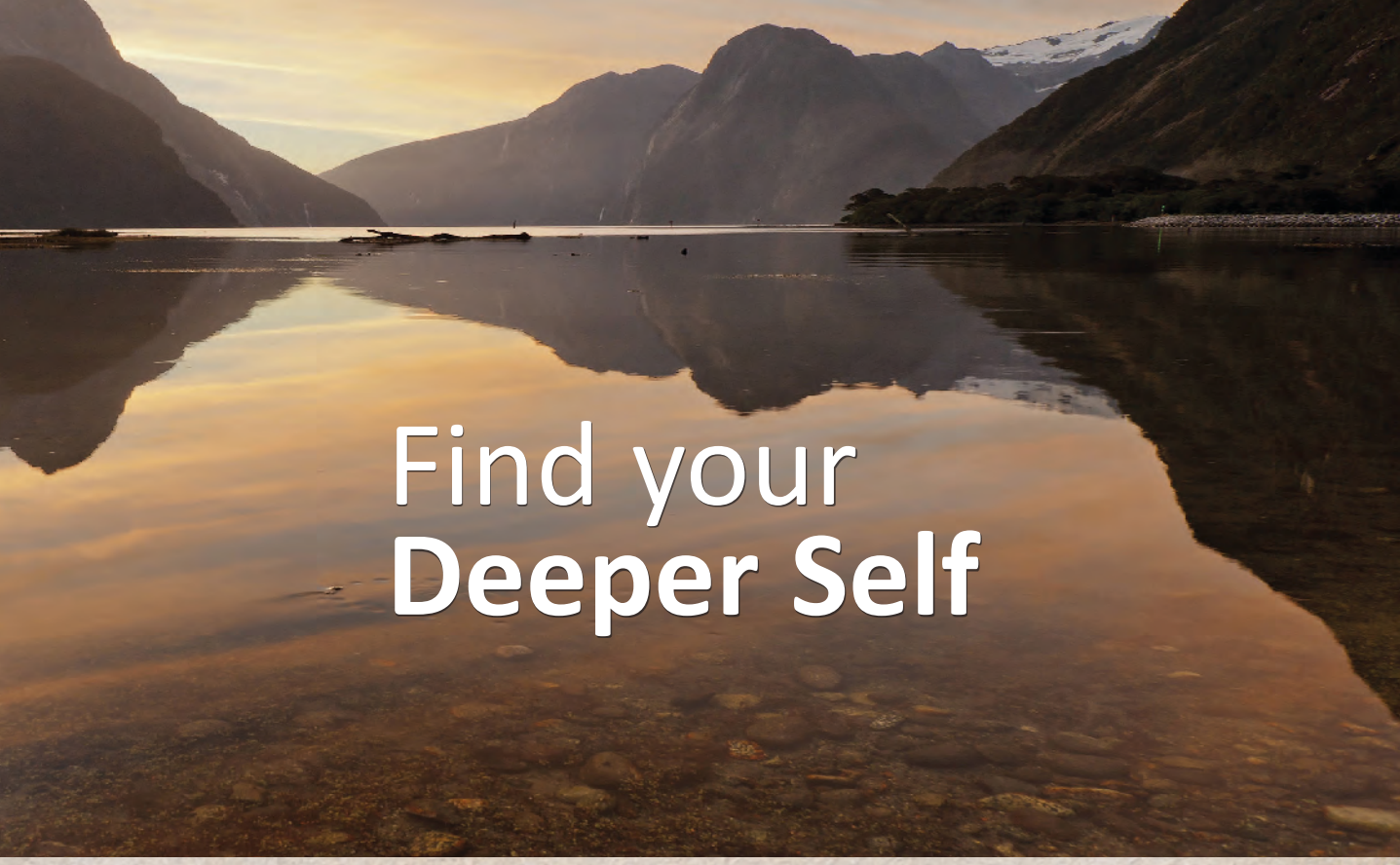
The ROSICRUCIAN

Issue No 90 - November 2022





Find your **Deeper Self**

In the depths of your being resides your deeper Self, an aspect of your being which breathes in calm reflection the very rhythm of the universe. It is in touch with all things and communicates with all that matters for life on Earth. It seeks to instruct and guide its human ward how to live a good life, and does so with care for its wellbeing, and above all, with love and compassion for all expressions of life.

Your Self knows why you are here and what you are meant to accomplish in this incarnation. It knows what your chances are of attaining the goals you have set for yourself, and whether they are beyond your reach or fully attainable. And it assists you to reach the attainable goals with care and attention to the minutest details.

Your deeper Self is a veritable slumbering genius, eager to help you express your hidden talents with greater refinement and sophistication than you have ever considered possible. The most productive thing we can ever do is to find and communicate with this Self.

For millennia, seekers of universal truths have known of the existence of a kernel of perfection lying dormant in every person, manifesting supreme confidence, calmness, maturity and wisdom. This deeper Self is called by Rosicrucians, the 'Inner Master', for it has in abundance, qualities of refinement, high purpose and spiritual maturity we would expect only of the most accomplished of humans.

You can discover how to access this high level of achievement and embark upon the definitive, true direction of your life simply by learning how to contact and regularly commune with your deeper Self. If you are searching for a way of accomplishing the most fulfilling and rewarding things in life, in a fair and ethical way, then learn from the ineffable wisdom of that inner perfection.

To find out more about the Rosicrucian Order and how it can help you achieve your most treasured goals, visit our website or contact us for a copy of our introductory booklet *'The Mastery of Life.'*

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THE EXTREMELY RARE ASIAN WHITE TIGER

The white tiger is a leucistic pigmentation variant of the Mainland Asian tiger (Panthera tigris tigris). In ancient Chinese mythology, it was known as *Baihu*, who appeared whenever the emperor ruled with absolute virtue or when there was peace throughout the world. It is one of the four symbols in traditional Chinese astronomy, representing the west and the autumn season.

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Celestial Light

by **Colin Palmer**

When William Wordsworth wrote the ode, *'Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood'*, he could not have known that he was writing it for me. If he had known, he would have said more about *"the glories he hath known"* and he might have been more specific about that line: *"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."*

Somewhere in my teens I stumbled upon, or was guided to, this poem and I knew immediately the things he was speaking about. And if I remember rightly, I said a prayer that hoped fervently that this man I was beginning to be would never *"perceive it die away, and fade into the light of common day."* Of all my prayers, this one has been most kindly and very obviously answered, time and again. I wouldn't have it otherwise. What happens to someone whose perception in certain areas is frozen or had stagnated at the age of five or eight or ten? Can they grow? Must they then enter the prison to arrive at a maturity which would allow them to *"Forget the glories he hath known, and that imperial palace whence he came?"* Must our birth become *"a sleep and a forgetting?"*

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For me, the answer to my prayer has been that I was allowed to retain many of the glories that a child can see, and so to enjoy the wonder of it all. I didn't mature to the point of forgetting the glory of sunlight flashing upon water, or the mirrored wonder of reflections in a lake. I still enjoy the bubbling music of a cataract, the miracle of the *'light'* in the night sky which we call the moon and the mystery of a gaudily coloured butterfly fluttering by. Many of us can remember feeling affinity for the ants, and sympathy for the worm the robin is swallowing. We might also feel possessiveness for a flower whose beauty tantalises, for we know that all of creation was built upon a divine plan to give us the enjoyment of its beauty.

Beauty in Nature

Recently, I met a nettle and was warned not to touch it, for it would cause me misery. As it would intrigue a two-year-old, so it did me, and I grasped the nettle for the joy of touching it and being better acquainted. Naturally its spines pierced my fingers and irritated my skin for many hours afterward. As I pulled the spines out I was glad of the experience, for now I have known the nettle and understand that it only harmed me in self-preservation. I might never touch another one, but I know now the nature of the plant intimately, as I couldn't have done without that moment of contact.





I still look at a dandelion and see its beauty, in spite of the years people have been maligning it. To me the beauty of roving clouds in a deep blue sky is as great as it was when I found time to lie in the shade of an oak tree and watch those clouds drift by. A mica-filled stone can catch my eye and invite my enjoyment the moment it flashes to let me know it's there. Birdsong is the friendliest of music and the wonder of a firefly at eventime is no less than it was when I was five. Finding a new kind of beetle that I can examine is still exciting, and I often carry a magnifying glass that will let me see the detail of structure and colour of the smallest flower.

Wordsworth said: *"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting"* and I agree, but I would also add that our time on Earth is a kind of dream during which we can enjoy the wonders that we find. I don't thrill with wonder as I watch a TV program or while I wash a sink full of dirty dishes. Necessary activity, yes, but such prosaic acts contribute nothing that will inspire my day or add a bit of glory to tomorrow. As the Welsh poet William Henry Davies said in his poem *'Leisure:' "What is this life if, full of care, we take no time to stand and stare."* For me, the important moments are those when I must stare at the murderousness of little things.

Does any or all of this represent growth? That depends upon the direction you would have growth take. If you want to be rich, work every moment for gain and don't be bothered to look at a rose. If you want to put on

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weight, indulge yourself in gourmet delights. If you want to be wise, read all the books in the library. If you want to grow strong, work with weights or take up a sport. If you want to be hated, do all you can to make those who should love you, hate. If you want to be content, have some time each day when you can marvel at the things of our world that no human can make or fully understand.

Wordsworth wrote: *"Whither is fled the visionary gleam? Where is it now, the glory and the dream?"* It could be locked in the darkness of our eyes that have grown blind through the years. It could be lost in the preoccupation we all have with life's processes that drain our time and energy. I don't claim to know whether the glory and the dream can be reclaimed after 30 years of misuse and neglect. When the *'prison'* door has closed, can we ever escape? I would guess that it would be more trouble for most of us than the vision of glory is worth to the adult mind. We will remain blind to those wonders we knew as children, forever.

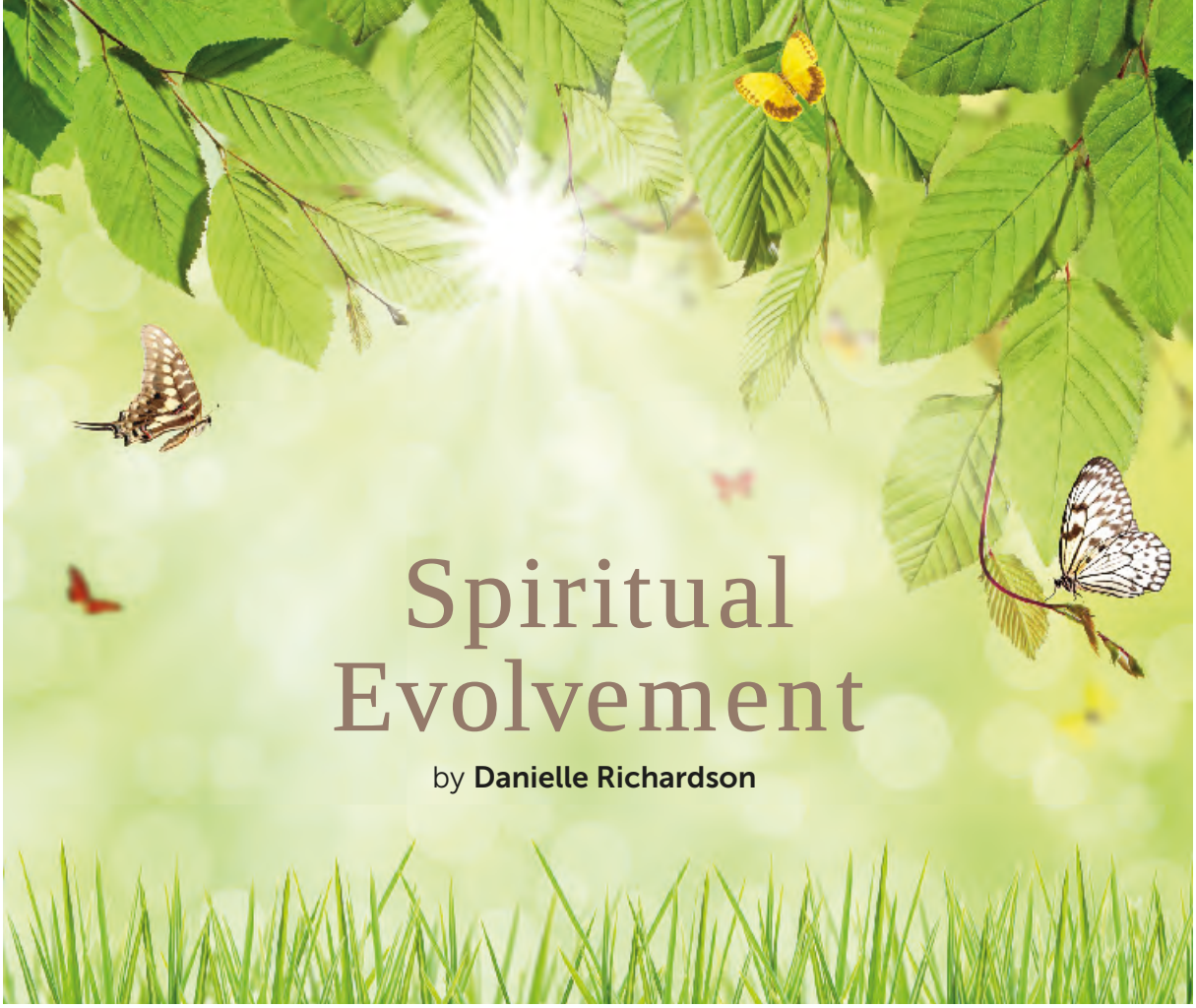
When Wordsworth asks *"Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke the years to bring the inevitable yoke?"* he must have thought it was too late to reverse direction. He adds, *"Nothing can bring back the hour of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower."* But he also writes, *"Those shadowy recollections, which, be they what they may, are yet a master-light of all our day."* And a bit farther on he mentions *"truths that wake, to perish never."* I doubt if he thought it was easy to retain that spiritual bloom of earliest childhood, but I feel sure he believed that it could be preserved by hard work and attention to those earthly values that are *"apparelled in celestial light."*



I really believe that keeping, or recapturing, this feeling of wonder at our world and universe is as important to us as is the heartbeat of life. As the trunk is important to the tree and the root to the plant, so is this spiritual awareness vital to everyone. We can live without it, but how sordid and how commonplace will be all of our days. Childlike wonder is something to seek earnestly if we've lost it and something to hold onto firmly when in the confusion of life it tries to escape. So, take note of the simple marvels all about you. Watch a puppy play, study a captive worm, enjoy the changing pattern and colours of sunset, with a glass study the glorious structure of any flower, marvel at the thousands of leaves upon a tree for none are the same, and bid the birds good night as they settle at dusk in an evergreen.

