

The Aquarian Theosophist



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OPTIMISM

Correspondence from [E-Theosophy](#), Brazil

The question of optimism in Theosophy should be examined.

It must be clarified that theosophy - as every true philosophy- is about happiness. Thus a natural optimism emerges from the perception that inner (not apparent) happiness or bliss is the natural result of life, when life is lived in a correct way.

The noble eightfold path is in fact the path to happiness or nirvana.

Theosophy can only be seen as the path of woe from the point of view of lower self, which is illusory.

True, suffering is part of life. No doubt about that. This is so because life implies illusions and therefore brings about pain and frustration for those vehicles or principles that move at the level of illusion.

Dukkha, pain or suffering, and more literally "insatisfaction" or affliction, **is the first noble truth of Buddhism.**

This is so because it is the starting point of the path towards happiness, bliss, liberation, nirvana.

Therefore Optimism in theosophy does not deny probation or suffering. Just the opposite. It enables us to understand tests and frustration, and to learn from them.

True optimism does not distort facts in the vain hope to deny suffering or confirm one's naïve expectations, pet illusions or vain attachments.

Optimism in theosophy consists in recognizing the fact that for each pain there is a lesson, and often more than one; and that these lessons can be learned in a conscious way, if one sincerely looks for the causes of suffering.

There is no naïve idealization in true Optimism.

Any lasting Optimism is based on Discernment. **Optimism is that confidence in Life that makes one live in peace** amidst the perspective of natural disasters that may significantly reduce human population, with no exceptions granted to ourselves or our friends.

True optimism can appear to be severe because it is deep and therefore does not have to appear on the surface for everyone to see and supposedly applaud.

Optimism, or confidence in the Future, is a deep source of the feeling and of the understanding that sustain long-term self-sacrifice. One needs to have true optimism to make a vow to dedicate one's life to an ideal, and also to be loyal to such a vow, leaving aside any expectations for short-term and illusory results, including avoidance of personal pain.

Optimism in esoteric philosophy is therefore the ability to see and to get in harmony with the essence of Life, for essence is the territory of Law, and Law is both the vehicle and the source of bliss.

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Reincarnation

An impartial review of Dr. Ian Stevenson's ideas

The Editor of the Washington Post, Tom Shroder, was interviewed after he had investigated Dr. Ian Stevenson's work.

Starting off as a skeptic and committed to the "journalistic ideal of objectivity" he travelled with him on two research expeditions. After these he admitted he was convinced that Dr. Stephenson's findings about recovered memory from past lives were genuine.

http://www.childpastlives.org/library_articles/stevenson.htm

Children who remember past lives

There have been many cases of children from the age when they can first talk saying that they can remember another life.

They talk about another house, other parents and families and about how they died. Sometimes they become so unhappy that their parents arrange for them to go to the place where they say they lived before. In many cases they are able to identify their previous relatives. Usually the memories start to fade by the time the child is 6 or 7.

The Shanti Devi Case

At the age of four in 1930 in Delhi, India, Shanti Devi began to mention certain details about clothes, food, people, incidents, places which surprised her parents. She mentioned the following which were later verified to be true. She:

- said she was Lugdi who used to live in Muttra, 128 kilometers away
- spoke some words in the dialect of that area without having learned it
- claimed to have given birth to a son and died ten days later, events which it was later found did happen to Lugdi
- when taken to Muttra recognized her husband of her former life, Kedar Nath, and spoke of many things they did together
- was able to identify with accuracy a number of landmarks where she used to live in the previous life in Muttra

- was able to correctly state how the furniture was placed when she used to live there in her home
- knew that in her former life where she had hidden 150 rupees in an underground corner of a room for safe keeping in the house. The husband of the previous life, Kedar Nath, confirmed that although the money was not there he had found it there
- correctly identified Lugdi's former parents from a large crowd.

A committee of well respected people from the town was organized to investigate her claim. It included a well-known politician, a lawyer and a managing director of a newspaper. The committee was more than satisfied that Shanti knew things that she could not have obtained knowledge about by cheating, fraud or in any illegitimate way. None of the members of the committee knew Shanti or had any connection with her in any way whatsoever.

