



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 2

Greetings from the President's Desk

Disinformation can be worse than the disease

Recently I was listening to the radio and heard a comment that “disinformation being disseminated in this crisis may have a much worse effect on our community than the disease itself”. I was struck by the fact that conspiracy theories were blaming a natural disease on other human beings – the Chinese, the Americans, the Muslims, the Jews or anyone else you don’t like. As members of the Theosophical Society, one thing we all agree upon is forming a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. This was a radical proposition when it was first posited at the end of the 19th Century. In some quarters, it still seems to be a radical proposition today.

As a nucleus of this Brotherhood, all of us can help dispel disinformation and socially destructive forces. On social media or in discussion with our family and friends we can remind others that we are part of one humanity. Our thoughts and feelings have a real effect on the world around us. In the current climate of suspicion and distrust each of us has a duty to dispel disinformation and urge our community to act with kindness and tolerance for one another. A popular mantra from politicians at the moment is that “together we can overcome this public health crisis”, but who is the “we”? Now, more than ever, the contemporary relevance of our first object is in sharp focus. We are unable to meet as usual, however as members of the TS we are still a “nucleus” that can make a difference. Many small contributions combine to form a great force for unity as one humanity.

In this edition of our eNewsletter there are some thoughtful contributions about the sources of fear and the need for change. Some excerpts from J Krishnamurti and from N Sri Ram provide a useful context for understanding the bigger picture of our circumstances. If you wish to submit something for coming eNewsletters, please email it to our office,

Stephen McDonald
Blavatsky Lodge President

Facing Fear

Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood’.

These words of wisdom from the famous scientist, Marie Curie, offer a timely antidote to the tsunami of fear crippling the world as a result of the current pandemic and its overwhelming coverage by the media.

Fear is a negative emotion imposed from without. It is the most effective means of control, used throughout the centuries by powerful people and institutions. We are born without fear. As the song reminds us – ‘You’ve got to be taught to be afraid...’

My mother’s pathological fear of dogs was imposed upon her at a very early age by a no doubt well-intentioned grandmother who placed a toy dog at the top of a staircase, telling my mother that it would bite her if she went near it. Surely a small gate across the top of the stairs would have been a better safeguard; nor during my childhood would we have had to cross to the other side of the street every time we noticed the approach of a dog, however big or small. How many more serious fears, deeply imbedded and unresolved, cause undue suffering to so many people?

Accepting the proven power of thought to influence reality, surely the encouragement of positive thinking is mandatory in our current situation. There is no room for fear, described by Usman B-Asif as ‘a darkroom where negatives develop’.

It is ignorance which engenders fear. Total awareness of the situation is of paramount importance. It leads to understanding which can avoid and even dispel this negative emotion, directing our energy towards positive ways of dealing with a challenging reality.

As Krishnamurti suggests in his book ‘Total Freedom’ : ‘If you don’t waste energy – and that only takes place when the observer is the observed – then you have that immense energy to transform *what is*.’ (Page 305) Further assurance is offered: ‘We can begin to discover the causes that produce fear, and in understanding these causes, there is the elimination of fear.’ (Page 103)

An encouraging word from Joseph Campbell: ‘The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek.’

I must admit that I have heard people speak of ‘healthy fear’. Is there such a thing? What do you think? Please enlighten me!

I look forward to your response.

Pamela Peterson.

Secretary, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee.

- In this issue:**
- Greetings from the President's Desk
 - Facing Fear
 - Heavenly Gifts
 - Creativity - a poem
 - Truth is a pathless land
 - The T.S. a Banyan Tree
 - Useful resources/links



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 2

Heavenly Gifts

Excerpts from Himalayas Abode of Light, Chapter 2; by Nicholas Roerich

Heavenly gifts are always connected to human consciousness with lightning speed. Everything from the Highest, everything from Above, naturally directs human imagination toward Light, toward sparkling urgency. And so it is. The greatest realisation can come like lightning, instantaneously. But yet another condition has to be recognised in our earthly understanding: in these high conceptions is revealed a heavenly language, for which we have but poor expressions in our earthly tongue.

If we gather all our conventional definitions around the concept of Heavenly Gifts, it will be but a weak and limited expression of the Ineffable. Only the Heart can give life to such expressions as solemnity, greatness, ecstasy, awe, joy. Without transfiguration through the Heart, all these lofty words are but dead sounds. Thus, it has been ordained since antiquity that the Highest Gifts should be reverently accepted and introduced with dignity into earthly life.

Heavenly Gifts, if not introduced lovingly and with care into the earthly life, will be as wings torn off, which, despite their magnificent beauty, are useless. But the Highest Will provides wings for blissful flights.

At times, people in their despair imagine that the Heavenly Gifts have ceased to flow. But they do not consider that their own eyes may not be able to discern the Invisible Light in the glare of the sunshine. The shower of Bliss is poured forth in benevolent generosity, but only drops of this treasure reach the earth. Yet, every thought about Heavenly Gifts strengthens the heart...especially now, when human hearts are in such confusion and deep pain, one should strive toward the highest of healing agents- toward Heavenly Gifts.

The benevolence fills my hands.

In profusion it pours through my fingers.

I cannot contain it.

I am not able to distinguish the glowing streams of richness.

Thy benevolent wave pours through the hands upon earth.

I do not see who will gather the precious gems.

The tiny sprays, upon whom will they fall?

If only I could carry home the Heavenly Gift!

Eleana Papagiannopoulou
Blavatsky Lodge Member



Creativity - A poem

creativity is
the reflection of a reflection
of a reflection
of Nature...
only she is perfect
we can only aspire...
but this aspiration
towards beauty
towards love
towards perfection
is what makes us
truly human and
connects us with
a golden thread to her
and each other.....



