



# OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 1

## Greetings from the President's Desk

### In this issue:

- Greetings from the President's Desk
- Message from the Vice President
- Carpe Diem
- Theosophy is not a set of beliefs
- Useful resources/links

Welcome to our first edition of this email, which is aimed at keeping in touch during the Lodge's temporary closure. Like most of you, I'm confined to working at home. As the Lodge's activities have been suspended, our committee decided that some periodical contact with each of you would help reduce the isolation and remind us that we are all a part of a larger group which is still in existence and operating behind the scenes.

We won't be bombarding you with emails or too much content. We plan to get a communication to you once per fortnight during the closure. In this edition there are messages from our Vice-President, Rosanna Cummings and Secretary, Pamela Peterson. Each edition will have one or two articles or links to items of interest. "Open & Alive", however, is not just meant to be a voice for our Committee; its purpose is to be a line of communication, and any contributions you make will be considered for publication in future editions. Please consider writing or submitting any short articles (150 words or so) or links that you may come across that you would like to share with other members of our community, and email by them by Word to the following address:

[pamelapeterson@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pamelapeterson@optusnet.com.au)

Keep safe and well.

Stephen McDonald  
Blavatsky Lodge President

## Message from the Vice President

During the necessary closure of our lodge due to Covid 19 members of Blavatsky Lodge would like to contribute theosophical teachings via email to help maintain connection and support to our members. Various members have been asked to contribute and if any members receiving this email who would also like to contribute, please forward your contribution by email to Pamela Peterson at [pamelapeterson@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pamelapeterson@optusnet.com.au)

I would like to start by offering a personal message about what I see could be some potential positive outcomes from Covid 19.

We are all in the middle of what, less than a few months ago, could not have been thought possible. Every day we are presented with terrible news. However, some positive things are becoming evident from this pandemic.

All crises instigate change and perhaps some of these changes could bring about a better world when we finally come through this—which we will. People are reaching out (though not physically!) to support each other and all our wonderful emergency workers. Governments are looking at ways to ensure all people have enough money to survive. All unemployed people will receive financial support across the board. Perhaps a positive outcome of this will be that our society will continue to take care of its more vulnerable? So many people have lost their jobs but demand for workers in other areas is emerging—such as supermarkets, warehouse storage, packaging, and manufacturing of medical equipment. A small conciliation for the terrible upheaval to everyone's lives, but we need to focus on the positives otherwise we may become overwhelmed by doomsday scenarios. We cannot function optimally if we are constantly anxious. Hence it is important to take care of yourself both physically, emotionally and spiritually.

This calamity has certainly made everyone realize, we are all in this together and only together can we come through this. We all need to become kinder and think of others. This in itself could create a great spiritual leap in consciousness. Let us all do whatever we can to help within our communities—even if it is to call up friends to ensure they are well or if they need anything. It doesn't matter what it is. Just do something. We will get through this together. Be kind to others but also remember to be kind to yourself.

To start our communications I would like to offer a short article by N. Sri Ram who was the International President of the Theosophical Society for 20 years from 1953-1973. Sri Ram was a prolific theosophical writer and if you would like to learn more about him refer to this link: <https://theosophical.society.org.au/events/birth-of-n-sri-ram>

Rosanna Sheridan,  
Blavatsky Lodge Vice President.



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## Carpe Diem

Remembering the words of Francis Bacon – 'A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds' – I took the opportunity of the time afforded me by restrictions on social gathering imposed during the current pandemic to make the opportunity to organise the large volume of Theosophical material gathered from books, conventions, lectures etc. over many years – a mammoth, on-going task.

The following reminders which emerged during the process I would like to share with you:

1. The relevance of the Third Object of the TS to our current circumstances. We have the power within us not to solve but to deal with the situation.
2. The power of thought. Thoughts become reality. Hence the importance of positive thinking in all situations.
3. We have the freewill to choose which emotion we are going to attach to any experience. The onus is on us. Let's not surrender our freewill by allowing others to create our feelings.
4. The moment is the only time we ever have to live. Let's not waste it by thinking about the past which we cannot change or the future which we cannot know.

I know that more words of wisdom are waiting to be found in my on-going sorting and filing process. I'll share them in a later communication.

Pamela Peterson.

Secretary, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee.

