

PHILOSOPHY · SCIENCE · RELIGION · THE ARTS

TheoSophia

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UNITY OF LIFE

FLY A KITE

The Meaning of a Pandemic

Growth and Spiritual Struggle

TheoSophia



TheoSophia is the official magazine of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand.

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Contributions are welcome. Articles will be considered if up to 1,500 words, and sent as an email attachment to the editor. Note that *TheoSophia* articles will also be used in part or whole on the website: www.theosophy.nz

Please contact the editor at editor@theosophy.org.nz or visit our website for the guidelines: www.theosophy.nz/

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THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Our Mission is to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the Unity of Life.

July 2018 Naarden meeting of the TS



Cover:
Poinsettia
Becerra Govea



Our Need to Connect

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TSNZ CONVENTION 2022

HEART OF THEOSOPHY

Regenerating Change Within for a World in Need

13 - 18 January 2022

AGM: 14 January 2022

Rose Park Hotel, Parnell, AUCKLAND

Come and join us in Auckland as we explore together the Heart of Theosophy, regenerating change within and opening ourselves to the possibilities that life offers.

Across the road from the convention venue are the beautiful rose gardens to escape to for quiet walks and reflection. An outing is also planned plus time to slow down, share and chat over a cup of tea. Renew your TS friendships and enrich this special experience.

Presentations from various local and national speakers, guided meditations and workshops are scheduled. We have an invited international keynote guest speaker via zoom (see top of next page). Speakers include: National President, John Vorstermans, National Vice-President, Renée Sell and Auckland President, Richard Sell.



John Vorstermans



Renée Sell



Richard Sell



For further information see TSNZ website: www.theosophy.nz/

HIGHLIGHTED SPEAKERS FOR 2022

INTERNATIONAL ZOOM GUEST SPEAKER FROM THE USA

Elena Dovalsantos

TSNZ is fortunate to have a special Zoom guest speaker from the USA, Elena Dovalsantos who hails from a family of three generations of theosophists. A dedicated student of the Ageless Wisdom, Elena is a TS international lecturer and a national speaker for the TS in America. She led the *School of the Wisdom* at Adyar in 2019 on *The Secret Doctrine* and was director of the *School of Theosophy* in NZ just prior to that. Currently based at the Krotona Institute of Theosophy in Ojai, California, Elena has a Doctorate in Chemistry and Masters in Management, spending most of her career as a research scientist.



SPEAKERS



Susanna Roskilly
CANTERBURY



Trish Lynch
AUCKLAND



Alastair Murray
CANTERBURY



Jonathan Quintin
Artist and Cosmologist

Carole Van Weede
AUCKLAND

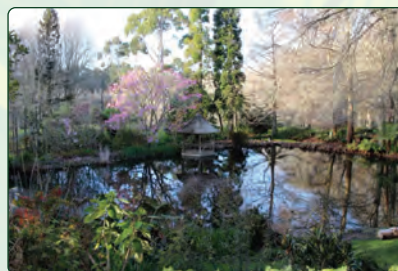
Jim Scrivener
NEW PLYMOUTH

PLUS

NZ Artist and Cosmologist
Jonathan Quintin
will be sharing with us
*Sacred Geometry and
Universal Order* – a visual
presentation.

Special Outing

TSNZ is organising a trip to the beautiful Ayrlires Garden and Wetlands in Whitford to take place on Monday 17 January. The TSNZ group outings are always popular not only for the chance to see parts of our country not otherwise visited by some but also to have down-time to relax and enjoy the company of other members and strengthen special ties.



See more details of this special place at: <https://ayrlires.co.nz/home/>

TSNZ VOTING RESULTS

NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

Renée Sell has been elected to the role for a one-year term beginning January 2022.

GOVERNANCE BOARD

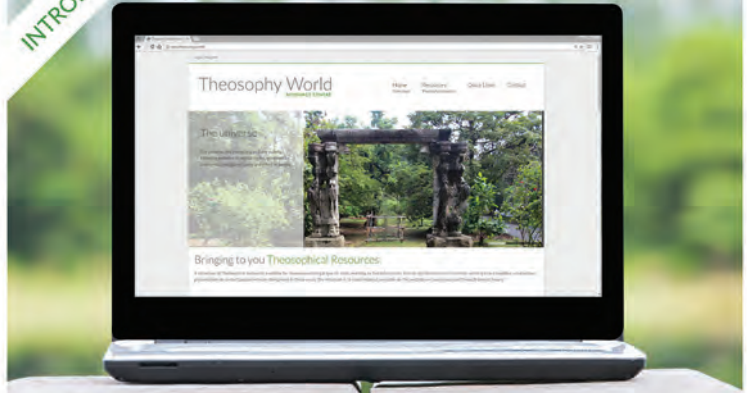
Vicki Jerome and Richard Sell have been elected to the Board for three-year terms beginning January 2022.

REFERENDUM

Future Options for Theosophical Centres

Just on 85% of those who voted were in favour of Affiliated Centres. The results were such that the outcome is binding with the next phase of work being to update the constitution and bylaws to accommodate the Theosophical Affiliated Centres which we hope to be completed by the end of 2021.

INTRODUCING



WWW.THEOSOPHY.WORLD

A NEW RESOURCE CENTRE FOR ALL THINGS THEOSOPHICAL

theosophy.world is a resource centre dedicated to helping you find what you are looking for. As a new online resource, material is building all the time.

- eBooks
- video and audio archives
- historical publications
- links to other helpful resources
- poems, quotes and much more...

SOMETHING TO SHARE?

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content@theosophy.world

Theosophy World
RESOURCE CENTRE

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY Selected Works of John Sell



Two of John Sell's qualities that come through this book are his sincerity and his ability to engage the reader... This is evident in every chapter, providing uplifting support as the reader delves into what are often difficult and complex issues on the path to self-understanding and personal transformation.

Practical Spirituality also contains a useful article by Elizabeth Sell [who edited the work] titled *Service: A Dynamic Challenge*, that focuses on the importance of committing ourselves to practical activities that are of lasting value to both the local and world communities. In addition to illustrations by John Sell and Lionel Taylor, *Practical Spirituality* contains full-colour reproductions of rare paintings by Elizabeth Sell that are as beautiful as they are inspiring.

Practical Spirituality: Selected Works of John Sell offers a wealth of useful, step-by-step teachings of Theosophy that will challenge, inform and inspire. In addition to being important to the library of every theosophical lodge or study centre, this will be a 'core text' for individual students wishing to expand their insight, compassion and understanding of life's mysteries.

Extracts from review by Nathaniel Altman in the American TS magazine *Quest*, Fall 2019.
See complete book review on line at www.theosophy.nz/

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United We Stand...

Divided we fall. When has that ever been more true? A refrain sung since the 1970s and famously quoted long before by world leaders, is credited to American Founding Father, John Dickinson's *Liberty Song*, Ancient Greek, Aesop's fable of the strength in a bundle of sticks as well as to New Testament unifying philosophy. In these Covid times, unity takes on a new meaning.

The theme of unity and kinship so strong in Theosophy, figures here in the writing of John Vorstermans (p.6), Renée Sell (p.12), library books available (p.16), a short science feature (p.17) and a piece from the HPB Lodge website (p.24). Tim Boyd writes about wisdom and power (p.9), Betty Bland about transformation (p.18), Barbara Hebert on growth and spiritual struggle (p.20) and Dr Steven H. Levy describes the meaning of a pandemic (p.26).

Heart of Theosophy: Regenerating Change Within for a World in Need is the theme of the TSNZ Convention 2022 to be held in Auckland. Enrolment forms are enclosed. Don't miss this opportunity to renew friendships, experience unity and learn more about Theosophy (p.2).

As Aotearoa, New Zealand unites to defeat covid and unity of kinship is experienced this summer, may you enjoy a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Pamela Zane Keys
Editor

Harmony

A tiny piece of Heaven touched my heart.
A moment rare, as beings truly met,
In wondrous Harmony, a world apart
And from it came a sound I can't forget.

It crossed all boundaries, met all need,
Created, uncreated, newly formed yet free,
It spanned the years, became a swaying reed
And brought a tear, one jewel of it, to me.

Once in a life such sound turns on the sun,
Brings us to our knees in loving prayer,
Returns the blessings of the Way, the One,
And tells of Joy and Peace awaiting there.

Vicky Weston

DIARY DATES

2022

Jan 13-18	TSNZ Annual Convention – in Auckland
Jan 14	AGM of The Theosophical Society in NZ Inc.
March 06	<i>TheosoFest</i> – HPB Lodge – Auckland
April 22-25	Autumn School of Theosophy

Check for updates and details of these events: www.theosophy.nz

FUTURE ISSUES 2022

Date	Theme	Deadline
2022		
March	<i>Harmony</i>	1 January
June	<i>The Inspiration Behind the TS</i>	1 April
September	<i>Spirituality and Religion</i>	1 July

Email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

TSNZ National President, **John Vorstermans** examines UNITY at its most profound level.



A WIDER VIEW

The Theosophical Society has a purpose clearly defined in the First Object, “To form a Nucleus of Universal Kinship without distinctions.” To me, the meaning is clear; we are endeavouring to manifest in our Centres and National Sections a Nucleus, a reflection of a Unity suggested by the Ageless Wisdom and confirmed in some quantum theory of today. There is no separation between you and me, between anything anywhere except the separation created in our minds.

Creating this Unity is a real challenge when we struggle so much on a psychological level with our feelings and thoughts and throw in personal desires, wants, needs, and feelings of entitlement. These are personal struggles we as individuals are challenged to deal with every day. However, if we are aware of ourselves and can see this happening, we can do something about it. Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, The President co-founder of the Theosophical Society, said in 1875 in the inaugural address on the founding of the Theosophical Society:

If we are true to each other and true to ourselves, we shall surmount every obstacle, vanquish every foe, and attain what we are in search of, the peace of mind that comes from absolute knowledge. *If we are divided, irresolute, temporising, Jesuitical, we shall fail as a Society to do what is not clearly within our reach.*

For the Theosophical Society to be successful, it is up to each member to create this Unity and recognise this undivided reality. Without a constant examination of what passes through our minds, then this is not possible. Buddhists call this mindfulness, Krishnamurti called it *choiceless awareness*. It is simply self-observation. David Bohm, a theoretical physicist, puts it like this:

Suppose we were able to share meanings freely without a compulsive urge to impose our view or conform to those of others and without distortion and self-deception. Would this not constitute a real revolution in culture?

Can we listen to each other without forming a judgement or view when someone shares with us? Can we genuinely listen, sit with it and see what comes up for us? This requires attention and awareness of our feelings and thoughts, observing our bodily reactions and so forth. We could ask questions or share what comes up for us regarding what we hear. It is a process, a way of listening with respect. When replying, are we aware of what we are going to say before we speak, have we considered the words, feelings and thoughts behind them, how they might be received? All this is important in non-judgemental, respectful and mindful conversation. To form this Unity, we need to change our culture, habitual ways we act and respond.