The case became internationally known and attracted the attention of many, many sociologists and writers. For example, in the 1950s a Swedish writer, Sture Lonnerstrand, traveled to India to meet Shanti Devi and to continue to investigate for himself the documented facts. He too came to the conclusion that the Shanti Devi case is a foolproof case for reincarnation.

from Reincarnation International, Jan. 1994 No 1 Lon. [See also Wikipedia \(click here\) and on the link below](#)

<http://www.victorzammit.com/evidence/childrenwhorememberpastlives.htm>

(There are some well researched video clips on the victorzammit site, including another well verified one - the James Linegar Case - that of a young American boy who remembers his past life as a fighter pilot during World War II.

~

Dr Ian Stevenson, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia Medical School, spent many years investigating claims by children that they could remember a past life.

He interviewed over four thousand children from the United States, England, Thailand, Burma, Turkey, Lebanon, Canada, India and other places, who claimed that they could remember a number of incidents from a past life. He checked documents, letters, autopsy records, birth and death certificates, hospital records, photographs, newspaper reports and the like. Eds.)

ON BUDDHIST MEDITATION II

Part II – cont'd from May 2011 AQ, Supplement

In the book, Buddhist Meditation, by Edward Conze, we are given the antidotes recommended by Buddha, to his disciples, to overcome hatred or anger for another. Thus, whenever one's mind is filled with anger or hatred towards another, one must reflect thus:

When I am angry I reduce myself to a state my enemy wishes for me. First of all, even if I am dressed well and may have had my bath, I look ugly when I am overcome by anger. My enemy wishes that I should sleep badly, be without good things of life, without reputation and without friends, and when I die, I should be born in the place of woe. That is exactly what happens when I indulge in hatred and anger.

If such reflection does not help to appease one's aversion for another, then one should try to dispel his malice by recalling some peace-bringing and pure quality in one's enemy. Each one has some redeeming quality.

Try to dwell on good quality of your enemy, and if possible even try to bring that out in your conversation with other people. If even this does not help, then the disciple should recall the instances from Buddha's former lives (before he reached enlightenment) when he showed great love and compassion towards his enemy. If even such reflection fails to appease one's malice, then, one should contemplate on what is said about worldly life, i.e.,

It is not easy, monks, to find a being who has not in the past been one's mother, or one's father, brother, sister, son or daughter.

Hence, it would help to think that perhaps this individual might have been my mother in the past birth, who sheltered me for nine months in her belly, who removed my urine, my excrement, spittle, snot, etc., without complaining, carried me on her hips and brought me up.

If the disciple is still unable to pacify his heart, he must contemplate on the advantages

of practising loving kindness. Lord Buddha has said that when loving kindness has been made a firm foundation of one's character, eleven advantages can be expected: One sleeps at ease, wakes up at ease, sees no bad dreams, he is dear to men, he is dear to ghosts, and is protected by the gods. Also, he is not affected by fire, poison and sword. He is able to concentrate his mind quickly, his features are serene, he dies un-bewildered, and even if he may not penetrate any further, he is one who goes up to Brahmaloaka or Brahma's world. (pp. 118-133)

In the book, Meditation—The Buddhist Way of Tranquility and Insight, the author, Kamalashila, a member of the Western Buddhist Order, while describing the four brahmaviharas, gives an outline of each quality by describing its “near enemy” and “far enemy.”

The “near enemy” is a negative quality which we tend to mistake for the true quality. The “far enemy,” is the opposite negative quality. For instance, the near enemy of metta or loving kindness is sentimental attachment, and the far enemy of metta is hatred. Metta must be gradually refined, till it is free from any expectations, and is merely a desire for another person's happiness and growth.

We know that for someone who is suffering, in addition to loving kindness, we should want to relieve his suffering, by developing a deeper response, that of compassion.

There are seven stages of Karuna Bhavana meditation (on Compassion), similar to metta bhavana meditation. It is not very easy to handle suffering of another person. **The two near enemies of compassion are sentimental pity and horrified anxiety**, because it is possible to mistake them for compassion. “Sentimental pity,” is when we feel sorry for the suffering person, but make no attempt to understand or alleviate his suffering. **The opposite or “far enemy” of compassion is cruelty.**

