

# ROSICRUCIAN DIGEST

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Mysticism

# ROSICRUCIAN DIGEST

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The front cover of this issue is an illustration from poet William Blake's final work, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*.

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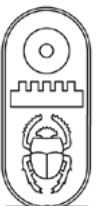
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# MYSTICISM

There is nothing so inspiring,  
so filled with peace,  
happiness, perfect health,  
joy, and contentment  
as the development of the  
spiritual nature.

- H. SPENCER LEWIS (1883-1939)

Imperator of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, 1915-1939



# THE MYSTICAL PATH

*Imperator Claudio Mazzucco, FRC*



*William Blake, Jerusalem, Plate 1, Frontispiece, ca. 1804.*

Socrates said: “the unexamined life is not worth living.” We believe that it is an intrinsic trait of human nature to strive for knowledge, and that this manifests itself to a greater or lesser degree in different soul personalities according to their stage of evolution. Mysticism, in this context, is an inner pathway, arising as a response to the ever-increasing calls of the soul.

As we gradually grow in awareness about our own nature and expand our understanding of who we are, we discover an increasingly harmonious response within us to those impulses urging us to become ever more curious about the mysteries of life, the beauty and harmony, which in turn triggers a virtuous, self-perpetuating circle. We become increasingly aware that there are truths that go against everything that may appear obvious to us, and we

learn that logic and rationality are only one aspect of human nature. However, on this journey, we are also challenged by aspects of daily life which, for a number of reasons, may not reflect what is actually happening within us. We may, at some point in our lives, no longer appreciate certain relationships, certain environments, or certain ways of “passing the time.” We may also feel uneasy about the pace, daily commitments, and worries that prevent us from dedicating our energies to the things we consider truly important. We are being influenced by the material dimension and have a sense of not being able to escape it. We would like to be, as Plato says in the *Theaetetus*, more like philosophers who sit in meditation than like mounted archers who run around shooting arrows.

The Mystical Path proposed by Rosicrucian mysticism does not intend to fuel the idea that a person, in their personal quest, should turn away from life, family, and friends, and become a recluse. Far from it. Rosicrucian mysticism is like a continuous breath of fresh air, its purpose being to reignite the fire that is partially extinguished. This fire can ignite certain aspects of our personality, purify those aspects and restore those energies that are an inherent part of us. When this internal movement is triggered, the Mystical Path starts to slow the internal rhythm down, enabling each Rosicrucian student to “see” more clearly whatever might otherwise have been overlooked, preventing them from going through life without recognizing it.

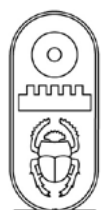
As they engage more and more in the practice of self-inquiry, with a high degree of sensitivity, the Rosicrucian, slowly and harmoniously, leaves behind those anxieties that are typical of life, those false hopes, those patterns that cause human relationships to decline, the passing of time that only seems to increase

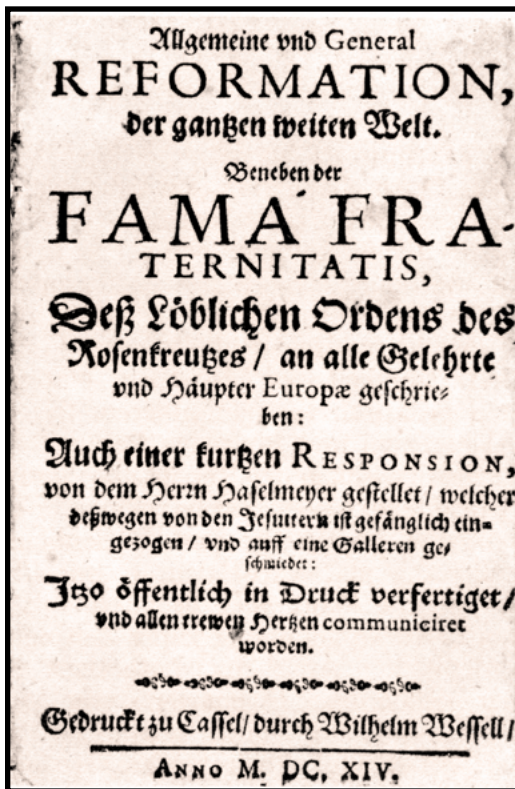
boredom. Thus, they restore the quality of interpersonal relationships, strengthening their bonds with life and with the world, becoming agents of divinity as they begin to substitute the mere theory of spirituality with the actual practice of a spiritual life. During this process the soul is nourished, transmuting the personality of the individual who, cherishing it, reaches a greater inner maturity while things appear to be moving more slowly.

To quote the great Italian poet Eugenio Montale (1896-1981), we observe how “obscure things tend towards clarity.” One of the aspects that becomes increasingly clear as we proceed along the Path is that prosperity is a condition linked to awareness. Humanity’s state of mind determines its reality. Even the possibility of allowing those energies available to us to flow is linked to the degree of awareness that characterizes our level of personal evolution. We slowly let go of the inclination to think that happiness is a condition belonging to the future: when I have more money, when I have more time, when I am retired, when I have a bigger



The Mystic's Path by montag451 on DeviantArt, 2022.





The first page of the Fama Fraternitatis (1614).

house, etc. The slowing of this pace within us allows us to “see” the things we already have, enabling us to plan a future without far-fetched, fantastical ideas or out-of-proportion illusions. We have a saying that a Rosicrucian student keeps their head among the stars and their feet planted firmly on the ground. This expression clearly explains the position we must take in the face of life. We must recognize that we are already, here and now, bearers of a certain degree of realization, nurturing within us gratitude towards the universe and the God of our Hearts, manifesting compassion towards all creatures (remembering those who are in physical and emotional pain), and always expressing trust in life and humanity, must constitute the conduct of every student who aspires to great inner revelations.

Reading the history of Rosicrucian mysticism, we naturally draw parallels between 1614, the year of publication of

the *Fama Fraternitatis*, and our present time. The seventeenth century was a critical period for Europe. The birth of science, as we know it today, occurred during that time; the discovery of the New World was relatively recent; printing was spreading knowledge like never before; and religious wars were raging, bringing widespread famine and death. Undoubtedly, we have come a long way since then. Many negative aspects have been overcome, yet certain experiences persist and carry a heavy burden of anguish and insecurity.

The response of the Rosicrucians at that time was the publication of the *Fama Fraternitatis* and the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, reminding people of the need to place their lives under the auspices of knowledge and fraternity among people of good will. This invitation has been repeated ever since by our Order (like the manifesto *Positio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis*) and we, Rosicrucians of the twenty-first century, carrying our history in our hearts and looking to the horizon, must spread thoughts of peace, harmony, and prosperity to the whole of humanity. To this end we are reminded today of the pledge we made to ourselves before joining the Order, when we embarked on the path of self-knowledge. Let us draw strength from the fraternal bonds that unite us and spread the light of knowledge of which AMORC is a worthy heir for the world!



This article is an extract from the book *I Saw Your Light from Afar*, which is available as a PDF, ebook, and audiobook at: <https://www.rosicrucian.org/rosicrucian-books-i-saw-your-light-from-afar>.

# MYSTICISM IN THE EVOLUTION OF CULTURES

*Peter Bindon, FRC*



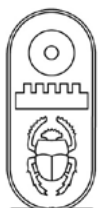
*The Flammarion engraving, first published in 1888.*

One of the costs today's humans have had to bear as a result of the all-too-fast technological development which followed on from the scientific and industrial revolutions is the inexorable loss of our links with the earth and, more importantly, alienation from our spiritual source.

To most of us, and perhaps in every age, progress is looked upon as synonymous with the improvement of material conditions. A civilization which can produce laser eye surgery, space travelers, super railways, and atomic fusion is generally regarded as being advanced. But the enlightened few of every period in history have always recognized that true civilization is something more than material development, and that "something" is spiritualization. They have recognized that material advancements are only instruments for providing the leisure

and opportunity for the development of the spirit. The nearer the human race approaches to the Central Spirit of the universe, to the Cosmic, the further it will have progressed.

During the rise of materialism, many of the world's cultures deeply repressed or even denied the organic processes that link humans with nature; these processes are birth, reproduction, and death. Simultaneously, the spiritual awareness that once provided humanity with a sense of meaningful belonging to the cosmos was replaced by disbelief in a Cosmic force, or superficial religious activities of decreasing vitality and relevance. Happily, Rosicrucians have maintained their interest in a positive relationship with the Cosmic and are striving to be practical and constructive in offering something to the world that will assist each and every



human to advance this spiritual quest. But, you ask, by what mechanism can humanity achieve this goal of advancement?

The mechanism that advances civilization towards spirituality is mysticism, of which we Rosicrucians are probably all practitioners. And there are suggestions that outside the Order an unprecedented renaissance of interest in the psychology of mysticism and the spiritual inter-relationships that exist between all beings in the universe are developing among more and more individuals.

So, what is mysticism, and what are its origins? The non-theological use of the word *mystical* in English, meaning “a hidden or secret thing,” dates from about 1300 CE and arrives in English from Anglo-French where it is *misterie* (O.Fr. *mistere*). It came into French from the Latin *mysterium*, but its origin was from the Greek *Mysterion*, meaning “secret rite or doctrine,” but, of course, mysticism is itself much older than this label for it. It is clear that mysticism implies a relationship to mystery.

Many philosophers refer to mysticism as being either a religious tendency and

desire of the human soul towards an intimate union with the Divine, or as a system growing out of such a tendency and desire. These contentions assume that the so-called Divinity, about which they speak, is the absolute and ultimate state of existence. This may or may not be so, but, are mysticism and religion inextricably related? I think not. Mystical contemplation and spiritual expression can take place both inside and outside the realm of religious belief and religious dogma.

Usually, a mystical experience is filled with intense feelings and may involve a dialogue with or a direct encounter with ultimate reality; what we call the “Cosmic.” The “mystery” here is defining the identity of the something or someone greater than human comprehension that has been encountered during the mystical exercise. In the West, it is only in the last 2,000 years or so that mystical experience has come to mean a direct experience of the divine; and since, in theory at least, Christianity is the religion of love, the Christian “mystical” experience is spoken of as a “spiritual marriage.” For myself, I believe



*Anthony van Dyck, The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine, ca. 1620.*



that a successful mystical experience may depend less on the particulars of the given occurrence than on what happens because of it.

Mystical experiences are shaped by culture and tradition. Accounts of their experiences provided by mystics are inevitably influenced by the culture in which they live and by their professed religious tradition. In the first case, it is because language and linguistic references and expressions are determined by culture, and, in the second instance, it is because most religions contain the language that is most called upon when talking of the ultimate entity or the infinite. In fact, as we have seen, it is well-nigh impossible to examine mysticism in popular writings without also encountering religion, so intertwined have the two become since the advent of organized religion in the world. So Western mystics rarely claim that their experience dissolved them into the being of ultimate reality because Western theism insists that human beings never literally become the Divine. On the other hand, Eastern mystics often describe the ultimate state of their spiritual experience as involving complete physical and sensory union with what we might call “Cosmic Consciousness.”

All mystical experiences, therefore, vary somewhat. Each is unique, but the uniqueness does not diminish or negate the claim for transcendence or touching ultimate reality despite the comment that the mystical experience itself is in part a function of what the mystic thinks can happen. Many mystics say that speech breaks down and is inadequate to describe their state, that silence is more appropriate, and that even silence is not adequate. This dimension of the mystical experience, although ultimately inseparable from the culture and personality of each mystic, transcends or rises above cultures, and

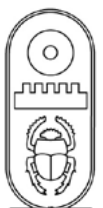


*The Gwion Gwion rock paintings in Western Australia, dated ca. 10,000 BCE.*

applies to Christians as much as to Indigenous Australians. And here lies a difficulty.

What prehistoric humans thought can never be known with certainty, because they did not write it down. The materials that they left behind, like tools, weapons, works of art, burials, and the rest, can be interpreted in many ways, but even then we may not arrive at the actual interpretation. A successful mystical experience may depend less on the particulars of the given occurrence than on what happens because of it. At best, material objects comprise a fragmentary record of the many different human groups who have lived in a variety of physical environments over a period of time far longer than that of recorded history. And even after written records begin to appear, because describing spiritual ecstasy is so difficult we have few documents that can tell us what previous cultures and civilizations thought about this activity.

However, some deductions about what our ancestors thought about life and death, the two major concerns they had as we ourselves have, can perhaps be drawn



from the burial practices and tools of a subgroup of humans known as Neanderthals. These folk buried their dead with care, indicating their affection for the deceased. They included food and equipment in the graves, which suggests they had a belief in an afterworld of some kind, in which the dead were not entirely cut off from the living. It also implies that they understood one factor which distinguishes humans from other animals, the knowledge of their own inevitable death. This remains the basis of one of the great mysteries of life. And thus, like we do, they understood that time passes and results in death, and then...?

In turn, a sense of time implies the concept of order, of events following one another in succession, suggesting that Neanderthals understood the pattern of birth, life, and death that underlies human existence—that we are born, live for a time, and then die. They must have observed that the same cycle is true of plants and of animals. Perhaps it was this understanding that brought these early humans to the conclusion that behind the order of nature lies somewhere beyond and above the plants, the animals, and even above themselves. After all, the

task of the shaman, the person who was perhaps more perceptive or spiritually inclined than others in their group, was to attempt to make contact with that supernatural something that lay beyond human knowledge. We might imagine that these early humans conceived of the supernatural “something” as a super-human that was in control of the order of nature.

Evidence of some sort of religio-magical cult, dating from about 100,000 BCE, has been found in caves in the European Alps where the skulls of bears had been placed on stone slabs in what looks like a ceremonious arrangement. Firstly, this action suggests that these relics were set apart from the mundane and were considered special in some way; and secondly, it indicates that the cave itself may have been thought to be a sacred place. Does the selection of skulls for this arrangement demonstrate that they thought a creature’s head contained the essence of its being? Certainly the intention of the rituals of later bear-hunting peoples was to appease some supernatural power for the killing of a bear, to make sure that there would be no decline in the supply of bears for hunting. Thus, we discover that



*Hand prints dated to 39,900 years ago in the Pettakere Cave in the Maros-Pangkep karst in South Sulawesi, Indonesia, which contains the earliest known cave wall art in the world.*



*A portion of the artwork in the Chauvet Cave in the Ardèche department of southeastern France. It depicts cave lions and other animals. Some of the artwork in the cave has been dated to 35,000 years ago.*

the idea that an animating essence or spirit inhabits all aspects of nature. The idea that every hill or stream or tree or living thing has a soul is one of the oldest of human beliefs.

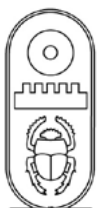
People with limited control over their environment are likely to have tried to establish some kind of relationship with their own ancestors, from whom they have inherited such knowledge of the workings of nature as they possess. Their reason for this contact with their ancestors would most likely be to try to gain some control over the powers that give order to nature. They needed to ensure that food supplies were maintained, that their animals were fruitful, and that children were born. No doubt, they also needed to act in some way to appease nature, which sometimes disastrously fails to provide the necessities.

In the Upper Paleolithic period (from about 30,000 to 10,000 BCE), after the arrival on the scene of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, as we like to call ourselves, burials become more elaborate and ceremonious, and there is strong evidence of the people's concern for fertility in the "Venus figures," small figurines of women, some highly stylized and others comparatively realistic, found in

a number of archaeological contexts across Europe. The swollen pregnant abdomens of many of these figures and their blank, featureless heads suggest that they were not meant to portray particular women but a more abstract idea of "woman" in general, and especially woman in her role of mother. They may have been worn by women as amulets to ensure fruitfulness and they may have represented a Great Mother, the source of all life.

