



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 6

Opting for Opportunity

Two shoe manufacturers on a working holiday in remote areas came across an isolated indigenous community. The first remarked despondently: 'Hopeless situation. Nobody wears shoes.' The second declared joyfully: 'Wonderful opportunity! Everybody needs shoes!' As Albert Einstein said: 'In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.'

The world currently finds itself in the middle of great difficulty. Having been running for so long like Alice with the Red Queen, we have been brought to an abrupt halt in our frenetic pounding on the treadmill of time, often in search of things not worth having. Suddenly restrictions imposed to counter a deadly virus have afforded us plenty of time – time to reflect, to re-evaluate, to reconsider our priorities, to 'put our house in order'; not just the drawers and cupboards which will not close because they are overflowing with things to be sorted 'someday'. More important is the clutter of the mind and heart in need of urgent attention – a stock-taking of our values and priorities.

Why did this wake-up call need to be so harsh? Could it be that we were too pre-occupied to be aware of earlier, more subtle reminders? Were we running too fast to read the signs along the way? Were opportunities glimpsed out of the corner of an eye considered to be too hard and consequently ignored?

As Winston Churchill said: 'A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.'

We are now standing at the cross-roads. There is no time for fear, trepidation, denial or despair. We have the power within us to choose the right path. Let's opt for opportunity!

Pamela Peterson
Secretary, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee

Words of Wisdom 1.

The most yielding thing in the world
Will overcome the most rigid
The most empty thing in the world
Will overcome the most full
From this comes a lesson:
Stillness benefits more than action
Silence benefits more than words
Rare indeed are those who are still
Rare indeed are those who are silent...
And so I say:
Rare indeed are those who obtain
The bounty of this world
Having without possessing
Acting with no expectation
Leading and not trying to control
This is the supreme virtue:
Wisdom
Tao Te Ching

Lucille Crocker
Member, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee



In this issue:

- Opting for Opportunity
- Words of wisdom 1.
- The Nature of things
- Lodge & Library COVID –19 update
- Greetings from the Library
- Short biographies of Madam Blavatsky's close associates
- An Approach to reality
- Namaste Series 4: 3 Violence
- Words of Wisdom 2.
- History repeats itself
- Words of Wisdom 3.
- Ode to the Onion
- Thank you!



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 6

The Nature of Things

Dr David Bohm interviewed by Dr David Suzuki

This 40-minute interview conducted in 1979 is still amazing and makes for fascinating listening. You may find yourself unable to stop hitting the repeat button again and again!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-jl0zzYgIE&t=1830s>

Dr Bohm was an American scientist who has been described as one of the most significant theoretical physicists of the 20th century and who contributed unorthodox ideas to quantum theory, neuropsychology and the philosophy of mind. Many theosophists will be aware of him through his numerous dialogues with Krishnamurti.

Scientists at that time believed if matter could be broken down to its core constituents, it would be possible to understand the basic properties of the universe and then be able to rebuild matter and even cellular life itself. Science could perhaps replace God?

In this interview, Bohm discusses his theories, which ostracized him from the scientific community at that time. He discusses his interest in the general nature of matter in the universe and the fundamentals of physics, quantum mechanics and relativity. The current scientific views, at that time, he felt were unclear and contradicted each other.

The word “atom” means something that cannot be divided, however it was discovered that atoms had smaller components – electrons, neutrons and protons. Then it was discovered that these smaller particles could also be broken down into even smaller particles such as quarks. However all these particles can only be understood through their wholeness because at the sub-atomic level Newtonian mechanical behaviour breaks down and we enter the strange quantum world with its mysterious and unpredictable behaviour with electrons at one time behaving like particles then at another time behaving like waves.

In relation to the Theory of Relativity, Einstein said that the particle is an abstraction – there is only a whole field that is undivided. Quantum Mechanics shows that when you have many electrons together, you cannot divide them thereby inferring that the universe cannot be divided. What do these two theories have in common: undivided wholeness. Quantum Mechanics says the entire universe is made up of quantum particles connected by indivisible links, which includes the Observer and the Observed.

