

Centres of Theosophical Work and the Nurturing of their Inner Vitality

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First reading from [Light on the Path](#)

The condition of the soul when it lives for the life of sensation as distinguished from that of knowledge, is vibratory or oscillating, as distinguished from fixed. That is the nearest literal representation of the fact; but it is only literal to the intellect, not to the intuition. For this part of man's consciousness a different vocabulary is needed. The idea of "fixed" might perhaps be transposed into that of "at home". In sensation no permanent home can be found, because change is the law of this vibratory existence. That fact is the first one which must be learned by the disciple. It is useless to pause and weep for a scene in a kaleidoscope which has passed.

It is a very well-known fact, one with which Bulwer Lytton dealt with great power, that an intolerable sadness is the very first experience of the neophyte in Occultism. A sense of blankness falls upon him which makes the world a waste, and life a vain exertion. This follows his first serious contemplation of the abstract. In gazing, or even in attempting to gaze, on the ineffable mystery of his own higher nature, he himself causes the initial trial to fall on him. The oscillation between pleasure and pain ceases for perhaps an instant of time; but that is enough to have cut him loose from his fast moorings in the world of sensation. He has experienced, however briefly, the greater life; and he goes on with ordinary existence weighted by a sense of unreality, of blank, of horrid negation. This was the nightmare which visited Bulwer Lytton's neophyte in "*Zanoni*"; and even Zanoni himself, who had learned great truths, and been entrusted with great powers, had not actually passed the threshold where fear and hope, despair and joy, seem at one moment absolute realities, at the next mere forms of fancy.

This initial trial is often brought on us by life itself. For life, is after all, the great teacher. We return to study it, after we have acquired power over it, just as the master in chemistry learns more in the laboratory than his pupil does. There are persons so near the door of knowledge that life itself prepares them for it, and no individual hand has to invoke the hideous guardian of the entrance. These must naturally be keen and powerful organizations, capable of the most vivid pleasure; then pain comes and fills its great duty. The most intense forms of suffering fall on such a nature, till at last it arouses from its stupor of consciousness, and by the force of its internal vitality steps over the threshold into a place of peace. Then the vibration of life loses its power of tyranny. The sensitive nature must suffer still; but the soul has freed itself and stands aloof, guiding the life towards its greatness. Those who are the subjects of Time, and go slowly through all his spaces, live on through a long-drawn series of sensations, and suffer a constant mingling of pleasure and of pain. They do not dare to take the snake of self in a steady grasp and conquer it, so becoming divine; but prefer to go on fretting through divers experiences, suffering blows from the opposing forces. (LoP, pages 41-44)

Impersonal, Altruistic Work Provides the Best Channel of Inspiration

“The multiplication of local centres should be a foremost consideration in your minds, and each man should strive to be a centre of work in himself. When his inner development has reached a certain point, he will naturally draw those with whom he is in contact under the same influence; a nucleus will be formed, round which other people will gather, forming a centre from which information and spiritual influence radiate, and towards which higher influences are directed.” (“Five Messages from H. P. Blavatsky to the American Theosophists” p. 4, HPB)

“In every conceivable case he himself must be a centre of spiritual action, and from him and his own daily individual life must radiate those higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow-men.” (“The Key to Theosophy” p. 236, HPB)

“The best advice I ever found was: **1st**, Use your predominant gifts to the best advantage. **2nd**, Do not impede your fellow in so using his. **3rd**, Follow the methods of Nature. Find a current or a nucleus, and work in it. No matter whether it seems perfect to you or not. Leave results to the Law. But if no nucleus is found, become yourself a center. The Divine will enter and work through you.” (“Letters That Have Helped Me” p. 159, W. Q. Judge)

“There is, first, our own work, in and on ourselves, each one. That has for its object the enlightenment of oneself for the good of others. If that is pursued selfishly, some enlightenment comes, but not the amount needed for the whole work. We have to watch ourselves, so as to make of each a centre from which, in our measure, may flow out the potentialities for good that from the adept come in large and affluent streams. The future, then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment, so we shift the future up or down for good or ill; the future, being only a word for the present, not yet come, we have to see to the present more than all. If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future. . . .

