



# TRIANGLES

Bulletin 115

March 1996

## The Detached Observer

The artist painting a picture provides an evocative metaphor of the quality of detachment. There is a constant need to stand back from the easel and to look at the painting as a whole, to put it into perspective. Only through assuming this attitude of the detached observer can the artist assess whether what has been put on the canvas is true to the inner vision that inspires the work.

Similarly, the art of treading the spiritual path challenges us to stand back from the immediacy of our everyday environment. From the vantage point of the detached, inner observer we are able, first, to understand and then progressively to free ourselves from the habits and patterns of thought and emotional reaction that could otherwise enslave us. Detachment is a means of lifting our focus, so that we can observe our interaction with others and handle our energies from a higher perspective. It is an essential quality to be cultivated if we are to be more fully ourselves, more fully able to express what we sense we have the potential to achieve and to be in our lives.

Yet the very process of becoming the detached observer can, if wrongly understood, be a trap. It can lead to an unhealthy suppression of the emotions, producing a cold and aloof manner and blocking the flow of compassion. In order to avoid this trap, the skilled observer quietly watches and understands spiritually diminishing emotional and mental habits and, as a result, gradually ceases to be identified with those habits. Detachment, with love and understanding, enables the pilgrim to work with the art of transmutation and does not deny the world of emotion. The emotional life of the pilgrim skilled in the art of detachment reflects this inner centredness.

The psychologist, Roberto Assagioli, reminds us that we should think of detachment in tandem with its opposite quality, attachment. The process of detaching ourselves from one aspect of our nature requires that we attach ourselves to something else. For the pilgrim on the path this means attachment to better aspects of ourselves. Alice Bailey writes of one who has given too much emphasis to detachment and consequently become cold, unfeeling and isolated as needing to foster "the rose of attachment".

Each day, when we give energy to our Triangles, we have the opportunity to take up the vantage point of the detached observer. We stand as a point of lighted, loving energy, detached from our personal lives, and related to the two other points of the triangle. Then we take another step in detachment – moving back from identification with our own triangles as we bring to mind humanity's need for love and light, and as we identify with the global network of Triangles. Through this daily activity we are cultivating our sense of being attached to, and identified with, the One Work of serving the Plan of love and light.

# Quotations on Detachment

The sequence is, first *dispassion*, then *discrimination*, and finally *detachment*. On these three words must all disciples meditate, if they are ever to reap the fruits of sacrifice.

“Having pervaded the worlds with a fraction of Myself, I remain.” Such is the theme of the soul’s endeavor, and such is the spirit which must underlie all creative work... the soul has also to relinquish not only its tie and its gain through contact with the personal self, but it has most definitely to relinquish its tie with other personal selves. It must learn to know and to meet other people only on the plane of the soul.... The soul has also to learn to relinquish the fruits or gains of service and learn to serve without attachment to results, to means, to persons or to praise.

**Alice Bailey**

The Thinker often spoke about the wings of man, and pointed out that physical wings are not sufficient. “Know how to become detached, then you will be able to soar into the Higher World.”

**Supermundane II (Agni Yoga series)**

[The illumined soul] knows always: “I am not seeing. I am not hearing. It is the senses that see and hear and touch the things of the senses.” He puts aside desire, offering the act to Brahman. The lotus leaf rests unwetted on water: He rests on action, untouched by action.

**The Bhagavad Gita**

Detachment is needed to select and assess objectives rightly, and to relinquish or adapt them; our aims change as we climb the path and it takes a high level of quiet, inner will to decide what we shall do and where we shall go, instead of being the pawn of outer circumstances.

**Michal Eastcott**

We dis-identify by observing. Instead of being absorbed by sensations, feelings, desires, thoughts, we observe them objectively without judging them, without wanting to change them, without interfering with them in any way. We see them as distinct from us, as if we were looking at a landscape. We calmly observe those psychic arabesques from a detached viewpoint.

This attitude of serene observation can be practiced at any moment of our life, and its first effect is that of liberation. I am fearful, I observe my fear, I see its contours clearly, I see that the fear is not me, that it is a thing outside myself; I am free of that fear. This attitude of contemplation was exemplified by Pythagoras in the metaphor of the festival. Some people, he said, come to the festival to compete, some come to show off, some come to ply their trade, and some come to meet other people. But some individuals come just to watch. They do not have to prove anything or try any harder. And they are the freest.

**Piero Ferrucci**

The Perfect Way is only difficult for those who pick and choose. Do not like, do not dislike; all will then be clear. Make a hairbreadth difference, and Heaven and Earth are set apart.

**Seng-ts’an (600AD – Chinese Buddhist)**

Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff from taking various forms.... Control is by practice and non-attachment.... That effect which comes to those who have given up their thirst after objects either seen or heard, and which wills to control the objects, is non-attachment.

**Patanjali**

He who would be serene and pure needs but one thing, detachment.

**Eckhart**

We can seek to identify certain basic inner obstacles to the expression of our caring instincts. As these rise to the surface in familiar concrete situations, we can bring them into the clear light of awareness: we see how this resistance is affecting our ability to hear people’s needs; how this habit is shaping our attitude to social action; how this expectation is contributing to burnout. By carefully observing these hindrances we can strip away some of their hidden power and reduce their influence over us. With a certain amount of perspective, in fact, we can come to see them not only as problems to overcome but as information leading to a deeper understanding of service. We can make use of them, helping ourselves help others.

