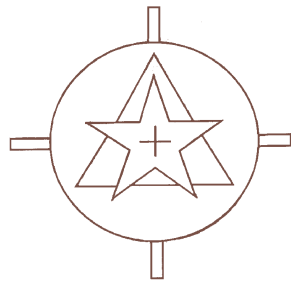


Arcane School Conference New York

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OPENING ADDRESS:
Living in the Ethers — the Spiritual Value of 'NOW'

Christine Morgan

Good morning and a warm welcome to you all. A good reason for the selection of this year's keynote: *Let the group transfigure life in terms of accomplishment*, is that the spiritual path, for an individual or a group, only comes to life when the inner and the outer are woven together — when ideas contacted in meditation are seen right through to the stage of expression in the mundane life. They don't have to be big ideas — in fact meditation is more a sequence of little ideas — little packets of buddhic energy that make their way down through the mind into the etheric body to be stored and released with skill in action throughout the day. This is why the initiate is always in a state of spiritual tension — the etheric body is charged up through meditation and frequent link-ups throughout the day, and that charge has to be held and not allowed to dissipate through distractions of consciousness. The cumulative result of this constant charging up of the etheric body is joy in the steady victory of the spirit over matter — and the transfiguration of life in terms of accomplishment.

This is ceremonial magic — sublime rhythm and ritual — and it lies at the heart of the school's understanding of "practical discipleship". The keynote is part of an instruction that the Tibetan gave to a disciple who was accomplishing at his own steady pace, doing what was required of him and no doubt doing it adequately, but who was now being called upon to expand the boundaries of life's normal rhythms and to become more invocative — more aware of the spiritual tension of the moment. It is through this enlivened state of awareness that the energies of the soul and the Spiritual Triad are continually evoked for use in service and this is what is required to transform mundane life and a typically drab environment into a dynamic arena of service. It seems a fitting call to us all as a group to do likewise.

The process involves "the joyful, uplifting power of 'udana' — one of the five pranas that circulate around the etheric body of each human being as discussed in the March school letter. Udana means "that which carries upward", and when controlled, it co-ordinates the vital airs in the brain cavities and the rising of the consciousness into the crown chakra — the Holy of Holies. As this proceeds and a disciple starts to express himself through the force centres above the diaphragm, the sheer power of his livingness is transformative.

The proclamation of the Christ, "Behold, I make all things new", can therefore be emulated by each disciple at his own level. The disciple becomes an agent of divine influence. This word 'influence' is particularly revealing - it originally denoted a fluid given off by the stars which flowed into human life affecting its destiny in some way. Disciples, as agents of the stars, relay their silent influences on earth and, from out of the tomb of matter, the divine life force rises with its gift of new beginnings.

This transfiguration may seem beyond our reach, both individually and as a group, but it doesn't have to be — our destiny lies in our own hands and it is up to us to decide whether we become warriors on the path of light or what the Tibetan calls "the plodding, fairly satisfactory aspirant". During this precarious transitional stage time in world history, the love within us requires that we do all we can to meet this unprecedented opportunity that is now presented. We must dare to throw down the gauntlet

to our personalities to take a revolutionary step forward into a new way of living as a constant point of focused spiritual tension.

It is undeniably an enormous challenge because the material world is perceived so strongly and tangibly. Even with esoteric knowledge and sensitivity to subjective impression, the senses can all too easily be overwhelmed, dissipating the spiritual life. The intensity of the inner worlds has to be strived for however, and we can attain this through acting “As If” the goal has already been achieved. Using the creative imagination in this way is to work under the occult law *energy follows thought* — the thought form we build is steadily energised to such a point of resonance with the reality to which we are aspiring that it finally transports the consciousness right into the heart of it.

In this spirit let us imagine living in the ethers as the detached observer, viewing life on the physical plane of film, each frame a crystallised image qualified by a precipitation of spiritual forces; at the point of passage from one frame to another, the observer stands, infusing subjective qualities into what subsequently will become each event of the day. To take an analogy from quantum physics, instead of being at the mercy of an ‘uncertainty principle’ where wave functions collapse unpredictably into the qualities that govern the events of the day — the disciple lives in a succession of controlled moments of transformation.

From this perspective, the present is simply a point of tension between the future and the past; and it is vital for us to grasp this truth as a group if we are serious about transfiguring life in terms of accomplishment. Our success hinges upon the idea of being focused in the present — in the “now” — where past, present and future form a flowing continuum. Helena Blavatsky gives this wonderful elucidation:

“Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration... The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past. Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change—or the same—for the billionth part of a second; and the sensation we have of ...the division of “time” known as the present, comes from the...glimpses of things that our senses give us as those things pass from the region of ideals which we call the future, to the region of memories that we name the past... No one could say that a bar of metal dropped into the sea came into existence as it left the air, and ceased to exist as it entered the water, and that the bar itself consisted only of that cross-section thereof which at any given moment coincided with the mathematical plane that separates, and, at the same time, joins, the atmosphere and the ocean. Even so of persons and things, which, dropping out of the to-be into the has-been, out of the future into the past—present momentarily to our senses a cross-section, as it were, of their total selves, as they pass through time and space (as matter) on their way from one eternity to another: and these two constitute that “duration” in which alone anything has true existence, were our senses but able to cognize it there.”

Interestingly, Helena Blavatsky’s description of the future as the realm of ideals is entering modern philosophical thinking via what is known as process philosophy based on the work of Alfred North Whitehead. He was the first to understand the implications of wave-particle duality in quantum physics. Because electrons are perceived as waves until they interact with something and seem to collapse into particles, he realised that an electron is not a thing like a tiny billiard ball but a process. You cannot have a wave at an instant — by definition it takes time. A wave has a future pole and a past pole — the future pole is a realm of possibilities and when the electron interacts with something such as the physicist’s measuring device — the wave collapses out of the world of possibilities into the world of observable facts.

Whitehead then went on to apply this beautiful explanation of quantum uncertainty to the human being — he theorised that the mind is the future pole, the body the past pole. Our minds live in a realm of potential energy that constitutes the virtual future from which we choose what will precipitate into measurable facts or activities in the concrete world. This corresponds to the precipitation stage of meditation when the energies that have been contacted act like waves of energy which collapse down the planes to finally be distributed through the five planetary inlets irradiating human consciousness. As they are then concretised into activities of goodwill by people around the world they become the past.

The purpose of all this esoteric imagery is to highlight the fact that perception is everything, and only through a changed perception can we then work practically to change our fragmented daily lives and states of consciousness. The major point is to regard ourselves and all other human beings, in fact, everything in manifestation, as a process rather than a substantial 'thing'. This can then help us to understand the idea of synthetic motion that the Tibetan would have us express in daily life. Through synthetic motion life becomes the harmonious spiritual flow of processes such as the activity of the centres, sheaths and causal body.

In connection with this, the Tibetan states, "One of the main functions of the Master in this cycle...is to teach His pupil how to reconcile all these factors, how to synthesise their various modes of motion or expression, and how to co-ordinate them all so that the vibration is uniform. When energy from the Ego controls, or imposes its rhythm upon the various sheaths via their respective major centres, when the triple fire is mounting in orderly fashion via the triple channel, and when the three head centres are united in triangular fashion, then we have illumination or the irradiance of the entire personality life, darkness gives place to light, and the Sun of Knowledge arises and dispels the darkness of ignorance...The man becomes a burning and a shining light, radiating forth a light which burns from within. He becomes a sun or son irradiating others. When the next step is accomplished, and the energy of the Monad, focussed through the jewel, makes itself felt also on the physical plane, passing through the triple egoic lotus via the channels already utilised by the Ego, we have a man who is "inspired," who is a spiritual creator, and who is himself "a Sun of Healing Radiance."

To stand at this point of tension is to become Masters of our own destiny. It is to stand at the centre of the spiraling cyclical motion of the ray of love-wisdom as a creative agent — building right relationships in the environment by projecting light and love into the heart of matter. It is true creativity. Furthermore it is possible of attainment no matter where we live, what we do or what age we are for accomplishment is already within us in one sense, it is just a case of evoking the energy of the perfect ideal or archetype of ourselves — the spiritual ego — and letting it flood into our lives to illumine and transform the immediate duty and goal, and concentrating on extracting the gold from the base metal of everyday life — this is the very basis of transmutation, transformation and eventual transfiguration.

Of course, this is extraordinarily challenging in the face of life's demands, but there's a very positive aspect about this keynote in that our eyes are not focussed on some grand service plan or a sense of failure but rather we are looking toward the immediacy of transfiguring life in the foreground of daily living. We are being called upon in this epoch to evoke the higher mind to crown the lower mind's achievements and help humanity sense and see a vision of the "glory of the One" in that which is immediate and local rather than futuristic and distant.

This integrated group pattern of thought becomes a living, lighted mandala through which the Hierarchy can work and each student is a part of the pattern and a vital link in the relaying of energy

into his or her environment. It is through a disciple's closeness to the field of service, to the new group of world servers, to humanity, as well as the lower kingdoms, that makes him a vital link of the chain in releasing hierarchical energy in appropriate ways. Through the cumulative efforts of each disciple, discipleship groups grow in power and by their cumulative efforts we will finally witness the resurrection of humanity into an era of soul living, which will include a shift to etheric living.

This shift comes at a price, but a relatively small one if we consider that it is really the shift from the monotony and repetitiveness of physical plane living into the creative ever original experiences of etheric living. That is the beauty of the esoteric life — the same force is never experienced twice. This is because from the subjective point of view, the energy body of everything in manifestation is a rotating sphere, each, radiating influences and being subjected to the radiation of other spheres itself — everything affecting everything else and minute changes of transformation taking place in perpetuity. So at any moment of the day, all manifested spheres in the universe, from atoms to humans to planets, suns and galaxies are all in a slightly different position to one another, the combined forces bringing something new to each that has never been experienced before. If we can dwell upon this point we will realise that the attempt to consciously live in the ethers and really strive to experience life in terms of energy patterns is the most uplifting, creative thing we can possibly do. It is the joy of living in an ever changing mosaic of light, colour and sound every part of which is alive and vibrating with dynamic life.



GROUP DISCUSSION — Resonating to the Group Thought Life

A group discussion focussed on the following questions:

1. “It is not so much the active outer service of a group of disciples which is of major importance (though it has necessarily a vital purpose) as the coherent, integrated group thought which is so potent in effecting changes in human consciousness”.
2. The challenge of “forgetting the things that lie behind” in order to “make all things new”.
3. “Through the cumulative efforts of each disciple, discipleship groups grow in power and by their cumulative efforts we will finally witness the resurrection of humanity into an era of soul living, which will include a shift to etheric living.”
4. Consider the phrase 'etheric living' - what might this mean and to what degree are we living our own lives etherically?