The Upper Paleolithic is also the time when the magnificent cave art of Europe was produced. If the purpose of this art included a desire to promote fertility amongst the animal species portrayed as well as to assist hunting, then we might conclude that the society in which the artists lived believed in a supernatural order of reality that humans must try to influence in order that they and their quarry are to eat, live, and procreate. Perhaps this also implies that these people had ideas of magical symbolism in which a real state of affairs can be influenced in some way through mimicry and simulated situations.

Neanderthals did not wear ornaments, so far as is known, but the later Paleolithic peoples did. They made necklaces of



animals' teeth or cowrie shells, for instance, and carved bracelets from mammoths' tusks. It seems likely that ornaments contained an ingredient of magic, as they have tended to do ever since. The teeth may have carried with them the qualities of the animals from which they came, and in many times and many cultures the cowrie shell has been an emblem of the feminine and fertility.

The so-called "Neolithic revolution," which saw the gradual development of cultivating crops and breeding animals, instead of gathering and hunting, originated in Asia in the ninth millennium BCE or earlier, and spread over most of Europe by about 3500 BCE. Our picture now becomes, if anything, even more obscure than before and the course of the transition from what is known of the Paleolithic to the religions of societies with written records is not at all clear.

It seems evident that as agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry were gradually established during the Neolithic period, the annual cycle of nature became a dominating factor in human life and a focus of religious and magical attention. Unlike the aggressive hunter, the passive farmer relies more on the slow workings

of forces which are still largely beyond human control. Hunting's perspectives are relatively short-term and farming's are relatively long. The sense of an order behind nature, of human dependence on it, and of the perils of disorder in the shape of drought, famine, destructive storms, and pestilence, may have been strengthened by the longer perspective of farming communities. There are scattered pieces of evidence confirming that agricultural people worshiped fertility deities. Seedtime and harvest were the two great occasions of the year, and likely to be celebrated with festivals and rites intended to ensure a good crop. And it appears that undertaking ceremonies and performing rituals that would ensure fruitfulness were among the basic concerns of prehistoric humans, and probably represent humanity's earliest religious ceremonies.

The sky also becomes important, because sun, rain, and wind affect the growth of crops and because the calendar, which successful agriculture demands, is worked out by the reference to events occurring in the sky. (Reverence for the sky and its forces may easily have existed long before, though there is no evidence of sky worship in the Paleolithic.) But as



*A side view of Stonehenge, which was built between 3100 and 1600 BCE, in Wiltshire, England.*



*The Venus of Hohle Fels, dated to around 42,000 years ago, was found in a cave near Schelklingen, Germany. It is the oldest known statue of a human.*

we will see, the new emphasis on the sky will bring significant changes to the world.

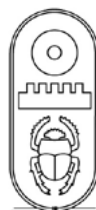
Most Neolithic societies buried their dead with greater pomp and circumstance than previously, especially those individuals who had been powerful in life. Sometimes, as in megalithic burials in Europe, or pyramid burials in ancient Egypt, constructing the graves involved immense and extravagant toil implying a deep respect for the powers of the dead personage and probably the belief that they influenced the growth of crops from the earth in which they lay buried. Representations of the mother deity are often found in burying places and she seems clearly connected with the earth.

Thus humanity arrived at a point where they realized that we are and always remain part of a universe. It is a living universe and is animated with what I will call "Spirit," and that Spirit lies at the core of existence in this universe. It is a dynamic force which permeates the universe from its center to its circumference. Each of us has it in ourselves and by it we are being continually acted upon. It burns within us, and we are bathed by its energy. But there are times when this force is peculiarly insistent and urgent within us. And there

are times when it presses upon us with urgency from without. And there are rare occasions when the urge from within and the pressure from without meet and correspond. Then we have the ecstasy of mystical experience in its fullness as an interaction or connection is established between the individual self and the universal whole and during which the self enters into a new state of being. The most we can guess about what mystical practitioners were enacting or thinking at this point in prehistory is deduced from enigmatic paintings made by the artists of the time in caves and in secluded caverns.

As people began to master new techniques in their material lives, inventions and discoveries were fitted into a religio-magical context, but the people who made these discoveries recorded precious little about their spiritual lives. The discovery of yeast, for example, made it possible to bake bread and brew beer, commodities which both had a long history of symbolic connections with the deities and the otherworld. The rise of metallurgy with the development of working in copper, bronze, and iron gave the smith the uncanny powers of one who was as much magician as craftsman. The seasonal progression of the agricultural cycles was still disrupted by climatic variability, which less sophisticated people put down to supernatural interference. Although we have some evidence of ceremonies and rituals whose aim was to appease wrathful deities, we know nothing of the spiritual quests of individuals during these chaotic ages.

The advance of towns, states, and armies in central Europe, with their male dynasties and priesthoods, tended to diminish the earthly Great Mother's status in favor of male deities of the sky who came to dominate the civilizations of the ancient world. Egyptian, Greek,



and Roman stories told of the exploits of the sky-dwelling deities as they created the universe, made humanity, established order, and put down disorder. In far Western Europe, the invasions and conquests of warrior peoples, who believed in deities of the sky, also lessened the influence of the Great Mother.

Although we have little information regarding the attitude of peasants and laborers in ancient Egypt towards mysticism, the fact that they collected many prayers and invocations to be recited over the deceased in their coffin or even by the entombed deceased demonstrates that some of the presumed results of mystical activity were certainly within their understanding.

There is little Mysticism in the earliest schools of Greek philosophy, but it becomes important by the time of the philosophical system of Plato. It is especially evident in his theory of the world of ideas, of the origin of the world soul and the human soul, and in his doctrine of recollection and intuition. The Alexandrian named Philo, who lived between 30 BCE and 50 BCE, taught that people, by freeing themselves from matter and receiving illumination from the Divine, may reach a mystical, ecstatic, or prophetic state in which they become absorbed into Divinity. But the most systematic attempt at formulating a philosophical system of a mystical character was that by the Neoplatonic School of Alexandria, especially that of Plotinus, arguably the greatest philosopher-mystic the world has ever known, who lived between 205 and 270 CE.

In his *Enneads*, Plotinus sets out a system which has as its central idea the concept that there exists a process of ceaseless emanation and out-flowing from the One, the Absolute. He illustrates this

concept using metaphors such as the radiation of heat from fire, of cold from snow, fragrance from a flower, or light from the Sun. This theme leads him to the maxim that “good diffuses itself” (*bonum diffusivum sui*). He concludes that entities that have achieved perfection of their own being do not keep that perfection to themselves, but spread it out by generating an external image of their internal activity. The ultimate goal of human life and of philosophy is to realize the mystical return of the soul to the Divine. Freeing itself from the sensuous world by purification, the human soul ascends by successive steps through the various degrees of the metaphysical order, until it unites itself in communion with the One. Now, I am sure that you recognize some of our present-day Rosicrucian principles in there.

It was Plotinus who gave us the image of the Great Chain, used in later times by our own Rosicrucian alchemists and theorists to draw symbolic spherical diagrams of up



*A detail from The School of Athens by Raphael (1511), believed to depict Plotinus in a red robe.*

to twelve concentric spheres representing: matter, life, sensation, perception, impulse, images, concepts, logical faculties, creative reason, world soul, nous, and the One.

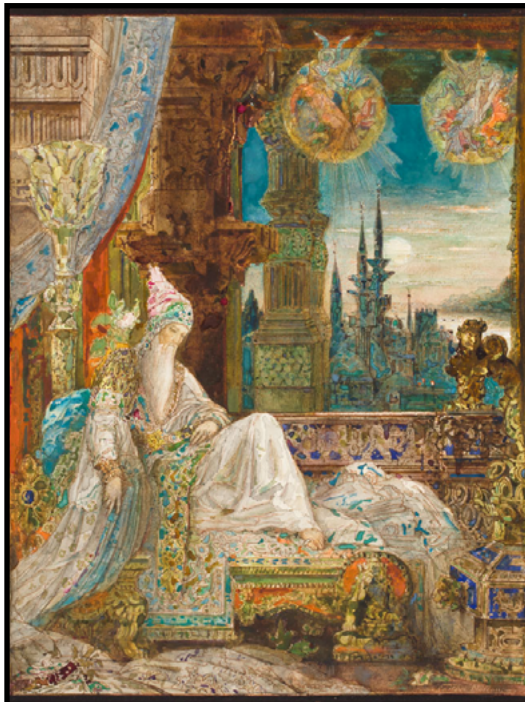
The development of a particularly masculine outlook in cultures occurred over long stretches of time and the details of its advance across the settled world are largely unknown, but there was inexorable continuity in its spread. Admittedly, the Earth Mother of prehistory, in her various local incarnations, did become the ancestress of deities of later societies, but it seems that her times were past. It is worth observing that although her world had been uncertain, the new era of the masculine sky deities was no more settled.

Essentially, mysticism brought to the world religion, but despite perhaps being the carrier of mystical principle and methods, mysticism is not religion, nor as I have already mentioned is it necessarily religious. Mysticism belongs to the core of most religions and many commenced

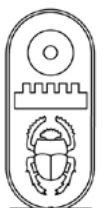
after their founder experienced a powerful and immediate mediate contact with the spiritual essence, their divinity. However, a lesser number of religions were prepared to allow their adherents to establish this kind of contact with the Cosmic for themselves, but rather kept this task firmly in the hands of a priesthood or the appointed leaders.

The Cosmic is also commonly called the One, and you and I are in some sense that One. This means that the inmost self of humans is identical with the Absolute, with the unchanging power against which the whole changing universe must be seen. Thus, one lives not only with one's own life but also with the life of the whole universe. This universal life is founded in a changeless Being which is at the same time one's own eternity. It was this understanding which made it possible for the poet Tennyson to say that death was "an almost laughable impossibility."

These latter are some of the ideas that we have inherited from those cultures that have proceeded through history before us. We carry their heritage. Some of their ideas and concepts have been discarded as humans came to new understandings of how the many parts of this complex Universe fit together. Some ideas and concepts remain relatively unchanged. As Rosicrucians, we recognize that the final goal of all mystical experience is connection with that Divine Infinity which lies beyond matter and mind, but which can transform them. The approach to this ultimate state is through the power of discriminating thought and purified emotions and, as Henry More, one of the Cambridge Platonists, stressed: "God [the Divine] reserves His choicest secrets for the purest minds."



*Gustave Moreau, The Dream of an Inhabitant of Mongolia, 1881.*



# THE ORACLES OF DELPHI

*Grand Master Julie Scott, SRC*

Imagine a culture that celebrates women as fonts of wisdom.

Imagine a tradition that values more than just intellectual ways of knowing, such as synchronicities and dreams and intuition.

Imagine teachers who encourage their students to anticipate the path ahead, not to just look for an immediate solution.

Imagine a Sage who requires the Inquirer to participate in their inquiry, in order to evoke deeper learning.

Imagine Shamanesses who invite us to be all we can be.

These were the Oracles of Delphi.

For thousands of years the Oracles of Delphi were consulted before any major decision was made. Kings, generals, and philosophers all sought her advice.

The average person was only allowed to approach the Oracle once in their lifetime. The petitioner had to cleanse themselves in the nearby sacred spring before approaching her. Then they would ask their question.

When you visit the temple of Apollo at Delphi today, you can see an underground chamber that goes beneath the adyton. This was where the Oracles entered. Ancient historians reported that there were fumes coming up through a fissure in the ground in this area, and the Oracle would sit on a tripod above these fumes. She would hold a sprig of laurel and look into a bowl



*John Collier, Priestess of Delphi, 1891.*

of water as she answered the petitioners' questions.

Recent research has shown that there are two major geological fault lines that cross like an X under the adyton in the temple of Apollo. There is evidence there of gases, such as ethylene, that could induce a borderline state.

The Oracle would prepare herself. She would fast and would only meet with petitioners on certain days. It's believed that this might have been when the gases were safe enough for her to be able to be seated above them.

The women who served as Oracles were chosen for their natural abilities. They were called Oracles, and their prophecies were also called oracles. Sometimes the women were also called Pythias. Pythias were

associated with the mythical python from this area. Serpents were associated with the Divine Feminine. Sometimes the Oracles were called Sibyls. In Greek, *sibyl* comes





*The omphalos or navel of the world at Delphi.  
Photo from the Rosicrucian archives.*

from *theobule*; *theo*, which is “the deity,” and *bule*, which means “to sing.” So, she’s singing from the Divine.

The Oracles presented their oracles for thousands of years, possibly as early as 5000 BCE. The Oracle Tradition ended in the year 394 of our era, when the Roman Emperor Theodosius forbade any of the ancient traditions.

There was a special stone placed in the temple area at Delphi called the omphalos, which means navel or belly button. It was believed that Delphi was the center of the

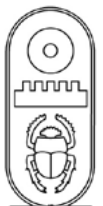
world and that it was connected, through its navel, to the mother deity. What closer connection have any of us had to our mother than through our navel?

Now, let’s look at how the Oracles were celebrated as fonts of wisdom.

In ancient Greece, no major decision was made without first consulting the Oracle. On the path leading up to the Temple of Apollo there are stone treasuries. These are small buildings that were filled with riches given in thanks for the Oracles’ advice.

The Oracles were able to see beyond the usual limits of time and space, again, through synchronicities, intuition, and dreams. You may be familiar with one of the most famous oracles associated with Delphi, that of King Croesus and his request for war advice.

Croesus was the richest man in that part of the world and was very powerful. He was the King of Lydia and had everything he wanted. The Persians were not threatening Croesus, but he felt that they could in the future, so, he asked his representative to ask the Oracle if he



should wage war on the Persians. The Oracle replied that if he did, he would destroy a mighty empire.

Croesus interpreted this to mean that he would destroy the mighty Persian Empire, but it didn't turn out that way. The Persians soundly defeated Croesus's army and captured him.

After his defeat and eventual release, Croesus sent his representative back to the Oracle to ask where her error had been. She pointed out that when he had previously asked if Croesus should wage war on the Persians, she had said—if you do, you will destroy a mighty empire. She said that this was true, but he never asked the second, and more important question, which would have been—which empire? It proved to be Croesus's.

The Oracles expected inquirers to participate in their own learning. They often responded in riddles so that the person would have to participate in the response themselves, not just have it handed to them.

You may be

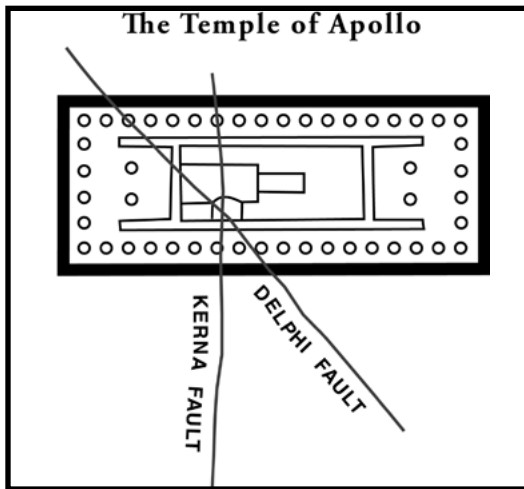
familiar with the Oracle's connection with Socrates, as related to us by Plato. Before his famous trial that involved the Oracle, Socrates said that if we can understand something through learning, we should learn it, and if something is common knowledge, don't ask the Oracle. In the same way if there is something we can do in our own lives with the powers that are already available to us to improve our lot, we should do it. He said we should not count on the deities or some magical formula to do it for us.