Lucille Crocker
Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee Member



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 2

Truth is a Pathless Land

Excerpts from *Truth is a Pathless Land—A Journey with Krishnamurti* (Ingram Smith, 1989)

It was mentioned, in the first edition of the ongoing fortnightly email of Blavatsky Lodge, that "all crises instigate change". Most of us know that change, although often uncomfortable and sometimes extremely difficult and painful, can be used as opportunities to learn and grow especially if viewed from this perspective. We can, however, only learn through own individual experiences in everyday life. This might sound like common sense but so many people spend their lives studying, reading books, attending workshops etc. hoping to improve in some way and fundamentally do not see any long-lasting change. We continue to repeat the same or similar repetitive, negative patterns—the ones causing us and those around us pain and suffering. Krishnamurti said "*Truth is a Pathless Land*" to emphasise we have to follow our own unique journey. Other's who have gone before us can point the way—teachers are useful and often necessary—but ultimately your journey is yours alone. Learn from your Self. To do this you need to become highly aware and sensitive to your inner psychology by enquiring into it with total honesty. You cannot change what you do not even understand. Learn to know yourself.

Two apt passages from *Truth is a Pathless Land* for these difficult times read:

"There is no pre-learned approach to a crisis, for it is totally unpredictable. I am either taken completely by surprise, or my known resources have failed to meet the challenge. It is the critical breakdown or breakthrough point when the past actually, for the moment, ends. Crisis is, in fact, the gateway to an unknown dimension, an ever-new reality."

"Reality is a peculiar thing. Reality is a living thing and cannot be captured and you cannot say it is always there. **There is a path only to something which is stationary, to a fixed, static point.** To a living thing which is constantly in movement, which has no resting place, how can there be a guide, a path? Can you put aside the teacher, the path, the end—put it aside so completely that your mind is empty of all this seeking?"

"To be quiet requires great energy; you need all your energy for silence of the mind and it is only in emptiness, in complete emptiness, that a new thing can be."(p. 216-217)

Having put together all the above—you might wonder "well why be a member of any group such as in this case—The Theosophical Society? To help give a response to this question I would like to offer the following short article by N. Sri Ram in which I believe he answers that question:

The T.S. a Banyan Tree

Excerpts from *On The Watch Tower*, 1966, by N. Sri Ram (ch. 31, p 458/459)

The Theosophical Society can be an organization in which there are many views, many standpoints, many philosophies even. It can be like a wonderful banyan tree, the main trunk of which is at Adyar, but which throws down rootlets and stems in different parts of the world, each representing a school of thought or a certain mode of activity. All of them would be from the one tree, fed from the same parent-root, a tree under the shade of which those who are in affliction and weary may rejoice to shelter for a while. Why should not our Society be like that banyan tree?

The Society is even already a unique organization. There are so many National Societies, each autonomous. Each Lodge, each member is autonomous—or should be. There is freedom for each and all, and there ought to be also a complete openness of mind. But how are these Sections and Lodges held together? Not by rules and constitution. What is to prevent their breaking away and declaring their independence, as did the various parts of Alexander's empire after he passed away? The only thing that holds this world-wide organization is the life which flows through the Society and the response which members all over the world make in their freedom to the impact of that life. We cannot coerce any National Society to remain within the international organization, but they do so because they want to remain; are eager to do so, because they regard Adyar as the fountain of their inspiration. The future of the Society depends then on the continual and increasing flow of life from those exalted sources from which the life actually issues.

Continued next page



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 2

The T.S. a Banyan Tree continued..

Excerpts from On The Watch Tower, 1966, by N. Sri Ram (ch. 31, p 458/459)

Is it not also remarkable, even strange, that nowhere has Theosophy been specifically defined in our Society? There is a Theosophy, which we seek to promulgate, to understand, perhaps discover. But there is no official document, no paper or statement which says it shall mean this, that or the other. If the aim is so open and if each one may proceed towards it in his own way, what is there to prevent all the members from drifting in different directions, each along his pathway; so that they soon separate and there is no possibility of concerted action? What holds the minds of the members to what we call Theosophy?

There are certain truths, there is a certain outlook, a plan, which is embodied in the literature which has been published and sent from Adyar. But these ideas have made their own way into the world. The truth has been proclaimed and it has gained acceptance not because it has been imposed nor because of any hopes of gain that have been held out. If we try to spread Theosophy by appealing to motives of self-interest and gain—subtle or gross—surely it will not be Theosophy at all and we cannot expect the message to ring true to its purpose. Truth is always propagated by its own force, by the free and voluntary response of those who read or listen to the particular truth. Thus there is a certain set of ideas, a body of truths, a philosophy, which is accepted by tens of thousands of members of the Society and by many outside the Society.

(April 1955)

Rosanna Sheridan
Vice President, Blavatsky Lodge

Useful resources/ Links

New Member Letters

Due to the temporary closure of National H.Q., New Member Letters has been offered online and can be accessed in their entirety for fascinating reading.

Perhaps you have misplaced your letters from many years ago? Perhaps you have said to yourself in the past - "One of these days, I will reread these very illuminating letters!" Well that time has come.

As it is said "never put off until tomorrow what you can do today!"

To easily access these letters, please copy and paste the following link into your browser:

<https://theosophicalsociety.org.au/highlights/letters-to-new-members-580fa80b-9592-4572-89b5-1889345d9596>

Contributions to our Newsletter

If you would like to contribute anything to future editions of this newsletter, please send your articles, poems etc in word format via e-mail to adyar@tssydney.org.au for consideration.

Disclaimer: opinions expressed by individual members do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the Theosophical Society.