Art, Magic, Redemption, and the Life of Discipleship

Allison First

“Music hath power to sooth the savage beast” — or so the saying goes. It seems to be a fairly common assumption that music is endowed with some special power, or some exceptional quality that can transform, transfix, uplift, heal and inspire the listener. In fact, humanity has always held a certain fascination with all of the arts — painting, literature, dance, and so on. All of the arts seem to possess a special quality, that humanity has, at its core, always held dear, meaningful and worthwhile.

In trying to put a finger on just what it is about the arts that transfixes us, perhaps, one might say that the arts have a certain magical quality about them. However, the word 'magic' is a bit of a stretch for the Western mind and a generally unacceptable concept in the Western world.

Yet, in ancient times, the arts — music, drawing, storytelling, dance, and sculpture — were sacred activities and the arts had a clearly defined association with the spirit world and magic. In ancient times, the arts were often the domain and special the purview of the local holy person, shaman, or wise man or woman who could see between the worlds and mediate between spirit and the local community. The arts were an important tool in the arsenal of a spiritual leader. Along these lines, it is interesting to note that the word *bard* — a story-teller and musician — has down the ages lost some of its meaning and definition. Originally, the bard was a druid priest and it was in the role of spiritual guide and mentor that a bard was charged with offering music and stories. Although the modern artist is no longer recognised as spiritual mediator and guide, nonetheless, the modern artist continues to play a similar role in the world to this day.

Many indigenous cultures around the world still hold that their art forms are imbued with magic and the power to heal and transform. Ephemeral sand paintings are still offered by Tibetan monks and American Indian medicine men alike; dance is still considered sacred in many cultures, as is storytelling. Some cultures still believe there is a magical power related to the drawings, sculptures, and tribal totems that depict their gods, goddesses and legends. And, we should remember that these are often beautifully rendered pieces, and of a quality valued by Western museum curators and collectors alike.

When indigenous cultures venerate and value the magical qualities of their religious and spiritual art, this is — in the end — really not so very different than the veneration and reverence of modern Westerners when they pay tribute, in great throngs, at the sculpture and art museums of our day.

Both modern and indigenous works of art are simply the representation of ideas and ideals and these provide a vehicle in which consciousness can circulate and offer a point of view for consideration. Modern art is not unlike the sacred mandala that supplies a point of focus for contemplation. Both modern and tribal art — when successful — provide an experience that serves to raise consciousness and conveys a certain indescribable something that acts as a transforming agent.

That special transforming something we experience in all great works of art is actually the presence of the soul. It is the soul's magical presence that makes a piece of art worthy for display in a museum. It is the dynamic and radiant quality of the soul that transforms mere pigment on canvas from an

inanimate object into a living presence that both stimulates and opens understanding. It is the magic of the soul that turns simple pitches and sounds into the great music that can transport us to higher dimensions and, it is the presence of the soul that finds just the right way to express the written word, so that inert ink and paper become a powerful force that moves us deeply, shows us our humanity and opens doors in our mind to some of life's great lessons. A work of art is considered art to the extent that the artist has succeeded in expressing and clothing in matter the intuitive, yet dynamic insight of the soul.

When art is personality driven, it fails to hold our interest and engage us in the same way that art will touch us when it is informed by the transcendent quality of the soul. Work informed by the soul is always innovative, unique, and new, and it will often speak volumes, and on multi-dimensional levels of understanding.

Art is a mediating point where spirit and matter meet in the world. Art is the place where, somehow — impossibly — unyielding matter is intertwined and mingled with spiritual substance. The life of the artist is much like the life of discipleship. Make no mistake about it, to become an accomplished artist is quite an amazing and heroic undertaking. It is a truly painstaking task to achieve mastery in some one field of human endeavor. It requires tremendous discipline and sacrifice, undergone willingly, and often over several lifetimes — it is labour of great love. Not only must skills and knowledge be acquired and mastered, but somehow intuition must also be called into play as the key ingredient that makes a work of art truly transcendent. Intuitive interplay is the crowning glory in all artistic accomplishment, and the element that magically transfigures and redeems matter.

Art is by its very definition a sacred place and to the extent to which any matter is penetrated by spiritual qualities and spiritual values, is the extent to which any matter will be transfigured and redeemed. There is always a definite art to expressing any thought, word, or deed — no matter how small or big — with the integrity, levity and wisdom of the soul. And making an art of anything we do always requires focus, insight and creativity.

Yet, in order to *fully* bring spirit into matter takes creative genius. Creative genius, is in the end simply the mastery of man's innate creative intelligence, or the capacity for active intelligence. The active intelligence is the ground whereon the artist, magician, or disciple must take their stand in order to mediate between the two worlds of spirit and matter. Creative intelligence is the seed that coordinates and synthesises above and below. Creative intelligence is the place that simultaneously looks above and works below, and the faculty that holds intuitive guidance in mind, while working with the materials and/or circumstances at hand to desired ends. Creative intelligence is the quality with which humanity is both gifted and called to evolve, and thereby serve as the planetary light-bearer. The creative intelligence is the faculty that figures out how to resolve the dichotomy between spirit and matter so that in the end — with great and unique invention — the light of spirit becomes a manifest on earth. Creative *genius*, is therefore the accomplished mastery of working with soul and matter in some one field of human endeavor.

The light of the active, creative intelligence is the substance of one's own being that both the disciple and the artist must use to weave the two worlds together, like the spider spins its web. The disciple, like the artist, takes on unyielding matter and it is a tremendous undertaking, requiring sacrifice, strength, and discipline to bind the two worlds together.

When the attempt is made to bring together the two divergent streams of divinely inspired ideas and the realities of harsh and static matter, at first, there is friction and conflict. The middle ground of intellect, is the place where the artist and the disciple must hold a point of tension — a point of fusion

between above and below. One must strive to make this point of tension so complete and so devoid of any thought of oneself that a vacuum is created between the worlds of within and without; a vacuum that simultaneously draws in spirit and lifts up matter. This is an active intellectual process, requiring focus and concentration so complete that it brooks no room for anything else, save the task at hand.

For example, any symphony musician will tell you that when they perform, there is no room for any thought of self. The symphony musician must be totally absorbed in hitting the right notes, in just the right time and in just the right way; there is no room for anything else if one wants to be worthy of a seat in the orchestra.

Perhaps the symbol of the cross (\oplus) can best describe the point of tension held by disciple and artist alike. The cross describes four divergent points all held together at a point of tension at the center. The disciple, we know, willingly mounts the cross in self-forgetfulness, but it really is not so much the dreary cross of self-sacrifice as it is potentially a really fun process of finding the exact point of equilibrium at the center of one's being; such as the fun we have when we isolate the task; such as when we decide to create a self-chosen work of art or play some music. An accomplished artist is one that has found and identified the authentic point at the center of their being—the point of unique and radiant individuality. Holding the point of the true self is a deeply rewarding experience; it is the point of balance that creates harmony out of conflict; it is the point wherein the sacrificial four corners of the cross are resolved into the sacred center. Anyone who has ever studied music theory knows that the music engages and pleases us is by creating points of tension that are then resolved.

The symbol of the cross has a long-standing association with the Christ, but in ancient times, a cross within a circle was often used as a symbol for the Sun. Some scholars think that the shift in pagan worship from the Sun to the Christ, is indicated in the assignment of December 25th for Christ's birth, which is the date of the old Roman solstice, associated with the return of the Sun god Apollo.

In considering the mediating point of tension — held by artist and disciple alike — the symbol of the sun is very like an abstraction of the cross within a circle, wherein only the periphery and the point of tension at the center are depicted. Finley Eversole in his book, *Art and Spiritual Transformation*, points out that art is a process of finding the point of equilibrium; of moving from the dot off-center, to the dot finding the point of balance at the center of the circle. This point of balance is curiously enough also the symbol for the Sun.

The symbol of the sun is a symbol for completion, radiance, and individuality. We find this symbol (dot within circle) in the sign of Leo, ruled by the Sun. Again in the opposite sign of Aquarius, the symbol for the sun (the dot within the circle) might actually be considered an abstract depiction of a pot of water (circumspect, complete and with a focalized point for distribution). This abstracted pot of water is held in a point of balance atop the disciple's head — like a crown.

In the symbol of the sun (the dot at the center), periphery and center are held as one and the part has found its right relationship with the whole. Similarly, when the point of individuality becomes known, one's relationship within the greater whole is also understood (within/without; above/below; individuality/unity, sacrificial/sacred). Each one of these states is implicit within the other. The dot at the center of the circle, like the point of tension at the center of a cross, is an indication of the right relationship having been found between the part and the whole, and the whole to the part. One implies the other and the two become inextricably interwoven when the true point of equilibrium is found.

As said, art is a mediating point between the two worlds. Art is the magic of the soul, manifest via creative intelligence, holding the point of tension at the center. The point at the center is our authentic voice — our own unique individuality. The point at the centre is the point of balance, the point of harmony; it is the Master in the Heart that knows without having to be told by any outside source what is right; it is the transcendent genius within each of us.

The artist comes to know this point by showing up at the studio every day to make things. And similarly, the disciple doesn't serve because he knows, but knows because he serves. Holding the point at the centre, we accomplish little points of wholeness — little points of completion that transfigure the world. These little points of wholeness lead us to ever widening circles of completion and thereby — accomplishment, by accomplishment — the disciple develops the fine art of binding the two worlds together, or the fine art of continuity of consciousness. This is the task before every disciple and the magical art form that transfigures and redeems the world.



Visualisation: Lead us from Chaos to Beauty

The Sun upon the Square

I. Group Fusion

Imagine the collective consciousness of all who are gathered here fusing into one united spiritual organism and serving as a mediating point of consciousness between the human kingdom and the kingdom of souls.

II. Visualisation

“Opening up before the group mind — a square or oblong, composed of a kaleidoscopic mass of inchoate colours, moving, pulsating and in constant indescribable confusion.

Superimposed upon this square is a radiant sun with a penumbra composed of the seven prismatic colours; these colours radiate from the sun in regular rhythmic bands and produce a marvelous blaze of colour.

The background of the square appears to have its confusion of colours shown of a heavy, lurid kind and quality; the scheme of beauty emerging (even if it appears as superimposed) is translucent and delicate and radiantly living in hue. The heavier background can be distinctly seen through the translucence.”

Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. II, p.305

Work creatively and imaginatively with this living symbol — integrating it into the group consciousness. As the group becomes sensitive to its magnetic field of revelation, imagine a new transparency of lighted meaning and spiritual order revealing itself.

III. Focus the formula to a point of spiritual tension:

Lead us from Chaos to Beauty

Visualise the bands of prismatic colour radiating out from the sun, and through the group mind and heart, carrying those revelatory energies which are ready to emerge in the world.

