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Editor

PRADEEP H. GOHIL

A STEP FORWARD

Equanimity is a word that is closely associated with spiritual development. It means calmness and composure, especially in a difficult situation. In life, one has to learn to accept both the good and the bad with equanimity. It shows the evenness of mind especially under stress. In Buddhism, equanimity (Sanskrit: *upeksa*) is one of the four sublime attitudes and is considered to be neither a thought nor an emotion. It is rather the steady conscious realization of reality's transience. It is the ground for wisdom and freedom and the protector of compassion and love. By itself, equanimity is not an emotion. However, it is a regulation strategy for emotions. In concert with the cultivation of an impartial attitude in response to all experience, equanimity involves the skilful process of maintaining calm and mental equilibrium in the face of provocative stimuli.

Equanimity is a neutral feeling, a mental experience that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. It corresponds to a mental state that is not easily achieved and typically requires some form of practice. It is a state of mind that cannot be swayed by biases and preferences, an even-mindedness in the face of every sort of experience, regardless of whether pleasure or pain are present or not. This state of equanimity manifests as a balanced reaction to joy and misery, which protects one from emotional agitation. Equanimity is not necessarily an absence of emotions but it allows emotions to pass through without reacting to them. Cricket lovers know how M.S. Dhoni did not react at catches dropped or misfielding or close victories or losses. A commentator once asked him, seeing him calm in such circumstances, whether he feels no emotions. He said that emotions are there in his mind

but feels that it is not necessary to react to them. That is a perfect example of equanimity.

There are two main usages of the term 'equanimity'. First, it can refer to a 'neutral feeling', a mental experience, that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant, and that involves neither intensifying nor dampening current mental states. This first usage of the term equanimity is commonly experienced throughout any ordinary day. The second meaning of equanimity corresponds to a mental state or trait that is not easily achieved and typically requires some form of practice. It is a state of mind that is described in the previous paragraph.

It should be emphasized here that equanimity is not an attitude of cold indifference but rather of mental imperturbability. The notion that equanimity includes a sense of care and attentiveness rather than indifference can be illustrated with the feelings of a mother when a child is born, her sentiments felt toward the newborn infant can be like wishing he be well and may he thrive. Her feelings of compassion are the feelings extended to a child when he is sick as she wishes he be free from pain and suffering. Feelings of joy - sympathetic joy, are experienced by the mother as she feels towards grown up daughter who leaves the home after marriage. The joy is felt for her even though it may be painful to the mother. Equanimity is how a mother might feel on hearing about her grown up child's business dealings - she is attentive and caring about his welfare, not disengaged or indifferent and yet has no emotional entanglement to the content of the news she hears. So equanimity is "not an attitude of cold indifference, but rather of calm composure".

Importantly, having equanimity does not mean suppressing emotions or giving up the affective colouring of our life experiences. However, the emotions should not persist indefinitely. One should also be careful to draw a distinction between equa-

nimity and indifference. This is very important in the context of equanimity towards people. Remaining indifferent to other people's needs or their suffering is certainly not considered a form of equanimity, and is contrary to Theosophical teachings. Theosophy recommends practicing equanimity towards beings by contemplating how all beings are similar to ourselves, in that they too wish to gain happiness and be free of suffering, regardless of whether we would consider them as our friends, enemies or strangers. It follows that all beings should be treated with a very deep sense of care. Here we can see the link between equanimity and the first objective of the Theosophical Society talking about Universal Brotherhood.

It is important to recognize the distinction between the affective tone of pleasure or pain, and one's emotional response to it. There are many situations in which it is entirely appropriate to feel joyful, and we naturally welcome this experience because it involves pleasure. It can also be appropriate to feel sad, such as when grieving the loss of a loved one. However, what determines our degree of "suffering" or grief is our emotional response to joyfulness and sadness. If we crave for the continuation or intensification of a joyful experience, then when it inevitably changes, we will experience dissatisfaction in direct proportion to the strength of our craving. Similarly psychological suffering occurs when an experience of sadness is amplified by a strong dislike or opposition or denial and other forms of unhealthy or unskilful emotional responses.

Just as stress is defined not by what is happening in the world but by one's response to what is happening, so also suffering results not from the content of experience but from the emotional disposition with which it is experienced. Equanimity enables a skilful emotional response to the full range of feeling tones. Feeling happy without interfering with the mental plea-

sure by trying to grasp hold of it, or feeling unhappy and being able to gaze upon it with equanimity rather than trying to change it into something other than what it is, are both skills that can be developed. Mindfulness is the first stage of this learning process by means of which one is able to focus attention upon the flow of experience without distraction. With practice, one can develop a greater ability to respond to this flow with equanimity and that can be a step forward in the process of our evolution.

Theosophy is a wisdom which is based on truth but this truth is manifold, it has several layers, one within the other. One might call it the totality of truth with regard to man, life and the universe. If our actions, thoughts, feelings, responses are all in harmony with the nature of this totality, then we are wise.

N. SRI RAM

THE GOLDEN HOUR: A TURNING OF THE CYCLE

I WOULD like to consider something related to the theme of our International Convention, “Cycles of Awareness”, particularly how cycles affect us and how we can interact with them in a proactive and productive way.

Cycles affect us at every level. They are so omnipresent at the personal level that they often go unexamined. In her introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) discusses Three Fundamental Propositions. Cycles is the second of them. She points to specific cycles such as day and night, life and death, sleeping and waking, the seasons, as being such a common part of our everyday experience that they indicate to us the presence of a fundamental Law of the universe.

Although we are largely unaware of them, there are cycles at other levels within which we participate. There are minute cycles taking place continuously, even within the body. Most of us are not aware that during the course of any day there are more than two trillion new cells formed within the body. This process of cell replication and cell destruction, is ongoing even while we sleep, but it is too small for us to be aware of.

Anything related to the spectrum of light or the electromagnetic spectrum takes place along a range of cycles, everything from visible light to gamma rays, but some of those are so rapid and so fast we cannot even conceive of the speed at which they function. These things are micro, small, beneath the level of our perception. There are also much grander cycles — macro cycles. Just as we have a year where in 365 days the Earth makes a

circuit around its centre, the Sun; our solar system has a similar cycle where it circles the centre of the Milky Way Galaxy. It takes a little longer than our Earth. In fact it takes 225 to 250 million years to make this cycle of a galactic year!

In our Theosophical studies and in the teachings of the Ageless Wisdom, we are made aware of even grander cycles, those of *pralaya* and *manvantara*, of or universal sleeping and waking, and activity. It is described as “the Great Breath”, in which universes are drawn in and breathed out. Universes come into being, have their time, which seems eternal in our counting, but then are breathed back in and sleep. This is a grand cycle as well — too large for us to have any meaningful experience or comprehension of it.

In this Earthly life to which we are all bound, there are countless other cycles. There is an idea expressed as the biogeochemical cycle. So in the biological, geological, and chemical realms there are multiple cycles involved in the circulating of the atoms that compose the bodies of every living creature.

The basic idea behind this is that the Earth’s matter, though seemingly limitless to us, *is* limited. It is a closed system. New matter is not suddenly coming into being. Except for those meteorites that fall upon its surface, new matter is not coming into the Earth. The same matter that was here initially is here now. Every living organism that comes into being, is composed of the recycled atoms that have been present before.

A mathematical calculation was done to answer the question: how many of William Shakespeare’s atoms does each one of us have in our bodies? The basic calculation involves figuring out how many atoms of food, air, bodily waste, and remains of the body passed through Shakespeare during his life and then were returned to the general pool of matter following his death. Next the computation was done about the total number of atoms

available for recycling at the Earth's surface. Based on this computation, it was determined that each one of us has approximately six billion atoms of William Shakespeare in our bodies.

