

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

Our present lifestyle often fails to satisfy or bring us peace, even during times of 'happiness'. Sometimes we feel hollow and so we look outside of ourselves for satisfaction. There are always those who, *for a price*, are ready to offer us a quick fix to satisfy this feeling of inner emptiness.

Humanity is so preoccupied with 'wanting and getting' that we seem to have lost sight of —

Who We Are and Why We Are Here!

You are invited to consider some important questions and comments on timeless concepts. **These ideas can be applied to your everyday life and may give you a new way of thinking about the human condition and purpose.**

Seeking your own Truth is a personal journey but you are not alone in your quest....

Every day we have to live, participate and relate to others in this world. But so often, in the process, an inner part of us remains un-nourished. It is easy to compare ourselves with others and measure our success in terms of dollars. Even though we might become wealthier and gain more material possessions and power, there are times when we notice a certain emptiness *inside* us.

There is a way of life which points more towards *inner fulfilment* than outer gain. There have always been teachings encouraging self-exploration and self-awareness. Through reflection we can calm our thoughts and the emotions which threaten to overwhelm us, and begin to sense the deeper core of consciousness that is our true essence.

It is possible to awaken our higher powers of intuition, understanding, insight, love, compassion and creativity, to begin to realise our potential and know what it means to be *fully human*.

This way of life helps us to act not only from a realisation of our oneness with all others but also from the knowledge that our thoughts, speech and actions have definite consequences. We can

see this principle very clearly today in the effects of decisions made by humanity upon the ecology of this planet.

Question: How do my Thoughts and Speech Influence my Life?

It is generally accepted that a human being has freedom of choice. We **choose** what we continually think about and when we become **aware** of what we are thinking, we can see the effect on our health and the emerging pattern of events in our lives.

A thought is a powerful first link in a chain. When we study the potency of sound at subtle levels, we can understand that we are producing a **thought-form**. A second link is the articulation of the thought which is **speech**. By verbalising the thought we give it great power and convert it into something tangible for which we are personally responsible. The first two are closely linked to any subsequent **action**. It has been said that by the sound of our own voice we write the 'melody' with which our life resonates.

A thought is a vibration and as self-conscious human entities we have the power to create. By our thoughts, speech and actions we strike our own keynote which sets up certain rhythms. These vibrations attract and give rise to the statement, 'like attracts like'.

We have a choice whether we use this potent power positively to benefit all life, or selfishly. If the latter, it will impact not only on the quality of our own life, but also on those with whom we come into contact.

Once we become consciously aware of whether our attitude and speech are producing harmonious energy, or the opposite, we begin to direct the quality of our daily life.

Question: Why am I Responsible for my Present Circumstances?

It is proposed for your consideration that we are **now** what we have made ourselves by past thoughts, speech and actions. By accepting responsibility for our circumstances, we can start to live

a more harmonious life and understand how we can attract certain circumstances in our life. The choice is ours as to the quality of our daily life and also, therefore, our future lives.

There is a universal law of **harmony** known as 'karma'. We make causes and the effects necessarily follow. The two are inseparable. Mostly, the result alone is seen without the preceding cause and therefore seems entirely unaccountable. It is common for us to feel that our suffering is the result of causes set in motion by **somebody else**.

If, however, we view events from a wider perspective, our view of the world becomes very different. Consider for a moment the possibility that a part of us is eternal, living through innumerable lives with a new personality (body, emotional and mental faculties) provided each lifetime. Consider also that the goal of the journey is to discover and perfect our uniqueness within the universal life.

Karma is neither predestination nor fate. It is a universal law of balance, correcting imbalance and explaining life's seeming inequalities. The application of this natural law does away with any possibility of luck, either good or bad. By our thoughts, words and deeds we generate energy for which we are responsible.

Question: Does Karma Help to Explain Both the Joyful and Difficult Circumstances in my Life?

Yes, Naturally life is not all plain sailing. There are periods when everything seems to go smoothly and we experience great joy. At other times we experience problems and suffering. If we begin to grasp the way in which the law of cause and effect works, we begin to understand that every situation we are presented with in life is an opportunity to balance a previous imbalance. Our **attitude** to our circumstances then becomes more important than the circumstances themselves. We have a choice in how we respond, whether positively or negatively, and our choice will dictate the quality of our life. Our joyous experiences are therefore a result of our former positive actions as well as our attitude to life, and the opposite equally applies.

When we see or hear of the unfortunate circumstances being experienced by some people, we wonder 'Why is it happening to them and not to me?' The personal and group karma of these people may be the explanation. If we accept that we each are responsible for our choices which become our personal karma, consider also that humanity has national and world karma. This would seem to indicate that souls incarnate at the same time, in the same place, to work previous karma.

At the widest level, humanity as a whole is responsible for causes set in motion through personal and collective actions over a very long period of time. These causes set in train certain consequences which may cause suffering, sometimes quite swiftly. We each have responsibility, wherever possible, to assist those in need. This is but a natural and compassionate response when we comprehend the oneness of all life and understand the great joy in giving.

