



The Spiral Path...

The Theosophical Society, American Section – Quarterly Circular – Spring Equinox 2023 – #13

Those who entertain such thoughts as
“He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he
robbed me,” will not calm their anger.

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“He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he
robbed me,” will calm their anger.

Here in the world, anger is never pacified by
anger, it is pacified by love.
This is the eternal truth.

Dhammapada, The Way of Truth

Thoughts and Consequences

The action of Karma works to soften our nature, and helps us become compassionate beings. What we experience as repercussions (effects of causes) are not some malevolent force from outside us that has a vendetta against us, or that is simply testing us or is frightened of us. It is ourselves self-correcting ourselves to work in accord with the nature of the universe.

Our thoughts are where things begin. We construct the universe around us through our imagination and wondering. We draw to ourselves those things which we need in order to organize and understand our world. We often get off-track by focusing on the material world and the pains and pleasures it offers. That is not the real world. The real world is our core, our consciousness, which is part of the divine, and it is seeking to understand itself and its place in the kosmos so that we can grow and evolve into a greater conscious being.

In this life of ours we have the ability to experience many emotions and feelings which affect our being and that of those around us. Many emotions come from a deluded mind, one that does not see the higher purposes in all things. Anger is one of these. It causes division, separateness, and many other emotions, including *more* anger. It does not seem to be a constructive emotion. It can be expressed toward people, ideas or philosophies, and systems of thought or systems of man’s own making.

When we find ourselves in the midst of angry thoughts, all we have to do is to pause, and reflect on impersonal love. Thoughts of helpfulness, oneness, and compassion. By working in this direction, (and it often *is work...*) we can help heal those divisions and separations in the thought-life of humanity. Those things which are even today dividing and separating people in neighborhoods, countries, and in communities which transcend visible borders.

This age of Kali-yuga, the age of lowest materialization we are now experiencing, moves faster than the other ages have. It is as if its shorter time period compresses the longer times of other ages into a shorter time period, but with the same amount of stuff accomplished. Perhaps if we could slow down just a little and reflect more thoughtfully on our life trajectory, we could offer additional help to humanity and the great work we are all trying to realize.



“It is important to understand that you are not separate from the dynamics that create supernovas, stars, galaxies, universes, and the structure of space-time on the Planck scale. You are an integral part of this flow of information. And what you call your body and the complexity of the biology around you, the fractal nature of trees, plants, etc., all emerge from this information flow. All of that emerges from that stream of information, including what you think of as your consciousness.”

Nassim Hamein

When we get angry, we suffer. If you really understand that, you also will be able to understand that when the other person is angry, it means that she is suffering. When someone insults you or behaves violently towards you, you have to be intelligent enough to see that the person suffers from his own violence and anger. But we tend to forget. We think that we are the only one that suffers, and the other person is our oppressor. This is enough to make anger arise, and to strengthen our desire to punish. We want to punish the other person because we suffer. Then, we have anger in us; we have violence in us, just as they do. When we see that our suffering and anger are no different from their suffering and anger, we will behave more compassionately. So understanding the other is understanding yourself, and understanding yourself is understanding the other person. Everything must begin with you.

Thich Nhat Hanh, *Anger*

FRAGMENTS: I

Cavé [Genevieve Ludlow Griscom]
Theosophy, October 1896

I. If you have patience and devotion you will understand these things, especially if you think much of them and meditate on them, for you have no conception of the *power of meditation*.

II. Beware of anger, beware of vanity, beware too of self-depreciation, these are all lions in your path. Live each day, and each moment in the day, by the light within, fixing your gaze upon it with faith and love. When the hours of darkness come and you see it not, wait in patience and contentment, knowing it still burns and that when morning dawns, if your watch has been constant, you will see it burning, perchance more brightly than before. "The darkest hour is before the dawn;" grieve not therefore nor feel one moment's disquietude. Your lamp is lit, tend it faithfully, it matters not that the outer eyes do not behold it. Those who know and love you can always see it, and it may also be shining in some other heart which as yet has no light of its own. * * *

The [Brotherhood] waits and watches ever, and ever, ever works — think you not we have patience? — and those who serve us must do the same. You are right, no detail is overlooked. Life is made up of details, each a step in the ladder, therefore who shall dare say they are "small!" * * *

We are closer than you know, and love and thought bring us still nearer.