When we explore the secrets of nature, be it through science or divine wisdom, we are fortunate to have *The Secret Doctrine*, an immense treatise exploring some of the mysteries of the divine wisdom, writers, philosophies, religions and science of the time.

The Secret Doctrine's suggestion in the proemⁱⁱ that there are certain propositions to keep in the back of your mind when you go on this discovery journey, is outlined below.

THREE UNDERLYING PROPOSITIONS



#1

UNITY OF ALL

Existence is ONE THING, not any collection of things linked together. Fundamentally there is ONE Being. The BEING has two aspects, positive and negative. The positive is Spirit, or CONSCIOUSNESS. The negative is SUBSTANCE, the subject of consciousness.



#2

CYCLIC LAW

The absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking are examples of this cyclic nature of reality.



#3

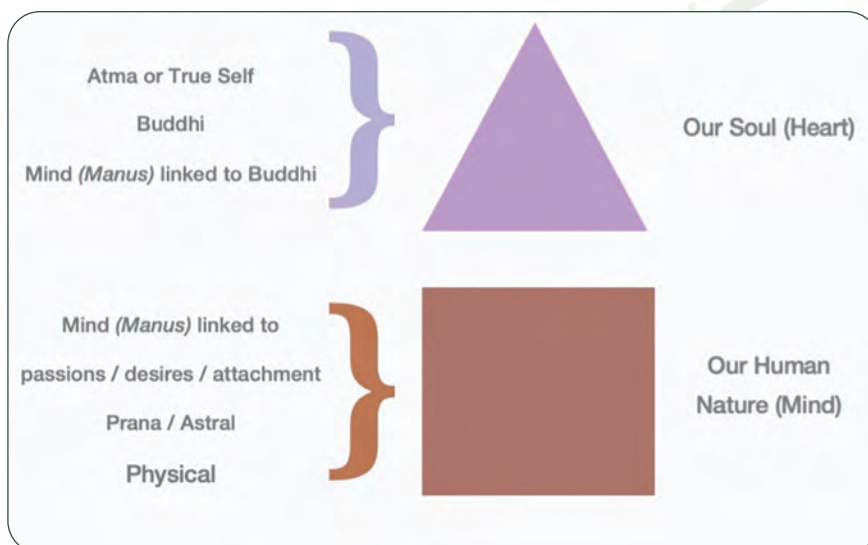
THE PILGRIMAGE

The obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul through the Cycle of Incarnation in accordance with cyclic and karmic law by self-induced and self-devised efforts, with no privileges or special gifts, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit, throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

Above are snippets of each of the propositions. Each forms a part of a whole which may be expressed in different ways. The One Undivided Unity lies at the base of it all. During the cycles within and of the universe, activity is expressed in the form of the dual nature of consciousness and matter. When brought down to a mental level, into polarity, the mind learns through experiencing such opposites as, love-hate, dark-light. We often read about battles played out between the light and the dark; mythical stories like those of Harry Potter have similar deep psychological meanings. As the universe expands, *The Secret Doctrine's* propositions propose a universal law of periodicity, which I translate as cycles through which everything evolves.

You can see this expressed through the cycles of seasons, moon cycles, night and day, astrology, endless cycles with each not precisely repeating itself but evolving in the process, like a tree going through its seasonal cycles grows through this process. The process of reincarnation of which we often speak in Theosophy, is just another aspect of these cycles, life-death-life.

The third proposition focuses on the journey of the Soul. The Soul is what we in Theosophy know as our immortal self, higher self, inner nature, witness or observer, etc. In the concept of



reincarnation, it survives death and from which we journey again into a new life. The diagram on the left shows a pictorial representation of the Soul and Personality, our Human Nature (Mind).

This journey of the Soul into a human form is one of growth and evolution with the ultimate experience to become a human being that is fully conscious while in human form. This process takes many lives through which we evolve, in the early lives, by trial and error, checked by karma, keeping us in balance and teaching the importance of right actions and right motive. If we observe life, we can see this in action everywhere. The proposal is that this process is not just blind evolution but requires our effort to grow and awaken consciously. Everything we have now has developed over countless incarnations through lessons learned and skills acquired through our self-devised efforts. There is no favouritism in receiving so-called special gifts given to anyone, except those developed or earned in the past or present. We can see this at work in nature through the struggle of the chick hatching from its egg or the butterfly breaking out of the chrysalis. Each grows stronger through the struggle for release. If we try to help them break out of their egg or chrysalis, they may die. The struggle is an essential step in life.

Looking back at our lives, it is clear that we learned most when life was not so easy. Although I do not purposely look for challenges in life, they present themselves when the time is right, usually when I think life is going so well! If I don't struggle with them and try to see what the lesson is I need to learn, then the struggle will pass. However, if I resist, then the lesson repeats itself, often in a more powerful way. The 19th century Swiss Psychiatrist, Carl Jung said "What you resist, persists" describing our unwillingness to learn and grow, so the lesson keeps repeating itself, albeit in different forms.

The journey to experience Unity is quite a process and not an easy one. As long as our personal feelings and mind remain glued to our desires, it is almost impossible to move forward. We have some great little books in the Theosophical Society which help us understand the process of moving to Unity, such as *At the Feet of the Master*, *Light on the Path* and *The Voice of the Silence*, which takes us a step further in the process of connecting with who we are. These books require practical effort in putting concepts into practice.

Coming back to the beginning, to create *A Nucleus of Universal Kinship* is a multi-step process. First is realising what this practically means in our everyday interconnected life through a self-reflective process. Books might talk about this stuff, but it is only in the doing that it can happen. This unity has many names; for some, it is a dream, the Universe, divine intelligence, or God or whatever. When working from that perspective, we work from knowing that you are me and I am you; differences are

no longer an issue. Then, when people come into our meetings and experience this respect we hold for everyone, we will attract an amazing set of people who want to know how to become part of this unity.

The Theosophical Society is an ongoing experiment started in 1875 to see if we could establish this Universal Kinship. In the Theosophical Society, we focus on the essential values of honesty, integrity, good faith, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect for each other and their views which are a mark of the deeper aspects of all religions and expressed through the sacred scriptures of the Divine Wisdom. We see them prevalent in the ethical practices of many businesses and organisations in the world today.

UNITY is all there is. Our journey will take us to it, no matter how long it takes. We are already there; we need to realise it, awaken to it.



- i David Bohm, *Changing Consciousness*, 1992
- ii H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Original verbatim edition, pp. 16-18



The TS, Hierarchy and Personality

Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society, reflects on the potency of wisdom and harmony.

I had an uncle, my favorite uncle, who died several years ago. Uncle John was a remarkable man in terms of his accomplishments in life, but more so because of his generosity of spirit and unconventional ways of thinking. As a student he worked long hours in very difficult circumstances to put himself through college and then medical school. In his fifties he decided that family practice was no longer satisfying, went back to school for three years, and became what he had always been in his heart of hearts – a psychiatrist. He was the uncle that would take us fishing, show us how to build a bicycle, and tell us stories about his life and the things he had seen.

In 2014, after the passing of the TS's longest serving President Radha Burnier, I was elected as the eighth International President of the Theosophical Society. In my mind I was something of an unlikely choice for the position, having only been at Adyar a total of three times over the previous three years for a grand total of three weeks.

My résumé consisted of many years of work solely within the USA – the TS in America, the TOS, and quite locally in Chicago within a spiritual community I participated in founding, back in the 1970s. Although some of this experience could be generalised and applied at Adyar, I was in over my head. The saving grace for me had little to do with my history, or experiences, and everything to do with attitude and state of mind. I was willing. Whether foolish or naive, I embraced the opportunity for deeper service. My exposure to the wisdom tradition and to profound individuals within the TS who had deeply touched this wisdom left me little choice.

Organisationally the TS has a hierarchical structure. There is a head from whom authority flows downward. This is a form that is consistent with spiritual traditions throughout history. Whether it is the guru, rabbi, imam, Rinpoche, or abbot, the congregation, sangha, temple, brotherhood, sisterhood, or order, hierarchy is imbedded in our approach to spirituality. Wherever we find realised people, men or women who demonstrate a closeness to Oneness and the powers that express through such a consciousness, our tendency is to place them on a pedestal and imbibe. It is a natural and intelligent response to value and respect those who exceed

us in wisdom.

A distinct problem we encounter in organisations focused on spirituality is that we really do not know what wisdom is. In the Bible it is said that “the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Genuine wisdom often bears a close resemblance to madness when it appears in our world. The great avatars and prophets of history upended societies and transgressed norms of law and conduct. The Buddha abandoned his wife and child in search of enlightenment. Upon attaining enlightenment his refusal to recognise caste distinctions virtually excluded the Brahmins from access to his teachings. The social order of the time and laws of caste forbade them from even being in the presence of the lowest castes. If so much as the shadow of a member of the “untouchable” caste touched a Brahmin, ritual cleansing was required. Jesus accepted social outcasts as disciples and rejected the religious teachings of his time. Krishna involved himself in a war that brought about the destruction of the Kshatriya (warrior) caste, on occasion giving advice deemed immoral for his time. The spread of Mohammed's teachings and the growth of his community incited his society to a war against him and his followers. J. Krishnamurti made the statement: “It is no sign of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.”

What seems to be the rejection of social norms by those who are genuinely wise is in reality an expression of the impossibility for wisdom to be confined within the limitations of conventional society. In spiritual traditions around the world knowledgeable or eloquent people are regularly mistaken for wise, to the detriment of others and themselves. Anyone who has embraced a spiritual path for some time has seen their share of manipulative pundits and priests, cruel vegetarians, rogue Rinpoches, self-absorbed theosophists, selfish devotees, and others who, though exposed to the potent energies of the wisdom tradition, have been thwarted by the inadequate development of the tool of personality.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) once made the point that “personality is the curse in the Theosophical Society, as it is

everywhere.” This was not intended to mean personality in the popular sense of an individual’s mannerisms, qualities and characteristics. From the Ageless Wisdom perspective personality has the specific meaning of the organisation of the materials of the physical, emotional and mental, or mânasic, fields that define and filter one’s range of response. HPB refers to personality as a curse, having painfully experienced it repeatedly in her efforts to share some measure of the Ageless Wisdom with the world. Time and again she witnessed how well-intentioned, upright, seemingly well-adjusted people changed when exposed to the heightened flow of power that accompanies even contact with knowledge about spiritual things, let alone actual wisdom. Like plugging a 110-volt appliance into a 220-volt outlet, unless there is some mechanism to control the electrical flow, the appliance will quickly burn out. The materials that compose it are not capable of conducting current at that level. Like everything else, the limitations imposed by an undeveloped personality are not permanent, but an intelligent and rigorous attention is required to build in materials able to accommodate more potent energies. The maxim emphasised by HPB was: “First deserve, then desire.”

...the radical inseparability of consciousness at all levels, is the basis for anything that can be described as spiritual.