IV. Distribution

Let the group affirm the fact of these impressions of beauty and synthesis being transmitted deep into the heart of human consciousness

*In the centre of all Love I stand
From that centre I, the soul, will outward move.
From that centre I, the one who serves, will work.
May the love of the divine Self be shed abroad,
In my heart, through my group, and throughout the world.*

OM OM OM



Ceremonial and Ritual in the Daily Routine

Amanda Williams

In thinking about ceremony and ritual, we are apt to imagine the elaborate undertakings of the Catholic Church or of Masonic practice, and indeed those are ceremonies and rituals. However, when we shift our focus to consider ceremony and ritual in the daily routine, we find a much more simple application of the same idea.

In *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. I*, we are told that “No one on earth can evade ritual or ceremonial, for the rising and the setting the sun imposes a ritual, the cyclic passing of the years, the potent movements of the great centers of population, etc... all of these impose a rhythm upon humanity” (p. 365). These daily rituals observed in the movements of the heavens are the essence of what ceremony really is — the establishing of rhythm in our lives.

Rhythm — now there’s a fascinating subject. It is said that the original drummers were women. Indeed the very word “meter” is derived from the word “mater,” related to “mother.” Why? The ancients noted the obvious effects the cycle of the moon manifested on the female body in the form of the monthly menses. Only right and natural that women should be appointed the keepers of time as drummers.

This whole theme of ceremony and ritual can be easily applied to music in many ways. For one, rhythm is an inherent part of both music and ceremony. It has been said that music is nothing more than making order of time. When you consider the progression of one note to the next in sequential order, melody applied to a specific rhythm, it is easy to see how this can be seen as true.

Also in *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. I* is the statement on p. 331 that the “development of sattva or rhythm within the human kingdom.... Is really harmonious response to vibration, and leads to the integration of the unity in the whole and to the production of that “understanding” which will enable the man to eliminate all barriers in his consciousness.”

Wow. That's a heavy statement. So, when we impose rhythm upon our daily lives, we are actually bringing ourselves into harmony. With what? With this impressing vibration — whether is that of the Soul, of the group, the Monad, etc.

The whole notion of being in harmony with something implies a group consciousness. Going back to the music analogy, when something is in harmony, by definition there must be more than one thing happening. Sometimes in a spiritual context, one is tempted to think of “being in harmony” as a state of being balanced within ones self, and it is good and desirable state, indeed. However, is it not also possible, given the musical analogy at hand, that something more and greater is implied by this harmonizing action. In music, one note alone has nothing with which to harmonize. As soon as we add another note to the mix, we've got the possibility for harmony (or discord — but we're talking about harmony here). One note alone can't do any of that. It sits there and contemplates its aloneness and is contented to be a singular expression of tone. There can be no melody, no movement, no rhythm, nothing but note.

Now, when we add another note to the mix, then we've got something. Suddenly, we have melody, movement, action. We have relationship, rhythm, and tonality — the experience of how the notes work together. When the two or more notes are sounded in unison, then we have harmony — this thing to which the passage refers, this “harmonious response to vibration that leads to integration”. Integration with what?

We have just discussed the fourth ray and its particular influence on the human fabric. Though artists and musicians fall on every ray, the 4th ray is often seen as the ray of the artist because of the keynote of conflict inherent in its manifestation. There are many reasons for this — and many correspondences that can be explored, namely, for the purpose of our discussion, the imposition of conflict — harmony through conflict to be specific — upon the environment.

Music is all about tension and resolution. Without it, the music is static and non-dynamic. Tension is the musical equivalent of conflict — to be exact, the interlude between dissonance and resolution— between harmony and discord — and here in music we see harmony through conflict practically applied.

The fourth ray is also a clearing house — the half way point in the rays, the equivalent function the solar plexus plays in dividing the centers in the body between the lower triangle and the upper correspondences. Fourth ray individuals, a great many of them artists of various disciplines, serve as the clearing house for humanity — displaying their working through of conflict and the resulting harmony when consonance is achieved to their fellow man.

What is the goal of all this? What is the purpose our daily lives achieve? It has been said that the goal before us on the spiritual path is to reconcile the pairs of opposites so that the underlying unity can be discovered. When we consider the ceremony and rituals present in our daily routine, be they complex as in the organized pageantry our military displays or simple as the rhythm of our own heartbeats, we become aware of the cyclic nature of our environment. In this act of paying attention, of presence, of mindfulness we recognize the sacred element of all the phenomenal appearances we encounter, and the act of consciously recognizing the divine in all we encounter brings an added element to our journey. When we think about this concept applied to the topic at hand “ceremony and ritual in the daily routine” we see the significance that rhythm plays in all of this.

For many of us on the Path, the establishing of a daily routine is a chore. It is in this conflict that we truly get to the bottom of the thread that connects this whole topic. As aspirants, we subject ourselves to a series of integrations followed by a harmonizing with the overriding influence of the Soul. It is

dealing with the resulting, for some of us frequent, bouts of rebellion waged by the personality which causes us to feel imposed upon by this tyrant of a thing — the Soul. Yet, we subject ourselves, willingly of course, to the reality of this conflict between our desire to achieve integration and synthesis with the Soul and Higher correspondences while our selfish little personalities whine and moan and resist falling into line — coming into rhythm — abandoning the world of duality for a realization of unity.

Nothing causes such an outcry of indignation in the neophyte (especially those of an artistic disposition) than the notion that one ought to have a daily routine. We want routine, we desire it — and we know that a daily routine would be best for everyone involved. But oh the pain! Oh the conflict — the constant internal (and at times external) complaints of the stubborn, prideful, matter laden personality and its burdensome physical — emotional —mental triplicity to drag around!

But what is daily routine really getting at? Maybe by looking closely at the underlying significance of such a thing, can we as aspirants on or approaching the path of discipleship, find the will, in addition to the desire (which is already present) to accomplish this miraculous feat of self discipline. Discipline — disciple.

The daily routine speaks of rhythm. Arcane School students are all mindful of this need to make our meditations regular — preferably at the time of the sunrise. There are scientific reasons for this guideline — namely the natural facility of balanced and equally opened nadises at that early hour, but there are other reasons for the aspirant to adopt a regular routine of meditation and waking activity.

For one, as we just described, order is the natural expression of the divine will. Chaos is the opposite of order, which is why the ancients viewed Chaos as evil. So, any implementation of order we can affect upon ourselves is all the better for achieving our group purpose of fitting ourselves for service.

Remember — rhythm has in it the seeds of harmony. So in essence, imposing rhythm on ones own life (through this act of will and sacrifice — at least as the personality sees it) is bringing oneself into harmony. And how can we be in harmony as a single human expression? We can't! Not without realizing that we are but a brightly colored spoke in the great wheel of humanity. We must recognize our place within the whole, and realize that we are indeed all One.

As we prepare to break into groups, we should recognize that each of us plays a vital role in the fabric of humanity, and through our group consciousness, we can entrain ourselves to work in unison for the greater good of the whole. Recognizing the sacred all around us, being mindful of the cycles and rhythms in our environment, and celebrating these in the form of ceremony and ritual is really a celebration of each of us — of our unity through diversity, and of our common source and destination as pilgrims on the path of discipleship.



Walking Each Other Home: Thoughts on the Law of Group Progress

“We’re all just walking each other home.” - Ram Dass

Many have written eloquently about the Law of Group Progress particularly since the Festival Week in December. Of course, Alice Bailey wrote definitely on the subject. Martin Vieweg has an insightful paper on the Law of Group Progress posted on his Website www.whentheshoulawakens.org. Lucis Trust has sent out quite a bit of material on the Law, which was summarized in the Arcane School letter of December 2012:

The Law of Group Progress indicates the altitude that a discipleship group aspires toward to help the passage of this new light from the fifth to the fourth kingdom on nature. Sometimes referred to as the Law of Elevation, it concerns the mysteries of group realization and expansions of consciousness into “fullness of life.” As such it holds the key to group work as can be inferred from the following comment by the Tibetan: “Disciples in my Ashram have a dual responsibility to stand steady in the preservation of realization. . . . It is through the unbroken conscious thinking of a welded group of disciples that a Master of an Ashram works. It is not so much the active outer service of a group of disciples which is of major importance (though it is necessarily a vital purpose) as the coherent *integrated group thought*, which is so potent in effecting changes in human consciousness.

Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. II, pp. 503-04

What I would like to talk about today is how the Law looks in manifestation. The purpose of the Law. How it is implemented. I will use my own story as the backdrop of the larger tale—knowing full well that each of us has a story that bound together illustrates the Law of Group Progress in Action. At the end of my talk we will have the opportunity to feel the Law in Action as we recite together the Old Commentary Mantra about Walking Each Other Home.

For the majority of my 13 years as an Arcane School student, reading, study and meditation were my prime movers. I worked them into a busy professional life as a health care CEO but the books came out at every chance, even if my meditation practice lagged behind. Esoteric knowledge was the goal and cosmology was the interest. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and Infinity I and II were my favorite books.

In early 2005, I started the Weavers in the Light study sets with no understanding that my world was about to be turned upside down. In September of that year, a tiny spore called blastomycosis ended my career and almost my life. My reaction to that life altering event was to delve deeper and deeper into reading, study and knowledge acquisition. I withdrew into disability and psychically licked my wounds. A hermit’s life suited me fine.

That all changed in 2008 when I read Laurence Newey’s article “The Electric Gods” in *the Beacon* magazine (April-June 2008):

The notion of a cold, sterile universe, where galaxies, suns and planets spin in isolation, has reflected man’s self-absorbed, materialistic consciousness down the ages. But today our steadily shifting perception toward universal brotherhood and interconnectedness is reflected in a new awareness of the electromagnetic nature of the universe. In *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* we are told that “All physical phenomena as we understand the term have an electrical origin and an initial vibration on the first sub-plane of the physical plane.”¹ We find echoes of this great truth in the words of plasma scientists Wallace Thornhill and David Talbott:

From the smallest particle to the largest galactic formation, a web of electrical circuitry connects and unifies all of nature, organizing galaxies, energizing

stars, giving birth to planets and, on our own world, controlling weather and animating biological organisms. There are no isolated islands in an electric universe (Thunderbolts.info (website), David Talbott and Wallace Thornhill).

That last sentence—there are no isolated islands in an electric universe—was my wake-up call. For several days I mulled this sentence over in meditation and went to www.thunderbolts.info to find out what else these two men had to say. Soon, I had several of their books, which I could not put down. After that, I signed up for the Thunderbolts Update Newsletter to keep abreast of developments and found that the group was looking for volunteers.

Through a serendipitous series of events, which consisted of a persistent offer to volunteer over two years, I began to get more and more involved. First, it was an offer to create a database then to sell books at an NPA/EU conference, which was followed by coordinating the first and second annual Electric Universe (EU) conferences.

