



The Spiral Path...

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Our Path

Tao is infinite.
If we use it, we find it inexhaustible.
Deep and unfathomable,
It seems to be Ancestor of all things.
It rounds off our angles,
It unravels our difficulties,
It tempers our light,
It is lowly as the dust,
It is pure,
It remains everlasting.

Tao Teh King, IV – Dr. Isabella Mears, translator

The Spiral and the Path

Allow me to describe the fitness of “The Spiral Path” for the title of this quarterly circular. We are all following a path. Or, more accurately, we are all making our path. Or, perhaps more explicitly, we are the Path. We could say that the path each of us is on, is a spiral path, one on which we grow with each step, each moment, each choice. One story has it that we are all on our own path, circling the mountain trying to get to the summit. If we look from above the mountain, that way looks like a spiral.

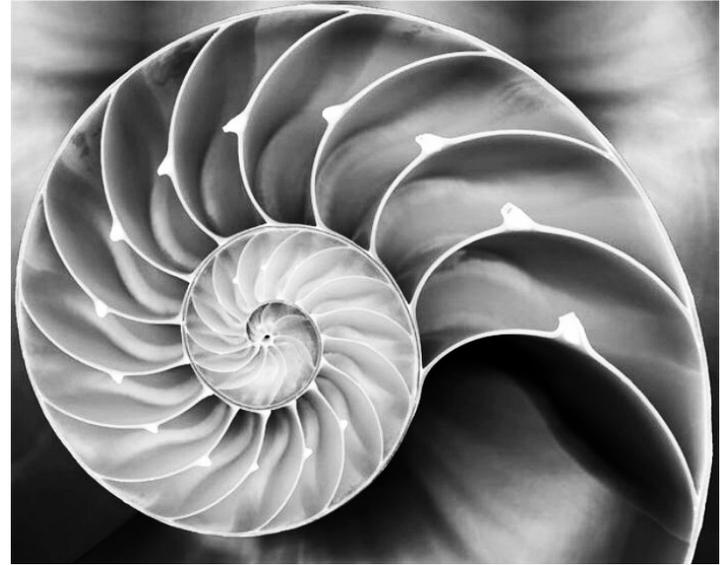
The spiral is not a circle. A circle is a closed ring which repeats itself in the same location. A spiral is a progressive, continuous curve which grows, expands, evolves, over time. With an outer expansion, from the center out, the spiral path leads us from to lower to the higher, growing as we evolve a greater understanding of the universe and our place in it. If we reverse that course, and transit a course from the wider outer to the solitary starting point, we follow the labyrinth-like figure back to the Source.

Are we moving inward? Are we moving outward? Perhaps we are going in both directions at once, as in and out are but relative terms, and we love a good paradox. Symbols are tricky, and are never meant to be a direct interpretation or picture of an idea. We use them to visually recall or depict distinct parts of ideas. One symbol can have many interpretations attached. From whichever perspective, we are expanding. Growing our faculties and training our mind to be open to the mysteries that await us on our path. Those which are in us waiting to come out, and be realized.

By reaching for the source we expand our Selves. Our Personality is over-shadowed by our Individuality, and we become a more encompassing Being. The mountain is there, and we are in or on our Path, or our Path is in us, as we do the work required to make our life spiritually meaningful.

‘Theosophy is the art of living, and the science of life.’

Attributed to H.P.B.



Living in the Now By William Q. Judge

There is never any need to worry. The good law looks out for all things, and all we have to do is our duty as it comes along from day to day. Nothing is gained by worrying about matters and about the way people do not respond. In the first place you do not alter people, and in the second, by being anxious as to things, you put an occult obstacle in the way of what you want done. It is better to acquire a lot of what is called carelessness by the world, but is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of one's own duty, satisfied that the results must be right, no matter what they may be.

The Past! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as now you exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: “Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge.” Regret is productive only of error. I care not what I *was*, or what any one *was*. I only look for what I am each moment. For as each moment is and at once is not, it must follow that if we think of the past we forget the present, and while we forget, the moments fly by us, making more past. Then regret nothing, not even the greatest follies of your life, for they are gone, and you are to work in the present which is both past and future at once.

“In him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind with the Supreme Being, what room can there be for delusion and what room for sorrow when he reflects upon the unity of spirit?” In all these inner experiences there are tides as well as in the ocean. We rise and fall. Anon the gods descend, and then they return to heaven. Do not *think* of getting them to descend, but strive to raise *yourself* higher on the road down which they periodically return, and thus get nearer to them, so that you shall in fact receive their influences sooner than before.