For many people this might seem like an encouragement to write some additional sonnets, or come up with an additional act in one of his plays, but six billion atoms within our bodies is like nothing. The number of atoms in the body is a 10 followed by 27 zeros — incalculable. It makes a grain of sand on a beach look large. So each of us is composed of the same matter that was in the body of Shakespeare, the Buddha, Jesus, and in the bodies of countless saints and scoundrels who have inhabited the planet throughout history. If we were to give it some thought, it should indicate something about the interdependent nature of all life.

So far we have considered cycles in Nature. For us who are drawn to a spiritual path, two questions should come to our mind: “Is it possible for us to rise beyond these natural cycles in which we are enmeshed?” Is freedom a possibility?”, so bound do we seem to be in these various cycles of Nature.

At a certain level, it is clear that we are chained to Nature and to all of its various cycles. For any embodied being, such as the human being, Nature is inescapable. It could be said that Nature is brutal in the movement of its cycles. The weak do not survive in Nature, but then again neither do the strong. Ultimately anything or anyone that is born is engaged in a cycle of birth, growth, decline, and of what we describe as death. If we have any doubt about this fact, we can verify it by looking at the greatest among us. The Buddha came and passed through this cycle. Jesus did the same. Whether it is a human being, a tree, a star, or a galaxy, the natural cycle is identical. Every one of us passes through this. These cycles in Nature are all worthy of study and understanding, so that we can interact with that aspect of our being intelligently.

For spiritual practitioners, there are other cycles. One in particular is supremely important to become aware of: cycles of consciousness, or of awareness. In Eastern spirituality, there is a Sanskrit word that cuts across all of the various traditions typical to India, — *samsâra*. It literally means “wandering”, but it is very descriptive of a cycle in which we are all engaged as beings with consciousness. It describes the repetitive cycle of birth, suffering, and death that is fueled and continued by ignorance, which is not the same as not knowing.

Ignorance refers to the idea that *everything* we perceive as real is incorrect. This cycle is often depicted as a wheel with various stations on it. Much like the cycles in Nature, we are chained to this cycle of *samsâra*, with one very important difference: the reason we are so closely bound to this constant rebirth and the suffering that it entails, is because of unawareness. Awareness permits for the ending of this cycle.

As awareness arises so too does the possibility of freedom. With awareness being so important, the question we have to ask ourselves is: Awareness of what? It is not enough to merely be aware that this cycle exists. That is a beginning, because for many that level of consideration has not even been given to it. The all-important awareness is an awareness of the primacy of consciousness.

Consciousness is not bound to matter. It participates in matter, expresses itself through matter, but is not identical nor is it bound to Nature's processes. Spiritual traditions and the Ageless Wisdom which underlies them give guidance in how we address this process — how we first see the cycle within which we are continually engaged, then how to actually find a way to interrupt that cycle. This is the basis of any valid spiritual tradition, all of which points to an important starting place for loosening the bonds of this grip we are in.

Even a casual observation of the way things work, shows us that everybody who comes into this world also leaves it. For many people this is a frightening mystery they would rather not think about. But the first step always is to become aware of impermanence. We are not here forever. Everybody comes and goes. When we become aware of that, not just as a general idea, but that this is something which universally occurs and will also happen to us, that type of thinking can lead us to next steps.

One of the interesting facts of our time is the estimate that approximately one in every eight people has had a near-death experience. Medical advances nowadays have greatly improved the ability to resuscitate people who have heart attacks — one of the more common causes of death. It used to be that if you had a heart attack, that was it! You did not have a *near-death* experience, you had a *death* experience.

The result is that now many people have had the experience of consciousness separating from the body; the body being pronounced dead; and yet they have full awareness. They find that the consciousness, upon being loosened from the body, continues to have experiences, many of which they later describe, and the similarities between these reports are quite remarkable. For people who have had this experience, it changes them. On a fundamental level, they become aware of things which previously were not part of their experience: that death is not annihilation, that consciousness exceeds the limitations of the body, and continues apart from it. People I have known have returned from this experience with different priorities in their life.

The *Bhagavadgitâ* tells us that at the moment of death each person goes to what was their “ruling passion” in life. Someone who was a materialist is drawn into a fixation on the material realm, which is no longer available to them. For someone who had an idea of a heaven world, they are drawn toward *that*. Whatever has been our ruling passion in life is what we are

drawn to, or what we are propelled toward.

When we recognize this, it sets in motion the possibility that we have some choice in the matter of what passion will rule us. Just because the TV is on, because the newspaper is on the table, or somebody is telling an interesting gossip story, does not mean that we have to give over our attention and become absorbed in it. We can choose how and where we place our attention, how and where we position our consciousness.

Part of the purpose of a spiritual tradition is to give guidelines in how to further this prioritizing of the direction of our consciousness. In Mahayana Buddhism, there is a particularly powerful approach to prioritizing the direction of our life energies. The basic recognition is that we are here for a short time, so how do we best use that time? One is advised to look around and judge for oneself what might be most productive.

In the Mahayana tradition, there is the example of the Buddha, the Enlightened One. In his earlier life, when he was seeking enlightenment he was termed a Bodhisattva, one who has pledged themselves to a vow which is a specific life direction: “I will attain enlightenment for the benefit of all beings.” This is the priority that is undertaken in an internal vow, intended to shape our behaviour going forward.

Although we know that in such a lofty goal it is certain that we will fail again and again, the idea is that we continue to try. If, in fact, it is significant enough to us, then we may stray from it, but the strength of our commitment to the vow will always draw us back. The vow’s focus is that we prepare our consciousness, deepen our awareness, with the aim that it can be of benefit to others.

In *At the Feet of the Master* the young Jiddu Krishnamurti points out a similar approach when he talks about how it is we are to study, on what do we fix our attention with the intention of

liberating the mind? Knowledge is infinite. Books are coming out every day. So what do we study? What will be most valuable and useful for this Bodhisattva ideal? Krishnamurti's statement was that we study first, *that which will most help us to help others*.

Blavatsky, the principal founder of the Theosophical Society (TS), late in her life became dissatisfied with the growth and progress of the TS. At the very beginning of this movement she was instrumental in attracting attention to Theosophy, the Ageless Wisdom. Having been born with highly developed psychic abilities, one of the ways she did it was by producing a variety of phenomena of a "supernatural" nature: levitating and materializing objects, producing sounds from tables and walls, clairvoyance, and a remarkable array of phenomena that were witnessed.

Her initial motivation was to present these things in order to *attract* the attention of a "thinking" group of people. It did that. The ranks of the TS swelled with people who were fascinated with phenomena. But only very few of them had any genuine interest in what was behind the production of those phenomena.

What was the bigger picture that these phenomena connected one to? Most people were only interested in the circus aspect. So she became frustrated with the fact that there were so few who were truly looking to change, to impact the world with this fundamental idea of Brotherhood, the Oneness of all life. To find a living expression of that was the focus, and that was the very thing that everybody seemed to miss.

So she described the TS in two ways. First she said that it was a stupendous success in terms of presenting these formerly exotic ideas such as reincarnation, karma, states of consciousness, that the universe is pervaded with intelligence throughout

its parts, that there is no empty space, self-responsibility, that we are instrumental in the unfoldment of our consciousness, or in constricting it. The TS was a stupendous success in terms of putting these ideas at the doorsteps of a global audience, whereas before no such consideration was possible.

At the same time she wrote that the TS was also a dead failure. It is a challenge trying to think about how these two ideas can fit together. On the one hand, a stupendous success; on the other hand, a dead failure. Both statements were true for the two different avenues of expression for which the Society was founded. The one avenue of sharing an information and conceptual source was well developed. But in its main function, to form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity *that can be expressed in us*, the lives of its individual parts, *that* was where she witnessed a continuing failure. A genuine familial relationship among TS members was difficult to establish.

