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Theosophical Order of Service

(Founded February 1908)

(A Union of Those who Love in the Service of All that Suffers,
promoting the Application of Theosophical Principles)

Newsletter Date: January 2017

In December 2015, Southern India faced severe storms and heavy rains resulting in considerable flooding. The TS Adyar estate suffered considerable damage, especially to the workers' dwellings. All this just before the Annual International Convention too! TOS here donated £500 towards the reconstruction.

How the Money was Allocated in 2016:

1. **Dr Besant Memorial Animal Welfare Dispensary, Adyar** [£100]. 2. **Olcott School, Adyar** [£200]. 3. **Women's Aid, Adyar** [£200]. 4. **Free Dispensary, Adyar** [£300]. 5. **Seeing Eyes for Everyone (SEE) Adyar** [£200]. 6. **Round Table** [£100]. 1 to 6, and 16 via **Tehmi Pomeroy**. 7. **Centre for Animals and Social Justice (Uncaged)** (www.casj.org.uk) [£100]. 8. **Cumbria Mountain Rescue** [£150]. 9. **Dr Hadwen's Trust**. (www.drhadwintrust.org.uk) [£100]. 10. **Dr Cadiér (The Healing Foundation)** (www.thehealingfoundation.org.uk) [£200] via **Maureen Atkinson**. 11. **Ecumenical Israel / Palestine EAPPI** [£100]. 12. **Golden Link School, Philippines** [£500]. 13. **Joy Bells Orphanage and School Foundation, India** (www.joybells.co.uk) [£150] via **Gary Kidgell**. 14. **Muslim Global Relief** [£100] for planting trees in Africa, via **Maureen Atkinson**. 15. **Prison Phoenix Trust** (www.prisonphoenixtrust.org.uk) [£100]. 16. **TOS Home Schools in Pakistan**, [£100]. 17. **Chennai Floods, December 2015**. [£500]. 18. **Kenya TOS** [£400] via **Bhupendra Vora**. **Total: £3,600.**

♥ We are very grateful to **Tehmi Pomeroy** for conveying the donations to India.

♥ We are very grateful to **Bhupendra Vora** for conveying the donations to Africa.

The **TOS AGM** was held at Wills Hall, Bristol University, during the **Theosophical Society in England's (TSE)** Annual Summer School. The following were re-elected: **Chair: Maureen Atkinson**, **Treasurer: Greta Walker**, **Secretary and National Co-ordinator: Cynthia and Atma Trasi**. The annual subscription remains at **£4**.

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

Ed: I am very grateful to **Leslie Price**, **Father Kevin Tingay** and **Gertrude Trivedi** of Frimhurst Family House, for enlightening me about **Mrs Grace Goodman** and the **Frimhurst Recuperative House**, which celebrates its 60th Anniversary next year! **Mrs Goodman** seems to have been a most remarkable lady, and I only wish I had the good fortune to have known her and her wonderful selfless service. Her work is mentioned in the following book, along with a variety of eccentric and astonishing persons!

Far Out – The Dawning of New Age Britain by **Miriam Akhtar & Steve Humphries**. Sansom/Channel 4 Television, 1999. 1-900178-22-2. pp.21-23.

The following is from 'The Theosophical Journal' 1961, Vol. 2, Jan.-Feb.

THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

Whoever has read the report which follows will, I'm sure, agree that Mrs Goodman and Mrs Gainsford are achieving a wonderful and in the opinion of many, a unique piece of social service. This being increasingly accepted by the various County Councils which avail themselves of their services, succeeding where they often had to admit defeat in the employment of more orthodox methods.

It is work, then, that must go on. Like all ventures inspired by faith, these ladies knowing that they must prove to themselves and thus to others in action the true – the Theosophical – way of winning back into strength, hope, and ultimate self-confidence those who have found life at all levels too much for them, counted not the cost. They worked on the principle that the means will be forthcoming if the work proves worthy. How right they were and how fortunate that they had no alternative!

But the inevitable consequence is that on the economic plane this great venture is badly "in the red". And that I feel is where we come in. Frimhurst Recuperative House has been registered

officially as an approved charity, so that seven-year Covenants are the best means of rendering the maximum financial help.

So, the Council of the Order has decided to open a fund expressly in favour of the work at Frimhurst, and with permission of the General Secretary of the Society, to appeal to all members who appreciate the importance of this work and who feel constrained to give it financial backing. As with the Refugee work donations should be sent to me at 50, Gloucester Place, London W1, acting as Treasurer of this Fund.