Sangharakshita, a Buddhist teacher, points out that in one of the Mahayana Sutras Buddha is represented as saying that if one has only compassion for the sufferings of other living beings, then in due course all other virtues, all other spiritual qualities and attainments, will follow. This is illustrated by a moving story from modern Japan. There was a young man who having led an easy life, decided to enter a Zen monastery and become a monk. When he

expressed his wish to become a monk, the abbot in the monastery asked him if there was anything he was good at. The young man replied that he was good at playing chess. Then a very old monk was called and the young man was asked to play the game of chess with this monk, with the condition that whoever lost the game, his head would be cut off. As the game proceeded, the monk seemed to be winning. Hence, the young man played with greater concentration, and it looked almost sure that he would win the game. But then he looked at the face of the old monk and thought, "My life is no use to anybody. This monk has led such a good life, and he is going to have to die." His heart was filled with compassion, and he deliberately began to make wrong moves. Just when it was sure that the young man would lose the game, the abbot upset the chessboard saying to the young man, "You have learned two things today: concentration and compassion. Since you have learned compassion—you'll do." So long as there was feeling of compassion, there was hope for this apparently worthless man.

Not only should one feel compassion for the poor, for the suffering, for the evildoer, but also for the person who may be happy. The disciple of the Buddha feels compassion for the world of deluded mortals, knowing that although a person who is temporarily happy, and enjoying his possessions, is bound to come to grief because of the impermanence of conditioned existence.

Mudita or sympathetic joy is a feeling of joy or gladness in the happiness and well being of others. It is possible to share in happiness of another when we are ourselves in a happy and positive state of mind. But generally we experience a tinge of jealousy or even unhappiness at another's success or achievement. If we are honest to ourselves, we will admit that at times, we feel a subtle satisfaction at the misfortune of another person. In a similar Buddhist practice called "rejoicing in merits," one appreciates the good qualities of other people. In our times, when newspapers and news channels highlight ugly side of human nature, it is essential and important to dwell on the good works and virtues of our friends and neighbours. We might dwell on the inspiring example of Gandhiji, Albert Schweitzer, Mother Teresa and many other lesser known individuals, and learn to appreciate and rejoice in their virtues and noble deeds.

The *Mudita Bhavana meditation* begins by first developing the feeling of loving kindness. The next step consists in directing that loving kindness towards someone who we find as being particularly happy and joyful. They might be happy for a while, or they are happy because of wealth, or position or success in life. We must be able to congratulate them on their good fortune and earnestly wish that their happiness continues for a long time. We have to continue the meditation by developing in us the feeling of appreciative and sympathetic joy towards a friend, a neutral person and an enemy, by dwelling particularly on their good qualities and their happiness. In the next step, we should rejoice in our own merits and good qualities, just as we rejoice in merits of others. The opposite or far enemy of mudita is envy or resentment. The near enemy of mudita is very subtle, wherein we indulge in a kind of vicarious enjoyment, without actually being appreciative of them. We may be only deriving some sentimental kind of satisfaction from our idea of their happiness, writes Kamalashila.

These three meditation practices lead to higher levels of consciousness and form a foundation for the fourth, viz., Upekkha Bhavana meditation. It is only after we have learnt to appreciate joys and sorrows of others that we are ready to practice equanimity. We begin Upekkha Bhavana meditation by developing a feeling of loving kindness and then try to become emotionally aware of the joys and sorrows, first of a neutral person, then of a friend and then of an enemy. We must become aware that they are responsible for the situation they are in, and yet respond to their conditionedness with metta. The quality of patient understanding will slowly inculcate the feeling of equanimity. The far enemy of Upekkha or equanimity is cold, hardened and fixed indifference. The near enemy is neutrality, lukewarmness or lack of interest. The main purpose of this meditation is to be aware of the feeling of indifference in us, and try to feel love equally strongly towards all. The quality of equanimity is a positive emotion that is combined with a powerful element of insight.

It is not to be forgotten that the sentiments of Love, Compassion, Sympathy and Serenity are not exclusively reserved for human beings, but are to be radiated toward all that lives.

from The Theosophical Movement, Vol. 3, No. 2 June 17, 2011

http://www.ultindia.org/tm_magazine/TMJune2011.pdf

Modern Universities Belong to Middle Ages

from a correspondent in Greece

Having read the mail including the passage from "Theosophy" magazine, July 1957, titled "Modern Universities Belong to Middle Ages", I would like to add some bits of information about education in the earlier times around the Mediterranean basin.