Toward the end of her life, she determined that she would work with a few in order to root these principles in their consciousness. The focus of the TS was on the many. She formed her "inner group", a small group of 12 people. She talked to all of them saying that the choice to take part in this effort was not casual, but a profoundly serious commitment.

In order to take part in this inner group, the people that she chose had to take a pledge that had six parts, but the most important one was the very first: to "endeavour to make Theosophy a living factor in my life". This was the basis for the coming together of this group and for what she hoped would be the realization of the purposes of the theosophical movement.

It was not a pledge that was given to the fellow members of this inner group, nor was it offered to the group's leader. The pledge was not made to an individual; it was not personal in any way. Its closing words were: "so help me, my Higher Self." It

was made to this higher self out of which *all* souls are emanated. She described it as “universal” and “second-less”. The aid, the flowing in of the Higher Self was the factor that would make this pledge real.

The determination of the will to link ourselves with the Higher Self to direct the consciousness sets something in motion. It begins with imagining the possibility, in this case that Theosophy can become an active agency in one’s life. Then one commits to that possibility. In whatever way that we are able, we commit. And this is really where the power comes. The Higher Self does not grant favours. It is not like the traditional approach to prayer that many people engage in, a begging for undeserved favouritism. That is not the way it works. The Higher Self pours its power and guidance into the one whose will becomes *merged* with its own.

This pledge is born out of a recognition that we are here for a short time, that this moment is impermanent, that *all* of the cycles of Nature speak to our inter involvement. I like the expression of Thich Nhat Hanh, who talks about “interbeing”. Literally, all of the atoms of our being are continually shared with all others. Anyone who begins to see this has the capacity to imagine a unity that goes beyond the norms of our daily experience. Even a glimpse of that should draw from us a commitment to pursue that way of living.

There is a very special moment during the cycle of each day that is highly prized by artists and photographers. It is called the “golden hour” — that time right before the setting of the sun, or immediately after its arising, when anything that is bathed in that light seems to have a special and particular glow. To the eye of the artist, it is highly regarded because seemingly ordinary things take on a different quality of being. This is the hour when everything has a radiance, but not merely from the light falling upon it. This golden hour seems to activate something so that the

glow is seen as coming from within. Probably all of us have had the experience of seeing the world in these moments. This is a description of something that is revealed in Nature’s daily cycles — the natural cycle of visible light.

A similar event takes place within our cycle of awareness. It happens in a couple of ways. There are experiences of illumination that occur in the lives of all of us. Generally they are momentary, where we find that something arises within us, where the barriers that have been erected over a long time of improper thought, of misunderstanding, of unexamined living, for whatever reason, these barriers fall away, and in that moment this Higher Self can become present. It is no longer obstructed.

These experiences often happen in mysterious ways, sometimes as a result of the inner work we have been doing, to see and address our self-created barriers. In talking about the pledge, one of the things HPB stressed was that in order for someone to become sincere in their commitment, an understanding of what one is committing to is required. Of course, that understanding grows over time, but she made it clear that if Theosophy, the Ageless Wisdom, is to become an active factor in our lives, we need to have some knowledge of what it is. I think she viewed the process of deepening understanding as action-based. Whether that action be physical or mental, it was rooted in the expression of a state of awareness focused on *compassionate* activity.

In various circles people think in terms of service activity, but we are talking about compassion as expressed in our actions toward others, and in the silent action that takes place within our own minds of how we regard others, our quality of seeing. This golden hour makes itself known and felt by others in every compassionate act that flows from us, in every deepened understanding in which we find a way to share with others, not just intellectual understanding, but of the fabric that we are all a part of, the Oneness at the root of this whole theosophical movement.

Act by act, thought by thought, we are bringing this golden hour into being. The term that Blavatsky used was “a pledge”; it was a formal arrangement that took form within ourselves. Within us is where everything begins, takes place, and ends. In her model HPB talked about Theosophy. For someone who is involved in the Theosophical Society and this way of thinking, that is a wonderful and powerful avenue of expression. That is the reason why it is of value to *all* of us. But we must commit to something. If it is a friendship, put yourself in it. If it is a marriage, a relationship, a community, a nation, commit yourself to it.

One of the great scientists of the 20th century, also a profound mystic, George Washington Carver, an American botanist renowned for his experiments with plants. He was able to draw out countless previously unimagined products from various forms of plant life. He made a statement that was at the root of his whole method of scientific practice. When asked “how are you able to see these expressions that are unseen to others?” he responded: “Anything that you love enough will reveal its secrets.” The commitment that is rooted in love, in an awareness of our Unity and that we function, live, and depend upon each other, is powerful and at the root of what we call “Theosophy”.

These are a few thoughts to consider concerning this cycle of a dawning awareness that we are trying to hasten. It will do us good, but, more so it will do good for others. We are here to do more than take up space in this world.

I appreciate your attention, as always, and appreciate whatever it is that you find it within your heart and ability to commit yourselves to. It will definitely open up pathways to greater and deeper things.

(Courtesy: *The Theosophist*, February 2021)

[The theme of the Indian Section Convention-II was “**Awareness Transforms Life**”. It was held on 30 December 2020 in which four members of the Indian Section expressed their views on the theme of the session. All the four talks have been published in the following pages.]

UMA BHATTACHARYYA*

DOES ONE GO THROUGH CYCLES OF TRANSFORMATION IN LIFE?

The plan of Nature is a slow, yet steady unfolding of consciousness, awareness. As awareness increases, avenues open up, offering greater happiness, fulfilment and joy.

A stone is alive with atoms but has no feeling. It makes no difference to the stone whether you kick it, pulverize it or worship it.

A plant is aware of soil conditions and moisture. It sends its roots to sources of water and nutrients. Its shoots reach out to sunshine and it blossoms in spring. It is believed to respond to music, too. But it does not feel the love or tenderness of a parent.

Animals are aware of seasons. Migratory birds fly thousands of miles to beat winter. Animals sense danger and elude predators. They are capable of deep caring and form loving relationships.

The human being is mindful. We are aware of the seen and obvious. We can connect cause with effect and decipher laws of nature. We also have the power to align with the unseen - the subtle hand of Divinity. We can choose to remain at lower levels of awareness- eating, drinking, sleeping- content to submit to the

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elements. On the other hand, we could soar to higher levels of consciousness, to a world that offers certain victory over the material world, where we find perfect balance in every set of circumstances.

Vedanta requires commitment to one's own inner transformation. As we go up, we transcend earlier limitations. We become independent. Unfortunately sense gratification is what the world craves for. But it is the lowest and is limited by the here and now. We become happy only when we are catered to. But many a times we may find darkness surrounding us, we may be going through constraint in our relationships, may be having financial difficulties or may be dealing with an illness that seems insurmountable. We do not have to be blinded by the darkness confronting us. Worldwide tendency to elude sorrow and the restlessness has led to ignorance of naturalness of life. It is painfully astonishing that prime concern of humanity today is to address the question "How should life be?" Whereas the basic question remains "What is the purpose of life?"

To rescue individual from this delusion the seeker is required to ponder over three core questions- "Who am I?", "Why I am here?" and "What is the purpose of my life?" It is in the pursuit of answers to the above questions, the seeker turns to teachings of saints and mystics and the spiritual quest starts moving beyond the mundane existence of material life. So what is the way ahead? How can the seeker go about reconnecting to his true self? Seeker needs to now rediscover the original path to the truth. As he gradually advances on this path, there begins silent transformation within.