Given the fact that personality is an unavoidable feature of being human, and that it is the source of all misunderstanding, separatism and self-centeredness, what can be done to mitigate its influence in a spiritual organisation? This is a question that all spiritual traditions have had to face. It could even be said that the problematic human personality is the reason for the appearance of every avatar and messiah, and for the establishment of the traditions that grew from their teachings.

The starting point for all valid spiritual teachings has been to understand and move beyond the domination of the personal and its unexamined projection into every aspect of human experience. Whether the focus is mindfulness or union with the divine, a grounding in something superior to the personal is the universal direction of spiritual practice. From an Ageless Wisdom perspective, the fundamental idea of hierarchy is that there is an infinite chain of ever-expanding consciousness, and that each ascending level exceeds, but also encompasses the former state. So, although more

expansive or ‘higher’, it is inseparable from the preceding condition from which it has grown. No matter how tall the tree, no matter how expansive the view from its heights, it remains deeply rooted in the earth.

This understanding gives us a glimpse into the depth of the First Object of the TS: “To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood...” The level of connection we describe as “Universal Brotherhood” is a fact of Nature. Oneness, or the radical inseparability of consciousness at all levels, is the basis for anything that can be described as spiritual. The nucleus is formed when the fixed and divisive barriers of personality dissolve, even temporarily. In a sense, the spiritual endeavour succeeds by repurposing the instincts of the personality — self-preservation and self-aggrandisement. The emphasis on cooperation and compassion as avenues to peace and happiness, and access to deepened capacity gradually draws the attention away from an isolating sense of self to an enlarged experience of connection. We live, move and participate within a “Greater Whole”, which once experienced eclipses the importance of our engrained limiting behaviour.

What does leadership mean within a hierarchical structure such as the TS, whose focus is the realisation of the Unity of all life? The Hermetic axiom says: “As it is Above, so it is Below.” Affinity to the higher benefits all that is beneath. The most efficient service to humanity results from connection to higher orders of consciousness and the energies that can flow unimpeded as a result of that connection. In theosophical tradition great emphasis is placed on selflessness as a condition that enables such connection. Whether it is a guru, God, or a Master of the Wisdom our inability to extend the limiting sphere of self is a barrier to their influence. This problem is as challenging for the sincere aspirant as for the casual practitioner. One of our great difficulties is that the habits and training of this and previous lifetimes lock us into a way of seeing the world that is separative, isolating, and inherently incorrect.

One function of an organisation or group is that it provides a laboratory for the experiment of selflessness. It is the nature of any group that one is continually in the presence of others whose personality composition differs from one’s own. While we recognise natural harmonies with some, with others we can feel distance, or even aversion. Yet we are drawn together and choose to be together purposefully. The Mission Statement for the TS is: “To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and

...the
movement
toward
harmony and
the process
of forming a
nucleus are
ongoing.

realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation, and the unity of all life.” With this as a motivating direction for our thinking and shared work, our focus is lifted beyond personal preferences, attractions and aversions.

When we lose sight of this, we lose connection and stall in our growth as individuals and as a group. There is a powerful principle that cuts across spiritual traditions. It has been expressed as “Wherever two or more gather in My name, there I am in the midst of them.” “My name” may be seen differently depending on one’s tradition and training as an ID for a localised activity of consciousness and form. The same name can mean a variety of things to different people depending on their relationship to the ‘person’. Anyone’s name describes a person who is a neighbour for some, a boss for others, a parent or child, an adversary, and so on. One of the causes of religious tension is absence of a shared name for that which encompasses, yet transcends all name, form, and consciousness. Wars are fought over it. In the higher sense “My name” is not a mere word. It is like a GPS marker on a map of consciousness, leading us to a ‘location’ of heightened activity.

In a hierarchical sense, at any time or place that two or more people can establish a harmonious focus on a greater consciousness, that consciousness becomes available. Our work within the TS is nothing less than this. In this condition, outwardly, great things are achieved. In the outside world the TS is involved in numerous activities — schools, training centres, healing groups, animal welfare work, childcare facilities, anti-stress training, and more. All of these are meaningful, necessary work, but it is the inner condition of a consciously cultivated and deeply felt union with our co-workers that gives life to these efforts. The power that is accessible to an elevated group consciousness, to the nucleus, exceeds what is possible for the individual, and where the focus is on service to others, or to humanity as a whole, the group becomes a conduit for the energies of higher sources. New ideas, new ways of thinking, new solutions to age-old problems reveal themselves and become suddenly practical. Previously unrealised resources and people appear to aid in the work. In the words of Goethe: “A whole stream of events issues ... raising in one’s favour all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings, and material assistance, which no man can have dreamed would have come his way.”

Whether it is a TS Lodge, or Study Centre, or its International General Council, the most basic requirement is that we learn to think beyond our personal wants and needs. Working together as a group has been the ongoing experiment that mitigates much of the undesired influence of personality. This approach does not guarantee that any decision will be agreeable to all, or even that it is the best course of action in the long run. What it does ensure is that the movement toward harmony and the process of forming a nucleus are ongoing.

Fast forward to April 2021: another cycle of seven years has come and gone and with it my re-election as International President. What has been learned? Seven years ago, at the time of my inauguration, I commented that the need is to respond to the “ever-calling invitation to openness, which is the only way in which we as individuals can be transformed, and the only way in which humanity can experience the regeneration that has been spoken of.” This is territory we will continue exploring together.

From *The Theosophist* Vol. 142.9, June 2021



Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society was born in New York City and studied at Brown University then at the University of Chicago. In Chicago Tim joined the TSA in 1974 and co-founded a Theosophical spiritual community in Chicago’s inner city. They held classes on the Ageless Wisdom, meditation and healing and formed a business which helped stabilise neighbourhoods through the training and employment of local youth and creation of affordable homes. Tim has been involved in Theosophical work at many levels: from lodge member, to TSA president and president of the Theosophical Order of Service USA. He has spoken across the USA and every continent except Africa. Tim’s articles appear in journals around the world.

Renée Sell explores the possibilities around...

Our Need to Connect

To form a nucleus of the Universal Kinship of Humanity
without distinction of race, ethnicity, creed, gender,
sexual orientation, caste or colour.

These past 18 months, with the pandemic raging around the world, have certainly tested us all in different ways: enduring the effects of the pandemic including lockdowns, separation from our family and friends, disruptions in jobs, schooling and at times, what feels like a severance from our hopes and dreams. We are discovering new ways of connecting, whether on mobile phone apps or computers, building closer connections with those around us and if we choose, to nourish the inner connection that separates us from our True Self.

Could this be considered the opportunity of a lifetime to have space to discover something more meaningful? We don't always see the positive in difficult situations, although it may be hiding in plain sight. It is this moment, right now that I want to speak of. Here, in 2021 and perhaps through all this disconnection we may discover Real Connection.

Many of us are reconnecting with nature and exploring natural surroundings. This has meant my rising at 6 am to be present to the beauty before the morning sun reveals its rays. In engaging with nature early in the morning, we can carry our discoveries with us throughout the day, whether that be a peace of mind, beauty of heart or just a calm stillness that permeates our own Being. It is palpable and sensed by those around us, a gift that each of us can cultivate at this time. We have the capacity to expand as individuals not knowing where the seeds of a peaceful mind, a loving heart, or a calm demeanour

may spread and grow. In our communities as we start to open up again, many will be reaching out and wanting to connect in more meaningful ways, looking for like minds and questioning the 'why?' of what is happening in these times. This can bring us head on into the big questions of life that often go unanswered as we navigate through our busy lives: Who am I? Where do I come from? Why am I here? What happens when I die?

As members and friends of the Theosophical Society, we may ask what role the Society is playing at this time, as heirs to this rich tradition of wisdom and this noble cause of a 'Universal Brotherhood/Kinship' with all that lives, the Oneness of all life. What part do we play in this great work 146 years on from the founding of the modern theosophical movement? How can we best reach out to society with our message of hope in the 21st century? What is our relevance in the world today, and how is our message broadcast? The Theosophical Society has been founded to let people know there is such a thing as theosophy and to assist seekers on their spiritual journey. Theosophy is a beacon light of hope, very relevant today, for a world in need. This brings us to language, which is so important, and we may ask: Are we connecting to all people with our message by speaking in the language of our culture and time?

Let us consider more inclusive language within the Society's Objects. The intention is not to change the intent of the Objects themselves but rather, to clothe them in more contemporary and inclusive language;



starting with the word *brotherhood*. In New Zealand the meaning is no longer perceived as Inclusive. We could be doing a disservice to the Society continuing its use and hindering our ability to connect with as many people as possible. When speaking to people newly interested in theosophy, we are having to defend the word *brotherhood*. We are an educational organisation and we exist and operate within NZ society. It is our responsibility to reach all people in Aotearoa/New Zealand. An example of the unacceptability of the word *brotherhood*, is where membership applicants cross out the word and replace it with a more inclusive word. Many young people laugh outright at the idea of *brotherhood* as being inclusive of women and ask “Why don’t you just change it and avoid the long-winded explanation justifying the word’s usage?”

CHANGING – BROTHERHOOD TO KINSHIP

Language is important because the language we use doesn’t only reflect our culture but also constructs it and powerfully influences generations to come in their attitudes. Language can set expectations about how people are supposed to be. *Brotherhood* is considered gender bias language in 2021 in NZ when it is used to represent everyone. Gender bias language in favour of one sex only, men, can lead to women being excluded or rendered invisible and is therefore divisive and this is the opposite of the Theosophical Society’s message.

In reference to the replacement word proposed, there are a number of meanings of the word *Kinship* in various dictionaries, usually referring to family relationship ties. In the context of the Society’s First Object, the dictionary also states *Kinship* means a *sharing of characteristics* or origins. Synonyms: affinity, sympathy, kindred, rapport, harmony, understanding, alliance, association, empathy, closeness, fellow feeling, bond, community, communion, compatibility, link, accord, friendship, togetherness (Oxford dictionaries). It is to this sharing of bonds and affinity, along with other synonyms listed, that *kinship* as a replacement for *brotherhood* refers. Within theosophical writings in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, the words *Universal Brotherhood* are spoken of as an association of ‘affinities’ of strong, magnetic yet dissimilar forces and polarities, centred around one dominant idea.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky wrote about the need for future theosophists to stay vital and relevant to the world they live in and not crystallise their thought patterns around old ideas so they become but rigid dogmas. A very thought-provoking quote from when H.P. Blavatsky was speaking of *The Future of the Theosophical Society* may help us:

I do not refer to technical knowledge of the esoteric doctrine, though that is most important; I spoke rather of the great need which our successors in the guidance of the Society will have of unbiased and clear judgment. Every such attempt as the Theosophical Society has hitherto ended in failure, because, sooner or later, it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart. You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biased by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognise it instantly and so avoid being led



away by it, the result can only be that the Society will drift off on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die.