C. L. Paul, Hon. Secretary.

FRIMHURST RECUPERATIVE HOUSE

“Today is a fitting day as I write this report, (for although it was not until 2 March 1958, that we received our first families, it was three years ago, today, on 1 November 1957, that we first took possession of the house which is now known as Frimhurst Recuperative House, a Recuperative Centre. Early this month we received our one hundredth family (with an average of three children and mother and father). This means that approximately 500 troubled souls have come into contact with, and lived Theosophy, for whatever psychological work that is done at Frimhurst, it is a facet of Theosophy in action.

The acceptance of ourselves and each other, as we are at this moment, as a basis from which one can draw from the pressure of life, take stock of oneself, assess one’s good and bad qualities, and then try and improve if one wishes, is a form of Theosophy. For the families, this period at Frimhurst is a turning point in their lives, as often for the first time they see things from someone else’s point of view.

Frimhurst is the only house in the country which takes both mother and father and children of all ages, thus treating the family as a whole and giving them an opportunity of adjusting together. We have been asked many times, not only by the families themselves but by the Council Officials and social workers who come to visit Frimhurst, why do we do this work and why is it that we are such incorrigible optimists and take most types of cases, many of which are considered as hopeless by the authorities. We then explain our belief in the brotherhood of men and the powers that are latent in man, which gives them much food for thought.

Most of the families that we get at Frimhurst are not hardened criminals, but very ordinary people who have been very badly battered by life, and it is just this last knock that was too much for them. For instance, there was the young girl of 19 years, mother of three children who tried to kill herself, as she felt quite hopeless about her future. She was little more than a child herself, and when she was better she enjoyed joining the children at play-therapy, as she had no chance to play in her childhood: as she was too busy looking after her younger stepbrother and sisters and helping her ‘Mum’ in the home. She and her husband aged 21 years had loved each other since their school days, neither had been out with anyone else, they had courted straight after leaving school, but really had not had much of a chance in the past and could see no future in a “bed sitter” with three babies. What would we have done in similar circumstances and with their background?

Another mother who had lost her home through bad management and her husband’s illness said she now realised that she had been too possessive, too proud about her family and things. Though she had always had vague desires about wanting to help people, she had always been too wrapped up in her own home and family to think of others. Of her own accord, she told us that she thinks that God must have sent her to Frimhurst to learn to use the bitter experience of losing her home. She said that her own experience will make her aware of others’ needs.

The work at Frimhurst has been proving effective, as many more agencies are sending families, and the Almoners, Probation Officers and the various Councils are recommending us to their colleagues. Recently there was an enquiry from as far as Lincoln County Council about a family they would like to send us. That was on the recommendation of the Mental Health Association, who were asked for a suitable home for this particular family.

As usual with most registered charities funds are very low, so we ask those who are able to give whatever help they can.

GRACE GOODMAN

Frimley Green, Near Aldershot, Hants.

Compassion, Community-Passion, One and Circle.

Someone came to stay at our farm around 2011, and made a little labyrinth, laying out stones on the ground in a pattern by the stream. It has been long since washed away, but it was maintained

and kept in use for a few years. A maze is a similar thing. I know what a maze is, but what is a labyrinth, what is it for? I asked someone. They explained that you walk slowly into it following its pattern around and around, going into the centre and, while doing so, mulling over a question that you want an answer to, and when you get to the centre you turn around and start to walk slowly back out and the answer will come to you. Well, that's interesting but I was sceptical about it. However, as it happened, I did have a question which was 'what is the meaning of this word compassion?' I didn't much like it, it seemed to carry connotations of do-gooding, of winning points, of superiority, of contrived sympathetic pity for people who need none of another's 'pity', but who need dignity and respect! 'Compassion': I didn't like it but I did not know why I didn't like it. Did I have the right idea about what I thought it meant, especially as others had no problem with it? So, that's what I went into the labyrinth asking: "What is it? What it does it mean?"

Well, you would not believe it, but in the moment I tiptoed, balanced, turned around at the centre of the labyrinth, what immediately came into my mind from nowhere, was "Oneness"! That's all, "Oneness". Well! I know what that is! It isn't watching someone struggling from the side lines, separate, issuing words of support while watching them struggle. No, it means being one with them, which means getting in there with them and sharing with them in their struggle. If they're pushing a heavy weight and you join them, their burden is shared. Many hands! So, I like that a lot, and I'm OK with the word 'compassion' now.