The passage from the magazine quotes:

"Scholars have pointed out that the heavy-handed organization of the modern university is an inheritance of the Middle Ages, and not of the Greek Culture, where lay the practical origin of education for Western culture. Greek education was informal, unorganized. The Greeks saw no need for the apparatus of organization in teaching. Academic status and all the "machinery" of modern education becomes a little ridiculous when compared to the simplicity of the schools and methods which produced some of the greatest men of history." (p. 387).

I definitely disapprove of the need for «Academic status and all the "machinery" of modern education»; yet, I do believe that knowledge and, consequently, education need a sort of method, either sought for or not, in order to become accessible, conceivable and effective in our world.

Education is the tool for individual development and what has been done through initiation and the laws of karma and reincarnation for thousands of years is nothing but providing man with the means that help him learn and understand the cause and purpose of his own life.

Education is what turns a child into a mature human being (in ancient Greek the verb "to educate" meant "to train", "to instruct", "to discipline" ; also "to punish", for the child to learn). A child is a human being in the course of evolving. Our life on the planet is a never-ending educating process corresponding to the needs of human kind. Schools regardless of gradation, from elementary schools to universities, are the form esoteric science has assumed, here on earth, in order to promote and sustain the enlargement of human consciousness.

Obviously, in the early stages, knowledge was not organized under collective schools but rather in the form of private tutoring and

initiation. However, the culmination of Greek culture witnessed such renowned **schools as Pythagoras' at Croton**, and the **Magna Graecia** followed by **Plato's Academy**.

Pythagoras's teaching did not only focus on theory. Practice was a major issue with him. He founded the **Pythagorean School**, an educational establishment, and at the same time an **Academy of Sciences** and a small **model city** under the direction of the great leader. There **Pythagoras** attained justice in real application.

Plato founded one of the earliest known organized schools in Western Civilization on a plot of land in the Grove of Hecademus or Academus. It operated until 529 AD, when it was closed by **Justinian of Byzantium**, who saw it as a threat to the propagation of Christianity. Many intellectuals were schooled in the Academy, the most prominent one being **Aristotle**.

In 193 AD, **Ammonius Saccas** founded in Alexandria, Egypt, his **Neoplatonic School** introducing Neoplatonism or Eclecticism. **Origen** was a famous student of his. We have come to know of his teachings through his student **Plotinus**.

The latter (204-270 AD) is generally accepted as the last great philosopher of ancient Greek philosophy prior to the prevalence of Christianity and the closing down of all philosophical institutions. In 244 AD, when 40, he settled in Rome and started his own school on the footsteps of Plato, the philosopher he admired most.

Then come other philosophy schools such as:

- * **The Rome Neoplatonic School: Porphyry** being its chief representative also writer of numerous relevant philosophic and scientific works.
- * **The Syria Neoplatonic School:** with **Iamblichus** as its main representative. (Iamblichus died in 330 AD).
- * **The Pergamum Neoplatonic School: Aidesius** being its chief representative and founder. He was Iamblichus' student. **Julian**¹, the Byzantine Emperor, was a follower of that School.
- * **The Athens Neoplatonic School:** emerging in the early part of the 5th century. Its main

¹ Mme Blavatsky calls him an initiate, albeit one who went too far in what he divulged. "What Occultists & Kabbalists Have to Say", CW XIV p 222-3.

Eastern thinking puts no blame on a creator

The ancient ideas in the Upanishads of India are only gradually working their way into acceptance in the western mind. They claim everything that appears to exist exists because of consciousness. The Western concepts base existence on either the unconscious and blind forces of nature or say it was created by the Creator who is viewed as the sole creative force. For the western scientist consciousness is the product of creation.

In contrast, the Upanishads tell a story of 10 rather simple-minded monks who came in their wanderings to a river they all needed to cross together in a boat. The leader counted everybody to make sure they were all there. He pointed at each one as he counted but he could only count nine. The others couldn't think of who was missing so each took their turn, but each of them could only count nine. They were puzzled. Then their teacher happened to come along and asked them about their difficulty. "There is only nine of us and we can't figure out who is missing." The teacher resolved their problem. "You stupid monks each of you forgot to count yourselves."

In western science, philosophy and religion we always neglect to count our own self. We are made up of our body, mind, soul and a 'me' or self. We seem to think we don't exist or if we do exist, then we are something that we own, like our car. We can't seem to fathom that our body is our vehicle by which we experience life. Our body is not our self.