My volunteer job titles began to accumulate until they included volunteer coordinator, conference organizer, student scholarship coordinator and executive assistant plus a few others. To my amazement, involvement with the Electric Universe (EU) group coincided with leaving the acquisition of knowledge behind. Originally, it was not a lack of desire to study and read but a wholesale lack of remembering the details. Apparently, it was time to act rather than study about acting.

Therefore, I had no choice but to work administratively with no pretensions to know the science behind the Electric Universe. Plato's comment "I know nothing" came to have significant meaning. This situation was at first quite embarrassing when EU colleagues expected me to know what they knew. Eventually, they came to accept that my job was to support those who spread the idea of an interconnected electric universe, and I could do that without knowing all the details.

This lesson illustrated the fact that we were all one organism, each with a specific job to do based on our ray attributes. Many Ray 5 science minds supported by a Ray 7 administrative brain were an excellent combination to spread the word about an Electric Universe.

Service in group formation was and continues to be the unifying key. DK said that "No esoteric group is soundly handled and correctly motivated unless the spiritual energies find expression in definite Service." What we are led to do in progressive stages as students of the Arcane School is to cultivate this HABIT of "spiritual livingness" through Service in the field to which we have been drawn both exoterically and esoterically.

Through this transformative process, I discovered that our work is not about reading, studying and becoming more holy. DK reminded us that esoteric learning is not intended to drive our spiritual life into greater and increased subjectivity, which would be the mystic's path of least resistance. As evolving Arcane School students on the esoteric path, we are expected to learn how to absorb energy and how and in what measure to distribute that energy in everyday life wherever we have found opportunities to Serve. In these days of change, there are no hermits allowed.

What direction that service takes may look random on the outside but is actually astrologically conditioned by our ray combinations at birth based on the Soul's plan for our life. We can follow that plan through intuitive study of our Natal Chart as well as astrological transits that unfold throughout our lives.

For example, my transit for today looks like this:

Transiting Jupiter Conjunction Jupiter:

This transit shows the beginning of a new cycle in your life. Every 12 years Jupiter comes back to its natal position signifying a time of renewal. In particular it shows the end of a cycle of beliefs. You have been learning about your own spiritual, religious or philosophical beliefs, and have now reached a new level of understanding. Therefore during this transit you may meet new teachers, join new groups or start new activities which will help you in the next 12-year cycle of learning.

As you know on a larger astrological scale, 7th Ray energies are coming into play during this current Aquarian cycle. This is a particularly potent period because Aquarius is ruled by Uranus, whose energy is that of the 7th Ray. The 7th Ray always inaugurates the emergence of a new kingdom in nature, and DK said the emergence of the 5th Kingdom will be the eventual result of this Aquarian Age.

Today, as the 7th Ray comes into manifestation, we shall see the approaches between the two higher kingdoms of men and souls [Hierarchy] greatly facilitated as the magical work in the producing and bringing about of relationship begins to go forward as desired. It is the work of the 7th Ray which will bring about sensitivity to one of the Major Approaches which is being now attempted. *Only as history is made and we learn later the nature of the epoch through which the race of man has passed will Humanity appreciate the significance of the present Hierarchy and the magnitude and success of its achievement since 1925 . . .*

Esoteric Psychology, Vol. II, p. 273

Success will depend on us disciples illumed by Love-Wisdom serving in group formation as part of the New Group of World Servers. My colleagues of The Thunderbolts Project form one such group working exoterically to save the world, and there are many others toiling in all fields of human endeavor. The groups represents a corresponding group activity on the subjective side. As Arcane School students, we are called to action every day through a structured meditative practice to build the Antahkarana, yet another esoteric group service activity. There are many others.

All of these groups are embedded in the larger Hierarchical group, which is itself nested in the energy of Shamballa and so on up the chain. Thus, by necessity, as one embedded group moves forward they all do. Viewing this picture in your mind's eye, you can see that the underlying meaning of the Law of Group Progress is about walking each other home.

The Ancient Ones sent the following inspirational message eons ago knowing groups, who are reaching the portal of the Final Way, would understand and be able to utilize the energy imparted. By reciting this mantra together as one voice, we will feel the Law of Group Progress in Action:

*Great is the mystery of those who blaze
The trail back to the Father's Home!
The Word goes forth to all the sons of men, the Sons of God:*

*Those who have reached the portal of the Final Way
Must prove themselves and in their proving teach
And lift those who follow in their steps.
Thus, down the ages have the sons of men,
Who are the Sons of God,
Embodied in themselves the Light which ever shines,
The strength, which lifts and serves,
The Love the evermore endures.*

*They walk the way of Purity,
The Way into the innermost.
We follow after.*

*They served their times.
We seek to do the same.*

In conclusion, may I say: whether you are here in person or listening online or watching from the “other side”, our group here is the representation of “spiritual livingness” created by Love-Wisdom in Action as governed by the Law of Group Progress.

The time has come and the World is waiting for us as one electromagnetic and interconnected Mind to blaze the trail back to the Father’s House. In this Way and only in this Way is the resplendent result guaranteed. As aspiring, pledged and accepted disciples, it is up to us.

Let it Be. Thank you and Namaste.



PANEL DISCUSSION: Aquarius and the Emerging Science of Interconnectedness

This was an open discussion with Mintze Van der Velde, physicist and secretary of the Lucis Trust in Geneva, and Jim Ryder, engineer/physicist and retired Vice President of Lockheed Martin Corporation’s Space Systems Company, where he was head of the Advanced Technology Center. Together they discussed a new science of life emerging from current research into the way in which organisms function. The influence of Aquarius on this new science of life, and the linking bridge with the science of the Ageless Wisdom teachings was also explored. As this was mainly a discussion period with interaction from the audience, no transcript is available.



ARCANE SCHOOL CONFERENCE
SUNDAY OPEN SESSION - April 28, 2013

The Liberating Path of Compassion

Thank you everyone for coming out on a beautiful day like today, “sacrificing” yourselves to be a part of this work. It’s a privilege to speak with you on this topic, which I did not choose— and you know when you are given a topic it is often because it is something you need to learn to embody. I’m sure we could all say that in relation to compassion because it is said to be the key quality in need of realization in order to pass through the various gates of initiation—so we can never tire of deepening our understanding of compassion. Compassion is a decidedly second ray quality—many of us here perhaps have a strong affiliation or link with this ray energy. The Teacher who wrote the books that we study, as well as the amanuensis who transcribed the books both came forth along the second ray of love-wisdom and certainly compassion is one of the key qualities of that ray as well as being the keynote of our Planetary Life.

We are told that for some reason our planet is a planet of suffering and woe, although we’re not given a lot of details about why this is so. We’re told the conditions found on our planet are only found on two other planets in our solar system—Saturn and Mars. Not all planets have to go through the struggles and trials that our humanity has to go through and this must say something about us and about what we need to learn and are learning. It seems apparent that compassion is something fostered by living on planet Earth and being bombarded not only by our own suffering— which most of us have probably experienced in this lifetime—but also by experiencing the suffering at this time in planetary history as we watch the unfolding human drama that humanity and the lower kingdoms are passing through across the board. This suffering that we see can have one of two results—it can make us jaded because we have seen so much, rendering us incapable of feeling any compassion as we turn off and become numb to the horrors in which so many people find themselves or we can somehow find the strength within ourselves and the necessary tools to help alleviate the suffering that so many lives are experiencing at this time.

When we consider compassion and many of the other concepts contained within the Ageless Wisdom teachings we can always find inspiration from the Mother of our work, and I speak of Helena Blavatsky in this case. In her beautiful, brief work, *The Voice of the Silence*, she wrote, “Compassion is no attribute, it is the Law of laws, eternal harmony, Alaya’s self. A shoreless, universal essence, the light of the everlasting fitness of things. The law of love eternal.” I like that — “a shoreless, universal essence.” And in the yoga sutras we read that compassion is the key to being able to experience oneness with others. And so although we often speak of oneness as a primary quality that we’re attempting to understand and embody the sutras highlight that it is through the cultivation of compassion that oneness with our fellow human beings is attained. And in that same yoga sutra we’re told that compassion is related to the astral body, to the feeling nature. There are three qualities related to the three aspects of the astral body—one is a more mental approach to experiencing oneness, which is dispassion; then there is an emotional response (within the astral realm) to the understanding of oneness, which is tenderness; and lastly, the third aspect, related to the physical component of oneness, is compassion. Compassion is, therefore, related to physical plane action and creative life. And so it is not just an emotional response, but rather an emotional response working through onto the physical plane.

This slide is of a field of lotus flowers. D.K. gives us an interesting comparison to the flowering of lotuses when he speaks about the importance of this time in planetary history. This is said to be the time for which the Masters of the Wisdom have been preparing ever since they first came or embodied themselves upon our planet some 18.5 million years ago. And one of the reasons why this time is said to be such a key moment is because so many members of the human kingdom are bringing about this flowering within their consciousness—a collective flowering. And we’re not all unfolding at the same

rate or pace, but many people who are putting themselves upon the path of service are beginning to flower. We're told this flowering is related to the impress from the solar angels, these great beings who are ourselves, on a higher level of consciousness. And because of the timing, which we cannot really understand, there is a flowering going on making this a fantastic time to be alive and working together with others because we are beginning to express our true nature, which is one of compassion and love.

This is said to be the Time of the Forerunner—from 1965-2025—a key time for human and planetary consciousness to take a step forward. The Tibetan relates this to the time 2500 years ago when the Buddha walked in India and there was a great inpouring of second ray energy. But now, during this period, the light of the second ray which was pouring into India during that ancient time has moved westward and we're told that this is the time of the greatest inpouring of the second ray energy into the western world. So we don't need to run off to India—and that's not to denigrate anyone who wants to work to develop the Darjeeling centre, as Steve does, but we don't need to go to the East because the western world is now the recipient of this energy—hence the importance of this time.

So I thought that maybe because we have come together at the time of Wesak—we're still within the distribution period of this great festival time—it might be helpful to consider a few aspects of the life of Buddha and what went on within his consciousness 2500 years ago. Certainly the story of his life that has come down to us is largely allegorical because he had transcended most of the challenges outlined in Buddhist texts. But the teachings were given to show the way to his followers and to us—he knew that he had a message. So the Buddha's life and work is central for us to come to an understanding of compassion, which his life demonstrated to such a high degree.

The Buddha was born, achieved enlightenment and died under the sign of Taurus so Taurus is an integral aspect of our understanding of this Wesak Festival. And Taurus also governs the new group of world servers. So we as a group can learn so much from the life and teachings of the Buddha, about how we can follow in His footsteps and attain some of the realizations which he embodied because we are governed, as a group, by this sign—the sign of illumination, the sign of striving, the sign of goal-fitness, the sign of skillful endeavor. The Buddha said he didn't indulge in some of the activities of this physical plane not because he thought they were sinful but rather because they were not skillful and detracted him from his goal of attaining the illumination of consciousness. And today in our secretarial workshop one of our co-workers spoke of spiritual ambition as related to the will aspect and the need for us to be somewhat ambitious, as a group, in order to penetrate into that highest will aspect and we can follow the teachings of the Buddha in our attempts, as a group, to move forward towards this eventuality.