“The only way we can alter it is by such action now as makes of each one a centre for good, a force that makes “for righteousness,” and that is guided by wisdom. . . .

“But, concretely, there is a certain object for our general work. It is to start up a new force, a new current in the world, whereby great and long-gone Gnanis, or wise ones, will be attracted back to incarnate among men here and there, and thus bring back the true life and the true practices. Just now a pall of darkness is over all that no Gnani will be attracted by. Here and there a few beams strike through this. Even in India it is dark, for there, where the truth is hid, the thick veil of theological dogma hides all; and, though there is a great hope there, the Masters cannot pierce through to minds below. We have to educate the West so that it may appreciate the possibilities of the East, and thus on the waiting structure in the East may be built up a new order of things for the benefit of the whole. We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light – a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres, from beyond the earth.” (Letters THHM p. 71, 73, WQJ)

“Try to progress in harmony; the other kind of progress will then follow in due course. Be a centre of harmony yourself and others will help you in spreading that feeling throughout. Let us all draw closer together in mind and heart, soul and act, and try thus to make that true brotherhood through which alone our universal and particular progress can come.”

(Letters THHM p. 168-169, WQJ)

“And now as to the Branch. A rush of members is not good for it unless those in are able to cope with the rush. Hence it is of high importance that the branch should educate and strengthen itself, or it may grow too rapidly, like a child, and get weak, and thus retard itself. If, on the other hand, a large number of its members become each one a centre and a power from having good knowledge of the subject, then you would see the branch go on with undoubted power and force. If you had lecture after lecture, and merely new members and no building up of the old members, your branch would die the moment the supply of lecturing was cut off. Try and impress this on whatever of the members are willing to listen.”

(Letters THHM p. 169, WQJ)

“Remember, however, that you yourself can be and are a centre to the extent that you make Theosophy a living power in your life.”

(Letters THHM, p. 174, WQJ)

“Let your *words* and *acts* bespeak the power and knowledge that is really yours. Then will you be a radiating center of light, unconsciously doing good wherever you go and whatever you do.”

(“The Friendly Philosopher” p. 21, Robert Crosbie)

“Meditation as used by us, is what is called in Sanscrit *Dhyana*, i.e., want of motion, and one-pointedness. The main point is to free the mind from the power of the senses, and to raise a current of thought to the exclusion of all others. “*Realization comes from dwelling on the thing to be realized.*” W.Q.J. says, “To meditate on the Higher Self is difficult; seek then, the Bridge, the Masters. The patient dwelling of the mind on a single thought results in the gaining of wisdom, and it is thus that the true Occultist is developed. Aspiration toward the Higher Self should form part of the daily meditation; the rising toward the higher planes of our being, which cannot be found unless they are sought. Earnest and reverent desire for Master’s guidance and enlightenment will begin the attunement of the nature to the harmony to which it must one day respond. Concentration on a single point in the Teaching is a road to the philosophy; self-examination, a road to knowledge of oneself. To put oneself in the place of another, to realize his difficulties, and thus be able to help him, is that faculty—which when extended makes it possible for the Adept to understand the nature of the stone or other form of consciousness.” Meditation is a good beneficent practice leading to a great end. It is also a great destroyer of the personal idea.”

(“The Friendly Philosopher” p. 21, Robert Crosbie)

“Doubt and Desire seem to go together; for wanting a thing implies the doubt of getting it, and intensity of doubt is expressed in fear. So Desire, Doubt, and Fear are the characteristics of the Kama-lokic state.... we can desire nothing for ourselves and determine to accept what comes.”

(“The Friendly Philosopher” p. 51, Robert Crosbie)