

## Freedom of Thought

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasize the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H. P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties. The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

## Freedom of the Society

The Theosophical Society, while cooperating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such cooperation possible, is and must remain an organization entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title 'The Theosophical Society'.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organization.



# THE THEOSOPHIST

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**Cover:** J. Krishnamurti (11.5.1895–17.2.1986) was a philosopher, speaker, and writer who had a major impact on twentieth century thought. This month commemorates his 125th birth anniversary—  
Photo courtesy of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America Archives, Ojai, California, USA

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# THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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**The Theosophical Society** is composed of students, belonging to any religion in the world or to none, who are united by their approval of the Society's Objects, by their wish to remove religious antagonisms and to draw together men of goodwill, whatsoever their religious opinions, and by their desire to study religious truths and to share the results of their studies with others. Their bond of union is not the profession of a common belief, but a common search and aspiration for Truth. They hold that Truth should be sought by study, by reflection, by purity of life, by devotion to high ideals, and they regard Truth as a prize to be striven for, not as a dogma to be imposed by authority. They consider that belief should be the result of individual study or intuition, and not its antecedent, and should rest on knowledge, not on assertion. They extend tolerance to all, even to the intolerant, not as a privilege they bestow but as a duty they perform, and they seek to remove ignorance, not punish it. They see every religion as an expression of the Divine Wisdom and prefer its study to its condemnation, and its practice to proselytism. Peace is their watchword, as Truth is their aim.

**Theosophy** is the body of truths which forms the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guide its evolution. It puts death in its rightful place, as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the Science of the Spirit, teaching man to know the Spirit as himself and the mind and body as his servants. It illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths, and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high, and to work perseveringly, is welcomed as a member, and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

# You Are the World

(At a Krishnamurti Foundation Retreat, Rajghat Fort, Varanasi, India, 29.12.19)

TIM BOYD

**S**OCRATES made the statement that “the unexamined life is not worth living”. Today we will take some time together to examine the subject of this retreat: “You Are the World”. There are three things to consider: there is “you”, there is “the world”, and there is the relationship that links the two together.

When we think in terms of “Who I am”, “Who is this ‘I’”, there are many ways in which it is described. Our view depends largely on where we are born in the world, what family, what religion, what view of science, what culture we are born into. Beginning from that way of seeing the world we start and try to find our way toward something that is more true or accurate for ourselves.

Most of us have been exposed to some variation of the thought that we are a spark from a divine flame. In Western spirituality we might speak in terms of “You are a child of God”. Some traditions describe us in terms of the components that comprise the consciousness through which we function. So we hear people talk about the aggregates and the *gunas* (*rajas*, *tamas*, *sattva*). A good deal of “Who am I” is filtered through the very narrow points of view of culture, religion,

and so on. Those are the very agents that cause us to accept certain narrowly defined limits for our consciousness. We call these limits our identity.

For most of the people who are here, if someone were to ask you in normal conversation, “Who are you”, your response might begin with “I am an Indian”. Always we tend to point toward the body, so there is this bodily component that we identify with, that we spend so much of our energy and time feeding, promoting, grooming, all the things we do to the body to make it usable in the world. In addition to the body we find ourselves deeply committed to multiple identities that we have been assigned. The assignment process begins at birth.

At the moment of birth we are told that we are a boy or a girl. That is the first announcement that is made about our identity when we first appear in this world. Based on that, the clothing that we will wear, the habits that we will cultivate, the thoughts that will be permissible to us are strictly determined. In the United States to be born a boy means that you can be a great baseball player. If you are born a boy, the games that are typical for young men are those where you are

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shooting someone with a gun. If you are born a girl, then dolls and home-making toys are the ways in which you are cultivated to accept and express this cultural identity.

These are the initial steps that we are very familiar with, but perhaps we are not, because over time they become so deeply ingrained that this “I” becomes completely unaware of its totally conditioned nature. That is the initial aspect of becoming who is this “I” that is the world. However, there is a point at which this process becomes accelerated. This means that while we are initially told this is who we are, there comes a point that not only do we accept it, but we proclaim it, “I am \_\_\_\_\_”, and then we fill in our personal list of the attributes we will say compose our identity.

The great teachers who have been among us have made an effort to point our attention in the direction of this core limitation of consciousness. In a sense, there really is one truth. No matter what tradition, or who the great teacher was, there is one truth that they have all tried, in various ways, to communicate. This is the one truth that we have consistently resisted throughout history; it is not just typical to our time. The fundamental idea expressed in many ways is that there is one Life, one Consciousness, a Unity in which we participate.

The effort has been made to try and point our attention in the direction of this Unity, because it is what has been called the great alchemical agent. It is the agent that has the capacity to dissolve some of

these rigid boundaries we build in terms of this accepted identity process.

So, “Who am I?” At the deepest level I am an expression of a universal consciousness. The Great Ones speak from a level of having moved beyond those boundaries, or are able to traverse those boundaries as necessary. When they speak, it is from a level with which we have little familiarity. Obviously, one of these Great Ones in recent times has been J. Krishnamurti. He attempted for more than seventy years to communicate what is in essence a simple message.

Often we think that simplicity is something easy, but probably it is the opposite. The simplest things are perhaps the most difficult because we resist them. As much as we say otherwise, we desire complexity at every level. Krishnamurti spent a lifetime trying to get people to see something that is continually right in front of them. To find that at the end of a life, not even the people who are the closest to you could fully grasp what you spent a lifetime sharing, would be a cause of frustration — to an ordinary person.

In human history these Great Beings come again, and again, attempting to awaken us. And always they use terms that describe us as if we are asleep. The Buddha was “the awakened one”. He was awakened from the sleep in which we are deeply engaged at this moment. So He became something special. The great difficulty is that we put these Great Ones on a pedestal. We go to them, look to them for leadership, when the only message they have ever given has been

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“Don’t look to me!” The very process of “looking toward me” takes you away from what it is that you are looking for.

So “Who am I?” Who is this “I”, the thing that we have to discover. The “I” that is projected on to the world is the “I” that we have come to accept. Perhaps we find ourselves feeling that “this is the best I can do for right now”. In those places where there is the belief in multiple lives, “there’s always another life coming, so if I don’t get it now, I have future opportunities”.

One of Krishnamurti’s ways of describing reincarnation was that it is a fact, but it is an untrue fact [Laughter]. It is a very interesting statement, but try to figure that one out! There are many things that we accept as true that induce in us a sense of laziness, that there is no immediacy required with this process: “There is no need to wake up because if I don’t wake up now, I can be in rapid-eye movement sleep during this lifetime, not deep sleep, just rapid-eye movement. So I can have some nice little dreams.” But with the process of awakening, it is very understandable why that is something that we would *not* want to undertake.

Who is this “I” and what is “the world”? When we say “You are the world”, what does that even mean? In normal thinking the world is enormous. When we think about the world in which we live right now, it is governed by certain laws. Just like me, there are more than seven billion others thinking, moving, attempting to find a better way for themselves. When we say

“the world”, maybe a picture of the globe comes up in our mind. Or maybe a picture of an infinite number of people comes to mind. Is that the world?

In my background my first acquaintance to this sort of thinking came through the Theosophical Society (TS), which provides a very broad palette from which to work. There was an expression used by one of its founders, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB). Apparently somebody asked her about this topic of “the world”. She made this statement: “The world means Man [humanity] living in the personal nature” — that is, the compound of all our desires, all of our wishes for ourselves and others, of all our antagonisms toward those we do not care for, all of the things that are attractions, repulsions, desires, *is* the world.

As a collective, humanity’s living from its personal nature results in the expression of this thing that we call “the world”. So, what do we see when we look at that world? I just arrived from the United States. Coming here to India, I picked up a newspaper and there are things going on in Hong Kong, there are environmental issues in other places, economic issues in another place, turmoil in India itself — the world. Humanity living from its personal nature is the world which we inherit, become conditioned to, and then magnify.

What is an ocean? The coming together of an infinite number of drops of water could be said to constitute this infinite body that we call “the ocean”. The world as we experience it and the

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world as we create it has been described in a number of ways. A gentleman by the name of Charles Tart speaks of something called a “consensus trance”. From this trance state there is a mirage or a projection that is the product of a consensual mingling of all the minds that participate in the shared ocean of consciousness. In this sense this world is a collective creation. But each of us also has our own individual world, so there is one world, and also seven billion worlds.

Each one of us sitting here now has a whole range of sensations and experiences. As much as we may be trying to listen, the seat is uncomfortable, my fingertips are cold, in *my* world, there is the sensation of cold. The person next to me might be fanning themselves; their sensation is heat. In *my* world, when I see the person sitting across from me, there is a sense of attraction; the person next to me might be angry at the exact same person. All of these things coming together constitute “the world”.

The essential problem is that we have become completely convinced that all of us are separate from one another, separate from Nature, that there is a possibility of separation. We are completely convinced of it, and this is the one thing that is really a total impossibility. Separateness is only possible in our intent or motive — an aspect of the “consensus trance” we share.

“You are the world” is a statement of fact, and of our responsibility in creating the world. In the Theosophical Society

there is this idea of self-transformation, and the reason why we seek out people who have had an unfoldment of consciousness is so that we, too, might be able to transform.

One of the many difficulties with self-transformation is that it takes place in two different ways. The way we are most familiar with is a process that we engage in of purification of our thoughts. There are many people who practise meditation; many people take on a purer diet in order that they can become susceptible to transformation. These are the ways we know, these are the things that are taught in the spiritual traditions of the world. But the actual experience of transformation seems to be something that goes beyond the process, the methods, beyond the teachings; it cannot be taught.