Kill out doubt which rises within; that is not yourself, *you know!* The doubt is a *maya*, cast it aside, listen not to its voice which whispers low, working on your lack of self-confidence. Therefore I say have neither vanity nor self-depreciation. If you are the Higher Self, you are all that is great, but since your daily consciousness is far, far below, look at the matter frankly and impartially. * * * Vex yourself not with contradictions. You know that you must stand alone: *stand* therefore! * * *

Keep yourself *high*, and strengthen your faith. * * *

By your own supreme act of faith, you must claim and hold these things.

III. Let not Humility, that tender presence, become a stumbling block. In so doing you sin against the Higher Self.

IV. Closer insight gives heavier responsibility — do not forget that, — and a responsibility which affects others more than it does yourself. See to it then that the outer does not obscure the inner, for your lamp must be carried aloft for others to see, or not seeing it, to continually feel. * * *

Do not confuse the outer with the inner therefore. Though the outer be full and rich remember it is so because of the inner *shining through*, and look ever back to that which shines. No sorrow, no disappointment lie there, but a fullness of realization of which you have no conception and a power and strength which shall lift you above these confusions to a sure place of your own. You have been too harsh with your lower nature, that leads to dangerous reactions. Quiet, steady effort is far better, casting aside all thought of results. Treat your mind as a child, lead it firmly but gently and in all ways and at all times strengthen your faith.

V. Your instrument must not be like another's instrument — no need to duplicate these. It is your special kind which is needed and wherein you differ from others is not where you fail but where, if perfected, you may do your own special work which they cannot do.

VI. Through these tears of blood you will learn; through this suffering you will gain the power to aid your fellows. What to you is the approbation or disapprobation of any one? Work and wait on and all will be well.

VII. Sink into the very depths of your being, you will find all there. Be a follower of no man, follow the inner voice.

FRAGMENTS: II

Cavé [Genevieve Ludlow Griscom]
Theosophy, January 1897

I. The truest happiness is to be found in the deep *interior* study of the great mysteries of nature and life, seeking thus to find the best manner in which the soul may express itself, and in a constant fulfilment of this manner of expression when found. If they can be taught to see and feel this, and the true meaning of it, the work is done. Labor therefore faithfully to accomplish this in yourself, for we can teach others only what we ourselves know, and this knowledge is one with experience. The divine light burns for all; take your part of it, and illuminating first your own heart the power will then be yours to illumine others. Remember, words are not needed. In the silence these things are done. Those in whose midst you may live, quiet and unknown, will have the radiance cast upon them merely by your presence. It is not what you say and do, but what you *are* that tells, and that will leave its ineffaceable mark upon each character you meet as upon all time. The Soul desires to express itself in its reflection, your life. So live that it may do so. So think and act that you may become a channel for higher things to descend to the lower planes. * * *

II. Meditate on things you want to know. * * * Seek all knowledge within yourself, do not go without. You understand what is meant by this; not that books should be neglected, but that information obtained from them should be *drawn within*, sifted, tested there. Study all things, in this light and the most physical will at the same time lead to the most spiritual knowledge.

III. Duty is not an ogre but an angel. How few understand this. Most confuse it as they do conscience.

IV. Sorrows, crosses, these are our opportunities could we but see it so. But he is far along who does so see it. He has attained who fully realizes it.

V. The [Brotherhood] force working in a pure devoted heart sets free the soul and lets it speak. The eternal verities resound for ever upon the spiritual planes and when the mind is pure and will hearken, the soul echoes them.

VI. What of the darkness! What of the light! They are one to those who *see*. How plain these matters are in higher moments, how drearily obscure at other times. This will show you the value of higher moments perhaps, and what those always living in them enjoy.

Be what you love. Strive after what you find beautiful and high and let the rest go. Harmony, sacrifice, devotion, take these for key-notes, express them everywhere and in the highest possible way. The beauty of a life like that, the power of it, who can measure or set bounds to.