Whatever be the level of our spiritual development, deep down all of us have a sense about true purpose of life. We must know that our existence is not to be limited to petty desires and decadent strivings. Nevertheless, we are now confronted with times where a multitude of external pressures and internal commitments veer us in unthought of and hitherto unknown zones. We tend to ignore our deeper standards, cherished ethics and inner most objectives. What follows is a slumber of hollow,

meaningless existence where we squander the precious days, weeks, months and years. Life somehow goes on but slowly and steadily an uneasy feeling creeps in. We wonder what would challenge life once our material needs are met. Sometimes we are under tremendous stress to protect what we have. We live under shadow of fear. An accomplishment which makes life meaningful under any condition or which signifies the existence of life is important and must be carefully understood. If a limited measure or view is taken as the standard, for example the body-its significance shall cease after a period. We must therefore understand significance beyond the limit. If we do not expand our vision beyond this life and do not appreciate and attain core purpose of life during this lifetime itself, then this whole journey would be jeopardized. Life is a journey of Atman to transcend body consciousness, not for piecemeal happiness but to attain infinite bliss, "Anand". It is journey to dismantle an imaginary theorem and become free, a freedom attained much prior to death. The game of life is all about this. The journey of life continues for one or more lifetimes until there is complete transformation and ultimately infinite is attained. A life module like this renders life blessed over its own existence.

We have all come from one source, the Divine and we carry its essence in our hearts. The journey towards the source of our existence the Divine, is a long awaited transformation our soul has been waiting for many lifetime. The aphorisms declare that "thou art God". Godhood is not something that we gain or lose. Godhood is our essential being at all times. Before we realize God, we are God. After we realize, we are God. If that be so, then what exactly is the difference between our pre and post realization state? Yes, there is one significant change that is our awareness of Godhood. No doubt Godhood is our perennial being but before realization we are not aware of our Godhood whereas after transformation we are aware of our Godhood.

Once the Divine within is awakened, all its qualities manifest within us. Eternal peace, joy and unconditioned love take over our being removing all ignorance absorbed from the worldly

surroundings which has kept us in the dark over lifetimes. It is only through divine grace that one can experience transformation within. In order to elevate the mind and transform deep-rooted fears and negative impressions into love, we need to attune and open our entire “Being” to connect to the Divine within, thus becoming ‘awakened beings’. The moment this connection is made, the mind undergoes spontaneous spiritual change. Old negative impressions in our consciousness are replaced by the seed of divine intelligence that brings spiritual transformation. The process of transformation occurs beyond the physical body far beyond the subconscious mind at the deepest layers of one’s core consciousness. This transformation helps in removing deep-rooted blockages within and sets us on a new trajectory to unite with Divine within. This is the start of journey to spiritual growth, self-discovery, transformation and liberation.

As the layers of deep-rooted *sanskaras* and detrimental unpleasant past impressions are removed, we experience our own true, divine essence, leaving us with experience of love, peace, joy and internal freedom even in the most turbulent of times. The seeker now finds things changing as he gets established in the right direction which will in time fulfil the purpose of his life.

Waves upon wave of transformation will be on its way. Each wave of transformation will create an enormous opportunity to connect with light within followed by a period of integration as the wave recedes. Then arrives the next wave, higher, bigger and more powerful than the previous one. Each wave of higher vibration will be bigger than the one before. Its effect will be more dramatic because number of people able to experience their own true nature will increase.

Such divine ‘energy transfer’ enables us to ride this wave of transformation and experience more joy, peace and love which is our true nature. As we align with our higher self, we will no longer feel the turbulence as these waves come and will be able to use the wave power to lift ourselves higher and align with current flow of nature. Our alignment with the wave of transformation can assist humanity and Planet earth in making a calm and peaceful transition to a Golden Age.

*H. SRIPRIYA**

HOW AWARENESS TRANSFORMS LIFE?*

It is an interesting and useful topic ‘How awareness transforms life.’ It is important to think out logically the basic questions and facts relating to life’s problems before we attempt to answer. The question arises what is awareness and how do we define it? Does it have classifications? Well, broadly it can be classified as Self-Awareness and Others’ Awareness.

In case of self-awareness, it usually involves an individual or a person himself to have a powerful stimulus which could be emotional or intellectual or spiritual in nature. It may involve sublimating the energies of the mental and the emotional to a new field which has not been present until now. In order to do this, one would have to step back from the activities of the present and make an assessment of whether what one is engaged in is worth continuing in future as well or whether one needs to do something different to make one’s life what one wants it to be.

To understand this issue of awareness let us look at one or two examples.

Firstly, let us take the example of the son of King Suddhodana and Queen Mayadevi of the kingdom of Kapilavastu who was called Siddhartha. He lived more than 2500 years ago. The prince lived with all opulence and grandeur. He was a brave and fearless warrior, accomplished archer yet kind and compassionate. However, he was oblivious of the challenges in the life of a common man. While growing up in princely ways he happened to come across a section of his people living with hardships completely unknown to him. The initial impact which can be

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called awareness gravitated him to know the reality of such things as old age, illness and death. He also came to know about saints or sadhus who were seekers after truth not attached to material world.

When Siddhartha was first exposed to sorrows of life in his kingdom, he was hurt and disturbed to such an extent that he began to question himself as to the root cause of suffering and kept brooding over the situation.

Siddhartha became aware that he had to find a solution, a way out and this occupied his entire consciousness. He chose to pursue a path in search of an answer to the big question before him. He was in his inner quest for the answer and was eventually enlightened. This enlightenment changed not only his life but a large section of mankind which is in common knowledge.

This is a case of Self- Awareness which eventually became part of sizeable populace across continents and reached a state of universal acceptance.

I would like to present another example that of others' awareness – leading to birth of an eminent institution lasting over many decades. Such an example is close to our heart where the founders in the year 1875 established the Theosophical Society. HPB and HS Olcott who were handpicked by the Inner Founders were aware of the need to create an institution which could act as a platform for the coming generations. The thought process happened 145 years ago. A lot of credit ought to go to the people who followed the founders and remained committed to the functioning of the institution in its true sense of serving humanity. I think that this strength, the backbone (of TS), being the values it nurtures will serve the people in long time to come hereafter

Let us take another example - that of Valmiki. In ancient India, presumably four – five thousand years ago, Valmiki lived

by looting and stealing from people. When the divine sage Narada met him and asked him to give up his wild ways Valmiki tried to justify that he was doing such things for the sake of a livelihood and for his family. And that they would support and stand by him in all the sins and crimes which he has been committing. However, when in actual reality Valmiki learnt from his wife that she and the family would not actually share the sins of looting and the wrong doings he became aware of the reality of life. With the help of the wise sage who advised him to take the name of the divine and go inward into meditation, Valmiki the robber was transformed. He became the first poet of India - the *adi Kavi* and composed the Ramayana

From the aforementioned examples of Gautama Buddha, and Founders of TS and Valmiki, it is clear that the nature of activities in their lives changed post-awareness. It was a fundamental change that happened within permanently. This process of change is in general terms called transformation and does not happen overnight. It takes time to assimilate and persist with process of change. When old ways of life are given up and new ways of life adopted for evolution and progress then there is complete transformation.

When we speak of transformation it is not the process by which larva becomes caterpillar and finally a butterfly in its natural process of evolution. By transformation we refer to the change in consciousness of man which makes him selfless, vast and unshackled. From a merely thinking mind, we need to go beyond. Mind is the helper, mind is the bar. "Mind is the Great Slayer of the Real" exhorts HPB.

When we are stepping back and looking at ourselves, we should not fall into delusion or illusion. An overtly critical mind indulges in self-bashing. On the other side of the spectrum, it should not be in state of self-glorification behind the calm exterior.

Very often awareness seems to be clouded by our petty troubles, sorrows which have a bearing on selfishness and self-centredness. We suffer from the imagined fear of the unknown, the future and have a tendency to relapse into the past with remorse. Remorse and Anxiety stops us from progressing

We need to move away from conditioned response to a considered response. The mirror of the mind gathers dust and if not cleaned with the awareness and wisdom it falls into disuse. Therefore, it is imperative to look at life earnestly and in a true spirit of enquiry with a free mind with courage.