Perhaps this is a good time to take questions.

**Q:** You spoke on one or two perspectives about “You are the world”. Since the basic traits of our nature are the same — greed, selfishness, and all that — can we say that we are human beings functioning from our personal identity?

**A:** That would be an exactly correct statement. The limitations that we described as identity are the limits of our capacity to function. Very often we find ourselves resisting certain sorts of behaviors because “that is not who ‘I’ am”, or “because that is not ‘me’”. So we have a definite sense of who we are, although the way we function indicates that we have a limited awareness of this “me”.

The awareness of it is what gives us

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the liberation. In a sense, once we can *see* these limitations, then there is really nothing we have to do. They are dissolved in the act of seeing. Others have tried to communicate this to us, and that is why we engage in the process of *trying* to see. Then, of course, the problem is always that in making an attempt we interfere with the actual seeing, because we have a goal, it is not about seeing what is, it is about accomplishing that goal of transformation.

**Q:** You said that the Great Ones always try to help us, that there is one Life, and one Consciousness. Also that the real separateness is the intent and motivation. So how do we understand that?

**A:** A statement has been made that while many things are important, our motive is *everything*. Everything that we do arises out of some motivation, even if it is just personal survival. There are certain intents that are very deep within us of which we are largely unaware. Every personal intent is just a further hardening of these limitations, the boundaries that I use to define myself. If we could ever really become aware of our motivations: Why did I eat that food, why did I enjoy the food that I ate? Why do I seek out that particular experience? There are certain conditionings behind all of that.

In this process of trying to unravel these boundaries we become progressively aware. The mind is everything. Spiritual traditions point us toward spirit, but spirit is largely unknown to us. We do not know what spirit is. We see its

effects, or what we say are its effects, but the only way those things are seen is through the stream of the mind. To the extent that we can become aware of the movements of that mind, to that extent we find some sort of freedom. This is the nature of intent, motivation, and its complete involvement in this process of separateness.

**Q:** The ego and the “I” are related. So how can we be free of this ego, “I”? Also, they say Krishnamurti is a person not of this world. Is he not of this world?

**A:** I know there is a great deal of discussion or analysis about Krishnamurti’s consciousness. I do not know that I would be qualified to comment on his consciousness or his nature. First, I never met him personally. My exposure to him has been what has been passed on via his writings, audios, videos, and through the people that I have met who knew him. What is of more value to me is what he gave that can assist in this process of liberation. Always it is a matter of the ego.

Everyone who feels oppressed and afflicted by this ego, desires some sort of freedom from it. Then the challenge is what to do? A lot of what passes for a spiritual practice is a variety of refinements to that same ego. I want happiness; everyone wants happiness, and yet I find unhappiness. So we try to adjust our behaviors, so that we will have a happy, comfortable ego. And then if the ego is comfortable enough, very often we can make ourselves feel as if to some degree we become free of it. It is still there, but it is just manipulating forms of comfort.



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So the only freedom that really comes is in *seeing* it. The attempt that was made by Krishnamurti was to help us to see. Somebody once asked him to give his entire life's teaching in one sentence. He said: "Attempt without effort." If you look in a dictionary, to attempt *is* literally to exert effort. So here is the mindbreaking advice that is given: "Attempt without effort (attempting), to live with death." I told this to a friend and my friend laughed because he thought I was telling him a joke: "Attempt without attempting, to live with the opposite of life, in futureless silence."

What Krishnamurti spent more than 70 years of his life teaching is found in this: we make an attempt, but any attempt involving personal effort defeats the purpose, so it must be effortless. To attempt without effort appears outwardly the same as the attempts of others who do not see. But for those who *do* see, it is an effortless process. In a sense, to fulfill this, we could say, requires a certain extension of our consciousness *before* we can do it. So the whole idea of process flies out the window. We are committed to process, which is part of the reason why we remain in bondage.

We are committed that if we do "A", it leads to "B", which leads to "C", which leads to liberation. But, of course, it does not work that way. "Futureless silence", what could that possibly mean in our normal language, in our normal thinking? We say "quiet", "stillness", "silence", as if they were the same thing, and they are not. They are qualitatively different states of being.

When we are quiet, we narrow the field of the many things pulling on our attention. When we are still, it becomes possible for only one thing, to be our total focus. When we are silent, self disappears; there is no past or future. Silence is necessarily futureless, but it is a strange and mind-boggling expression because we are never, ever, silent. The best most of us do is quiet or stillness, and that is all still part of the process.

Krishnamurti was not teaching us a process, he was not talking about the improvement of the ego. The freedom from the ego comes when we drop the process and somehow have the experience; and that is not describable. The best that one can do is to create an atmosphere, and the tools that we have at our disposal are things like words. We "create" an atmosphere through words that allow for a sense of openness. For a moment we can drop our defenses against the things that we disagree with or are unable to understand; and somehow in those moments is when we have our experience. That is where silence becomes a possibility, and we have micro-experiences of that.

Those micro-experiences make it possible when we encounter someone who lives fully in that realm, to become aware that, "Ah, there is something here." Why? because I may not be *fully* expanded in that way, but I have connected with this experience of silence, freedom, free from ego constraints, even if it was for just the blink of an eye.

**Q:** You say that we are in bondage

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because the turmoil is there in me. I want to be free of that, which cannot be effortless, because the craving is always there. Craving cannot be effortless. The tendency of craving is to survive. What is the root of that craving, and what is wrong with that craving?

**A:** There is a root to the sense of craving, of dissatisfaction, of the many things that pass through our normal experience. Perhaps there are a couple of ways that we can approach this. The first is becoming aware; many people are craving but they could not really say that they are. They have not given it any thought. They have not noticed that this tendency creates patterns in their lives. Once this awareness is there, that is when the real problem starts for us. Then what do I do? There is *some* value to effort, which is why it is said: To be effortless really does not make sense for us at certain stages of our unfoldment.

As much as the experience of silence, transformation, enlightenment, illumination is not something controllable by us, still it becomes rather clear that some process of refinement or awareness brings us a little bit closer to the potential for that experience. The two (refinement and awareness) are different. I know people who have spent years studying and meditating, yet they have very little experience of freedom. There is an expression that enlightenment is an accident, but practice makes you accident-prone. Process makes you prone to the experience of unfoldment, of silence. They are not necessarily linked, because the

two are very different things. That is one of the difficulties with someone like Krishnamurti.

He spoke from the level that was beyond the practice, and so that makes it difficult for those who are involved in a process. Within the life of every single person, *everyone* has had the experience of this unfoldment, this illumination, everyone. It is not the Buddha-type or Krishnamurti-type of unfoldment. But everyone has had moments when, for whatever reason, we have become free from our obsession with our self. Oftentimes it is in appreciation of Nature, or in play. There are those who say that we are most human when we are at play. Just look at children!

We have all had those moments when the self has dropped, when this covering of the self drops away; that is when we say there is the egolessness, the freedom, the illumination, but then it covers us back again. Just as soon as we start to notice that we feel free, in that moment, when the “I” is recognizing our freedom, the freedom has ceased. But then it creates yet another craving to reach that unselfed state again, so we are attempting *with* effort to be free. This is the kind of wheel that we are caught in.

**Q:** You said to create an atmosphere, and you also said just now that the process leads only to some potential. So I want to ask you, this awareness, is it a different space? And this thought process, is it a different stream? Are these two different, or are they interrelated?

**A:** If you think in terms of there being

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one Life, one Consciousness, it is impossible to separate them. If we are talking about an awareness, it functions at many levels, so that one which extends beyond the personal nature is the one we are talking about. For example, for anyone who has been near the seaside, as you walk along the beach you see little puddles of water that have formed — small puddles of water that just lie there. They have a certain shape, a certain depth, and appearance of constancy. But then a wave comes in, and that wave washes across the little seaside puddle, and for a moment that puddle is no more.

If we think in terms of consciousness, we are that little puddle of water, it is small, unchanging, it has very distinct boundaries, and that is the way it will live and die unless something washes across it. The puddle has absolutely no capacity to command the ocean to send a wave across it, but in that moment when that action has occurred is when that limited puddle takes on a consciousness that is the ocean itself. There is no distinction. It is a momentary experience. Then the wave withdraws.

Once the wave goes away the puddle is there, apparently just like it was before, except everything is now different. It is not the same water. It looks the same, but it is not the same, because now it has an awareness of what it is like to be the ocean, not merely of what the universal consciousness is like, but that there is this possibility where that which is universal,

and that which I have experienced as separate, are in fact one. The memory, or awareness of this experience does not go away, and that is the thing which I believe plagues many people into pursuing something they would call the spiritual path — the fact that there is nothing that can exceed the All, the One. Anyone who has had some taste of that pursues it. But, again, that is the phase of attempting *with* effort.

**Q:** We as individuals also have glimpses of that experience of self-realization, or enlightenment, so it is not as if we are totally unaware of what Mr Boyd has been talking about. Sometimes we have a feeling of what he has been saying. Krishnamurti often talked about “freedom from the known”. We are all conditioned by knowledge, by what we have known all these years. There is no possibility that we will end all this conditioning. So where do we meet?

**A:** What “freedom from the known” demands from each of us is to try to understand what it might mean to end our conditioning by knowledge. Our normal perspective is: “Okay, I might have to do some work, and I need to get myself together so that I can put an end to that.” We spend a great deal of time and effort in that process with no results. So perhaps we have to look at it another way, and I cannot tell you what that way is. Krishnamurti was unable to do it for us, and I am certain that my set of skills might be a little bit less than his. ✧

# Truth Must Come to You; You Cannot Seek It

J. KRISHNAMURTI

**Q:** WOULD you tell us what, according to you, is the Truth which will free us? What is meant by your statement, “Truth must come to you; you cannot seek it”?

