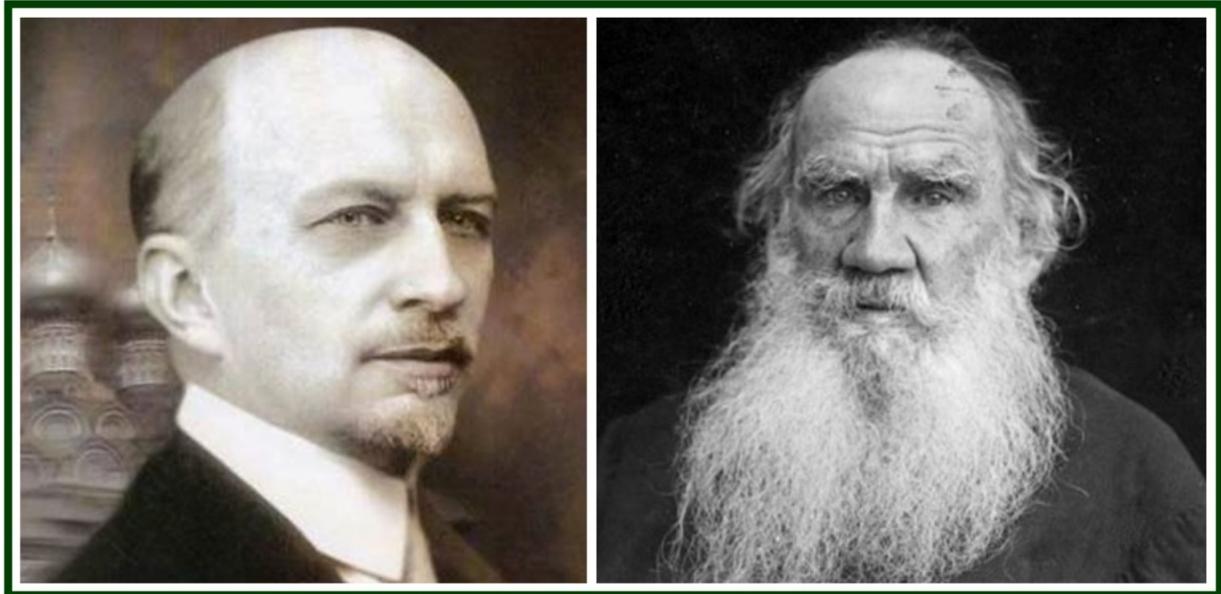
In politics, as in organized religion, Journalism or esoteric organizations, there is a time when high degrees of hypocrisy seem to be politically elegant and even unavoidable.

Then sincere words are immediately denounced as unacceptable. They are said to express an arrogant, aggressive and anti-social attitude. It is assumed to be a grave offense not to accept the rules of social falsehood.

As life never ceases to renew itself, there is also a time when the whited sepulchres are seen as such, and people who work with higher degrees of sincerity emerge as the game-changers, making new rules according to which honesty is beautiful, and fraud, ugly.

Ivan Il'in: On Resisting Evil by Force

N. O. Lossky



Ivan A. Il'in (left) and Leo Tolstoy

Editorial Note:

A few uncomfortable questions confront esoteric circles: “From an ethical and theosophical point of view, should one oppose fraud and hypocrisy, or fight crime, terrorism, and anti-Semitism? Or should we pretend we are *too spiritual* to defend Life and fight injustice?”

Although the outward cycle of civilizations is often an ugly thing to see, theosophy invites us to look at life in all its aspects, and learn from them. Helena Blavatsky was not neutral regarding the periodical conflicts taking place in human history between noble impulses and the violent worship of selfishness. In her lengthy article “Turkish Barbarities”, which was published during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878, she wrote: “I regard this war not as one of Christian against Moslem, but as one of humanity and civilization against barbarism.” There is nothing new under the Sun: in their disrespect for human lives, the Turkish troops were then behaving much like the 21st century Islamic Terrorists do. Western Europe had nothing to say in that situation, and its inability to act was denounced by Russian author Turguenyev, in a poem translated by HPB.[1]

A few decades after the war with Russia and other Slavic countries, the Turkish policy of cruelties would culminate in the Armenian Genocide. As time passed, the Western European difficulty in fighting evil got even more serious. In the 1930s, the continent could not stop Adolf Hitler. It had to be Russia and the United States to defeat Nazism in the 1940s. But by then Europe was largely destroyed, its population reduced, and a Jewish Holocaust, larger than the Armenian one, had been perpetrated by Adolf Hitler.

