



The duty of the theosophical movement is above all to live, to experience, to practice, truly understand, and live up to the teachings of the Mahatmas and HPB. Secondly, it includes teaching esoteric philosophy, transmitting original theosophy and making it accessible to all.

The idea of *living theosophy* may seem to be easy.

In fact, the task demands a slow, deep, long-term self-transformation, which requires more than one lifetime.

The pilgrim needs to observe, know and transmute all that flows on the subconscious level of his mind. He must deal - in an impersonally correct way - with the subconscious of others. At the same time, he has to develop a direct and constant contact with his own *supraconscious* - the higher self, his immortal soul.

Understanding Blavatsky or following the teachings of the Masters, therefore, requires a complex inner preparation, which is inseparable from the basic lines of Raja Yoga. Progress takes place slowly, and uses to be invisible. However, the process of self-training constitutes the concrete basis and foundation of one's higher studies in original theosophy. The building of the two things - the foundation and the highest point - must be simultaneous along the path.

In order to strengthen the basic ideas of Raja Yoga in his soul and change his daily life in the light of the teachings of the Masters, the reader of the ILT websites has texts of various authors: among them, O.S. Marden, Yogi Ramacharaka, and Joseph Buchanan. [1]

Marden complements Blavatsky. He illuminates the daily life of modern citizens with the point of view of the higher self. He does so by teaching self-control, self-knowledge, self-construction, and by showing how we can strengthen our will to do good.

Freudian psychology (Sigmund Freud, Karen Horney, Erich Fromm) as well as ethical psychologists in general (Rollo May, Viktor Frankl, Pitirim A. Sorokin) also have great importance in understanding the illusions of lower self. It is necessary to see all that is wrong, in order to strengthen and purify one's will, and build that which is right.

The general direction is given by Raja Yoga, adapted to the countless scenarios of modern daily life. Both Helena Blavatsky and the Masters always made it clear that it is useless to try to memorize and repeat the sacred teachings as if we were in a church choir. Self-responsibility and an independent thinking are as important as humbleness, and devotion to the highest.

## NOTE:

[1] See HPB's article "[Moral Education by Prof. Buchanan](#)".

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**S**tudy more:

- \* [Good Sense in Approaching Raja Yoga](#).
- \* [From Ritualism to Raja Yoga](#).
- \* [Eternal Wisdom in Daily Life](#), by O.S. Marden.
- \* [According to Thy Faith](#), by O.S. Marden.

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How to Help Those Who Failed:  
**Understanding the  
Nature of Truthfulness**



Most likely it is only a coincidence. After we published the article “**Franz Hartmann or the Need for Honesty**” [1], an institution devoted to pseudo-theosophy decided to promote the books written by this author, and started making intense propaganda about his “intellectual accomplishments”.

Regardless of make-believe, what counts in Karma and Theosophy is not verbal gymnastics or theoretical statements. Among the decisive factors one finds sincerity and the ethics of the soul.

As a personality, Franz Hartmann has scarce importance in Theosophy. Just as Carl G. Jung, he was but a follower of ethical relativism and a practitioner of moral ambiguity. These two factors should of course be recognized as deadly poisons by every true pilgrim, yet they are most easy to find nowadays in Western nations.

Helena Blavatsky writes in “Five Messages” that “the Ethics of Theosophy are more important” than any theoretical explanation or “divulgement of psychic laws and facts”. Words are limited to the mortal evanescent man, she says, but “the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man - the reincarnating Ego”. [2]

As a movement, we must be able to learn from our failures. It well-documented that Helena Blavatsky gave us her testimony about the effects of falsehood among theosophists. Writing about Franz Hartmann, for instance, she said:

“The magnetism of that man is sickening; his *lying* is beastly; his slander [...], his intrigues unaccountable but on the ground that he is either a maniac - utterly irresponsible for the most part, or allowed to be possessed by his own *dugpa* Spirit.” [3]

A remarkable “scholar” in pseudo-theosophy, perhaps, but also a dangerous failure that must be seen as such.

While Hartmann’s individual defeat is a minor fact in the history of the theosophical movement, it teaches us a lesson of great importance: one must seek for truth, not for mere appearance. And posing as a wise person for the others to see is worse than useless.

Our duty is to help every soul who fails like Hartmann did. In order to make it easier for those who did not succeed to recover themselves, we must in the first place make sure the movement does not adopt their illusions.

As long as the theosophical lodges remain loyal to facts and to reality, once the defeated souls emerge again in some future incarnation, it will be easier for them to recover from past mistakes and avoid repeating unethical delusions. This we owe Hartmann and others. We can help all those who approach theosophy by providing them with a sane and lucid theosophical movement which can inspire the best in every honest soul.

In any occasion, learning to learn from mistakes is of the essence, both in individual and collective life.

## NOTES:

[1] Click to see “[Franz Hartmann or the Need for Honesty](#)”.