**A:** Surely, by understanding what is false, what is illusion, what is ignorance, Truth comes into being does it not? You do not have to seek it because thought is the instrument with which you are seeking. If I am greedy, envious, prejudiced, and I try to seek Truth, obviously my truth will be the result of greed, envy, prejudice — therefore it is not Truth. All that I can do is to see what is false, to be aware that I am conditioned, that I am greedy, that I am envious. That is all I can do — to be aware of it choicelessly. Then, when I am so aware, and therefore free from greed, Truth comes into being. But if we seek Truth, the result obviously will be illusion. How can you seek Truth? Truth must be something unknown to a mind that is caught in the false — and we are, because we are conditioned psychologically as well as physiologically — and



a conditioned mind, do what it will, cannot possibly measure the immeasurable.

These are not just words. You can see the truth of it, if you are really willing to listen rightly. How can I, when I am conditioned by belief, by fear, by my nationalism, by my prejudices, and in innumerable ways by greed and envy —

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**J. Krishnamurti** (11.5.1895 – 17.2.1986). This month commemorates his 125th birth anniversary. Extract from *The Collected Works of J. Krishnamurti*, vol. V, London, 16 October 1949.

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how can I see the Truth? If I do, it will be a self-projection. What the self seeks is obviously its own creation, therefore untrue. And seeing the truth of this, the truth of what I have just now said, is already a liberating process — is it not — merely to see it, to be aware that greed cannot find, envy cannot find, that which is true. Merely to observe it, to see it, to silently be aware of it will bring about not only release from greed, but the realization of what is true.

So those who are trying to seek Truth will obviously be caught in illusion, and therefore Truth must come to you, you cannot go after it, you cannot chase it. Because, after all, what is it we all want? We want gratification, we want comfort, we want inward security, peace — and that is what we are seeking. We call it Truth, we give it a name. Therefore what we are seeking in different forms, at different levels, is gratification, not Truth. Truth can come into being only when the desire for gratification, for security has come to an end — which is extremely arduous, and as most of us are lazy, sluggish, we pretend to seek Truth and form societies and organizations around it.

So, all that we can do is to be aware of our own appetites, desires, and — it does not matter at what level you may place them — to be aware of all that and to be free of it, which means to be free of the self, the “me”. Then, you do not have to seek Truth; then Truth will come to you because the field is there — a mind that is quiet, undisturbed by its

own agitations. Such a mind is capable of receiving. It must be negatively aware, passively aware, which again is very arduous because the mind wants to be something; it wants a result, an achievement. And if it has failed in one direction, it will seek success in another. That success it calls the search for Truth. Whereas, Truth is the unknown; it must be discovered from moment to moment, not in some abstraction, not in some isolated action, but in every moment of our daily existence. To see the false as the false is the beginning of the Truth — the false in our speech, in our relationships, the little appetites, the little vanities, the barbarities which we indulge in. To see the truth of the falseness of all that is the beginning of the perception of what is true.

But you see, most of us do not want to be so aware. It is tiresome. We would rather escape into some illusion, into some belief, in which we can find isolation and consolation — it is so much easier, and in that isolation we say that we seek Truth. It is not possible to find Truth in isolation. It is not possible — if we are psychologically secure, certain — for the great uncertainty of Truth to come into being. So, all that we can do if we are really serious, earnestly interested, is to give Truth an opportunity to come into being by understanding our relationship with things, with people, with ideas. Then, understanding brings freedom, and in that freedom alone can there be the Real. ✧

# Keynote Address at J. Krishnamurti's Birth Centenary

HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH DALAI LAMA

FIRST of all, I would like to express my great happiness and thanks to be able to come here on this inaugural function of the birth centenary of Krishnaji. By attending this function and by hearing the talks delivered by the former speakers, it reminded me once again of my meeting with Krishnaji. The views, philosophies, and thinking that are left behind by great thinkers and philosophers like Krishnaji are immortal, irrespective of whether that great being is alive physically or not.

In the talk of Pupul Jayakarji she mentioned Krishnaji's thinking about the importance of *self-discovery and self-awareness* without effort. This is the exact tongue that we find in the Buddhist and Zen Buddhist scriptures.

Some kind of self-awareness without effort, without thinking or the thinking process, simply, with some kind of deeper awareness, some kind of spontaneous deeper experience. But such experience, I should say, does not occur easily. The special or exceptional cases of such deeper experience *can* develop. And then once



*Radha Burnier, former international president of the TS Adyar, greeting His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, July 1981. (See her article on p. 23)*

that kind of deeper experience develops, *all* the phenomena outside and within oneself appear as a little bit different than what they appear to ordinary people. I think the negative emotions become reduced, increasing the positive emotions, such as compassion. And also in Pupulji's speech she mentioned that Krishnaji had

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Delivered at Vasanta Vihar, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Chennai, on 21 January 1995, with His Excellency Mr R. Venkataraman, former President of India, and Mrs Pupul Jayakar, writer, on the dais.

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said that we should rely on the teachings rather than the teacher. This is a very important point.

When a great teacher, Dromtonpa, [11th century] was near to passing away, some of his disciples asked him: "Now while you are here, we can ask you and get your guidance; but when you are no more, what are we to do?" Then the great teacher replied: "Your teacher should be the book, not the person. Also you yourself be your teacher and do your own investigation or experiment."

When these things are mentioned it reminds me of my experience with Krishnamurti. At times when I communicated with him he was quite sharp, and at times quite blunt, but in any way, my memories are very positive, subtle, pleasant, and no doubt he was one of the greatest teachers, thinkers, and philosophers. Sometimes new ideas or concepts are developed, but they are not much relevant to daily practice; but this was not so in his case, his concepts were very accurate and important.

Now my talk is about *non-violence, compassion, and interdependence*. The latter is referred to as *pratityasamutpāda* in Sanskrit. I believe the very purpose of our life is happiness, satisfaction. It is quite simple, because our very existence, I think, is very much based on our hope. Once hope is lost, our existence is automatically shortened. Sometimes this happens in some societies. So hope means hope for something good. Therefore, it is quite clear, the very purpose of our survival, life, or existence, is for something better.

At the same time, a human being, firstly

because of the body, and secondly, particularly because of the intelligence or brain, is bound to face a lot of problems. Actually, many problems are of our own creation. Certain problems we cannot avoid, but certainly those which are of our own creation, if we develop a certain mental attitude, can be reduced, and in some cases it is possible to eliminate or drop them.

How to tackle this problem? I believe that the method is *non-violence*. It is the most effective and closest to basic human nature. There are a few reasons for this: Firstly, basically, I believe human nature is gentleness, and affection. Of course, hatred, jealousy, and fears are also part of our mind, but certainly these are not the dominant part of our mind. The *main* forces that dominate our mind are mostly compassionate.

Another reason: If we look at our health, according to medical science, even during the period that the child is in the mother's womb, the mother's calm mental attitude or peaceful mind is a very positive and important factor for the unborn child. If during pregnancy, the mother's mind has many disturbances, it is very harmful. Also, for a few weeks after birth, the physical touch of the mother is one of the crucial factors for proper development of the baby's brain. And then for their whole life, those children who are under compassionate care, with love and affection, will have much better physical as well as mental health.

In our daily life, when our mind is constantly disturbed by hatred, jealousy,

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and fear, eventually it will spoil our physical condition. Of course, disturbances due to sudden news or some event occasionally happen, but basically our mind should remain steady, without too many ups and downs. Too much happiness and too much unhappiness are not healthy. The very nature of the structure of our bodies is closer to a peaceful mind, not a disturbed or agitated mind. Therefore, basic human nature is mostly gentle.

Of course, if we look at human history, there have been lots of disturbances, a lot of wars and killings and bloodshed — even today. But if all the hatred and desire for killing were in the majority, then we would not need to worry about overpopulation. But since it is a fact that the world population keeps increasing, overall I think compassion, affection and gentleness, in other words non-violence, is much closer to the basic human nature.

Another way to look at non-violence is that violence very often creates more problems or harmful side effects, and no solutions. But through non-violence, in the spirit of reconciliation, we may not achieve 100% of what we want, but that achievement is a true one, without side effects. Thus the non-violent way to solve or tackle human problems is more effective in the long term. In our daily experience non-violence is *really* effective and very beneficial.

Let us take the example of the agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and also the developments in South Africa and other places. I believe that these are really positive signs. Now,

in the political field or in certain conflicts, people have begun to really believe that non-violence, in the spirit of reconciliation, is now not only appropriate, but effective. So I think these are healthy signs.

Sometimes I tell my Indian audience a half-joke: At the time when the outside world was not paying much attention to ahimsa (non-violence), it was very much alive in India. Now that more and more people from outside India begin to believe in the value of ahimsa, I find that it is a little bit reduced here in India. So you see, too much export, not much left! We have to think seriously about it.

I am glad to notice that Indian philosophy and other great thinkers' philosophies are getting revived, and I think this is very important. On one occasion in Delhi I expressed that there is a new huge statue of Gandhi in front of Parliament, so I hope that the Members of Parliament, when they pass in front of the statue, are reminded of his philosophy, because this is very important. In many places in India we can find big pictures of Gandhi, and his name is used in many statements, but I have my doubts whether they *really* seriously implement Gandhi's philosophy. I think this is a serious matter.