If we were our body, which part are we? If we are our leg we can lose our leg but such an individual still seems to function as a whole person. We could have a heart transplant and that still does not seem to diminish our existence. We are simply experiencing life with a different heart. Well, perhaps we are the brain.

But scientists have searched the brain and not been able to locate the person experiencing and witnessing the thoughts that move through the brain. No, the self within us cannot be our bodies. We can recognize however, we are consciously perceiving the thoughts of the brain and experiencing the life

and feelings that arise in the body, and we can intuitively feel we are real.

The Upanishads describe who we are by describing what we are not. I wonder if anyone can say that they do not exist except as a body. Can you think you as the owner of your body do not exist? Don't we intuitively feel that we are distinct from the body, as we continuously refer to 'me' as the owner of the body? This self is not objective to our senses and therefore, it is not something we own like a car or our body, but this self is the owner of the body therefore we can say 'my' body, or 'my' mind in the same way as we can say 'my' car. The Upanishads tell us we are consciousness. The 10th man in the story is our very own self which is invisible, formless, and inscrutable consciousness, not unlike what we may perceive as our Creator. Did we then create ourselves?

Eastern thinking avoids problems where we may find fault with a creator. It insists that we are self-created by the law of causation which they call *karma*. The bible says we reap what we sow. How does this relate to the tenth man? The tenth man is consciousness and by his yearning for life has with his imagination created for himself a physical life and has been attracted into a suitable body. In eastern philosophy, consciousness is the real behind the physical world and is responsible for the creative impulse. Nothing can be shown to exist without consciousness being present. The physical world then emerges out of the yearnings and desires of consciousness not unlike a dream that is created in the mind.

With this knowledge the world starts to look more like a dream than a bleak, blind and rigid reality. The element that is real is that 'I am', 'we are' and the world is our collective dream.

Can we improve on it by striving to dream a better dream?

We can do this by choosing loving thoughts and loving actions which manifest in their own time as beauty and good fortune in the world around us.

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The contributor is a London resident, who is a student of religious and spiritual works.

Published in London Free Press, October 29, 2011

Link at <http://www.lfpress.com/comment/2011/10/28/18893701.html>

## Scholars seek to correct 'mistakes' in Bible

( Painsstaking work is being done to compare the Bible with it's respective sources, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. Experts say they're looking to publish the authoritative edition of the Old Testament. Edits from an article by Matti Friedman. )

**JERUSALEM** — A dull-looking chart projected on the wall of a university office in Jerusalem displayed a revelation that would startle many readers of the Old Testament: ***the sacred text that people revered in the past was not the same one we study today.***

An ancient version of one book has an extra phrase. Another appears to have been revised to retroactively insert a prophecy after the events happened.

Scholars in this out-of-the-way corner of the Hebrew University campus have been quietly at work for 53 years on one of the most ambitious projects attempted in biblical studies — publishing the authoritative edition of the Old Testament, also known as the Hebrew Bible, and tracking every single evolution of the text over centuries and millennia.

And it has evolved, despite deeply held beliefs to the contrary. For many Jews and Christians, religion dictates that the words of the Bible in the original Hebrew are divine, unaltered and unalterable.

For Orthodox Jews, the accuracy is considered so inviolable that if a synagogue's Torah scroll is found to have a minute error in a single letter, the entire scroll is unusable.

But the ongoing work of the academic detectives of the Bible Project, as their undertaking is known, shows that ***this text at the root of Judaism, Christianity and Islam was somewhat fluid for long periods of its history,*** and that its transmission through the ages was messier and more human than most of us imagine.

### 'Must be of interest'

The project's scholars have been at work on their critical edition of the Hebrew Bible, a version intended mainly for the use of other scholars, since 1958.

"What we're doing here must be of interest for anyone interested in the Bible," said Michael Segal, the scholar who heads the project.

The sheer volume of information makes the Bible Project's version "the most comprehensive critical edition of the Hebrew Bible in existence at the present time," said David Marcus, a Bible scholar at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, who is not involved with the project.

But Segal and his colleagues toil in relative anonymity. Their undertaking is nearly unknown outside a circle of Bible experts numbering several hundred people at most, and a visitor asking directions to the Bible Project's office on the university campus will find that many members of the university's own staff have never heard of it.