Theosophy has clear philosophical statements to make regarding the problem of injustice, and especially of large-scale injustice and systematic cruelty. The Eastern Masters of Wisdom who inspire the theosophical movement teach that justice is better than injustice, and one of them wrote:

“Every Western Theosophist should learn and remember, especially those of them who would be our followers - that in our Brotherhood, all personalities sink into one idea - abstract right and absolute practical justice for all. And that, though we may not say with the Christians, ‘return good for evil’ - we repeat with Confucius - ‘return good for good; for evil - JUSTICE’.” [2]

The question of resistance to evil is therefore in the agenda of those who love Life and respect mankind, and Russian philosopher Ivan A. Il'in has something to say about it. The following article is reproduced from the volume “History of Russian Philosophy”, by N. O. Lossky, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1952, 416 pp., see pp. 387-389. We have added footnotes. We adopt the transliteration of Il'in's surname into our alphabet according to its use in the recent Western editions of his books. His name is also transliterated as “Ilyin”, among other options.

(Carlos Cardoso Aveline)

Ivan Il'in: On Resisting Evil by Force

N. O. Lossky

Ivan Alexandrovich Il'in was born in 1882. He was professor of the philosophy of law in the Moscow University, was exiled from Russia by the Soviet Government in 1922 and is now living in Switzerland. [3] His chief works are: “The Philosophy of Hegel as a Concrete Teaching About God and Man”, 2 vols., 1918; “Of Resistance to Evil by Force”, Berlin, 1925; “The Religious Meaning of Philosophy”, Paris, 1925; “Of Perfect Art”, Riga; “The Path of Spiritual Renewal”, Paris, 1937.

Russian philosophers have a distinct tendency toward concrete ideal realism. It is therefore not accidental that they should have produced works about Fichte and Hegel pointing out the concrete character of those thinkers' teachings. Vysheslavtsev studied the concrete ethics of Fichte in the last period of his creative development, and Il'in proved the falsity of the prevalent conception of Hegel's philosophy as a system of abstract panlogism.[4] He has demonstrated that the idea is for Hegel a concrete principle, i.e., what Lossky [5] calls a concretely ideal entity; further, he has shown that Hegel's concrete speculation is intuition directed upon concretely ideal being. The meaning of philosophy consists for Il'in in the knowledge of God and the divine basis of the world, namely, in the study of truth, goodness and beauty as having their source in God. Il'in explains the decadence of modern art by the lack of religion among the people of the present day, and hopes that there will again come a period of religious revival, when art will flourish anew.[6]

Il'in's inquiry into “Resisting Evil by Force” is a valuable piece of work. He sharply criticizes Tolstoy's doctrine of nonresistance. Il'in says that Tolstoy calls all recourse to force in the struggle with evil “violence” and regards it as an attempt “sacrilegiously” to usurp God's will by invading another person's inner life which is in God's hands. Il'in thinks that Tolstoy's doctrine contains the following absurdity:

“When a villain injures an honest man or demoralizes a child, that, apparently, is God's will; but when an honest man tries to hinder the villain, that is not God's will.”

Il'in begins the constructive part of his book by pointing out that not every application of force should be described as “violence”, for it is an opprobrious term and prejudges the issue. The name “violence” should only be given to arbitrary, unreasonable compulsion preceding from an evil mind or directed toward evil (29 f.).