Soon you will find these things of earth verily are *"apparelled in celestial light."* Suddenly you will find in yourself a new person, and your life will forever be richer and more fulfilling.

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Spiritual Evolvement

by **Danielle Richardson**

Living in a city, I've come to cherish the times I can leave it all behind and take myself into the countryside where I can be alone and have time to sit down, relax and contemplate. My life is normally so busy with work and children that I find it difficult to get any time to myself. Last month I took advantage of some free time to reinvigorate my soul and body. I love trees and the outdoors and one of my favourite places is about an hour's drive away, in a wood with a small lake next to it. It was while sitting quietly in that serene setting that the following thoughts came to me, and I would like to share them with you.

As we consider the Cosmic as something eternal with no beginning or end, it means, I believe, that we too are eternal; at least the parts of us that express attributes of God. Those 'parts', those attributes of the Divine within us, are a conglomeration of all links we possess with our Creator...; and we know it by a name: our *'soul.'* This segment of the Divine has the natural power to expand and elevate our outer consciousness toward an ultimate union with its source. Just as our five senses enable our intellect to develop the material side of earthly life, the soul enables us to reach the celestial heights and receive knowledge of the Divine, with its universal laws and omniscience. There is a quote from Plotinus (204-270 CE) that I particularly like:

> You ask how can we know the infinite? I answer, not by reason [...] You can only apprehend the infinite by entering into a state in which you are [your] finite self no longer. This is the liberation of your mind from finite consciousness. When you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the infinite. You realise this union, this identity.

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Rosicrucians aspire to attain Cosmic Consciousness and understand that a belief in the existence of one universal God constitutes the very beginning of spiritual development. As students on the path we come to recognise that our *'resident'* soul is the sum total of what we can experience in human form of our God, and we must allow this expression of the Divine the freedom to unfold its beneficence and infinite wisdom within our finite being. In order to stimulate the soul's unfoldment, we must establish a spiritual living ideal, supported by continuous mental and physical efforts to accomplish that ideal.

The ideal most conducive to spiritual attainment is one that allows us to elevate our soul, mind and body with the aim of ultimately merging with the Divine. This is the highest plane in the universal order and is ever seeking to express more of its Light, Life and Love through the *'human collective.'* I list three points below:

1. We should never cease trying to unite with our God, and serve in accordance with the *'original plan'* we believe was meant for us in this earthly life.

2. We should try to understand the divine nature of our soul and give it the freedom to express itself ever more widely through our outer nature, leaving it fully unhindered by our petty daily affairs. We can do this by eliminating false beliefs, as and when our soul enables us to realise the errors of those beliefs.

3. We should put our *'physical house'* in order by cultivating proper living, focus our minds of logical, compassionate and intuitive thinking, and cultivating healthy eating habits. By doing this, we maintain a clear mind and good physical health.

The Sublimation Process

Good physical health is important, but it's not the only part of our development. Developing our intuitive, psychic and spiritual faculties is just as important. As we begin opening ourselves up to these 'higher' aspects of our being, our sympathetic nervous system and various psychic centres within the body serve as the body's preferred natural channels for the expression of the soul and start expressing greater and greater activity within groups of energy of ever higher vibratory frequencies.

When our development has reached a point where the nervous system and psychic centres are able to resonate in sympathy with the vibratory frequencies of the soul, the intellect becomes fully conscious of the

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actual spiritual force within us. From a Rosicrucian manuscript of the early 20th century we have the following: *"The universal mind as an intelligence permeates every cell of our being and is accessible as [an] infinite wisdom."*

Eventually, after conscientiously working on this ideal and continuously living consistent with the nobler ways of living and thinking engendered by the soul, we come to experience a union of our soul with our outer intellect. And when these two merge, we are aware of being enfolded by an invisible, living intelligence, and become immersed in divine wisdom and creative thought that enables us to grasp cosmic truths intellectually and spiritually.

Feeding the Physical Body

Being infused with the Light permeating our lives from the Divine Mind through the constant presence of our soul, we are brought into a keener awareness of our body's nutritional needs. And because our body's cells serve to house the divine life essence, we need to keep those cells in a healthy state.

I've found, from time to time, that my intuition prompts me to eat specific foods at certain times in order to correct various nutritional deficiencies. At other times I've felt a distinct need to take food supplements in addition to my normal diet, but when my inner needs have been satisfied, I discontinue them and return to the simplest and healthiest types of food I know. And I count in this the types of food I consider as ethically sourced and devoid of animal suffering. This I consider fundamental.

Nurturing Non-attachment

However, the harmonising of the Soul, Mind and Body is only the initial step in the ascent to the highest planes of Cosmic Consciousness. In the mystical process, the body is gradually conditioned to receive and withstand the higher and finer rates of cosmic vibrations yet to come. The intellect gradually becomes *'spiritualised'* by the soul essence and is then able to translate correctly the cosmic impulses into words it can understand. Just as neophytes at the outset of their respective spiritual journeys have to develop themselves on broad fronts in order to gain sufficient strength and wisdom in gaining audience with the soul, the hoped-for ascent into ever higher planes of soul expression, through the outer human personality, requires a lot of time and practice and repeatedly entering into deep states of contemplation.

As we journey towards Cosmic Consciousness, we are faced with the important task of readjusting values in the universal scale from the Cosmic down to our material plane. The speed and extent of our subsequent soul unfoldment depends on the order in which we place those values. In my perusal it seemed obvious that the source of life should be at the apex, and that non-attachment to worldly things should slowly be developed in our everyday affairs.

Mystics in times past taught the principle of renunciation of the world in favour of the Divine as the highest and most desirable value we can aspire to. When that source of all that I am is given the highest position and is established as the ideal of my life, mental and emotional inhibitions dissolve into nothing. The soul then, as the closest representative we can know of that ultimate Source of all things, is freed up to continue unfolding our outer being toward emulating ever greater *'portions'* of the magnificence of our God.

The Reality of Renunciation

The principle of renouncing the world does not necessarily mean living in seclusion from the world or receding from pleasure and relaxation. Renunciation, in the truest mystical sense, is the refusal to be swayed by greed, selfishness, hate, jealousy, cruelty, dishonesty, deceit, conceit and vanity. Materially speaking, it is to

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use the great array of aids to better living for comfort and expediency of not only ourselves but of as many others we can afford to assist, rather than using them as symbols of status and vainglory.

The principle also applies to the popular tendency toward hero worship or demagogism. How often do we come across a film star, sportsperson or politician who is idolised by thousands if not millions for the persona they display. There's a world of difference between enjoying and giving credit to an artist for an excellent performance, and viewing that person as a perfect superbeing to be set on a pedestal. As aspirants on a very special path of spiritual development, we can't afford to allow these mental and emotional obsessions to dominate or even influence of our lives.

Falling prey to such practices disrupts the union of the soul with the intellect of its human ward by lowering the tone of the thoughts the person harbours or, in popular terminology, lowering the person's 'mental vibrations.' The soul is constantly attracting our outer attention to realms of the highest purity imaginable, even if we're unaware of it. And we cannot stymie the soul's work for us without experiencing very unpleasant repercussions.

Mental and Emotional Maturity

Renunciation of the world does not mean that we must ignore our responsibility to the rest of the world. We all have karmic obligations that have to be met and compensated for before we bid farewell to our brief sojourn on planet Earth. Through the degrees of enlightenment we attain through our personal life trials and experiences, we must willingly assume the task of responsibly pointing out what is right or wrong to those who come into contact with us and appear willing to learn. We're all on paths towards ever greater spiritual unfoldment and it's incumbent upon us to always lend a helping hand to those who are seeking what we have already found.

The task of attaining self-maturity and helping others to start on the same process involves never-ending mental activity and intellectual alertness in the effort to analyse whether a given situation is in line with or in opposition to basic principles. Yet the reward for such painstaking efforts is the gradual growth into mental, emotional and spiritual adulthood, something we would wish for all people.

Our mind is like a rose which shows all of its inherent form and beautiful colours at maturity. Only in this state of maturity of being is the illumination of Cosmic Consciousness able to flow into us and we can behold the beautiful and indescribable Light of true Illumination. Cosmic Consciousness or Illumination, as it's also referred to, is the summum bonum of human attainment on earth and is the greatest reward we can receive in our personal achievement of mental and emotional maturity. The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (121-180 CE) summed this up rather neatly in his book *Meditations*:

> Honour the highest thing in the universe [for] it is the power on which all things depend. It is the light by which all life is guided. Honour the highest within yourself, for it too is the power on which all things depend and the light by which all life is guided.



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The Kahunas

Old Hawaiian Mystics

by **Hansel Aea-Chang**

The Hawaiian language is beautiful and marvellously descriptive; each word and part of a word is full of meaning. The word *'Kahuna'* is said be derived from two Hawaiian words, Ka and huna, literally meaning *'the secret.'* It is also said to come from two other words *'kahu'*, and *'na'* which literally mean *'the guardian of something.'* Thus the word in its entirety, *'Kahuna'*, has been interpreted as meaning, *'the guardian of the secret.'* As Kahunas, these versatile mystics of old Hawaii guarded the secret of dealing with the methods of attaining the knowledge and power which lies beyond humans through spiritual insight and faith.

The word 'Kahuna' is said be derived from two Hawaiian words, Ka and huna, literally meaning "the secret."

More than priests of a religious order in ancient Hawaii, the Kahunas were practical persons of real ability in their times: educated professionals such as doctors, lawyers, architects, scientists, educators, agriculturalists and, last but not least, seafaring men who understood the map of the sky. On the individual Kahuna devolved the responsibility of conserving resources and seeking new supplies, thereby advancing knowledge as well as meeting new situations within the framework of proven natural laws and human nature.

Kahunas were divided into many classifications or orders. Each order conducted a specific school with apprenticed students who eventually became Kahunas and masters of their craft or profession. But first, as students, they were required to watch, listen and learn.

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Questions were discouraged, if not forbidden, because the apprentice was encouraged to think, to perceive and to ponder about that which he was taught. Along with the practice of his special craft, each student member also learned to employ skills such as hypnosis, auto-suggestion and mimicry. This enabled him to become a master of psychology with a knowledge of human nature, which is necessary in making predictions, accomplishing desired ends and strengthening the order to which he belonged.

During the apprenticeship, each student would learn quickly through exercising great patience and attentiveness. But above that, he also strove to obtain understanding so that he might become a lover of the intuitive wisdom and illuminating knowledge that came only to those who could peer into the depths of *'Let that which is unknown become known.'*

The masters of any one of the Kahuna orders arrived at their exalted position only after more than two decades of training in a strict discipline. As children they were largely drawn from the ranks of the ruling class called *Ali'i* in the Hawaiian language. These children were selected on the basis of intelligence, interest and willingness to learn. However, a child of exceptional ability might be accepted from the common people, but it was seldom difficult to trace his bloodline to the Ali'i or royal family.

Each priestly order and craft or profession had its own god. Assuming that the confidence earned from the mastering of his profession might have instilled in the individual Kahuna a respect for other orders of Kahunas, we can understand why all Kahunas exhibited faith in the gods and insight into the power of prayer.

Specialised skill alone would naturally bring fame to every Kahuna order. However, the keen foresight and secret knowledge displayed by the few set them apart from all others as Kahuna mystics. Such a rare guardian of the mysteries understood the Kahuna prayer found on an ancient temple tower:

Let That Which Is Unknown
Become Known.



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A SHADOW OF THE LIGHT

by **Merle A Allison**

From antiquity we hear that *'A glass of wine lost a mighty kingdom'*, *'A nail turned the tide of a mighty battle'* and *'A woman's smile destroyed the homes of a million people.'* Yes, so it happens that little things, at times, alter the course of history. And a legend also relates that the untiring determination of a tiny spider spinning a web in an old hut gave Robert the Bruce of Scotland renewed courage to return to battle and thereby succeed in his mission.