VII. Can you not live so as to feel the great throbbing heart around you, so as to express that feeling in even the smallest detail? Let there be nothing cold or cynical in your view of life. Sense the pathos and the pity of it, trusting that some day to your now darkened eyes the mystery and the pain will be untangled. Feel, feel, with everything that cries, with everything that suffers, and in even the most broken fragment of a life, find some beauty. Let your own quivering heartstrings teach you the anguish in other hearts and live to ease it. Pain is our best teacher. Do not dread nor flee her therefore, she comes in mercy. Go forth to meet her, trembling perhaps, but reverently, patiently, unflinching; only so can the lesson be learned, and from the dark hours spent with her a light shall arise, showing the way to stumbling feet, giving the power to comfort and console. And in the peace of that your heart shall understand and be satisfied.

VIII. How much mis-interpretation and mis-understanding there is regarding these things, and by the most enthusiastic, the most devoted souls, whose emotional intensity driving them along, blinds them utterly, and in the *full chase* of new experiences they see not that they are following only their own desires, and again losing the substance for the shadow. It is discouraging, and yet the forces thus generated

can be used for higher ends, and the good intention of the deluded one counts for him. But remember, O disciple, that in the silence these things are performed and recognized and in the silence alone. Few indeed understand how complete that silence must be, few save those who have at some time known the peace of it. All *excitement is psychic*, and though these whirlwinds of force descend, you must learn to hold yourself still in their midst, feeling neither attraction nor repulsion, else chains are forged to draw you to them. There are some who need this lesson badly, all more or less. * * * The great force acts dually and you must stand *still*, not passive or inactive but unswayed. You must learn to take psychic emotions in hand as well as physical. * * *

Hold your purpose and your ideals clearly and steadily before you. Desiring truth you shall surely have it, intending righteousness you shall surely so perform though all things seem to conspire against you. In times of confusion and difficulty rest upon that and you may then unshaken see no agreement, no light ahead. * * *

XI. I measure the height not merely the depth of a soul by its stillness.

From the Editor

Our lives are constantly in flux, as everything ultimately is. There is no absolute constant, no stationary thing in the universe that we can perceive. Why does this matter? It matters because no state of a person, no emotion, no condition in our lives remains forever. Ever-changing — perhaps at times imperceptibly — our conditions and person move forward. Through poverty, depression, political unrest — whatever the situation or circumstances, we move forward. One day, the realization of this will hit us, and we will understand the temporary nature of everything around us — *including us*.

There is balance in the universe, based in duality. Outwardly, one's gain is really another's loss. Inwardly, the richness of one's heart is the ultimate gain which everyone can claim as theirs. Our heart-life, our lifting of veil after veil on the path eventually reveals the beauty of compassion and cooperation, and when we express these concepts, we help the whole of humanity rise ever so much toward the goal. Change happens. Let us make it a change toward the bright inner light we each possess.

Fraternally,
Scott J. Osterhage

THE CREATIVE POWER OF THOUGHT

A. Trevor Barker
The Theosophical Forum, February 1937

The subject of the Creative Power of Thought is intimately related with the first principle in which our Theosophical Movement is rooted. You cannot consider the dynamic and creative effects of the thinking power of the human mind without immediately being struck by the fact that all nations and all men are in reality interconnected to such an extent that they are affected morally and physically by the thoughts and actions of each other. In other words, if there is a nation which is bent upon a vicious, destructive, downward and degenerate course, that nation will inevitably poison the very thought atmosphere of this Globe, and then by means of the inner constitution of the planet upon which we live, there is conveyed to all other nations of the earth that main current of thought and destructive energy that such a nation — or if we choose to make the application, such an individual, chooses to degenerate.

Now if that is true, there is fortunately a more cheerful side to the picture, and that is, that just as we are affected morally and physically to our detriment if we are negative and weak enough to be so affected,

so also, even unconsciously and against our will, we benefit by those nations and men of goodwill — those individuals of high spiritual nature, who are pouring forth their beneficent thought upon the world; and because of the inescapable unity in which we are all rooted, it benefits with its creative power in the same way that the other destructive kind of energy pulls the whole fabric of universal life downward — or shall I say retards it somewhat in its upward progress.

This is a very fundamental thought, as I see it, from which to commence our whole study of the subject. In that rather famous book called *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, there are stated three great Truths, and one of them is to the effect that man has it in his own hands to create his own weal or woe; his own future life and future destiny, and it is done without any doubt at all by means of the dynamic, creative force of his own desire, his aspirations, his thought, and his will. These are the tools which the Theosophist, the occultist, the disciple, the Mahatma, and the man of the world, have at their disposal.