Rely within yourself on your Higher Self always, and that gives strength, as the Self uses whom it will. The way gets clearer as we go on, but as *we* get clearer we get less anxious as to the way ahead. If people will only let each other alone and go about their own business quietly all will be well. It is one's duty not to get into the duty of another. And in this it is of the highest importance that we should detach our *minds* (as well as our tongues) from the duties and acts of others whenever those are outside of our own.

The future then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment so we shift the future up or down for good or ill; for the future being only a word for the present – not yet come – we have to see to the present more than all. If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future.

Is not the Self pure, bright, bodiless, and free – and art thou not that? If you are at all cast down, or if any of us is, then by just that much are our thoughts lessened in power. So I pray you to remove from your mind any distaste for present circumstances. If you can succeed in looking at it all as *just what you in fact desired*, then it will act not only as a strengthener of your good thoughts, but will reflexly act on your body and make it stronger.

The great struggle must be to open up my outer self, that my higher being may shine through, for I know that in my heart the God sits patient, and that his pure rays are merely veiled from me by the many strivings and illusions that I bring on outwardly.

Selected from *Letters That Have Helped Me*

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All our troubles, and sorrows and pains – psychical, mental, astral, and physical – originate in the fierce selfishness of the lower part of us, the grasping, acquisitive nature of us, the hunger for sensations of various kinds, which in order to gratify we do things and think thoughts which in their essence are selfishness imbodied.

The Dialogues of G. de Purucker, II, 149

“Even sages have been deluded as to what is action and what inaction; therefore I shall explain to thee what is action, by a knowledge of which thou shalt be liberated from evil. One must learn well what is action to be performed, what is not to be, and what is inaction. The path of action is obscure. That man who sees inaction in action and action in inaction is wise among men; he is a true devotee and a perfect performer of all action.”

The Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 4 – W. Q. Judge Recension



Notice to American Section FTS

John and Alex Rau are retiring from their post as National Secretaries. For fourteen years, on top of their administrative duties, they published the section's quarterly newsletter, *The 21st Century Path*, as well as a magazine for inmates, *The Kali Yuga Rag*. It is with deep respect and appreciation I wish them all the very best.

Scott Osterhage has accepted the reins of the post of National Secretary as of April 11. I have every confidence that the American Section is in good hands.

Faithfully and fraternally,

Randell C. Grubb

From the Editor

I would like to personally thank John & Alex Rau for their 14 strong years of service as American Section National Secretaries, and for making this transition impeccably smooth. I know their undying commitment to theosophy, the Society, and the greater Movement was, and will always be present in everything they do.

I would also like to thank the membership in advance for their patience as we embark on this new path. Together we can raise the tide of the thought-life of humanity to a higher level, supporting our innate divine purpose.

Best Regards,

Scott Osterhage

And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

By Kitty O'Meara 2020

This is all the secret. Half, if not two-thirds of our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. Destroy the latter and give another bent to the former, and nature will do the rest.

H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings, XII, 403

The Still, Small Path

Excerpt from *The Path of Compassion* by G. de Purucker

All esoteric schools have taught as the very foundation of their being: “Man, know thyself!” It has ever been thus, and the key to this lies in many things. It lies in the study of the suffering that the knot of personality experiences before its intricate labyrinth of selfishness is overpassed; it lies also, on a more exoteric plane, in the perusal of the majestic literatures of past ages: the brain work, the heart work, the work of the soul, of the seers and sages of every era. Greatest of all, it lies in the study of love for others and utter forgetfulness of self. Therein rests the mystery of Buddhahood, of Christhood: forgetfulness of self, absorption in love all-encompassing, unbounded, frontierless, of all that is.

Some people imagine that the path of spiritual attainment is far away over the mountains of the future, almost unreachable, when in reality there is a relatively narrow frontier between ordinary life and that followed by the neophyte or chela. Essentially the difference is one of outlook, and not of metaphysical distance. It is the same difference that exists between the one who falls under the sway of temptation and thereafter becomes its bondsman, and the other who successfully resists the temptation and thereafter becomes its master.

Anyone can enter upon the path, if his will, his devotion and yearnings are directed toward being of greater service to others. The only thing that prevents him from taking that most beautiful step is his convictions, his psychological and mental prejudices which distort his perspective. We are all learners, all of us have illusions. Even the mahatmas and adepts have illusions, albeit of an extremely subtle and lofty character, which prevent them from going still higher – and this is one of the reasons they are so compassionate towards those who are seeking to tread the very path along which they have successfully advanced in former days.