But the majority of us are not earmarked for such historical destinies, and the role we play upon the stage of life may make little impression upon the course of history. Yet who can say how much the little things we do today may deeply affect the tomorrow of someone we may never know? Greatness does not always mean fame, wealth or power. Greatness requires more than these trappings: it's that subtle something in the innermost recesses of the self which

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glows like a ray from an invisible candle shedding the light of illumination into the dark night and leaving in its wake an unforgettable essence only the heart can comprehend.

Who can say how much the little things we do today may deeply affect the tomorrow of someone we may never know?

This happened to me many years ago when I met someone I saw for just a moment, someone whose name I didn't know and whose face I cannot remember; yet in his passing there was printed indelibly upon the fabric of my consciousness the beauty of the shadow he left behind. It was one of those mornings I am sure we have all experienced; the kind of morning when necessity demands you go to work no matter how badly or how sick you might feel. So it was with me. I had a miserable cold and, like many other winter mornings in Edinburgh, it was windy and bitterly cold.

I stood at my bus stop with a dozen or more other people shivering, my face half buried in the turned-up collar of my coat. I was ill in both body and mind. I had missed my first bus, and a red light had caused me to miss the next one. I couldn't pretend, I was miserable and I didn't care who knew it, and my misery was made worse by the fact that I would have to wait another 15 minutes in the wind and cold for the next bus. Silently, I felt extremely sorry for myself, growing hostile against the weather and the bus company in particular, upon whom I took great pleasure in blaming the discomfort I felt.

I was frowning gloomily and my jaw was clamped shut to keep my teeth from chattering. I'm sure my expression was anything but pleasant, and my red nose would surely have made me a perfect substitute for the well-known red-nosed reindeer. I pulled my chin out from under my coat collar long enough to glare down the street, hoping for some glimpse of the next offending bus. That was when I saw him.

He seemed to have appeared out of nowhere. He was poorly dressed, in fact, quite shabby really.



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Neither this nor that he was an elderly man softened my frame of mind. I immediately thought that he must be some down-and-out, but his strange actions mystified me. I found myself watching him with a growing interest. He picked his way carefully through the waiting crowd, stopping for just a moment in front of each lady at the bus stop. He spoke to each one for just the fraction of a moment, tipped his hat, and passed on to the next. After he left, each lady had a smile on her face, yet no one gave him anything nor acted in any way to give the impression that he had asked for anything.



I was so stunned that before I could recover, he had passed on down the street. I stared after him like someone in a hypnotic trance.

Intrigued, I couldn't help wondering about this and feeling curious about his actions, yet as he came toward me I instinctively stiffened against his approach, muttering inwardly *"Probably some nut trying to be a comedian."* I was in no mood for funny remarks and tried very hard to look it. I glared at him with what I thought would be a most discouraging scowl and was ready to cut him short with whatever curt response I could think up. He stopped within a couple of feet of me, looked straight into my red-nosed, scowling face and said: *"My dear, you look very beautiful this morning."* He tipped his hat, smiled and bowed slightly in a manner that would have done justice to a prince himself.

I was so stunned that before I could recover he had passed on down the street. I stared after him like someone in a hypnotic trance. If I had been slapped across the face I couldn't have been jolted any harder. He couldn't help seeing my red nose and the bad temper in my face, yet in spite of this he gave kind words and a friendly smile. I hadn't deserved his kindness, yet he gave it without hesitation. It was only after I got to work that I realised I had completely forgotten my own misery and bad temper. I could think of nothing else but this strange little man who had passed like a shadow yet had changed my whole morning and left me with something to think over for the rest of my life.

More and more he began to seem like an angel disguised as a very humble soul, perhaps even alone in the world with nothing to give to anyone but a beautiful philosophy that he believed in living. Whether the sun was shining or not made no difference to him. He seemed to know that with a few kind words and a smile he could spread sunshine wherever he went. Yes, he came like a shadow out of nowhere, and drifted back into nowhere, a nameless, faceless shadow, giving to many that unforgettable something that all the money in the world could never buy, and he left in his passing a little part of the light that burned within his soul.

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THE BISCUIT THIEF

by **Nomis Rassac**



I'm sure you've heard several variants on the biscuit thief theme, from *'Tonnage Tim'* to *'Boisy the Beagle'* to *'Pecan the Parrot'* and, more recently, Valerie Cox's lovely tale about the *'The Cookie Thief.'* Here comes another version on the immortal theme of kindness and sharing.

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Frank was returning from a short stay abroad and, finding himself at an airport changeover with a few hours to spare, he bought a coffee and packet of biscuits. Satisfied with life, he sat down at an unoccupied table and was catching up on his emails when he heard the rustling of plastic. From behind his laptop, he was astounded to see a shabbily dressed man who had just sat down opposite him, helping himself to Frank's biscuits!

He didn't want to get into a confrontation with the man but thought he should at least make a point; they were after all his biscuits! So, casually, he leaned across and took a biscuit himself without looking up. A short while later, the man helped himself to another biscuit, and Frank did the same. And so it went until there was just one left, by which time Frank was about to blow a fuse but couldn't bring himself to saying anything, for he secretly suffered from the well-known but poorly diagnosed malady of *'stiff-upper-liptosis.'* Finally, the man broke the last biscuit in two, took half of it and left the rest for Frank.

An hour later, as Frank was about to get up to walk to his boarding gate, he was shocked to see 'his' packet of biscuits lying neatly on top of his hand luggage, precisely where he had left them. And with shame he realised he had been eating the other man's biscuits. All the angry thoughts he'd directed at this innocent man had been misplaced, and with genuine grief he realised it was too late to make amends for what had been an easily avoidable mistake. What a rude ingrate: Frank, the biscuit thief.

He had undergone what in polite society is called a *'paradigm shift'* but has been known more thoroughly in esoteric circles for thousands of years as an *'initiation.'* He'd been taught a lesson, had suffered the moral pangs of conscience, and had learned something entirely new. And, apart from the deep shame he felt, he was also lifted up by feelings of gratitude for the lesson he had learned. One moment he'd been on the verge of a sharp argument with a stranger eating *'his'* biscuits; the next, he was humbled by the kindness of a shabbily dressed man willing to share his biscuits with him.

Let's always be aware of the broader context of the life situations we encounter and remember to step aside a while before doing anything. Indeed, let's withdraw outside of ourselves for a while, if we can, and briefly see things from the vantage of a fly on the ceiling. Let's always think before jumping to conclusions, and let's do our thinking with fairness and kindness. Let's not assume things about people because of their shabby clothes, or their accents, their habits, or any other things we may consider 'peculiar.' A book's contents are not determined by its cover, and so too do we need to read the book of life more thoroughly in our daily situations before jumping to conclusions about people and doing things we will surely regret.

More often than not, we interpret things through coloured lenses, biased and distorted by our many harsh life experiences.

Truly, things are seldom as they at first appear. It's so rare that we see things in the clear light of unvarnished truth and rarer still that we accomplish meaningful change because of those moments of clarity. More often than not, we interpret things through coloured lenses, biased and distorted by our many harsh life experiences. So, let's leave our biases aside as much as we can; let's not jump to conclusions without proper thought that is both truthful and kind to all. Frankly (no pun intended!), how often have you been absolutely convinced of something that later turned out to be false? To my great regret, I must confess I've been there..., often!

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Petrarch
Father of Humanism

by **Bill Anderson**

Francesco Petrarca (20 July 1304 – 19 July 1374), commonly anglicised as *Petrarch*, was an Italian scholar and poet of the period known as the *Trecento* (1300s) in Renaissance Italy. His rediscovery of Cicero's letters is often credited with initiating the 14th century Renaissance. Petrarch is often considered the founder of *humanism*, and, as a poet, his sonnets were admired and imitated throughout Europe during the Renaissance and became a model for lyrical poetry.

Setting the Scene

Petrarch lived in the 14th century: tumultuous times. The last Cathars, who had fled to northern Italy, were being hunted down and murdered. The Knights Templar were being harried throughout Europe after their Order was dissolved and their wealth seized by European rulers. And the Black Death decimated the continent between 1347 and 1353, reputedly reducing its population by a staggering 60%.

The bitterly cold winters and drenching rains of the early 14th century announced the end of the *Medieval Warm Period* (MWP) when Europe had expanded dangerously close to the

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Petrarch was born in the Tuscan city of Arezzo in 1304.

limits of its resources. Four centuries of unusually mild temperatures, the highest in 8,000 years, prompted the continent's farmers to plant crops on large tracts of land previously unsuitable for agriculture. The increased food supply in turn fuelled a population explosion that tripled the number of people in medieval Europe. As the first century of the *Little Ice Age* began, a series of famines and plagues, beginning with the *Great Famine* (1315–17) and especially the *Black Death* (1346-1353), reduced the population by perhaps half or more. It took 150 years for the European population to regain the levels it had reached in 1300.

There is an account of grain prices in Europe in which the price of wheat doubled from 20 shillings per quarter in 1315 to 40 shillings per quarter by June of the following year. Grape harvests also suffered, which reduced wine production throughout Europe. During this climatic change and subsequent famines and diseases, Europe's cattle were struck with *Bovine Pestilence*, a pathogen of unknown identity. The pathogen began spreading throughout Europe from Eastern Asia in 1315 and reached the British Isles by 1319. The lower temperatures and a general lowering of nutrition levels among cattle lowered herd immunities, making them ever more vulnerable to disease, and the proliferation of dead or unhealthy cattle drastically affected dairy production. Much of medieval peasants' protein was, until the early 1300s, obtained from milk in its various forms. Milk shortages therefore caused marked nutritional deficiencies in human population centres throughout Europe. Famine and pestilence, exacerbated by the prevalence of war during this time, led to the death of an estimated 10% to 15% of Europe's population. This, then, was the Europe into which Petrarch was born.

Letter to Posterity

Petrarch wrote a letter introducing himself, called his *Letter to Posterity*, parts of which are reproduced below:

> To begin then with myself. The utterances of men concerning me will differ widely, since in passing judgment almost everyone is influenced not so much by truth as by preference, and good and evil report alike know no bounds. I was, in truth, a poor mortal like yourself, neither very exalted in my origin, nor of the most humble birth, but belonging, as Augustus Caesar says of himself, to an ancient family.
>
> My parents were honourable folk, Florentine in their origin, of medium fortune, or, I may as well admit it, in a condition verging upon poverty. They had been expelled from their native city, and consequently I was born in exile, at Arezzo, in the year 1304 on the 20th July, on a Monday, at dawn. I have always possessed an extreme contempt for wealth; not that riches are not desirable in themselves, but because I hate the anxiety and care which are invariably associated with them. I

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have, on the contrary, led a happier existence with plain living and ordinary fare. So-called convivia, which are but vulgar bouts, sinning against sobriety and good manners, have always been repugnant to me.

I possessed a well-balanced rather than a keen intellect..., one prone to all kinds of good and wholesome study, but especially inclined to moral philosophy and the art of poetry. The latter, indeed, I neglected as time went on, and took delight in sacred literature. Finding in that a hidden sweetness which I had once esteemed but lightly, I came to regard the works of the poets as only amenities.

Among the many subjects that interested me, I dwelt especially upon antiquity, for our own age has always repelled me, so that had it not been for the love of those dear to me, I should have preferred to have been born in any other period than our own. In order to forget my own time, I have constantly striven to place myself in spirit in other ages, and consequently I delighted in history.



In 1345 he personally discovered a collection of Cicero's letters not previously known to have existed.

So, Petrarch in his own words. What he says about himself seems to be true, and not boasting at all.

Early Life

As he says, he was born in the Tuscan city of Arezzo in 1304. He spent his early childhood in the village of Incisa, near Florence, but spent much of his early life in France at Avignon and nearby Carpentras, to where his family moved in order to follow Pope Clement V (reigned 5th June 1305 to 20th April 1314). This is the Pope who abolished the Knights Templar. He was also the Pope who moved there in 1309 to begin the Avignon Papacy. Petrarch studied law at the University of Montpellier (1316–1320) and the University of Bologna (1320–23). Because his father was in the legal profession, he insisted that Petrarch and his brother study law as



Petrarch was close friends with Francesco Landini, one of the most famous and revered composers of the second half of the 14th century.



Another friend was another Florentine: Giovanni Boccaccio, the Italian writer, poet and important Renaissance humanist.

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well. Petrarch, however, was primarily interested in writing and Latin literature.

Petrarch travelled widely in Europe, served as an ambassador, and has been called the world's *'first tourist'* because he travelled purely for pleasure. During his travels, he collected crumbling Latin manuscripts and was a prime mover in the recovery of knowledge from writers of Rome and Greece. In 1345 he personally discovered a collection of Cicero's letters not previously known to have existed.

Petrarch argued that God had given humans their vast intellectual and creative potential to be used to their fullest.

Disdaining what he believed to be the ignorance of the centuries preceding the era in which he lived, Petrarch is credited with creating the concept of the historical *'Dark Ages'* of Europe. He regarded the post-Roman centuries as *'dark'* compared to the light of classical antiquity. The phrase *'Dark Age'* itself derives from the Latin *saeculum obscurum*, originally applied by the historian *Caesar Baronius* in 1602 to a tumultuous period between the 10th and 11th centuries. The concept thus came to characterise the entire Middle Ages as a time of intellectual darkness between the fall of Rome and the Renaissance, a view particularly prevalent during the 18th century Age of Enlightenment.