The life of the Buddha is quite familiar to all of us so I will just run through a few of the key points related to it—and one in particular that I found most interesting. As you know, the Buddha took up the path of asceticism because it was the route of many seekers at that time who had set the goal of enlightenment before them. How many of us can say we have enlightenment as our goal in this lifetime, I can't say I do, but perhaps, as a group, as Michelle said, we should think more ambitiously, to take some steps in that direction because we have been given so much. And to those who are given much, much is demanded of them. So perhaps it behooves us to make the effort..

The Buddha found himself on the path to asceticism and he had nearly died. He had starved himself to the brink of death by meditating many long hours without nourishment. And finally, when he was just about dead, he said—this isn't working. That takes some honesty and self-reflection to admit that the path one has been following for many years isn't working and to step back from death and realize it is time to try another way. And when he did that, when he took time for reflection, he remembered a childhood experience. This has always been the part of his life that I found most interesting. He

remembered a childhood experience he'd had as a very young boy. His father was a wealthy man and it was the day in India when celebrations were made—when they dug up the soil and planted the seeds and celebrated the arrival of spring. Siddhartha went with his father and his nursemaids to the festivities and he was left alone under a flowering rose-apple tree. And he looked at the fields and the digging up of the soil that was occurring and the death it was causing to the worms, the insects and the plants and flowers. He suddenly felt such a welling up of compassion within himself that he couldn't stand it. He said he felt like his family members were being killed—he felt so much compassion for the insects and plants. And it was this feeling of compassion that led him into a spontaneous, pre-enlightenment experience. He instinctively rose into the asana position and felt within himself a great sense of inner peace, joy and liberation.

And then, at this later turn of the spiral when he was practically dead, Buddha recalled that spontaneous enlightenment experience he had achieved effortlessly as a young boy and he wondered what this experience had to tell him about the limitations of the path he was following—a joyless path of extremism. And he determined to begin to cultivate compassion as a central quality of his path from then on. He realized he had turned too much towards a path of negation of all the joys and beauties of life and from that moment on he cultivated what he called a skillful mindset—he cultivated compassion, kindness, harmlessness and all of the qualities we are asked to cultivate as well. He put his focus on that—it wasn't enough to just meditate and deprive himself, he needed to practice this loving kindness and that became the central part of his message.

This change in his practice led him to enlightenment. And the Buddhist teachings state it was a rapid attainment—within a matter of days—but, again, this is probably largely allegorical. This story points to the impetus that can be given to our spiritual path through the use of simple practices—simple in theory but not simple in realization. The Buddha then had another lesson that led to an outpouring of compassion. After sitting under the bodhi tree and attaining enlightenment he thought he could spend the rest of his days in contemplation. That was his wish. He said the path was too difficult and people were not ready for it and so he didn't think there was any need for him to share what he had learned. But then we're told there was an intervention by the great Lord Brahma who came down from heaven to speak with the Buddha. He said, "Lord, please teach the dhamma—(the truth, the teaching) there are people, with only a little desire left within them, who are pining for lack of this method." He pleaded, "Look down at the human race which is drowning in sorrow and travel far and wide to save the world." So the Buddha heeded the counsel of the Great Lord and went on to spend the next forty years of his life serving the people to the best of his ability. In the teachings of the *Pali Canon* and retold in *Buddha* by Karen Armstrong, we're told that as a result of the Buddha's teaching many, many people attained enlightenment.

The Tibetan speaks of the 900 arhats who worked with the Buddha to dispel world glamour. So we know there was a type of spontaneous awakening at that time and that we in the western world are passing through a time of equal opportunity—a time of a great inpouring of second ray energy, coupled with the energies of Aquarius and the seventh ray, leading to the possibility for the illumination of consciousness. We have an opportunity to follow in the footsteps of those great teachers such as the Buddha and the Christ, who have done so much, sacrificed so much, for us and for our world.

I wanted to end with a beautiful little poem from an English poet. It's an old poem that was received, I believe, through a channel, at the end of the first World War. There was at that time, as you could imagine, a great feeling of joy in the world when the War and the tremendous suffering that had engulfed Europe ended—leaving a sense of expectancy and optimism towards the future. The poem was written by Siegfried Sassoon—you've probably heard of it:

Everyone suddenly burst out singing
and I was filled with such delight.
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
winging wildly across the white
orchards and dark green field—
on, on and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted
and beauty came like the setting sun.
My heart was shaken with tears
and horror drifted away.
Oh but everyone was a bird and the song was wordless.
The singing would never be done.



VISUALISATION: MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

Think outwardly towards one another in love. PAUSE.

Sound permeates all forms. Light permeates all forms.

As we silently sound the OM, visualize the energy of the soul flooding the personality sheaths, making them radiant vehicles of light.

Lift the energy to the point where the alignment with the soul becomes real. Listen to the chord of the soul. PAUSE.

Together we make up a group tune. We make music ceaselessly. As we build in the light, joining our group together with all groups throughout the world, we become part of a great network of light workers.

Link now with the soul of humanity, seeing this kingdom pervaded by light and sound.

See and hear this rhythm of sound and this myriad of chords and notes blend with the music of the Hierarchy itself. This is a steadily enriching symphony which is playing now. PAUSE

Now visualize the centuries slipping away, see all these various sounds unite and resolve into one another until some day, the planetary symphony that Sanat Kumara is composing will be completed and our Earth will then make a notable contribution to the great chords of the solar system. PAUSE.

Then, as the Bible says, the Sons of God, the planetary Logoi, will sing together. This will be the result of right breathing, of controlled and organised rhythm, of true pure thought and of the correct relation between all parts of the chorus.

Visualize and breathe this vision into existence, distributing the energy through the group ajna center—the new group of world servers.

OM OM OM

Reflections on the Reappearance of the World Teacher

Steve Nation

How far have we progressed in building the path of light for the return of the World Teacher – the

Christ? Are there signs that the reappearance of the Christ is imminent and how do we envisage the reappearance taking place in the modern world?

Prophecies in the Tibetan's teachings about the externalization of Hierarchy and the emergence of the World Teacher play a hugely important role in the imaginative life of the Arcane School group. They are like a pole star guiding our thinking about the present and the future, about the problems of humanity, about our group purpose; and we can expect them to be crucial in impressions that come in response to the keynote: *Let the group transfigure life in terms of accomplishment.*

Yet, these prophecies can be amongst the most challenging and difficult themes in the whole body of DK's work, and because of this we can sometimes leave them out of our discussions and conversations – and even perhaps leave them out of our thinking. Sometimes a pole star represents a point of such potency that we shield our eyes from it – keep our distance – shut it out of our thinking about the incarnated world of time and space in which we find ourselves.

How *do* we see the process of the externalization and the reappearance taking place in human affairs? Where do we see the signs, the evidence that these processes are underway? Where and how do we see the human face of the ashram and the Christ – with hands and feet, with muscle and above all with mind and heart? These are questions to meditate on and to discuss.

Throughout history there has been an almost universal belief in a Coming One. And in spite of all the problems created by religious institutions, churches, temples and mosques, the revelations brought to humanity through the great avatars, have been the primary source of inspiration and vision driving the evolution of consciousness. Civilization as we know it (now and in the past) is a record of the human interaction with these revelations. The will to bring into being societies that protect and foster human rights, deepen human solidarity and that are committed to protection of the environment – this will draws upon the legacy of revelations of great avatars down the ages.

I imagine there is no difficulty for most of us in accepting that Christ or the Buddha, the Prophet Muhammad or other historical figures lived in earlier times and brought with them revelations that changed the course of history. So why is it that there is a difficulty in accepting that such a thing might happen again in our time – as has been predicted by most sacred texts? It is clear that we need something to radically transform the nascent vision of wholeness and interdependence that is sweeping through the intellectual and cultural life of humanity so that it can break free of the stranglehold of inherited illusions and glammers of separation. Something new is required, some initiatory process, that will make it possible for wholeness and synthesis to become the vital living core of a new civilization. Our work is to visualize this 'something' happening – to expect it – to prepare for it. We should never underestimate the power of focused group imagination, expectation and intention.

There is almost no modern intelligent discourse about a World Teacher appearing in our time. It is certainly not part of any major stream of theological or artistic, political or economic conversation that I am aware of. It has been brought up as a serious universal vision at the General Assembly of the United Nations, on a fairly regular basis, by none other than the Shi'ite government of the Republic of Iran – yet this has received surprisingly little attention as the world media understandably focuses on the political content of these messages given the vulnerability of the whole region and the intensity of the relationship between different political forces.

One of the reasons why the notion of a Coming One receives such little attention in respectable modern thought is that the idea has been so misused or abused in the past, interpreted through veils

that transparently hide the real. History is full of disastrous events fuelled by messianic claims. Wars have been fought between the followers of those who claimed to be the divinely ordained leader anticipated by religious or esoteric texts.

There are, of course, those who speak today of the Coming One but most are yearning for a return to the past, and are inspired in essential and fundamental ways by a vision of separation. They are what theologian Hans Kung might refer to as 'counter-movements' and 'deviant trends' in the 'epoch-making paradigm shift' from 'modernity to post-modernity'. (Hans Kung, *Global Responsibility, In Search of a New World Ethic*. London SCM Press 1991, p. 19)

And so to expect a Coming One now runs the risk of being interpreted, even by some of the most enlightened and universal spiritual movements, as gullible wishful thinking, replacing the responsibilities and challenges confronting the human with a sentimental belief that the heavens will part and we will all be saved. We human beings have caused the problems of climate change, nuclear weapons, and economic systems that are toxically competitive and fuelled by greed. The birthing of the new era, so the thinking goes, depends on our awakening sense of wholeness, and nothing else. It's all down to us. Along with other esoteric groups our Work is to challenge this strain of humanism that denies the realities of Hierarchy and the subtle worlds.

As we ponder what the teaching on the Coming One means to us 65 years after the book *The Reappearance of the Christ* was first published, we need to be honest with ourselves – honest about impressions we judge to come from the soul, honest about what our common sense tells us, honest about our willingness to explore the idea as a working hypothesis. And for this we need, as a group, to have a serious conversation, shining a light onto this most central aspect of the teachings, remembering always that the insights and vision offered by the Master should only be accepted if they call forth a response from the illumined mind and bring a flashing forth of the intuition.