The Stoic Epictetus said that inquirers of the Oracle should consider whether they are motivated by fear and desire or by a detached wish for truth. When someone asked the Oracle a question, Epictetus wondered, were they expecting a certain answer and did they just want her to confirm it for them, or were they really looking for the truth? Epictetus said that we should

treat the Oracle's response like we treat the perception that we get from our eyes. We don't tell our eyes: "I want you to see this." We look at and



*Aegeus, the mythical king who founded Athens, consults the Oracle.*



perceive what the eyes send to our brain. In the same way, Epictetus said, people should look at what the Oracle said to them very impersonally and, whatever it is that they are told, they should put it to good use, even if it's not the response that they wanted.

The Oracles also invited people to be all they could be to embrace their destiny. Before Pythagoras was born, his father (or in some versions of the story, his mother) visited the Oracle of Delphi. She knew that Pythagoras's mother was pregnant and said that she would give birth to a man who was supremely beautiful, wise, and beneficial to humankind. This is how Pythagoras got his name; he was named after the Pythia, the Oracle who predicted his birth.

Later, when he had established his famous school, Pythagoras taught in three degrees. The second degree included moral and political laws. He said that he learned what he taught about moral laws from the Oracle at Delphi.

Socrates's advice regarding approaching the Oracle was previously mentioned. You may also be familiar with the story of Socrates and his famous trial that involved the Oracle.

Socrates was put on trial for corrupting the youth of Athens and introducing false deities. However, when Socrates chose to

defend himself at his trial, he said that this wasn't really the reason he was on trial. He then shared why he believed he was on trial.

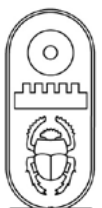
He said that his childhood friend went to the Oracle at Delphi and asked if there was any man wiser than Socrates. She said no. Socrates then said that he was sure that this couldn't be correct, so he started interviewing people whom he was sure were wiser than he was.

First, he interviewed a politician with a reputation for wisdom. He wanted to prove that the politician was wiser than him, but after speaking with the politician he said that he was not wiser than Socrates because he thinks he knows something when he does not know it.

Then Socrates spoke with poets, dramatists, and musicians and found that they didn't really understand the sublime messages of their creations, so they weren't wiser than Socrates either. Finally, he spoke with craftspeople and found that, based on the strength of their technical proficiency, they claimed knowledge of all other subjects which they didn't really possess. As Socrates interviewed people to prove that he wasn't the wisest person, he created enmity from those whom he had interviewed, which led to the false charges against him.

Finally, Socrates said that the Oracle might be right because he alone seemed to be prepared to admit his own ignorance rather than pretend to know something he did not know. More than 2,400 years later this is reflected in the Rosicrucian Code of Life: "If someone asks you for advice on a subject you do not know well, humbly admit your ignorance."

Now let's participate in a meditation related to the Oracles of Delphi. Please close your eyes and take three deep breaths.





*Michelangelo's Delphic Sibyl, 1509.*

Visualize the culture that you live in celebrating women as fonts of wisdom.

What does that look like?

Who are these women?

What are their roles in your society and your culture, and in your neighborhood?

What is your relationship with them?

Now, see your tradition valuing more than just intellectual ways of knowing, for example, seeing beyond the usual limits of time and space through intuition or dreams or synchronicities.

How can that manifest in your world?

How can it manifest in your life?

Now imagine teachers who encourage foresight to see not just an immediate solution, but to see the greater path ahead.

Consider some questions in your life that you hope to receive answers to.

How can you see beyond just the immediate situation?

Can you see how it fits with the full course of your lifetime?

For the most important activities that you participate in, how can you see that they fit with the full course of your country's

history or the future of our planet beyond just the immediate solution?

How can your actions have a greater impact further down the path?

Now imagine a sage, either in your life or in your society, who expects inquirers to participate in their own learning. They don't just hand you the answer and, if it's something that you can do on your own, you do it. You don't expect someone to magically produce a result.

What is some action that you can take to be of service to others right now?

Imagine shamanesses who invite us to be all we can be, to step into our destiny.

What do you want to know about your destiny?

If you could speak with the Divine in order to live at your highest potential, what would you ask?

Open yourself to messages from the Oracles of Delphi, from your inner self, from your subconscious, from the Master Within to help you fulfill your destiny.

This can happen at any time, in any place.

So Mote It Be!

# SILENCE: INNER LEARNING THROUGH THE POWER OF SILENCE

*Jeanne Guesdon, SRC*



*A Pythagoras statue on the island of Samos, Greece, where he is believed to have been born.*

Before he would initiate a neophyte into the mysteries of his teachings, the philosopher Pythagoras would subject the candidate to various ordeals which were designed to strengthen the initiate's character and which would allow Pythagoras to judge them. Thus newcomers amid the sages of Crotona listened but never asked questions. For months on end, they were subjected to the discipline of silence, so that, when they were finally allowed to speak again, they would do so only with circumspection and respect. They had learned inwardly, through personal experience, that silence is an almost divine power—the mother of all virtues.

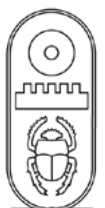
Alas, why are we not still today under the genial authority of Pythagoras? The main trouble with today's world is the lack of silence. Not only is contemporary society literally poisoned by the tumult of machines (including talking ones), but also—and especially—it is saturated with

loud and empty words. It is a question of who will speak the loudest, who will make the most statements, who will tell their story with the most trifling details.

How correct was Kierkegaard, the great Scandinavian thinker, when he wrote: "The world in its present state is sick! If I were a doctor and was asked for advice, I would answer: 'Be silent!'"

Yes, true Rosicrucians can be recognized by their oral temperance, among other virtues. They speak only sparingly, and the words they speak are rich in meaning. They practice the following advice from a Sufi teacher: "If the word you are going to speak is not more beautiful than silence, then do not say it!"

When we apply for initiation, we must remain silent not only toward others but toward ourselves also. Let us understand this well. It is in silence that the Cosmic, the Divine, communicates with us. In order for us to hear the Divine's advice,



to receive intuitive flashes, we must know how to silence the profane voice within. The Hebrew Scriptures teach this symbolically in the First Book of Kings (19:11-12), where the prophet Elijah is shown taking refuge in the desert and waiting for a message from the Divine:

[The Divine] said, “Go outside, and stand on the mountain before ADONAI [the Divine]”; and right then and there, ADONAI [the Divine] went past. A mighty blast of wind tore the mountains apart and broke the rocks in pieces before ADONAI [the Divine], but ADONAI [the Divine] was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake, but ADONAI [the Divine] was not in the earthquake.

After the earthquake, fire broke out; but ADONAI [the Divine] was not in the fire. And after the fire came a quiet, subdued voice.

It is then that the Divine appeared to Elijah. In his famous treatise entitled *The Conference of Birds*, the mystic Attar expresses the same truth in a different way: “As long as they walked, they talked; but when they arrived, all talk ceased. There was neither guide nor traveler; even the road had ceased to exist.”

One of the greatest French mystics, Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin, deserved to be named “the Unknown Silent One” by his disciples. More than anyone else, he exalted the virtue of silence. He wrote, “Great truths are taught only through silence.” Better yet, he made this remark which unfortunately applies so well to our times: “Is there a greater proof of human weakness than the multiplicity of our words?”

It is very true that silence is a real test to the one who, through habit or tendency, does not know how to observe it. Tradition relates that the ancients had made a divinity out of silence; male in

Greece, where it was named Harpocrates, and female in Rome, where it was called Tacita—well named since it is derived from the Latin *tacere*, which means “to be silent.” This demonstrates to what extent our ancestors worshiped this virtue; also, that the Romans did not consider gossip as a foible of the fair sex.

As explained in this message, the discipline of silence is a power; it allows us to maintain within a vital influx that useless words waste away. Before you speak, try to evaluate if what you intend to say is worthwhile: if it can do some good and especially if it is not going to cause any harm. You will notice that the effort you exerted in repressing a useless word causes a reaction within, a struggle against temptation. Each victory shall give you new power. That is why it is wise to follow the Sufi’s advice, and if what you are about to say is not more beautiful than silence, then abstain from speaking.

Meditate upon this message; think about it often. It is hoped that it will help you to ascend one step higher on the ladder of spirituality.



# VESTALS

*Christina d'Arcy, SRC*

Colombes are girls and young women in the Rosicrucian Tradition, between ten and eighteen years of age, who serve in our Lodge and Chapter Temples. Women who serve when they are older are called Vestals.

The positions of Colombe and Vestal are based on the role that existed in ancient Rome in the Temples of Vesta. These girls and women were the caretakers of the hearth where the divine flame lived.

Vesta was a deity in Roman mythology. She came from the Greek deity Hestia, who had a similar role. In the earliest times, Vesta wasn't shown as a woman. She was simply depicted as a flame. She was the flame. The vestals took care of the hearth – the gateway between worlds. This was the place where the Divine and our world merged.

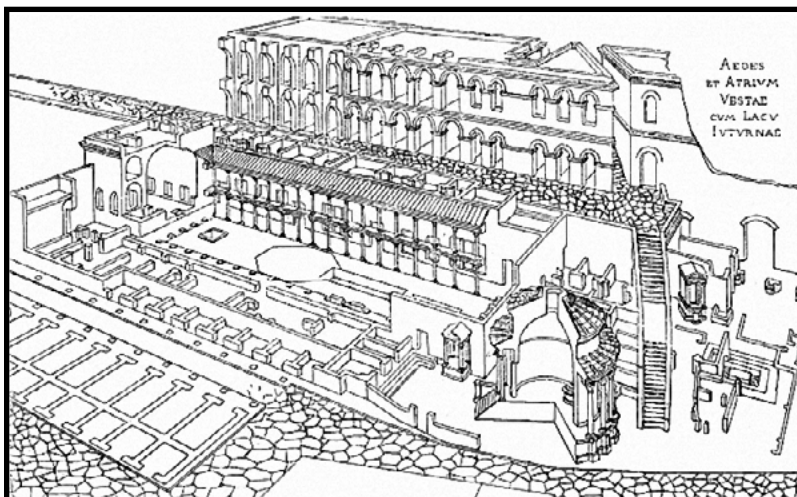
Vestals, who had an important role in Roman spiritual life for hundreds of years, served for thirty years. Once they committed, they had to serve the entire thirty years. The first ten years they participated in training. The next ten years they served in the temple. In the last ten years they trained others who succeeded them.

The vestals were the most revered women in ancient Rome. During this period women had very few rights. Women were legally the property of their husbands and before that, of their fathers. Women were much like slaves. However, the vestals had extraordinary rights, along with their duties.

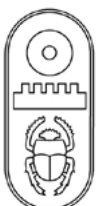
Only six vestals served at one time. As some were finishing up their thirty-year term, others were just beginning. Today, in the Forum in Rome, the Temple of Vesta has been partially reconstructed. It's circular, which is uncommon. Roman temples were usually rectangular. The circle is often associated with the Divine Feminine and eternal life.

Just above the Temple of Vesta in Rome was the House of the Vestals. This was a fifty-room building where the Vestals lived, along with those who assisted them.

These girls and women had an extraordinary opportunity, but, more than that, they had an extraordinary duty. It was believed that the existence of Rome depended on the eternal flame, which they tended, always burning. They were responsible for keeping the hearth, the eternal flame, alive.



*The House of the Vestals in the Roman Forum, above the Atrium of the Vestals and the Temple of Vesta (the circular building on the right).*





*A hearth in an AINU house.*

If we imagine the time when early nomadic people may have first settled in a cave or a hut, the hearth, having a fire within their home, would mean everything to them. They couldn't turn on a heater or a stove like we do today. It meant life to them. It brought light and warmth into their homes. This was the beginning of the hearth, of having a place of fire in the earliest homes, often when it was very challenging to start a fire.

This developed as communities grew. There would be a central hearth. If you joined that community, you would get the fire for your hearth from that central hearth and bring it to your home. This connected you with your community. Eventually, this became a way to connect with your republic or empire. Again, Rome depended on this eternal flame to be ever-burning.

At the 2015 AMORC World Convention, Frater Atsushi Honjo, Page 22

Grand Master of the Japanese Grand Lodge, presented [a fascinating program on the AINU indigenous people of Japan](#). Their ancestors were originally part of the Cave Bear clan. In their traditional homes today, there is a big square hearth in the center, with an eternal flame. This is the place where the spirit beings enter our world. When someone in their family goes through transition, it's believed that their soul goes through this gateway to the other world, and they believe that they can communicate with their ancestors through this hearth.

The AINU deity of the hearth was named Kamui Fuchi, which means "Rising Fire Sparks Woman."

She is the deity who is the caretaker of the sacred flame. She is the keeper of the world between humans and spiritual beings.

Often the hearth is associated with the threshold. Perhaps you've heard of



the tradition of a groom who picks up the bride and carries her across the threshold into their new home. Originally, this was to invoke the blessings of the divine fire that existed within the hearth or the threshold.

There are other traditions that tell the story of a female deity of the hearth or fire itself, such as the myth of Demeter and her daughter, Persephone, in ancient Greece. The ancient Greeks believed that when humans died, they did not have a complete soul. The deities lived forever but humans were more like phantoms in the underworld. One version of the myth says that Persephone was abducted to the underworld by Hades, the deity of the underworld, against her will. Another version says that Persephone went to the underworld on her own, out of compassion, like a bodhisattva, to help the people there, so they wouldn't be so afraid.

When Persephone disappeared into the underworld, her mother, Demeter, didn't know where she was. Demeter searched all over Earth, but she couldn't find her beloved daughter. In despair she went to Eleusis, twelve miles from Athens, disguised as an old woman, not like the deity that she was. The three daughters of the king of Eleusis saw Demeter and felt compassion for her and invited her into their home. They convinced their mother, the queen of Eleusis, that it would be a good idea for this woman to take care of their little brother.



*An ancient statue of a Vestal in the Roman Forum. Photo from the Rosicrucian archives.*

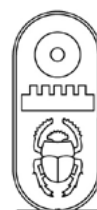
Unbeknownst to them, in gratitude, every night Demeter covered this boy with ambrosia, the food of the deities, and placed him in a fire, in order to make him immortal. She was protecting him with the ambrosia as she put him in contact with the divine flame.

One night the queen saw the baby in the fire and screamed. Demeter took the baby out of the fire and handed him to the queen, saying, "Witless are you mortals. You don't know the difference between good and bad!" The boy remained mortal.

Something similar happened to Achilles. A deity covered him with ambrosia, but the process was interrupted and she missed one part of his body that remained vulnerable forever: his heel. He would have been immortal forever, but the process wasn't completed.

The ancient Egyptian deity Isis, did something similar. She covered a child with nectar (the ancient Egyptians' version of ambrosia) to make this human immortal and she placed the child in the sacred flame. Humans can't stand the sacred flame directly—the ambrosia or the nectar protects us so that we can experience the divine energy directly.

Alchemy uses fire in a similar way as a primary agent of transformation. In alchemy, the sacred flame burns away the dross and reveals the hidden essences.





*A Shakti statue.*

In Hinduism, the most powerful deity of all is Shakti. She is radiance, the light of creation, the Hindu mother deity. The word that perfectly describes Shakti is POWER. She is the power of creation, beyond the physical, and the universal source of energy and creativity.

In Kabbalah, the esoteric teachings of Judaism, the word *shekinah* means “dwell” and refers to the Divine Presence dwelling in our midst. We often refer to the altar that is in the center of a Rosicrucian Lodge or Chapter temple as the shekinah; however, it is actually not the altar or the three candles on it. It is the receptive space just above the candles. The Jewish tradition has many different names for the Divine. Most of them are masculine. Shekinah is a feminine name for the Divine and it is this receptive holding place just above the candles. It is where the Divine dwells, where the sacred flame exists among us.

People in the Zoroastrian tradition pray towards a flame. They believe that fire represents the light of the Divine. They also believe that there is a spiritual flame within us which is fed through our pure acts and good thoughts.