CHANGING SEX TO GENDER AND ADDING SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The word *gender* as described in the *Oxford* dictionary means: “Either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.” The distinction between sex and gender is becoming increasingly more important to understand in today’s world. Whilst sex refers to biological differences such as chromosomes, hormone profiles and physiological differences in the creative organs, the term *gender* is used to describe social norms, meanings, and customs pertaining to femininity and masculinity. Gender is a cultural interpretation of sex, a social construct that we perform over time, and something that is highly regulated and moulded by society. For example, it is not in every man’s DNA to love tools, trucks and the colour blue, just as it is not in every woman’s DNA to love pink, dresses and cooking. These things are socially constructed gender norms acquired through socialisation. For most people, their biological sex and socially constructed gender identity are aligned, but there are many who do not fit into this strict gender binary such as gender queer, gender fluid, and transgender people. People are adding preferred pronouns to their emails and social media profiles, asking others to address them as ‘He/Him’, ‘She/Her’, ‘They/Them’.

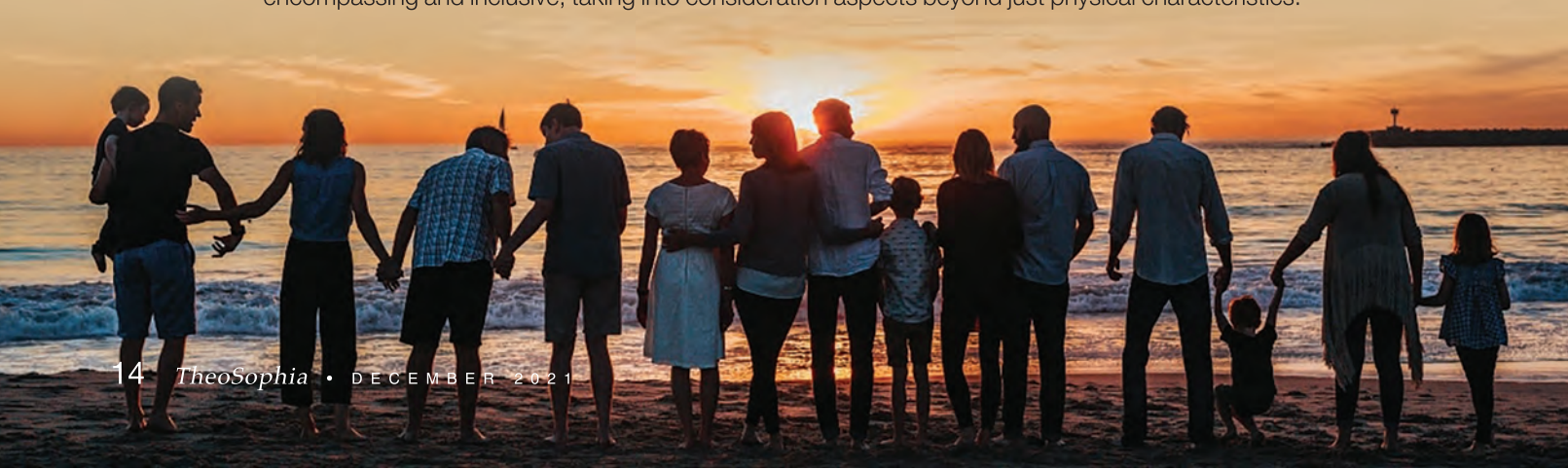
By encompassing people in a broader and more inclusive manner, the Society affirms all non-discriminatory behaviour and practices; not just on biological grounds alone, but also relating to social behaviour and lifestyle choice. In the adding of ‘sexual orientation’ to TS statements, we acknowledge sexual orientation in the First Object in order to ensure full protection of LGBTQ+ people interested in pursuing theosophical studies.

As in the wider society, the Society in NZ has faced issues with some gender discrimination within our ranks but it is within our grasp to address this in a positive and forward-thinking way. Any discrimination whatsoever within The Society is unacceptable and highlights the importance of having not just inclusive language but also protections in place for this.

ADDING NEW WORD *ETHNICITY*

“Race is one of the major groups which human beings can be divided into according to their physical features, such as the colour of their skin” claims the *Collins Dictionary*. ‘Ethnic’ means connected with, or related to different racial or cultural groups of people. *Collins Dictionary* defines an ethnic group as “a social group that shares a common and distinctive culture, religion, language or the like.” The *Oxford Dictionary* defines ethnicity as “the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition.”

Whilst the words *race* and *ethnic* are interchangeable, the word *Ethnicity* is presented as being more encompassing and inclusive, taking into consideration aspects beyond just physical characteristics.



Discrimination on the basis of race is still very real in today's world and a present threat in society. Including ethnicity 'in addition to' rather than 'as a replacement for' race, acknowledges and ensures anti-racism is strengthened within the *First Object*. We have the opportunity to be completely inclusive with our language so why wouldn't we? A beautiful quote from Master Morya, one of the inner founders of The Theosophical Society, when speaking about Theosophy, is an appropriate reminder for us here: "Theosophy is for everyone not just for a part."

Much consideration has been put into the necessary translating of the *Objects* into the language of our time. I suggest that before all people and particularly the youth of today can connect with the lofty theosophical ideas and concepts, we need to connect with the language used to explain them. The suggested changes to the *First Object* keep alteration to a minimum while being sensitive to the original intent. This is a positive and healthy move forward for the Society that will connect more readily to the people of New Zealand in our era.

At the upcoming AGM of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand, a Remit will be put forward from the Governance Board of TSNZ with a proposal for minimal changes to the wording of our *Objects* in New Zealand. The purpose of these changes is to be more inclusive and in touch with the people of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Our nation has always been at the forefront of change in the world, from women being first to vote, to being considered one of the most diverse nations on the planet. We want to speak to all peoples of all cultures and use current and inclusive language to strengthen our message. The suggested new wording is as follows:

To form a nucleus of the Universal Kinship of Humanity without distinction of race, ethnicity, creed, gender, sexual orientation, caste or colour.

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Heartfelt gratitude to all the women who have inspired and encouraged me and special thanks to those that have assisted me with research, suggestions and interviews (of both youth and minority groups) which contributed to bringing forth this article.



Renée Sell, dedicated student of the Ancient Wisdom has been active in the Theosophical Society in various capacities over the years and is the National Vice-President of the New Zealand Section. Renée has also coordinated the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) in New Zealand since 2003, nurturing many projects through this avenue of service. Her key focus is applying the Ancient Wisdom teachings in her own life and enthusiastically encouraging others to do the same.



The Geoffrey Hodson Library



Membership in the Theosophical Society in New Zealand includes library borrowing privileges (in person or by mail); however, members must register for this benefit with the library.

Non-members may register for library privileges for an annual fee of \$50.

Requests can be posted within New Zealand and must be returned at the borrower's cost.

To register or to borrow books:

call 09 523 1797 or preferable at the moment to email.

email

library@theosophy.org.nz

or visit the library in person.

18 Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051

You can view the library catalogue at

<https://tsnz-library.theosophy.org.nz>

UNITY

A selection of titles available from the library



THE ONE TRUE ADVENTURE: THEOSOPHY AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING

by Joy Mills

These essays by a premier American teacher are grouped according to the four stages of the quest for meaning: The Human Condition, Our Hidden Potential, Esoteric Teachings, and Self-Transformation.

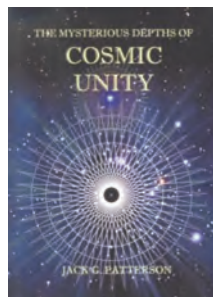


HUMAN REGENERATION

by Radha Burnier

“The subject of human regeneration is very important because a truly momentous change in the history of humanity will occur only when there is a revolutionary change in the human being.”

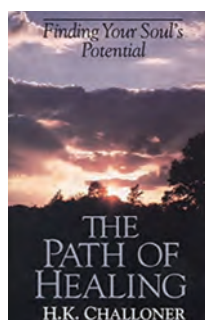
You can view the full text at <https://theosophy.world/resource/ebooks/human-regeneration-radha-burnier>



THE MYSTERIOUS DEPTHS OF COSMIC UNITY

by Jack Patterson

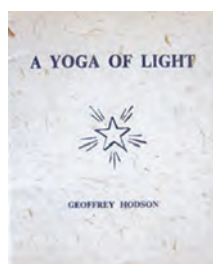
This remarkable book explores some of the deepest issues of the human mind, the nature of God, the underlying unity of the cosmos and intelligence that underlie manifestations in nature as revealed by researches in modern physics, parapsychology, transpersonal psychology and esotericism.



THE PATH OF HEALING

by H.K. Challoner (Janet Melanie Ailsa Mills)

This is both a practical and inspiring guide. “A way is indicated which, although arduous indeed, may lead more surely to inner as well as outer wholeness. The mystery of ills that often baffle medical science is elucidated with a seer's insight and the recommended cures are similar to those authenticated by the wise all down the ages.”



A YOGA OF LIGHT

by Geoffrey Hodson

“The discovery of the Godhead within one and its unity with the Godhead in all, these two discoveries are experiences in consciousness and the positive use of the creative imagination in meditation can help one to gain those experiences.”

You can view the full text at <https://theosophists.org/library/booklets/a-yoga-of-light/>

Entanglement

Everything is connected, say the scientists.

Quantum Entanglement is a quantum mechanical phenomenon in which the quantum states of two or more objects have to be described with reference to each other, even though the individual objects may be spatially separated.

This leads to correlations between observable physical properties of the systems. For example, it is possible to prepare two particles in a single quantum state such that when one is observed to be spin-up, the other one will always be observed to be spin-down and vice versa, this despite the fact that it is impossible to predict, according to quantum mechanics, which set of measurements will be observed.

As a result, measurements performed on one system seem to be instantaneously influencing other systems entangled with it. But quantum entanglement does not enable the transmission of classical information faster than the speed of light.

Quantum entanglement has applications in the emerging technologies of quantum computing and quantum cryptography, and has been used to realise quantum teleportation experimentally.

At the same time, it prompts some of the more philosophically oriented discussions concerning quantum theory.

The correlations predicted by quantum mechanics, and observed in experiment, reject the principle of local realism, which is that information about the state of a system should only be mediated by interactions in its immediate surroundings.

Different views of what is actually occurring in the process of quantum entanglement can be related to different interpretations of quantum mechanics.

Taken from Vol. II No. 4 *Researches Relevant to Theosophy* <http://theoscience.org/Source:ScienceDaily>

The above text is excerpted from the Wikipedia article *Quantum Entanglement*, which has been released under the GNU Free Documentation License.

NOTE: *Researches Relevant to Theosophy* website is pleased to propose its latest issue, *Volume IV - N° 3*, to readers including papers and communications from around the world on subjects such as Divine action in the world, COVID19 and Yoga, Mind-Body interaction, reincarnation. You can follow them on Twitter for real-time notifications of new posts. Your valuable feedback is always welcomed. RRT15.pdf (theoscience.org)

Betty Bland suggests we can transform the world, one spiritual kite at a time – when joined in unity.