In this spirit let us speak of intuitions of DK's prophecy about the Coming One that live within us. Let us speak of the role the reappearance plays in our imagination, in our deeper thinking about the world, and in our sense of the future.

We might begin this sharing by affirming that the Coming One we expect to see emerging in the world has little in common with the event that has been the subject of religious speculation down the ages – from all faiths. Too often the popular belief in the Return of Christ has focused either on some mythical future centuries away from the present, or on some misguided belief in a charismatic leader. We might affirm also that the World Teacher we anticipate will not in any way relieve us of our human responsibilities to do all we can to transfigure life and to create out of the substance of our own lives a culture which truly reflects our sense of the interdependence and oneness of life. We have no wish to retreat from this work of incarnating the new. Along with millions of others and thousands of groups it is our dharma and our joy to play our part in a stupendous adventure in human affairs – an adventure of transformation and transfiguration of what it is to be human and of what it is to live together as a human species impressed with a constantly emerging understanding of oneness, wholeness and interdependence. This sense of oneness is a source of joy and richness bringing new layers of meaning and purpose. It is also an irritant, a voice of conscience making us ill at ease with the competitive and separative spirit that informs so much of our psyche as well as our economic, political and social lives.

All the sacred texts and ancient writings from all cultures that have examined and revealed and penetrated higher levels of being have affirmed the Presence of Great Ones on the inner side of life. This is nothing new, nothing exotic – it is a part of the human tradition to affirm the reality of the

Kingdom of God and the presence within that kingdom of rishis, sages, saints, Immortals and Wise Ancestors.

As a group the Hierarchy of Illumined Beings is to us an aspect of reality – ignored, repressed and removed from the imagination by the ‘what you see is what you get’ supposedly rational and scientific view dominating the post-modern mind. A hierarchy of consciousness extends from an instinctive, ingrained and unquestioned sense of separation and division through to unimaginable heights of radiant love and inclusive synthesis – it is a continuum and each one of us finds ourselves within this continuum, this Jacobs Ladder of consciousness – all engaged in approaching the next step ahead of us, the next rung on the ladder towards greater inclusiveness and a wider perspective of wholeness. Let us affirm that a core part of our work in preparing for the reappearance is to restore a sense of the reality of higher levels of consciousness to the modern mind.

There is a legend that Christ has never left the earth. Right now, in the aura of the Wesak Festival, can we imagine this awesome Being, Master of all that is human, and of the Angelic Worlds, in human form, standing today, in a remote hidden region of the world? I like to think of this private place as being like the hidden valleys of Tibetan Buddhist tradition. In this place, the Christ stands – surrounded by the community of Saints, Rishis, Heroes and Wise Ones of all traditions and all peoples. In our imagination we might sense something of the radiance and livingness of this Community of the High Initiates. Within the soul of every human being there is that part of us that reflects this radiance, is sensitive to it. The Christ within is a part of our nature. A core part of our work in preparing for the reappearance is to foster recognition of the reality of the soul, the Christ within, in the psyche of the human. This is not simply a question of religion, or even of psychology, it is also a question of science.

And now, during this year when there is a cycle of emergence and impact – imagine the Christ, and the Assembled Hierarchy stepping figuratively out from the hidden valley and into the world of appearance. Imagine this as part of a process of emergence – a step from the light that is hidden out into the light that is able to be recognized and accessible to the modern mind.

Imagine this emergence in its three phases: stimulation of the Christ within the human heart – the soul actively having an impact on the conscious mind – the soul becoming a source of joy as well an irritant to the mind that yearns for the ease of the known and the safe. It is not difficult to recognize this process occurring during this period. Imagine too, the Hierarchy and the Christ overshadowing the field of mind and heart that is the New Group of World Servers – again collectively nourishing and nurturing profound senses of meaning, beauty and purpose. Surely we can see this happening now in the life of the New Group – in all the professions and all the fields of thought. Recognize this process of emergence: the light that is hidden in the secret place on earth shining increasingly through into the realms of human imagination, thinking and planning so that the sense of a future that is considered possible begins to resonate with the livingness of the resurrected Christ. This is an energetic event which is necessarily reflected in the thought life of the network of thinkers, activists and visionaries at the heart of the new group of world servers.

And now relax as we extend the image to a future occurrence when the Christ steps out into the full light of human affairs, emerging as World Teacher. We don’t need to contrive any images of Christ as a leader on the world stage – a leader in science, the arts or finance, politics or religion. There is also no need to contrive any sense of when or where this will occur – these are all details that are the Christ’s business. We might however affirm that this magical emergence into human affairs is imminent (imminent in the sense of the next two, five, ten, fifteen, twenty years).

What is important, hugely important, is that we build an imaginary sense of how this emergence into world affairs is already affecting forces of goodwill in the world and how it will completely transform things when it fully takes place. Christ's act of stepping from obscurity into the outer world brings together the full potency of divine purpose, the potency of the Love of God, and the creativity of a reoriented humanity in which the illusion of separateness and the glamour of selfishness lose their hold over the mind and heart.

The Christ will come to teach and to initiate a New Era. Bringing a note of synthesis into human affairs, we are told that the Christ's teaching will in all probability focus on four major themes: establishing right human relations, the law of rebirth, revelation of the mysteries of initiation, the dispelling of glamour. The World Teacher will be of a different order from the most enlightened spiritual teachers we recognize today (such as HH the Dalai Lama and his enlightened teachings on Universal Responsibility). The World Teacher will bring the radiation of the Christ to the teaching work – people of goodwill will be touched more than anything else by the radiation of the presence of the Christ – all seekers, aspirants, disciples and spiritual people will be changed in some way by the Christ's emergence into the world of human affairs.

Let us bring this into our imagination and into our intelligent understanding of what is taking place in human affairs now; and let us imagine the full emergence and appearance that this process is leading to.



The Transfiguring Power of Sound

Song and Reflections with Barbara Valocore

"AUM," said the Mighty One, and sounded forth the Word. The sevenfold waves of matter resolved themselves, and varied forms appeared. Each took its place, each in the sphere ordained. They waited for the sacred flood to enter and to fill.

The Builders responded to the sacred sound. In musical collaboration they attended to the work. They built in many spheres, beginning with the third. Upon this plane their work commenced. They built the sheath of atma and strung it to its Primary.

Those of you who might have read *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* may recognize this phrase from the Stanzas of Dyzan, not that we really understand it! But these words carry our awareness to the central importance of sound as the primary builder, "the basis of existence, the method of being, and the final unifier", as the Treatise points out.

Everything in the created Universe originates from Sound. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God". Hindu scripture refers to Vishnu as, "The great Singer, creating by means of His song." Everything around us is a vibration of some kind, our bodies emit sound and through sound, the cohesiveness of our molecules is maintained. Sound permeates the entire Universe.

The Music of the Spheres and the Voice of the Silence convey to us the meanings of the deepest center of our spiritual Being. Contemplation on the sublime manifestations of sound transport us to realms beyond our concrete selves, into the dominion of the soul and the spirit. Sounds have a profound effect on us; on our physical bodies, on our psyche and our emotional state. We can be soothed by

harmonious and beautiful music and the sounds in nature, or irritated and made tense by the discordant noises of a big city. Sound builds and sound destroys.

In the macrocosm, the Heavenly Man uses sound to build His body of manifestation and everything contained in it. And because the adage “As above, so below” holds true, the soul of man, the Angel of the Presence, also builds its form, its shadow, with sound. Sounds uttered by a Cosmic Being direct the devas in their building work and when the time is right, forms no longer useful are destroyed with sound.

Human beings have used the voice to communicate since the beginning of time and while we have no way of actually knowing when the first singing began, we can imagine ancient man raising his voice in nature, singing to the stars, mimicking animal calls or imitating the birds. Every religion has some tradition of singing or chanting; of praising, imploring and addressing the divine in some way. Stories are told through song, mothers soothe babies with lullabies and children sing nursery rhymes at an early age. Every kind of human emotion is expressed through song, either in popular genres or classical forms such as the art song or opera.

Another form of song many of us have experienced if we ever went to church, is the hymn. In 18th and 19th century England, writing hymn texts was a widespread practice among the clergy, or by men who later became clergy, perhaps the most famous example being *Amazing Grace* by John Newton. One time, when this young and profligate slave trader was returning to England from a trip to Africa, his ship encountered a terrible storm which almost resulted in a shipwreck. During the storm as he saw his life threatened, something turned in him and he cried to God in desperate prayer. The resulting answer was the now famous hymn text of *Amazing Grace*, sung the world over and still with us after over 200 years. John Newton gave up the slave trade.

Interestingly, another famous hymn by the Reverend John Henry Newman, was written aboard ship on a voyage decades later, also returning to England. The ship became becalmed, stationary for a week at a time when Newman was anxious to return home, and in distressed frustration he cried out to God and the text of the hymn *Lead Kindly Light* was his answer. He later became a Cardinal in the Catholic Church.

The hymn describes what we might call the journey of the Prodigal Son, from darkness to light, the renunciation of materialism and selfishness of the personality to an orientation to the light of the soul. The speaker asks the light, the soul, to lead him safely along the Path, to guide his steps toward home. This is the hymn:

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home; Lead Thou me on:
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see.
The distant scene, one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus nor prayed that Thou, Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now Lead Thou me on.
I loved the garish day, in spite of fears.
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still Will lead me on.
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent till The night is gone;

And with the morn, those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

The physiology of the human voice is the perfect combination of a wind and stringed instrument. The vocal chords are as reeds and strings together and the breath sustains the sound as it moves between the vocal cords in the larynx. The resonating parts of the vocal instrument, like the empty space in a violin or the bell in a brass instrument, are the bones and cartilage in the head and chest. God creates the perfect instrument for His purpose.

We are meant to find our notes: first that of the personality and then the note of the soul. We are meant to sound the Sacred Word on the note as we hear it, until our outer ear is attuned to the inner hearing. Eventually the note of the Monad is heard and when all notes are known and alignment is complete, the form is shattered and no longer necessary.

From beyond the beginning of time the Great Lords intoned ineffable sounds, transfiguring the worlds, accomplishing creation with mantric formulas in endless cycles of birth and death. They know the mysteries of sound which are as yet unknowable for us.

“OM mani padme hum” “OM mani padme hum”

This is the most sacred of all the eastern mantrams which is known by the public and every syllable holds a secret potency. As a whole, it has seven meanings and can bring about seven results. High Cosmic Lords, Bodhisattvas, Masters, Adepts, Initiates; these advanced Beings know the secrets of sound and can wield mantric formulas for specific divine purposes. They direct the devas in their building work through sacred utterances reverberating through space. Humanity cannot yet be trusted to know these powerful secrets, but we do know and do chant the Sacred Word, the OM and the many other mantrams which we use, most importantly, the Great Invocation.