This is similar to the training for our Colombes, our vestals. How do you

prepare to be the caretaker of the hearth where the sacred flame lives? How do you approach that place?

The Doric stand in our Lodge and Chapter temples is our hearth. It is a flame in the East of the Temple. The Colombe sits next to it during our rituals and tends it.

At the beginning of every convocation, the Colombe takes the light from this hearth and lights the three candles on the shekinah in the center of the temple. This activates the shekinah, that Divine Feminine energy in our midst. Again, the word *shekinah* means “dwell” and it is this divine presence dwelling in our midst.

Some Colombes prepare for their important role by prescribing a character for themselves before they approach the hearth, when they enter the temple. They enter in reverence. They are very particular about what thoughts they allow into their minds and are very careful with their words and actions.

In one of our initiations we learn that the Colombe represents our conscience. This reminds us of how we can act when we are in the presence of a divine flame, which, of course, is ever-burning within us.

Now let's practice a meditation together.

Please sit comfortably. Take three deep breaths, becoming more relaxed with each exhalation.

Imagine that you are in a Rosicrucian temple.

See the Colombe rise from her seat and light her candle from the flame on the Doric stand, which is next to her.

Visualize her walking reverently toward the altar in the center of the temple.

She lights the three candles on the altar, activating the energy of the shekinah, just above them.

The Divine Presence dwells in our midst.

Just as the shekinah is at the heart of the temple, attune the energy of your heart with the shekinah. Connect your heart with the light in this temple.

Feel your heart center vibrating with this energy—see a yellow radiance extending from your heart center throughout your entire being.

Your heart, your being, is gently enfolded in hands above the candles on the altar.

You exist in the shekinah.

You exist in this place where the Divine Feminine dwells.

Now let us intone the vowel sound EH seven times, feeling this heart center growing stronger, more radiant, and extending throughout your entire being.

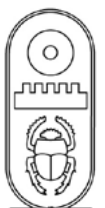
The flame dwells within your heart.

So Mote It Be!

May we ever be aware of the sacred flame with which we are entrusted.



*Shekinah in the Grand Temple at Rosicrucian Park.*



# COMMITMENT TO THE SOUL

*Lonnie C. Edwards, MD, FRC*



The true mystical spirit, as practiced by us, needs to be rededicated, strengthened, revived, and renewed. At no other time in human history have the souls of humanity had a greater need for expressing themselves through personality. Likewise, no better time has existed before now for humanity, individually and collectively, to honor and commit itself to the prompting and integrity of the indwelling soul.

The intelligent qualities of soul and soul personality must be given the freedom to express themselves through human activities without obstruction. Preparations must be made before the soul can express itself through this medium. We must desire that all obstacles interfering with the soul's expression of love and oneness of being be eliminated and replaced with light. The personality must be regenerated, enlightened, disciplined, purified, and dedicated to the service of humanity and to the glory of the Divine.

From a practical point of view, we must strive to become aware of all negative, destructive, or unkind thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or intentions which might serve to block the flow of light coming from soul

and soul personality. A sense of fulfillment, joy, and security develop by encouraging the soul to express its attributes through one's personality. Desire and ambition of a selfish nature diminish. There is no desire for power over any person, place, or condition. Instead, the soul begins to instill a sense of harmlessness. A commitment to express the higher self brings about much less criticism of others. Attacks upon our brethren, especially in instances when they seem to have fallen from the path, made a mistake, or expressed an opinion that differs sharply from our own, all fade into insignificance. Expressing the attributes of the soul develops a desire to have Divine Love flow continuously through and from the heart during interpersonal relationships. As this love flows, it communicates the desire to be the sole energy that exits from our mind and heart.

One of the purposes of universal soul, that special extension of the Divine that is within, is to evolve the soul personality. The soul personality is to move toward mastership and express the Divine's attributes with increasing perfection. Before entering the earth plane and while

in the cosmic realm, the soul personality desires, understands, and accepts this reality. It neither thinks nor functions as the human mind, nor does it have the traditional fears, limited understanding, and reservations of the human personality.

The soul personality, guided by the Divine's will and wisdom, desires and decides exactly what experiences it needs in order to accomplish its divine mission: a divine unity with the Divine. In achieving this, it becomes, just as the Creator is, kind, loving, forgiving, and patient. The soul personality and the Divine are inseparable during this earthly human journey and are always available to guide and infuse you with unconditional love and understanding in all endeavors.

The soul encourages you to be proactive in all experiences; being reactive is destructive. Contact and unity with the soul bring understanding and answers to your questions. The Divine has so designed us that within each of us there is a special classroom, an inner sanctum, designed for inner communion. Within this classroom, your master teacher expects and awaits you. Seek the presence of this Master Within. No one can enter this classroom except you. The Master is always there.

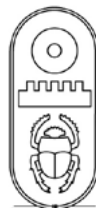


When the soul personality leaves the cosmic realm with the lessons to be learned, it makes the commitment to carry out its mission here on the earth plane while retaining the wisdom acquired during previous incarnations. With the first breath of life, the soul personality enters the body and finds that it is imprisoned in this physical entity with underdeveloped senses and a minimal awareness. A newborn infant is not equipped to communicate or connect with the physical world in a very intelligible fashion. However, this physical world, with its experiences and human contacts, is absolutely essential to the work that the soul agreed to for the purpose of evolving and expressing divine qualities.

The soul personality, responding to the Divine's laws and directions, continues the process of creating the important physical instruments through which it will work and develop. These include the five physical senses; the endocrine and psychic centers; and the central, sympathetic, and spinal nervous systems. All of these are active and gradually grow and further develop. Among the physical body's most notable component is the brain, along with its attributes of intellect, desires, and emotions. A wonderful and efficient physical instrument results: a perfect temple in which the soul will dwell.

The soul personality devotes so much attention, energy, and effort in developing the physical body and its faculties that the soul personality forgets its true identity and its mission or purpose. It begins to identify with the body as "self." Under the light of the Divine, it begins to understand its true nature and self. It comes to understand that the physical body with all its wonderful attributes does not constitute the real self. The journey back home begins, the journey to express its divine qualities.

Let us briefly consider the mind. Mind is a part of universal mind. We might





conclude that one of the functions of mind is to transmit the will and desires of the soul to the brain. The mind is truly the great “sixth” sense, designed to serve as a special instrument for the soul. The student of mysticism needs to meditate on the concepts dealing with the reality of the physical body and its relationship to the soul, the soul’s mission and purpose.

Understanding and being conscious of this permits us to commit our lives toward the Divine’s purpose. The indwelling soul is love, light, and love, and operates according to the cosmic law of love. We seek to establish this identity and we desire to express the soul’s attributes through our human personality. We manifest light, love, and peace the more we strive to be tolerant, kind, loving, idealistic, and selfless. This attitude establishes a harmonious attunement and relationship with creative cosmic forces. The soul will begin to increasingly reveal itself in our daily lives.

What can we do to create, build, and express these qualities in our lives now? We must begin the process regardless of difficult relationships, problems, and associations we may have now or that we may expect in the future. Through study, contemplation, prayer, and desire we can commit ourselves to developing and expressing a loving heart and mind while

showing greater generosity. We must be determined to increase our willingness to forgive, to overlook weakness and errors. We must be willing to extend a hand to those who seem to fall. We need to grasp every opportunity to maintain an inclusive mind. We must practice being open and broad-minded, tolerant, and patient. We must learn to accept and love all life forms, including those that sacrifice themselves for our food, comfort, and emotional enjoyment. We must refuse to permit our consciousness to be tied solely to visible, earthly, negative, or bigoted thoughts of any kind, especially regarding creed, culture, or nationality.

Begin to realize that during the many incarnations through which you have lived, you have experienced various cultures, races, creeds, and beliefs on your path to evolution. Respect all of these, for they are a part of you or will be in the future. In this life you are given the opportunity to live and practice whatever you learned in past lives and experiences. In accordance with cosmic law, if you fail to do this, your “lesson plan” must be revised. Experiences must be repeated until they are learned and practiced. Consult the soul within and let it guide and walk the path with you.

Provide yourself with quiet time to go into your inner sanctum. Attune with the Master Within. One way of doing this

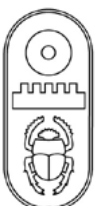
is to begin before you even sit down by becoming quiet and mentally stating, “I intend to commune with the Divine and my soul.” Or you may choose to say, “I intend to commune with my higher mind.” Then sit down comfortably, becoming still, while breathing slowly and deeply, relaxing and focusing upon the movement of your breath. State your intention as many times as necessary for sincerity of heart and mind to get started and take control. When this happens, you will feel a sacred bonding emotion and a relaxing feeling. As you repeat this daily ritual, you will gradually begin to sense a great spiritual peace in heart and mind. Awareness of this appeal and subsequent success may be realized consciously or unconsciously. Even when you think you have felt nothing, you have still achieved an important degree of success.

The great law of love gradually becomes the law of your being and the intention of your life. Recognize love and beauty as the sole essences of all existence, the most dynamic and healing forces in the universe. Learn to see and sense these all around you on your path. Actively choose to have this love govern how you deal with people, places, and conditions. Engender a true soul commitment and experience true inner peace. Fear and resentment

cannot exist where this law rules. You are truly dedicated to soul’s purpose whenever operating within this cosmic and universal law. You may experience the same infusion of spirit which inspired Francis of Assisi to write the following while in contact with the Infinite:

*Make me an instrument of Thy Peace.  
Where there is hate, let me bring love.  
Where there is offense, let me bring forgiveness.  
Where there is discord, let me bring union.  
Where there is error, let me bring truth.  
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.  
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.  
Where there is darkness, let me bring light.  
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.  
O Lord, I do not seek so much to be consoled  
as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
To be loved as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
It is in forgetting ourselves that we find  
ourselves,  
It is in forgiving that we are forgiven,  
It is in dying that we are reborn to eternal life.  
Forever realize that you are a source of the  
Divine’s light and love.  
So Mote It Be!*

Let’s apply what we’ve learned.





### **Exercise to Strengthen Commitment to the Soul**

Sit comfortably in your chair with your feet flat on the floor and your hands in your lap. Slowly and gently take seven deep breaths. Pause for a count of four after each inhalation, then open your mouth and slowly exhale. Closing your eyes, contemplate the nature of the soul in light of the chapter you have just read. Then open your eyes and read aloud the following five affirmations. After reading each affirmation, pause briefly in order to contemplate the essential meaning and seek to experience each of the affirmations as a true reality.

1. Yes, I am a living soul.
2. I am forever enfolded within the very soul of the Divine.
3. My body is a perfect instrument of my indwelling soul.
4. Yes, I dwell within this wonderful, magnificent body for which I am grateful.
5. I intend for soul to express its light and love through me to all with whom I come in contact and who are in my world.

After finishing your contemplation, offer thankfulness. You may say any prayer you wish and send thoughts of cosmic love and cosmic light to those in the world and to those with whom you are in contact. Afterwards take five deliberate breaths, and then write in your journal any impressions of meaning of the soul that you care to record. Go about your regular activities after finishing this exercise.



# MEDITATIONS ON EXPANDING OUR AWARENESS - LUCID WAKING

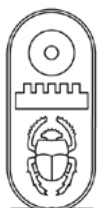
*Julian Johnson, FRC*

Humanity has been on a quest to expand its awareness from the earliest times of its communal existence. The desire to know and understand its environment and capabilities have been critical to our survival and growth as a species. This continuously growing body of knowledge is passed down generationally in the form of culture with the aim of benefiting the welfare of the group's members and future generations. Humankind's expanded awareness of the world we live in and the forces acting in our world have progressively led to the development of the many technologies which have promoted human health and material welfare. Our awareness of the nature of our material environment has increased exponentially in the last two centuries, enabling humanity to sustain a large population and simultaneously increase longevity.

An important engine of this progress has been our ability to extend the range of our physical senses beyond their intrinsic limits and to employ the resulting expanded awareness of our environment to our material benefit. Over many centuries, humankind has designed and created instruments that significantly extend the

range of our physical senses. One example is our sense of sight. Microscopes enable us to discern the minute qualities of materials well beyond the capacity of our eyes, which are limited by our eyes' lenses and the nature and density of the receptor cells of our retinas. X-ray machines produce visible impressions created by energy that passes through our bodies to which our eyes are otherwise insensitive. Similarly, telescopes enable us to see light particles that continually strike our eyes when we look at the night sky, but which otherwise are imperceptible to us. Video equipment enables us to see events that are distant in space and time. Numerous other inventions similarly augment our senses of hearing, smell, taste, and touch.

Notwithstanding the relative progress that humanity has made in building our awareness of the physical forces that govern much of the observable universe through the extension of our generally recognized five physical senses, human experience has led many to accept that there are other knowable phenomena that lie immediately beyond the typical scope of these senses and our awareness. Some of these phenomena have been



scientifically documented in recent years, such as the identification of a brain area endowing humans with an innate sense of direction due to our brains' ability to register changes in the magnetic field lines of Earth. There is also evidence of an internal sense of touch which allows us to sense subtle conditions within our physical body. Experienced yogis use this capability to reduce their heart rate or increase their body temperature at will. The use of intuition to access information without reliance on memory or normal sensory means is another example.

The exploration of these and similar phenomena is generally left to the area of study known as parapsychology. Gaining wide notice in the 1960s and 1970s, parapsychology investigates capabilities of consciousness extending beyond the five physical senses, such as telepathy, precognition, telekinesis, and remote viewing. Thousands of years of human experience from around the world give credence to the existence of these phenomena, although they escape examination by conventional scientific methods.

While these various means of expanding our awareness have significantly impacted how humans experience the world, an important avenue for expanding awareness with unlimited potential for bringing about a transformation of the experience of humankind remains largely unexplored. Based on our lived experience, it is apparent that there is more to us than what literally meets the eye. There is a part of us that we can all see and touch, and there is another part of us that is not discernible nor measurable by our five physical senses. While humankind continues to study extensively the first part, which is the physical body and the accompanying material world revealed through our senses, we have devoted comparatively little attention to the seeming intangible part, which is our awareness.

From a mystical point of view, our ability to reflect upon our own awareness is one of the greatest assets of human consciousness. While it is widely recognized that animals and plants exhibit consciousness and even decision-making capabilities to promote their survival and comfort, human beings appear to be unique in our ability to contemplate the



fact and nature of our awareness. This represents a higher expression of self-consciousness than simply recognizing an individuated identity which can be seen in other species.

However, the human capacity to reflect on the immaterial aspect of self is generally overlooked and its benefits are not fully recognized. While we are awake, the mental life of most human beings is devoted to the same concerns as other creatures, centered on meeting organic needs for finding food, mating, and avoiding discomfort and threats to one's physical existence. We also know from direct experience that when not occupied by immediate needs, humans spend a great portion of their mental life ruminating on past events as well as contemplating various versions of future states. Cataloging these thoughts will reveal that they are chiefly related to securing material needs in more elaborate fashion for themselves, their offspring, and other members of the species.

While humanity has made great progress by expanding its awareness of the nature of the material world, it is of equal importance to be aware of awareness. The content of awareness changes continuously, but awareness remains the same. The content of our awareness has dramatically changed since we were children. Nonetheless, we experience the world from the same center of perception throughout our lives. Our circumstances

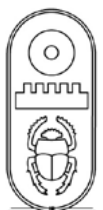
may change, our clothes may change, where we live may change, our bodies may change, our name may change. However, the locus or point of our awareness, the seer behind the eyes that look out on the world does not change. Even death does not alter this. Based on accounts of near-death experiences, the same point of awareness continues beyond the cessation of the functioning of the human body. Awareness is the immovable object.