Petrarch said he was the friend of kings and others whom he met on his travels. He was a close friend of Francesco Landini (1325/1335 – 1397) of Florence, one of the most famous and revered composers of the second half of the 14th Century. His music has echoes of the Byzantine Imperial Court in Constantinople and he was the foremost exponent of the Italian Trecento style.

Another friend was another Florentine: Giovanni Boccaccio (16 June 1313 – 21 December 1375), the Italian writer, poet and important Renaissance humanist. Boccaccio wrote a number of notable works, including *The Decameron*. He wrote his imaginative literature mostly in the Italian vernacular and is particularly noted for his realistic dialogue which differed from that of his contemporaries.

Father of Humanism

Petrarch is traditionally called the *'Father of Humanism'* but is considered by many to be more generally the *'Father of the Renaissance.'* This honorific is given both for his influential philosophical attitudes, found in his many personal letters, and his discovery and compilation of classical texts.

In his work *Secretum meum* he points out that secular achievements did not necessarily preclude an authentic relationship with God. Petrarch argued instead that God had given humans their vast intellectual and creative potential to be used to their fullest. He inspired humanist philosophy, which led to the intellectual flowering of the Renaissance. He believed in the immense moral and practical value of the study of ancient history and literature..., that is, the study of human thought and action.

As Petrarch learned more about the classical period, he began to venerate that era and rail against the limitations of his own time. Though he felt that he lived *"amid varied and confusing storms"*, he believed that humanity could once more reach the heights of past accomplishments. To him, Latin was not merely a self-justifying discipline but the means to re-enter the realms of classical thought and imagination to find new ways of thinking and investigating yourself and the world at large. His travels around Europe (*"I am a citizen of no place, everywhere I am a stranger"*) introduced him to

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Mount Ventoux in the distance.

different cultures and his poetry, for which he is best known, was not only a way of writing, but also a manner of thinking.

He owned a Greek manuscript of Plato and read the *Timaeus* and *Phaedo*, which were available to him in Latin translations. He also gathered information on Plato in other Roman authors and cited some Platonic doctrines. However, more important than these occasional references to specific theories is his conviction that Plato was the greatest of all philosophers.

A highly introspective man, Petrarch shaped the nascent humanist movement a great deal because many of the internal conflicts and musings expressed in his writings were seized upon by Renaissance humanist philosophers and argued continually for the next 200 years. For example, Petrarch struggled with the proper relation between the active and contemplative life and tended to emphasise the importance of solitude and study. He asserts that man and his problems should be the main object and concern of thought and philosophy. In a clear disagreement with Dante, in 1346 Petrarch argued in his *De vita solitaria* that Pope Celestine V's refusal of the papacy in 1294 was a virtuous example of solitary life. Later, the politician and thinker *Leonardo Bruni* (1377-1444) argued for the active life, or *'civic humanism.'* As a result, a number of political, military and religious leaders during the Renaissance were inculcated with the notion that their pursuit of personal fulfilment should be grounded in classical example and philosophical contemplation.

Climbing Mount Ventoux

Petrarch wrote an account of an ascent that he and his brother made of Mount Ventoux in France. It may have been an actual journey but whether it was or not, it is filled with allegorical allusions and hidden meanings that resonate well with Rosicrucians. Below follows a portion of this account, long in words, perhaps, but steeped in allegorical meaning.

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Today I ascended the highest mountain in this region. For many years I have been intending to make this expedition. You know that since my early childhood, as fate tossed around human affairs, I have been tossed around in these parts, and this mountain, visible far and wide from everywhere, is always in your view. So, I was at last seized by the impulse to accomplish what I had always wanted to do.

I now began to think over whom to choose as a companion. It will sound strange to you that hardly a single one of all my friends seemed to me suitable in every respect; so rare a thing is absolute congeniality in every attitude and habit even among dear friends. One was too sluggish, the other too vivacious; one too slow, the other too quick. One was duller, the other brighter than I should have liked. This man's taciturnity, that man's flippancy; the heavy weight and obesity of the next, the thinness and weakness of still another were reasons to deter me. The cool lack of curiosity of one, like another's too eager interest, dissuaded me from choosing either. All such qualities, however difficult they are to bear, can be borne at home: loving friendship is able to endure everything, it refuses no burden. But on a journey, they become intolerable.

Thus, my delicate mind, craving honest entertainment, looked about carefully, weighing every detail with no offense to friendship. Tacitly it rejected whatever it could foresee would become troublesome on the projected excursion. What do you think I did? At last I applied for help at home and revealed my plan to my only brother, who is younger than I. He could hear of nothing he would have liked better and was happy to fill the place of friend as well as brother.

We left home on the appointed day and arrived at Malaucène at night. This is a place at the northern foot of the mountain. We spent a day there and began our ascent this morning. From the start we encountered a good deal of trouble, for the mountain is a steep and almost inaccessible pile of rocky material. However, what the Poet says is appropriate: *"Ruthless striving overcomes everything." (Vergil: Georgics & Macrobius, Saturnalia.)*

The day was long, the air was mild; this and vigorous minds, strong and supple bodies, and all the other conditions assisted us on our way. The only obstacle was the nature of the spot. We found an aged shepherd in the folds of the mountain who tried with many words to dissuade us from the ascent. He said he had been up to the highest summit in just such youthful fervour fifty years ago and had brought home nothing but regret and pains, and his body as well as his clothes torn by rocks and thorny underbrush. Never before and never since had the people there heard of any man who dared a similar feat.

While he was shouting these words at us, our desire increased just because of his warnings; for young people's minds do not give credence to advisers. When the old man saw that he was exerting himself in vain he went with us a little way forward through the rocks and pointed with his finger to a steep path. He gave us much good advice and repeated it again and again at our backs when we were already at quite a distance. We left with him whatever of our clothes and other belongings might encumber us, intent only on the ascent, and began to climb with merry alacrity. However, as almost always happens, the daring attempt was soon followed by quick fatigue.

Not far from our start we stopped at a rock. From there we went on again, proceeding at a slower pace, to be sure. I in particular made my way up with considerably more modest steps. My brother

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Young people's minds do not give credence to advisers...

endeavoured to reach the summit by the very ridge of the mountain on a short cut; I, being so much more of a weakling, was bending down toward the valley. When he called me back and showed me the better way, I answered that I hoped to find an easier access on the other side and was not afraid of a longer route on which I might proceed more smoothly. With such an excuse I tried to palliate my laziness, and, when another would have already reached the higher zones, I was still wandering through the valleys, where no more comfortable access was revealed, while the way became longer and longer and the vain fatigue grew heavier and heavier.

At last I felt utterly disgusted, began to regret my perplexing error, and decided to attempt the heights with a wholehearted effort. Weary and exhausted, I reached my brother, who had been waiting for me and was refreshed by a good long rest. For a while we went on together at the same pace. However, hardly had we left that rock behind us when I forgot the detour I had made just a short while before and was once more drawing down the lower regions. Again I wandered through the valleys, looking for the longer and easier path and stumbling only into longer difficulties. Thus I indeed put off the disagreeable strain of climbing. But nature is not overcome by man's devices; a corporeal thing cannot reach the heights by descending. What shall I say? My brother laughed at me; I was indignant; this happened to me three times and more within a few hours. So often was I frustrated in my hopes that at last I sat down in a valley. There I leaped in my winged thoughts from things corporeal to what is incorporeal and addressed myself in words like these:

What you have so often experienced today while climbing this mountain happens to you, you must know, and to many others who are making their way toward the blessed life. This is not easily understood by us men, because the motions of the body lie open while those of the mind are invisible and hidden. The life we call blessed is located on a high peak. 'A narrow way'*, they say, leads up to it. Many hilltops intervene, and we must proceed* 'from virtue to virtue' *with exalted steps.*

On the highest summit is set the end of all, the goal toward which our pilgrimage is directed. Every man wants to arrive there. However, as Ovid says: "To wish for something is not enough. With ardent longing you must strive for it." *You certainly do*

With such an excuse I tried to palliate my laziness...

not merely want; you have a longing, unless you are deceiving yourself in this respect as in so many others. What is it then that keeps you back? Evidently nothing but the smoother way that leads through the meanest earthly pleasures and looks easier at first sight. However, having strayed far in error, you must either ascend to the summit of the blessed life under the heavy burden of hard striving, or lie prostrate in your slothfulness in the valleys of your sins.

There is a summit, higher than all the others. The people in the woods up there call it 'Sonny'*, I do not know why. However, I suspect they use the word in a sense opposite to its meaning, as is done sometimes in other cases too. For it really looks like the father of all the surrounding mountains. On its top is a small level stretch. There at last we rested from our fatigue.*

And now, since you have heard what sorrows arose in my breast during my climb, listen also to

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The summit of modern-day Mount Ventoux.

what remains to be told. Devote, I beseech you, one of your hours to reading what I did during one of my days. At first, I stood there almost benumbed, overwhelmed by a gale such as I had never felt before and by the unusually open and wide view. I looked around me: clouds were gathering below my feet. From there I turned my eyes in the direction of Italy, for which my mind is so fervently yearning.



Portrait of Petrarch.

The Alps were frozen stiff and covered with snow - those mountains through which that ferocious enemy of the Roman name once passed, blasting his way through the rocks with vinegar if we may believe tradition. They looked as if they were quite near me, though they are far, far away. I was longing, I must confess, for Italian air, which appeared rather to my mind than my eyes. An incredibly strong desire seized me to see my friend and my native land again. At the same time, I rebuked the weakness of a mind not yet grown to manhood, manifest in both these desires, although in both cases an excuse would not lack support from famous champions.

Then another thought took possession of my mind, leading it from the contemplation of space to that of time, and I said to myself:

This day marks the completion of the tenth year since you gave up the studies of your boyhood and left Bologna. O immortal God, O immutable Wisdom! How many and how great were the changes you have had to undergo in your moral habits since then.

I will not speak of what is still left undone, for I am

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not yet in port that I might think in security of the storms I have had to endure. The time will perhaps come when I can review all this in the order in which it happened. Thus, I revolved in my thoughts the history of the last decade. Then I dismissed my sorrow at the past and asked myself:

Suppose you succeed in protracting this rapidly fleeing life for another decade, and come as much nearer to virtue, in proportion to the span of time, as you have been freed from your former obstinacy during these last two years as a result of the struggle of the new and the old wills. Would you then not be able, perhaps not with certainty but with reasonable hope at least, to meet death in your fortieth year with equal mind, and cease to care for that remnant of life which descends into old age?

These and like considerations rose in my breast again and again. I was glad of the progress I had made, but I wept over my imperfection and was grieved by the fickleness of all that men do. In this manner I seemed to have somehow forgotten the place I had come to and why, until I was warned to throw off such sorrows, for which another place would be more appropriate. I had better look around and see what I had intended to see in coming here. The time to leave was approaching, they said. The sun was already setting, and the shadow of the mountain was growing longer and longer. Like a man aroused from sleep, I turned back and looked toward the west. The boundary wall between France and Spain, the ridge of the Pyrenees, is not visible from there, though there is no obstacle of which I knew, and nothing but the weakness of the mortal eye is the cause. However, one could see most distinctly the mountains of the province of Lyons to the right and, to the left, the sea near Marseilles as well as the waves that break against Aigues Mortes, although it takes several days to travel to this city. The Rhone River was directly under our eyes.

I admired every detail, now relishing earthly enjoyment, now lifting up my mind to higher spheres. I was completely satisfied with what I had seen of the mountain and turned my inner eye toward myself. From this hour no one heard me say a word until we arrived at the bottom. These words occupied me sufficiently. I could not imagine that this had happened to me by chance: I was convinced that whatever I had read there was said to me and to no one else. Silently I thought over how greatly mortal men lack counsel who, neglecting the noblest part of themselves in empty parading, look without for what can be found within. I admired the nobility of the mind, had it not voluntarily degenerated and strayed from the primordial state of its origin, converting into disgrace what God had given to be its honour.

I admired the nobility of the mind...

How often, do you think, did I turn back and look up to the summit of the mountain today while I was walking down? It seemed to me hardly higher than a cubit compared to the height of human contemplation. How intensely ought we to exert our strength to get under foot not a higher spot of earth but the passions which are puffed up by earthly instincts.

And thus, gather from this letter how eager I am to leave nothing whatever in my heart hidden from your eyes. Not only do I lay my whole life open to you with the utmost care, but every single thought of mine. Pray for these thoughts, I beseech you, that they may at last find stability. So long have they been idling about and, finding no firm stand, been uselessly driven through so many matters. May they now turn at last to the One, the Good, the True, the stably Abiding.

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Euganean Hills, Italy, where Petrarch spent the later part of his life.

Later Life

Petrarch spent the later part of his life journeying through northern Italy as an international scholar and poet-diplomat. His career in the Church did not allow him to marry, but he is believed to have fathered two children: a son Giovanni (born in 1337) and a daughter Francesca (born in 1343). Both he later legitimised.