Last night I googled the definition of compassion and Wikipedia gave similar descriptions, along with its derivation from community passion, com-passion! So there you go, it means I want the best for you, and for us, it means as we are as one, one body, oneness. It's how the gift economy works, as well as it being the commons, the air, the beach, etc., giving to the other because they're you! And their needs are your needs! You want the best for them. One and zero! O, holding hands in a circle. One. Enhancing. Community enhancement, overall enriching.

Anon, New Leaves, No.118, The Movement for Compassionate Living,
www.mclveganway.org.uk

GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS

Bhutan, a country previously known for its isolationist policies, sought a new path to development. In 1972, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck introduced the Gross National Happiness (GNH) philosophy and its four development pillars as an alternative to the Western measurement of developmental success Gross National Profit (GDP). The four pillars of the philosophy are: sustainable development, preservation and promotion of cultural values, conservation of the natural environment, and establishment of good governance. With these principles in focus, Bhutan continues to improve living standards in their ongoing journey.

In 2010, the Centre for Bhutan Studies further identified these contributors to happiness so as to bring the more holistic elements to the forefront: physical, mental and spiritual health; time-balance; social and community vitality; cultural vitality; education; living standards; good governance; and ecological vitality. Both as individual and businesses we can challenge our cultural thinking: that success or failure be measured purely in financial terms, take a breather and rethink where happiness truly lies.

Suma Wholefoods Catalogue, Nov. – Dec. 2016

CHANGING THE WORLD THROUGH LOVE by *Uma Bhattacharyya*



We all dream of a better life in a better society. However, it has become difficult to go through a complete day without becoming disillusioned, disappointed and drained by the selfishness surrounding us. So many people seem to be interested only in their personal gain. They have become rude and arrogant, critical and insensitive. In a nutshell, we don't find peace and harmony in the world. Most of us feel that there is nothing we can do to change this and we attribute the cause of our

disappointment to the world. We believe that the world needs correction. From time immemorial, human efforts have been directed towards improving the world but so far, these efforts have met with little success. We do not realise that the solution lies in improving not the world but ourselves. We can find peace and harmony only by purifying our inner world. When we purify ourselves, the world is purified. This is a law of nature. The world is but a reflection of our thoughts. If our thoughts are good, the world is good. If our thoughts are bad, the world is bad. Therefore, when we change the pattern of thoughts within us, the complexion of the entire world changes. No

sooner are we born, then we are indebted to the world for all that it provides for our living. As long as we live, we must maintain a sense of gratitude to the world. So must we serve the nation, serve the family and serve ourselves. This is the first element of right living. We need to do service to maintain our proper spiritual wellbeing. The Bhagavad Gita says it is criminal on our part to consume the resources of the world without contributing to it. There are two broad principles governing human actions. The first principle is based on an attitude of giving and the second on an attitude of taking. If the attitude of taking prevails in a society, we find its members possessed with multiple selfish demands and desires. Consequently, there is stress and strain in society. Let the attitude change to giving, and our demands, desires and selfishness drop. Harmony, peace and happiness reign in the very same society.

The dignity of the human race is founded upon the principle of giving. The Buddha used to say to his disciples, "if you know what I know about the power of giving, you would not have a single meal without first sharing it with someone." In fact, no man has the right to claim anything as his and demand anything from society. Perhaps his only right in the world is to 'give', 'to serve'. "Be content to serve," pleaded Christ. Richness of mind and heart lies in selflessness and as we give selflessly, we acquire more inner power. Riches come to us to serve mankind in a bigger way. The best work is work that is done impersonally. We should keep our mind free, unattached to the work we perform. We shouldn't get mentally entangled in our work. People believe that if they don't get entangled in worldly matters, they cannot work; they cannot progress. It is an erroneous concept. In fact, truth is just the opposite. As soon as we assume an egocentric approach, "I am the doer," we involve ourselves completely in the performance of our duties with an egocentric attitude. We believe that the burden of duty rests upon our shoulders. We start hurrying and worrying about its completion. This creates mental fatigue, attachment and fear about the outcome which spoils the glow and richness of the work we are performing. We should remember that the so-called material work in hand is quite immaterial. Our foremost occupation in life should be just to do whatever work is in front of us. This is the beginning and end of our entire obligation. When our ego, our little self is absent, when we are unattached, impersonal towards our work, then real work is turned out. And we progress in life. If we take a close look at nature we can learn our lessons from the sun, moon and rivers. They work so tirelessly, so impersonally. Rivers flow. They have no personal motives. Flowers bloom. They give out a sweet fragrance. There is neither ego prompting them to do so, nor do they have any selfish desire to fulfil. We must banish the thought, "I am doing this."