In the light of the teachings of the ageless wisdom we try to rise to a sympathetic and objective standpoint. When we are conscious that to do the right thing at any cost for the sake of right then we are truly acting from the heart of the being which is always celestial strength and the core of transformation

We need to look at how life changes after transformation by taking new set of actions. We understand that in life it is not what you do so much matters as how you do it. Your goals are probably sound but it is in the manner of how you proceed towards the goals that matters most.

What we have discussed so far is basically what most human beings go through in the form of experiences, some of which can be classified as awakening to so-called awareness. Similarly, all situations that lead to awareness do not lead to everlasting transformations. At the same time a few events become part of our remaining life for ever due to the nature of profound impact. We are trying to emphasize that becoming aware is one part but making it useful for remaining part of life as a permanent activity could transform the outcomes of the life as such.

What made Buddha from Prince Siddharth, what was the starting point for change of approach to life? Where did he finally reach? After this change he first became aware to find an

answer to end sorrow. He was completely transformed and was known to the world as Buddha whose teachings were, and are still, useful to mankind in many ways.

In the case of our Founders their starting point was to become aware for the need to conceptualize the concept of theosophy and start the institution in which they succeeded.

Thus, we realize the starting point for most major accomplishments in history have begun from awareness. The examples given above are commonly known.

In real life there have been, and there shall be, many exemplary seers, saints, scientists and thinkers who have gone through similar experiences beginning with awareness to persistent actions and highly recognized accomplishments for the betterment of the world at large.

In conclusion, when a ship is on sail to its destination the captain uses the compass to understand that ship is on course to its destination. Similarly, we need awareness to steer course of our life.

Now, I would like to conclude with a few thoughts of Bro N Sri Ram:

“The inherent nature of life is a nature of freshness, energy, sensitiveness and beauty; it has to be released, not acquired. If this is so, it puts a different complexion or face on the whole problem of the transformation that is possible in ourselves”.

Let us be Aware, Let us Transform.

IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS IN FULFILLING T.S. MISSION

The topic of this session concerns theosophical society's mission and importance of awareness. As we know theosophical society's mission statement says- TO SERVE HUMANITY BY CULTIVATING AN EVER DEEPENING UNDERSTANDING AND REALIZATION OF THE AGELESS WISDOM, SPIRITUAL SELF- TRANSFORMATION AND THE UNITY OF ALL LIFE.

The mission statement contains only 24 words as such but each and every word is very meaningful and valuable. If we see carefully, mission statement inculcates the aspects of awareness by specifying five words .i.e. ever - deepening understanding and realization. Due to the time constraint the mission statement cannot be elaborated. However, it is now our responsibility to fulfil the mission, isn't it? We, the members of theosophical society should thoroughly and understandingly realize the importance of undertaking theosophical work- the work to serve the higher purpose of life - the work to serve objectives of the theosophical society.

There are three elements of awareness- person/persons, surroundings or environment and target or goal or subject-matter. In the aforementioned topic the third element has already been defined i.e. to fulfil theosophical society's mission. The person or persons need to be aware of theosophical teachings and the atmosphere has to be created to promote these perennial teachings.

*President, Marathi Theosophical Federation.

Even if a person is aware of the fact that his or her life is a serious matter and the life cannot be whiled away casually then the person shall think and act to live a meaningful life. He or she shall realize of being a part of the race, society, nation and globe and thus the person shall feel responsible to help and promote not only his or her life but that of the whole humanity.

In order to serve higher purpose of life the awareness regarding self-preparation is very necessary. We can say that the underlying purpose of all aspects of theosophical work is 'self-preparation'. Without working on ourselves we cannot evidently serve the objectives of theosophical society. It should not be like - one can speak on brotherhood and yet be completely unconscious of the relationship with others. Awareness is also proved to be a tool for self-transformation. Remember, what we are not aware of we cannot master.

The experts say that the awareness should be natural and not mechanical because of the quality and glory of being aware.

The importance and power of awareness is given in detail in the literature and awareness techniques are being used in meditations such as zen meditation, vipasyana, choiceless awareness, etc. H.P. Blavatsky mentions that gaining spiritual self knowledge is not possible by strenuous thinking or brain processes. Non-conceptual meditation is needed to go beyond lower mind. The source of wisdom is connected with Buddhi-which is beyond the conditioned consciousness of the lower mind and hence there is a need of unconditioned observations. Awareness comes through mind and intellect.

Regarding the importance of awareness, we can say that what awareness brings is freedom from fixed belief and habits. Basically, you are the awareness from which everything is made. Thus, awareness brings to shift the INSIGHT. You find yourself

wanting to intensify some valuable qualities—such qualities which are essential to being human. The qualities include love, compassion, curiosity, creativity and personal evolution. Everything we value come from inside, everything we do come from the inside. How to intensify these qualities—simply but definitely by paying attention to them. You let awareness guiding you to the goal. Let me explain this in short- The renowned scientist Einstein made explicit reference when he said that a sense of wonder was essential to any great scientific discovery. Now, the question arises- Is wonder a thought ? Wonder is not a thought. Wonder is a quality of awareness...opposite of taking things for granted.

Awareness is a stimulus. Once we are aware of something we try to acquire knowledge and detailed information about that thing. This helps us to think and act accordingly.

One important result of awareness, however, is developing empathy, which means - you listen, put yourself in others' shoes, try to understand their perspective, and share in their feelings. This promotes brotherhood. Other important result of awareness is that awareness allows us to become proactive rather than reactive.

Awareness has been a subject matter of research study also. In this context I would like to mention the latest research on awareness, specifically on subjective awareness. It is published in the Journal of General Psychology in April 2019 under the headline as – varieties of conscious experiences and subjective awareness of one's true-self. In this research it is theorized to reflect an experience connect or disconnect between one's awareness and actual experience.

So far as the present topic is concerned, Awareness is important and powerful tool in spreading and popularizing theo-

sophical teachings among the people at large. The awareness of external situation can pave the ways for finding methods, new initiatives and other requisites for conveying the message of theosophy to the people. As of now there are around 27,000 members of theosophical society in odd 60 countries. Number of the members is small as compared to other sects. To be a theosophist, you require certain amount of questioning, patience for listening as well as self-directed efforts which many people find difficult. It is observed that the group of people who tend to be attracted to the theosophy include either those who want direct relationship with God or Divinity or those who believe that there is a deeper shared truth between science and spirituality or those curious to understand the teachings and doctrines of theosophy or those who have high degree of awareness for searching themselves the truths without dependent on Guru or scriptures or sect or tradition. It is necessary to reach to people who are more amenable to theosophical teachings. The pioneers of theosophical society mentioned that even such small numbers can influence world's positive spiritual 'Noosphere' which can bring changes in consciousness.

The following steps can be taken to spread and promote theosophical teachings:

1. Identify the persons who seem to be amenable to theosophical teachings; workout plan for such identification.
2. Use science and theosophy forum to emphasize that theosophical truths are in spiritual dimensions and have precise laws quite similar to scientific world.
3. Emphasize on awareness techniques.
4. Emphasize on simple living, vegetarian diet and no drugs or alcohol.

5. Selfless services to be rendered and the work of the theosophical order of service needs to be encouraged.
6. Use modern communication techniques and methods for making people aware of theosophical truths.
7. Hold regular meetings, seminars, discussions, lectures and related social gatherings and programmes.

I would like to mention one of the useful activities undertaken by the Indian Section which is termed as 'smart goals'. The federations are given the tasks to be conducted by the lodges aiming at enlarging the know-how of theosophical teachings to be conveyed to the members as well as to the common public.

At the end, I would like to remind that we the members of theosophical society, need to work rigorously on 'self-preparation' in order to fulfil the mission of the society. We need to introspect and to have an honest look into ourselves. The right conditions for self-preparation can be created when we come together with others with a sense of community and with unity....Let's be conscious of ourselves.