The Theosophical philosophy, therefore, at the very outset of our study ennobles man, and shows him that he has within a godlike and creative power to make for himself the very conditions for which his heart most yearns; most secretly aspires towards. We have all, I have no doubt, tried to experiment with these laws in greater or less degree, in an endeavor to apply them to ourselves. But as a practical example: what should we do if we find ourselves surrounded by conditions we do not want? First of all it is necessary to create the clear mental picture of that which you individually want to achieve; the particular objective that you have set yourself, and immediately very powerful forces are set in motion, for which you individually have a great responsibility. Everything that we desire, especially when the desire is very strong, immediately sets up a current along magnetic lines of force to those layers of space which contain that which we seek; thus creating lines of magnetic attraction with other human beings or spiritual entities who have the capacity to bring to it that which we have set our minds upon. Directly you begin to desire a thing, immediately you are beginning to create for yourself opportunity, and the opportunity will come inevitably to work out that which you yourself, for good or ill, have set your creative forces in motion to bring about. Therefore, is it necessary to emphasize the tremendous importance of submitting every such determination, aspiration, desire, to the dictates of the Higher Self in each one of us; to the Silent Witness of all our endeavors: for otherwise, if we are not willing to take the position that was taken two thousand years ago by those who created for us the New Testament; if we have not the point of view "Not my will but Thine," then we may risk to create something of a personal effect or result which will hang around our necks like mill-stones: for the forces that we set in motion are real — they will bring to us that which we want them to bring. Fix your mind, and your will, and your desire to bring evil to another, and you will be destroyed yourself by the reaction that such kind of work brings about.

These forces — we are talking about occultism — are creative and destructive: hence the very thorough drilling that those who study the genuine teachings of Theosophy receive in the moral and ethical basis of the Theosophical philosophy. For if that is not rooted in the student's and aspirant's mind, it is more than likely he will make an application of these laws, when he begins to understand them, that will not only wreck or bring evil (and untold evil) to others with whom he is associated, but still more will he wreck himself.

Now a word as to the means by which the thoughts of other individuals and other nations affect us. It is by means of that which Eliphaz Levi called the Astral Light; that part of the Cosmic Ether which is actually the lowest part of that universal Cosmic principle which in the East they call *Akasa*. That astral light interpenetrates our whole Globe just as it does every other planet in the Solar system. It is imponderable, tenuous, and contains the picture, the impress, the record, and therefore the memory of every thought and every act that has ever been performed on this Globe. It is because thought travels, that when we emit or permit to pass through our minds a thought,

which is a living intelligence, a thing full of life, we are setting in motion a force which goes to the furthest confines of space. Think of all the creative ideas for good along constructive and healthy lines: great inventions, wonderful ideas dreamed by inventors, by poets, by Adepts, by Mahatmas, which are stored up as it were in the Akasa, in the Astral Light, waiting for that man or woman who is high-minded enough to give them expression in action. This is the explanation why, when an inventive mind is concentrated upon a particular problem, the complete solution will often come into his mind, although he has not worked out all the logical steps to the solution that is eventually arrived at. In other words it is possible, if we learn how to do it, to call to our aid the thoughts of the past, and those of the mighty spiritual thinkers of our own era, to help us, to encourage us, in any worthy purpose that we may have, or may be engaged upon. Conversely, to the extent that we are living under the control of the sense life, of the personality, of negative states of mind and thought — to that extent we are calling to — I won't say our aid, but we are attracting, setting in motion, a reinforcement of the very negative, sensual, destructive or evil states of mind in which we may be at any moment of time.

So what does it amount to? It amounts to this: since our mind and consciousness are always busy with something, even when we are almost in a state of inertia, there is some thought, some idea, some aspiration, and some desire, coloring the whole kama-manasic consciousness. Whatever it is that is in our mind is being reinforced, strengthened, by all past thinking along the same line that is stored in the astral light. See how important this is. Without any volition on our part, if we are living at a consistently low level we are inviting all the same forces of a low level to strengthen us in that negative and weak attitude that we are adopting. See, therefore, what tremendous powers and implication and hope the spreading of the Theosophical philosophy and teaching has for mankind. Why? Because you are giving them something in the way of food for their minds that lets the whole Inner Soul of the man rise and take in its comprehension the vast sweep of the Universal Mind; letting in the sunlight of the spiritual life; giving it food; attracting the human soul and the human mind upward.