The more one rises above the little self, ego, the more glorious the work. While our physical body resorts to service, the mind must embrace the world with love. This is the second element of right living. Love means realising our oneness with the entire universe. Love is being in harmony with one and all. As for maintaining harmony in our body, every part of it must consider itself one with the whole body. Similarly, when we feel and realise our unity with our fellow beings, our oneness with the entire universe, harmony in society, in the world, prevails. That is love. This is the right use of love. The moment we are in harmony with the universe, with the world, with nature, there is joy, peace and happiness all around. If we lack that feeling and consider ourselves as separate and distinct from others, we fall out of harmony with nature. There is 'we' and 'them'. Others are not like us, we fear them. We cannot trust them, they are dangerous. We project our hatred, our failures, onto them. We blame them for our problems rather than looking within ourselves. We attempt to solve our problem by 'fixing them', often with violence. But when we reach out with caring and compassion to those who seem different from us, we conquer our fear and replace it with love. We overcome violence. We are all created in the image of God and God is within us all. God is love. So, our basic underlying nature is loving, peaceful, balanced and harmonious. We are innately compassionate and kind.

The child, when it takes birth on this earth is all love. The child has no motives, no desires, no personal attachments. It is an embodiment of pure love. It is not being the lover but it is love itself. It is purity itself. That explains why the whole world adores the child. Over the course of our lifetime an overlay of fear, anger, envy, sadness, insecurity and many other negative thoughts and emotions accrue and cover our beautiful inner nature. The outer covering is intensified and reinforced by our childhood training and experiences in our current life. We appear to be what we are not, angry and fearful people filled with insecurity, guilt and self-doubts. We have forgotten who we really are. Fear prevents us from recognising our true spiritual essence. We have so many fears. We fear being rejected, being ridiculed, being humiliated, being perceived as weak,

being labelled or being foolish. Yet, these fears are false. We are always loved and protected. Love dissolves fear. One cannot be afraid when one is feeling love. True love is the state of complete fearlessness. As the depth of love increases, intensity of fear slowly decreases. The more love we have, the more divinity is expressed within us. When we remove the outer layers of dirt and debris, negative thoughts and emotions, when we clean and polish away the outer overlay, we can once again discern the true diamonds we really are. The majority of us don't live our lives being aware of our spiritual nature, so our task is to unlearn those negative and harmful emotions and attitudes that plague our lives and cause us, our communities and our world such misery. As we let go of these negative traits, we discover our true nature, our positive and loving self. It has always been there, all the time, covered, obscured and forgotten. The spiritual journey therefore, is from where we are to where we have always been. What people call love is far from true love.

The concept of love today is distorted. The much talked about love is nothing but personal attachment. Love and attachment are diametrically opposed to each other. Attachment is perversion of love. When we attach ourselves selectively to a particular object or being, we automatically detach ourselves from the rest. Attachment is not possible without relative detachment. All personal attachments limit us, they make us dependent, they prepare our fall. People rightly say "he has fallen in love." The love that people claim to possess is far from true love. It is preferential love, uneven love. True love is universal, even, the same to one and all. Jesus Christ attained that state. His love was uniform. When he was crucified, he maintained the same feeling of love and compassion for those who crucified him. The feeling of love arises from purity wherein there is no distinction, no demarcation. Purity of heart is attained when one is evolved. When we are flying in an aircraft 40 thousand feet above the ground level, hills and vales appear to be at the same level. When we reach an elevation, all differences in the objects down below disappear. Similarly, when we realise our supreme self, when we reach the pinnacle of spiritual glory, all differences and distinctions of the terrestrial world disappear. Spiritual ignorance is the cause of all sorrow and suffering in the world. There is only one way to eradicate sorrow and establish enduring peace and happiness. This is to instil knowledge of the inner self that we are all divine beings and inter-connected. Only Spiritual practices can take us to that state of elevation as they help us to develop a purer mind and subtler intellect. We get nearer and nearer to our inner core and attain realisation of universal brotherhood. It is only through spiritual practices we come to realise that we are all the same, we are all rowing the same boat, and there are only superficial and unimportant differences amongst us, no difference that really matters. Then only can we reach out to people with love and compassion. Because of the purity inside, we become humble and respectful. Without such purification, there is a danger of falling prey to one's little self, ego, while serving. It really counts for nothing when we begin to feel that "I am doing service to the world." Real social service demands soul service first. What should precede social help of any kind is the basic current of oneness between giver and taker. Only then can the social help extended work wonders for both giver and taker. In the words of Bro. N. Sri Ram, "The greatest service one can render to one's fellow beings is to spread an understanding of those fundamental truths with regard to life which can lift them out of their problems and ignorance and bring them to a condition of tranquillity and happiness they had not experienced before." If we accept the task to become enlightened beings of our planet, we can begin to change the world.