Karma is not fate. It is the inevitable and just effect of previous causes. Peace will come to our world when enough people live peaceful lives.

Question: Can you Explain More About Reincarnation?

Coupled with the law of cause and effect, or karma, reincarnation provides opportunities for choice and for the restoration of justice and balance in our lives. Reincarnation in the physical world is the way in which our intellectual and spiritual evolution takes place. The soul of the individual, through its vehicles which we call the personality, continually learns and strives in its many incarnations, eventually reuniting with the Spiritual Source of all. The emptiness we sometimes feel manifests as a yearning for that 'something' which is deeper than the material world can offer.

It is proposed that each lifetime the soul calls into being a new personality with a new brain and certain capacities developed in previous lives. An accountant, closing a year's accounts and opening new ones, does not enter in the new year all of the items of the old, but only its balances. In a similar way, the soul hands on to the new brain the qualities, tendencies and capacities which are the result of past life experiences. It is the soul that can truly

remember.

The past explains the present and the present influences the future. When spiritual growth is better understood, we begin to see how we are building our own future. Our lives then become increasingly fulfilled as we make progress towards the goal of human perfection. Along the way, as we become wiser and more compassionate, we are more effectively able to help not only humanity, but all life on the planet.

Question: If I Have Lived Before, why Don't I Remember?

This question is often asked when reincarnation is mentioned. Surely we would agree that we forget more of our present life than we remember. Can you remember learning to read? The fact that you can read proves that you did so. Can you remember each and every daily incident of your present life? Furthermore, as our present brain and physical body had no share in our former lives, how can we remember those events? It is only the soul that can truly remember. Sometimes, however, we may intuitively recall a past experience.

If we accept that the immortal, spiritual part of us survives physical death, we begin to understand that life is a continuum. We tend to use the two words **life and death** in the same sentence as though they were opposites. The opposite of **death** is **life**, it is **birth**. The ageless wisdom teaches that life continues not only between birth and death but also through the period between death and rebirth.

Death, then, is seen as a recurring incident in innumerable lives, allowing us an opportunity to gain knowledge of who we truly are. It is the way in which the life just completed is assessed and assimilated. At death the physical, emotional and mental bodies are no longer needed by the soul as vehicles for experience in the material world.

Within ourselves we know that we are more than flesh and blood. Various teachings have always affirmed an indwelling Spirit which existed before birth and which will continue to exist after death.

Question: What Happens When We Die?

Death is not very different from sleep. When we go to sleep, consciousness is temporarily withdrawn from the body but we continue to have emotional and mental adventures which are often remembered on waking. In our dream state, we can reach heights that indicate realms of consciousness beyond those experienced in our waking hours.

Consider the idea that at physical death our consciousness begins a journey into realms more exalted than those entered while asleep. In the dream state, we are still connected in consciousness with our physical body and can return to it. However, at death this link is broken. It is said that at death we go to a world of light, experiencing increasing freedom as consciousness is progressively released from the heavier vibrations of physical matter. A process of purification then takes place before the soul can go into the deep and blissful state of rest which it has earned.

In recent times many personal accounts of near death experiences (NDEs) have been documented. People who have had NDEs report a feeling of peace, the sensation of travelling very quickly through a dark tunnel, a review of the life just lived and a movement towards, or entrance into, all embracing Light. This perception of light is consistent with the inner teachings of all religions.

If we accept that we are all embarked on a spiritual journey and are each an individual aspect of the one Spiritual Source to which we are gradually returning, doesn't it logically follow that our return to our Source cannot be achieved in just one lifetime; that we have lived many lives and died many deaths? Each life is like the seasoned life of a plant, with every flowering giving renewed hope of final perfection.

The physical journey through many lives provides opportunities for various experiences which the soul assimilates for its evolution. This would seem to indicate that our 'heaven' after each life is of our own making. Each life brings us closer to the journey's end. By then, the individual soul will have freed itself from the round of births and deaths and become one at last with its Divine Source.

Question: What Determines the Circumstances of Rebirth?

The long period between lives could be likened to the hours between meals; a period of digestion and assimilation as necessary as the meal itself.

Birth involves a dual mystery: first, the mystery of the growth of the physical embryo and second, its union with the soul. Teachings suggest the existence of spiritual intelligences that in some way guide the development of the new body and the working out of positive and negative karma from our previous lives. A new incarnation would then see the birth of a child in circumstances in which it can work out and experience the consequences of past actions. This is growth for the soul. Many parents are deeply aware of the responsibilities they have undertaken in helping a soul take on a new body. A loving and serene atmosphere helps a child's physical and mental development, thus assisting the soul's further growth.