Non-violence is not only a noble idea, but practically it is very useful and effective, if properly implemented. Then the question is: What is non-violence? It is not just a mere absence of violence — then indifference also can be non-violence, but it is more than that — it is related to motivation. It is a question of compassion,



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love, and respect with a sense of concern for others, and restrain from harming others. In other words, I believe that non-violence is compassionate action, or the manifestation of compassion.

Since violence and non-violence are linked with a sense of motivation, now in some cases people may give a nice speech, use nice words and gestures or expressions, like a smile. If it is verbal and physical action motivated by a selfish desire, this could be essentially violence! On the other hand, with a sense of motivation, responsibility, and involvement, if we tell someone something bluntly, with harsh words, it may appear a little violent, but in reality it is non-violence. Therefore, in order to promote ahimsa, non-violence, first we have to make every effort to promote human compassion.

Sometimes people get the wrong impression or understanding that compassion is a feeling of pity without the feeling of concern, but this is not genuine compassion. Genuine compassion is not only a feeling of closeness, but also the sense of respect and concern for others. This genuine compassion has no boundaries, it includes not only friends but also enemies. When I say that the root of non-violence is compassion, we have to promote an *unbiased* feeling of closeness. Everybody, even animals, have a sense of closeness to their own close friends. But that is biased, that is actually attachment, not compassion.

Compassion is not based on friendship, because the other person has the *same* right to being a happy human being;

it is based on a sense of concern, of responsibility. So that kind of mental attitude can be developed even with our enemies, even if their intent is to harm us. As far as those persons are concerned, they also have every right to be happy and overcome their suffering. So there are bases for developing genuine concern for your enemy. That is why I say that genuine compassion is unbiased. As I mentioned before, since basic human nature is more compassionate than not, there is a possibility, a seed, or potential, to develop such kind of compassion.

Sometimes when we talk about compassion, love, and forgiveness, people usually consider that this has a religious aspect, but I think that is wrong. All major world religions carry the peace message and emphasize the importance of love, compassion, and forgiveness, but even without faith or religion we *can* develop these virtues. In fact, I believe that when we are born we are free from any religious faith, or ideology, but we are not free from human compassion. Therefore, even *without* religious faith, we must develop some kind of deeper spirituality. That I think is very important. But today we are lacking *that* kind of spirituality, the goodness of the human being, which is basic spirituality without necessarily developing any particular faith.

As far as religion is concerned, it is an individual right; whether we accept a religion or not — it is totally up to each individual. But I believe that as long as we are members of the human family — a human being on this planet — we *must*

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cultivate genuine compassion and affection. Without that, there is no way to develop a sense of universal responsibility, of global responsibility, of involvement, of commitment. Without them, how can we solve our world problems? That is a crucial factor.

In reality, the world has become much smaller and heavily interdependent, and there is no independent "my future", "my interest". "My future" is very much linked with the future of the world. If humanity is happy, I will be happy, if humanity suffers, I will suffer. Sometimes I describe the genuine trust, or concern towards others, as actually a "wise selfishness". It is better to be selfish with wisdom rather than foolish and selfish. There is no reality in seeking one's own interest for one's own future; it is a total illusion.

If the future of the world is for more peace and harmony, with a compassionate atmosphere, then *we* get the benefit. It is wrong to expect something to come from the sky or as a blessing from somewhere. *We* have to make the effort. So the responsibility for the future of humanity lies on our own shoulders. We cannot blame politicians or individual people. The entire humanity has the responsibility. The initiative *must* come from each individual human being.

Now I will say something about the nature of *interdependence*. The phrase "dependent arising", or "interdependence", has three levels of meanings: (1) Dependent arising, or when things come into existence depending on causes or conditions. (2) Things are dependent on their

parts or on their branches. (3) Things are dependent on the terms or names that are being used to designate them. The first two meanings of this word "interdependence" are applied in economics and many other related fields in the world and can also be applied to the relation between human beings, and between humans and Nature, the environment and animals.

When we talk about the third meaning of interdependence, that things come into existence through mere designation, through mere terms and names, through the mind, or thought, this means that if you try to analyze and investigate and try to find the object being designated but are not able to find it, it may be due to two causes: (1) non-existence of the particular object, because the naming comes from imagination, so one cannot find it; or (2) the nature of the object is *different* than the one we thought. If in this second case we say that the object does not exist merely because we cannot find it, or because we are looking for the wrong thing, then that would contradict daily experience.

Here we can clearly understand the discrepancy between appearance and reality. Normally we try to run after mere superficial appearances, and we are not able to understand the reality. Because of that, we are confused and bewildered. How do we remove this confusion or ignorance? We have to go beyond appearances and understand and realize what the reality is. Therefore, it is in this context that in the Madhyamika philosophy we find terms like *śunyata*,

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which has been translated as “emptiness”.

What do we mean when we use the term “emptiness”? It usually means “empty of inherent existence”. But the equivalent term used for it is “*madhyamika*”, or “middle way”. This is because it is a path free from the two extremes; it is the actual reality. The two extremes are: permanence and nihilism. *Permanence* here means that we tend to think of objects or phenomena as completely independent, or existing themselves, and this is a mistake of apprehension, falling into one extreme. The other extreme, or *nihilism*, happens when we do not find an absolute existence, and tend to think that things do not exist *at all*. *Madhyamika* is the middle path.

The apprehension of *independent existence* can be removed by search and investigation. When you are unable to find that things exist, themselves or independently through search and investigation, this clearly removes the extreme of permanence. The extreme of *nihilism* can also be refuted, because if we accept that things have no existence at all, then that evidently contradicts our daily experience. When daily experience clearly demonstrates that things exist, but at the same time, we know that things do not exist independently, then we can clearly come to the conclusion that the way of existence is not independent, it is something else. Thus we come to the conclusion that things exist through mere designation. That is the meaning of “dependent arising” — from things being designated.

Understanding this philosophy is quite important, because once we are able to

understand it, we will be able to eliminate many negative mental attitudes generally from our own mental fabrications. Many negative emotions are essentially developed on the basis of wrong conceptions. Once we realize these are baseless then we will develop some kind of realization of the possibility of the cessation of negative emotions. This ultimately brings genuine compassion. Now though you see a lot of suffering and problems, there is the possibility of ending it, of cessation of all this suffering. Yet, due to ignorance, we deliberately indulge in these negative emotions. So some kind of infinite compassion *will* develop on the basis of realization of that kind of nature. This is why in the Buddhist scriptures we find statements like “an emptiness whose essence is very much influenced by the practice of compassion”.

As far as I understand Krishnaji's philosophy, he is making the same point on the level of emptiness, or *śūnyata*. Unless we are able to identify the object of negation and, having eliminated that object of negation, we are able to develop a strong experience, it will be difficult to express or explain the state of that reality. That is why I do feel that when Krishnaji laid much emphasis on this aspect of negation, it is actually touching on the essence of emptiness.

Likewise, when we talk about self-awareness or self-discovery, in the case of consciousness, there are many different levels of consciousness. Normally, our ordinary level of consciousness is very much invaded by many conceptual

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thoughts, and so we do not get a chance to glimpse the reality of our own consciousness. Once we can do away with the invasion of conceptual thoughts, then we may be able to use our subtle consciousness to become aware of itself. This is very much related to our explanation of the nature of emptiness, or *śunyata*. But this is another level of one of the ten levels of consciousness. It is from this perspective that I do see the close interconnection between the implementation of non-violence, compassion, and interdependence.

Finally, as I mentioned, each individual has the responsibility, and the initiative has to come from the individuals themselves. Here it is *very* important that each person, whether rich or poor, uneducated or educated, as long as we have a human brain and heart combined, each of us has a great potential to make a contribution. It is really a failure if one feels or thinks that one is just a simple person and cannot do much. The sense of helplessness is a huge problem. That is the source of failure. But in another way, it is fortunate, there is a challenge, there is the opportunity to utilize the human potential effectively.

Now, we are almost ending this 20th century, the greatest century of human history. I think that during this period we experimented with all sorts of thoughts or activities. Now I think we are eventually returning to the basic human nature. We have really utilized *all* artificial

means, but they have not solved human problems. We have much relied on external means, and now they have shown their own limitations. So now we have to think, to return to our inner, deeper motivation of consciousness. The prime mover is not a machine, but *here* [pointing to his heart]. Unless some proper perspective, view, or attitude is developed *here* [same], it will be very difficult. Unless there is genuine peace developed *here* [same], how can there be genuine lasting peace in the world? Therefore, the source of a good future is *here* [same] and *here* [pointing to his head]. We sometimes use the brain too much, and use the good heart less.

A lot of conflict and competition in the human mind and society exist because of human vested interests, imagination, and lack of effort. But the human mind and imagination can also overcome these conflicts, provided there is sincere motivation and determination — human will. So now let us *try* to develop these kinds of mental qualities and make *every* effort. With effort, even failure does not matter. If something bad happens due to lack of effort, that is really unfortunate. But if we make *every* effort and fail, again and again, it does not matter; no regrets.

So that is my personal belief, and I myself am *trying* according to this belief. This may not solve the real problem, but at least this gives me inner peace and strength. So you will also have the same experience! ✧

# Look to the Essential

J. KRISHNAMURTI

**Q:** DO I understand you rightly when I say: There is relative truth in the old way (stages of the path of discipleship . . . and so on), but both ways cannot be trodden by the same man; the old way is not untrue, but one must decide which way to go?

**A:** Quite right. You must decide which you will do. This is not an ultimatum, please. It is left to the choice of the individual, because, after all, I cannot force anyone, and no one can force me.