To be aware of awareness itself is to temporarily wake up while we participate in this dream we call life. It is what we could call Lucid Waking, a parallel to Lucid Dreaming, where we are aware that we are in the dream state while dreaming. Lucid Waking takes us away from the preoccupations of work, family, and friends into the mystery of our existence.

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The key to the gate of Lucid Waking is to hold in mind the state we experience when we look up at a star-filled sky and realize that we exist among the multitude of stars in the universe and are momentarily transfixed by the Cosmic questions of: "Where am I?" "What am I?" "Why am I here?" Lucid Waking is to realize that you exist. It is to realize that we are part of the immense phenomena that we call the universe.

For students of mysticism, Lucid Waking is also to remember that we take part in an Infinite Intelligence that underlies all that we see and experience. It is to understand that we are part of





something that has had no beginning and has no end. It simply IS, always has been, and always will be. It is to find rest in that we are a part of that which is beyond time and eternal.

Focusing on the infinite aspect of our being opens new doors of awareness of our relationship with the Cosmic Intelligence, which most people call God or the Divine. We experience the vibrant connection between the macrocosm and the microcosm that bridges the Infinite Intelligence and our seemingly infinitesimal self.

Just as there are techniques for cultivating Lucid Dreaming, we can employ tools to cultivate Lucid Waking. However, in making use of such tools, it is important to slowly build on using them to allow the mind, our personal mental structure, to become progressively at ease with this expansion of awareness. Lucid Waking means adding to our framework of reality moving toward a previously seemingly incomprehensible unknown that we heretofore have found to be overwhelming, as indicated by the feeling of awe we get upon the contemplation of the unknown presented in a vast night sky filled with innumerable stars. While inspired by the sight, we typically retreat from it and its unknown implications,

returning to the comfort of thoughts related to more familiar elements of everyday life. Nonetheless, it is possible to build up our capacity to sustain longer intervals of such contemplation through regular gentle extension of our pre-existing mental and emotional boundaries. This practice is not unlike slowly building up physical strength in weight training. Too much weight lifted too soon can lead to harm, while progressive increases in weight with proper periods of rest in between can steadily and safely increase our capacity. Unlike the dangers accompanying hallucinogenic drugs, the Rosicrucian precept that “evolution not revolution leads to lasting change” is particularly applicable to this work.

The heart of these tools is remembering. It is bringing back to mind that you exist. One approach to doing this is with eyes open, mentally repeat “I am” or “Am” or “I exist” or some other simple words with similar meaning. Looking at a candle flame from a distance can be a useful visual sight. When doing this exercise, don’t reflect on any context. Reflecting on possible contexts will take you away from the goal of the exercise, which is to spend time in pure awareness without the conditioning of other thoughts. We want to have an “empty” mind except for it being occupied by awareness. When thoughts intrude, as they invariably will, simply come back to your focus on awareness. Do this exercise for five to ten minutes and then transition into whatever method of meditation that you find most compatible personally or return to your regular activities.

When watching or hearing news of world events, no matter how disturbing, remind yourself that everything takes place within the Consciousness of God, the Cosmic Consciousness. As the Master Jesus put it (Matt. 10:29-30), “Are not two



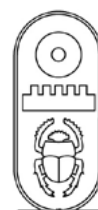
sparrows sold for a penny? Yet none of them will fall to the earth without your father. Even the hairs of your head are each counted.” Or from the words of Acts (17:28), “In him [It] we live and move and are.” The truth of these statements is reflected in one of the hallmarks of Cosmic Consciousness, as reported by those who have experienced it, namely the realization of the imminent presence of the Divine Intelligence throughout all reality.

Another tool for helping to focus on awareness is by mentally asking yourself with eyes wide open the following question, “Why is there something rather than nothing?” The intent here is not to answer the question, but to ponder it. Let it sink in. Let it remind you that you exist versus non-existence. Momentarily feel your place in eternity, outside of time, without beginning or ending. Just recognize that you exist. Repeat the prompt several times, for as long as you are comfortable, to bring your mind back to focusing on awareness.

Various experiences in nature can bring us to a heightened state of awareness and consideration of our place in the universe. When given the opportunity to be in such a setting, whether a star-filled sky, a beautiful sunset or sunrise, or a

majestic mountain vista, at the moment it elicits a heightened sense of your being and aliveness, stay with it. As the sensation fades, reinvoké it with the same or similar thoughts that accompanied the experience initially. Repeat the process several times and then turn your consciousness inward through meditation or resume your regular activities. When another opportunity presents itself, repeat the experience.

The tools offered above and others of one’s own design can help with the process of acclimatization of our consciousness to an expanded reality. Initially, in the intentional journey toward Lucid Waking, it is normal to experience our mind’s resistance to it. Our mind clings tightly to the version of reality that we have built up since childhood and which presently enables each of us to navigate conscious experience with reduced anxiety. This is one reason why individuals hold on so tightly to world views they have formed despite being repeatedly exposed to evidence that contradicts those views. Nonetheless, we can slowly stretch the boundaries of our awareness through exercises that incorporate recognition of elements of reality that we have excluded from conscious awareness while adding to our awareness elements of reality that



reduce the accompanying fear that might be aroused through expanded awareness.

For example, humans spend little conscious time throughout most of their lives dwelling on the unavailability of physical death, or transition as Rosicrucians commonly refer to it, and its relatively imminent nature, except to regularly make choices to avoid its accidental occurrence. Reading about the scientific evidence supporting reincarnation or the continuation of awareness beyond physical death shown through the investigation of near-death experiences can help us incorporate the seeming unknown of death into our conscious awareness while also affirming the continuation of awareness beyond the point of transition. The words of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin reflect this well: “If at death we realize that this life is an illusion, why do we treat it differently now? The nature of things does not change.”

Let us note that meditation in its various forms complements all of these exercises. Meditation gradually loosens

the grip of our physical senses on our consciousness, allowing us to attune our consciousness to other aspects of reality which are ordinarily overwhelmed by the impressions brought to us by our senses. Meditation turns our awareness inward, focusing our awareness on the Knower rather than the known.

To summarize, awareness is the most profound aspect of self, as awareness is of the nature of the soul, which is an extension of the Cosmic Intelligence. The value of its study is pointed to in the words of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, “The door by which the Divine goes out of Itself, It enters the human soul. The door by which the human soul goes out of itself, it enters the understanding.”

Let’s value and cultivate our awareness as the precious gift that it is.

***Author’s note:*** The film *Waking Life*, available on Amazon Prime, is an interesting exploration of topics discussed in this article.



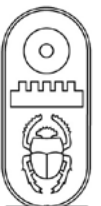
# YOU NEVER CAN TELL

*Ella Wheeler Wilcox, SRC  
(1850-1919)*

You never can tell when you send a word,  
Like an arrow shot from a bow  
By an archer blind, be it cruel or kind,  
Just where it may chance to go.  
It may pierce the breast of your dearest friend.  
Tipped with its poison or balm,  
To a stranger's heart in life's great mart,  
It may carry its pain or its calm.

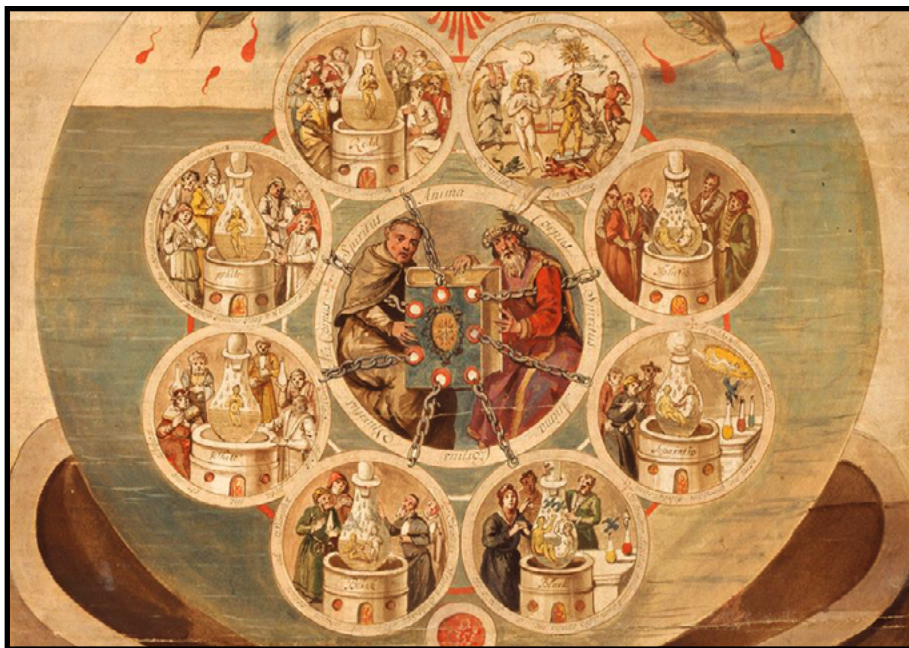
You never can tell when you do an act  
Just what the result will be;  
But with every deed you are sowing a seed,  
Though the harvest you may not see.  
Each kindly act is an acorn dropped  
In God's [the Divine's] productive soil  
You may not know, but the tree shall grow,  
With shelter for those who toil.

You never can tell what your thoughts will do,  
In bringing you hate or love;  
For thoughts are things, and their airy wings  
Are swifter than carrier doves.  
They follow the law of the universe -  
Each thing must create its kind,  
And they speed o'er the track to bring you back  
*Whatever went out from your mind.*



# TRUE IMAGINATION IN ALCHEMY

Dennis William Hauck, PhD, FRC



*A detail from the Ripley Scroll, sometimes called  
"Alchemists Revealing Secrets from the Book of Seven Seals," ca. 1700.*

There is a riddle from the Middle Ages that describes the true nature of the First Matter—a mysterious, etheric substance that is the source of all transformation:

The key to life and death is everywhere to be found, but if you do not find it in your own house, you will find it nowhere. Yet, it is before everyone's eyes; no one lives without it; everyone has used it. The poor usually possess more of it than the rich; children play with it in the streets. The meek and uneducated esteem it highly, but the privileged and learned often throw it away. It is the only thing from which the Philosopher's Stone can be prepared, and without it, no noble metal can ever be created.

The riddle tells us that this secret power is commonly used and is in plain sight. But it is most obvious where we live (in our own minds?). Children play with it,

and humble poor people use it more than snobbish rich people. The uneducated lower class prizes it, but the educated higher class believes it is an idle waste of time. Yet this hidden ability—that so many condemn and take for granted—is the only path to real wisdom and the only way to perfect anything.

One of the authors in the twelfth-century text *Turba Philosophorum* (*Assembly of Philosophers*) describes it as "a thing which is found everywhere, which is a stone and no stone, contemptible yet precious, hidden, concealed, and yet known to everyone. It is a thing stronger and more sublime than all other things."

"It is familiar to all men, young and old," explains the author of *Gloria Mundi* (*Glory of All Worlds* - 1620). "It is found in the country, in the village, in the town, in all things created by God; yet it is despised by everyone. No one prizes it, though, next



to the human soul, it is the most beautiful and the most precious thing upon earth and has the power to pull down kings and princes.”

How you answer the riddle has a lot to do with your concept of reality. Where do you draw the line at what is real? Your fantasies? Your dreams? Your thoughts? Your soul? Matter—is that real? According to Hermetic philosophy, everything is real. Everything we perceive is part of the same One Thing, and the spectrum of our awareness is determined by the light of the One Mind. That primal light is reflected in each person’s consciousness in the light of imagination, which is the answer to our riddle.

My ten-year-old nephew once described imagination as “walking around inside your mind.” For alchemists, it was a private world of infinite possibilities where much of the Great Work took place. To differentiate it from idle fantasy and daydreaming, they called it the True Imagination. It is a special kind of mental imagery or visualization that is directly connected to the ground of reality. In our culture, we are taught to reject the True Imagination and sever our ties to the hidden reality while we are still children. Families, schools, churches—authorities of all types—deny our inborn connection to the Divine Mind and replace it with their own dogma.

“There is a secret stone,” explains one fourteenth-century alchemist, “hidden in a deep well, worthless and rejected.” “Our most precious stone,” laments another, “cast forth upon the dunghill, being most dear, is made the vilest of the vile.”

According to Paracelsus, “the True Imagination leads life back to its spiritual reality, and it then takes on the name of meditation.” What he meant was that the

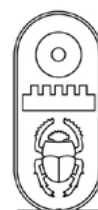
True Imagination envisions the divine source of anything, which can then be explored and understood through meditation.

The meditative methods used by alchemists consisted of prolonged and silent invocation of divine powers. Sometimes a person’s “inner angel” or “higher self” was invoked. In their meditations, they were looking for the “angelic ray” that unites the world of forms with the divine ideals that are the source of everything.

The author of the 1550 text *Rosarium philosophorum* (*The Rosary of the Philosophers*) describes this special kind of alchemical meditation: “Take care that your door is well and firmly closed, so that he who is within cannot escape, and, the Divine willing, you will reach the goal. Nature carries out her operations gradually; and indeed, I would have you do the same: let your imagination be guided wholly by nature, through whom the bodies regenerate themselves in the bowels of the earth. And imagine this with true and not with fantastic imagination.”



*A woodcut from The Rosary of the Philosophers, 1550.*





An image from Carl Jung's *The Red Book*, first published in English in 2009.  
 The text in the image reads: "Father of the Prophet, beloved Philemon."

The True Imagination envisions the subtle processes of nature and connects them with their divine archetypes. It attempts to capture the "Seed of the World" as the Divine Mind dreams it. Therefore, when Hermetic writers speak of "seeing with the eyes of spirit," they are describing a process that penetrates the deeper genesis of things beyond their outward appearances.

Alchemists believed imagination is a piece of heaven concealed within us, a divine connection to the cosmic One Mind. If you look up the definition of "imagination" in Martin Rulandus's *Lexicon of Alchemy* (1612), you will find it defined as "the Star in Man, a celestial or supercelestial body."

"The alchemists' concept of *Imaginatio*," explains Carl Jung (1875-1961), "is the most important key to understanding the Opus. We have to conceive of these imaginal processes not as the immaterial phantoms that we readily take fantasy

pictures to be, but as something corporeal, a subtle body. The act of imagining was like a physical activity that could be fitted into the cycle of material changes that brought these about and was brought about by them in turn. The alchemist related himself not only to the unconscious but directly to the very substance that he hoped to transform through the power of imagination. The act of imagining is therefore a concentrated extract of life forces, a hybrid of the physical and psychic."

From his lifelong study of alchemy, Jung developed the new discipline of transpersonal psychology and a therapeutic method he called "active imagination" that uses the imagination as "an organ of understanding." The technique allows unconscious issues and deeper feelings to act themselves out in visualizations that often involve conversations with imaginal figures, such as one of Jung's "guides," Philemon (shown above).

Active imagination can also be practiced by automatic writing or artistic endeavors like painting, sculpting, music, and dance. The method opens a channel of communication between conscious and unconscious parts of a person's psyche and also between the personal level and the collective unconscious.

Active imagination demonstrates the reality of pre-existing images in the human psyche corresponding to external events and objects. Surprisingly, this concept is a basic principle in the philosophy of science. Galileo, Francis Bacon, Giordano Bruno, Johannes Kepler, Isaac Newton, and Gottlieb Leibniz all spoke of primordial images that are pre-existent in the human soul and can be perceived through the "innate instinct" of imagination.

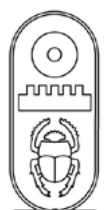
Quantum physicist Wolfgang Pauli (1900-1958) explained how these images

are the source of scientific insight: "When one analyzes the pre-conscious steps to true concepts, one always finds ideas which consist of symbolic images. These inner pictures are produced by an 'instinct to imagining' and are shared by different individuals independently. Out of these archaic images grow rational concepts."