Changes will occur slowly as we begin to practise acts of kindness every day. These acts do not have to be expensive or complex. They can be nothing more than a pleasant smile or assistance to someone needing help. They can be a kind word, a sweet gesture, a caring action, a compassionate attitude, a shared joy or a helping hand. Step by step, a huge transformation of our society could begin. People will feel nourished by the kind gestures of others. Fearful attitudes and defensive mind-sets would begin to melt in the warmth of kindness. Kindness and caring cannot only be reserved for our families and friends. Our spouse, our children teach us to love. We perhaps didn't know how to love until we raised a family. Now that we have learnt the art of loving, it shouldn't be restricted or confined to the family unit alone. Our home may be the centre but not the boundary of our affection. Having generated it in our home let the rays of our affection radiate all over. If we could inspire everyone to perform a few acts of kindness each day we could change the world. At least a good beginning could be made and we can harbour more hope for the future. In addition, we could be role models for our children. They would learn the power and importance of being kind. Our children watch us closely. They model themselves on what they observe, our behaviour, our values, our attitudes. If we are hateful and violent, they will become

the same. One of our most important tasks is to teach our children right values and right behaviour through our own example. And we should do this right from the time they are infants because babies too are observing us closely and they understand far more than we think. There is no time schedule for changing the world. The only important thing is to begin. If it is true that a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step, then the first step is to let go of our fears and isolation and begin to practise acts of kindness, whether random or planned, whether big or small and to do this every day. Whether we reach out to a few or to many is not important. The numbers do not matter, the act of reaching out with care does. Sometimes when a physician touches a patient with compassion and healing, the physician benefits more than the patient. All of us are physicians of the soul. Changing the world from its current violent and hate-filled nature will not happen through the efforts of only a few enlightened individuals even if they are powerful world leaders. Rather, day-to-day acts of kindness and compassion shared between people and within small groups can bring about the change to a more loving and kinder place. The responsibility lies on each of us to reach out to the world with love and compassion without any concern for what we may gain. When our communities are co-operative and compassionate, when we are responsible and kind, we can create a little bit of heaven upon the earth. As it is said, "if we do not have the opportunity to do great things, we can do small things in a great way."

TOS International e-Newsletter 2016

The Blind Horse

Near my home is a field, with two horses in it. From a distance, each horse looks like any other horse. But if you are passing by and decide to interrupt your journey in order to watch them for a while, you will notice something unusual. Look into the eyes of the larger of the two horses and you will see that he is elderly and blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down, but has tried to make his last years as happy and comfortable as possible. This alone is unusual, but that's not the thing that makes this story amazing. Just stand nearby and listen for a while. You will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will notice that it comes from the smaller horse in the field.

Attached to the smaller horse's halter is a bell. It lets the blind horse know where his friend is, so that he can follow. As you stand and watch these two friends, you'll see that the horse with the bell is always checking on the blind horse so that he doesn't get too far away, and that the blind horse will listen for the bell and then slowly walk over towards the other horse, trusting that he will not be led astray by his friend.

When the horse with the bell returns to the shelter of the barn each evening, it stops occasionally and looks back, making sure that his blind friend is following him home and hasn't been left so far behind that he is unable to hear the bell. Like the owner of these two horses, God does not throw us away just because we are not perfect or because we have problems or challenges. He watches over us and even brings others into our lives to help us when we are in need. Sometimes we are the blind horse being guided by the little ringing bell of those who God places in our lives. Other times we are the guide horse, helping others to find their way.

Good friends are like that. You may not always see them, but you know they are always there. Please listen for my bell and I'll listen for yours. And remember, Be kinder than necessary. Everyone you meet is fighting some form of battle.

'The Healer' the magazine of Harry Edwards' Healing Sanctuary.

Donations or subscriptions to the **TOS** to **Greta Walker**, **TOS** Treasurer, Yr Ogof, Mynydd Mechell, Amlwch, Anglesey, Wales LL68 0TE. You may pay by standing order. Form can be downloaded from the TOS website. Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to 'The Theosophical Order of Service'.

Many thanks.

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