CHHITAL PATEL*

NEED OF AWARENESS TO RELATE TO THE PRESENT PANDEMIC SITUATION

According to our great master like Buddha, most of us live our lives like sleepwalkers, with lack of alertness towards our deeds, environment, and our motives.

We live a mechanical and comatose life. While we are asleep, we simply act out our conditionings, habits, and impulses. That's called sleepwalking (i.e. acting mechanically, habitually, automatically, impulsively, and unconsciously.). When we are sleepwalking, we are absent, lost in our thoughts about the future or the past, but not being in present. We are always either worrying about the future or thinking about the past in each moment of our life. It's now high time that we really think for the need to recondition and revive ourselves with living in present for a better tomorrow.

There are two categories of self-awareness.

1) *Internal self-awareness*: This means knowing one's own values, strength and weaknesses. How we see our own values, passions, aspirations, adjust with our environment, reactions (including thoughts, feelings, behaviour, strengths, and weaknesses) and impact on others. Internal self-awareness is associated with higher job and relationship satisfaction, personal and social control, and happiness; it is negatively related to anxiety, stress, and depression.

2) *External self-awareness*: means understanding how other people view us, in terms of the factors mentioned above.

*Member, Reva Lodge, Vadodara, Gujarat

Awareness is the key to being self-directed, centred, free in every aspect of our lives, happiness and understanding.

Underlying all meditation techniques, including martial arts and all great athletic performances—is a quality of being awake and present to the moment, a quality that is called awareness. Once we can identify and understand what this quality of awareness is, we have the key to self-mastery in every area of our life.

As said by Osho Rajnish:

Watch every act that you do. Watch every thought that passes in your mind. Watch every desire that takes possession of you. Watch even small gestures like – walking, talking, eating, taking a bath. Go on watching everything. Let everything become an opportunity to watch.”

“Don’t eat mechanically, don’t just go on stuffing yourself – be very watchful. Chew well and watchfully and you will be surprised how much you have been missing up to now, because each bite will give you tremendous satisfaction”.

Whatever you are doing – walking, sitting, eating, or if you are not doing anything, just breathing, resting or relaxing – never forget that you are a watcher or *drashta*. You will forget it again and again. You will get involved in some thought, some feeling, some emotion, some sentiment – anything will distract you from your position. Remember, and run back to your centre of watching.

Make it an inner process, continuously... You will be surprised at how life changes holistically. If you struggle with anxiety, the cure is awareness. Watch your anxiety, be alert when it arises, pay attention to it. Be curious. See it for what it is. If you keep watching it long enough, it will eventually drop by itself.

Likewise, if you struggle with depression, insecurities, anger, addictions, the cure is paying more attention to it.

How to increase your Self-Awareness:

1. Practice Mindfulness and Meditation
2. Practice Yoga
3. Go over your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours to see where you met your standards, where you failed them, and where you could improve.
4. It helps you to discover what you want, what you value, and what works for you. It can also help you to find out what you don’t want, what is not important to you, and what doesn’t work for you.

Now we move to current pandemic known as COVID-19

It started from December 2019, and in a short span of time, it covered almost the whole world affecting millions of people. Human civilizations are facing threat for their survival and livelihood. Majority of nations are not getting any substantial relief and solution to come out from this pandemic. Rather they convince their citizens to take precautions like changing their lifestyle, imposing the lockdown, adopting naturopathy, suggesting to have the nutritional diet, maintaining the social distancing, usage of personal protective equipment, maintaining good hygiene, self-quarantine etc.

Here I want to take different approach to any disease or illness :

144 is a number for vibrational level of energy that will return to earth for bringing oneness to all of us. 144 Hz (Hertz) brings a sense of unity with people. It would be logical that is what will bring peace to the earth. We are the ones to carry 144.

Like any other virus, COVID-19 has a low vibration rate with a closed electromagnetic circuit structure, with a resonance frequency of approximately 5.5 Hz-14.5 Hz. In the highest ranges starting with 25.5 Hz and above, the virus becomes inactive and dies.

For a person who lives in high vibes is no longer in a danger, because a healthy man's body "vibrates" in the highest ranges and only occasionally, for various reasons, slips into lower vibes. The reasons for this can be various disorders in the energy balance (fatigue, emotional breakdown, hypothermia, chronic diseases, nervous tension, etc.).The virus in nature, that is outside the body, is not resistant.

Earth's total average frequency resonance is now 27.4 Hz, and therefore it would be destructive to the virus, but there are places where this frequency is lowered, i.e. geopathic areas created naturally or artificially (hospitals, prisons, Power lines, subway and public electric vehicles, malls, offices, pubs, etc.) Where vibes drop to levels below 20 Hz.

For Humans at Low Vibration, this virus is dangerous

If we have feelings of pain, fear, irritation, hot temperature, flash of fury, superiority, pride, some type of disorder, the human vibrations are in between 0.2 Hz to 3.1 Hz. Within this range Virus can grow & survive.

On the other side, if we live with generosity, compassion, pure love with universal brotherhood, unconditional, sacrificial, universal love (205 HZ)—then vibration will be in between 45 HZ to 205 HZ. In this vibration no virus can survive.

One can raise vibes by working with oneself and stimulating conscious behaviours.

Benefits of Self-Awareness:

When we see ourselves clearly, we are more confident, more creative, more proactive, boost our acceptance. We make strong conclusions, build stronger relationships, and communicate more effectively. We're less likely to lie, cheat, and steal. We can see things from the perspective of others, We are better workers who get more promotions. And we're more-effective leaders with more-satisfied employees and more-profitable companies. Increased self-awareness leads to more self-care for physical and mental health.

The link between meditation and self-awareness is clear, practicing meditation will naturally lead to more of the self-awareness. When we meditate, we are paying attention to the things that can often get ignored in our busy day-to-day life: the present moment and our own internal experience.

Meditation brings about a range of improvements, including more positive effect, less stress, greater mindfulness, enhanced resilience, and even greater satisfaction in life.

Remember, whenever you realize that you have gone to the past or into the future, don't create a problem out of it. Simply come back into the present. It's okay! Simply bring back your awareness.

NEWS & NOTES

Bengal

The Bengal Federation was formed in the year 1920 under the Presidentship of Manishi Hirendra Nath Dutta. This is the first time in the history of the Federation that the AGM was held virtually on 26.12.2020 and that too also in the Centenary Year. Earlier, we had a plan to celebrate this glorious event in a befitting manner. But due to Covid -19 pandemic, we had to conduct it virtually. However, we have a plan to celebrate it properly in a suitable manner sometime in future.

The Annual Conference of Bengal Federation was also held on 26 December 2020 afternoon at BTS Hall, under the Presidentship of Bro. P.K. Datta. Ven. P. Seewali Thero, General Secretary, Mahabodhi Society of India, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and respected Bro. Birendra Lal Bhattacharya was the Guest of Honour. A short talk was given by National Lecturer Bro. Pradip Kr. Mahapatra.

The opening song was rendered by Sis. Jaba Guhathakurta. It was followed by inaugural address delivered by the President Bro. P.K. Dutta. Bro. Pradip Mahapatra, in his short talk on 'Seven Portals' narrated Madam H.P. Blavatsky's views on Theosophy. Bro. Birendra Lal Bhattacharya, narrated the contribution of Founder President (of BTF) Bro. Manishi Hirendra Nath Dutta to Theosophy and the way he led the Theosophical movement in Bengal to a great height. Ven. P. Seewali Thero beautifully explained how Buddhism and Theosophy influenced each other for the betterment of human life and the Society as a whole.

Our activities during the year were adversely affected due to the Covid-19 pandemic, such as disruption of Railway services, local transport facilities and the instructions given by the Government to follow the restrictions during the lockdown period. Now situation has slightly improved and slowly we have started reviving our activities.