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) used the True Imagination to see himself riding on a light beam through the cosmos, and he returned from his journey with the theory of relativity. Like the alchemists, he paid homage to the power of this divine gift: "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire universe, and all there ever will be to know and understand."



*A detail from an illustration in Splendor Solis, 1582.*



# INTRODUCTION TO ALCHEMY

*Frater Albertus, FRC*

What is alchemy? This is the first and most vital question to be answered before a study of the following pages should be undertaken. This question can be answered to the satisfaction of the inquiring mind, but all careless paging through any alchemy book will be to no avail. If the reader has no previous knowledge of alchemy and, moreover, no knowledge through conscientious study concerning mysticism, occultism, or related subjects, the answer to the above question will have little meaning. What, then, is alchemy? It is “the raising of vibrations.”

For this reason, it is wise not to attempt to experiment with the laboratory outlines that follow. These experiments are only for those who have spent considerable time in spagyric research and who have proven to themselves that an honest endeavor has prevailed and that this same endeavor still motivates their true search for the highest arcana, the *lapis philosophorum*. As all students of alchemical literature have come to realize that the exact process for the opus magnum has never been completely revealed in simple language or put into print, they will appreciate the fact that here is given a detailed description of the lesser circulation.

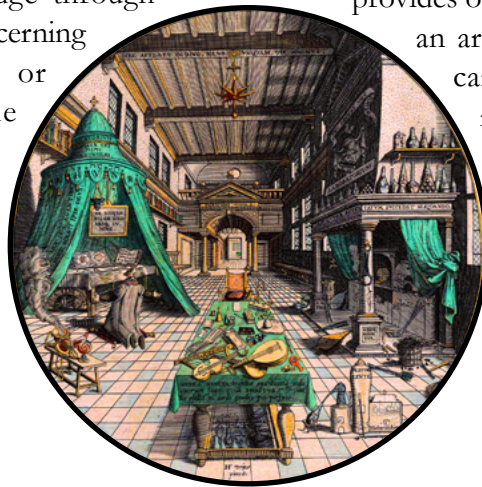
In alchemy there are the lesser and greater circulations. The former pertains to the herbal kingdom and the latter to the most coveted of them all, the mineral (metallic) realm. A correct understanding, and not

just knowledge, of the herbal process will open the gate to the great arcanum. Months and years of experimentation in your alchemical laboratory will prove the truth of this statement. The fact that alchemy is a life's work will be accepted by those who have spent months and years behind books and retorts. It is this significant fact which

provides our spagyric art with such an armor that no materialist can pierce it. If it were not for the cleansing, purging, and aging of the alchemist-to-be over a great length of time, like the *subjectum* they are working with, how could it be kept from the profane and the unworthy? Only that which has stood the test of fire has been purified. That there is still a cloak of secrecy covering alchemical processes,

and that this must yet remain so will have to be accepted by all aspiring alchemists. For personal greed has no place in alchemy. The aim of all true adepts is to help relieve a suffering humankind in its physical and spiritual misery. A non-acceptance of this excludes one automatically from the circle of adepts.

My friends in the medical professions, as well as the pharmaceutical chemists, will readily disagree with me when reading what follows. This must be taken for granted and, in fact, has been so since what is presented here is so foreign to the standardized teachings in present-day medical colleges. Since I agree with them, on their terms, it is only fair to ask that



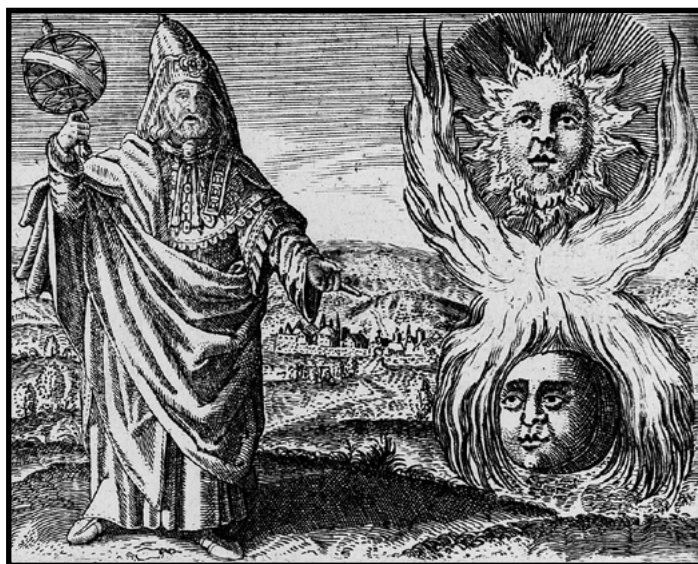
*An image of an alchemist's laboratory, from Heinrich Khunrath's Amphitheatrum sapientiae aeternae, 1595.*

they think of the contents of this article in the terms of an alchemist. If this is impossible, then the article should be laid aside for the time being and forgotten until it can be examined by an open mind free from prejudice.

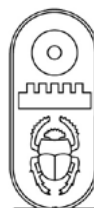
No attempt is being made here to write on allopathic therapeutics. This shall be left to those versed in this particular branch of healing. I am writing here about alchemy because of the years of studies and experiments that have preceded this book, and because of the work that shall in all likelihood continue to follow. Since the scope of alchemy is so immense, one earthly incarnation in many, if not most, cases is an insufficient time for the full completion of the work. In climbing the alchemist's ladder, there are many tribulations to consider involving time, money, heartaches—to mention only a few of the difficult steps. The aspirant then should think long and well before undertaking such an ordeal, for, if they are not prepared, all will prove unsuccessful.

The process in both the lesser and greater circulation is basically not expensive. In fact, it is relatively insignificant. But before this state can be reached much money, time, and effort can

and, most likely, will be spent. It is for these reasons that an urgent appeal is made not to venture rashly into alchemy, not to see oneself sitting in perfect personal health at the end of a rainbow with the world at one's feet and with full pots of glistening gold. These are only illusions and will prove to be but sensational and glamorous *fata morgana*; they will not satisfy the soul. There is more to be gained in alchemy than vainglory. This, in fact, cannot be obtained in alchemy. Such vainglory is as far from the true goals of alchemy as night is from day. This brings us back to the simple statement made at the beginning of this article: "Alchemy is the raising of the vibrations." The person who sees no meaning in this seemingly unimportant sentence has no right to attempt alchemical experimentation. Such a person is like one who claims that since they know all the letters of the alphabet they can, therefore, read any language as they are all composed of letters from the same alphabet. But do they read with understanding when the letters are interchanged, forming words in different languages? A chemist may know all the formulas and all the abbreviations of chemical terminology, but do they also understand what they really are? Their true origin? Their first state? This we



*An illustration depicting Hermes Trismegistus in Symbola aureae mensae duodecim nationum, by Michael Maier, 1617.*





*A detail of an illustration of an alchemist at work in Elias Ashmolé's  
Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum, 1652.*

shall leave for those who are concerned to answer. If all the foregoing statements do not discourage the aspirant and make them put this article away with disgust, perhaps then it will help them to find themselves in this universe and to give peace and contentment to their soul. Hermetic philosophy, with its practical arcanum, repeats itself over and over again in the ancient axiom: "As above, so below. As below, so above."

It is questionable whether or not historical references to alchemists of the past have a place in these pages. There have been so many books published already that have made it their business to elaborate on the history and romance of alchemy. For this reason, no attempt is being made here to add to the wealth of biographical material supplied by such books. Our emphasis falls, rather, on present-day alchemystical experimentation, conducted in accordance with age-old practices. Our aim in these pages is to attempt to demonstrate and to reveal the truth of alchemy in contemporary language, while still remaining in harmony with ancient rules and rituals, according to the Alchemist's Oath. The practice of alchemy, not only in earlier times but in our own day as well, should be undertaken only with the greatest solemnity. This can best

be illustrated by the following oath from *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (London, 1652). This oath, in only slightly modified form, is still being used by present-day adepts:

Will you with me tomorrow be  
content,  
Faithfully to receive the blessed  
Sacrament,  
Upon this Oath that I shall heere  
you give,  
For ne Gold ne Silver as long as  
you live,  
Neither for love you beare towards  
your Kinne,  
Nor yet to no great person  
preferment to wynne:  
That you disclose the secret that I  
shall you teach,  
Neither by writing nor by no swift  
speech;  
But only to the person which you  
be sure  
Hath ever searched after the  
secrets of Nature?  
To them you may reveale the  
secrets of this Art,  
Under the Covering of Philosophie  
before this world yee depart.

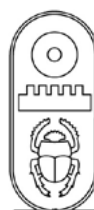
Sooner or later, most students experience a desire to find an adept in order to become their pupil or disciple. But no matter how sincere such a desire is, it is futile for the student to attempt to locate a teacher versed in the Grand Arcanum. “When the pupil is ready, the Master will appear.” This ancient precept still holds true. One may search, one may aspire, one may work and study hard until the wee hours of the morning, and yet it will not be evidence that one will ever attain that priceless jewel: the Grand Arcanum. For it takes more than mere study. An honest heart, a clean heart, a true heart, a benevolent and contrite heart accomplishes more than all the book learning can ever do. Yet, strangely enough, learning must accompany the virtues just cited. Without a knowledge and an understanding of natural laws and their corresponding spiritual parallels, no one could ever truly be called an alchemist or a sage.

I am not attempting to vindicate alchemy. It needs no vindication. I am advocating the truth in alchemy, for it is a most wonderful experience to have come to a realization. To experience! To realize! To have found “the light that shined in the darkness.”

All the foregoing may seem so discouraging. Perhaps a heavy doubt may weigh upon the heart of the lover of alchemystical research. Whatever the cause or whatever its effects may be, a tremendous responsibility is connected with it. The person who has read about the lives of the alchemists has found that most often many years had to elapse before their goal was reached. Not everyone was as fortunate as Eirenaeus Philalethes, who writes that in his twenty-third year that great blessing in the form of the *lapis philosophorum* was attained. Many had to await another incarnation before they proved themselves worthy and ready to receive it. But, if all doubts are put aside



Illustration 17, “The Demonstration of Perfection,” from *The Rosary of the Philosophers*, 1550.



and if a firm belief has grown into a strong faith, then that quickening moment that produces knowledge will eventually help one to come to “understand,” to “realize” the oneness of the universe, the secret behind Creation and the unfolding of Cosmic Consciousness.

This brings us to the natural questions: “What is the secret of creation? And what constitutes life force?” These questions must be answered before the would-be alchemist can accomplish anything in their laboratory.

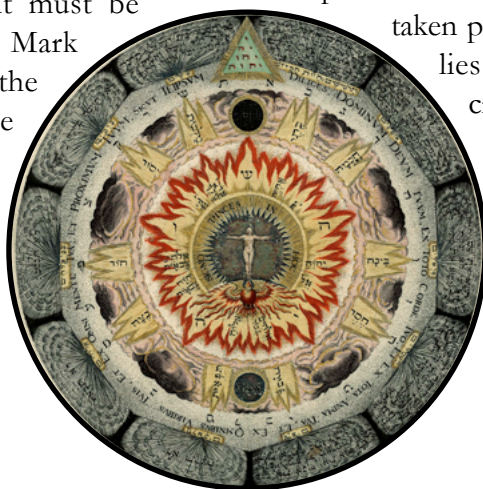
Since everything that grows comes from a seed, the fruit must be contained in its seed. Mark this well, for here lies the secret of creation. The raising of specimen, as said before, is the raising of vibrations. Herbs, animals, as well as minerals and metals, grow from seed. To understand this secret of nature, which is only partly revealed to humankind generally, constitutes the main theoretical subject in alchemy. Once this is known, then only the proper understanding is necessary in order to obtain results in the raising or elevating of specimen, which is nothing else but transmutation. If we can help nature in her ultimate goal, that of bringing her products to perfection, then we are in harmony with her laws. Nature does not resent an artificial effort, or a shortcut, to bring about perfection. To illustrate: the seed of a tomato may be put into the ground late in the fall. Snow and ice may cover it during the winter. But no tomato plant will grow during this time, outdoors in freezing temperatures. However, if the same seed is planted inside where sufficient warmth and moisture is provided, and if it

is placed in the proper matrix it will grow into a plant and bear fruit. This is not contrary to nature. It is in harmony with the natural laws. For fire (heat), water, air, and earth are all that are necessary to cause a seed to grow and bear its predestined fruit. The life force originates not in fire, earth, air, and water. This life force is a separate essence which fills the universe. This essence, or fifth essence (quintessence), is the truly important object that alchemists seek. It is the fifth of the four: fire, water, air, and earth, and is the most important one for the alchemist to find and then to separate. After such a separation has

taken place, the answer to what lies behind the secret of creation will then manifest itself partly in the form of a dense smoke-like vapor that settles, after passing through the condenser tube, into a water-like substance of a yellowish color carrying with itself something oily which gives the tinge to the extracted water. This oily substance, or alchemical Sulphur, is just as essential to alchemical preparations as Salt and Essence.

A repetition of certain phrases and sentences may be found throughout this article. This is not arbitrary; they have been purposely inserted in order to emphasize certain important points more strongly. Much that is written here must be reread many a time in order to lift the veil. This only can be accomplished individually by each student. That which follows will be discovered when the practical experimentation takes place in the laboratory.

Now to the alchemist’s laboratory. This usually takes on a sinister coloring as



*The Cosmic Rose from Heinrich Khunrath's Amphitheatrum sapientiae aeternae, 1595.*



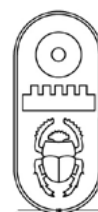


*Alchemist's Workshop in the Rosicrucian Alchemy Exhibit in San Jose, California.*

one's imagination runs wild. Even today, so-called religious people are inclined to discuss alchemy in rather subdued whispers because, so they claim, it is the devil's work. Ignorance is bliss to some, and no one has a right to take another out of their bliss. We must ignore those that have religious scruples against alchemy, as we do not intend to convert anybody. The aim laid down here is to help the alchemical aspirant on her laborious road. This road begins in the laboratory. Everything in the laboratory revolves around the fire or its emanation: heat. The rest is composed of a few flasks, a condenser, and some ingenuity. It sounds rather simple and really is so. What about all the other instruments that clutter up an alchemist's laboratory, as pictures would have us believe? Just as an artist needs only canvas, paint, and brushes to paint a picture, but may add an indefinite number of other related objects to their studio, so may an alchemist add other related equipment as they see fit. No doubt they are going to experiment and probe deeper into the mysteries to unlock one after another. Once the soul hungers and thirsts for truth and the unfoldment of nature's laws, there is no end to its search until the ultimate has been reached.

Where should a laboratory be located? How can one practice alchemy in a crowded city? Such questions will have to be answered individually by each student. A corner in an attic or a place in the basement is sufficient, as long as there is a continuous source of heat available. The person who wishes to practice our spagyric work will have to do all the work themselves. How fortunate! How else could it be? How else can one appreciate the experience if they do not arrive at the crucial point of knowledge by their own individual efforts? Enough has been said now concerning the hardships and disappointments that undoubtedly will be encountered. If the student, in spite of these difficulties, still wishes to enter the portals of the spagyrist's holy temple, they will find a welcome guide in the following pages. These unfold, in simple language, the process of the lesser circulation.