I have followed all these old paths of discipleship, of worship, and I see that they are much too long, too complicated, unnecessary, because whatever path you may follow, whatever god you may worship, whatever shrine you may build, you are forced at last to come back to yourself and solve that self. Whatever path I followed, there was still that inward struggle, discontentment, unhappiness, loneliness, fear, looking to others for encouragement — there was always something going on within me like a bubbling volcano. So I say that it does not matter what you believe, what you worship, you will be forced to come back to yourself.

Why need you believe, why need you

worship, why need you have gods, theories, philosophies, dogmas, fears? They are useless so long as the “I” is not content, not made to understand, not tranquil, not free from corruptibility. As the questioner says, which way you follow is a matter of individual choice. You may prefer the choice of comfort, of discipleship — I place comfort in that — but you will be forced to face yourself eventually, you cannot avoid it.

You must have this harmony within yourself, free of all gods, masters, discipleship, fears, traditions, births, and deaths, existence — everything. Because I have followed all those and have found them all useless, I say that it is better to establish harmony within yourself rather than to seek aid from outside. The choice is yours, because nobody wants you to choose one or the other — I certainly do not.

You must decide. No Society is going to force you to decide. That is why you cannot make a dogma or a philosophy out of this. It is an individual choice. And as you are free, you will choose either limitation or freedom, either comfort or that fearlessness which gives right comprehension. ✧

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Extract from *J. Krishnamurti: Selected Early Talks & Writings*, 19.07.1929. Courtesy of R. E. Mark Lee from his forthcoming book, *J. Krishnamurti's Process: Experiences of Transformation*, ch. 11, p. 148–9.

# J. Krishnamurti, Theosophy, and the Theosophical Society

*(Answering questions from young Theosophists at the San Rafael Theosophical Centre, Argentina, April 2004)*

RADHA BURNIER

**Q:** *MANY people say that, when he left the Adyar Theosophical Society (TS), J. Krishnamurti betrayed the TS and the Masters who instructed him. What do you think about this?*

Not many people, but some say this. I think it is a wrong idea. There was no question of Krishnamurti betraying the TS or the Masters who instructed him. In the TS at that time, there was a group of people who claimed to have contact with the Masters, and who assumed authority for themselves. They believed they were in a position to declare: “You have been put on probation; someone else has become a pupil of the Master”, or “Now you are an Initiate”. But it could be seen by the behaviour of these people that they did not fulfill the qualifications which are described in *The Masters and the Path* and other books about what a true disciple of the Master or Initiate would be like. So it became like a drama, a farce, and Krishnamurti disliked all this very much.

Dr Annie Besant was old [in her 80s], and Krishnamurti himself said that for many years she had worked too much — constantly working for the TS, for India’s political freedom, and for many other causes, such as women’s upliftment, the antivivisection movement to protect animals, and scouting. The number of causes she championed was amazing; nobody else could have done it. Krishnaji said that when the body became old, she failed to have the same kind of intellectual power that she had previously. So, when this group of people around her was saying all these things, she neither interfered nor put an end to it.

My father [N. Sri Ram, fifth international President of the TS], who was Annie Besant’s secretary for some time, and who knew her well in the last years, said that she had a very trustful nature. She trusted all people who worked with her — that may have been one reason why she did not oppose these beliefs. Although Krishnaji felt that the Society

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**Radha Burnier** (1923–2013) was the seventh International President of the TS Adyar from 1980 until her passing. Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, August 2005.

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was going in the wrong direction, he was not able to stop this trend, and therefore left the Society. I believe Annie Besant was not so much upset as deeply concerned about how he would look after himself, for he had not been prepared to do so in the turmoil of the world. So she advised some members of the TS to look after him and work for him.

I think the idea that he betrayed the Masters is ridiculous. My personal opinion is that he was in constant touch with the Masters. He knew far better what the Masters were than most of the people who talked much about the Masters and claimed to be their agents. According to Krishnaji, the mistake made in the TS at that time was that the sacred and holy were brought down to a personal and material level. Swami T. Subba Row objected even to H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) [co-founder of the TS] talking as much as she did about the Masters, because of the danger of degrading the concept of the Masters.

God is said to be made in the image of man; similarly people attribute to the Masters what is familiar to themselves, but it has little to do with what they actually are: very holy, pure, wise people. Madame Blavatsky also made it clear that those who want to contact the Masters must rise to their level, it being impossible to bring them down to the worldly level. But the bringing down was what was happening. Krishnaji rejected the ideas about the Masters, but not the existence of liberated ones.

According to Pupul Jayakar's account of Krishnaji's life, when the "process"

was taking place, he sometimes said: "They are here." That "they" were doing something to his brain, and so on. Who were the "they"? Even just before he died, it is reported that he remarked: "I am ready to go. They are waiting for me." Another side to the matter was that in the TS too much was made about where the Masters lived, what kind of colour of hair each one had, and that kind of thing. These details, even if accurate, concern only the outer appearance; the Master is really a state of consciousness. He may wear a certain body at some time, and another body at another time. Thinking of the appearance and the physical body of the Master is completely wrong.

HPB wrote that the people who say they want to contact the Master do not know what they are talking about, because the body is only a mask, not the real thing. This is true even in our case; the body is a mask, concealing a different reality. In the case of the Mahatmas, the reality is a certain level and quality of consciousness. Perhaps Krishnaji did not like reducing the Masters to these details, and thinking about them as being somewhat like ourselves.

**Q:** *Did Krishnamurti keep in touch with the TS in some way?*

After he left the TS, there were people in the TS who felt he was creating a disturbance, but there were also people in the TS who felt he was saying something profound and valuable. It is because of the latter that the ambience was created for Krishnaji to come back much later into contact with the TS. He himself told me

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that Mr [C.] Jinarājadāsa (whom he called Rājā) [fourth international President of the TS] was always very nice to him. They did not have the same ideas; Bro. Rājā's conventional Theosophy and Krishnaji's new presentation did not agree on many things. But he told me that Rājā was always so affectionate, he would take books and other things for him, send his car and give him money. In those days, Krishnaji was not so well known. When my father became President, he deftly brought a change within the Society in favour of understanding what Krishnamurti was talking about.

**Q:** *Did Krishnamurti deny the Mahatmas? Did he deny the path of discipleship?*

He used a vocabulary which is not the traditional one. He did not use such words as “the path”. In fact, he said “Truth is a pathless land”, and many people are still puzzled by it. But from the theosophical point of view, every monad [referring here to the human spiritual individuality that reincarnates] is unique and, entering the material plane, follows its own unique path. The development that takes place in every individual is unlike any other — the whole of Nature is like this. Some years ago they said the thumbprint of every one of the millions of human beings is different and identifiable. Now they say they can identify a person by the teeth, the vocal cords, the hair, and so on. Thus that kind of uniqueness exists even at the physical level. So each person has to proceed through his own understanding to the truth. Nobody else can say “This is the path you must tread”.

Krishnaji did not talk about either the path or discipleship, because a disciple is supposed to obey; and obedience, particularly if it is blind, is a barrier to the development of true intelligence and intuition for which he used the word “insight”. People get set ideas about the meaning of words, and perhaps he used different words to encourage listeners to examine the meaning afresh.

**Q:** *Some members of the TS say that Krishnamurti's work is not related to occultism, which was a word used by HPB and the Mahatmas.*

What is occult is what is hidden. There are innumerable things which are hidden from our eyes, ears, and other senses which have a limited range. A few hundred years ago, if you had turned the knob of an instrument in order to hear music flow from two thousand miles away, they would have called it magic, but now it is science. When you understand Nature and her laws, more and more of the occult ceases to be so.

But the so-called occult may also be what people do not know for themselves, yet think they know. They may disseminate wrong information or falsehoods for the sake of gain. Therefore, in the TS we do not encourage too much interest in so-called occult things. Alice Bailey writes about the Rays. How many people know what they are and whether what she says is correct? It is best to keep an open mind on these questions. The same thing applies to C. W. Leadbeater, or Madame Blavatsky. We need not reject or accept what is said, but keep an open



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mind. Holding one's judgement in suspense is very important.

The Buddha's illustration of a poisoned arrow piercing a person's flesh must be recalled. Should he be discussing from what direction the arrow came, who was the carpenter who made it, and at what velocity it flew? That would be absurd. He must first remove the arrow and heal the wound. So the Buddha did not talk about abstruse or occult things. Krishnamurti's approach was similar. He said, "Your house is burning", meaning the world itself is in great danger. Should not attention be directed to this, rather than talking about the occult? He did not allow people to distract themselves. But he was an enlightened person who knew many things not known to us about the depths and mysteries of life.

**Q:** *What do you think Krishnamurti's feelings were towards the TS?*

I think his feeling was friendly, which does not mean that he agreed with what TS members in general said and thought, because, as you know, there are all sorts of varying ideas since the TS stands for freedom of thought. Some people hold Theosophy is what Blavatsky wrote and nothing else. This is not different from the Muslim idea that Muhammed was the last and only prophet: "After Muhammed, there is nothing further." Anything other than Blavatsky is not Theosophy, or should be called pseudo-Theosophy.

But others maintain that the wisdom that is Theosophy can come from many sources, in many ages. Even people who are not enlightened may say some things

which are wise. So the only reasonable attitude is what HPB described as "the open mind, the pure heart". This needs to be encouraged. Krishnaji spoke of unconditioning the mind. The TS works for universal brotherhood — without distinction of race, religion and all that divides people, every form of conditioning — the universal mind, the unconditioned mind. I think — I cannot of course speak for Krishnaji — that he appreciated some fundamental approaches of the Theosophical Society. On one occasion, he said to me with a smile: "You know, I like the TS."