[2] “[Five Messages](#)”, by H.P. [Blavatsky](#). See p. 26.

[3] Quoted in “[Franz Hartmann or the Need for Honesty](#)”.

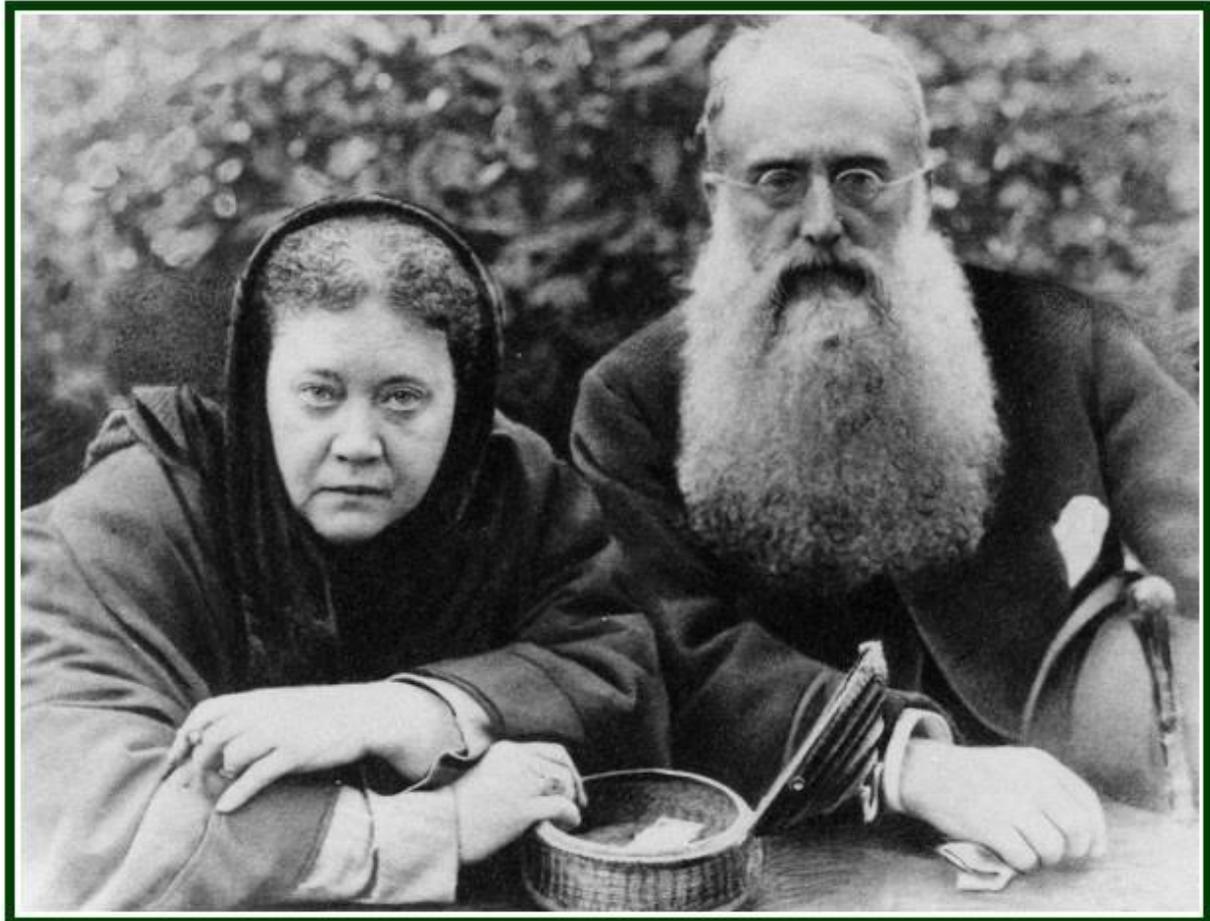
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# HPB and the Poor Cowards in Adyar

## The Treason Against Helena Blavatsky Started in the 1880s



**HPB and Henry S. Olcott. A Master of the Wisdom clarified:  
Olcott's failure was due to his being afraid of defending the Truth.**

During the 19th century, Christianity was used as a colonialist spearhead to reduce the strength of India's traditional religious and philosophical culture, and to consolidate British domination in that country.

As soon as the theosophical movement gained strength and influence by showing the value of Eastern wisdom, the attacks of Christian missionaries against Helena Blavatsky and Theosophy were started and acquired momentum. In 1884-1885, the anti-Theosophical campaign began to include tactics such as bribery, infiltration of agents in the movement and false accusations with large media coverage.