Those who wait for a complete description, in similar language, of the Grand Arcanum will wait in vain. It cannot be given. It is not permissible. This is of utmost significance: the person who can accomplish in their laboratory what the following pages present by way of instruction, can surely accomplish the



Grand Arcanum, if they are ready. The preparation may take years or even tens of years. No time limit can be set. Some have a natural or inherited tendency, or gift, to delve into the mysteries. Some can never even enter. The “why” for this has no place here. But to those who are ready to travel the royal road of alchemy, I say, “Patience! Patience! Patience! Think and live cleanly and charitably and dwell always in truth—that which you honestly consider and believe to be the truth.” Such a neophyte cannot fail then. Remember, “Seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

The wisdom of the sages represents a culmination of all that is essential for people to have faith in, knowledge of, and understanding about. The person who

has attained such a state of illumination is indeed in harmony with the universe and at peace with the world. To reach this goal of enlightenment, the struggle in this mundane shell need not be of a violent nature, as some want us to believe; rather, it should be a constant alertness to the possibilities that confront us in our daily lives, to raise our thought world above the drudgery of this everyday life, and eventually to find the peace within us. If one has not undergone the alchemy of the inner self, or transcendental alchemy, as it has been termed, they will find it extremely difficult to obtain results in their practical laboratory experimentation. A person may produce things they know nothing about, consequently passing them up as worthless. It is not sufficient only to know; it is understanding that crowns our work. It is here the wisdom of the sages and adepts helps to bring about an understanding within the individual concerning that which they know but do not understand.

In alchemy, there is only one way that leads to results. The aspirant must show their worthiness and their sufficient preparation. This preparation extends over many and varied subjects, but most of all does it concern the search for truth. The living, waking, or conscious state must be immersed in the truthfulness that speaks out of every word and action. There must be a love for humanity that knows no passion, a readiness to gladly share one’s entrusted material possessions with others, and a willingness to put the needs of humanity above personal desires. All of these virtues one must acquire first. Only then will the wisdom of the sages and adepts begin to make sense. Then nature will become a willing companion to serve us. The world, as we will then realize it, begins to take on form and shape, whereas previously it enshrouded us in a haze which our vision could not penetrate. We will come to know the Divine. Illumination



*Zhang Shixing* 張士行, Alchemist with charcoal basket, ca. 1700.

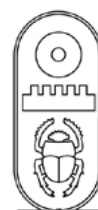


*A depiction of the ouroboros and an eagle in a boiling pot in Aurora consurgens, a fifteenth-century alchemical treatise.*

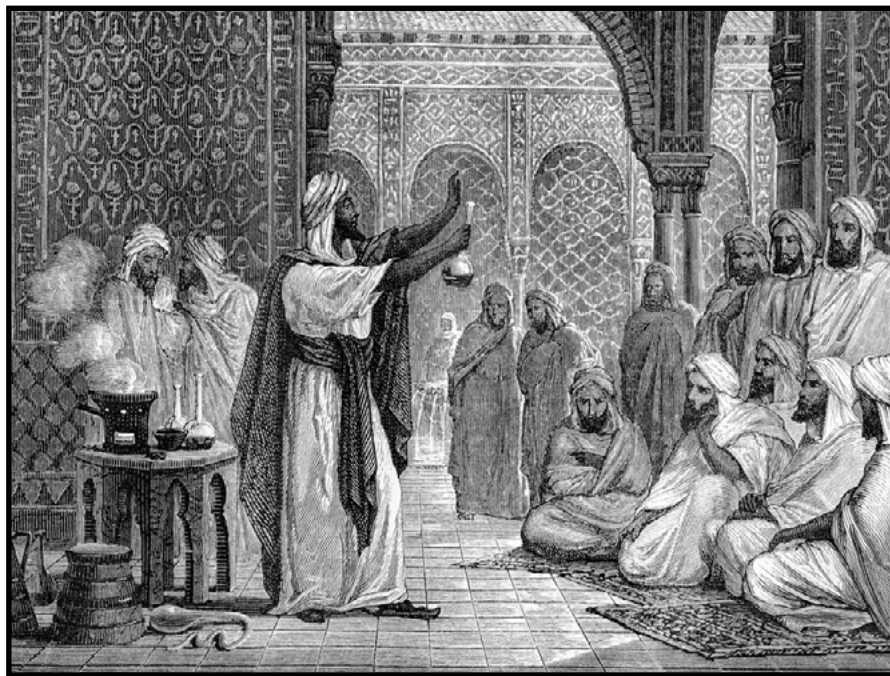
will enlighten our whole life. It will cease to be a mere fight for an existence, for the Divine will have entered our hearts. Peace Profound will dwell within and surround us amidst turmoil and strife. This the wisdom of the sages will help us to attain. But only our own preparation and proper living will let us obtain it. We must do the work ourselves, for no one can do it for us. We will begin to realize that everything is no longer so individualistic as it seemed before. “We” is the term in which we will think. We, the Divine and I, humanity and I, become entwined. The “I” loses its meaning; it becomes submerged in the Cosmic All. “I” becomes many, as part of many that has its ultimate in one. Individuality, though still existing, becomes “All-individuality.” Hence we begin to realize that the “I” is only a segment of the Divine, an entity in itself but not the true self, that which is All, the Divine. The wise ones, sages, adepts, or whatever names we may give them, those who have become illuminated, meet on the same plane. They have climbed to the mountain top. Theirs

is the mastership over the world below. They can see what happens below and that which will happen because of their far-reaching sight. Those in the valley, twisting and turning and searching behind obstacles are too close to the pattern of events to see it. Sages read nature as an open book printed in clear type whose sentences they fully understand.

The writing left us by the sages are typical for the correspondence of their thoughts and explanations. All agree with one another. Only the uninitiated believes they detect inconsistencies and seeming contradictions, due to lack of understanding. Exemplary in its precision and profundity are the seven points dealing with Rosicrucian concepts as given during an extracurricular lecture to students of The Rose Croix University by the late eminent Sovereign Grand Master of that Order, Thor Kiiualetho. The following is quoted (with his permission) from his lecture, “The Basic Rosicrucian Concept.”



1. The Origin of the Universe is Divine. The Universe is a manifestation of, and an emanation from, the One Absolute Cosmic Being. All manifestations of life are centers of consciousness and expressions of the One Life within the framework of its material limitations. There is but One Life in the Universe—the Universal Life. It saturates and fills all forms, shapes, and manifestations of life.
2. The soul is a spark of the divine consciousness in the Universe. As a drop of water is a part of the ocean and all water, so is the soul manifesting in material expression, a part of the One Soul in the Universe. In the human being it develops the personality and the individual expression.
3. The soul-force possesses potentially the powers of the divine principle at work in the universe. The function of life on Earth is to afford the opportunity of developing these potentialities in the personality. Since one incarnation on Earth cannot possibly be sufficient, the personality must return again and again in order to achieve the maximum development.
4. The moral law is one of the basic laws of the universe. It is likewise called the principle of Karma, the result of cause and effect, or action and reaction. There is nothing vindictive about this principle. It works impersonally like any law of nature. As the fruit is contained in the seed, so the consequences are inherent in the act. This principle guides the destinies of both people and nations. Knowledge of this principle gives human beings the power to control our own destiny.
5. Life has a purpose. Life is not meaningless. Happiness is a very



*An illustration from the book Vies des Savants Illustres du Moyen Age, 1867, whose caption reads: "Geber teaching chemistry at the school of Edessa." It depicts the famed ninth-century author of numerous Arabic treatises on alchemy and chemistry.*

real thing and is a by-product of knowledge, action, and living.

6. Humans have free choice. We have tremendous powers of both good and evil, depending upon our conscious realizations.
7. Since the individual soul is part of the universal soul, human beings have access to powers we do not know, but which time and knowledge and experience will gradually reveal to us.

Hermetic philosophers have taught the very same fundamentals even as philosophers of the future will do, for that

which constitutes truth will remain truth. It cannot be changed. But the theories of humans and their opinions, which are incorrectly given by some as truth, are subject to change. Because one calls oneself a philosopher does not necessarily make one such. One is only a philosopher who has a sincere love for the wisdom that manifests universally and who strives as sincerely to apply it in one's daily life. Wisdom is acquired through righteous living. It is understanding applied. The acquisition of a degree of Doctor of Philosophy, as conferred upon graduates in institutions of higher learning, does not make one a philosopher, as much as those in possession of such a degree may believe in their right to such a title.



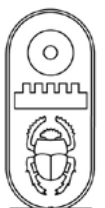
*A portion of the Ripley Scroll, ca. 1700. The banner above the sun reads "The Red Sea. The Red Sol. The Red Elixir Vitae."*

To be acquainted with the history of philosophy, the lives and teachings of those called philosophers, is only a study and knowledge of their universal concepts and what has been derived from them. To be a philosopher, therefore, means to understand and live according to that understanding, knowing well that only by giving unhesitatingly and unselfishly will our belief in humankind be justified. When this has been realized, only then will alchemy become something real. Transmutation always takes place on a higher plane, and in the physical world laws cannot be

adhered to or violated without producing karmic manifestations. Beneficial karma, if it is permissible to use a term, because karma is impartial, is brought about by harmonious applications of natural laws. These natural laws must be adhered to if, according to predestined results, we wish to obtain what nature has decreed.

If the foregoing even in its very condensed form has made any sense at all to the student of alchemy, it must be apparent then why that alchemical

gem, which all alchemists desire to produce, has been called the Philosopher's Stone. How often it is that we use words and attach no meaning to them, only because we fail to understand.



# MYSTICAL PRAYER

*Michael Shaluly, FRC*



My life has been guided by AMORC's teachings for over thirty-five years. The principles supported me when I started a company thirty years ago, and recently, as part of the company's community outreach, I became the Chairperson of our local Chamber of Commerce. This position helped us when we celebrated our firm's thirtieth anniversary, as we invited dignitaries from our state and community government, businesses from across the United States, and our sales force from around the world. I prepared brief comments for this event, inserting all the expected expressions of appreciation. But I also kept getting a strong impression that I tried to ignore, and that was to recite a morning prayer that I had used for years. I was introduced to this prayer at AMORC's Domain of Silence in Quebec more than a decade ago, where it greeted attendees each morning, recorded by the Grand Master. It was a wonderful way to start our day at the Domain, and it has remained with me since that time.

I tried to put the thought of reciting this prayer at our company event out of

my mind. I always strived to keep my mystical work private, and I had no idea how such a diverse crowd would react to a prayer. Would they think it was overly religious? Our national sales manager was an avowed atheist. Would this adversely affect his work? It would be safer to simply say, "Thank you!" But the impression kept coming back: "Use the prayer!"

Against my reasoning, I decided to heed that small voice. At the end of my acknowledgements, I mentioned how I recite a certain prayer each morning, and throughout the day for support, and that I hoped they could find strength in it as well. I asked them to bow their heads if they wished, and I began:

God of My Heart, in the silence of the day that dawns, I come to ask of you peace, wisdom, and strength. Today, may I look at the world with eyes filled with love. May I be patient, understanding, kind, and wise. May I see your children beyond appearances as you yourself see them, and therefore see only good in each one. Close my ears to slander; keep my tongue free of malicious words; may only thoughts

of blessings remain in my mind. May I be so kind and so joyous that all those who approach me feel your presence. Clothe me with your beauty, God of My Heart, that throughout this day, I may reveal you.

The result? Civic leaders, chamber members, our sales force, even the atheist, came to me afterwards and stated that they were inspired, and many asked for a written copy. It was entirely successful, and it set an inspiring tone for the remainder of the event.

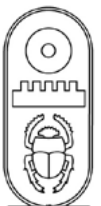
Several weeks later, my wife and I were attending an awards event in a neighboring town. We all stood and recited the pledge of allegiance, and then the emcee asked a local pastor to deliver an invocation. The pastor came to the microphone, asked everyone to bow their heads, and then began:

“God of My Heart, in the silence of the day that dawns...”

It was a wonderful moment, hearing the prayer that greeted us at the Domain so many years ago, and knowing it had now made its way into our community. Afterwards, the pastor thanked me for sharing the prayer with the person from whom he had gotten it, and that he, too, was sharing it with others. Again, others came to me and asked for a written copy.

So, how does that invisible, guiding, mystical influence make its way into our world? Perhaps by us heeding that small voice, and acting upon it with confidence. The world needs the goodness that comes from our hearts, and sharing that goodness in whatever form it might be will be welcomed by that same small voice in others.

**God of My Heart, in the silence of the day that  
dawns,  
I come to ask of you peace, wisdom, and strength.  
Today may I look at the world with eyes filled with  
love.  
May I be patient, understanding, kind, and wise.  
May I see your children beyond appearances,  
as you yourself see them,  
and therefore see only good in each one.  
Close my ears to slander;  
keep my tongue free of malicious words;  
may only thoughts of blessings remain in my mind.  
May I be so kind and so joyous  
that all those who approach me feel your presence.  
Clothe me with your beauty, God of My Heart,  
that throughout this day, I may reveal you.  
So Mote It Be!**



# SIMPLICITY OF LIFE AND PURPOSE

*Leo Adams, FRC*

In life, some ask themselves at varying depths and times, what is my purpose? This question comes up in the mundane or earthly sense, as well as the esoteric or mystical sense. The answer can be very simple, but not necessarily easy. How does this align with true will or Divine Will? What about karma?

The answer can be very simple and possibly right in front of you. It is probably not a job, career, or some life's work. A significant key is love: love of yourself, of others, and of your life experiences. You may have realized by now that the experiences and lessons in life are memorable, unique, and timeless, where the jobs, tasks, or even goals come and go. All are simply a means to the experience and personal growth that will last lifetimes.

Knowing your purpose should be the foundation of your Great Work.

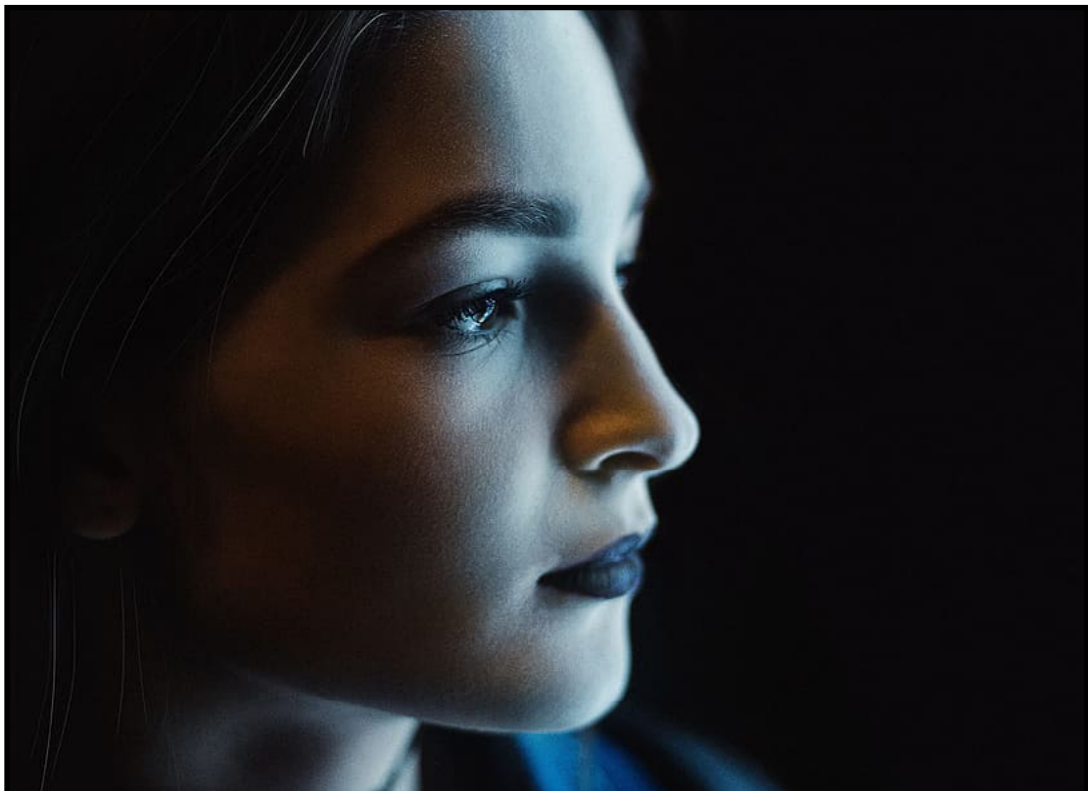
Life and purpose can be very simple if you are willing to look deep and make some fundamental choices of what is really important to you.