A most ancient and beautiful mantram or hymn, the Gayatri, addresses the Creator, the One from Whom we originate and to Whom we eventually return. Many of us know it. Our full moon talks often use it to focus the group mind. Any text can be sung, and the following is one western musician's melody for the words of the Gayatri in the English translation we use:

O Thou, who givest sustenance to the universe,
From Whom all things proceed,
To Whom all things return,
Unveil to us the face of the true Spiritual Sun
Hidden by a disc of golden Light
That we may know the Truth
And do our whole duty
As we journey to Thy sacred feet.

OM

When ritually performing a sacred chant, or sounding the Sacred Word, the OM, what counts is the thought behind the sound, the intention behind the voice. Focused mental attention is key to correct meditation and occult meditation transforms life in terms of accomplishment. When we meditate, and all our meditations are group meditations, we are constantly emitting sound and effecting changes of which we know nothing. We sound together the OM at the end of all meditations and when physically in a group, we are able to hear our brothers and sisters sound their various notes. Often, the group sounds the same note.

In India, the Gayatri is chanted in Sanskrit by the highest Brahmin priests as a form of deep worship. It is a sacred act with profound meaning. Let us imagine for a moment being in an ancient hall, where countless worshippers are unitedly sounding the OM. Myriads of voices are chanting together. Listen to the Sound, hear Them. Let yourself see the crowds, for they are real and they are with us. See us being joined by groups all over the world, perhaps the Hierarchy can hear us, perhaps our sound is unified enough to be heard by the Great Ones. Perhaps they are even chanting with us.

We will close by chanting together the Gayatri which I will chant in Sanskrit and all of you will sound the OM in accompaniment. The following melody was written for this conference by Owen Burdick, a contemporary composer who was attracted to work with the Sanskrit text. He took a known raga and built a melody around it and this melody is his interpretation of a very sacred chant.

An unknown source says: "The Gayatri is the prayer for the blessing of all creatures by our radiant father in Heaven, the Sun". Let us sound together the OM here: (Eb OM). If that's not comfortable you can use this note (Bb OM). We need to hear both these tones. When you run out of breath, start another OM. Keep the sound going until we end in silence together. We are together blessing all creatures.

OM
Bhur bhuva Suvah tat
Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devah asya Dhimahi
Dhiyoh Yonah Prachodayat
OM



**We the Peoples ... the Culture of Peace and
the Transmutation of the United Nations**

Iris Spellings

The United Nations has often been referred to as the “the hope of humanity”, as “humanity’s most far-sighted and significant undertaking”. It represents the fact of our oneness—a reflection, perhaps, of the highest achievement in consciousness marked by humankind as a whole at this time. In the ‘70’s, Donald Keys, former speechwriter for Secretary-General U Thant, said it was challenging to discuss “spirituality” at the UN because people thought that the UN was the antithesis of spirituality, but he says:

I must report, however, I regard the United Nations as the most spiritual place in the world today. The UN is the first planetary focus at the human level. It is the first place that the nerve endings of all humanity join. It is the first place where all the qualities, characteristics, attributes, and essences of all human groups merge and blend. It is truly, the first temple of humanity.¹

Little did I realize that when I heard Donald Keys talk about spirituality in the ‘80’s at one of Lucis Trust’s conferences like this, that I would ever in a million years be standing before you here today talking about the UN.

When I first came to the UN in 1998 as a volunteer to represent the non-governmental organization (NGO), Operation Peace Through Unity, and to work with the Aquarian Age Community, in holding monthly meditations at the time of the full moon entitled “Spiritual Work of the United Nations and the Liberation of Humanity”—still continuing today—the word “spirituality” was used cautiously and marginally at the UN. Misconstrued as it was, it carried the heavy tone of orthodox religion. Instead, at that time, “spirituality” was expressed as values, ethics and so forth. Gradually, over time, and through use—by including it in the title of seminars and as topics of meetings—groups arose at the UN with it in their name, like: Spiritual Caucus; Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns; and ambassadors began referring to spirituality in their talks. The most recent word that is emerging into greater fluency is the word “love”. Ambassadors and heads of state in their addresses to the General Assembly are now voicing it. The 4th Ray of Harmony through Conflict influences the work and the workers very much in the bridging process that is being done at the UN...and this is being done, or begins, with language.

The UN was created in 1945 after the Second World War with the principal aim to maintain international peace and security—prevent future wars—essentially, to bring about the culture of peace. Has it been successful? Statistics show that new wars are much fewer; recurring wars are the primary problem i.e., especially when people’s needs are not met—poverty, hunger, unemployment, etc.—and often, if this was not the case before the war began, it is much greater afterwards. Wars have even started over the price of bread, like the 1863 bread riot in the Confederacy and the French Revolution.

In response to this problem of recurring wars, in December 2005 the General Assembly established the UN Peacebuilding Commission—to be distinguished from UN Peacekeeping Operations, which are a non-violent force of “boots on the ground”. The Peacebuilding Commission’s main task is to assist countries emerging from conflict to achieve sustainable peace. One way is by providing a necessary link between the Security Council (security issues) and ECOSOC (economic and social development issues), which will facilitate coordination between *all* parties involved—namely, the county, or countries, in question, other UN bodies and donors... such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, etc.—who might provide funding in post-conflict situations *and* making sure that the help gets delivered in a timely fashion. Another way is by sticking around long enough to make sure (with a dedicated commitment) the work gets done. Other groups—like the NGOs and peacekeepers—are called in during the main conflict and then once a settlement has been reached (due to limited resources and personnel) they must rush to the next crisis and are unable to remain long enough to secure a lasting peace.

The cost of war, not only for arms—but, the *price* of war—the fatalities, the mental illness, the mass destruction of towns and lives that must be rebuilt is enormous. As the cartoon says—maybe you saw it as you came in: “*If we can risk nuclear war, we can risk disarmament.*” (Remember that!)

Until we start focusing time, money and energy into creating a culture of peace, starting with peace education we, the UN, will be forced to continue rushing from one crisis to another, putting out one fire after another, after another. Therefore, to say the least, it is unsustainable and economically unsound. Peace education is essential, and the role of the family—the oldest institution in human history—is at the core of this education, beginning at the youngest age.

The Preamble to the UN Charter begins: “*We the Peoples*”. It doesn’t say: “we the nations”. Collectively, you, me and every other human being from the 193 member nations—we—are the UN! It is more than an organization; it is a living organism made up of all of us. Therefore, for the UN to be successful, we must all help in meeting its goals.

There are three UN documents that stand out. In order of importance, I would say: *Charter of the United Nations*; the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*; and the landmark *United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace* [A/RES/53/243], which was adopted by consensus on 13 September 1999 by the UN General Assembly. It defines a culture of peace as: “a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life”...Based on things like respect for life; commitment to peaceful settlement; efforts to meet developmental and environmental needs—or sustainability; equal rights; freedom of expression and information; and adherence to the principles of justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding, to name a few...at all levels of society.

This is meant to be all-inclusive and emphasized in Article 8 of this document, which states:

A key role in the promotion of a culture of peace belongs to parents, teachers, politicians, journalists, religious bodies and groups, intellectuals, those engaged in scientific, philosophical and creative artistic activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations.²

As most of us in this room already know, peace is not just the absence of war and violence, but entails the responsibility of all of us as one humanity to “live together as good neighbors”; to live the Golden Rule, which is at the core of every religion: Love your neighbor as yourself—treat others as you want them to treat you. It’s simple. Essentially, peace is the establishing of these “right relations”. With oneself, as the Earth Charter says, with other persons, other cultures, other life, the Earth, and the larger whole of which we’re a part.

In the *I Ching*, peace is described as the opposite of standstill or stagnation. The Chinese word for peace (*t’ai*) means “union”, “interrelation”. It is also much broader and includes: “contentment, rest, bringing about a time of flowering and greatness”.³ It denotes a time in nature when heaven seems to be on earth, and so their powers unite in deep harmony...when the inner nature is stronger and richer than anything offered by external fortune.

We are reminded by DK that all within the solar system is dual. It “is in itself both negative and positive: positive as regards its own form, but negative as regards its greater sphere.”⁴ On planet Earth we learn and discern by way of this duality; by measuring pain with pleasure, by balancing the inner and the outer, dark and light, hot and cold—both two sides of one coin. In the human kingdom love is the fulfilling of the law, arrived at along the path of pain and sorrow.

Peace in the world is a direct result of the inner experience of each one of us; inner peace is the source of peace for all else and seeking it brings equilibrium. Inner peace is an imitation of the Divine. The way to this realm lies through the mind. We remember the familiar UNESCO quote: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.”⁵

Sogyal Rinpoche in the *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* calls meditation “the true practice of peace, the true practice of non-aggression and nonviolence, and the real and greatest disarmament.” He says that “only when we have removed the harm in ourselves do we become truly useful to others”⁶ and through the practice [of meditation], then, by rendering ourselves harmless, we allow the fundamental goodness and kindness that are our real nature, to shine, to radiate and to flower.

In these words, he has just described the process of transmutation. Transmutation is an achievement, not a process. It concerns physical substance, or material form, at the atomic level and changing from one state to another through fire or radiance. On a higher turn of the spiral, it’s said the effect of the Bodhisattva, finding its expression upon the astral plane, will produce vast results of a quieting nature and bring by reflex action, peace on earth.

This is the Teacher of Love and Unity, the Coming One, the Maitreya—expected by the people of all nations and called by many names—who is coming, ‘radiant with all fires, His Heart aflame with compassion’ and aflame with the affirmation of the new! And the major required preparation is a world at peace, one that is based on an educated goodwill, leading eventually to right human relations. (We have our work cut out for us!)

According to the Ageless Wisdom:

Culture is the approximation of the two ways—heart and mind; of the two worlds—sensitivity and thought; and of the attitudes, relational in nature, which will enable a man to live as an intelligent, subjective being in a tangible physical world. The man of culture relates the world of meaning, or the vertical way of life, to the world of appearances, or the horizontal way of service, and regards them in his mind...as constituting one world with two aspects.⁷

It’s also said: “Without culture there can be no international agreement or mutual understanding.”⁸

The first sign of culture is the *absence* of personal discord. Culture is the *essence* of a civilization. It sheds light on the meaning of our time, and can inspire us to be all that we are capable of being. War has been the result of an emphasis upon a material culture. Now is the time to focus on creating a spiritual culture—a culture based on loving understanding, goodwill and in harmony with all life. A Culture of Peace—A Culture of Heart. This is not an impossible dream; it’s the next step.

Not only *can* one dream, but also one *must* dream. “...All the Teachings testify to the Great Reality of peace.”⁹ There are many dreams that can be transformed into reality, even though they seem unattainable or unreasonable. Education for all is one such dream, ending poverty, meeting the MDGs—the Millennium Development Goals. Difficult as it is to fulfill these dreams, within them are fragments of truth that can be realized in day-to-day life. Peace, being one of them, is an effect based upon actions or movements, and often simple ones at that.