Bohm gives one analogy to help us understand this wholeness theory by the whirlpool, which appears to be separate from the rest of the water. However, when a second whirlpool interacts with the first whirlpool they merge into one rather than remaining separate. He proposed that the entire universe is built this way. All parts are abstractions from the whole and have no independent existence. In the same way we see ourselves as being individual but again Bohm states this is an abstraction, as we could not survive without our connecting networks of support.

Bohm proposed his theory of the Implicate and Explicate Order and gives a fascinating analogy of the unfolding and enfolding of a drop of colored liquid on glycerin within a double glass tube being stretched out or unfolded until it becomes invisible, however, it still exists and can become enfolded to return to its original state. Students of theosophy would easily see the similarity of this analogy to cosmogenesis within The Secret Doctrine.

Explicate Order is what science views as matter we perceive in its unfolded state without the awareness of the Implicate Order or matter that it is enfolded from – rather like seeing the tip of an iceberg and not realizing its wholeness is hidden from view.

Bohm discusses his involvement with Krishnamurti and how he felt that something beyond science was needed to help the world because truth alone does not seem to be enough. Philosophy eastern and western could offer needed solutions as science on its own often becomes destructive.

Krishnamurti proposed that the problems of mankind originated in thought itself. Bohm when he was young thought that poverty was the main problem and that science could help alleviate it, but then he realised that science would never solve mankind's problems by itself. What is the link? Consciousness is caught in a certain illusion. Everything that happens is recorded like a computer program and we act according to that program – hopes, fears, prejudices and desires. We do not respond rationally but according to our program. We need to become deeply aware of the internal program – we cannot rely on our memory. We can become more aware of the program by watching the feelings that the program generates and the type of relations we have with others. Our feelings are the mirror of our program. Do not accept the ego – it is only a structure within the whole.

We need to understand what the problem is. However often we cannot directly affect the problem – like Niagara Falls – the problem has too much force. We can, however, as individuals make a difference by withdrawing from the current stream of consciousness. If groups of people come together this creates a tremendous impetus to the whole of society. A very few people with high energy are enough to break up the old traditions in order to create new and better societies, otherwise un-evolving civilizations tend to die out.

Rosanna Sheridan
Vice President, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee



OPEN & ALIVE - Edition 6

Lodge & Library COVID –19 Update

The library reopened on 1st of June and we were very happy to see members and visitors coming in to visit, browse, borrow and return their Library books.

The Library is still operating on reduced hours and will continue to do so until further notice. Current hours of operation for the Adyar Library are: **10am – 5pm Wednesday to Friday only**

The Lodge has restarted some of its book groups on Wednesday mornings. The details of the groups and times are as follows if you would like to attend:

Book	Time	Convenor
Pilgrim on the Path – by John Algeo	10am – 11am	Rosanna Sheridan
The Mahatma Letters	11am – 12pm	Simon O'Rourke

The 1pm talks on Wednesdays are back; initially we are recommencing with video presentations by well respected Theosophical Society presenters rather than live speakers until further notice.

Information on the book study groups and 1pm talk topics can be found on both our;

- Meetup Page <https://www.meetup.com/Science-of-the-Spirit-of-The-Theosophical-Society>; &
- Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/tssydney>

Please note that for the safety of our members and guests all current activities at the lodge are operating under NSW COVID guidelines, and as a condition of entry you must:

- Provide contact details on arrival.
- Use the Hand Sanitiser provided on arrival
- Maintain social distancing of 1.5 metres between you and others at all times.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Debbie Isaacs
Office Assistant, Blavatsky Lodge

Greetings from the Library

Hello everyone!

My name is Marion Sinclair and I am the new Library Assistant in the Adyar Library at Blavatsky Lodge.

Some of you I have met already, and I am looking forward to meeting all the remaining members of this Lodge and hope to see you in the Library over time.

The members of Blavatsky Lodge are fortunate to have such a large and specialised library available to them. It is a wonderful collection and should be explored and enjoyed. If you need any assistance regarding the Library, please contact Graham or myself and we will endeavour to help you.