In order to prevent the irremediable consequences of a blunder or of an evil passion a man who strives after the good must in the first instance seek mental and spiritual means to overcome evil by good. But if he has no such means at his disposal, he is bound to use mental or physical compulsion and prevention. “It is right to push away from the brink of a precipice an absent-minded wayfarer; to snatch the bottle of poison from an embittered suicide; to strike at the right moment the hand of a political assassin aiming at his victim; to knock down an incendiary in the nick of time; to drive out of a church shameless desecrators; to make an armed attack against a crowd of soldiers raping a child” (54). “Resistance to evil by force and by the sword is permissible not when it is possible, but when it is necessary because there are no other means available”; in that case it is not only a man’s right but his duty to enter that path (195 f.) even though it may lead to the malefactor’s death.

Does this imply that the end justifies the means? No, certainly not. The evil of physical compulsion or prevention does not become good because it is used as the only means in our power for attaining a good end. In such cases, says Il’in, the way of force and of the sword “is both obligatory and unrighteous” (197). “Only the best of men can carry out this unrighteousness without being infected by it, can find and observe the proper limits in it, can remember that it is wrong and spiritually dangerous, and discover personal and social antidotes for it. By comparison with the rulers of the state happy are the monks, the scholars, the artists and thinkers; it is given to them to do clean work with clean hands. They must not, however, judge or condemn the soldiers and politicians, but be grateful to them and pray that they may be cleansed from their sin and made wise: their own hands are clean for doing clean work only because other people had clean hands for doing dirty work” (209). “If the principle of state compulsion and prevention were expressed by the figure of a warrior, and the principle of religious purification, prayer and righteousness by the figure of a monk - the solution of the problem would consist in recognizing their necessity to each other” (219). [7]

The possibility of situations that inevitably lead to the contradiction between a good purpose and imperfect means is man’s *moral tragedy*, as Il’in and other thinkers sharing his view express it.

NOTES:

[1] “Turkish Barbarities”, H.P. Blavatsky. The article was first published in New York in August 1877. See “Collected Writings”, H.P.B., TPH, Volume I, pp. 255-260, especially 259-260. A few pages before the article, one finds Turguenyev’s poem “Croquet at Windsor”, translated by HPB from the Russian: pp. 253-254. The poem is a vigorous denunciation of the Turkish-Muslim atrocities in Eastern Europe, while Western Europe did nothing.

[2] “The Mahatma Letters”, TUP edition, Pasadena, CA, Letter LXXXV, p. 401.

[3] The present text was published in 1952. Il’in died in Switzerland in December 1954.

[4] Panlogism is a Hegelian doctrine according to which the universe is an act or creation of the Logos. The idea is broadly consistent with theosophy.

[5] Lossky is here referring to himself in the third person.

[6] The idea is connected to the Eastern and theosophical doctrine of the cycles.

[7] In theosophical parlance, every citizen must combine in himself the substance of a warrior who fights for justice, and of a monk, who maintains a contemplative attitude towards life. See for instance, in our websites, the article “Moral Strength in Judo and Theosophy”, by C.C. Aveline.

Real Friendship Deserves to Endure



“Friends in need, friends indeed”, says the popular axiom.

In his play “Timon of Athens”, William Shakespeare studies the topic of friendship, true and false.

The inner message of the play shows an aspect of the cycle of Saturn, which is initiatic according to HP Blavatsky: the process of slowly acquiring power only to lose it, and then gradually recovering it, in an improved and increased way. The story of Job in the Jewish Bible is also a study of Saturn’s cycles, in one of its readings.

While helping others, a thoughtful individual will develop means to do it in a way that is as wise as possible. Goodness is only efficient when there is discernment.

Giving away whatever people may want to be given them will in the end cause more harm than good to them, and to the altruistic individual himself. In order to know someone, one must see how he behaves during difficult times. The Jewish divinity did that with regard to Job. It is easy to look like an ethical person as long as life is comfortable and one’s wishes are granted.

In fact, “to be ethical in need is to be ethical indeed”. He who is honest during difficulties deserves to be relied upon. If a culture, nation, group or association allows people to live in hypocrisy, its foundations are not stable. That which is based on sincerity, deserves to endure.

The Eternity of the Instant

The theosophical movement exists to preserve and spread the original teachings of esoteric philosophy.