While life may not appear to be simple, if you focus on the simple things that are important to you, it will make life so much easier to enjoy and live life with true purpose.

While this article has much information, it presents more questions for you to answer within, rather than a simple answer, to one of the biggest questions in life: What is my purpose?

## **Lessons from [Rosicrucian Principles for the Home and Business](#)**

One of the most relevant and profound statements relating to Rosicrucian philosophy and purpose comes from from the introduction to the book *Rosicrucian*







*Principles for the Home and Business* by H. Spencer Lewis.

In the introduction, the editors state:

Rosicrucianism, as presented by AMORC throughout the world today, is a practical philosophy, a science of demonstrable laws. And Rosicrucians have always been practical individuals, working with nature's laws for the sole purpose of improving their own and others' lives here on Earth, now.

According to the Rosicrucian ideal, each person should attempt, by every means ethical, moral, and cosmically approved, to succeed in life; to enjoy health, happiness, material comforts and the comforts of physical existence; and to attain spiritual peace and attunement. In fact, Rosicrucians have ever held that to truly fulfill the mission of our existence here on Earth, and thereby carry out the Divine Will, we should neither slight nor negate the material or worldly obligations that are incumbent upon all of us,

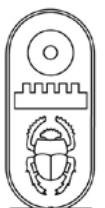
but should meet them, master them, and make an eminent success of our earthly life. This, say the Rosicrucians, will bring us more truly in contact with the universal laws of nature and attune us more consciously with the universal scheme of things, helping avoid living a life of speculative abstraction or spiritual monasticism.

### **Fundamental Rosicrucian Principles**

There are some fundamental elements to living life in harmony and Peace Profound. Are you practicing or using the Rosicrucian principles you have learned over the years? Are you living in harmony with nature and its cycle of the year? Are you doing the work that you are fully committed to?

There are also some basic Rosicrucian principles that are very relevant and important.

- Everything is connected on all levels, be they divine, spiritual, astral, or physical. All is one.





- Spirit is everywhere. The energy or frequency of Spirit permeates everything, thus offering an infinite resource for understanding and action.
- There is your personal soul, which is a temporal perception of separateness from a Universal Soul, which we are all part of and, as individuals, is where we should work for that ideal of perfection in harmony with the All.
- The concept of reincarnation is important. It is not necessary to believe in it, but you should realize that nothing is destroyed and ended, only transformed into a new thing. Do you really believe the Cosmic would only give you one chance at getting everything harmonized or balanced in one incarnation?
- There is also the important concept of karma. This is not a good or bad thing; it could be described with the phrase “the Law of Compensation,” where

everything on all levels moves toward a state of balance without judgment, punishment, or reward. There is only balance.

#### **Lessons from *Mansions of the Soul***

An excellent reference for much of this question relating to purpose is explored in *Mansions of the Soul*, another book by H. Spencer Lewis.

The author writes:

This book... is an attempt to explain in non-technical language, and without religious bias or prejudice, the reason for the incarnation of a divine soul in a physical body, and the purpose or mission of that soul in a physical body on this earthly plane....

In attempting to find an answer to the question: “Why are we here?” a person cannot subdue or cast out of their consciousness the idea that if they could determine what they are, they would know why they are. Therefore, along with humankind’s quest for knowledge concerning the purpose of its existence in an

earthly life is the desire for knowledge concerning ourselves and our relation to the universe.

### Lessons from *Mental Alchemy*

There is another profound reference for the question we are examining here that specifically looks at why we may feel we need to have a purpose. In the book *Mental Alchemy* by Ralph M. Lewis, he addresses why we seek purpose.

The following are a few ideas extracted from the book:

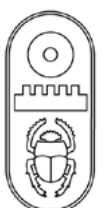
- One cannot imagine themselves consciously walking along a road, not knowing why they are there or where they are going.
- Never in a conscious, normal state do we act on our own volition without relating a motive, a purpose to our action.
- People are accustomed, in setting up conditions to comply with their

complex nature, to term such as purpose.

- A person's reason, their psychic and emotional selves, must be gratified. They must be stimulated and appeased. This can only be done by ideals, plausible reasons, or self-created purposes for living.
- A person can give purpose, which is a faculty of their intelligence, to their immediate life. They can establish ends which not only will gratify their inherent intellectual curiosity but will satisfy those higher psychic impulses and sentiments which people designate as moral and spiritual qualities.

### Do You Know Your Purpose in Life?

The central question to this article has been asked in many forums and gotten many different answers. This question comes up in life at some of the darkest of times or even in the most spiritual or illuminated moments.



Sometimes it is simply a fundamental question relating to spirituality, family, love, and service, or in a more mundane sense, having enough money, or a career, or a job. Maybe the discussion comes up in meditation or spiritual initiation.

This is a conversation you should have regularly with your higher self and Master Within, to make sure you are in alignment with your true will and your higher purpose.

Nobody else can tell you what your true purpose is in life.

The question of purpose may have multiple explanations on multiple levels, but each can be reduced to some very simple and fundamental answers.

### **What Is Life All About?**

There are a few common elements encapsulating what life is all about in a deeper sense: experience; love; knowledge; wisdom; spirituality; service and helping others; answers; karmic reconciliation or balance; exploration and adventure; accomplishments; and so on.

The list could go on to infinity, because everyone is in this incarnation for a different personal journey and soul purpose.

Spend a brief moment and reflect, making a mental note on what life in general means to you.

If you have no idea where to start with these fundamental, philosophical, and spiritual questions, then look at what is important to you in your current incarnate personality, as well as, what is important to your higher or spiritual self.

At the end of the day, it is you in all senses of the word, and as Rosicrucians, we strive to align both the physical and spiritual self as One. There are the higher or esoteric aspects in life that can seem very general but extremely important, such as: happiness, peace, harmony, and oneness. There are the physical or earthly aspects in life that we must live and deal with each day, such as: stability, health, friends and family, and enjoyment. Then there are the big-picture aspects that can be very important





to support our experiences and purpose in life, such as: goals, accomplishments, service, and prosperity. This list is far from complete, and I suggest you make your own personal list after some reflection and meditation.

### **We Are All in This Together**

We must also remember and embrace the reality that we are all in this together with many others on their personal journey. There are some basic realities that are important to everyone's experience and purpose in life, even though they may not know it.

The Rosicrucian manifesto *Appellatio Fraternitatis Rosae Crucis* explores this idea more fully. Here is a brief summation of the three areas focused on in the 2014 manifesto:

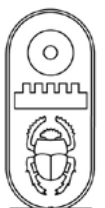
- Ecology: If we do not have a good environment and living conditions, we can never achieve a healthy or sustainable lifestyle. So, all our purposes in life should include

support for all living things and the ecology that support all of us.

- Humanism: We must understand and embrace the importance of each human, and for that matter all living beings, and their living conditions, health, and basic needs are important to all of us for many reasons including love, compassion, inclusion, freedom, and personal experience.
- Spirituality: While spirituality is important, without the previously mentioned concerns, spirituality would be the least of your worries. True spirituality allows and encourages each person to explore their inner spiritual connection with the Divine or Cosmic.

### **Simplicity of Purpose**

Former Emperor Ralph M. Lewis wrote about his views on the "Simplicity of Purpose" in the *Rosicrucian Forum* from April 1953.



In his view, there are two “natural gratifying ends to pursue” as a purpose in life: health and peace of mind. In health, you should focus on the efficiency, coordination, and balance of your entire human organism or body. There should be a focus on harmony as experienced by a condition of well-being, of freedom from aggravation and distress. If you perceive suffering or discomfort, it is futile to establish any concept of idealism, unless there is a first concern for health and comfort. This purpose of health applies to both mind and body.

Then we have peace of mind, where you are in a state of inner peace, where you are harnessing or engaging the productive human power related to idealism. Some would say this could be as basic as Peace Profound, or this could be a state of mind where you feel free to be you. You may need to adjust the particulars of human

experience to conform to these two basic ideals, with a harmonious relationship between your health and peace of mind.

The Emperor’s message can be extrapolated into three fundamental, simplistic principles that can support every person’s higher purpose.

- Well-Being: This includes one having a habitat, or a place to live comfortably; enough food to keep you healthy and happy; and the health of your mind and body so that you can focus on your true purpose with clarity.
- Happiness: This can be rephrased as joy in your heart, whatever that means to you.
- Peace Profound: This can also be rephrased as peace in mind and heart that transcends temporal events or distractions.





### **Karma**

Karma is a concept that is frequently misunderstood. Some simply see it as the universe's or nature's way of punishment for wrongdoings, but this cannot be further from the truth. It is really the Law of Compensation or cycles and rhythm in action.

Every action, thought, and word causes an action and reaction to varying degrees of multiplicity. Nothing is destroyed or created, but instead there is a transformation of something from before. At the end of the day or even the millennia, everything moves towards balance. There are swings to the polarities, to and fro. It is the law.

In this incarnation, you have some stuff to learn and some other stuff to deal with. What have you learned or do you still need to learn to be perfect? How does this fit into your purpose? Have you ever found yourself looping or repeating experiences in life? Simply ask yourself, what are you supposed to be doing, experiencing, learning, or adjusting within and without?

If you make no real changes, you will find yourself in the same experience over and over, but in different forms.

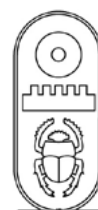
Karma is not necessarily mean, bad, or good; it is just what your personal soul must realize and adjust to in order to get closer to that point of harmony and balance. Wake up, see the message, meditate, make a plan, adjust, do, and be. After all, you are a being!

### **Motivation**

Let's touch on life's passion, drive, or motivation. Are you consciously aware of what drives or motivates you and makes you want to get out of bed each day? What is the basis or foundation or purpose behind your drive? Is your passion or drive in alignment with Divine Will and natural law?

If you are not having fun or enjoying what you are doing you should consider focusing on a change.

Your personal motivation must be in alignment with your purpose.



## Embrace the Experience

I cannot express how important embracing the experience is in life, in love, and in purpose. This aspect of experience will last many lifetimes, if you embrace the experience in your heart and conscious mind.

- Look for the message and lessons in life.
- Discuss with your Master Within.
- See every experience as an opportunity.
- Be present in the moment.
- Express your love for the people in your life.
- Love people, animals, plants, flowers, grass, trees, soil, water, oceans, rivers, nature, everything in its infinite diversity in infinite combinations (which the Vulcans in Star Trek call IDIC).
- Love yourself as you are inside and out.

## Love

Love everything as it is and love what it may become through the opportunity of transformation. If your thought, action,

or word feels negative, then release it and move forward. When you think love and peace with every thought, action, and word, then your heart and mind will be free and life will automatically shift consciously and subconsciously. It doesn't require any special meditation or skill, it just takes practice, over and over and over until it becomes natural to you.

## Life's Balancing Act

How do we balance the higher and lower? The inner and outer? The fun, as well as the responsibilities and commitments? Purpose and self-mastery should be the driving foundation for this balancing act. Pursue both, with balancing alignment, with your true purpose and everything that supports that.

Let's start off with the essentials for achieving this balance. I call this the grand balancing act of spirit, fire, water, air, and earth. If any are neglected, it will cause an imbalance and thus a distraction or discomfort in life. Here is what each of the essential elements involve:

- Spirit, where we should empower our inner and spiritual journey, as well as our oneness.







- Fire, where motivation, drive, passion, and enjoyment empower us to move forward.
- Water, where our heart is nourished with love in our social setting and community, with our friends, family, lovers, and partners.
- Air, where a healthy growth and focus on our mental state, mindfulness, awareness, and learning give us the growth we should seek.
- Earth, which is probably the most important for our balance because it is where the caring for the health of our body happens, and it includes diet, fitness, and sleep.

All of these are essential elements for balancing our life and purpose.

Now we will examine the balancing polarities in life:

- Adventure versus stability.
- Opportunity versus risks.
- Management versus control.
- Need versus want.
- Purpose versus passion.

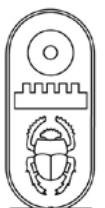
All of these polarities are relevant, but, while you are navigating them, it is better to avoid the extremes. Finding that balance or sweet spot in your life is very important to finding and living your true purpose.

There is no perfect answer, but this is where your contemplative work must begin. Reflect, meditate, consult your Master Within, and be willing to adjust each day.

### **Dharmic Groove**

To find your purpose you must find and live in your “Dharmic Groove.” You will know when you find or are in that sweet spot.

The word *dharma* comes from the Proto-Indo-European root *dher*, meaning “to support,” and the Sanskrit word for “law” or “justice.” The word has different meanings in Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism. For this article, we are focusing on one of the Hindu meanings of the word, which describes dharma as a kind of moral law for personal conduct. Dharma is one of the four goals of a human life in Hinduism, and it consists of “truthfulness, non-injury, and generosity, among other virtues,” according to



*Encyclopedia Britannica*. Following this could help sustain a positive order in your life. This concept correlates to the ancient Egyptian concept of Ma'at, which is balance, harmony, truth, and justice.

Living in your Dharmic Groove is where you experience or find yourself living in a place where synchronicity happens with serendipitous experiences, as if by some seemingly divine or magical guidance; where visions and messages come from within so easily; where your vision is clear at all levels; where your heart is free, without restriction; where your focus is relentless and time seems irrelevant; and where you find yourself naturally moving and being in alignment with natural laws and Cosmic Will.

While traveling throughout Thailand, I learned about the idea of everyone experiencing their personal dharma and karma without judgment. This idea extends to there being no judgment of where people are at a particular moment in their life, nor of who may be right or wrong. What a person may need to be

experiencing or even projecting at any time may involve you not taking things personally.

This concept was very difficult for me to accept, and it is just as relevant to not judging ourselves for whatever is happening, as long as we are learning and growing. We should be continuously moving towards a state of Peace Profound regardless of how many incarnations we may have experienced.

### **At the Beginning and End of the Day**

Keep your focus on your purpose through some basic principles:

- Health, joy, peace, harmony, and happiness.
- Love yourself and your oneness with the All.
- Know, acknowledge, and embrace your drive, passion, or whatever motivates you.
- Make sure you are in harmony with Cosmic laws.





- Live life daily in alignment with your purpose, which should be in alignment with Divine Will.
- Live and be in your Dharmic Groove.

### **Purpose Going Forward**

Make your purpose simple. Don't get distracted with the "hows," the details, or the temporal obstacles and distractions. Just focus on the higher purpose or anything that supports that higher purpose.

If you are not healthy, happy and at peace within, nothing else matters until you get there and you are allowed to focus on your Great Work.

The autumn time is a great time for appreciation of what you have, assessing your harvest in life, in full appreciation, regardless of how much or how little you have.

The winter will be the time for going inward and establishing or reestablishing your new light or new seed for the next year, and, in life going forward, to be ready for the spring and fulfillment within yourself and your purpose in life.

Live your purpose. Don't spend too much time looking back on the "couldas" and "shouldas," but instead harness the focus and concentration of the magus towards your true purpose and the experiences in life that await you.

Use your basic Rosicrucian practices of reflection, meditation, alignment with cosmic laws, commitment to you, your purpose, and personal transformation, and, most importantly, love yourself, love nature, love the All.

Live long and prosper in love, peace, health, wealth, harmony, hope, happiness, joy, purpose, and Peace Profound.

So Mote It Be!