Statistics prove that the role of women is critical for achieving lasting and sustainable peace. They bear the brunt of poverty and the disproportionate burden of violence; therefore, their contribution around

the negotiating table is critical and valuable. Their qualities of creativity, patience, the capacity to love and build consensus, all these highlight the importance of women's contributions into all aspects of peacemaking and peacebuilding, which has been recognized by the passage of *Security Council Resolution 1325: Women Peace and Security* (2000), its subsequent resolutions and a number of General Assembly resolutions. Ensuring equality for women and girls (in schools, at home, in the workplace, etc.) provides one of the greatest potentials for positive change at this time, and more so in the long run.

Our world is very far from the world we wish for ourselves and much of the culture of peace will belong to the future. Humanity is evolving rapidly and little by little, we are beginning to see evidence that the Culture of Peace is emerging and sprouting in everyday life.

Peace is indeed much more difficult than war. There is a constant fragility to it to maintain it. We need to constantly be reminded of its existence. Only by its loss do we recognize its true value. Journalist Colum McCann recently wrote an article for the *New York Times* stating this; it's called: "Remembering an Easter Miracle in Northern Ireland" about the 15-year anniversary of the Good Friday peace agreement in Northern Ireland. He said, "The true art of peace, negotiators know, lies in our ability to deal with the mighty weapon of language."¹⁰ Interestingly, though, he also emphasizes the need to embrace silence.

In matters of peace or justice, we are called to be both idealists and realists, yet never give up... to realize it's never too late to try again. DK says let joy be your strength and adds that it's "only possible when power, will and strength are blended with love, wisdom and skill in action and speech."¹¹

NGOs have been referred to as the conscience of the United Nations. Many serve (knowingly or unknowingly) as members of the New Group of World Servers—those spiritually oriented men and women who can act as a bridge between spirit and matter. That know how to use the power of thought to picture the most beautiful possibilities, but they also know how to manifest them by clothing them in matter. They are working to facilitate the entry of new ideals and aims characteristic of the New Age, the Aquarian Age, the Culture of Peace (whatever name we want to call it) into the consciousness of the race, in order to hasten the process of evolutionary development on our planet. Changing the present situation is a Herculean task, yet not impossible. Required is the focused effort of all spiritual and dedicated servers to work out the Plan of Hierarchy in the world. The practice of "right human relations", or human rights, is essential in this Plan.

Human rights, in general, are defined as those rights, which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings. They're based on humanity's growing demand for a life in which the inherent dignity and worth of each human being is accorded respect and protection. Their denial, aside from being an individual and personal tragedy, also creates conditions of social and political unrest, spreading the seeds of violence and conflict within and between societies and nations.

Currently, there is a worldwide group arising from civil society who is working on a proposed UN resolution on the Right to Peace. The Right to Peace translates the universal value of peace into the legal category of human right. It has been the main goal designed by the Spanish Society for International Human Right Law (SSIHRL) since it was established in 2004. They have worked with the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee who produced a report on the right to peace about a year ago, reaffirming the common will of all people to live in peace with each other.

On the world stage, the challenge continues to be between the collective ideal that is the UN and the individual behavior of member states. It comes down to the sacrifice of selfishness, which is being

demanding of those whose responsibility it is to determine policies (national and international) and to take those steps, which will establish right human relations.

The entire UN complex is undergoing change both inwardly and outwardly. On a physical level, the Office of the Capital Master Plan is transforming this historical and rare architectural masterpiece of its time (built in 1950-1951) into somewhat of another architectural masterpiece of this time by transforming it into a greener and more energy efficient, safer, more secure, better ventilated and a technologically up-to-date infrastructure—and, essentially, all will be put back together so it will look like it did before. The office spaces are being completely modernized. However, the appearance of the public spaces is being preserved.

The second change influencing the UN is by civil society itself. A heart-centered culture is emerging... from the inside out. NGOs are working together now as groups, groups within groups, thus multiplying the potential and in the process learning how to work together as a group in love, cooperation and in unity.

One such example is Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCoP) a loosely knit consortium of representatives for civil society holding space for the synthesis of the sustained efforts of men and women of goodwill all around the planet who work, in many varied aspects, toward establishing right human relations for a lasting and sustaining peace. This group seeks to promote the UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace and its eight action areas. Please join us in this group on *Facebook* in amplifying some of these various endeavors being realized and in connecting with them—(sometimes the websites are available for live webinars)—and providing strength and support, firing the entire world with radiance and a spirit of relationship. Your support is welcomed; it's essential and it's deeply appreciated.

When we envision the UN, “the center which we call the race of men”, overshadowed by the Avatar of Synthesis and infused with the love of the Hierarchy and the Christ... can we imagine the UN as a focal point through which the Lord of Love will work on earth, through which Light, Love and Power make contact with the hearts, minds and little wills of men, weaving all separated units of life and consciousness together and “closing the door where evil dwells?” And can we also take up our part in this great alignment by learning to function as a world savior individually and collectively within the Law of Sacrifice?

As the last line of the Great Invocation says: “Let light and love and power restore the plan on earth.”¹².... It doesn't say create, or build, it says restore. DK says, symbolically speaking,

when the United Nations has emerged into factual and actual power, the welfare of the world will then be assured. What is that welfare but love in action? What are right human relations but love among men, groups and nations? What is international cooperation but love on a world scale?¹³

Peace, like love, is a cohesive principle. It is an essential principle in nature belonging to the innate essence of all things, not merely a quality to be acquired. In fact, peace is *not* the goal, for our race and time, no matter what we think!¹⁴ Peace is not the goal...It's *love*, expressed as goodwill. When we truly love each other there will be peace. How is it that after 2000 years, we failed to recognize the most important word in the human language and that it is not only a noun, but it's a verb!

Humans create evolution, and nothing can impede it. But only when we are nearer to solving the problems of poverty, homelessness, education, discrimination, etc., only when the world will be a

better place to live, for us, and the generations to come, only then will the movement for a culture of peace achieve its objective. We're shifting from a focus on material values and a fear of war to one of spiritual values and a culture of peace. We are in the midst of an immense economic shift 'from guns into plowshares' on a global scale.

We are one Humanity, yet we each have a responsibility. Peace is an effect, based upon our motives and actions. (As we said, it's simple!) The seeds of the culture of peace will flower when the UN's "We the Peoples" (you and me) work responsibly, hand in hand with LOVE and fixed determination to do what is best for the whole of humanity, at any personal cost and by means of uttermost sacrifice—as one would do for oneself.

Please allow me to close with a passage from *The Brotherhood of Angels and Men* by Geoffrey Hodson:

You shall build cities fairer than were ever seen in Greece, for you are Greece reincarnate; but you have grown since then; the angels who taught in Greece have grown since then. Together we might fill whole continents with cities fairer than those of old.

You shall mould your thoughts, your feelings and your flesh; you shall build a Race godlike in its beauty and its strength; the angel hosts will come to aid you in your task.

This is the vision of the future that we bring, a future of limitless possibilities of splendour, when once more the children of God, angels and men [humans] come together for the fulfillment of the Plan.¹⁵

¹ Donald Keys, "Spirituality at the UN", <http://www.aquaac.org/un/sprtatun.html>

² *The I Ching, or Book of Changes*, Bollingen Series XIX, p. 440-441

³ United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace[A/RES/53/243], http://www.sgi.org/assets/pdf/UN_CulturePeace_bklt_r4.pdf

⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 478

⁵ The Preamble to [the Constitution of UNESCO](#)

⁶ Sogyal Rinpoche, *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, p. 62-63

⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, p. 43

⁸ *Hierarchy*, Agni Yoga Society, para.331, p. 182

⁹ *Supermundane, II*, Agni Yoga Society, para.295, p.71

¹⁰ Colum McCann, "Remembering an Easter Miracle in Northern Ireland", [The New York Times](#), 30 March 2013

¹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, p. 593

¹² <http://www.lucistrust.org/invocation/>

¹³ Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, p.50

¹⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, p. 277

¹⁵ Geoffrey Hudson, *The Brotherhood of Angels and Men*, p. 8



CLOSING ADDRESS

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This weekend we've touched upon many facets of what it means to transfigure life in terms of accomplishment. And this was rounded off beautifully with our focus on the greatest hope we have for transfiguring the world at this time – the United Nations – which to fulfil its destiny, must become the synthesising, distributing force centre of one united spiritual organism – humanity.

When we think of how hard it is to transmute our own personal natures, we can appreciate just how huge a challenge it is for the UN to fulfil this role and how well it is proceeding. To help the UN and the culture of world peace we are challenged as an esoteric community to deepen our own concept of peace, to understand it as a reflection of the energy of the highest planetary centre, Shamballa, where Peace is “serene determination and poised quiescent will”.

True peace is therefore a dynamic state – a point of willful tension in the head and heart that nothing can ruffle. It swings all the three divine aspects, will, love and intelligence into a simultaneous activity in line with the will of God. As little human wills align themselves with the divine Will, we will know first hand that “There is a peace which passeth understanding; it abides in the hearts of those who live in the Eternal. There is a power which maketh all things new; it lives and moves in those who know the Self as one.”

It is through the concentration of peace into a point of tension that we become magnetic and invocative – that we become creative artists and white magicians. Living at a point of tension at all times brings a harmony of mind, heart and motion that translates into a magical organising power that leads us from chaos to beauty – that, through ceremony and ritual on the physical plane transfigures a group of disciples into a spiritual organism working with lighted, dynamic purpose in the body of the Logos.

Our reflections this weekend have highlighted the fact that every centre of living force – atom – human being – group or nation – are cells within the greater organism of our planetary life all driven by the silent quiescent will. This energy is combustive and will drive us towards new realms of possibility, new vistas of consciousness while simultaneously bringing harmony out of conflict in the human kingdom.

Yesterday we looked at the birth of a new world view that is literally introducing a live wire into the material bound consciousness of science – a current of electricity running through the nervous system of humanity that will resurrect it into new life through the recognition that all matter is organic and alive with nervous energy.

To live in an age of electric consciousness is to liberate ourselves from the hold of matter and the passions associated with it. To trade in our passions for the path of compassion so beautifully spoken about today is the path of accelerated motion between the opposites that lead straight to the heart of life. And what there? Surely the ability to stand and create with the transfiguring power of sound as part of the life of God – the power from who all things proceed, to whom, all things return.

Let us go into the final meditation on this keynote to dynamically let in that light which will make way for the greatest transfiguration of life in terms of accomplishment that the world has ever seen – the reappearance of the Christ himself and the externalisation of the spiritual Hierarchy. Helping to materialise that vision is our goal and the greatest service we can give to humanity.