Fly a Kite!

One thousand kites in the air at the same time! This was the goal of the Wheaton Sesquicentennial Commission when they put out an all-call for kite flyers from the area to gather in one of the local parks last Spring. They were hoping to set a world record for the most kites flying at once. The winds didn't cooperate, but it was a festive gathering drawing kites of all sorts together for the grand attempt. Although the count was a mere 800, the event created a myriad of shapes and colours dotting the skies.

Besides the lack of cooperation from the winds (we live near Chicago, which is known as the Windy City), one reason the event didn't meet its goal may be that our general culture isn't very savvy about kiting. We can find some kites in the stores, but rarely do we see many in the air. This is probably because there is a real art to kite flying, and what may seem like a simple hobby in fact requires a certain level of skill.

Think about all the parts of a simple kite that have to be in balance. First is the framework, which has to be tough, light, balanced and flexible. It has to be carefully designed, since it is the structure on which all else hangs. Then the wind-resistant covering that holds it all together adds lift, design and colour. Yet even with these details carefully crafted, the kite cannot get off the ground if it does not have a tail to keep it in balance.

These elements of a kite can be likened to the spiritual life. The structure or framework is composed of the familiar Theosophical triad of study, meditation and service. These are the supporting spines of our practice, without which any effort will fall flat. The study of the Ageless Wisdom, against which we can measure our experience of nature within and without, provides the strength of understanding that can carry us through the winds of fortune.

The more we know about the universe and its laws, the more we begin to see the necessity of an altruistic spirit. A greater understanding of our own nature creates in us an absolute realisation of our unity with all. Without this generous and open-hearted attitude, our spiritual kite will not be structurally sound and will finally collapse under the weight of its own self-preoccupation.

Yet study and service alone lack cohesiveness. They require the strong binder of meditation, which holds these elements together in a meaningful way so that they are firmly anchored in our consciousness. Meditation creates the still insight through which our own individuality can unfold its beautiful design. We are like snowflakes: no two are exactly alike. Meditation reaches deeply within to tune into that interior essence so that each one of us is able to express his or her own distinctive character.

With these foundations well in place, we are on our way, but without the covering to provide the lift, we are still earthbound. That covering can be compared to the essential element of inspiration. Study, meditation and service can be quite consistent, but until the element of inspiration is introduced, our practice can fall flat. This is a part of the beauty and art of building our soul's kite.



A greater understanding of our own nature creates in us an absolute realisation of our unity with all.

The sources of inspiration are myriad and unpredictable. For some, it may be Taizé chanting or singing the Indian devotional songs known as *bhajans*; for some it may be the veneration of Jesus, Buddha, Allah, saints from the past, or present-day teachers; for others it may be ringing bells, lighting candles, or praying in a chapel. The colourful practices of the traditions we hold dear call to the depths of our being, resonating with the intrinsic patterns of our individual natures and drawing us toward the heights. These multifaceted practices, which bring inspiration through beauty and devotion when observed in full consciousness and joined within the framework of study, meditation and service, create an inner structure that will be sensitive to every breath of wind from universal spirit.

The caution to be sounded here is that we all have to realise that the shape and colour of our kites are not the only kinds there are or should be. Besides making this a very boring and regimented world, this would essentially tie our kites down to self-centeredness, pride, and exclusivity. These will never fly!

Finally, the remaining element required for an effective kite is a proper tail to provide balance and steady orientation as the winds blow to and fro. I think we can say that the element that provides this balance is the attempt to live by high ethical standards each and every moment of our daily lives. This consistent development of character steadies our efforts and generates the necessary stability.

All of this we do in preparation, but we never know when the wind will catch us and lift us to the heights. We have to be diligent, trust the wisdom of those who have experience in the flight of spirit, and remain willing to keep trying and learning. If our practice and inspiration are soundly based and our daily lives reflect all that we know, we will be holding our souls aloft in readiness. We will be prepared to catch the smallest breeze.

If we are prepared and ready, the spirit will move us and lift us into the heavens. And if we Theosophists as a group can work together sharing knowledge and helping one another, then we can have an assortment of many-coloured kites of consciousness held in readiness so that we can have many more than a thousand spirits joined in heart and breath, dotting the cosmos and shielding humanity.

Build your spiritual kite carefully day by day and hold it ever at ready so that in the twinkling of the universal eye, we will unite as a band of worldwide servers. The many shapes, designs and colours of our beings united in spirit will offer far more than a spectacle of colour or shapes filling the sky: we can be the critical mass to improve, beautify, and, yes, even transform our world.



Betty Bland is past President of the Theosophical Society in America and currently serves on the boards of the Theosophical Order of Service and the Theosophical Book Gift Institute. An active worker for the Society since she first joined in 1970, her emphasis continues to be the practical applications of Theosophical principles.

National President of the TS in America, **Barbara Hebert** sees potential benefits gained through times that may seem dark.

Growth and Spiritual Struggle

We can define spiritual struggle as a conflict or dissonance between what we hold sacred (our beliefs, including others who share those beliefs or the institution that houses them) and our experiences. This conflict results in emotions that often seem distressing.

There are many instances in which our experiences challenge our beliefs. For example, dissonance may arise when someone within the spiritual community behaves in ways that are unexpected or considered unspiritual. Another example might involve a time when an individual is faced with difficult life decisions, but his or her belief system does not provide support or guidance in making those decisions. For some, spiritual conflict may occur in times of crisis. During the past year and a half, it is likely that many have found themselves struggling in this way as our world has changed so dramatically.

Our spiritual beliefs support us and answer our questions about the world. They provide structure, meaning, and understanding in our lives. They create a sense of stability and security. The spiritual community becomes a family, sometimes even closer than the one into which we were born. When our experiences challenge our spiritual beliefs, we may feel as if our world has collapsed; it has gone dark and become chaotic and confusing. We struggle to find stability and security. In this situation, we may feel adrift, separate, and isolated from our spiritual community. We may experience fear and even anger.

If we don't struggle, we don't grow.



We can choose
to navigate
the labyrinth of
confusion until we
find our way out.

No one wants to live through what some have called the Dark Night of the Soul. Although it is not widely discussed, it is a relatively common experience. This spiritual dissonance tends to be an intensely private time of questioning and anguish. One may ask questions like, “How can such pain and suffering be allowed?” “How can I live up to my spiritual values?” “Is there a deeper purpose to my life?” “Has my community abandoned me?” Very likely you have asked yourself these and similar questions during difficult times.

Many people regard spiritual struggle as a bad thing. We may assume that ‘the universe’ or ‘a higher power’ is telling us that we must not continue in the same way, that we have chosen the wrong path. However, if we look at the situation more objectively, we find that struggling (spiritually or in any other way) is an integral component of learning and growing.

If we don’t struggle, we don’t grow. As you think back over your life, when have you learned or grown the most? Typically, our greatest growth occurs during times of crisis or struggle.

In 1987, psychiatrist M. Scott Peck published *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*. In this book, he described four stages of spiritual development. A brief discussion of these stages may help us understand the value of spiritual dissonance on our journey.

Peck’s first stage is called the chaotic-antisocial. Individuals in this stage are egocentric. Although they may say they love and care for others, they are primarily concerned about themselves – their own wants and needs – and can be manipulative and self-serving in acquiring what they want.

In an effort to move away from the chaos of this first stage, Peck speculates that some individuals move on to a second, *formal-institutional* stage. Here they become affiliated with some type of institution that provides security and stability. This stage is often marked by a focus on rules. Individuals at this level may be dogmatic and legalistic in their beliefs. Because security within the institution is of paramount importance, any change or challenge to the institution or its beliefs can cause tremendous upset and feelings of threat. Peck points out that stage two individuals can be found in every ideology.

Individuals arrive at Peck’s third stage, the *skeptic-individual*, as a result of a dissonance between their belief systems and their life experiences. Their belief systems no longer adequately answer their questions or explain the situations in which they find themselves. These people tend to self-identify or be perceived as nonbelievers, atheists, agnostics, or scientifically minded individuals who want researched and logical explanations for the meaning of life. They do not need the structure of an institution and feel free to question their beliefs. Many people in this stage are actively seeking answers to the meaning of life. They focus on social justice and work for social reform.

Those who continue to seek may find themselves in the final stage of Peck’s theory: the *mystical-communal*. Here individuals focus on community rather than individualism. They focus on unity rather than on separateness. They accept the lack of definitive answers and look to the mystery of the universe as part of the spiritual process. They are willing to live in the unknown, searching for the unknowable.

Clearly, Peck’s third stage, the skeptic-individual, is the questioning stage of spiritual development. In order to grow spiritually, we must question our beliefs. If there is no questioning, we are unlikely to grow spiritually.

The Ageless Wisdom and teachers throughout time have encouraged seekers to question, to self-reflect, and to listen to their inner voice for answers rather than listening to authority figures. We are encouraged to grow by continuing to seek Truth.

Perhaps another way of looking at the growth that occurs from facing a crisis is through the hero’s journey described by Joseph Campbell. In his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*,

Campbell writes:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

To relate this to spiritual struggle and growth, we may see ourselves in the role of hero. As the hero, we are forced from our comfortable daily life by a spiritual crisis. We battle through the crisis: the questioning, the feelings of being alone, afraid, and uncertain. As we successfully negotiate the battle, we find that we re-enter the light. Our understanding of ourselves and our beliefs deepen and expand. We have grown spiritually and have become stronger and wiser. This growth influences others as well as ourselves.

We always have choices, of course. We can choose not to enter the battlefield, not to face the crisis head-on. We can choose to remain in the darkness, feeling abandoned and isolated. Or we can choose to analyse our lives and our belief systems. We can choose to navigate the labyrinth of confusion until we find our way out. This process is a difficult one and requires internal strength and fortitude, but it is the way of the hero. It enables us to deepen our understanding and beliefs. It provides the pathway to finding a new light that shines even brighter than previously.

If you have lived through such a time (which is likely), think back upon it. Remember what you were like before the crisis. Think about how you felt when the crisis occurred. Remember how you decided to face the situation and fight the battle: the courage it required, the times you may have faltered and got up again, the joy of moving forward, slow step by slow step. You are the hero! You won the fight. Through your spiritual struggles, you have transformed your life and the lives of those around you.



Barbara Hebert, Ph.D., National President of the Theosophical Society in America, is Director of the Southeastern Louisiana University Counselling Center and is a Licensed Professional Counsellor. A third-generation, Barbara has been involved in local, regional and national office. Theosophy provides the guideposts through which she endeavours to live her life. She says that while the Ancient Wisdom is important, it is essential to continue to grow and evolve so that the shared Theosophy message remains clear and relevant.



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Theosophical Digest



The *Theosophical Digest* is a quarterly magazine which condenses wholesome articles on meditation, comparative religion, Ancient Wisdom, art of living, health, science, theosophy, spirituality, philosophy and more.