**Q:** *In your opinion, were the foundation of the TS and Krishnamurti's work part of the same plan of the Mahatmas, or were these two different things?*

When C. W. Leadbeater saw Krishnaji for the first time, there were several people on the Adyar beach. Krishnaji was with his younger brother, and — probably due to malnutrition — he looked dull, some people even thought subnormal in intelligence. His younger brother was brighter and got good marks in school, which Krishnaji could not. He may have been too sensitive to bear what is called the brunt of life. But when Leadbeater saw him, he unhesitatingly said: "This is a highly evolved soul, untainted by selfishness and in many incarnations he has had contact with the Masters."

After Leadbeater wrote to Annie Besant that the two motherless boys were not properly looked after, she made arrangements for them to be taken care of. She and Leadbeater felt that he would be the

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vehicle of the World Teacher. Even earlier, Annie Besant had been lecturing on the coming of the World Teacher. Before Krishnaji was discovered, another boy had been identified as the vehicle, so some said Leadbeater did not really know, which may not be true; he may have simply realized that he had made a mistake. But when he saw Krishnaji he was absolutely certain and so was Annie Besant, and they did everything they thought fit for Krishnaji.

One common idea which many people have is also wrong — that they [CWL and AB] said Krishnaji was the World Teacher. They did not say that. He was to be the vehicle of the World Teacher, and at some point his consciousness would blend with that of the World Teacher. On 12 January 1910, Annie Besant wrote to Leadbeater: “It is definitely fixed that the Lord Maitreya takes this dear child’s body. It seems a very heavy responsibility to guard and help it, so as to fit it for Him, as He said, and I feel rather overwhelmed . . .” (Mary Lutyens, *Years of Awakening*, ch. 1). In 1926, Krishnaji wrote to Leadbeater: “I know my destiny and my work. I know with certainty that I am blending into the consciousness of the one Teacher, and that he will completely fill me.”

On one occasion Mrs Jayakar asked Krishnaji: “If Theosophists had not discovered you, what would have happened to you?” He answered: “I would have died.” She replied: “No, you would not have died. You would have been like Ramana Maharshi, and people would

have come to you.” Krishnaji said: “No”; it sounded as if there was a plan and purpose according to which his father was brought to Adyar. If Krishnaji had remained in the circle of an orthodox Brāhman family, he may not have been able to feel at ease with the whole world nor, outside the TS, would he have had the necessary international contacts. I am inclined to think that the course of his life was part of the Plan. It is said all the details of the Plan are not fixed in advance, but the general Plan was worked out.

Krishnaji had great admiration and love for Dr Annie Besant. She looked after him and spoke of him as somebody who would be a great teacher even when people laughed at her or upbraided her. Some of her friends in India told her: If you want to sponsor somebody, there are better boys than Krishnamurti. They were angry with her, but she did not change. Krishnaji himself related that at an important banquet in England, where liberal politicians like Lord Lansbury, who supported India’s freedom, were present, Bernard Shaw taunted Annie Besant, who had taken Krishnaji with her. Shaw, who always made fun of everything, said: “Annie, is this your little Messiah?”, and everybody laughed. But she did not flinch. She did not care what other people’s attitude was, because she was so certain that a great message would be given to the world through Krishnaji. He mentioned this particular incident and said she supported him unflinchingly until the end. ✧

# Krishnaji: Flowering in Goodness

CLEMICE PETTER

THE world has changed tremendously in the last century. Technology has developed and human life has become more comfortable in many ways, but inwardly, psychologically, human beings have not changed. We still are violent, greedy, envious, jealous, and much more. War is still a threat in modern society, and now we have developed powerful weapons that could destroy the possibility of life on Earth for centuries to come. With this scenario it is not difficult to see that we, human beings, are not intelligent, and that intelligence is the missing quality that humanity has to awaken, in order not to destroy itself.

To rescue us from our own ignorance, which is the ignorance of who we are, we have J. Krishnamurti, who is trying very hard to wake us up from illusions created by the false idea of the “I”. Krishnaji does not bring a new philosophy or abstract explanations about the universe and its origin, he talks about the origin and creation of all misery and confusion in the world, which is the false idea of a separate “I”. He also points out what are the dangers that led humanity

to this tragic point of creating the means for self-destruction.

To many people it seems difficult even to listen to Krishnamurti as he goes straight to the core of the matter and is not interested in anything else other than pointing out the self-created obstacles to the awakening of intelligence. Those willing to look at themselves will find that the whole problem of the world starts with ourselves. Society is designed exactly the same way as we are. A society without justice, with the few feeding on the riches of the land, and the majority oppressed by the weight of cruel rules and inhumane laws for the working class. The rich give a little charity here and there and feel that their duty has been fulfilled without ever questioning the social structure itself, because we do not like to be disturbed out of our comfort zone.

Questioning everything without accepting or rejecting is one of the things pointed out by Krishnamurti as a way to see with clarity. But for most of us to question is an undesirable thing as it may lead us to see what we have been trying very hard to hide, even from ourselves.

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Mrs Clemice Petter is a TS Adyar international speaker and Head of their Editorial Department.

## Krishnaji: Flowering in Goodness

It is this habit of not coming in touch with facts that has created the world as we live in today. We have avoided looking at our ugliness by covering it up with beautiful words, so we have created opposites. Out of hate we create love, which is no love at all, as it springs from fear. Basically fear is the energy created by the thinking process with its roots in the idea of “me” and “you”.

It is clear that the world that we see outside is the same as the one inside, it is the same movement happening inside and projected outside, therefore the work is within. To see what is going on inside is what brings about change in both the inner and outer world. This is because the outer world exists only as a reflection, it has no life of its own and will reflect exactly what is going on inside. Because the mind has divided it into the outer and inner we think this division is real and try to act upon the projection, instead of looking into the projector and see where the projected world is coming from.

Perhaps the mistake we keep making is to believe that we can change the outer without looking within. Somehow we have been under the illusion that what we are is not important, and that we can change people around us without understanding what we are talking about. The moment we start looking within we will stop trying to change people, we will understand what it takes for change to take place, therefore start seeing the futility of asking anyone to change. It is only the theoreticians, who have no understanding about themselves, who talk about

changing others or changing the world.

A sick, distorted mind, without understanding itself, tries to change the world, tries to set up the model, the way the world should work, and how people should live, and in what to believe. This script has repeated itself many times in human history and somehow we fail to understand that no real, fundamental change ever happened, and will never come about, by force. Whether it is the power of the state or the power of organized religion trying to impose their ways, historically it has been proven that the results are always the same: namely, exploitation and authoritarianism with all their dreadful offsprings. Is it possible for humankind to see this obvious fact and change direction? Is it possible to move from competition to cooperation, from politics, with its selfish games, to real democracy? This depends only on you and me. When we change, we will see that the world has changed.

Krishnamurti shows how impossible it is to have a good society with the same selfish outlook that has created the society we have today. He also pointed out that changes can happen only if we, you and me, change. This alone is revolution by itself, because we have always believed that after reading a few so-called holy books we know what is needed. We have also believed that because we have read such books we have come upon something great. Or even worse, we think we have turned into great people because we have some book knowledge. The fact is that it is self-knowledge

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alone that transforms the human mind.

A book is only a bundle of words put together in a certain manner. To see what the book is pointing to we need to have a clear mind without any opinion or conclusion. It is this capacity to observe without evaluating that Krishnamurti calls intelligence. To let go of our opinions and conclusions is the most difficult thing, because we have carefully accumulated and cherished all this knowledge and it gives us a certain feeling of security, that there is something beyond the ugliness of a life without love.

Krishnaji identifies the ways the human mind has tried to escape from the brutality of the lack of love in us. It is difficult to look, it is horrifying to see that even though we talk endlessly about love, and sometimes we are capable of a little bit of consideration, deep down in us what we call love is a self-centered activity that is rooted in the “me” and “mine”. So to awaken intelligence, which is also Love and Compassion, we need to see and understand the ways of the mind.

To see something we need to look, to give attention to it and stop running away. The turning point is when we start to look, to give complete attention to what is going on inside, to observe our thinking process, our feelings and how we justify everything or explain it away, so that we do not have to look at it again. But in this darkness of ignoring our own ways and feelings, we perpetuate the monstrous society in which we live.

It has been the ignorance of what we *are*, the ignorance of Unity, that has

degenerated our inner world, and therefore the outer world. To regenerate ourselves we need to turn our attention to the inner world. Krishnaji stressed the urge to flower in goodness, which means to open up to the sky. When we live in the little pool of “me” we are like in a dark room, although the Sun is shining brightly and clearly outside in the open sky. The “I”, which is the center of darkness, of ignorance, is full of formulas and wishes to control life. Perhaps goodness is the open sky, where life is seen as it is and the “I” has no place.

To flower in goodness is essential, and yet it is the most arduous thing to bring about. Maybe it seems so hard because we have been accustomed to go in the opposite direction. We have been running from self-knowledge for ages, we have created all kinds of escapes, from self-delusion to the entertainment industry. We tried it all, and now we are left with no choice other than to look into the only place where self-knowledge has always been, which is inside ourselves. As we understand what goes on within us, we also understand what is going on in every human being in the world. It is this understanding alone that brings humility, Love, and compassion toward all living beings. There is no shortcut and no amount of knowledge from books will bring the understanding of life, which starts with the understanding of oneself.

It was Krishnaji who broke the bars of the prison created by the mind, and he also said that the key to the open air lies within each one of us, no outside agent can give

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us the key. By saying this he also released us from the authority of another, be it the priest or the neighbor. In the inner field we have to walk alone. The only company allowed in the sacred field within is love. Love is the only force capable of moving mountains and bring about a total revolution in human Nature. But for love to come into being the first requirement is nakedness from egoism. The sense of self-importance and self-aggrandizement has to go. Love knows no pride and robs everything the “I” carefully puts together and protects with ferocious zeal.