Confronting this circumstance, the Theosophists located in Adyar - the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society - felt intimidated and got frightened. They lacked courage. With some exceptions, they stopped defending the main founder of the movement. Few among them had understood one basic fact:

*Every aspirant to wisdom is attacked and tested on the moral plane, and this happens in the exact measure of his efforts to elevate himself on the spiritual plane. The learner's integrity, his ability to be relentlessly honest with himself and others, is the only foundation upon which the soul-learning can take place.*

Attacked in many ways, defended by a minority, Helena Blavatsky fell seriously ill. Yet her mission could not end at that moment. Her health was essentially restored by a Master of the Wisdom. She traveled to Europe, she finished recovering and devoted herself to writing "The Secret Doctrine".

With the attacks of 1884-1885, a certain magnetic bond was broken on several fronts. Let's look at some examples:

- \* Eastern Masters stopped writing letters to lay disciples. Frustrated, Alfred P. Sinnett distances himself from Blavatsky. Unable to accept the fact that the Masters had decided to keep quiet, Sinnett falls into imaginary mediumistic conversations with false Masters.
- \* Damodar Mavalankar, an advanced disciple and a close assistant to HPB, reaches the limit of his human endurance. With his health in danger, he withdraws from Adyar and, being invited by his instructor, decides to live in an Ashram of the Masters.
- \* Subba Row, another advanced disciple, was defeated by himself. Falling into the magnetic circle of disorientation, he loses his good sense and dies still young.
- \* Charles Leadbeater, who had been accepted as a disciple on probation, fails the test. Later, when the Esoteric School is organized from England, Leadbeater is not admitted to it by H.P.B. This fact in itself demonstrates that Leadbeater failed as a disciple. Instead of joining the Esoteric School, he became part of a rival group in London, led by Alfred Sinnett, who had already fallen into the world of false clairvoyance.
- \* The majority of theosophists living in India loses the focus. Starting from 1887, HPB resumes her work with intensity - from her office in London.

By studying the documents of the time, widely published today, we see therefore that the betrayal of the founder of the movement began seven years before her death, and "flourished" under the leadership of Annie Besant, after HPB abandoned physical life in 1891.

People were unprepared for the pursuit of wisdom.

With a few exceptions, the collective bridge between the Eastern masters and the Western civilization was failing. The Karmic doors to the great world wars were thus opened. The foundations of the moral decay and lack of common sense that would reign in the 20th century and the first decades of the 21st century were established.

In an 1885 letter to Alfred P. Sinnett, when Sinnett had not yet turned against her, H.P.B. describes the way in which the Adyar theosophists systematically refuse to defend her, or to defend the truth, and exclaims:

“Why should my best friends allow me to be so vilified!” [1]

In the same letter, two pages later, she adds with the frankness of someone born under the sign of Leo, who trusts truth and the light of the Sun:

“While my enemies tear me to pieces the Adyar people play ‘hide and seek’ - they pretend to be dead - Oh! the poor wretched cowards!! (...) I tell you I suffer more from these theosophical *traitors* than from the Coulomb, Patterson, or even the S.P.R.”. [2]

Perhaps she was warning Sinnett about the moral danger he would face if he followed the same direction. Fortunately, Sinnett never attacked her personally. He lost the track, he became disoriented, but remained innerly loyal to the theosophical ideals.

On June 16, 1885, Blavatsky wrote in a letter to Francesca Arundale:

“And, oh dear, how many traitors and Judases of all colours and shades we have in the very heart of the Society. *Ambition* is a terrible adviser!” [3]

HPB must have known what she was saying by using this emphatic language. She suffered a moral and emotional crucifixion during her life.

One century later, in 1986, the Society for Psychological Research (S.P.R.), which had accused her of fraud, finally admitted the facts, albeit indirectly. HPB was honest and innocent: the fraud was in the accusations of the S.P.R. against her.

During the first half of the 21st century, a small number of Theosophists understand the unavoidably central character of ethics and honesty, as the foundations of any philosophical knowledge. It is reasonable to expect that this number will grow and make room for a better contact between good-willing people and the sources of higher knowledge.

## **A Few Words on Olcott**

One should also examine the attitude adopted by the founding president of the Theosophical Society, Henry Olcott, in the face of these challenges. And his attitude wasn't brilliant. Confronted by the anti-theosophical campaign, the president was guided by fear. He left aside the truth and abandoned the idea of being loyal.

Referring to Olcott, the Master told Blavatsky:

“...He showed moral weakness, as much as physical weakness...”.

“...The Society has liberated itself from our grasp and influence and we have let it go - we make no unwilling slaves. He says he has saved it? He saved its body, but he allowed through sheer fear, to its soul to escape, and it is now a soulless corpse, a machine run so far well enough, but which will fall to pieces when he is gone.” [4]

These words were annotated by HPB and, thanks to C. Jinarajadasa, are now part of the Letters from the Masters. In the future, they should be given their due importance.

Commenting on the fact that Olcott opened the doors of the theosophical movement to the enemies of truth, Blavatsky declared in 1885:

“Dead or alive, I will never forgive Col. Olcott...”. [5]

## NOTES:

[1] “The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett”, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, California, 1973, 404 pp., see Letter XLVI, p. 112.