The compact format of short articles, snippets and humour from authors around the globe makes the *Theosophical Digest* a great read for short relaxing interludes at any time. These books also make great gifts – perhaps as a subscription to an organisation, or someone you know who would appreciate some thoughtful inspiration in a busy world.

Subscriptions in New Zealand are \$25 annually, and the magazine is sent out quarterly. Back copies of individual Digests can also be ordered for \$5 each, and are subject to availability. The *Theosophical Digest* is published by the Theosophical Publishing House in the Philippines and reprinted in India.

To order an annual subscription, or for back copies and internet banking information, email Maureen Paterson with your contact details including address and phone number at thedigests@gmail.com or post a note to Theosophical Digest, Box 183, Kaeo 0448 or phone Maureen on 09 405 1653.



Southern Regional Gathering

Wow, what an exciting weekend! A huge thank you goes to Canterbury and Dunedin Branches who coordinated to present a Southern Regional Gathering held in Christchurch 27-28 March 2021 attended by South Island members, National President John Vorstermans and National Vice-President Renée Sell. It was a special time together, bringing new insights as we explored the theme *Acknowledging the Extraordinary in our Everyday Life*. Starting with a casual Friday evening dinner, we moved on to weekend attunements, meditations including a walking meditation in the Botanic Gardens, discussions, Q & A's, Energy Exercises and wonderfully inspiring presentations and talks:

- Susanna Roskiley - *The Canterbury Tales* - a short history of the Canterbury Branch.
- Doctor Alastair Murray - *Near Death Experiences* followed by group discussion.
- Susan Kaschula - *Wisdom Teachings Symbolised in Mercury's Image*.
- Tim Mitchell - *The Search for Meaning in a Chaotic World*.
- John Vorstermans - *The Key to the Seven Portals* delving deeply into spiritual life.
- Renée Sell - *Awakening to the Sacred, Our True Purpose*.

Heart-felt gratitude goes to Susanna Roskiley, Canterbury Branch President for her dedicated organising of the weekend's details and the close-knit band of supportive helpers especially Robin de Mandeville and Susan Kaschula. Susanna said, "It was an absolute pleasure to host our Gathering... seeing members meeting ... joining together in friendship and harmony to share and exchange ideas under the light of Theosophy was so uplifting."

May the Light generated at the gathering sustain theosophy's moving forward in the South Island. Evident were co-operation, harmony, friendship, warmth and enquiry; seeds from which theosophical groups grow. Members went home well equipped with wisdom and tools for greater service to others. It is clear that wisdom can become a living reality in our lives.



The transcendent consciousness brings out another insight into the nature of things, the ultimate foundation of universal kinship.

Unity of Life

Look at a single leaf of a tree. Its life appears to be separate from the other leaves. The apparent proof of such separateness is that if we cut that leaf, it will die, but the other leaves will not die or be injured.

Yet look again. What gives life to the leaf? It comes from the nourishing sap that passes through the twig, the same twig that supplies the same life to the other leaves. In other words, the leaf doesn't have a separate life. There is only one life that animates not only the leaves but also the twigs, branches, trunk and roots of the entire tree, which are but the outer garments of that life. The garment withers and dies during autumn and winter, and a new garment springs up in spring and summer. The garment changes, but the life doesn't. It's the same one life. The leaves look separate, but they're really but one life.

Look at your fingers. They're also separate. You wound the small finger and you feel the pain, but the other fingers aren't bleeding. They remain healthy and unaffected. Yet these fingers don't have separate lives. They are part of the one life that runs through the entire body of a human being. The separateness is superficial. If we look deeper into the nature of the fingers, we'll see that they are not really separate.

The deeper the self-realisation of a person, the more they influence the whole universe by their subtle spiritual vibrations, and the less they themselves are affected by the phenomenal flux.

Sri Yukteswar

MORPHIC RESONANCE

Everything, that is, every *morphic unit*, whether atoms, crystals, organs, animals, social systems or the entire cosmos itself, has its own *morphic field*. These fields determine the form and behaviour of the unit or organism, because the fields have *memories*, and the forms and behaviour follow these memories. These fields can be behavioural, social, cultural or mental. They constitute the underlying unity of organisms as well as the interrelationship between different organisms, which may be part of a larger morphic unit.

One famous example comes from the 1960s when English Blue Tits started to peck their way through the foil lids of milk bottles left on doorsteps. Within a matter of a week or so, Blue Tits were observed doing this all over the UK. How did they all suddenly, and almost simultaneously, 'learn' to do this? And there are stories of sheep rolling over cattle grids in Australia, a whole continent away from where the behaviour first started. There are even stories of cows in the USA who won't walk over a painted cattle grid even though they've never seen or experienced a real cattle grid.

...consciousness is a coherent whole, which is never static or complete, but which is in an unending process of movement and unfoldment.

David Bohm

The Theosophical idea of Unity is the contemporary spiritual message ... it has established kinship ... of women and men and respect towards every kind of life.



UNITY IN THEOSOPHY

This message of Unity was introduced through modern Theosophical Doctrine, presented by H. P. Blavatsky. The Theosophical idea of Unity is the contemporary spiritual message and as *the message of the unity of life*, it has established kinship or brother/sisterhood of women and men and respect towards every kind of life.

Unity determines the behaviour of contemporary humanity, and has established a new way of perception at all levels of life. Unity sets the foundations for the tendency towards fraternisation of nations, close co-operation among countries, economic unification and fraternity of religions. The tendency of the unifying message is to bring together the members of humankind into a universal family, where each person should recognise their inner kinship and origin, and through this knowledge be able to understand and sympathise with more immature others still plagued by discord, bigotry, rivalry and dogmatism.

For Theosophy, the unity of the manifested world is an undeniable event, a state which pre-exists before every creation and manifestation; it is the principle and the beginning of cosmic and universal creation, the fundamental of the apparent pluralism. The fundamental law of Theosophy is that there is an *Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable Principle (Secret Doctrine I, p.14) which is the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself.* (S.D. I, p.273)

It is owing to our limitations that a thing appears to us as single and separate when in truth it is not a separate thing at all.

Rudolf Steiner

THE NEED FOR PERSONAL CHANGE

If we are the Earth, if we are the Force, it follows that when Earth goes through changes, for example, when the magnetics of the Earth change, or if we have a polar reversal, our bodies are going to change, as well. In other words, these kinds of changes are having direct effects upon our perceptions of space and time, upon our relationships, our romances, our careers, our sleep

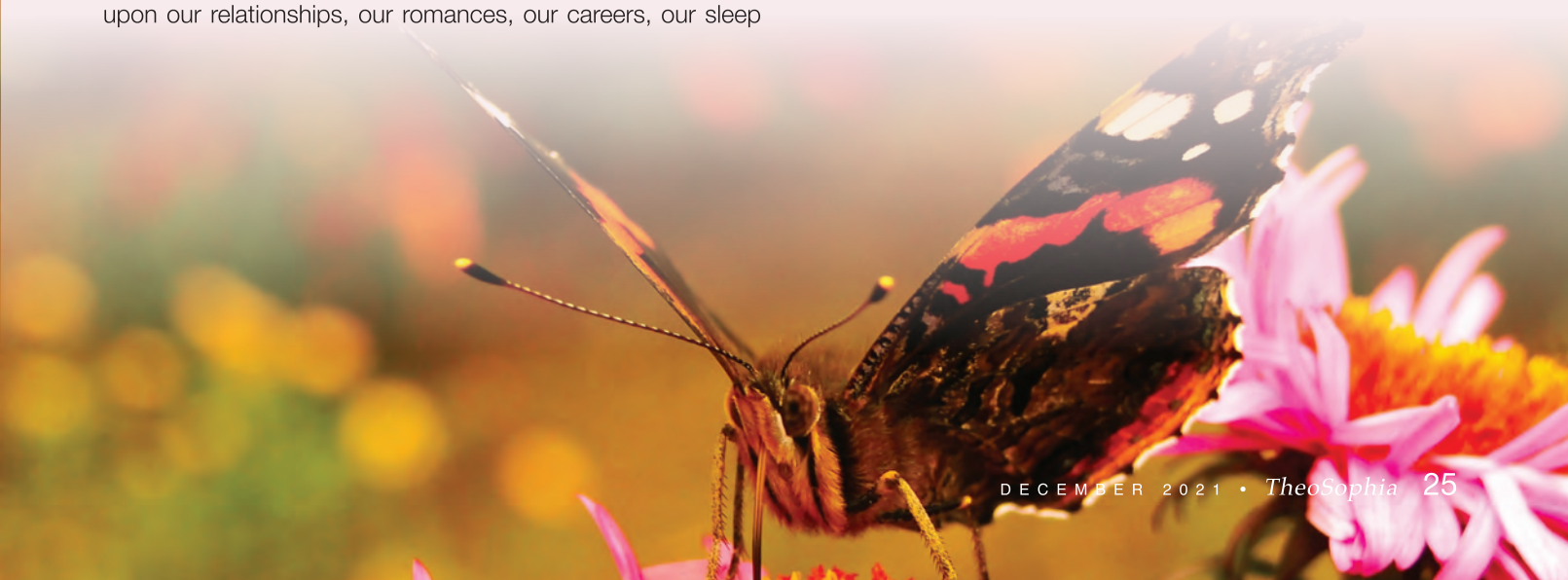
patterns, and how we view ourselves in relation to one another. All of those things are affected by changes in the Earth.

Each of us is experiencing, at least to some degree, changes in our personal lives, right now, that are reflecting the kinds of changes that are going on in the Earth at large. In the language of the ancients and our most cherished spiritual traditions, faith moves us into a space where we can affect the forces of Nature around us and bring about the kinds of changes in our world that we may call miracles. Or as Western science would put it, coherent human emotion produces a chemical change in our bodies, and that chemical change has quantum effects that extend beyond our bodies and brings about changes in our physical world (and now it's no longer a 'miracle'). But if we were going to make a flow chart of these two ways of describing what happens, the flow chart would be the same for the scientific and the traditional world view. In the Essene texts, the Hebrew and the Christian texts, the way that this is described is that when thought, feeling and emotion become one, in other words, when they are all aligned, then we say to the mountain, "Move!" and the mountain moves.

The unity of every faith that loves God and serves humanity, that is the message which comes to the world as the inner purpose of the Theosophical movement: to draw all faiths together, to see them all as sisters and brothers, not as rivals, to join all religions in one golden chain of divine love and human service; to reverence and serve religion wherever we find it, and to pierce through the varieties of the outer faith to the unity of the hidden life.

from Annie Besant (*Theosophy and the TS*, p.72)

Article from HPB website: <https://hpb.theosophy.org.nz/articles/unity-life>



The Meaning of a Pandemic

American theosophist, Dr Steven H. Levy pinpoints the hard lesson we can learn from widespread disease and suffering.