To break away from darkness demands great energy. Like the seed that breaks the shell and turns into a tree, we also need to break the shell of ignorance, the “I”, in order to flower in goodness. As long as the seed does not break the shell it remains only as a potential tree. Similarly, as long as we do not break the shell of “I” we remain as potential humans. It is only in the open skies that the human finds space to bloom and spread his perfume and fill the air with love and kindness. To break the shell of “I” is what Krishnaji was talking about all his life.

The teachings point out the energy needed for such a breakthrough to take place, and the ways in which we are wasting this energy. The only thing to do is to listen. But even this seems difficult for us. We are too sure about our opinions and too arrogant to see our mistakes. If we could only listen without jumping to conclusions or comparing what is

being said with what we think we know! But to listen in such a way requires a great deal of humility, not the humility cultivated by the arrogant, but that feeling of not knowing, of being open, in a state of learning.

Actually what Krishnamurti is saying is very simple and basic and, as he has also indicated, we cannot go far if we do not lay the right foundation, which is self-knowledge. As we know, to lay the foundation is the first step, and in the spiritual journey it is the first step of an endless journey that, like any other journey, starts only after the first step. Every teacher throughout the ages has said the same thing in different ways.

As far as one can see, teachings were always given using some kind of story — what the Christians call parables, and it is said that Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. It was in the Bible that I first learned of a sage who was teaching in such an open manner. Krishnamurti goes directly to the problem. He spent more than seventy years going all over the world pointing out what we are, and in which ways we are destroying ourselves and the planet. He openly said that what we call love is not Love, it has its roots in the “I”. He called attention to the fact that we are using organized religion with selfish motives, and that it is not religious at all.

When Krishnamurti was on his deathbed he said to those around him that because we could not listen to him we do not know what we are missing. Today, after all these years, we can easily see

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what he was talking about. There has been no one before Krishnamurti talking to the crowd in the way he did. He was talking to each one and at the same time to a multitude of people. It has been said by those who attended Krishnaji's talks that, sitting there in front of him, each had the feeling that Krishnaji was addressing them in particular, but then the whole crowd had that same feeling. This may be because to him there were not many, but only One. And because for him it was a reality, it surpassed the illusion of those who felt they were separated and therefore many.

It is almost a sin if those who are able to give it a chance to sit and just listen, deny humanity of the grace of better days. We are used to think in terms of "my" salvation and "my" spiritual progress, but in fact there is no personal progress or personal salvation, it feels like that because we look at everything with the lenses of the "I", and as long as the idea of "I" remains, it is impossible to see it the way it actually is. The truth is that there are not many, but just One. To see this we need to stop looking for personal spiritual advancement, which is the highest form of selfishness. Whether we see it or not, our blindness does not change the fact, it only keeps it in the darkness of ignorance in which the "I" lives.

We have come to a point now in human history, which is very dangerous. We are extremely ignorant of the consequences of what we are doing and extremely greedy. This combination of greed and ignorance is a dreadful thing. Maybe we have reached the point that was

seen by Blavatsky when she desperately asked those around her not to divide the Society, and more, she said that if we could see what she saw, we would work for brotherhood and nothing else. Krishnaji also said at the end of his life: "For God's sake, wake up! You don't know what is awaiting humanity around the corner!" Today we may be seeing what they were afraid of. But even with dangerous swords hanging over our head, we still do not listen. One wonders if the human species has gone wrong and is incapable of change, of being intelligent. If this is the case, then there is not much to hope for. If we continue to choose the same old ways and justify them by saying that this has been the way of our father and forefathers, or if we justify our selfishness with books and old traditions, then we will also continue having the same result as we have had so far — more violence, more wars, and more pain and suffering.

Krishnamurti is clear that what is needed is a total and complete inner revolution. A completely new form of living without the competition that breeds violence — a way in which humanity never lived before. This alone is enough for us to question tradition and whatever humanity has tried so far, as nothing has worked and humanity has remained psychologically the same for thousands of years.

There are those who justify the current state of affairs by saying that to see clearly there has to be inner growth, which is true. But the question follows: What will make us grow? And knowing this, why

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don't we grow? Is it not because when we say this we already assume that this growth is for the future, we are not ready now? In fact we live by words and hopes.

The reality is that if we are able to see that growth is necessary, then we are also ready to grow. But we try to avoid it, because it is an arduous task. But as this world is becoming more and more dangerous, there is no choice, we have to grow, mature, and take the responsibility of what is happening and stop running away. We have had enough of it and the Earth cannot take it any longer.

The planet is ready to welcome those who live as grownup people, taking responsibilities, and not those who are childish, always looking for someone to blame for the misfortunes of life. To grow we need to stand on our own feet and not depend on anybody to see with clarity; we have to face life with child-like eyes, which means the eyes of innocence, able to see life as for the first time, with an open mind

that is not accumulating, psychologically, the hurts and the pleasures of yesterday, therefore it is always fresh, innocent. To come to this point of absolute innocence, the "I" has to be understood and dropped. A self-centered mind can *never* be innocent, for the simple reason that innocence is not its nature.

The year 2020 is when we celebrate 125 years of the birth of J. Krishnamurti, the World Teacher of the turning point in human consciousness. We are living in a time that demands tremendous alertness from us. We cannot escape and run away, as there is nowhere to run. It is a historical lesson taught by Mother Nature that those who are incapable of change, disappear, as life does not wait or slow down for those trying to avoid its rhythm. It has been said that the future of human beings is infinite. Let us break the shell of ignorance, the darkness of "I", flower in goodness, and be the *human* being that we are in potential. ✧

### NOTICE

According to Rule 11(a) of the TS International Regulations, I nominated Dr Deepa Padhi to continue as Vice-President on 20 March 2020. At the end of the voting period we received 30 votes in favor and 0 votes opposing from the General Council members. In view of the results confirming my nomination, Dr Padhi is re-elected for a second term as Vice-President effective 20 April 2020.

Tim Boyd  
*President*



# Truth is a Pathless Land

MARY ANDERSON

WHEN J. Krishnamurti said “Truth is a pathless land”, it shocked many people. It still shocks. What is a path? A line that goes from one place to another, which has a beginning and an end. And we follow it only to get to our destination. Once arrived we no longer need it. So a path is limited in time and space and in its usefulness.

A path is in many cases necessary and important. In daily life, we follow a path to reach a destination, whether on foot or by car, train or even plane. We need paths in the sense of rules, methods, to establish our earthly life and organize it. With the help of methods we learn reading, writing and arithmetic, languages, chemistry, and so on. We go on during our professional training or apprenticeship to study and apply certain laws. In all this we rely on our past culture; we use others’ past experience. We do so even as we read the instructions about a new household gadget or bake a cake according to a recipe. In such cases we follow certain paths. It would be foolish not to do so. All these activities have one thing in common, the time factor, be it going from one place to another or learning certain skills.

What does no path mean? What image does a “pathless land” call up? A desert without any oases, where sandstorms wipe out all tracks? An impenetrable jungle? An ocean where we are driven to and fro without a compass? Or is it space, the universe, pathless without even the orbits of the stars?

Once we imagine space, we tend to place ourselves in it, and our thoughts tend to issue forth in different directions and return to us thus creating paths. But if a land or space is to be completely pathless there should be no point of personal consciousness in it. *We* should not be in it. We must blot ourselves out. Then, there would be no “I”, no centre, no point of departure or return, no paths, no conceivable limits. And this pathless land represents Truth. Does this not mean that truth can only be where the “I” (the personal thoughts and emotions) is *not*, where time and (limited) space are not, where there are no limits? The truth meant here is Truth in the highest sense of the Absolute. When we speak of pathlessness in connection with *this* Truth, we refer to the Indescribable by denying everything

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**Mary Anderson** (1.11.1929–14.4.2020) was Secretary of the European Theosophical Federation, international Vice-President, and international Secretary of the TS. Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, July 1989.

## Truth is a Pathless Land

that can be asserted about it as “not this, not that”.

From another point of view, it is like a step into a new dimension or “dimensionlessness”. Let us imagine a conscious creature familiar with one dimension only that can move forward or retrace its steps. What a shock to learn of a second dimension. It cannot imagine such a thing and might say, “Nonsense. It does not exist because *I* don’t know it!” And when it discovers the second dimension for itself and realizes that it can also move to the left or to the right, what a shock, what sudden freedom, what an expansion in consciousness! And likewise, when it discovers that it can also go up and down along a third dimension.

This points to what awaits us, three-dimensional beings as we are, were we to discover that there can be a fourth dimension. Someone who has made that discovery meets with little understanding, much incredulity, or even persecution. He is dubbed a mad fellow. Such “sacred fools” try to describe a new dimension to humanity only with the help of certain images. “A pathless land” is one such.

Pilate asked Jesus, “What is Truth”, but did not wait for a reply. Perhaps the reply would have been silence. It is seen from the preceding passage in the Bible that Jesus has referred to the Truth which every great teacher brings, certainly something indescribable, referring perhaps to the Divine, the Absolute? It would waste their time to bring something less, something with which humanity was already familiar! But we apply the word “Truth”

not only to the Highest, the Absolute, the Pathless, the Indescribable, about which we can only be silent. As the Absolute is the final source of all phenomena, so can Absolute Truth be seen as the source of all relative truths forming a hierarchy of forms of truth:

Deeply religious people and philosophers search for the *One Absolute Truth*.