Giovanni died of the plague in 1361. In the same year Petrarch was named canon in Monselice near Padua. Francesca married Francescuolo da Brossano, who was later in the same year named executor of Petrarch's will. In 1362, shortly after the birth of a daughter, Eletta (the same name as Petrarch's mother), they joined Petrarch in Venice to flee the plague then ravaging parts of Europe. A second grandchild, Francesco, was born in 1366, but died before his second birthday. Francesca and her family lived with Petrarch in Venice for five years from 1362 to 1367 at Palazzo Molina, although Petrarch continued to travel in those years. Between 1361 and 1369 the younger Boccaccio paid the older Petrarch two visits. The first was in Venice, the second was in Padua.

About 1368 Petrarch and his daughter Francesca, with her family, moved to the small town of Arquà in the Euganean Hills near Padua, where he passed his remaining years in religious contemplation. He passed away in his house in Arquà early on 20 July 1374..., his 70th birthday!

He was a great poet, writer and scholar as well as an ambiguous and transitional figure in his role in the history of philosophical thought. His thought consists of aspirations rather than developed ideas, but these aspirations were developed by later thinkers and were eventually transformed into more elaborate ideas. As one of the world's first classical scholars, Petrarch unearthed vast stores of knowledge in the lost texts he discovered, while his philosophy of humanism helped foment the intellectual growth and accomplishments of the Renaissance.

He is important in the history of the western world because he expressed, for the first time, that emphasis on man which was to receive eloquent developments in the treatises of later humanists and to be given a metaphysical and cosmological foundation in the works of Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.

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Right Attitude

An Inner Posture for Mystical Development

by **Sven Johansson**

Whereas we have times of seemingly rapid progress offset by periods of apparent stagnation, these are but disjointed early realisations of an underlying process that is both steady and cumulative, but entirely meant just for us. Progress is only ever made through our own efforts, step-by-step, hour-by-hour, day-by-day. And as we metaphorically approach the awesome vision of our destiny, the footsteps we leave behind in the sand are the personal thoughts, feelings and actions that once were ours and which have brought us experiences that have contributed to the growth of our soul consciousness. The path we have chosen leads us towards an initiation into the very heart of our being, the soul personality itself, known to Rosicrucians a the *'rose of the soul.'*

Sincere travellers following one of the many mystical paths leading to illumination and intimate union with the soul soon learn the futility of seeking shortcuts in an attempt to avoid necessary experiences. However,

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it's quite reasonable and even admirable for us to ensure that we're taking the most direct route, not to avoid effort but rather to focus and concentrate our energies on productive endeavours. Nature is supremely efficient in its pristine operation, and so too should we do our best to follow the most direct and efficient route to our goal.

Attitudes

This most efficient and most direct route to illumination is built upon a specific set of 'inner postures' that mystics adopt. Just as practitioners of hatha yoga adopt outer, physical postures with the intention of honing the health of the body, so do mystics adopt specific inner postures to achieve inner ends. These inner postures are commonly known as *attitudes*.

Attitudes determine how we think, feel and act. In short, it can truthfully be said that attitudes *permit* awareness, *permit* realisations and *permit* the appropriate utilisation of the mystical techniques we're using. Collectively, our attitudes are the gateway through which permissions are granted or denied, and because our attitudes are our own self-created thoughts we don't question the decisions that emerge from them. The inner posture of maintaining correct attitudes at all times directly governs how we, as scholars of the so-called *'mystical life'*, try to master the tasks needed for the gradual evolvement of our soul personality. First, we decide what to do..., then how to do it..., and finally, we adopt the appropriate attitudes that will enable our being to reach our coveted goal. That is the mystic way.

Certain attitudes are fundamental, even essential, to the mystical outlook needed to develop and refine our skills at navigating ourselves through life without leaving too much pain and suffering behind. But if we were to try to identify all beneficial attitudes in detail before even *starting* on our mystical journey, we would soon be totally overwhelmed by a jumbled and disjointed list far beyond our ability to comprehend,



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A plug fits into its socket, a key fits into its lock, not just any socket or lock, only the matching ones will do.

let alone to act upon. Yet there are a few very simple attitudes we can adopt, most of them so obvious they hardly need mentioning. Compassion, fairness, justice, responsibility for our own actions, etc; the list is not long, but a good start, and in the absence of any greater understanding than this, we must begin here. And even if we don't have a clear appreciation of the need for even these most obvious of inner attitudes, they quickly emerge through insights we gain once we've deliberately taken the first steps along the path towards our inner liberation. *The decision to take the path comes first; the rest follows.*

Most insights are specific realisations meant just for us, and the great *Law of Karma* ensures that we get precisely the lessons we need most at any given time. They are very personal, sometimes painful, and often apply only to specific aspects of our, and no one else's, life. There are, however, a number of essential attitudes common to all travellers on the path, ones that are gained by everyone at some point on the journey and which can be shared with and understood by virtually everyone. In this sense they are universal and fundamental, so let's consider the following six *'fundamental attitudes.'*

1: The Law of the Triangle

Rosicrucians have one fundamental law close to their hearts. It is called the *Law of the Triangle* and forms not only the basis of all mystical endeavour but is also recognised by science as the basis of all physical manifestations. It is essential that we deeply and indelibly impress upon our consciousness the concept that there are always two causes to every thing that happens. Every phenomenon necessarily results from an active and a receptive cause, being a product of the union of two qualities that we arbitrarily call *'positive'* and *'negative.'*

Of course, using words like *positive* and *negative* is done in a metaphorical sense only and there's no inherent *good* or *bad* implied in either word. The words are merely two points of a triangle, the third point being the manifestation of the union of these two points. There are two causes to every manifestation which, in turn, occurs at the precise place and time of the union of these two causes. As the saying goes, it takes two to tango, and it takes two causes for every effect. A plug fits into its socket, a key fits into its lock; not just any socket or lock, only the matching ones will do.

2: Causation

It is important to realise that all situations are the product of many concurrent phenomena, but crucial is the manner in which they are interpreted by our consciousness. Whether we realise it or not, we're constantly applying meaning to the causation we see about us. We do the interpretating, we apply the meaning. Without a clear understanding of the

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duality of causation, however, we're apt to concentrate on one cause only, usually the most obvious one. And by doing so, we fail to discern the deeper levels of causation, the full range of he causal force behind an occurrence.

Furthermore, every cause has its own history, its own *'world line'*, and that history should be carefully analysed and understood. By neglecting to consider the fullness of causation and applying meaning and reality to only one of the pair of causes, and then again only to the most recent of a whole stream of pairs of causes leading to the current state of affairs, we attach too much relevance to a single cause, and the result is a loss of perspective. So, causes come in pairs, and this is the principle behind the Rosicrucian *Law of the Triangle.*

When we know there are always two causes to every manifestion we have a better understanding of self. Usually we 'll be analysing something which has occurred in our own life and will therefore be alert to the part we personally played in the event's causation, namely, *how we share responsibility for the event.*

3: Change

Another essential attitude, also related to the first, involves change. We must understand and accept change not only intellectually but intuitively as well. Sometimes, less *'head'* and more *'heart'* can help us immensely to separate the wood from the trees. Few things are so stifling to human creativity, as deadly to personal or social development, as that misplaced zeal for a *'once and for all'* situation, a *'final solution.'* Dictators and tyrants love such solutions even when they hardly ever exist in the real world of complex situations.



Some people find life empty and devoid of meaning when they finally retire.

When we know there are always two causes to every manifestion, we have a better understanding of self.

Some people work their entire lives towards the goal of retirement, hoping for something special about being able to finally relax. But instead they find life empty and devoid of meaning when they finally get there. Others toil incessantly to create something, find their creation to be all they envisioned, yet remain dissatisfied. Too many believe that once they get things just as they wanted them to be they can sit back and enjoy themselves. Not so: *Change is the law*, and about the only thing we can rely upon is the fact that change will be with us for as long as we live.

As pairs of causes constantly merge to produce ever new manifestations, so too must we continually explore and seek to understand an ever-changing world about us. Incidental to the hectic pace of modern civilisation is the realisation of the impermanence and instability of material and social creations. The flu vaccine we received last autumn is unlikely to protect us from the latest mutation of this potentially deadly disease, as indeed we've discovered with the flu-related Covid-19 virus now afflicting millions of people throughout the world. And that highlights in stark relief that change, and our ability to quickly adapt to changes in our outer lives, is fundamental to our inner lives too. Not only does our outer world constantly change but our inner world also changes, though those inner changes are almost entirely due to our attitudes.

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In our own special ways, we are all seeking ideals of perfection, while at the same time being aware that the very concept of perfection is itself evolving within us.

Our aspirations, goals and desires all undergo modification as a result of the expansion and growth in maturity of our consciousness. A new being looks upon a new world every morning. Consequently, those who are serious about personal development don't fail to examine their personal philosophy each day in the light of new experiences; for they know that yesterday's principles of *'right living'* may be inadequate for today's living. In our own special ways, we're all seeking ideals of perfection, while at the same time being aware that the very concept of perfection is itself evolving within us. Of all people, mystics hold no expectation of a world where things stay as they are. They're sufficiently self-assured to live comfortably and well-adapted in an ever-changing world with a constructive attitude towards each new day's problems and opportunities. Change is the law!

Those who fully understand this welcome change as a vehicle for inner growth. In fact, by understanding change, they transcend mere acceptance of it and actively seek to share in the process, guiding change for the benefit of their self and others. We won't find true mystics longing for the past, nor will we find them fighting change in defence of a static present. But we will find them fully immersed in the active present while carefully and confidently working for a better, brighter future for as great a part of our Earth's precious biomes as possible. A true mystic is a willing, understanding and cooperative *agent of change*.

4: Self-Reliance

An ingredient of character known as self-reliance is a fourth essential attitude and it flows directly from our concept of self. Of course, self-reliance doesn't necessarily mean being egocentric, nor being uncooperative with our fellow humans. Nor does it mean we should be remiss in any of those social obligations that are incidental to *'good citizenship'*, however we may define it.

Of all people, mystics hold no expectation of a world where things stay as they are.

Self-reliance is more akin to things like courage, inner resolve and a deep sense of responsibility to, and connection with, all parts of Earthly life. True mystics know that no answer can come from anywhere or anyone except from within themselves, namely, from the *'still small voice within'*, that life-long manifestation of inner refinement and perfection that exists in embryonic form in all living creatures, possibly in its highest and most complex form in humans. They listen carefully to others, enjoy exploration and study with others, and share experiences with others, all in the cause of ever greater connection with the great life current of which they are a part.

To the extent that they're able to wisely choose and incorporate into their beings the positive and uplifting experience of others, valuable lessons are learned and their inner spiritual growth progresses. But the deep answers and profound changes for the better that they seek, can, in the end, only come from within

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their own spiritual depths. However, observing others experiencing similar things greatly eases the adoption and internalisation of such things.

Asking no one else for the realisations that must be earned, and not leaning upon anyone else, Rosicrucians look squarely into the face of the *'person'* with the proper answers each time they are seated before their *Home Sanctum* mirror, face-to-face with their *Inner Master*. Our *Self*, our *Inner Master*, is a *portion* or an *extension* of the *Divine Self*, that infinity actuality that some refer to simply as *'God'*, while many others have no name for what is ultimately incomprehensible and unnameable. Our *Self* is neither our body nor our possessions, nor any wisdom we've acquired, nor any of our personal achievements. We *are* this *Self*, the deepest part of us, the part that passes from life to life, from one state of existence to another, an extension of the God-consciousness within.

Impersonality is a fifth essential attitude, crucially important though often frustratingly difficult to attain.

While in human form, it is *only* through this precious *Self* that we can find and assemble a full appreciation of the true depths and refinement of our life-long reality as spiritual beings, temporarily manifesting goodness and compassion towards all living creatures from cradle to grave. A courageous philosophy it may be, but sadly it's not for everyone..., yet! Far too many seek others to lean on when they should instead be looking to their own deeper selves for the answers they lack. But the realisation of that inner core of perfection within every human being will undoubtedly be revealed to every person eventually, even if only many, many incarnations in the future.

5: Impersonality

Impersonality is a fifth essential attitude, crucially important though often frustratingly difficult to attain. Although the word *impersonal* denotes for some a person who is cold, aloof or uncaring, for a mystic it means something quite different and is more analogous to the wider perspective of seeing things *'in the whole'* and having the ability to use that greater 'vision' for the greater good of both the personal self and others within its karmic proximity.

When acting in self-centred ways, people often behave as though they were little gods, masters or gurus. Even when sincerely trying to help others, they take it upon themselves to control the recipients of their help by selecting the objects and means of assistance according to narrow, personal value judgments. In other words, they select who should receive their help and what form it should take. There's a tendency to decide what others *should* do and tell them how it must be done. In the individual's 'great wisdom', it becomes too easy to attempt to force the evolution of the understanding of others, meaning, of course, to make it more like their own. In all these things, is the helper not presuming too much?

In the broader scheme of things, it's far better to be impersonal, though always with compassion and understanding. To illustrate this, take the analogy of a simple candle. How unfortunate it would be for many if candles gave of their radiance only to those judged deserving or decided which of us needed light and warmth. Fortunately, a candle doesn't ask who we are, nor how we live, nor even our purpose in using its light. A candle simply radiates impersonally with no sermons, no advice, no judgment. It gives to all and we use its light as we wish. It simply gives, for that is its nature. The impersonal mystic also simply gives of his or her Light, and asks for nothing in return.