Astral Light – The invisible region that surrounds our globe, as it does every other, and corresponding as the second Principle of Kosmos ... to the *Linga Sharira* or the Astral Double in man. A subtle Essence visible only to a clairvoyant eye, and the lowest but one (*viz.*, the earth), of the Seven Akashic or Kosmic Principles. Eliphas Lévi calls it the great Serpent and the Dragon from which radiates on Humanity every evil influence. This is so; but why not add that the Astral Light gives out nothing but what it has received; that it is the great terrestrial crucible, in which the vile emanations of the earth (moral and physical) upon which the Astral Light is fed, are all converted into their subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics – moral, psychic and physical.

The Theosophical Glossary, H.P. Blavatsky, Theosophy Co., p.38

By March 2020 the new 2019 *coronavirus*, officially named Covid-19 by the World Health Organization (WHO), spread to dozens of countries across the world. WHO stated that the world should be prepared for a pandemic.

Officially, a pandemic is the easy transmission from person to person of a new disease throughout many countries; whereas, an epidemic is a widespread occurrence of a disease in a community at a particular time. The physical consequences alone of a viral pandemic are very serious. In February 1957, a new influenza virus emerged in East Asia causing a pandemic, the so-called Asian Flu. Some 1.1 million deaths were estimated to be caused worldwide.

As the student of Theosophy understands, interdependence and interconnectedness of humanity is a fact in all departments of nature – physical, psychic and moral. Human beings, individually and collectively are continuously impressing one another and being impressed by dark as well as inspiring psychic and moral influences. These local and widespread contagions have a periodic tendency determined by two fundamental laws of nature – periodicity, or the cyclic return of impressions, and the karmic law of cause and effect. The meaning, significance and consequences of a pandemic are much more complex than one might expect, since they are often accompanied by moral and psychic ‘infection.’ People need to prepare and organise appropriately. Pandemics create both challenges and opportunities for advancement.

Students of the history of pandemics recognise this truth as well. A wonderful source on the subject is a new book written by historian Frank M. Snowden, *Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present*. Frank M. Snowden is a professor emeritus of history and history of medicine at Yale. He demonstrates that epidemics affect every aspect of human life. They influence politics, revolutions, and the environment. They can inflame racial discrimination and invoke inhuman responses of governments. They change societies and affect personal relationships.

Most importantly, Professor Snowden concludes that pandemics and epidemics are not random events that affect societies indiscriminately, chaotically and without warning. A society produces its own vulnerability to viral epidemics by its structure, values, standard of living, and political priorities. It is an opportunistic contagion that moves across the moral and mental fault lines of a society. They manifest as a causal chain of ordered events. This idea is well understood and appreciated by the student of Theosophy to be a special aspect of the universal law of karma called by the ancients the *nidanic* chain of incessant causation and effect.

Professor Snowden emphasises that the history of pandemics reveals a truth that students of Theosophy have already come to realise from their experience with individual and interpersonal reactions to the real and

imagined threat of the coronavirus. The truth is that viral epidemics and pandemics hold up a mirror as to who we really are, or at least the weaknesses and strengths that are ordinarily hidden from our view. This is no surprise to the Theosophist who understands the above quotation from *The Theosophical Glossary*. The astral light that surrounds and interpenetrates the world is like a hall of mirrors that reflects back in an intensified manner the vile emanations it has received from humanity.

Individually and collectively, pandemics and epidemics affect us mentally, psychically and morally. The experience makes us more aware of our attitude towards our own mortality, to death, to our lives, to our environment. We certainly get to witness that we create the environment in which we live and that it responds to us. We become more aware of the values that shape our daily lives and little behaviours that would seem insignificant. Do we care about the people we work with, the poor, the elderly, the sick and vulnerable people of the world? The way in which we respond reveals our moral values and commitments.

All challenges notwithstanding, the collective and individual experience of an epidemic or pandemic can be an unrivalled learning experience and opportunity for advancement of an individual or society. Great humanitarian reforms and organisations have sprung up in the wake of epidemics.

For the serious Theosophists who try to make the teachings practical in their lives and fit themselves to be better able to help others, the experience arouses opportunities to crush out passions that primarily benefit the selfish tendencies of personality. The experience provides an opportunity to think about otherwise mundane matters of everyday life from the point of view of Divine Wisdom, and to crush out the notion of an existence that is separate from others.

Pandemics seem to teach an inescapable lesson that sermons, lectures, articles and visual media often fail to impress so vigorously. That is, that regardless of our race, ethnicity, economic status, creed, sex, condition, or organisational affiliation, we are all in this together and that we have to organise our lives and sacrifice some personal comfort with thought of the benefit of others. The health and well-being of those who might otherwise be perceived among us as the least and most vulnerable affects the health of all. As Professor Snowden says, we are best prepared for any pandemic or epidemic when we realise that what affects one person anywhere affects everyone everywhere.

No Theosophist could say it better.

..... ❖❖❖
The Meaning of a Pandemic was published at the associated websites on 7 March 2020.

For more texts by Steven H. Levy, M.D., a theosophist living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. see: www.FilosofiaEsoterica.com

SUGGESTED FURTHER READING:

Man and Society in Calamity by Pitirim A. Sorokin.

Link to website of the World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/>.

On planetary level of karmic law: *Human Ethics and Earthquakes* by Damodar K. Mavalankar.

... what affects
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everyone
everywhere.



Renée Sell, National Coordinator for the Theosophical Order of Service, New Zealand, sends season's greetings to all.



I hope you are finding time and space to go within, strengthen the connections to the higher Self and also reach out to those less fortunate. Christmas often brings into focus what matters most and what we can let go of as we anticipate the start of another year, honing our hopes and aspirations for the future with the opportunity for change and regeneration.

This year, New Zealand has been focused on core activities, continuing support of child sponsorships in India and Pakistan and fundraising for Pakistan literacy centres. Our aim here has always been to support and assist at the grass roots level, planting seeds for the future through children's education. Special thanks go to Vicki Jerome for looking after Child Sponsorship programmes and to Sue Harrison for coordination of receipts and details.

We have also supported a number of local projects. At Waipukurau School in the Hawke's Bay, healthy food/kai for breakfast and lunches, scooter and bike helmets and polar fleeces for pupils who would go without, have lifted the wellbeing of kids in the community. A huge thank you goes to Sue Harrison for organising and promoting this project.

In the Waikato region, Carol Collier has made a Sanctuary for the Waikato TOS Group. They have music afternoons, guest speakers, talks, and a stall at the local market twice a month. These activities support two Waikato community projects: He Puaawai Teen Parent Unit (TPU) based at a Hamilton secondary school and The Waikato Women's Refuge. A special thank you goes to Carol Collier for organising activities and fundraising.



Carol Collier

NEWS FROM THE TOS IN PAKISTAN



We have an update to share from Mushtaq Jindani, Hon. General Secretary of the TOS Pakistan, where TOS NZ supports a number of projects as part of our educational outreach. TOS NZ supports two Qandeel Home Schools, a unique educational undertaking of TOS Pakistan. The children, particularly girls in marginalised areas of Karachi who are not sent to schools, are encouraged to join Qandeel schools in the comfortable homes of local teachers. The children learn reading, writing, arithmetic and social skills of compassion, cooperation, generosity, humility, confidence, foresight and leadership. Once they finish Grade One, the children can be admitted to mainstream schools for further education.



One of the NZ sponsored Qandeel Home Schools in Pakistan.

A conservative estimate has about 40 percent of girls and 30 percent of boys of primary age not attending schools. These children are consigned to illiteracy and ignorance. Children at the Qandeel Schools enjoy activities such as arts and crafts with teachers using innovative approaches to teaching, including puzzle games, flash cards and storytelling which make learning effective and enjoyable. We will update you next time on child educational sponsorships in Pakistan.

RAFFLE REMINDER

The special 2022 Convention Raffle is a beautiful gift basket lovingly put together for this event. If you are not attending Convention, you can still buy tickets by emailing me and paying directly online. Raffle tickets are \$5 each or three tickets for \$12. Account details are in the donation box below. Just add your name and 'raffle tickets' in the reference line. Buying a raffle ticket supports TOS projects.

THANK YOU

We look forward to updating you in more detail on TOS activities at the TSNZ National Convention and wish to express heartfelt gratitude to the wonderful members and supporters of TOS projects. Your dedication, support and energy make a difference to people's lives.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and every blessing for the coming year, we hope for a vibrant 2022 working together for the upliftment of all. Let's remember the message of the TOS motto: A Union of those who Love, in the Service of all who suffer (updated – Ed.).

If you would like a copy of the TOS end of year report or other information, would like to organise an event for 2022 under the TOS umbrella, wish to make a donation or leave a legacy to the TOS, please email us at tos@theosophy.org.nz or phone 021 1755 170.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

For the past 18 years I have held the role of TOS National Coordinator in New Zealand and have been blessed in that work. There have been many opportunities to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Thank you again to all those who have supported me in the role with the cooperation of members contributing to TOS projects here and overseas. The TOS journey has been the journey of my life.

Now it's time to bring someone else into the role who is working in the community for the good of others. It is an honour to announce that Carol Collier from the Waikato will head The Theosophical Order of Service NZ. I wish her heartfelt love, support and every blessing. Let us all respond with openness, love and support as Carol leads TOS NZ into the future as the new National Coordinator.

Renée Sell

To help contact:
RENÉE SELL

Phone:
021 1755 170

or

Email:
tos@theosophy.org.nz

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- Pakistan Schools (Literacy Centres) \$.....
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- Auckland City Mission Donation \$.....
- Raffle Ticket \$5 each or 3 for \$12 \$.....
- Direct credit to a/c 'TOS New Zealand'

Bank account number: 03-0104-0088756-03, e-mail tos@theosophy.org.nz

Vegetarians Today



From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, **Margaret Johns** considers the unity of all life.

This year has seen a bit of déjà-vu with the emergence of the Delta strain of Coronavirus and the resultant lockdowns, particularly in Auckland. It would seem that humankind has many lessons still to learn and opportunities to learn some of those lessons are many and varied all round the world. Perhaps the most important one is that the unity of all life from minerals through to humankind, the one life force, flows through and unites us all.

The NZ Vegetarian Society, through its members and volunteers, works hard to promote its message of a kinder, healthier world through the way we eat and live, and our Think Kind competition for school students throughout New Zealand aims to encourage students to think, talk and write about ways of being kind, not just to people, but particularly to animals and the environment, making kindness and compassion part of everyday life.

There are endless opportunities to practise compassion and kindness, not just through diet and lifestyle, or to our neighbours and family, or strangers in need, but also to those we work with and share common beliefs with. It is easy to pay lip-service to a healthy, ethical and compassionate lifestyle, but not always so easy to put it into practice.

The NZ Vegetarian Society's Vegetarian Approved and Vegan Certified programmes continue to expand; the growth of veg~n products continues around the world as well as in New Zealand, and it is hoped that a change in the way we eat and look at where our food comes from will encourage a change in the way we relate to others. I read recently in one of The Salvation Army's newsletters: "You are not a drop in the ocean, you are the ocean in a drop" – a comment worth meditating on.