This is an endeavor so meticulous, its pace so disconnected from that of the world outside, that in more than five decades of work the scholars have published a grand total of three of the Hebrew Bible's 24 books. (Christians count the same books differently, for a total of 39.) A fourth is due out during the upcoming academic year.



**Dr. Rafael Zer, editorial coordinator for the Hebrew University Bible Project, uses a magnifying glass to read a biblical script at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem**

If the pace is maintained, the final product will be complete a little over 200 years from now. This is both a point of pride and a matter of some mild self-deprecation around the office.

**Bible Project scholars have spent years combing through manuscripts such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, Greek translations on papyrus from Egypt, a printed Bible from 1525 Venice, parchment books in handwritten Hebrew, the Samaritan Torah, and scrolls in Aramaic and Latin.**

The last member of the original team died last year at age 90.



## Focus on Mali



Encampments from the air - a village near Timbuktu, Mali

The Republic of Mali is a landlocked country in Western Africa, its capital is Bamako, with many borders including Algeria and Niger.

It has a population of 15 million and reaches north deeply into the Sahara while its southern region, where the majority live, features the Niger and Sénégal rivers.

The country's economic structure centers around **agriculture and fishing, and its natural resources include gold, uranium, and salt.**



Mali was once part of three West African empires that controlled trans-Saharan trade, but during the 19th c. "Scramble for Africa" France seized control. Later it joined with Senegal, then achieved independence in 1960.

After a long period of one-party rule, a 1991 coup led to the writing of a new constitution and its establishment as a democratic, multi-party state. **About half the population live below the international poverty line of US \$1.25 a day.** ([Wikipedia Mail](#))

## Thought for others opens the door

"In the hearts of all, at some time there arises the desire for knowledge. He who thinks his desire will be fulfilled, as the little bird in the nest, who has only to open his mouth to be fed, will very truly be disappointed... Each and every one is here for a good reason.

If we find partially the why we are here, then is there the more reason that we should by intelligent contact with life, seek in it the farther elucidation of the problem. It is not for the study of ourselves so much, as the **thought for others that opens the door.**"

W.Q.JUDGE ART.11, p.p.410-1

"The Self must be recognized as being within, **pondered over**, and as much as possible understood, if we are to gain any true knowledge." GITA NOTES p. 24

"The Law for the birth, growth, and decay of everything in Kosmos, from the Sun to the glow-worm in the grass, is ONE. It is an everlasting work of perfection with every new appearance, but **the Substance-Matter and Forces are all one and the same.** But this Law acts on every planet through minor and varying laws." SECRET DOCTRINE, VOL. 1, p.145

"... every grain of dust has, by gradual transformation through evolution, (to) become a constituent part of the "living soul"... the latter shall re-ascend the cyclic arc, and finally stand – its own Metatron or Redeeming Spirit – at the foot of the upper step of the spiritual worlds, as at the first hour of its emanation. This covers the concept of Universal evolution and **includes all beings without exception.**" ISIS UNVEILED, H.P. Blavatsky Vol.2., p.p.420-2

"This **visible universe** of spirit and matter..... is but the concrete image of the ideal abstraction; it **was built on the model of the first divine idea.** Thus our universe existed from eternity in a latent state. The soul animating this purely spiritual universe is the central sun, the highest deity itself. It was not himself who built the concrete form of his idea, but his "first-begotten;"... ISIS 1, p.342

*Selections from a correspondent in London, Ontario*

## The Mystery of Water and Gecko's feet

In a Simpsons Movie, Homer had to hold up his pig upside down, to realize his dream of owning a pig that could imitate a spider and walk on ceilings.



Source-  
thesharkguys.com

He could have realized this dream and watched his pig from his favorite couch, if he had only known about nature's ingenious design of the underside of a Gecko's foot. All he really had to do was modify the underside of his pig's feet (to make them similar to the feet nature gave the common household gecko) and add a little moisture to the air in the room.

### Van Der Waals Forces

All molecules experience attraction, an electrical effect arising from the dipoles created by **electron motion**.