When we act in a personal manner we're limiting the assistance we can give to those we know are in need; and we're hampered to an extent by our emotional

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attachment. Of course there are times when personal efforts and emotional attachments are proper and even required, both in material and non-material ways. But our primary task is to respond to an appeal only when asked, or when we see intuitively that a person desperately needs our help but is incapable of expressing any request in our direction.

Remember that asking for help is not always done with words. In fact, asking is most often done purely with a glance, a longing look or an expression of pain and suffering. We should all in some measure treat the ill, comfort the unhappy and protect those who are trampled upon and can't help themselves. Most of our labours should be devoted to impersonal service, an offering of our all to the Cosmic, to be utilised wherever required and in whatever way is needed, without requiring that we retain complete control, nor even that we require the assisted person to arrive at full, objective understanding of the source of the assistance they're receiving, or even of the success of our efforts.

Impersonally we serve all, known and unknown, who need what we can give. Best of all, while serving impersonally, we're not held back by worries about success, nor given over to pride by what help we may have given. Yes, true mystics simply give, not only because it is in their nature to give to all as the radiation of a light in a darkened room, but because it makes admirable good sense to give freely, unconditionally and without hope or wish for recompense. True mystics give first and foremost because this is part of their innermost nature, but they also give because it is a crucial part of their deliberate strategy to evolve their inner *Self*.

6: Determined Aspiration

The sixth and last essential attitude which will be considered is simply put but requires great effort to accomplish. This attitude is the determination to operate at all times upon the highest level of which we're capable. It means keeping our conscious awareness elevated at all times and to work at the highest level of awareness we can comfortably sustain. In layperson's terms, we aspire to interact with our inner Self with peak performance always.

Far too many spiritual seekers bemoan the fact that they can't become adepts overnight. They compare their puny achievements with the spectacular achievements of past great masters and avatars, and as a result, of course they feel utterly useless next to such radiant luminaries. And while preoccupied with such futile comparisons, they fail to use the very abilities they already possess and are meant to use. Feeling inadequate and not powerful enough to operate on a greatly elevated vibrational plane with ease and finesse, their response is..., to do nothing! What a poor excuse.

Prove you can be trusted with a match and you'll be allowed to hold a candle.

None of us can at all times be completely attuned and harmonious. We're human after all and have various limitations associated with our humanity, not least of all the biological needs of the physical body. Better for us to forget comparisons with masters and avatars, and with anyone else for that matter, and firmly resolve to operate upon the highest plane of consciousness open to us *at this moment in time*, in the present, not the future. In this way we will ever be at the upper limit of the *personal* range of mystical work we're capable of.

At those limits, we have glimpses of what lies even higher than what we've thought of. But we won't squander those glimpses with an over-eagerness to get there before we're ready. We'll aspire to reach those higher planes to be sure, and this aspiration will lead us on powerfully to their eventual attainment. But it doesn't matter that the highest planes can't be reached today, tomorrow or even in this lifetime. More important is that we're always at the highest possible level within

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our present range of possibilities. A past Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order, Harvey Spencer Lewis, put it like this: *"Prove you can be trusted with a match and you'll be allowed to hold a candle."* In other words, do your best now, and greater things are sure to follow.

Those then are what I believe are six essential attitudes for travelling a productive path of spiritual growth through life. Although we can separate and discuss them individually, they are in fact tightly interwoven with each other and form a mutually reinforcing single lattice upon which our futures are built. Attitudes have no direct power in themselves, but their implications are tremendous for they exert their power through their effects on our thoughts, feelings and actions, and the consequences are literally life-saving. Positive, uplifting attitudes are the kick-start we need to get going in any endeavour in life, whether it's a new business venture, a new relationship, a new job or the start of a new inner path. Start with the right attitude and you *may* succeed. Start with the wrong attitude and you *will* fail.

To summarise, if people were suitably grounded philosophically by the society in which they lived, there would be no need to even mention these essential attitudes, whose purpose is simply to psychologically orient any seeker of greater spiritual insight to be able to move on more quickly with their task than they would otherwise be capable of on their own. Rightly understood, the above six essentials permit personal powers to grow more quickly and to be utilised in the work of spiritual growth throughout the world.

If you find good in these attitudes, I urge you to adopt them as your own. Add them to your daily life and then evolve the details on your own, in your own unique, beautiful way. Maybe they'll be useful to you in your spiritual journey in years to come. And maybe they will bring you happiness, serenity and a passionate love for life of every sort on our beautiful planet Earth.

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The Human Égrégore

Group Consciousness for Evolution

by **Amelia**

A question uppermost in the minds of many who deal with neural systems and artificial intelligence is what consciousness actually is. And it all boils down to a single question: *"Does consciousness depend exclusively on material reality?"* Or, put another way, could consciousness exist without a brain, in fact without anything material at all? Clearly this is not something science can answer, for no instruments have yet been devised that can measure anything that may be occurring in the so-called *'non-material'* or *'psychic'* realm. And from a scientific standpoint, words such as *non-material* and *psychic* don't have any strictly defined meanings. Yet, despite the fact that the very question is non-scientific, it is being asked with greater urgency each year by science itself.

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The great psychiatrist and philosopher Carl Jung (1875–1961) believed that forms of consciousness exist beyond the realm of matter when he said: *"I do not doubt the existence of mental states transcending consciousness."* His statement implies that the word *'consciousness'* was for him a physical process associated with the brain, while *'mental states'* were something beyond material reality. When speaking of mental states, was he referring to a sort of universal or cosmic consciousness common to all living creatures, something above and beyond ordinary material, neurological consciousness? Or was he referring specifically to their human analogies? It's not clear, for he was a universalist in many ways, and in this instance it is quite likely that he was referring to humans consciousness only. With suitable changes to our definition of *mental states* and *consciousness*, the essence of his beliefs could, however, easily be extrapolated to all living creatures, which would then give his words the more universal appeal that much of his writings contained.

The French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859–1941) made an extensive study of the relationship between the mind, the brain and consciousness and concluded that mind and some forms of consciousness are separate from the body and its brain. Of course he was not the first to come to this conclusion. For thousands of years, people have believed that some intangible or non-material substance *'inhabits'* the human body and directs its actions at a deep level. It is this *'spirit'* or *'soul'*, rather than the body itself, which possesses the traits and qualities we associate with human consciousness.



Henri Bergson

Of course neither Jung nor Bergson were neural scientists or investigators of artificial intelligence, for such fields, and in particular PET and MRI scanning, have only existed for a few decades. Great as they were in their time, neither could have had the insight and knowledge that modern science has acquired, only relatively recently, regarding the strong correlation between brain activity and our thought processes. They could, therefore, not have been aware of the close link that is now believed to exist between some of our thoughts and emotions and specific areas of the brain. Had they known this, they may well have adopted a similar approach to that taken by many research workers dealing with cognition and the brain today, namely, that our entire experience of consciousness is



"I do not doubt the existence of mental states transcending consciousness."
Carl Jung

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Plotinus

due to the electro-chemical activity of the brain alone, and ceases to exist when the brain dies.

That there exist strong correlations between certain thoughts and emotions and certain areas of the brain has been proven beyond doubt. I am aware, of course, of the strong arguments for the so-called *'brain-only'* or *'brain-first'* origin of both consciousness and simple awareness. Yet there is one part of me which, against my better reasoning, simply refuses to accept that something as refined as human consciousness can have a source *exclusively* in the physical substance and structure of the brain. I do not doubt that the bulk of what we would call *'objective consciousness'*, including virtually everything we consider to be our identity, could not exist without the brain. But is that really all there is to consciousness..., here today, completely and forever gone tomorrow? It may be, but I doubt it very much.

The Guiding Power of Life

The deeper forms of consciousness that we, and no doubt most other animals, possess..., things like the subconscious and unconscious states that do the main housekeeping work of keeping us alive..., are they also exclusively the result of neural activity within the brain? Certain aspects certainly are, and it may be my more unruly, less rational side that needs to be suppressed in the face of scientific facts. But try as I may, I can't ignore the nagging feeling that this can't be the whole story. Something deep within either wants to believe a less material-only explanation or simply cannot accept the crudeness of current models of consciousness.

There exists a type of fundamental reality pervading the entire universe, a vital part of the life force itself, which infuses and *'inhabits'* all living creatures, from whales to viruses. And if it does not possess objective consciousness, then it certainly possesses a more diffuse form of consciousness which for us would be analogous to the subconscious or the unconscious that all humans possess. This is no new theory, of course: Plotinus (3rd century CE) wrote often on matters closely related to consciousness, though in modern terms we would be more inclined to dismiss his musing as mere belief unsupported by even the logic of his own day.

Consciousness at the level of the subconscious or the unconscious is, I believe, the guiding power of all life...

Consciousness at the level of the subconscious or the unconscious is, I believe, the guiding power of all life and the pattern or design through which life is expressed. It meshes with all other qualities, laws and forces of the universe under a single overarching intelligence which in esoteric circles, particularly in the Rosicrucian Order, is known simply as the *'Cosmic'* or the *'Divine Mind.'* Of course I'm speculating; I know this is merely a personal belief based on nothing more than an *'inner feeling'* on the one hand, and reasoning based on inner assumptions on the other. But I'm fully aware of the risk I'm taking with my professional standing each time I air such matters. Yet, despite the fact that there is no scientific basis for believing any non-physical origins for consciousness, I can't shake off the feeling that there is something deeper and as yet undiscovered by science. My

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experience of life, and the beautiful thoughts my mind has obligingly conjured up for me over the years, makes the existence of a sentient sort of *'Divine Mind'* an inner certainty, not merely a remote possibility.

A Collective Consciousness

Can we really envisage a universe as sophisticated as ours *not* possessing some form of universe-wide *collective consciousness*, a sort of *sentient natural law* which guides and cajoles all things to follow their particular *templates of ideal existence*, thereby allowing them to achieve the highest possible states of fullness and excellence in their particular lives? I find it hard to accept that any universe can be purely mechanistic, like a great wind-up toy which slowly winds itself down and in the process causes all things to happen in a fully pre-determined manner. Once again this is a belief, of course, but increasingly so it is one based on a firmer and firmer footing as the wonders of quantum physics unfold in the pages of respected scientific journals.

It is a wonder to behold the manner in which the cooperative collection of cells which makes up our bodies and brains can give rise to such a rich experience of human life. And just as humans have an ideal state to which they are biologically driven to strive to achieve, no doubt all creatures have their own ideal states too, all striving for those states without ever wondering why. The cooperative collection or *group consciousness* (and intent) of members of any living species, creates a rich experience for individuals of the species to benefit from.

Group consciousness, by definition, must possesses greater complexity, and therefore a higher form of intelligence, than any individual member of the species. This *'group intelligence'*, being of a higher, more refined sort than individual intelligence, is, I believe, the closest we can ever get to a sensible definition of a God. It is not the highest concept of God, but it is the highest form that any member of the group can ever become conscious of. God, as experienced by the individual, is therefore different for all creatures and depends to a large extent on the égrégore or group consciousness to which the species gravitates.

A Super-Égrégore

With the human intellect, though, because of its ability to reflect upon its own capacity to think, there is the possibility of a God higher than that perceived by all other creatures on Earth; one that not only incorporates the qualities, thoughts and hopes of all humans but of all living creatures *below* and *above* humans as well. And that *'super-égrégore'* or super collective consciousness can be assumed to be the highest form of God that humans can ever aspire to become conscious of. There are almost certainly elements of that super-consciousness which are at least partially separated from and entirely apart from the physical, neural systems of all creatures in the universe. And certainly, this group consciousness or super-égrégore continues existing regardless of individual members of any species dying off.

...group consciousness must possesses greater complexity, and a higher form of intelligence, than any individual member of the species.

The consciousness of any individual creature must therefore include within itself a focused and highly specific form of consciousness, but must also have access to a much more general and diffuse awareness of the collective consciousness of the species as a whole. In the Rosicrucian Order we use the coined term *'égrégore'*, which it seems was first used by the French poet Victor Hugo (1802–1885), though admittedly not with quite the same meaning

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as ascribed to it in esoteric circles today. In modern usage it refers to *'a field of collective consciousness'*, and it is this form of broad consciousness that I believe exists in all living creatures to some extent and which powerfully binds together members of each species.

I'm not deluding myself, for I know perfectly well that there exists as yet no objective, factual evidence to support such speculations. But speculating is after all one of the primary tools-of-trade of all philosophy; and as an aspiring philosopher, then, my temporal experience of life could amount to nothing more than a fleeting period of highly focused, objectively conscious awareness of a very small portion of a much wider field of consciousness known as the *'human égrégore.'* That égrégore in its entirety, namely everything that a human can ever become, may well be part of an even broader collective consciousness called the *'Divine Mind'*, of which all other living creatures also happen to be a part. As the great sage of Nazareth is reported to have once said: *"...in my father's kingdom there are many mansions."* Maybe this refers to the many forms of *'collective consciousness'* or égrégores that exist, one for each species.

...the greatest manifestation of life may be the collective consciousness of everything that has ever existed...