Directly you link to these teachings on the Creative Power of Thought the doctrine of Karma, and the doctrine of Reincarnation, you begin to see where we are being led: what happens to a man before birth, and what happens to him after death. What he believes about those two stages — ante-natal and after death — will necessarily govern his thinking here and now. Therefore, these great subjects which have occupied the greatest minds and intellects that the world has ever known, and on which we have a very rich collection of teaching are necessarily of the greatest importance, just because they do influence our thought, and therefore our action.

There is a very telling page in William Q. Judge's *Epitome of Theosophy*, which deals with the mechanism by which thought really works, and it shows how, if we fix our mind in disapproval or judgment upon another human being, we attract to ourselves elemental entities of the very nature of the fault that we are condemning, and then we proceed to build into ourselves the very condition that we wish to eradicate in somebody else, and so the fault goes backwards and forwards, intensifying the characteristics in both. The obligation and the remedy are obvious in this case. Exactly the reverse is true if we dwell upon thoughts of beautiful qualities that we would like to see, and do see around us in many cases, for then we are strengthening by our approval, and our goodwill, these characteristics in ourselves and others.

I would like, in connection with this subject of thought just to touch very briefly upon the relation of the Theosophical classification of man's constitution, with that of modern psychology. What is the connection between the conscious mind of the modern psychologist and the Theosophical classification? What is the connection, if any, between the modern psychologist's subjective mind, and where does it fit into the scheme of occult science?

I venture to suggest that the objective, or conscious mind of the modern psychologist is the lower manas, which is responsible for our ordinary every-day objective thinking; but the unconscious or subjective mind is another matter. The psychologists mix up, from lack of knowledge, the two parts of the mind — the Spiritual, that which inheres in Buddhi: that power of direct cognition and discrimination: the higher part of man; and the force inherent in what we may term the instinctive mind, the mind that is connected with *kama-manas*. Now we share this instinctive mind with all kingdoms of nature below us, and in particular the animal kingdom. Here we have nascent thought in the higher exemplars of the animal kingdom, and in that instinctive mind are many of the characteristics that modern psychologists attribute to the subjective mind. But they leave out of account, or are unable to account for the source of all those higher, nobler ideas of the human mind, which really come from the Divine part of his nature, and which they just classify as the unconscious. These things are very important for us because the Theosophical classification gives a clue as to what we must do in order to use our mental and creative faculties to the highest end. There is one aspect of this problem that is particularly interesting and very helpful. I have no doubt that many of us have at times been — afflicted, shall I say, with a problem which seems at times beyond our individual capacity to solve: a problem of such difficulty that the advantages and disadvantages of each course are almost equally balanced, and the mind becomes weary; the capacity to think and to solve apparently so inefficient that the person is in a very difficult position. It happens every day for many people. If we apply the laws that are behind this practical application of occult and scientific principles, it is quite possible to relegate the solution of the problem to the right department of the mind, and cease to worry. What do you think is the origin of the useful old practice of not making a decision until you have slept on it; until you have given time for this higher part of what the psychologist calls the Unconscious, or subjective mind, to get to work? It is capable of providing the solution of any problem. Read what H.P.B. has to say in *Isis Unveiled* about the power of the Adept to rise into the higher consciousness, and know all that ever was, is, or can be known about any subject in the Universe. Why? Simply because the higher part of us, the Divine part of us, is actually omniscient, therefore all we have to do is to find the means of opening ourselves to the inflow of this knowledge — and it can be done by asking for it, by aspiring towards it, by opening our minds to it, by presenting the problem in a good and orderly fashion, and leaving it to that higher part of the mind to find the solution, and if you have a sufficiently strong desire, and a sufficiently developed will, and enough confident expectation (which you may, if you wish, call faith), the result is quite certain, and you find within the requisite time the solution of the problem. This, of course, is a law which is constantly used by all of us all the time — generally perhaps more or less unconsciously, but nevertheless it is a law which works, and it is an extremely creative law. There are many illustrations of the working of it which you have probably read about and know very well.

One knows from daily life that one exists for other people — first of all those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness is wholly dependent, and then for the many, unknown to us, to whose destinies we are bound by the ties of sympathy.

Albert Einstein, *Ideas and Opinions*

Let the Silence within Speak...

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