[2] “The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett”, Letter XLVI, p. 114. On treason and lies coming from Adyar, see also the article “[Why I Do Not Return to India](#)”, by HPB.

[3] “The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett”, Letter XLII, p. 95. No doubt, subconscious ambition is one of the factors that stimulate cowards not to support leaders, when leaders are unjustly attacked. There is in this also a significant amount of ingratitude.

[4] “[Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - First Series](#)”, compiled and edited by C. Jinarajadasa, fourth edition, TPH, India, 1948, Letter 47, pp. 113-114. The entire Letter 47 describes the failure of Olcott, which later on was led to its ultimate consequences by his “political” successor, Ms. Annie Besant.

[5] “Collected Writings”, H. P. Blavatsky, TPH, USA, volume VI, p. 326.

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The above article was translated by CCA from “[HPB e os Pobres Covardes em Adyar](#)”.

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Read more:

- \* [Why I Do Not Return to India.](#)
- \* [The Fraud in Adyar Esoteric School.](#)
- \* [Blavatsky Students in the Adyar Society.](#)
- \* [Krishnamurti on Besantian Delusions.](#)

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**C**an you believe that as recently as 2011 and 2012 the European Union was actively engaged in promoting **peace**, and not war, around the world? The EU also said that **Peace** was among its core values. What happened to the EU? Watch the inspiring 10m video

**---Pledge to Peace---**

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# Thoughts Along the Road

## The Alchemical Process of Serendipity



- \* **T**he development of one's own will is the unavoidable task, if we want to preserve the voice of conscience, or, in other words, Antahkarana, Jacob's Ladder, that spiritual bridge between Heaven and Earth which is always potentially present within us.
- \* He whose willpower is not stronger and more enduring than the circumstances around him has to be at the mercy of external stimuli, and often sways *to and fro* in blind obedience to the changing winds.
- \* Out of the confusions created by meaningless oscillation, the conscious perception emerges that one must train himself and strengthen his inner purpose.
- \* The pilgrim who unites reason with the ability to make firm decisions is also capable of overcoming obstacles, or avoiding them - or enduring them, as the case may be. He begins to learn from both victories and defeats, always advancing in the right direction, whether externally or internally.
- \* The experience of classical philosophy and theosophy awakens in ourselves the practical need to educate the will, so that life gets organized around the best and the highest. The sensible pilgrim knows that patience, like perseverance, is the mark of a mature and strong will.

\* One's effort should be externally moderate, except for special occasions. The sensible pilgrim is perfectly able to wait, when obstacles appear; yet he never stops making progress along the path, at least on the inner level of spiritual soul.

## **Practical Sources of Serendipity**

\* Time is one of the best teachers of the pilgrim. An effective waiting is never inert or motionless. On the contrary: it allows the pilgrim to develop a strong creative action on a higher plane of consciousness. And this is an alchemical process.

\* Serendipity can be defined as "the ability to get in tune with the higher magnetisms of Karma"; with that subtle energy of the law of the universe which cures it all, which reconciles, recovers and optimizes every factor of life, while putting them all in a wider and brighter context.[1]

\* Are we ready to receive the peaceful patterns of vibration that awaken good karma and expand it? Or are we attached to this and that form of narrowness, in our horizon?

\* It is often difficult to renounce to one's favorite kinds of suffering. However, when the pilgrim acknowledges the fact that his true nature is blissful, he leaves aside every pointless interaction with pain.

\* It is not enough to practice right action and live in the atmosphere of that spontaneous altruism that comes from within. One has also to learn to stay away from unnecessary negativities.

\* A strong will is necessary to do the right thing. An iron will is indispensable to abandon useless habits.

\* In their narrow-minded search for money, the Western mass media radically attack the minds of their citizens with daily images of violence, side by side with images of exaggerated personal vanity, futility, and unfortunate egotistic actions. Such a poison has a deadly effect on the connection of the citizen with his own spiritual soul, and must be avoided by every learner of Eastern wisdom.

\* A personal independence from collective forms of mind manipulation has to be established. Chronos, the god of cycles, is a loyal friend of truth: in due time, honest journalism will be born again in the West. The first step - here and now - is to remain lucid oneself.

\* Altruism means irradiating positive energy: it does not consist in absorbing destructiveness. According to the *Dhammapada*, the seekers of the spiritual path must preserve their own happiness among the many who suffer with hatred and fear.[2] While doing this, truth-seekers can make a calm effort to share the peace of their hearts with those who are potentially open to a brotherly view of life.

\* Spiritual victory is about developing forms of syntony with peaceful, elevated vibrations. Thus serendipity emerges in the middle of probation.

## NOTES:

[1] See more on Serendipity, [here](#).