At the next level, we speak of “truths” in the plural, meaning principles or laws such as those which Madame H. P. Blavatsky gave us in the Three Fundamental Propositions. Scientists seek for similar principles — the Laws of Nature. Such truths are *relative* but *abstract*. Relative truths depend on certain circumstances. They do not apply to all cases and under all circumstances. It was discovered in this century, for example, that the laws of physics as hitherto known apply to visible matter but not to atomic particles. (Perhaps the Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* apply only to our Cosmos?) In daily life, we know above all *concrete* truth which corresponds to the facts. This is the kind of truth a detective or a judge tries to discover, truth as against untruth or illusion.

We must take care not to make the relativity of certain truths, or the pathlessness of Truth, an excuse to approve of untruths or illogicalities. Truth corresponds to reality or “things as they are”. Things exist at different levels of being or reality and what seems real from one standpoint may be seen as unreal from another. Blavatsky forcefully put it:

## Truth is a Pathless Land

The universe, with everything in it, is called *Māyā* (illusion), because all is temporary therein. . . . Yet the Universe is real enough to the conscious beings in it, which are as unreal as it is itself.<sup>1</sup>

Since we live in it, we must take this world and its facts, its reality, and its truths seriously.

Enthusiastic about the idea that all is divine and all one, a Yoga student did not for a moment think of getting out of the way of a mad elephant as it came charging on him. He thought, "After all, I am God; the elephant is God. God cannot harm God!" He soon learned that he should have seen God not only in himself and the elephant, but also in the elephant boy yelling out a warning! This story illustrates the fact that "things as they are" are not isolated, passive, static objects. They are in relationship with each other and form a dynamic model, not admitting of discrete paths.

We must take *all* factors into consideration if we are to recognize truth, and not be led astray to false conclusions. A colour-blind man may see a certain object as green that is blue for others. We should consider not only the object, but also whether the observer has "normal" sight. *We* also are part of things as they are. The truth about them finds its expression in us. If we are not bright and pure like a spotless mirror, we tamper with truth through our false vision. Exactly as modern physicists have discovered that the observer influences the behaviour of sub-atomic phenomena that he observes, we too influence what we

see, so that for us they are not what they are! We see them through the tinted glasses of our past experiences and opinions, our egocentricity. We force them into certain patterns or paths.

We humans have, as a rule, no direct contact with things. If we notice them at all, we see them only through the ever-present veil of the "I", of our personal thoughts and emotions. On the one hand, based on feeling, we see not the objects but our own images of them. On the other hand, on the basis of thought, we define them, name them, only to put them aside and forget them. And what is the present but the reality, truth, things — and people — as they are? We do not see even our friends as they are but according to our imagined picture of them. As Krishnamurti says: "When the mind is on the flight of discovery, imagination is a dangerous thing. Imagination has no place in understanding. Speculation and imagination are the enemies of attention."<sup>2</sup>

Only when we are watchful, is it possible to have real contact with things, people, with ourselves. To be watchful is to live in the present. It shuts out the traced-out paths of the past and future. "You have to take the voyage on an uncharted sea." Certain charts are however necessary in our lives. How can we reconcile these two points of view? It is a matter of the sphere one deals with and one's relation to the so-called path. A path is a help, a means to an end. Means are to serve us, not we them. Where a way is necessary in order to learn a certain skill, it does have a role, but a subordinate one

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at that. It is only the framework on which the living picture of our life moves. It is the form; we are the life. A path is helpful, as long as we use it as such. It becomes dangerous when we mistake it for the destination! Everything has its dharma, its place in life. It is illusion to assign a false dharma to something, to put it in the wrong place.

We have said that truth corresponds to things as they are. We have noted how we keep on putting barriers between things as they are and ourselves. In recognizing them we unmask them and ourselves from moment to moment. This requires great attention within and without. It cannot be programmed as a path to follow and recommend to others. Certainly, in doing so we are tracing a path, we are leaving traces. Perhaps really great beings leave no trace. But human beings always find someone to follow, in order to make a religion, a method, a cult, a sect. In a story told by Krishnamurti, the devil was not discouraged when a man picked up a little piece of truth, because he planned to help that man to organize it! Not that we should not pay attention to the paths of great beings, but we should do so with discrimination.

To see truth in our daily lives, to live in the pathless land, means to live in the present, to drop that which prevents us

from seeing things as they are, that is our own conscious or unconscious egocentricity. When we succeed, be it for a moment, we know truth also in everyday things and show discrimination. To do so, we must be completely honest and avoid even little white lies. As above, so below. Only when relative truth is respected within its own framework can one step on to Absolute Truth. This is a “path” which each one of us must create for oneself, moment to moment, forgetting at each step the previous. In this sense, one is oneself the path. Christ could well say, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life”.

The concept of truth must not lead to its limitation. What is really true is also beautiful and good. If the so-called truth about a person is not also beautiful and good, it is because we see him only from our outward point of view and not in his true inward being. Let us return to the image of truth as the pathless land, unlimited Space, where no “I” is present. Blavatsky recommends in her “Diagram of Meditation” that we reflect “I am all Space (and Time)”. Space without the little personal “I” and space which is the Self, the highest within us, which is at the same time the highest within all, are one and the same. The little “I” must disappear to make way for the higher Self to appear. ✧

### Endnotes

1. Quoted in *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy*, Ianthe Hoskins, p. 31.
2. J. Krishnamurti, *Commentaries on Living*, p. 190.

# Mary Anderson — In Memoriam

1. From Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu (Chairperson of the European Federation of the TS)

The first memory that comes to mind when I think of Mary is her gentleness. Affable, she was ever ready to listen to whoever wished to talk with her, in spite of a bit of a hearing difficulty. Full of enthusiasm as a young graduate and a member of the Theosophical Society (TS) for some years, I met her in a Summer School gathering in Switzerland in the mid-1970s. She left on me a deep impression of great sympathy and modesty. Indeed, she had this rare quality to make people feel at ease, ready to tell some colourful jokes; people would laugh to tears while she remained unmoved — but only apparently as those present could feel her enjoying their laughter!

Mary became General Secretary of the TS in Switzerland during 1966–71, where she stayed with Claire Wyss, Chairperson of the European Federation of the TS (EFTS), during 1969–71, until Claire’s passing. She lectured a lot in Europe, and helped in various other ways. From 1989 to ’95 she was Secretary of the EFTS, followed by her departure to settle at Adyar, while remaining in the EFTS Executive.

She then became international Vice-President from 1996 to 2001, when she took up the post of international Secretary as requested by the then international President Radha Burnier until 2008, when she settled in England.



*1 November 1929 – 14 April 2020*

In 2016, I received from her a parcel of used books she presumed I did not have — possibly part of her organising for the last journey.

In addition to the gratitude I keep for a stalwart, untiring servant of the TS, as well as for a great number of her clear and elegant writings, I am in debt towards Mary for a number of English lessons she gave me during her EFTS Secretaryship. She confessed to me: “You see, it is a pleasure to do so with you because I don’t need to use authority, as it had been demanded when I used to be a professional teacher for a brief time!” Then I asked her, “Why was that?”. Her answer was: “When I entered the classroom, the students, instead of becoming silent, started to laugh, and I felt unbalanced and wanted to laugh with them!”

Dear Mary, let us laugh as we used to do! Until we meet again, travel well towards the Great Light!

## Mary Anderson — In Memoriam

### 2. From Michael Thomson (Member of the TS in England)

Mary was the only child to George and Jane Anderson, being born and going to school in Glasgow, Scotland. After her father died, and soon after the Second World War ended, she and her mother opened a vegetarian Guest House in another part of Scotland, where Mary took French lessons. After winning a scholarship she attended St Andrews University, where she earned an MA in Latin, German, and Geography. After taking Teacher Training she taught French and German in a girls' school for some years. In the mid-1950s Mary moved to London to learn stenotyping, and there she joined the Theosophical Society (TS), becoming active in its international Lodge Youth Camps in Camberley. For several years she visited and lectured at TS centres in Europe. When she moved to Basel, Switzerland, she stayed with Claire Wyss, General Secretary (GS) of the German TS, serving as GS for the Swiss TS during 1966–71. Then during 1989–95 she was Secretary for the European Federation of the TS (EFTS) while working for a law firm in Basel until her retirement in 1995, when she left for Adyar.

The TS international President Radha Burnier invited her to be the international Vice-President, which required extensive travelling in India and worldwide, serving in this post from 1996 to 2001, to become the TS international Secretary and Director of the School of the Wisdom from 2002 to 2008, when she went back to England. When she left Adyar, Mary

stayed initially at the TS Estate in Camberley, while waiting for a vacancy at the Care Home for Independent Residents in Ferndown, Southern England. She always had the brightest smile of greeting accompanied with “yes, yes” in ready alignment with the person who engaged her in talk; and with her gentleness and calm manner she easily settled in. She was the happiest person I knew, probably because she loved everyone!

Soon afterwards Mary's laptop was back in action and her multilingual lectures were in demand. For several years she lectured in different languages in Europe, North and South America, Africa, Australia, and Israel, where many of her articles and talks have been translated and printed in Theosophical magazines the world over. Much of her life was devoted to the study and practice of living Theosophy. In her article “Living Theosophy” she wrote: “Indeed, Theosophy is a philosophy, a teaching, but it is also a way of life in the light of that teaching.” Mary will be remembered for her kind, humble nature, and all her invaluable contributions.

### 3. From Abraham Oron (Former President of the Tel Aviv Lodge, Israel)

Mary was a very dear teacher of Theosophy at its best, visiting Israel every year for more than 10 years. She also spread the light of Theosophy in many countries around the world. She passed away peacefully, and we will accompany her with loving thoughts on her way to the Light. May her memory be blessed! ✧

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