## Theosophy is not a set of beliefs

Excerpts from *On The Watch Tower*, 1966, by N. Sri Ram (ch. 30, p 430-432)

Many people think that Theosophy is a set of ideas or beliefs which are professed by those who call themselves Theosophists. But Theosophy is something which exists in Nature; it is Truth, it is Wisdom, and it is other things that follow from these. Truth is something which exists irrespective of doctrines and labels. The wisdom which we know as Theosophy would smell as sweet under any other name. There are people who are put off by the label "Theosophy". They think that Theosophists must be a kind of sect or religious body, added to all the sects and religious bodies which exist already. We should see that as far as possible there is no ground for such a conception of ourselves.

Sometime ago I came across a book called *Theosophy of the Upanishads*, written some decades before the Theosophical Society came into existence, which shows that Theosophy is a certain wisdom, not just a name by which a group of people are divided from the rest of humanity. What is there in a name, which is but a description, provided the name indicates the truth? The name "Theosophy" was chosen, I believe, in order to identify it with a Wisdom which existed in the past, not only at one particular time, but at different periods, and to indicate its profoundly philosophic and transcendent character. That which is spiritual is ageless, it is only the forms that can be dated. Let us always bear in mind the fact that when we use the word "Theosophy", we refer to a universal Wisdom which has been studied in all ages, exists in the present, and operates in Nature all the time, which we merely recognize under various terms that we might employ.

We must be careful never to negate or diminish this universality of Truth, and of the doctrine which is but a statement of the Truth. It is the beauty and fragrance of the rose which matters, and not the name at all. To perceive Truth, to understand how things happen, to know that there is a certain order in the universe, certain laws behind the phenomena we perceive, physical as well as psychological, is more like seeing than believing. We are not called upon to stuff our minds with all kinds of ideas, but rather to open our mental eyes and see.

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## Theosophy is not a set of beliefs (continued..)

Excerpts from On The Watch Tower, 1966, by N. Sri Ram (ch. 30, p 430-432)

Theosophy is a vision of Truth. When you open your physical eyes, you do not see a blank, you see the earth, the waters and the sky, in their proper delineations and relations. Our understanding of Theosophy should be as natural and free as all that. If another person does not see exactly what we do happen to see, we can have no quarrel with him. If he says he does not see the color of these walls as yellow, whereas to us it looks yellow, there is no ground of complaint against him nor cause for disputation. I do not see why the same attitude cannot be adopted towards anyone who does not perceive the truth of any matter dealt with in Theosophical books, or perceives it differently.

The truth which is in Theosophy should profoundly modify our attitude to people, things and events. It will do so when we actually perceive it as the very expression of life. Because it is so beautiful, when we do know it or feel it, it causes us to see the whole world in terms of that beauty.

We refer to the unity of Life. Suppose you realize it as a fact in some measure, then you cannot but look at every living being with whom or with which you come into contact in a different way, you will then have a different manner, a different approach, a different tone of voice from what obtains in this divided and contradictory world. To be a Theosophist is more than anything else to have the feeling of the universal life, from which springs good-will towards all beings and the realization that they are as much a medium for the experience of freedom, beauty and truth as yourself. Then the good fortune, the opportunities which come to them, their happiness and freedom are as precious as what may come to oneself and those closest to oneself. It is this expansive all-embracingness, and a sensitiveness in ourselves, which will make the Theosophical Society a true vessel of the perfect or spiritual Wisdom.

Towards those who might have left the Society we can have the same feelings. What does it matter if they did leave a particular grouping which did not suit them? They were impelled by certain motives or factors guiding the pathway of their life. They might have organized themselves into other Theosophical groups or be active under some other names. That does not diminish the brotherhood which exists and which we should be able to feel towards them.

If we are true Theosophists, we should meet every man on his own pathway, allow him the necessary freedom and take a living interest in his welfare. After all, we are all one in spite of the fact that each is experimenting on his own lines, experimenting with Life and Truth. (Dec. 1955)

## Useful resources/ Links

- [https://myemail.constantcontact.com/An-International-Message-of-Hope-and-Other-Resources-to-Help-Us-Navigate-These-Challenging-Times.html?soid=1101867790970&aid=v\\_bjpDPmILc](https://myemail.constantcontact.com/An-International-Message-of-Hope-and-Other-Resources-to-Help-Us-Navigate-These-Challenging-Times.html?soid=1101867790970&aid=v_bjpDPmILc)
- <https://sydney.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/tssydney/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/theosophysunshinecoast/>

## Contributions to our Newsletter

If you would like to contribute anything to future editions of this newsletter, please send your articles in word format via e-mail to [pamelapeterson@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pamelapeterson@optusnet.com.au) for approval