A molecule that has no electrical distortion can exhibit an electrical charge, when either:

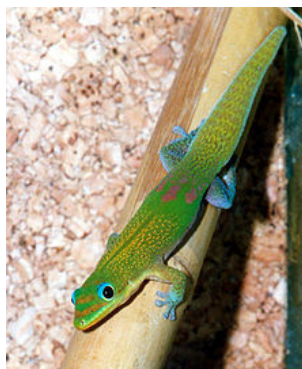
- a) its electrons happen to be in the same area of the molecule or
- b) when influenced by another molecule that is exhibiting an electrical charge.

This temporary "sloshing around" of electrons creates fluctuating dipoles even in 'normally' benign molecules. And, as one would expect, in the presence of water the molecular attraction is strong, long-lived and nearly permanent.

### The Underside of the Gecko's Foot

Different types of geckos have different 'looking feet' but they all share a common characteristic - they can interact with all kinds of surfaces at the molecular level and use this molecular attraction to scamper up walls and run around on the ceiling.

He could have realized this dream and watched his pig from his favorite couch, if he had only known about nature's ingenious design of the underside of a Gecko's foot. All he really had to do was modify the underside of his pig's feet (to make



Gecko  
(Credit: iStockphoto / Luis Carlos Torres)

Each toe of a gecko's foot contains hundreds of pad like ridges. On each ridge are millions of hairs that each divide, at their ends, into smaller strands.

These strands are so tiny that the molecules at their ends interact with the molecules of the surface the gecko is walking on. The presence of even minuscule amounts of water strengthens these attractive bonds between the gecko's strands and the surface.

Maybe, this is why, the Gecko population surges after a monsoon rain when the moisture in the air makes the gecko most mobile on nearly every kind of surface.

In a laboratory environment, the Van Der Waals attraction forces between a single strand and a surface have been measured to support a weight of up to 200 micro Newtons - enough to



Gecko Foot Hairs & Strands  
Source-Sciencephoto.com

support an ant. With half a million strands on each foot a little gecko walking with 2 million strands can carry a back-pack weighing 90 lbs - the weight of a small child.

(Many thousand gecko 'hair' ends (spatulas) would fit on a human hair, being smaller than the wavelength of light.

90 lbs (40 kg) is a theoretical figure since it's based on all the millions of spatulas on all four feet being in contact all the time (!) - clearly not possible.

A typical gecko only weights a few ounces (70 g), and so couldn't support that weight, but this does show nature has provided the little fellows with a generous safety margin! Ed)

### A NOTE FROM THE INDIGENOUS WATER SITE

"Each post is on a topic that is being researched as part of the effort to extract water vapor from the atmosphere. Each post has been designed to be entertaining and informative without directly revealing the topic or its application to extract water vapor from air and wind."

<http://indigenouswater.blogspot.com/2011/03/water-helps-gecko-walk-on-ceilings-with.html>

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## CORRESPONDENCE

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### Avaaz hits 10 Million!!!

11 October 2011

Dear incredible Avaazers,

Just a few hours ago, our community reached 10 million people!

10 million of us. From every nation, every walk of life. Hopeful, and serious about creating the world we all dream of. Campaign after campaign, we're winning. Not just the little fights, the big ones, the ones they said couldn't be won. And we're just getting started.

There's never been a community like this before – and we're accelerating – **growing by 4 million in the last 9 months!** If we stick together, anything's possible. The world may be awash with fear and fatalism, but people power is on the march everywhere, and together we're renewing and sustaining the most powerful force for change ever known...

#### Hope.

With enormous gratitude for every person in this extraordinary community,

Ricken, Alice, Luis, Ben, Ari, Saravanan, Wissam, Diego, Mia and the entire Avaaz team.

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### The Indigenous Grandmothers

C, perhaps you know the "Indigenous Grandmothers" and the Peace University? I get their emails from time to time and seem OK but I have not gone into their ideas at all - any info on them would be useful, we could put it on E-Theos and the AQ...

I believe one of their representatives is connected to the Mayan leadership who are distancing themselves from all that hype about 2012, which misrepresents the real underlying idea (as I understand it) of the dawning of a new age which began c. end 19th c.

The Editors

(the answer....)

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Aug 20, 2011  
Dear Friends,

I taught for some 7 or 8 years at the Peace University (UNIPAZ - not the Costa Rican one) in Brasilia and in other states as well.

I regret to say they are systemically unable to think deeply, as a University, at least; and although they use this name they are not a University really, as they do no research. They mix good will with will-to-obtain-money and, of course, are limited to pre-theosophic, superficial new age thinking.