Yet preservation and promulgation are not enough. Theosophists must also look at everyday events and challenges from the point of view of the original teachings.

The duty of theosophical associations is to stimulate every luminous point in the present-day collective culture and “zeitgeist”. The law of analogy, which shows similarity between different systems of thought, is the tool for that.

Planetary citizens can become living bridges between the present moment and eternal time. For each instant exists in eternity, and eternity is hidden in every fraction of a second.

Lessons From the Phases of the Moon There Is a Subtle Tide In Every Human Soul



Our life unfolds in a constant dialogue with the sky, and the Moon is the nearest celestial body to us. Its cycles are part of our individual nature. There is no separation in our solar system, or in the universe.

During the waning phase of the lunar cycle, it is the right time to close pending topics and tasks. “Waning” means “shrinking” or decreasing in outward illumination. It is an opportunity to look for the inner light. The waning Moon is the end of a cycle.

Just as in the final hours of a day one must finish things, in the last days of the Moon cycle it is correct to close whatever has been waiting for its end or completion. It is a time for detachment, inner peace, quietness and larger amounts of silence, before the cycle of life begins again.

In the New Moon phase, one sows that which is desirable and correct. There are no immediate results. The light is inner. To plant constitutes an act of independent confidence in the future.

Through sowing, we take action for the future to be correct. In the crescent Moon all topics and matters grow. The consequences of the sowing get visible. Light become external. One must define one's priorities and manage the exuberance of emerging issues.

The full Moon is the highest moment of the cycle and the phase when Light dominates in its external sense. Short term facts have stronger results. The expansion of feelings must be lived with moderate actions and a balanced attitude. One must be ready to the next moment. Everything that expands, gets reduced. After the highest point, restriction comes; once the harvest is done, wasting must be avoided.

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See the article “**Our Week and the Solar System**”.

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The Politicians of the Esoteric Movement



Eastern and Western religions and philosophies clearly teach that the world as we see it contains a significant amount of illusion.

The authentic teachings of theosophy say the path to truth is steep, narrow, uphill and thorny. The reason for this is simple. The path is surrounded by deceiving appearances.

Discernment is often a rare commodity in the present phase of human evolution. One should learn to develop a clear vision.

As we walk, blind belief is a Trojan Horse. It seems to make things easier, while in fact it attacks from within one's ability to defend oneself from Ignorance.

The search for comfort is part of the trap. Yet many are not ready to accept an uncomfortable path.

Although theosophists and esotericists are quite used to daily talks about "Maya" or Illusion, one can hardly find a leader of great theosophical corporations who is capable of examining in public the sad collection of mistakes accumulated by the esoteric movement since the last decade of the 19th century.

It seems the politicians of theosophy want people to think that there is nothing to learn from the past, and that no mistake was made. This is tantamount to fraud.

Any epistemology or pedagogy that denies the need for learning from mistakes is fake.

Such a pious fraud may belong to authoritarian churches, but not to a movement whose aim is the humble Search for truth.

On the Size of One's Soul



By feeling small, one is able to grow.

In order to improve his abilities, a chess-player must play with more advanced players than himself, and carefully study the games between grand masters of this thoughtful, strategic game.

Likewise, in order to expand his understanding of life a student of theosophy must observe, and interact with that which is immensely bigger, and more meaningful, than his small individual life.

The soul of every being tends to acquire the same dimensions as the object of his contemplation.

Giving Up in Order to Obtain

It is an illusion to think that the Path or the steps along it constitute a one-line monotonous progression.

The pilgrimage is multidimensional.

Each step changes all aspects of the road. A single step ahead transforms the place you are. It gives you another point of view and a number of potential insights. The experience of progress is therefore not merely accumulative. As you “accumulate” wisdom, you give up unwisdom.

A Master wrote to a disciple:

“You have much to unlearn.” [1]

With each new fact we see, various false impressions are abandoned. One does not go ahead half a meter, without leaving behind the corresponding set of illusions.