Bombay

SIS. ABAN PATEL'S talk on 'ZOROASTRIANISM' at OJAI VALLEY THEOSOPHICAL LODGE, CALIFORNIA, USA on 6 January 2021: It was at the invitation of the Theosophical Society in Wheaton Illinois that Sis. Aban Patel, Senior Member and lecturer of Blavatsky Lodge, Mumbai, delivered a talk on '*Zoroastrianism*'. Bro. Pablo and Sis. Michele Senders had extended the invitation. Sis. Aban in her talk traced the origin of Zoroastrianism to Persia and its later day shift to India and also its modern-day resurgence. This was part of the study of World Religions at the Ojai Valley Theosophical Lodge. The talk was well appreciated for its detail study and presentation. Sis. Kashmira Khambatta prepared power point presentation for Sis. Aban. Sis. Aban Amroliwalla contributed some inputs on Zoroastrianism. Sis. Aban Patel's talk has opened the door for a new discourse and interest in Zoroastrianism. The flooded gates of interest in Zoroastrianism were opened by Sr. Meherangiz Baria with the launch of *the Wisdom Capsule Series*, started with her presentation on *Zoroastrianism* at the Annual Session of Bombay Theosophical Federation on 17 October 2020.

Bro. Arni Narendran, Treasurer of Blavatsky Lodge, Mumbai, and Education-Director of VCTS, adds that in the Quest Magazine (published by the Theosophical Society of America) issue of January/February 2003 authors Dinshaw and Hutoxy

Contractor had written an article on *Zoroastrianism*. This article is often used as a reference on Zoroastrianism for discussion on the Religion in American Theosophical circles.

Adamant Lodge, Moscow –Russia has Bro. Arni Narendran, as a Speaker and Panelist for their ongoing Research Project Series on *‘The Secret Doctrine’*.

UNIVERSAL THEOSOPHICAL CALENDER 2021

This year the members of Bombay Theosophical Federation were in for a surprise when they received calendars in their Mailbox. The handiwork and munificence of our Senior Blavatsky Lodge member Dr. Rajam Pillai, who snatches every opportunity to propagate Theosophy through ‘Synergy’ journal, is now propagating Theosophy through an innovative calendar designed by International Lecturer Shri Shikhar Agnihotri of Pragya Lodge. The calendars have reached Brethren in Mumbai and other parts of India and overseas also.

Dr. Rajam Pillai has printed the Calendar acknowledging *‘conceptualized & created by Pragya CS Studio’* and adding *‘With compliments from Dr. Rajam Pillai, Managing Trustee Synergy Trust, Mumbai India (on behalf of Blavatsky Lodge – Mumbai, India 1880)’*.

It is truly a Universal Calendar with Information about Early History of the TS, Mission of the TS, The Objects of TS, Freedom of Thought, Freedom of TS, The Freedom and Responsibilities of Lodges & Branches, Theosophical Society’s Seal and Significance of Marked Dates of Great Atmas, Festivals and International Days, inspiring one to tread the path of Spirituality. The Universal Spirit of this Calendar will be surely appreciated even by Spiritual Fraternity. This Calendar will be a source of ready reference for the years to come.

Kerala

Arundale Day: George Sydney Arundale, the 3rd President of TS, was born on 1st December, 1878, so the day is observed as Arundale Day. On 1st December 2020 at 7 p.m. an on-line remembrance was held under the auspices of Kerala Theosophical Federation. Meeting commenced with Universal Prayer. Dr. M.A. Raveendran, President K.T.F., presided. In his speech Dr. M.A. Raveendran pointed out that each President of TS was unique and their contribution to TS and world at large was immense. George Arundale’s contribution in the field of Education, especially in Colonial India should be gratefully remembered.

The speaker Bro. K. Dinakaran, Secretary KTF, in his speech mentioned that G.S. Arundale was a great educationist, orator, organizer, philosopher and writer. He was interned at Ooty along with Dr. Besant and B.P. Wadia in 1917 for actively participating in the Home Rule Movement. It may be a record in the world history that two Englishmen fought for the freedom of a country ruled by their own country! Arundale’s slogan was “Together Differently”. He was the author of books - *“You, Freedom and Friendship” Kundalini, Mount Everest, Nirvana* etc. Besides, a large number of pamphlets are also to his credit. He encouraged his wife Smt. Rumkmini Devi to start the Kalakshetra at Adyar which later on became the icon of Indian Classical Dance and music. He toured all over the world to promote Indian Culture and Philosophy.

Sis. Jaisree Kannan - a member from Adyar conducted a music programme on J. Krishnamurti and Saint Kabir.

The 5th President of TS Mr. N. Sri Ram was born on 15 December 1889. Kerala Theosophical Federation organized an on-line programme to remember him. Dr. M.A. Raveendran, President KTF presided, and said that Sri Ram was an embodi-

ment of Wisdom and Peace. Bro. Dinakaran, Secy. K.T.F., introduced the speaker of the day Sis. Sonal Murali, National Lecturer, TS, India. Sis. Sonal Murali in her talk narrated the simplicity and profound wisdom of Bro. Sri Ram. She also explained the experiences shared by Sis. Joy Mills, Radha S. Burnier, Ernest Wood and many other Theosophists. The Watch Tower Notes and various other books of Sri Ram need serious attention of earnest students of Theosophy. His motto was “Endure till the End”- a message he inherited from Dr. Annie Besant. He was the private Secretary of Dr. Besant for many years and worked in the *New India*

Bro. Harihara Raghavan explained his personal experiences with President Sri Ram and said that Bro. Sri Ram was very simple, gentle and at the same time very firm on his principles.

Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

Dharma Lodge, Lucknow, held four on-line meetings in January, 2021. Talks in these meetings were delivered on the topics ‘Service of Humanity’, ‘Service as Sacrifice’, ‘Love-a Healer’ and ‘Doctrine of Heart and Eye’. The speakers were Bro. Ashok Gupta, Bro. U. S. Pandey, Bro. B. K. Pandey and Sis. Preeti Tewari respectively.

Four on-line meetings were organized by Nirvan Lodge, Agra, in January.

Pragya Lodge, Lucknow, held on-line meetings on 10, 17, 24 and 31 January when talks were delivered on the topics ‘Energy Centres in Human Body’, ‘Yoga as practice’, ‘Levels of Consciousness’, and ‘Death as visualized by Theosophy and Science’. The talks were delivered by Bro. C. A. Shinde, Sis. Vasumati Agnihotri, Bro. Chakit Swaroop and Bro. Ajai Rai respectively.

Five on-line meetings were organized by Sarvahitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, in January in which talks were given on the topics ‘Moon’, ‘Me and Mine’, ‘Spiritual Path’, ‘Open Mind’, and ‘Layers of Consciousness’. The speakers were Bro. Arvind Narware, Bro. Ahok Lokhande, Bro. S. K. Pandey, Bro. U.S. Pandey and Bro. Chakit Swarup respectively.

Bro. Shikhar Agnihori delivered a talk on the topic ‘Thought Power’ in the on-line meeting held at Prayas Lodge, Ghaziabad, on 03 January. The study of the book “*Practical Occultism*” was conducted there by Sis. Suvralina Mohanty on four Sundays of the month.

Meditation for children: Sis. Suvralina Mohanty conducted on-line ‘Basic Meditation’ class for children on every Sunday at 07.30 am.

NOIDA Lodge held two on-line meetings on 03 and 17 January when study of the book *The Voice of the Silence* was conducted by Sis. Lalita Khatri

Chohan Lodge, Kanpur, organized five on-line meetings in January 2021 in which talks on ‘Mental Surgery’, and ‘Dhammapada’ were delivered by Bro. S.K. Pandey. The topics of the two talks by Bro. S.S. Gautam were ‘Astral Plane’ and ‘Life of a Theosophist’. Bro. S.B.R. Mishra spoke on ‘Science of Karma’.