We hope to make the Library easier to use for all members, Debbie has been busy making colour coded signs indicating the different subject areas. We have lots of plans to deal with the Donated Books and process them as fast as possible. Watch this space for new developments.

We will need volunteer help to achieve some of our goals, so if you are interested in offering your skills, please let me know and identify what skills you can offer so that we can offer you something relevant. More on this in coming weeks.

Marion Sinclair
Library Assistant



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Short biographies of Madam Blavatsky's close associates



Henry Steel Olcott - (August 2, 1832 – February 17, 1907)

Was an agriculturist, American military officer, journalist, lawyer, and co-founder of the Theosophical Society.

He held the title of President-Founder of the Society from 1875 till his death in 1907. He was the first well-known American of European ancestry to make a formal conversion to Buddhism. During his presidency he helped to restore Buddhism in South Asia, and established schools for children of Buddhist and Hindu families, among many other notable achievements.

Col. Olcott related the timeless wisdom of Theosophy to the cultures of both East and West, applied it to everyday life, and built the Society into an international organization.

He was also the recipient of many of the Mahatma Letters



Godfrey Higgins - (30 January 1772– 9 August 1833)

Was an English magistrate, druid, landowner and a prominent advocate for social reform, historian, and antiquarian.

Higgins' work as a magistrate featured reformist campaigns, as part of which he "courageously exposed the scandalous treatment of pauper lunatics and campaigned for Parliamentary Reform, criticizing excessive taxation, the Corn Laws, and the exploitation of children in factories".

He wrote about ancient myths. His book *Anacalypsis*, was published posthumously, in which he asserts a commonality among various religious myths, which he traces back to the supposed lost religion of Atlantis. This book was the inspiration for Blavatsky's model of the Universe.



William Quan Judge - (April 13, 1851 – March 21, 1896)

Was an Irish-American mystic, esotericist, occultist, lawyer and one of the founders of the original Theosophical Society.

When Blavatsky and Olcott left America for India, they left Theosophy in North America in Judge's hands. The real beginning of the work of Theosophy in the United States began in 1886, when Judge established *The Path*, an independent Theosophical magazine.

Judge wrote theosophical articles for various theosophical magazines, and also the introductory volume, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, in 1893. He became the General Secretary of the American Section of the Theosophical Society in 1884, with Abner Doubleday as President.



George Robert Stow Mead (22 March 1863 – 28 September 1933)

Was an English historian, writer, editor, translator, and an influential member of the Theosophical Society, as well as the founder of the Quest Society.

He was a remarkable translator of Gnostic and Hermetic writings well before the Gnostic Nag Hammadi scrolls were discovered.

His scholarly works, approximately 30 books, were exhaustive for the time period.

In March 1909 Mead founded the Quest Society, composed of 150 defectors of the Theosophical Society and 100 other new members. Very intentionally, this new society was planned to be an undogmatic approach to the comparative study and investigation of religion, philosophy, and science.

*Reference - Wikipedia



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Excerpt from: *An Approach to Reality*

by Sri Ram, N. - Chapter 5 Reality in our living, p.52

The greatest problem for any one who is in search of the Truth- Truth which cannot be apart from his being- is *how to live*. This is so because whatever the truth may be, it has to be experienced in completeness of being. If there is any element of consciousness outside the truth we experience, it will necessarily conflict with that experience, or detract from that completeness in which there can be the sense of an ultimate end or state. The truth we seek must completely fill our being, and not be excluded from any contacts arising from the energies of that being as they flow out. In other words, it must fill ourselves and every expression of ourselves in thought, feeling and action. The experience of it is necessarily within oneself. But it must also have the definition sense of void, no loss of reality in passing from that which is within, to contacts with things that are without.