[2] Read the article [Lasting Happiness in Eastern Wisdom](#).

# **The Suggestion of Inferiority**

## **Instead of Despising Others, One Must Build Universal Friendship and Mutual Help**

**O. S. Marden**



**At all levels, self-respect and respect for the others are a central part of the law of life**

**The curse of the inferiority suggestion not only tends to destroy our faith in ourselves, but it often makes even the innocent take on the appearance of guilt.**

As the initials which boys cut in the bark of a sapling become great, ugly scars on the grown tree, so the suggestions of inferiority etched upon the young mind become great ugly scars in the life of the adult.

You may succeed when others do not believe in you, when everybody else denounces you even, but never when you do not believe in yourself.

In olden times criminals, fugitives from justice, and slaves were branded. The words, “I am a fugitive”, “I am a thief”, or others indicating their crime or their inferior status were seared on some part of the body with a red hot iron.

In Rome robbers were branded on the forehead with a degrading letter. Laborers in mines, convicts, and gladiators were also branded. In Greece slaves were sometimes branded with a favorite poetical passage of their master. In France the branding iron used on slaves and criminals often took the form of the fleur-de-lis. In England deserters from the army were marked with the letter D, and vagabonds, robbers and brawlers were branded in some way to advertise their disgrace.

The barbarous custom of branding human beings with the badge of crime or inferiority persisted in America even after it had been discontinued in the mother country. Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter" gives us a vivid picture of the suffering inflicted on the moral delinquent by Puritan moralists in Colonial days. The tragic heroine, Hester Prynne, is never allowed to forget her sin. The sinister scarlet letter with which she is branded proclaims her shame to every one she meets. While long after the Colonial period, up to the time of their emancipation, slaves were branded in Christian America with the initials of their owners as they were in Pagan Greece and Rome.

The mere idea of this stamping human beings with an indelible badge of disgrace, of inferiority, shocks us moderns. Yet we do not hesitate to mark people to-day with the scarlet letter of outlawry, the brand of ostracism. We put the criminal badge on our prisoners by shaving their heads and clothing them in stripes, thus perpetually keeping before them the suggestion that they are criminals, outlaws, apart from their kind.

We even carry our branding into our homes. In order to satisfy our cheap vanity, we force our domestic workers to wear as a mark of inferiority, a distinctive livery to remind them that they are menials, a lower grade of being than ourselves. As a matter of fact, if it were not for these branding distinctions, the maid would, in many instances, be taken for the mistress and the valet for the master whom they far outrank both in appearance and character.

There are certain inalienable rights which human beings inherit from their Maker, rights which no fellow being, no human law or authority is justified in taking away. No matter what offense a person may commit against society we have no right to degrade him below the level of a human being; we have no right so to bombard him with the suggestion of degradation, of inferiority, that we are almost certain to make him less a man; to lower his estimate of himself to such a degree that we rob him of the power even to attempt to regain his self-respect and his position in society. We have no right to insist that those who work for us shall wear a badge of inferiority. We have no right to thrust the suggestion of inferiority perpetually into the mind of any human being.

One of the greatest injuries we can inflict on any one is to convince him that he is a nobody, that he has no possibilities, and will never amount to anything. The suggestion of inferiority is responsible for more blighted ambitions, more stunted lives, more failures, more misery and unhappiness than almost any other single cause. Just as the constant dripping of water will wear away stone, so the constant iteration of a statement will cause its acceptance by the average person. Even though the facts may be opposed to it, a constant suggestion presented to the mind impresses us in spite of ourselves and tends to a conviction of its truth.

When the weight of the Civil War was nearly crushing Lincoln, when it was the fashion to denounce and criticize and condemn him, when he was being caricatured as a hideous monster in the jingo press all over the world, one day, walking the floor in the White House, he was overheard saying to himself, "Abe Lincoln, are you a dog or are you a man?" During

these dark days it would appear that Lincoln sometimes had a doubt as to whether he was really the man his closest friends knew him to be, or the one an antagonistic press pictured him.

The curse of the inferiority suggestion not only tends to destroy our faith in ourselves, but it often makes even the innocent take on the appearance of guilt. When Lieutenant Dreyfus, through a foul conspiracy, was convicted of the crime of treason against France, he showed outwardly all the manifestations of guilt. When stripped, in the presence of a vast multitude, in a public square in Paris, of all his insignia of rank as an officer in the army of France, the epaulettes and buttons being cut from his uniform and his sword broken, although conscious of his innocence of the crime imputed to him he actually looked like the guilty thing he was accused of being. And all but a very few close friends in the vast concourse that witnessed his public disgrace believed that even his appearance corroborated his guilt. The brain of the unfortunate Dreyfus was a wireless receiving station for the hatred, the contempt of millions of people who believed they were looking at a vile traitor who had sold valuable military secrets to Germany.