On invitation by Vikram Lodge of Ujjain, Bro. S. B. R. Mishra President of Sarvahitkari Lodge, Gorakhpur, delivered an on-line talk on the theme ‘Science of Love’. It was held on 28 January 2021.

UP & Uttarakhand Federation held an on-line programme on 09 January, 2021, when a group meditation guided by Bro.

U.S. Pandey was practiced by the participants. Thereafter a talk on the topic 'Human Journey of Experience' was delivered by Bro. Pandey. Members from many other Federations also joined in the programme.

Sis. Vibha Saxena, Secretary of Noida Lodge, contributed occasionally in the study on 'Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett' undertaken by Utkal Federation in January.

Sister Suvralina Mohanty, Secretary of Prayas Lodge, Ghaziabad, conducted two sessions on "Practical Occultism" for youth group of Siddhartha Lodge, Bhubaneswar. These were held on 24 and 31 January 2020.

National Lecturer

The following on-line talks were delivered on the invitation of the Lodges of other Federations:

Shankar Lodge of Delhi Federation- Bro. S. K. Pandey's subject of talk was 'Destiny and Effort'. It was held on 02 January 2021.

Reva Lodge, Vadodara, of Gujarat Federation- Bro. U.S. Pandey delivered on-line talk on the theme 'Meditation-its Scientific and Practical Aspects'. It was held on 03 January 2021.

Vikram Lodge of Ujjain - Bro. U. S. Pandey delivered an on-line talk on 07 January 2021 on the theme 'Mahatma Letters and Teachings therein'.

Siddhartha Lodge, Bhubaneswar (Utkal Federation) - Bro. U. S. Pandey delivered an on-line talk on the theme 'GOD and Gods' on 26 January.

International Seminar on *The Secret Doctrine*: Bro. U. S. Pandey joined as a panelist in an international seminar orga-

nized on-line by 'Adamant' Lodge, Moscow of the Theosophical Society in Russia. The theme was "Sloka 2, of Stanza I of *The Secret Doctrine*-Cosmogenesis". It was held on 30 January. Several members from countries like U.S.A. Russia, England, Greece, South Korea and India participated in this seminar.

Bro. Pradip Mahapatra addressed the members of Indraprasth Lodge, New Delhi, on 11, 18 and 25 October 2020 respectively, in which he delivered three on-line talks on 'Flowering of Life'. His other talk on 'Our Approach to Truth' was addressed to the members of Shankar Lodge on 7 November 2020. Besides, Bro. Mahapatra organizes the study-cum discussion class on every Friday from 8 to 9 pm. The subject of study is Mahatma Letters. He organizes public lectures on all-India basis on every Sunday from 10 to 11 am.

97TH EASTER THEOSOPHICAL CONFERENCE

02 to 04 April 2021

Subject – Theosophy and Krishnamurti

Venue – Conference will be through ZOOM

THEOSOPHY is Divine Knowledge or Science. It is eternal or known as **DIVINE WISDOM**. The term is many thousand years old. On the other hand J. Krishnamurti who was born on 11 May 1895, whose life and teachings spanned the greater part of the 20th century, is regarded by many as one who has had the most profound impact on human consciousness in the modern times. But what he teaches was foreign to the world. Is it not available in Theosophy? But he was a Sage, philosopher, and thinker, he illumined the lives of millions the world over — intellectuals and laymen, young and old. His only concern was to ‘set man absolutely, unconditionally free’. That’s why he has given stress on watchfulness, attentiveness, relationship etc. When there is no past or future but only present, otherwise it is freedom from the known. But is there any practical difference between Theosophy and the teachings of Krishnamurti?

Both in East and West JK is recognized as one of the greatest religious teachers of all times. He pointed out to bring our daily life a deeply meditative and religious quality which will bring a new mind, a new civilization. It gives a new meaning and direction to modern man’s quest for the Truth.

The members of theosophical Society are always seekers of Truth. Krishnamurti says “The mind must be religious”. By religious, JK meant a mind in quest of Truth. The serious members of Theosophical society are deeply interested in the transformation of consciousness. Transformation of consciousness

can be made only if one would go deep within himself. We are the way. So let us transform ourselves and transform the world.

Reference of Books

- 1- *Master and the Path* by C W Leadbeater
- 2- *The First and Last Freedom* by J. Krishnamurti
- 3- *Education and Service* by J. Krishnamurti
- 4- *The Key to Theosophy*, by H P Blavatsky
- 5- *At the Feet of the Master* by ALCYONE
- 6- *Human Regeneration* by Radha Burnier

PROGRAMME

Friday, 02.04.2021, Morning Session –

1. 9.00 AM- Universal Prayer
2. 9.10 AM- Welcome address by Bro. Pradeep H Gohil, President Indian Section - The Theosophical Society
3. 9.20 AM Opening address by Sis. Marja Artamaa, International Secretary of Theosophical Society.
4. 09.30- Welcome messages by Pradip Mahapatra
5. 9.40 AM- Theosophy and Krishnaji by Dr. N.C. Ramanujachary

10.15 AM- Break

10.30- 49[Forty nine] lives of ALCYONE by Bro. Kishore Ongole

Afternoon Session

1. 4.00 PM- Life and Works of Jiddu. Krishnamurti from 1910 to 1929 by Bro. Basavaraja Reddy
2. 4.40 PM- Intellect to Self-Knowledge by Sis. K. Parvathamma

Saturday, 03.04.2021, Morning Session [I]

9.00 AM – A loved Spiritual Teacher of the Twentieth Century by Bro. C .A. Sindhe
9.40 AM – Truth is a Pathless Land by Dr. M.A Raveendran

10.15-Break

Session [II]

10.30 AM – You are the World by Bro. R Krishnamoorthy

11.10 AM – Choiceless Awareness by Bro. K. Dinakaran

Afternoon Session

04.00 PM- Future of Humanity by Bro. N. C Krishna

04.40. PM – Love by Ms. Lakshmi

Sunday 04.04.2021, Morning session [I]

10.00 AM- Thought cannot solve any problem by Dr. L Nagesh

10.30 AM – Ancient Wisdom and Krishnamurti by Bro. R.V. Vastrad

11.10 – Break

Session [II]

11.20 AM – Intellect to Intuition by Sairam Pate

11.40. AM- Right Education in the Modern World by Sri Harsha

Afternoon Session

1. 4.00 PM- Closing Address [What TS members shall do?] by Bro.S. Harihara Raghavan

2. Vote of Thanks by Bro. S. Raman, Secy. Madras Federation

97TH EASTER THEOSOPHICAL CONFERENCE

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Subject –Theosophy and Krishnamurti

The members and sympathizers are requested to register name as provided in the registration form. They have to register before 20.03.2021 through the mail i. d. theosophyindia1891@gmail.com. On registration each one will be provided with ZOOM Meeting ID and Passcode before 02.04.2021. For any clarification kindly contact Pradip Mahapatra, Conference Officer, Cell no.9437697429, email-peekem0277@gmail.com.

FORM for REGISTRATION

1-Name of Delegate/s or_____

Sympathizers_____

2- Name of the Lodge/Federation_____

3- Email ID and Mobile Number of Delegates_____

**Pradip Mahapatra
CONFERENCE OFFICER**

**If education were for living and not merely for
livelihood,**

**If education were for joy and happiness and not
merely for temporal success,**

**If education were for self-expression and not so
exclusively for imitation,**

**If education were as much for eternity as it is
for time,**

**If education were as much for service as it is for
self-seeking,**

**If education were as much for wisdom and truth
as it is for so-called facts,**

**If education were as much for the soul as it is
supposed to be for the mind,**

**Then indeed would the younger generation
be well-equipped for Life.**

G. S. ARUNDALE