Life is Unique in Every Instance

As far as we know, each individual life experience, down to its most intimate details, can never be repeated. Each creature born into our world is unique in some way, and the consciousness associated with it ceases, according to science at least, at death. Taken to the limit then, the greatest manifestation of life may be the collective



Victor Hugo

consciousness of everything that has ever existed, rolled up with the collective consciousness of everything that ever could exist. Such consciousness would have no past or future, only a fixed, unchanging present. Everything that could ever happen, happens permanently in the present moment, in this *'life'*, and we could comfortably refer to it simply as the *'Divine Mind.'*

This greatest of all actualities, this Divine Mind, would possess an intelligence that at one and the same time vastly lacks the focus and specificity of our objectively conscious experience of life in the microcosm but also possesses in parts of it the highly focused, objective awareness of individual humans for example. It could therefore operate both as an impartial natural law and as a highly personal, loving, caring God. This God then may be the broad actuality that lies behind all existence, human existence included, and, to some extent at least, aspects of that both broad and specific consciousness may be the sort of consciousness we experience after death.

Even after your death, when you have no physical brain with which to pick and choose the parts of the *'Divine Mind'* you wish to experience, the *'Universal Actuality'* that existed before you died would continue to exist virtually unchanged. The experience of your life could conceivably then continue existing within

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the permissive bounds of that vast égrégore. And it is perhaps from that égrégore that *'something else'* is able to take up the thread again in some form or other, and continue the life experience which was briefly interrupted between the moment of your death and the moment of the birth of another human in another era, perhaps in another part of our universe, perhaps even in another universe entirely.

Our dreams may be disconnected fragments of this form of consciousness..., a bubbling up from the subconscious of experiences that we can't have unless the will is quiet and a door to deeper, less objectified forms of consciousness has been opened. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna says to Arjuna: *"You and I, Arjuna, have lived many lives. I remember them all; you do not remember."* Although any discussion of consciousness more or less assumes that we are referring primarily to the focused, objective type we associate with thinking, we must leave the door open for the possible existence of a host of other forms of consciousness: less focused, less specific and less analytical than our ordinary thought processes. They may be forms of consciousness which exist in other life forms totally unknown to us, perhaps life forms that aren't even carbon-based. And some of these may experience forms of consciousness similar to what we experience after death. Speculation it certainly is, but rich food for thought nevertheless.

Consciousness, Intelligence and Complexity

Let us remember that consciousness and intelligence are not necessarily synonymous. The word *'intelligence'* almost exclusively refers to a form of consciousness that *'moves'*, namely, experiences things in a focused and purposeful manner, linearly from past to present to future, using past experiences to project into the future possible scenarios of what may happen. Consciousness in a wider sense is therefore not synonymous with intelligence, but more akin to what we know as *'intuition.'*

Intelligence, on the other hand, can be closely associated with the concept of *complexity*; the greater the complexity of a system, the greater the intelligence the system can and probably *must* possess. So, *consciousness pairs with intuition* while *complexity pairs with intelligence*. Ultimately, the two pairs differ only in one respect, that of outward complexity. I use the word *'outward'* deliberately, for there exists with intuition a far greater degree of *hidden complexity* and therefore *hidden intelligence* (also known as *'inherited wisdom'*) than the outward complexity that is associated with any intelligent creature.

In war, soldiers use their intellect and reasoning



"You and I Arjuna, have lived many lives. I remember them all; you do not remember."
Krishna to Arjuna

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powers to devise the best strategies of survival while trying to defeat their enemy. But in critical situations, when there is *'no time to think'*, they throw caution to the wind and follow instead their intuition in an apparent override of the intellect. This is often the case where urgent life-or-death decisions have to be taken and the objective intellect can't respond quickly enough on its own. By very definition, intuition must tap into some sort of *'super intellect'* or knowledge-base far superior to the specific and highly focused type of intellect we use when applying our *'intelligence.'* This well of knowledge is, I believe, none other than the collective consciousness or égrégore of the human species and exists independently of any individual. Whether we are alive or not, the human intuitive group consciousness continues to exist and almost certainly can continue being drawn upon *'beyond the veil.'*

Only Human Consciousness?

Not only humans have consciousness, of course. There exist forms of consciousness both broader and more all-inclusive than humans possess, and some creatures possess *'packages of cognition'* much more focused and objective than anything we can experience. I therefore need to expand a bit upon what I mean by the word *'consciousness'* when applied to non-human life forms.

Let's begin with, say, minerals and then move up the ladder of complexity to plants and animals, the latter of which we are a member species. I can hear you say, *"'But minerals have no life"*, and yes, in the normal sense of the word, this is true. But minerals do possess structure, organisation and specific rules by which they *'self-assemble.'* For the purposes of the present discussion, I am therefore extending *'life'* (temporarily) to include any form of self-organisation, and of course that would include even a computer.

Each form of consciousness in the universe has associated with it a *'cluster'* of energies of which that consciousness is formed. The energies in this cluster come from a wide range of frequencies, but they are not necessarily contiguous. This is not to say that consciousness itself *is* the energy, only that consciousness in some form, however primitive, is present wherever energy exists. One may postulate further that no energy can exist without some form of consciousness being associated with it. Rosicrucians refer on occasion to the so-called *'law of the triangle'* whereby all manifestations in nature have two causes or two inherent properties, never just one. In the present context, then, we have *energy plus consciousness* being associated with every *'living creature'* (I loosely include minerals here), just as we have *space plus time* being associated with the dynamics of all reality in the universe. And just as space and time cannot be conceived each in isolation, energy and consciousness can also not be conceived each in isolation. In both cases, they always exist together; without one, the other does not exist.

some creatures possess 'packages of cognition' much more focused and objective than anything we can experience.

At the level of minerals, how can we speak of consciousness? Admittedly we do so only with some difficulty, for the concept is so far removed from the analytical form of consciousness we use that most people would fail to see a link. But this is merely a problem of scale and complexity. The highly-focused form of consciousness humans possess exists as a result of the complexity of the brain. The human brain has orders of magnitude greater complexity than what exists in the structure and self-organising process of, say, the crystals in a mineral. But just as various laws of nature ensure that certain crystals self-assemble in

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Where 'Dead Matter' Becomes a Living Organism

Just as our thoughts manifest as energy which can at times be perceived by other humans, so too it can be said that the self-assembly of mineral crystals is caused by definite laws which provide the information necessary for atoms and molecules to assemble themselves in the only way possible for that mineral. And this self-assembly process may, perhaps with a stretch of the imagination, be considered as a form of *'life'* too, though of course nowhere near as complex and sophisticated as even the smallest bacteria. Self-organisation occurs at all levels in nature, and it is merely a matter of scale and complexity to decide at which point we agree that *'dead matter'* ends and *living organisms* begin.

one way only, and others in other ways only, a wider set of natural laws ensure that humans too *'self-assemble'* only in specific ways. I'm sure you're thinking of DNA by now, but more specifically I'm thinking of the self-assembly *coding* that causes DNA to come into existence, not the self-assembly which is caused by the DNA structure itself, once formed.

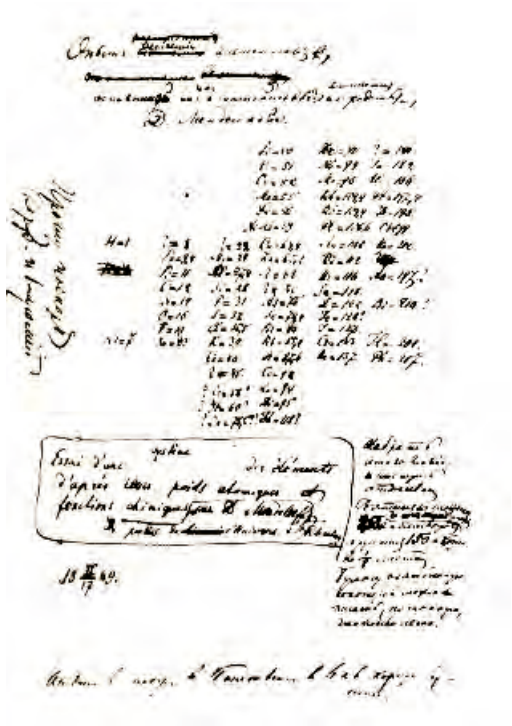
...it is merely a matter of scale and complexity to decide at which point we agree that 'dead matter' ends and living organisms begin.

These ways of assembling an organism may give greater degrees of freedom to the human self-assembly process, thereby yielding people with red hair, others with black hair, some with freckles, some with white skin, others with brown skin, some with blue eyes, others with green eyes, etc., but all conforming to a basic body plan from which there is little deviation. Conformance to that body plan and the intellect that comes with its brain differs conceptually only in scale and complexity from the very simple laws governing the self-assembly of crystals. We are different to crystals *in scale and complexity only*. Crystals and humans could therefore both be governed by égrégores or islands of *'group consciousness'* that define what they can and cannot accomplish and the extent to which their *'intellects'* can grow.

Arbitrary points on a scale are okay if we can all agree on them, but in absolute terms they aren't much use and the scale itself is all that should interest us. We may use inches or centimetres as our scale of length, but there is nothing universal or absolute about those units. So, the point at which life begins and ends is arbitrary, and precise agreement on where that point lies is not universally accepted. Therefore, putting arbitrary agreements aside, on the basis of this universal self-organising, self-assembly principle, we can say that even simple minerals possess *'life'* too.

The laws governing the *'self-organisation'* of simple elements are well known today, but thanks should go to one man in particular, the 19th century Russian scientist Mendeleev, for his creation of the periodic

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Mendeleev's hand-written periodic table of the elements.

table of the elements, a simple arrangement of the basic atomic elements which is still used in chemistry classes today. His table has of course been superseded by more detailed and useful tables, and the rules governing the self-organisation of elements are much more complex than they were only 50 years ago. But, in principle, we have at least a clear set of laws of nature that govern the manifestation of *'life'* at these simple levels.

This corpus of natural laws is under the overarching governance of an *égrégore* or *group consciousness* of sorts, something that science would call the *laws of physics,* perhaps, but that the brightest minds of societies of past centuries would have referred to as something like the *Cosmic Mind* or *Divine Intelligence*, in the same way that the laws governing higher, more complex life forms are also placed under an umbrella of some sort of *'intelligent guidance.'* In the plant kingdom, there are many plants that actively turn towards the sun as it moves across the sky. Some close their petals at nightfall, and others (like the Venus Flytrap) close their flowers quickly in order to capture and consume their prey. Awareness is certainly revealed in a plant capable of trapping a living insect, just as consciousness (or awareness at least) is of course present in a plant that actively tracks the motion of the sun.

Primitive Consciousness

An early experiment to try to demonstrate the presence of consciousness in plants was done by Satyendra Nath Bose, a great Indian mathematician and one of the co-founders of Quantum Mechanics. Unlike many scientists of his time, he had a deep and abiding love of all Creation, including things as *'simple'* as plants. Turning his mind to the possibility of plants possessing consciousness, he created an extremely sensitive instrument which could record the precise moment a stalk was cut, and he showed in this manner that plants were well aware of trauma to their physical integrity.

Much more delicate instruments have since then proven this beyond doubt, and many psychically sensitive people have reported perceiving the discomfort that a plant undergoes as its leaves or stems are cut. That is not equating that conscious response to what we



Satyendra Nath Bose

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know as pain; it is merely highlighting that the plant is at the very least aware, and to an extent possesses consciousness of a form that we humans undoubtedly also possess in the most primitive parts of our brain.

The pattern of consciousness in all things becomes more apparent as we move up the ladder of complexity. The greater the complexity of the organism, the more sophisticated are its faculties of perception, observation, knowledge and even memory. Migrating birds that fly thousands of miles across oceans and continents at fixed periods of the year are undoubtedly helped by the earth's magnetic field and the polarisation of sunlight entering their eyes. But they are almost certainly also influenced by a higher *group awareness* or *égrégore* that is linked to the Cosmic Mind of the universe. Border collies, the working dogs of many sheep farmers, learn quickly –through observation, repetition and a conscious understanding of the intent and purpose of the farmer's voice– what each instruction means. And for many, their intelligence is in some cases almost human-like.

In wild creatures, consciousness is closely influenced by instinct or intuition, much as a mother plover for example (a ground-nesting bird), becoming aware of an approaching potential predator (a human, dog or cat for example) deliberately leads the predator away from where the chicks or eggs are hidden, by deliberately behaving as though it were wounded and therefore presenting a potential easy meal. They become aware of the danger, instinct or intuition warns them of the gravity of the situation, and their bird intellect causes them to act injured as they lead the predator away.

Karma and Reincarnation

With humans, as with animals, people have many levels of consciousness, though roughly conforming to what we easily recognise as being human. According to mystical lore, the exact nature of their consciousness is



In wild creatures, consciousness is closely influenced by instinct or intuition. (Plover shown here).

determined by their past thoughts, words and actions, in other words their karma (from the Sanskrit root *krm* meaning *action*). Origen (185-254 CE), in his work *De Principiis*, says: *"Every soul comes into this world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of his previous life."* Clearly he believed that humans reincarnate and that their lives are influenced by what they have done in past lives.

"Every soul comes into this world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of his previous life."