In the working out of the law of karma it is further suggested that we are often born into a group of souls, many of whom were known to us in past lives and that we can incarnate with those we have loved before. Likewise, there are instances in which relationships from the past have not been happy, and opportunities are provided for these bonds to be transformed into ties of love and understanding. Through the process of rebirth we experience life in many different races and environments and gradually bring into action the whole of our divine potentiality.

Question: Is There Purpose in the Universe?

Ageless teachings have provided a vision of order in the universe which satisfies our yearning for purpose.

- Life is seen to be interconnected and purposeful rather than accidental and fragmented.
- All life is evolving and as humans we are progressively unfolding our latent capacities.
- These teachings put forward a logical explanation of the universe and its laws, humanity's origin, evolution and destiny.
- A spiritual path reaches heights beyond ordinary understanding

and points a way in which to live in the present and grow without limits.

Question: If I Develop Psychic Powers will I become More Spiritual?

There is a great difference between psychism and spirituality. In essence we are spiritual beings. We develop many powers during our evolution. These include psychic powers which will unfold naturally as we progress. They should never be forced.

If we become too preoccupied with psychic development, we may lose sight of the main goal of the human journey which is to **fully** realise our spiritual potential in **all** areas. As spiritual evolution develops there is less tendency to be absorbed in our own abilities and problems, and an increasing desire to use our many capacities for the good of life as a whole.

Why do People Meditate? And what are its Benefits.

We live in a fast moving world. Today, we are bombarded with information and with the stresses of modern living it is difficult to find a quiet moment. Human beings need to be able to tap that centre of peace which we all have within us. Going deeply within **is** meditation.

Meditation has been a central focus of the world's spiritual traditions. It helps us develop a calmer life, greater clarity of mind, the release of strength and wisdom in our lives and, most importantly, to directly realise the wellspring of strength and peace already within ourselves. In the silence of meditation we learn to still the body, mind and speech. Only in the inner silence, when the mind and the emotions are quiet, can we find true peace and fulfilment. This is a personal journey.

The word **Theosophy** means 'Divine Wisdom' and refers to the great truths which have been realised by wise ones over the ages. Some theosophical ideas have been examined in this booklet. Theosophy presents a world-view that emphasises the unity and interconnectedness of all life and the basic oneness of all people

and species on earth. It is a philosophy to be understood, not blindly accepted. It is **not** a religion, but in one sense could be regarded as the essence running through all religions.

Theosophy is a way of life which encourages the exploration of deep truths through self-examination and personal responsibility.

It illumines the scriptures and teachings of all religions by unveiling their hidden meanings, and is an ongoing ever-changing quest for truth.

Question: What is The Theosophical Society?

It is an international organisation established well over a century ago in 1875. Today branches exist in about sixty countries. The Canadian headquarters is located in Brampton, Ontario and members meet in branches and study centres across the country.

Members are seeking their own truth while acknowledging the one family of humanity without distinction of sex, race, or religion. Every religion can be regarded as an expression of eternal truth and The Theosophical Society encourages the study of religions, philosophies and sciences. Unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in the human being are also explored.

Members are united by their approval of the above objectives and by their determination to promote unity among all people. They hold that truth should be sought by the individual and not imposed by authority as a dogma. It has been said that belief can rest only on knowledge and experience.

Question: Are Members of The Theosophical Society Required to Hold Certain Beliefs?

No. The Theosophical Society imposes no dogmas but points towards the Source of unity beyond all differences. 'Together differently' could describe the attitude of members.

All people, whatever their race, religion or beliefs, are invited to

participate equally in the life and work of the Society. Members aspire towards devotion to truth, love for all living beings and commitment to a life of compassion and service.

In an official statement of policy, The Theosophical Society guarantees the right of individual freedom of thought for every member. No one, in joining the Society, is required to surrender their own beliefs and no teachings are in any way binding. Members are encouraged to exercise freedom of thought and expression within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

Question: Are there Basic Principles Behind Theosophical Teachings?

The Ageless Wisdom Tradition is founded upon certain basic propositions:

- That the universe and all that exists within it are one interrelated and interdependent whole.
- Everything, from atom to galaxy, is grounded in the same universal life-creating Reality. This Reality reveals itself in the purposeful, cyclic and ordered processes of nature.
- We are each treading our unique path on the journey of ever-expanding consciousness, to complete the return journey to the Source of our being.

Understanding the principles of Theosophy can help us to be:

Less attached to the many wants of the material world (e.g money, possessions, power, status), while understanding that certain material needs have to be satisfied.

More responsible for our thoughts, words and actions.

More tolerant of others, when we understand how the law of harmony works in our own lives.

More content at a deep level, rather than experiencing fleeting happiness when our various desires are met.

Quieter and more reflective.

Able to look at life in a fresh way from a wider point of view, as we explore life in the light of timeless wisdom teachings and begin to realise our **own Truth**.

For information about our Canadian groups, library, programmes or any other questions, please contact: president@theosophical.ca or visit www.theosophical.ca

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