We are all influenced for good or ill by suggestion, but children and young people are peculiarly susceptible to it. The constant suggestion of stupidity, badness, and dullness by teachers or parents, filling a child's mind with the idea that he is a blockhead, always blundering, making mistakes, that he is no good, and never will amount to anything, makes an indelible impression on his plastic mind.

The child naturally looks up to its parents and teachers and accepts what they say as truth. He has implicit faith in their superior knowledge and experience, which seem wonderful to him, and when they tell him he is stupid, dull, slow, or bad, he takes what they say for granted. He makes up his mind that, since they say so, he must be a blockhead, and that they are right in thinking he is no good and will never amount to anything.

It is criminal for a parent or teacher to brand a child as dull, stupid, bad; to tell him that there is nothing in him and that he will never be anybody or amount to anything in life. The effect on a sensitive child is disastrous. Thousands of boys and girls have been stunted mentally, their careers handicapped, and in some instances completely ruined by such cruel suggestions of inferiority.

I have known men who kept taunting their sons with what they called their imbecility and stupidity until the lads came to believe that they were partial idiots and could not possibly make anything of themselves. Many of them never did, because they were unable to overcome the conviction of inferiority impressed upon them by their fathers.

I remember one quite pathetic instance of a sensitive boy whose slightest mistake evoked a volley of abuse from his father. He would tell him that he was not "half baked", that he was "an imbecile", "a blockhead", "a blunderer", "a hopeless good-for-nothing". The little fellow so completely lost faith in himself and became so cowed that he hardly dared look people in the face. He could not be induced to enter his home when there were callers or guests present. He would slink away and hide himself in the shed or barn until they had gone. In fact, he became so morbid that he shrank from association even with other boys and the neighbors whom he had known from babyhood. The boy really had a fine mind, and when the death of his father threw him on his own resources, he managed, by sheer will force and dogged persistence, to succeed in making an honorable place in life. But he has never been able to get

away from the early conviction of his inferiority, of his lack of ability compared with others around him. All his later life has been handicapped by those pernicious suggestions. Whenever he is asked to assume any responsibility, to take a place on a committee or a board, to speak in public or make himself prominent in any way, these boyhood mental pictures of his “good-for-nothingness” rise before him like terrifying ghosts and seriously cripple or paralyze his efforts. He has always felt that there is some grave defect in his nature and that, try as he may, he cannot entirely overcome his handicap. This crippling, cramping defective image of himself impressed on this man in childhood and youth has robbed him of much of the best of life, of all the joy and exhilaration that come from spontaneity, from the free, unshackled expression of oneself, of all one’s faculties.

Children are affected by praise or blame just as animals are. It is easy to kill the spirit of a dog by abuse and ill treatment, so that in a short time he will slink about with his tail between his legs, look guilty and self-depreciatory. In short, he will take on all the appearance of a “whipped cur”. Thoroughbred horse trainers say that after a horse has been beaten or abused a few times he loses confidence in himself. His spirit is broken and when he sees the other horses getting neck and neck with him, or perhaps gaining on him a little, he is likely to give up the race. The destruction of self-confidence has caused many a youth with the latent qualities of a thoroughbred to fail in life’s great race.

There are thousands and thousands of boys who do not develop quickly. Their brains are strong and capable, but they work slowly, and as a consequence the boys are misjudged and misunderstood by parents and teachers alike. In other instances the stupidity and dullness for which children are berated are only apparent. They are often the result of timidity, shyness, excessive self-consciousness. The youngsters do not dare to assert themselves. Especially is this true in families where the parental rule is stern and repressive. The children are afraid to speak aloud or to express themselves in any way.

The suggestion of inferiority deepens this defect till it becomes a mania. Many of the tragedies of the pernicious “ranking system” by examinations in our public schools and colleges are the result of an acute sense of inferiority. Every year quite a number of public school pupils and students in academies and colleges suffer nervous breakdown, become insane or commit suicide because they fail to pass their examinations. Chagrin and humiliation at the sense of inferiority suggested by their failure unbalances them. In most of those cases lack of confidence, not lack of ability, is the cause of failure.

You may say this is foolishness, but it is true. And if the suggestion of inferiority is powerful enough to drive young people to suicide, certainly the opposite, the suggestion of superiority, would multiply the youth's ability and work a miracle in his career.

A child should never hear the slightest hint to the effect that it is in any way inferior. Its whole training should tend to develop faith, confidence in himself, in his powers, in his great possibilities. As the twig is bent the tree is inclined. The child who is impressed in its tender formative stage with the idea of its inferiority suffers a wrong for which nothing in the after years can compensate.

Many young employees, especially if they are at all sensitive, are irreparably injured by nagging, fault-finding employers, who are constantly reminding them of their shortcomings, scolding them for every trivial mistake, and never giving them a word of praise or encouragement, no matter how creditable their work, or how well they deserve it.