New Zealanders now celebrate special occasions right throughout the year including Diwali, World Vegetarian Month, Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Easter and Matariki, all opportunities to recognise the melting pot of life with its myriad of experiences knowing that we are all on the same journey towards the same goal, just travelling by countless different paths. Whatever path you are travelling on, I hope you take every opportunity to share aroha, compassion and kindness with everyone who crosses that path.

For special recipes for Christmas dinner and for summer meals, check out our updated and revitalised website www.vegetarian.org.nz Meanwhile, enjoy this *Spinach Bake*.

SPINACH BAKE (serves 4-6)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1 cup (dry) macaroni | 1 Tbsp oil |
| 1 bunch fresh spinach | 1 onion, sliced |
| 250gm cottage cheese | 1x 400gm can chickpeas or brown lentils |
| 2 large (free range) eggs | ½ cup fine grated cheese (non-dairy optional) |
| 1 tsp salt | 1 tsp paprika |
| ¼ tsp nutmeg | |

1. Boil macaroni in salted water (10 minutes).
2. Wash, chop spinach and steam 5 minutes until soft. Drain and chop finely.
3. Beat cottage cheese and eggs together then add cooked macaroni and spinach.
4. Season to taste with salt and nutmeg.
5. Heat oil and simmer onion and chickpeas (or lentils) until onions are soft. Arrange these on the base of an oblong shallow ovenware dish.
6. Spoon over macaroni mixture. Scatter cheese on top (with a few breadcrumbs if desired). Decorate with paprika.
7. Bake in moderate oven for 30 minutes. Stand for 5 minutes before serving.

See www.vegetarian.org.nz for a variety of recipes, including immune booster recipes from Anna Valentine (*The Veggie Tree*), which have appeared in *Vegetarian Living NZ*.

More recipes, information and the NZVS revised and updated *Home Tried Favourites* recipe book, are now available from www.vegetarian.org.nz



Vasanta House Library



Books can be ordered from the library at TSNZ national headquarters by using the postal facility available and contacting the librarian at email: library@theosophy.org.nz or 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051, or telephone 09 523 1797 (Saturday afternoons).

Cost to members is the return postage, non-members may join for \$50.

Vasanta House Accommodation

CURRENTLY CLOSED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS

Casual accommodation is available at TS National Headquarters, Vasanta House in Epsom, Auckland. There is a range of rooms: single, double and bunk rooms with and without en-suite plus kitchen and laundry facilities. We welcome those in sympathy with the TS Objects and willing to abide by vegetarian, smoke-free and alcohol-free requirements.

For bookings and more information please contact the office 09 523-1797.

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Send to: Theosophical Order of Service, c/o Renée Sell, HPB Lodge, Theosophical Society, 18 Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051. (Please refer to issue *TheoSophia* SEPTEMBER 2007, Vol. 68 No. 1 inside back cover for samples.)

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Theosophy

Theosophy is the body of truths which form the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guides its evolution.

Theosophy puts death in its rightful place as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the science of the spirit, teaching one to know the spirit as oneself and the mind and the body as one's servants.

Theosophy literally means divine wisdom: *theosophia*. Theosophy illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions, by unveiling their hidden meanings; thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone who is willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high and to work perseveringly, is welcome as a member and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

From *Exploring the Mysteries of Existence* published by The Theosophical Society - <http://theosophy.nz>

DIRECTORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND

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Members Meeting: 4th Wednesday of month 7.30pm
Contact: Ph 09 524 7994 / hpbpres@theosophy.org.nz
Website: <https://hpb.theosophy.org.nz>

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Venue: WEA Canterbury
59 Gloucester Street, Christchurch
Public Talks: 1st Thursday of month 7.30pm
Contact: theosophycanterbury@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/canterbury>

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Contact: Marie 027 499 1770 /
theosophy.dn@actrix.co.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/dunedin-lodge>

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Venue: Theosophy Centre, Waikare Ave, Kaeo
Contact: Maureen Paterson (09) 405 0707 /
farnorththeosophy.president@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/far-north>

HAMILTON

Venue: 73 Anglesea Street
Meetings: Sundays 7.30 pm
Contact: hamiltontheosophy@gmail.com
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Venue: Cedric Alexander Hall, 5 Devonshire Place,
Taradale, Napier
Meetings: 2nd & 4th Thursday 7.00 pm
Contact: Don Harrison 021 532 050 /
hawkesbayts@gmail.com

NEW PLYMOUTH

Venue: 30 Hine Street, New Plymouth 4310
Meetings: Public - see newsletter on website
Members - 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7.30pm
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tsnewplymouth@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/new-plymouth>

OREWA

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Contact: Heather Bell (09) 427 0149 /
palumbo@xtra.co.nz
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Contact: Anthea Clement (06) 353 6221 or 027 240 2069 /
pn@theosophy.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/pn>

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Venue: 19 Marion Street, Te Aro, Wellington 6011
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Members - Some Sundays 2-4pm (see programme)
Contact: Sushma Webber 022 626 8381 /
tswlgtm@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wellington>

WHANGANUI

Venue: Community Arts Centre, Taupo Quay
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Contact: Kirsty TXT to 021 212 3819 /
theosophywhanganui@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wanganui>

WHANGAREI

Venue: 110 Handforth Street, Onerahi, Whangarei
Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the month 11:00am
Contact: Paul Henderson (09) 436 2661 /
mjccloss2014@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/whangarei>

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INVERCARGILL

Contact: David Simpson (03) 213 0424

NELSON

Contact: Jan Lowe 022 123 4920 /
momentumsigns@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/nelson-study-centre>

TAKAKA

Venue: Members' homes
Meetings: Usually alternate Tuesdays
Contact: Murray Rogers 022 072 4569 /
jmrwordplay@gmail.co.nz

WAIKATO THEOSOPHICAL STUDY CENTRE

Venue: 40 Marama Street, Frankton, Hamilton 3204
Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursdays of month 7-9 pm
Contact: Carol Collier 027 668 4554
or Sue Mitchell 027 636 6435
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/waikato-theosophical-study-centre>

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Please Note: Due to Covid Restrictions, branch meetings may be postponed

What is Theosophy?

In three of her four main books,
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
specifically explained what Theosophy is...

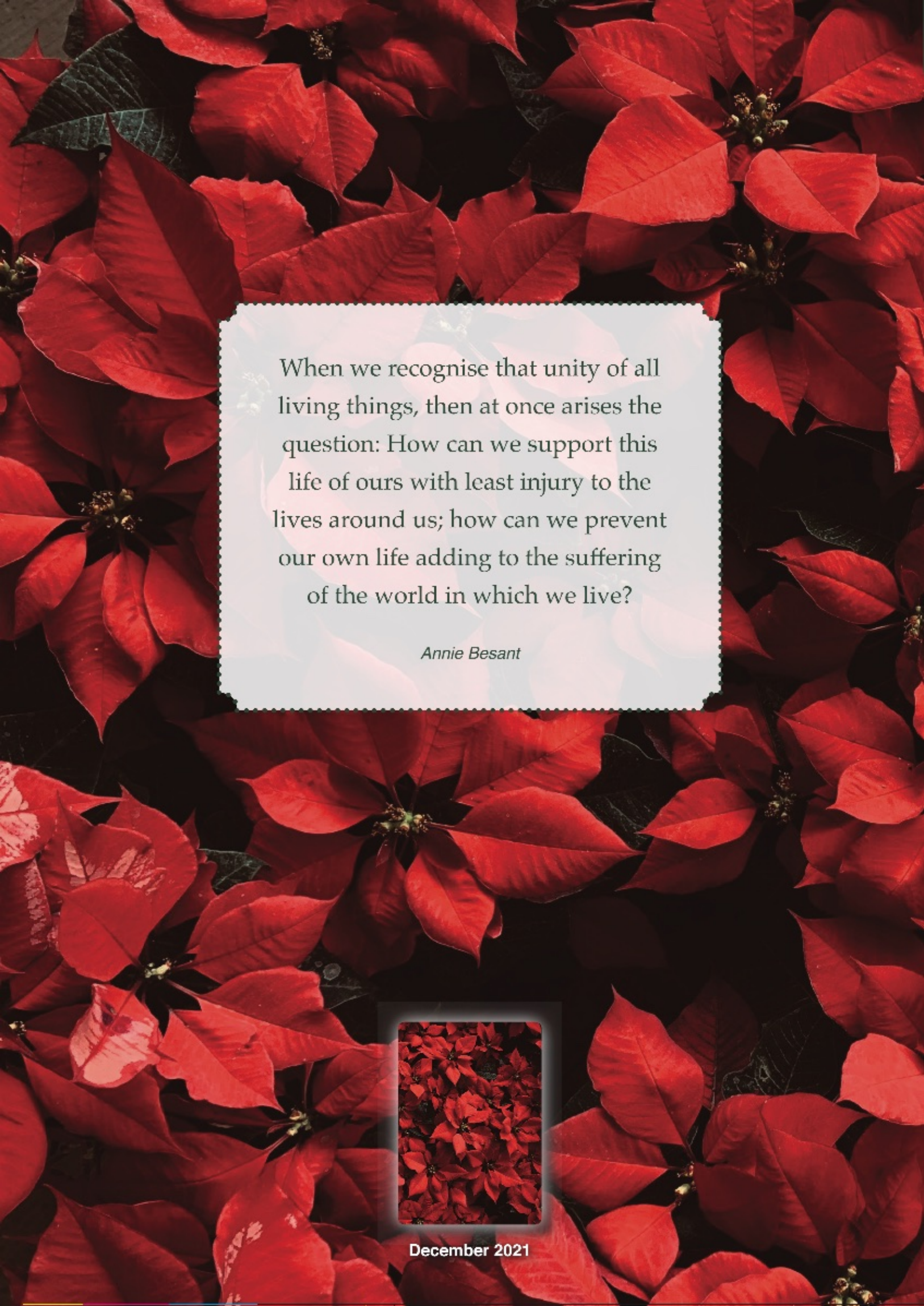
What we desire to prove is, that underlying every ancient popular religion was the same ancient wisdom-doctrine, one and identical, professed and practised by the initiates of every country, who alone were aware of its existence and importance.

To ascertain its origin, and the precise age in which it was matured, is now beyond human possibility. A single glance, however, is enough to assure one that it could not have attained the marvellous perfection in which we find it pictured to us in the relics of the various esoteric systems, except after a succession of ages. A philosophy so profound, a moral code so ennobling, and practical results so conclusive and so uniformly demonstrable is not the growth of a generation, or even a single epoch.

Fact must have been piled upon fact, deduction upon deduction, science have begotten science, and myriads of the brightest human intellects have reflected upon the laws of nature, before this ancient doctrine had taken concrete shape.

The proofs of this identity of fundamental doctrine in the old religions are found in the prevalence of a system of initiation; in the secret sacerdotal castes who had the guardianship of mystical words of power, and a public display of a phenomenal control over natural forces, indicating association with preterhuman beings.

H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* Vol. 2, p. 99



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



December 2021