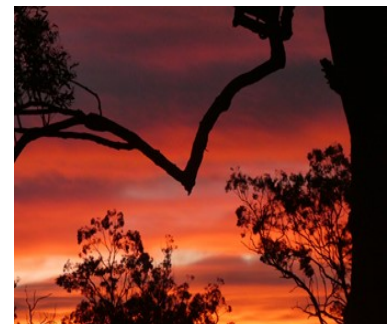
Essentially, Truth is an absolute and lies in an integrity of being. But it can be made to manifest only in forms of finiteness and relationship. The immediate field into which it can descend is that within which our own consciousness moves and functions, that is, the field of our everyday thoughts and action. The discovery of the nature of Truth is in reality, an uncovering of it. What covers, that is, suppresses and eclipses it, are the forms of consciousness which will not fit it, into which it cannot enter.

So we have to prepare the ground for the reception of Truth, and that is the ground of one's living, from which the forms or experiences of one's consciousness cannot be separated.

Eleana Papagiannopoulou
Member, Blavatsky Lodge

Namaste Series 4: 3 Violence

Violence begins with thought of **self**. which may be expressed as anger
Insight into one's actions may start with observation of one's thoughts.
Open a flow which comes ... to clear the way to freedom
Learn within each moment to hear the sound within the heart..which guides.
Ever abiding across these many worlds...come ways to **see** ...
Never to see is to **be blind** to where one is ... and **bound**.
Climb upon our ship which may cross-over all oceans ... and
Enter wherever one goes to journey.within these coloured braids .. in peace.
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Helen Lambert
Member, TS

Words of Wisdom 2.

Watch your thoughts, they become words,
Watch your words, they become actions,
Watch your actions, they become habits.
Watch your habits, they become character
Watch your character, it becomes your destiny!

Lao Tzu

Lucille Crocker
Member, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee



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Timeless: History repeats itself

By Kathleen O'Mara—This poem was written in 1869 and reprinted during the 1919 Pandemic.

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
and they rested
and did exercises
and made art and played
and learned new ways of being
and stopped and listened
more deeply
someone meditated, someone prayed
someone met their shadow
and people began to think differently
and people healed
and in the absence of people who
lived in ignorant ways
dangerous, meaningless and heartless
the earth also began to heal
and when the danger ended and
people found themselves
they grieved for the dead
and made new choices
and dreamed of new visions
and created new ways of living
and completely healed the earth
just as they were healed.



Lucille Crocker
Member, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee

Words of Wisdom 3.

If you cannot explain it simply, you do not understand it well enough.

Albert Einstein

In conflict, it is better to be receptive than aggressive, better to retreat a foot than advance an inch.

This is called moving ahead without advancing, capturing the enemy without attacking him.

There is no greater misfortune than underestimating your opponent.

Lao Tzu

He who stands on tiptoe, does not stand firm
He who rushes ahead, does not get far
He who tries to shine, dims his own light
He who has power over others, cannot empower himself
He who clings to his work, will create nothing that endures
To live in the TAO, do your job and then
Let go!

Tao Te Ching

Lucille Crocker
Member, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee





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Ode to the Onion

By Pablo Neruda

Onion,
luminous flask
your beauty formed
petal by petal
crystal scales expanded you
and in the secrecy of the dark earth
your belly grew round with dew.

Under the earth
The miracle happened
And when your clumsy green stem appeared
And your leaves were born
Like swords in the garden
The earth heaped up her power
Showing your naked transparency
And as the remote sea
In lifting the breasts of Aphrodite
Duplicating the magnolia,
So did the earth make you
Onion
Clear as a planet
And destined to shine,
Constant constellation
Round rose of water
Upon the table of the poor

You make us cry without hurting us
I have praised everything that exists
But, to me, onion
you are
More beautiful than a bird
Of dazzling feathers
Heavenly globe, platinum goblet
Unmoving dance
Of the snowy anemone

And the fragrance of the earth lives
In your crystalline nature.

Lucille Crocker
Member, Blavatsky Lodge Executive Committee



Contributions to our Newsletter

A very big thank you to everyone who has contributed to our e-mail newsletter over the period we have been producing it. Your contributions have provided interesting and insightful reads and helped us stay in touch and connected during these trying times

Disclaimer: *opinions expressed by individual members do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the Theosophical Society.*