Enthusiasm is the very soul of success and one cannot be enthusiastic about his work, he cannot take continued pride in it, if he is constantly being told that it is no good, that it is in fact disgracefully bad, that he should be ashamed of himself, and that he ought to quit if he can't do better. This fault-finding and continual suggestion of inferiority has ruined many a life.

A young writer, for instance, often gets a serious setback in his early efforts because of a severe criticism, an unqualified condemnation of his first book by a reviewer, or the return of his initial manuscript, with an editor's sneering suggestion that he has made a mistake in his calling. Harsh critics, editors and book reviewers have deterred many young writers from developing their talent. The fear of further criticism or humiliation, of being called foolish, dull or stupid, has blighted in the bud the career of many talented young people who under encouragement might have done splendid work. If he is of a sensitive nature even though he really have great ability such rebuffs often so dishearten him that he never has the confidence to try again.

In the same way many a possible clergyman or orator has been discouraged by early failure and the humiliation of ridicule. In other words, unless a youth is made of very strong material and has a lot of pluck and indomitable grit, the suggestion of inferiority, perpetual nagging and discouragement may seriously mar his career.

If instead of carping and harping on the little faults and mistakes of those under their jurisdiction, and prophesying their utter failure and ruin, parents, teachers, employers and others in responsible positions would recognize and appreciate laudable qualities, there would be less misery and crime in the world, fewer human failures and wrecks.

The perpetual suggestion of inferiority holds more people back from doing what they are capable of than almost anything else. In the Old World, - China, Japan, India, in England and other European countries, for example, - who can measure the harm it has done in the form of "caste". Think what superb men and women have been held down all their lives, kept in menial positions, because they were reared in the belief that once a servant always a servant; that because their parents were menials they must also be menials!

What splendid brains and fine personalities we see serving in hotels, restaurants and private households in Europe - often much superior to the proprietors themselves. Saturated with the idea that the son must follow in the father's footsteps, though they may be infinitely superior in natural ability to those they serve, these men remain waiters, butlers, coachmen, gardeners or humble employees of some sort. No matter what talents they possess they are held in leash by the ingrained conviction of generations that the accident of birth has decided their position in life. They are convinced that the barriers established by heredity and by caste, an outworn feudal system, are insurmountable.

How delightfully the gentle humorist Barrie satirizes this Old World condition in his play, "The Admirable Crichton". How skillfully he portrays the clever and resourceful butler, Crichton, who in the crucible of a great emergency proves himself a born leader, a man head and shoulders above the noble lord, his master.

When the yacht carrying the master and his family, Crichton and some other servants, is wrecked, they escape with their lives to a desert island. In their desperate plight the barriers of

caste are broken down, and master and man change places. Removed from an artificial environment, where hereditary rank and wealth determine the status of the man, Nature unmistakably asserts herself, and Crichton, by the tacit consent of all, becomes leader. By the force of his inborn ability he controls the situation. He commands, the others obey. Yet when they are rescued by a passing ship and brought back to England, old conditions at once resume their sway. Crichton, without a murmur, or thought of change, falls back to his former menial position, and all goes on as before.

While we Americans laugh at, or severely criticize and denounce, the snobbishness of class distinctions in other countries, we are guilty of similar snobbishness, especially in regard to one section of our fellow-Americans - the Negro race. No matter how highly educated, how able, how refined or charming a man or a woman, if he or she has but a drop of Negro blood, we brand him or her with the stigma of race inferiority.

I always feel sympathy for the colored people, especially for the better educated and more refined men and women of this class who must suffer keenly from the discrimination against their race. They see white people avoiding them everywhere; refusing to sit down beside them in public places, in churches, on trains and cars, everywhere they can possibly avoid it. In the South they are not permitted to ride in the same cars with whites, and in other parts of the country, while they may travel on the ordinary day coaches, they are not allowed on the Pullman cars, except as waiters and porters. Our hotels, private schools, public places, and even many of our churches, practice similar discrimination. The churches pretend to draw no color lines, but by their attitude most of them practically do so.

Everywhere they turn in this land of ours, where we boast that every man is "born free and equal", Negroes are embarrassed, placed at a disadvantage. In all sorts of ways white people are constantly humiliating them, reminding them that they belong to an inferior race, and they take their places according to the valuation of those born to more favorable conditions. This constant suggestion of inferiority has done much to keep the colored race back, because it has added tremendously to their sense of real or fancied inferiority and has been a discouragement to their efforts to make themselves the equals of those who look down upon them.

We cannot help being influenced by other people's opinion of us. It makes us, according to its nature, think more or less of ourselves, of our ability. We are similarly affected by our environment. We unconsciously take on the superiority or inferiority of our surroundings. Employees who work in cheap, shoddy stores or factories soon become tagged all over with the marks of inferiority, the cheap John methods employed in the establishments in which they work and spend their days.