**Ram Dass & Paul Gorman**

# The Planetary Network

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The planetary network of light, love and service is transforming the mental climate of the planet, reorientating humanity to spiritual attitudes and values. The groups and activities reported in the Bulletin reflect different aspects of the network. Please send information on any activities that could be included in a future Bulletin.

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## Darjeeling Goodwill Animal Shelter

The Darjeeling Goodwill Animal Shelter, a registered Indian Charitable Trust, has recently opened a reading and meditation room in Darjeeling, Northern India. A wide range of information on the work of Triangles and World Goodwill can be viewed by the public. Plans are also underway to provide an outpatient clinic for animals, including treatment for ponies, an anti-rabies campaign and veterinary care. The organiser of this initiative, Christine Townend, already runs an animal care centre in Jaipur, India.

From March of this year the Unit of Service would be interested to hear from anyone willing to stay for a minimum of one month to assist in the Darjeeling Centre – four hours each day, six days a week. The group suggests that volunteers should have a knowledge of the Alice Bailey teachings and be willing to take part in, and help with, discussion and meditation meetings which are planned to begin this summer. Accommodation could be provided at a nearby hotel at reasonable rates. A library has been established and donations of spiritual books would be appreciated.

In addition to the Darjeeling Centre, the group also plans to open an animal shelter, on a one-and-a-half acre site which it has purchased in Kalimpong, near Darjeeling, close to the borders of Tibet and Sikkim. Among other activities the shelter will,

with the support of local authorities, run a birth control programme for the many stray street dogs in the area. This will involve identifying, catching, sterilising, vaccinating and then releasing the dogs.

- *Correspondence to:* Christine Townend, Help in Suffering, Maharani Farm, Durgapura, Jaipur, Rajasthan. 302018 India. *The address of the centre in Darjeeling is:* Darjeeling Goodwill Animal Shelter, c/o Mr.K. Lama, 20 Dr. Zakir Hussain Road, Darjeeling, West Bengal, 734101, India.

## Spindrift – Prayer Research

In 1975, a small group of spiritual healers began a series of experimental tests to explore the effects of prayer and healing. Experiments were held on organic systems such as seeds as well as on inorganic processes such as cards, dice and random event generators. The experiments were conducted over an eighteen year period. It was found that prayer and positive thinking had the power to change physical conditions. In 1993 the results of the experiments were published in a comprehensive 406 page report *the Spindrift Papers*.

The group believes that through prayer we are able to tune into, or resonate with, the primal healing force and direct this energy to those in need. Copies of the report can be obtained from the address below.

- Spindrift, Inc., 8464 State Road 84, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33324-4547 USA. Tel/Fax: (305) 389 9223

*The Master observes the world but trusts his inner vision. He allows things to come and go. His heart is open as the sky.*

**Tao Te Ching**

# Three Spiritual Festivals

Each year the three Festivals of Easter, Wesak and the Festival of Goodwill or the Christ Festival (when World Invocation Day is observed) are celebrated by a growing group of spiritual workers around the world. It is a time of unique opportunity for members of the Triangles network when all of our resources are called to the fore. As a group we can help in bridging between humanity, with its constant cry for salvation, and the higher energies which ever seek to respond to that cry.

At the time of the three spiritual Festivals there is a special focus in human minds and hearts. Throughout the *Easter* period members of the Christian faith are, increasingly, turning their attention to the possibilities of resurrection and renewal and to the potencies of the living, risen Christ. At *Wesak*, Buddhists across the globe focus on the possibilities of enlightenment, and on the Lord Buddha as a source of Light. A number of Triangles workers and members of other inclusive networks also focus, at *Wesak*, on the idea of the Buddha and the Christ, co-operating together, to bestow a blessing upon humanity. On the *Festival of Goodwill* spiritual thinkers of all faiths are invited to focus their thoughts on humanity's potential to express goodwill in relationships.

This is the time of the year we find the added impetus of light to awaken the personality to the presence of the soul. As conscious workers in light, love and goodwill we can actively co-operate in invoking these forces and aiding their distribution throughout the planet. The work accomplished at the time of these three Festivals provides humanity with the charge of energies required to meet the coming year's spiritual needs. United with all Triangles workers, and realising the subjective unity of the prayers of all people of goodwill (regardless of the diverse names and customs they may use to express them) we can co-operate in lighting the fires of the mind, in kindling the flames of the heart and in igniting the spark of the higher will.

These three spiritual Festivals are a time for the unification of the aspiration of humanity, a time for the setting aside of differences and personal issues to work together for the salvation of our human family. In this work, our daily individual and group spiritual efforts and aspirations are gathered and focussed into a potent appeal for light, love and goodwill to descend on earth. At the time of these Festivals we are called to gather our spiritual resources, setting all else subjectively aside and, through prayer and meditation, to literally become living points of invocative and radiant light.

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| <b>Easter Festival</b>                        | – | <b>Thursday, April 4</b> |
| <b>Wesak Festival</b>                         | – | <b>Friday, May 3</b>     |
| <b>Christ Festival \ World Invocation Day</b> | – | <b>Saturday, June 1</b>  |

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Triangles is a world service activity in which people link in thought in groups of three to create a planetary network of triangles of light and goodwill. Using a world prayer, the Great Invocation, they invoke light and love as a service to humanity. Further information is available on request from Triangles. The Triangles Bulletin is for men and women of goodwill and is published four times a year in Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish. Triangles is an activity of the Lucis Trust, a non-profit educational charity which exists to promote right human relations.

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