NOTE:

[1] “Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom”, transcribed by C. Jinarajadasa, first series, TPH-Adyar, India, sixth printing, 1973, Letter 20, p. 53.

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The Central Point in the Circle

For centuries, human and planetary history has been undergoing a constant acceleration.

As the wheel of life of a particular civilization gains speed, its movement becomes rather feverish. Large amounts of Karma are updated and have to be dealt with. The alchemical acceleration takes place. Accumulated materials and substances of the past boil and burn.

At the same time, a certain number of citizens remain in direct contact with the Center of the Wheel of Karma. While their “objective” levels of consciousness exist in the outwardly agitated periphery of life, their inner sense of Self is still in unity with the Center of Peace.

The more agitated the Circle of Life gets, the stronger the karmic invitation to improve one’s contact with the Center.

A Few Words by Helena Blavatsky



The time is not far distant when the World of Science will be forced to acknowledge that there exists as much interaction between one mind and another, no matter at what distance, as between one body and another in closest contact. When two minds are sympathetically related, and the instruments through which they function are tuned to respond magnetically and electrically to one another, there is nothing which will prevent the transmission of thoughts from one to the other, at will; for since the mind is not of a tangible nature, that distance can divide it from the object of its contemplation, it follows that the only difference that can exist between two minds is a difference of STATE. So if this latter hindrance is overcome, where is the “miracle” of *thought transference*, at whatever distance?

[H. P. Blavatsky, quoted in the article “**Telepathy, the Silent Conversation**”, which can be seen in our websites.]

The Precept and the Practice

The distance between one’s ideal and one’s practice is natural: it means that our Ideal is high.

There has to be a long way between the place we are and the place we want to get to. Otherwise, we would have no ideal in life.

However, we must carefully observe the quality of our efforts to reduce the contrast between precept and practice. The danger of hypocrisy has to be made visible. Transparency is an effective tool to reduce the levels of hypocrisy.

Wise leaders invite everyone to examine the various possibilities of self-deceit and collective delusion, even in “advanced” levels of learning.

A leadership that avoids mentioning the danger of becoming whited sepulchres is working under the delusion that the path is not really probationary. It is letting people think that belief is more important than testing every bit of knowledge in practical life.

Avoiding reference to the possibility of failures is the shortest way to pious frauds and other forms of defeat.

Hence the need for humbleness and for the courage to be sincere along the way. Being honest requires courage, because it often irritates many.

Thoughts Along the Road Observing the Sacredness of Daily Life



There are earthly roads for the body, and celestial ones for the soul

* **S**piritual evolution depends on a voluntary effort, and it is also a natural process as inevitable as the sunrise. While seemingly paradoxical, these two aspects of evolution correspond to the hemispheres of human brain. The voluntary effort to attain truth is part of a wider and spontaneous awakening. The intuitive, involuntary aspects of enlightenment are never separated from the self-responsible journey to divine knowledge.

* Listening to the silence, reading from a blank page, talking without the use of words, travelling while remaining motionless, and staying still while in intense outward movement. The above are some important activities to be developed along the path to self-knowledge; for

human beings have several levels of consciousness and must learn to use them by transcending mere appearance.

* Self-control is not merely struggling against bad habits. It means renouncing to the Causes of wrong actions. We must give up attachment to outer objects and blind automatism.

* One of the first steps leading to self-control is the practice of an impersonal self-observation, in which we avoid both self-indulgence and self-condemnation, and focus instead on self-improvement. One's lower self must look at itself as an imperfect, yet loyal, disciple of one's spiritual soul.

* As we accept the limitations of life, we transcend them by ceasing to waste energy. We get free to think beyond present obstacles, once we acknowledge their existence. This is the first step in removing limitations *that can be removed*. The second step consists in searching for the way and the timing of their removal. Once this is determined, we must *act accordingly*. It is also important to preserve the ability to learn from new facts, as we persevere along the road chosen.