The quickest way to overcome these illusions is to cut the root of them, and that root is selfishness in its multimyriad forms. Even the yearning for advancement when it is for self alone is based on selfishness which in turn produces its own subtle and powerful mayas. Therefore every ambition to succeed, unless it be washed clean of all personality, will inevitably defeat itself, for the way of inner growth is self-forgetfulness, a giving up of personal ambitions and longings of any and every kind, and a becoming an impersonal servitor of all that lives.

It should be stated, however, that the purpose of genuine occultism is not to ‘produce disciples’ or to turn refractory human material into individuals striving for mere self-advancement. Rather is it to regenerate our imperfect human nature into becoming at first nobly human, and finally godlike – and this along the archaic and traditional lines of teaching and discipline which have been recognized and followed for ages past.

Chelaship is a vision, out of which arise conviction and definite action. All the rules of moral conduct that one may read about in the great literatures of the ancient philosophies as well as in theosophical writings, are simply powerful aids to help the aspirant cleanse himself of selfishness. The real code of ethics is an unwritten one, and therefore not subject to dogmatism, not easily enslaved to conventional notions or misconstruction by minds debating and quarreling about mere words. In essence it is of the extreme simplicity, for the most beautiful and the most

comprehensive truths are always the simplest. There are times when I throw my pen aside and say to myself: let us have just the simple truths that the little ones with their unspoiled natures and their direct and quick perception can grasp. It is difficult permanently to deceive a child. But when it is said that the neophyte must regain the child state, this does not mean childishness or stupidity! It is the child's heart that we need – trusting, intuitive, and alert.

Intellectual training is very valuable and a great help, but to become as a 'little one' is the most difficult lesson for human beings to learn. The brain-mind is a good instrument when guided and trained, but is a tyrant when left to its own devices and impulses, for it is always selfish; its vision is necessarily limited to the swirl of the lower and restricted field of consciousness of the maniac knot of personality. In the higher nature lies the higher understanding, and it alone can arrive at the inner meaning of the teachings. The lower mind can achieve some success in the brain-mind comprehension of them, but only when helped from the inner understanding. An individual may be quite sincere, quite willing to know, quite ready to experiment and to investigate, but the buddhic splendor may be completely absent. The only test of fitness is that which is given by the individual himself. If the light of buddhi be shining even by so much as a fugitive glimmer, that is enough. There is then in that individual the esoteric right to know.

Self-conquest is the path of growth. The whole truth is contained in these few simple words. It is a slow growth as with all great things; and if it is to be attained, it must be an unfolding of the man himself. There is no other path than that of inner development, no easy way: the one who cannot control himself in the affairs of daily life and does not know who or what he is, cannot control the events and experiences that inevitably arise around anyone who succeeds, even in small degree, in approaching that “straitest of all gates.”

Here is a strange paradox: if one would be master of himself he must be utterly *selfless*, and yet he must be *himself* utterly. The lower self must be wiped out – not killed, but wiped out, which means withdrawn inwards and absorbed by the higher self. For the higher self is our essential or real being, and the lower is but a ray therefrom – soiled, rendered unclean, so to say, because it becomes attached to this world of multimyriad illusions.

The man most easily deceived is the man most infolded in maya; and such are often the so-called worldly-wise. You cannot deceive an adept, as he would instantly see the attempt at deception; and the reason is that you cannot, as it were, throw hooks of personal attachment into his being. Nothing one can do or say will affect him or attract him to your thought if it is in the slightest degree selfish, nonuniversal. He is above those illusions, has fought through them, found them out and rejected them. Yet the masters feel, even before we ourselves would realize it, the slightest moving of the true chela spirit. The call upon them is tremendous, and a quick magnetic sympathy is thereupon established.

Taking the thought a step further: when a neophyte makes a deliberate and actual choice with all the strength of his being, he kindles a light within, and this is the buddhic splendor; and, as said, it is sensed understandingly and watched and cared for by the teachers, and thus he is an 'accepted chela.' How long will he remain such? None is picked out by perambulating magicians wandering the world, selecting whom they may think to be proper material – not at all. The choice is in the individual: he chooses his

path; he makes his resolve; and if the buddhic light is seen, be it only a spark, he is accepted, although that fact may be unknown to himself for the time being. Thereafter all depends upon him, whether he succeed or fall by the wayside.

It is a matter of the rarest occurrence for one immediately to know that he has been accepted, for the usual rule is that he is tested in a hundred thousand different ways, these tests arising out of the ordinary events of life and the aspirant's reactions to them. Once, however, that he becomes cognizant of his teacher, the path becomes both easier and more difficult – easier because there is the new conviction that at least a certain success has been attained, and also because of the courage and self-confidence that arise out of this fact; vastly more difficult because from now on he is under more direct training and guidance, and small lapses and little backslidings, for which large indulgence is allowed in the beginning, have henceforth very serious consequences.