Human consciousness is the *'continuing essence'* within the person upon which is recorded these actions. Is the *continuing essence* none other than the soul itself? Whatever we wish to call it, it is special; it is individual and unique to that person alone, though it also shares many of its qualities with the great human group consciousness known as the *human égrégore.*

Like animals, primitive hominids were conscious

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With humans, as with animals, people have many levels of consciousness, though roughly conforming to what we easily recognise as being human.



at first only of the most basic of conditions, such as fear of lightning, floods, fires, etc., but also danger from predators like lions and hyenas who undoubtedly ate them when they could. Slowly, as challenges in their environment grew and they were forced to adapt to harsher conditions, their consciousness adapted to the ever greater complexities faced by the brain and they became conscious of things such as devotion to one's loved ones and the need to protect them from harm. Much later, in evolutionary terms, they realised the many advantages that exist when living with inevitable compromises in larger social groups, such as a clan or tribe; and from this, social life, as we know it, finally started emerging.

...early hominids knew of their world only by means of their five senses.

At this level, early hominids knew of their world only by means of their five senses. They became aware of simple facts such as the similarity of some physical objects to deeper principles of life, and, from this, symbolism as a pure artifice of the intellect was born. Much later, of course, aspects of thinking such as reasoning and memory became the dominant feature differentiating hominids from all other creatures.

Inner Apprehension

As the complexity of human cognition increased neurally, so did the complexity and sophistication of interactions between people. Consciousness of higher, less tangible qualities of life slowly emerged, and this led in due course to moral and spiritual philosophies and religions. It was the deep-rooted consciousness of something hidden, unknown and apart from the individual that led to the formation of all belief systems.

With the acquisition of a higher inner apprehension of greater forces in life than those they were aware of through their senses, early humans began using faculties of the mind such as imagination, concentration and visualisation to plan their futures. And inevitably a time came when the first person experienced what we today refer to as an *'afflatus of the soul'*, from which true spirituality finally emerged.

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...a time came when the first person experienced what we today refer to as an 'afflatus of the soul', from which true spirituality finally emerged.

Our early ancestors became conscious of a much more intricate world than that of previous times, and, over tens of thousands of years, systems of governance, moral codes of conduct and inner levels of personal discipline became the hallmarks of what was considered *civilised* or not. Eventually mathematics and science emerged and made human life far more pleasant and easier to bear. Evolution had moved beyond mere random mutations of DNA to deliberate choices made in the minds of humans who could see better ways of living and of treating each other.

I have no doubt that this inner apprehension of *'something better'* emerged not only through the labours of a few pioneering individuals but was almost imposed upon them when they realised, from communion with their inner self or their conception of a universal God, that there exists something far greater and more awesome than any single person can conceive. And it is this *'great something'*, this *'Great Eagle'* of Native American ancient religious belief, which ultimately guides and directs all people in their evolution.



The 'Great Eagle' of Native American ancient religious belief, is ultimately what guides and directs all humans in their evolution.

We have come a long way from the first microbes to emerge on Earth billions of years ago, and we have a wonderful evolution of consciousness ahead of us if we can but survive our present world crisis. One thing I believe is certain is that the broader issues of our cognitive evolution, while governed certainly by physical laws of inheritance and random selection, are also governed by something more subtle, something I have referred to above as the human collective consciousness or *human égrégore.* To drive the point home as far as it will go, this human égrégore exists with or without us and will continue existing even when the last human has become extinct.

We have come a long way from the first microbes to emerge on Earth billions of years ago and we have a wonderful evolution of consciousness ahead of us...

The broader implications of such a belief are that consciousness, or some form of it at least, is not purely *'physical'*, not purely the result of electro-chemical signalling within a complex system such as the human brain, but exists as well entirely independently of the human form. It's a belief, of course, and you can take it or leave it; but I urge you to at least think about it.

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by **Will Hand**

OUR CHANGING WORLD

One advantage of growing older is that you gain a perspective of how things have changed over the years. Certainly in the last 50 years our world has been subject to very big transformations. The most obvious change is the increase in human population. In 1970 the world population was 3,700 million, of whom 37% lived in cities. Now in 2017 the figure is 7,500 million, of whom almost 55% live in cities. So our planet has to nourish twice as many people today than it did 50 years ago. Moreover the population is increasing at a rate of 80 million people per year. At present half the world's population is over 30 years, and in the affluent West people are living ever longer while people are still dying young in poorer and conflict-ridden nations.

Naturally such a big increase in population has put a strain on vital resources such as food and water. However, many scientists agree that the Earth can support a population of 10,000 million, which at the present rate of growth will occur in just over 30 years' time or around 2050. This is something our children and grand-children will have to face up to; a world that will be on the limit of resources and a world populated by a majority of people for whom concrete and tarmac will be more commonplace in their local environment than open green spaces.

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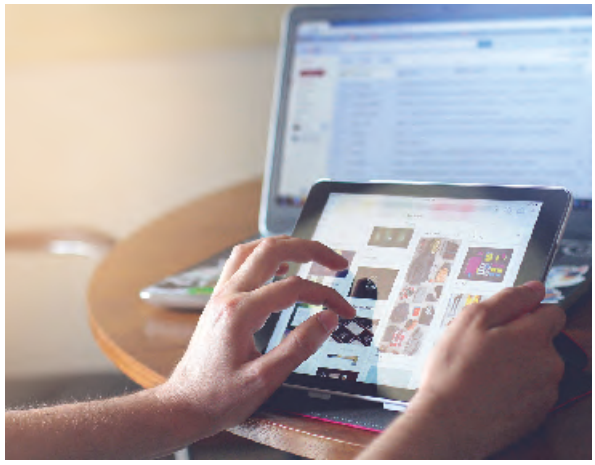
Added to population growth, there is also the major problem of climate change. This is happening now and impacts around the world are being reported frequently. Arctic and Antarctic sea ice volumes are now at record lows. Glaciers around the world are receding. I have witnessed this personally in the Alps. It is truly shocking how much less ice there is now compared to 40 years ago. Of course climate change offers opportunities as well as threats, as land that could not support crops last century will soon be able to do so. Also new sea routes are opening up in the Arctic, offering opportunities for trade and development. Generally, though, people are not reacting fast enough to the changing climate which is in part responsible for increasing stress due to water insecurity and severe or unusual weather.

To some extent, advances in technology are helping to mitigate some of the more extreme effects of environmental change and population growth. Over the past 50 years the increase in computer power has been astonishing. Since 1970 processing speeds have doubled every two years, and that is still happening today! This doubling will likely go on and on until transistors in central processor units become atom sized. Even then capability will continue to increase as quantum computers become more common. This gigantic increase in computer power and miniaturisation has meant that computers are now commonplace and as essential as the plough was in the Middle Ages.

The internet has also changed how we interact with each other and how we go about our daily business. It has also made the world a smaller place in that one can now pick up a tiny smartphone and call someone on a good quality line thousands of miles away, and, if we wish, even see the person at the other end! This would have been impossible 30 years ago. And still technology continues to develop at a rapid rate.

Even though population increase and climate change have increased stress in the world, we have not had a major continental or world war for 72 years now. For sure there have been many nasty regional conflicts, which are still continuing today. Also, destructive nuclear weapons are still being developed. However, cooperation at a high level between nations has ensured peace on a global scale. It is clear that, due to improved communications and greater travel opportunities, the whole world is now easily accessible. It is almost inconceivable today that we would go to war with a neighbouring European country when many of us travel to mainland Europe for holidays and have friends and acquaintances there too. Advances in technology have provided more opportunities for cooperation on a global scale than ever before. This certainly happens in the business and scientific communities, and even for organisations like the Rosicrucian Order technology has made a vast difference in how we function.

So what may the future bring? Problems with climate change and population increase will not go away, and increased cooperation between all nation states will be required to try to solve them and avoid conflict. However, technology will continue to march on. Already driverless cars are on the horizon, most large manufacturing processes are done by machines, and it will not be long now before we start to see intelligent robots become as common as computers. The science of *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) is making rapid advances, and in the coming decades we may well



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see AI devices taking over some white collar professions in much the same way that machines have replaced many blue collar factory jobs now. So where will that leave us humans?

I'm sure that in the not too distant future society will be asking the questions: *"What is it that makes us human? And what is to be our role?"* These are very good questions. Our bodies are carbon based, but soon we will have intelligent silicon-based entities sharing our world. It is conceivable also that these machines will be faster than we are at solving problems. In other words, machines will be similar to us but more capable and possibly last longer too! Machines will have a body and brain which is not carbon based. Clearly though, we all feel there is something else that separates us from machines, and the obvious answer is consciousness.

When machines become built with larger artificial *'brains'* than humans and still do not exhibit a human-like consciousness, then it will be demonstrated that consciousness is not entirely to do with the brain as most scientists today proclaim. Of course the opposite may happen, proving that the neuroscientists were correct after all. But mystics would be very surprised indeed at that outcome. Quantity of consciousness is not the be all and end all; quality is also important. Humans are able to have frequency responses on all different levels, including the spiritual realms. Accessing the spiritual dimensions requires the energy of Soul as well as vital life force. The vital life force in a future intelligent robot will come from its power supply and it is extremely unlikely to have Soul. This then will be the separating factor: humans have Soul, the Master Within, while machines, at least to begin with, will not. So perhaps a science of consciousness may become mainstream in the future as scientists try to understand better what it is that makes us human.

This would present a tremendous opportunity for Rosicrucians and other mystical organisations to help educate the general population in a paradigm shift away from materialism to something more spiritual. In a sense this work has already begun. When I first joined the Rosicrucians in 1971 and began to learn the art of meditation, my friends thought I was a bit weird. To them meditation was something rich people and pop stars did on trips to India and the Far East; it was not for ordinary people, especially 19 year olds! But now people are usually very interested if you raise the subject. In the past five years the technique of *mindfulness* has almost become mainstream and is even taught now in a few schools and some GP surgeries as an aid to cope with life, illness and stressful conditions.

This is just one example of a growing interest in and awareness of mystical topics. ESP *(Extra Sensory Perception)* has now been scientifically proven to exist through the work of, for example, Dean Radin and others, although the evidence still has not been accepted by everyone. The literature on subjects like near-death experiences has exploded in the past 10 years, with more active researchers now than ever before. Mainstream media rarely covers these developments but with the Internet and a big increase in alternative TV and radio channels, mainstream coverage has become irrelevant, especially with young people. So it is obvious that a time is not far away now when consciousness will start to be explored more fully and not just from a neurological brain-focused perspective.

Each and every one of us, as followers and students of mysticism, is going to be well-placed in a future world that will be more technological but also one where people will be asking more questions about themselves, who they are, why they are here and what their future is. Rosicrucians and other mystical groups will have a definite role to play as teachers in our beautiful but ever-changing world.

Reference

Dean Radin, *"The Conscious Universe: the scientific truth of psychic phenomena."* - Available from Amazon.

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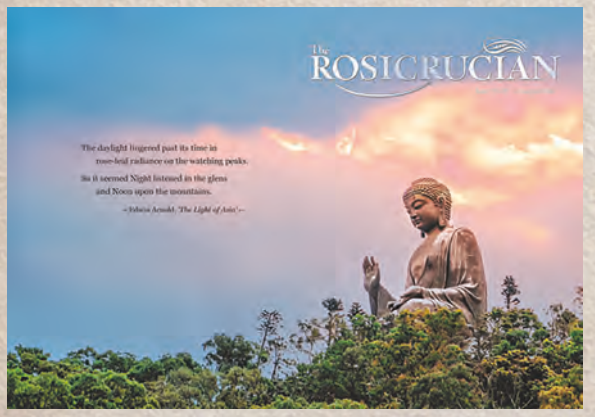
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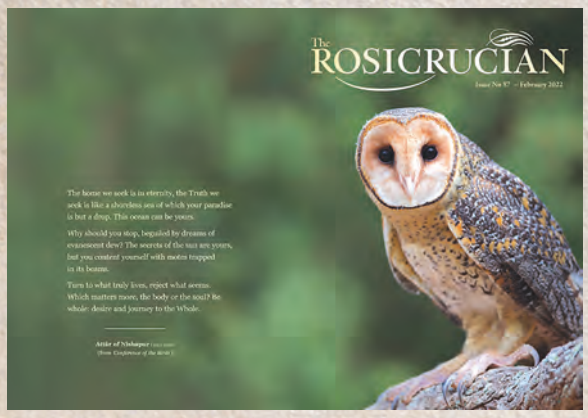
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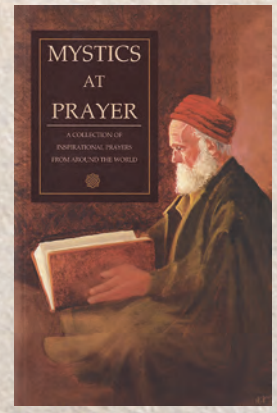


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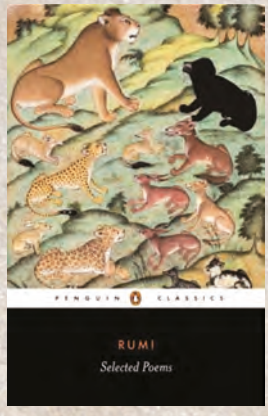
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“You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.”
-- Ralph Waldo Emerson --