* Each human life expresses the dynamics of our solar system. There are three main lines in one's individual evolution: they flow in unity with the Sun, the Moon and the Earth, and correspond to the spiritual soul, the animal soul and physical corporeality. From this perspective the anatomy of one's soul is threefold: as we take other planets into consideration we see that we are septenary, just as the rays of light coming from the Sun. We are seven, we are three, and we are one. In every case, we are a mirror reflecting the solar system.

* By leaving aside terrestrial noises one discovers the music of the spheres. Renouncing to the excess of irrelevant information, one understands that which is essential. The fundamental tenets of esoteric philosophy do not deny the lesser realities of life: they both include and transform them. Universality gives a meaning and a purpose to the smaller factors in one's agenda.

* If we see decaying levels of ethics and sincerity in the present civilization, we must not feel despondent nor lose confidence in the future. The darkest hours of the night are often the ones immediately before dawn. Time is not unilineal. After a long night, a new day emerges in a few minutes. By being vigilant, one does accelerate the dawn, and there is no need for that. However, vigilant people are awoken and active in the early morning. They can help others awoken from the dark nightmare of unnecessary ignorance.

* It is not enough to automatically decide to do that which is "desirable". Wise decisions concern actions that are both correct and feasible. Before making a decision one must realistically evaluate the means, tools, effort, patience and willpower necessary to effectively fulfil the decision, as much as its fulfilment depends on us. Then we can use the opportunity to grow as human beings, while strengthening and purifying our will.

* Humbleness and simplicity bring about happiness. Ambition and sophistication are sources of suffering. Although the spiritual pilgrim has to live and work in a complex world, his heart can remain simple or pure due to natural concentration on a high goal. Simplicity contains and transcends complexity. The changeful levels of consciousness must be convertible into a silent, vigilant simplicity that is centered on a sacredness beyond description.

* Perseverance and detachment are both necessary. One must persevere in the essential aspects of one's duty. We must be flexible and have no attachment to outer circumstances or situations. As soon as one becomes rigid regarding external factors, the inner connection to that which is essential becomes harmed. Into the extent that we preserve and enhance the contact with our own "essential nature" - to use the Taoist expression -, the outward factors tend to take care of themselves and become easier to handle.

* No words can be stronger than the practice from which they emerge. Such a practice can be individual or collective, objective or subjective; or it can take place on every level at the same time. The basis of one's words, however, is what one lives. The strength of a theosophist can only come from the daily life he leads. Words are extremely useful when they emerge from life: they can only mislead if divorced from facts. [1]

* Truth-seekers must not delude themselves by thinking that the more they make real progress along the road, the less necessary it is for them to face surprising obstacles, or to learn hard lessons. The more we learn, the more challenged we are to learn much further. Spiritual progress ceases the day we believe we "know it all that matters". Wisdom does not consist so much in "having" knowledge as in "being able to obtain" it; and in doing that in a quick and accurate way. Of course, humbleness and courage are of the essence in the art of learning.

NOTE:

[1] Translated from the opening lines in the article "70 Itens Para Uma Vida Natural", by C.C. Aveline.

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From the Golden Verses of Pythagoras

1. First honor the immortal Gods, as the law demands;
2. Then reverence thy oath, and the illustrious heroes;
3. Then venerate the divinities under the earth, due rites performing,
4. Then honor your parents, and all of your kindred;
5. Among others make the most virtuous thy friend;
6. Love to make use of his soft speeches, and learn from his deeds that are useful;
7. But alienate not the beloved comrade for trifling offences,
8. Bear all you can, what you can, for power is bound to necessity.
9. Take this well to heart: you must gain control of your habits;
10. First over stomach, then sleep, and then luxury, and anger.
11. What brings you shame, do not unto others, nor by yourself.
12. The highest of duties is honor of self.
13. Let Justice be practiced in words as in deeds;
14. Then make the habit, never inconsiderately to act;
15. Neither forget that death is appointed to all;
16. That possessions here gladly gathered, here must be left;
17. Whatever sorrow the fate of the Gods may here send us,
18. Bear, whatever may strike you, with patience uncomplaining.
19. To relieve it, so far as you can, is permitted,
20. But reflect that not much misfortune has Fate given to the good.