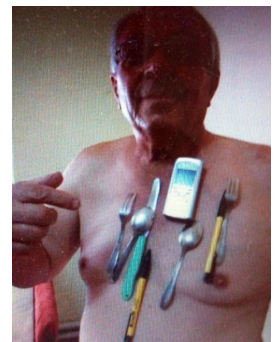
The problem of selling spiritual knowledge is great indeed with them. Public deficit in Brazil is huge, as in the USA. (Ask Obama about that.) But the ethical deficit is bigger, at least here.

Best regards, C

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### Serbian man becomes 'human magnet' after doctors zap his heart

The 66-year-old said he noticed the weird attraction ability when he left his mobile phone on his chest after making a phone call and then when he stood up from his bed found it had stuck to his chest.



Doctors who carried out tests confirmed the strange tendency... the Serb's heart had stopped after complications during an operation for a stomach ulcer...

Of his new super power, Sibin said: 'The doctors are at a loss to explain it - but I act like a magnet ever since I was given the electric shock.

<http://www.metro.co.uk/weird/870424-serbian-man-becomes-human-magnet-after-doctors-zap-his-heart>

(HPB writes that people can concentrate in their extremities a phenomenal abundance of magnetic aura, and in one young boy she called it an abnormal charge of "vital magnetism". His left hand had become "a wonderfully strong magnet. Metal articles of light weight attach themselves to his hand so that considerable force is required to remove them. From "Nature's Human Magnets". Eds)

# WISDOM IN ACTION

## Speaking of Adeptship

As to Mrs. Besant's opinion of Leadbeater: it is of value only to those who see value in it, and in any event it is only an opinion.

It has been said that he who speaks of seeing and meeting the Master thereby loses touch. My judgment would be that if, as is said, Leadbeater had stood "face to face with the Great Initiator," ***it would never have been spoken of by him***, and no other would know the fact. Leadbeater sought to be recognized as a great teacher and in order to break into other realms of nature used most abhorrent means—black magic, in fact.

***One may be sure that anyone claiming Adeptship is not an Adept***, and this in the very nature of things. Apply this to Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant, who are continually making public claims in this direction. The question arises: how much is real, how much for effect, how much self-delusion? The imagination is the image-making power and may create a glorified image of oneself. I am sorry it all occurred, for in the public mind Theosophy is connected with it, and many strange things are assumed to be Theosophy.

Perhaps I should submit to you my opinion that in the interests of those who are new to the subject of Theosophy, and because of the general tendency to follow personalities (particularly living ones), it is not wise to put such in mental touch with writers, who, however good any particular writing of theirs may be, have failed to show a true appreciation of Theosophic principles. I say this at the risk of being misunderstood; it is for you to accept or reject my opinion, as it meets your viewpoint.

The most painful experiences I have had in my Theosophical life have been the witnessing of the negation of Theosophic principles by those professing them and were it not my duty to put you in possession of the facts as I know them—facts representing dangers which lie about us in our quest—I would not have spoken. You asked for the facts; I have to give them as I know them. It should be said that while we condemn the act, we never condemn the actor.

The Theosophist must recognize that failures are not irremediable if followed by undaunted struggles upwards, and for professing Theosophists, who to our eyes appear to have strayed from the Path, we know that the time will come when the failure will be recognized, and the struggle back will be hard. Such must necessarily have our pity and sympathy, if we are true to the spirit of the Teachings.

Here and there failures will be noted, but there is much to encourage. There is a distinct change for the better in public sentiment; religions, sciences and governments are changing little by little. The Great Ones do not repine; neither do they cease working. Let us follow Their example. You may remember that K. H. wrote, "He who does all he knows and the best he can does enough for us" and again, ***"ingratitude is not one of our vices."***

Now possibly it may be seen what our Lodge stands for: the three objects as laid down by H.P.B. and Masters, and along the lines laid down by Them; ***no dogmatism, no personal followings, no "spiritual authority."***

Thus each may follow his line of development with such assistance as may be afforded by those who have traveled further on the Path than himself, when such help is requested. In this way, true discrimination is gained and the bane of all spiritual movements, authority, dogmatism, and their corollary—personal followings—avoided.

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FROM "THE FRIENDLY PHILOSOPHER" BY ROBERT CROSBIE