Moreover, no teacher makes himself known to his disciple without the latter's having previously received many instructive premonitions from his own inner being. The reason is clear: no one ever becomes accepted, until he has actually been accepted by his own inner divinity, i.e. until he has become more or less aware of the stirring within him of a wondrous mystery.

A certain stage of progress is of course necessary before such a choice can be made; but every normal being can make such a choice, because in him spirit and matter have attained a more or less stable equilibrium. In other words, chelaship may be undertaken at any stage by anyone who can arouse the Christ-light in his mind and heart. His resignation of the lower selfhood on the altar is what counts; and no human cry for help ever passes unheard, if that cry for more light be impersonal. *The test is impersonality.*

Let us not imagine, however, that, because the words renunciation and sacrifice are often used, these imply the loss of anything of value. On the contrary, instead of a loss, it is an indescribable gain. To give up the things that belittle, that make one small, petty, and mean, is to cast away our fetters and take on freedom, the richness of the inner life and, above everything else, self-conscious recognition of one's essential unity with the All.

It should be clearly understood that this training, which is one of study and of discipline arising in the spiritual and intellectual movements of the student's own soul, has never included and never will include any interference with or encroachments upon his family rights or duties. Chelaship is nothing weird, nothing queer or erratic. If it were, it would not be chelaship. It is the most natural path for us to strive to follow, for by allying ourselves with the noblest within we are allying ourselves with the spiritual forces which control and govern the universe. There is inspiration in the thought.

The neophyte's life is a very beautiful one, and grows steadily more and more so as self-forgetfulness comes into the life in ever-larger degree. It is also a very sad one at times, and the sadness arises out of his inability to forget himself. He realizes that he is very, very lonely; that his heart is yearning for companionship. In other words, the human part of him longs to lean. But it is just the absence of these weaknesses that makes the master of life: the ability to stand alone, erect and strong in all circumstances. But never think that the mahatmas are dried-up specimens of humanity, without human feelings or human sympathy. The contrary is the case. There is a

far quicker life in them than in us, a far stronger and more pulsing vital flow; their sympathies are enlarged so greatly that we could not even understand them, although some day we shall. Their love encompasses all; they are impersonal and therefore are they becoming universal.

Chelaship means trying to bring out the master living in our own being, for he is there now.

There will come a time, however, if one progress far enough, when even the family duty will have to be dropped, but the circumstances then will be such that the dropping will actually be a benediction to the individual as well as to the one towards whom the duty formerly lay. Yet let no one be deceived by the dangerous doctrine that the higher a man goes, the less is he bound by the moral law. The direct converse of this is the truth; the doing of wrong to another is never right.

At no step along this sublime path is there ever exterior compulsion of any kind; only such lofty compulsion as springs forth from the aspirant's own yearning soul to advance ever farther and farther inwards and upwards forever. Each step is marked, during its earlier course, by dropping something of the personal shackles and imperfections which keep us enchained in these realms of matter. We are told with reiterated insistence that the grandest rule of life is to foster within one's own being undying compassion for all that is, thus bringing about the winning of selflessness, which in its turn enables the peregrinating monad ultimately to become the Self of the cosmic spirit without loss to the monad of its individuality.

In the above lies the secret of progress: to *be* greater one must *become* greater, to become greater one must abandon the less; to encompass a solar system in one's understanding and life one must give up, which means outgrow and surpass, the limits of the personality, of the mere human. By abandoning the lower selfhoods we pass into the larger selfhoods of selflessness. No one will progress a single step to the more expanded selfhood which already is his own higher nature, until he learns that 'living for self' means descending into still more compacted and restricted spheres, and that 'living for all that is' means an expansion of his own soul into becoming the larger life. All the mysteries of the universe lie latent within us, all its secrets are there, and all progress in esoteric knowledge and wisdom is but an unfolding of what is already within.

How little our human troubles which plague us so greatly – such a burden of sorrow – seem when we allow our minds to dwell upon these infinitely comforting realities. No wonder the Christian writer declared that not even a sparrow falleth from heaven without its being known to the divine; not even a hair of our heads but is counted and cared for. How much more so then we ourselves. Even this world of phantasmagoria and shadows is an intrinsic and inseparable part of the Boundless from which we sprang, and towards the divine heart of which we shall one day return on the wings of the experiences that we have been through, wings that will carry us over the valleys to the distant mountain peaks of the spirit.

Let the Silence within Speak...

This quarterly circular is issued by the American Section National Secretary. Material, subjects, or ideas for potential publication in this circular are welcome from the membership. Should you wish to not receive this circular, or name or address information needs to change, contact me below.