If the employees in a store like Tiffany's or Altman's, for example, were to be mixed up with those of some of the cheap, shoddy New York stores, it would not take much discernment to pick out the worker in the superior environment from the one in the inferior. To spend one's best years selling cheap, shoddy merchandise will inevitably leave its mark on those who do so. Even though we may struggle against it, we are unconsciously dyed by the quality of our occupation, the character of the concerns for which we work.

In making your life choice, avoid as you would poison shoddy, fakey concerns which have no standing in their community. Keep away from occupations that have a demoralizing tendency. Every suggestion of inferiority is contagious, and helps to swerve the life from its possibilities.

Every influence in our environment is a suggestion which becomes a part of us. If we live with people who lack ambition, who are slovenly, slipshod, or with people of loose morals, of low flying ideals, we tend to reflect their qualities. If we mingle much with those who use slangy, vulgar, incorrect English, people who are not careful about their manners or their expression, these things will reappear in our own conversation and manners. If we read inferior books, or associate with perpetual failures, with people who botch their work and botch their lives our own standards will suffer from the contagion.

It does not matter whether inferiority relates to manner, to work, to conversation, to companions, to thought habits - wherever it occurs, its tendency is to pull down all standards and to cut down the average of achievement. We are all living sensitive plates on which the example, the thoughts and suggestions of others, our own thoughts and habits, our associations and surroundings indelibly etch themselves.

I wish I could burn it into the consciousness of every person who wants to make a success of life that he cannot do so while he associates himself with inferiority and harbors a low estimate of himself. Get away from both. Have nothing to do with them. If you are a victim of the inferiority suggestion, deny the suggestion, drive it from your mind as the greatest enemy of your welfare.

You can only do what you think you can. If you hold in mind a cheap, discreditable picture of yourself; if you doubt your efficiency you are shackled, you are not free to express yourself. You erect a barrier between yourself and the power that achieves.

The mere mental acknowledgment or feeling that you are weak, inefficient, is contagious. It is sensed by other people and their thought is added to yours in undermining your self-confidence, which is the bulwark of achievement. No matter what others say or think of you, always hold in mind a lofty ideal of yourself, a picture of your own efficiency. Never allow yourself to doubt your ability to do what you undertake. You cannot be inferior, because you are made in God's image. You can, if you will, make a masterpiece of your life, because it is part of His plan that you should.

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The above article reproduces chapter eight of the book “**The Victorious Attitude**”, by O.S. Marden. The volume was published in 1916 in the U.S. by Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

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# H.P. Blavatsky Speaks Out On Our Duty To Humanity

Steven H. Levy

American English, AE



Simply stated, a Theosophist is any person who works for the benefit and happiness of all human beings, regardless of race, creed, sex, condition, or organization. Personal benefit and contentment may follow as a result, but that is not the motive held in the heart.

What is due to all human beings? How does it relate to the studying, applying, and promulgating basic theosophical principles?

H.P. Blavatsky provides an answer in [The Key to Theosophy](#), on [page 230](#), when she states that what is due to humanity at large is “Full recognition of equal rights and privileges for all, and without distinction of race, color, social position, or birth.” This includes family, neighbors, community, and especially those who are poorer and more helpless than ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally, and even morally.

This duty is the one of the purest forms of practical Theosophy. She goes on with the warning that “this is a debt which, if left unpaid during life, leaves us spiritually insolvent and morally bankrupt in our next incarnation.”

How can we possibly begin to fulfill this natural duty to others when there is so much apparent injustice in the world and in social institutions?

One has the ability to choose to put their noble and correct intentions and thoughts into action, at least by modeling them in daily life. Each theosophist has the potential to become a center of theosophical influence.

If the golden rule - which is a maxim expressing one operation of the law of karma - is applied, it involves not losing any opportunity to extend to another individual or group the same justice, respect for rights, kindness, consideration and mercy we would want for ourselves.

The causes for regeneration and reform, as well as deterioration and decay, have their origin within the human heart and mind. Individually and collectively lasting reform begins in our inner nature - in our thoughts and feelings.

Is it possible for an individual to help other human beings recognize and feel their duty to others so that the abuse of power and unjust laws will disappear in time?

H.P. Blavatsky speaks out:

“We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor, but, in our quality of Theosophists, we cannot engage in any one of these great works in particular. As individuals we may do so, but as Theosophists we have a larger, more important, and much more difficult work to do... The function of Theosophists is to open men’s hearts and understandings to charity, justice, and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man; and when people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should feel and think, they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice, and generosity will be done spontaneously by all.” (From the First Message, in “[Five Messages](#)”, pp. 8-9.)

Following the way she has clearly pointed out, independent Theosophists around the world can choose to unite in their recognition and aim to make this one their missions throughout the 21st Century.

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See the article [The Spiritual Power of Marriage](#), by Pitirim A. Sorokin.

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