



World Goodwill

NEWSLETTER

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A regular bulletin highlighting the energy of goodwill in world affairs

RIGHT RELATIONS WITH ALL BEINGS

ONE OF THE CENTRAL BELIEFS that inspires the work of World Goodwill is that it is only through the persistent application of the principle of goodwill that we can move towards a world governed by right human relations. Just like 'goodwill', 'right human relations' is a concept that has not yet received the consideration it urgently needs, requiring as it does an almost complete revolution of mind and heart. The various crises that continue to afflict us, of racism, of economic inequality, of ecological devastation, etc., are so patently examples of *wrong* human relations, that it should be obvious that the practice of right human relations is essential, on an individual, group, national, and planetary scale. We are fortunate that so many people of goodwill are taking up the challenge of applying goodwill in a wide diversity of situations, as seen in the last issue of this newsletter. As Alice Bailey remarked, "[o]ne interesting aspect of goodwill is that, as it develops in the human consciousness, it first of all brings a revelation of the existent *cleavages* which distinguish the political, the religious, the social and the economic life of people everywhere. The revelation of a cleavage is ever accompanied (for such is the beauty of the human spirit) by efforts along all possible lines to bridge or heal the cleavage." (*The Rays and the Initiations*, p.750)

Nonetheless, a possible quibble that some might feel could be raised about 'right human relations' is precisely the middle term, 'human'. At a time in Earth's history where some conservationists are warning of a sixth great wave of species extinction, a wave that for the first time seems directly attributable to human actions, what of right relations with the other kingdoms of nature? The answer lies in the fact that the application of goodwill is not limitable to one aspect of creation, but is a universal radiation that encompasses all beings. Thus, at the same time as it repairs the cleavages among humans, it also mends the sometimes troubled relations that we have with our fellow creatures. So right relations with the other kingdoms naturally evolves in parallel with right human relations.

There is certainly no question, though, that, just as in the human case, we still have very far to go in establishing relations with animals, plants and even the mineral kingdom that could truly be described as 'right'. So it is worth pausing to consider where we are now, and to reflect on some of the fledgling initiatives, led by individuals and groups, that are healing the cleavages between us and other sentient beings.



GOODWILL IS...the bridge that unites the kingdoms of nature in wholeness

The circle of life and consciousness

When we begin to focus on the other kingdoms of nature, we are amazed by the absolutely bewildering variety of creatures on the planet. While the diversity amongst visible animals and plants is vast,

when we reach the level of microscopic creatures, this diversity increases by orders of magnitude. One is also struck by the extraordinary ingenuity with which life has solved the problem of diverse

environments, even the most extreme. For example, on the ocean bed are found so-called 'black smokers', which are hydrothermal vents due to upwelling volcanic activity. Superheated water, rich in dissolved minerals from the earth's crust, gushes out into the cold, dark water of the ocean floor. Sunlight is nonexistent, but some bacteria have evolved that can convert the heat, methane, and sulfur compounds provided by black smokers into energy through a process called chemosynthesis. More complex life forms like clams and tubeworms feed on these organisms. The organisms at the base of the food chain also deposit minerals into the base of the black smoker, therefore completing the life cycle.

The huge variety of creatures creates a difficulty – how to make sense of this diversity? Human beings are always seeking to make sense of their surroundings, to find or make recognisable patterns. To the average person, it seems relatively simple: there are animals, plants, and minerals, and little further thought is required on the matter. However, for scientists engaged in studying nature, more precision is needed. The basic threefold division of animals, plants and minerals was enshrined by the father of biological taxonomy, Linnaeus, in the eighteenth century, as the top level of his system. Taxonomy is the science of classifying things into differing types and sub-types, and for the biologist seeking to make sense of the relations between different types of animals or plants, it is clearly an important tool. A key question is, on what basis are distinctions between different creatures to be made? Linnaeus decided that the main basis was structural. So, to give a familiar example, a major distinction between a marsupial animal like a kangaroo or a koala, and other mammals, is that marsupials have a pouch in which infants spend part of their early life. There are other distinctions (e.g. marsupials generally have a lower body temperature), but identifying a visible physical difference like this is one that is readily understandable to the lay person.

However, as more and more species of animals and plants (the mineral classification soon fell into disuse) were discovered over time, the need to identify their place within the Linnaean system led to a profusion of types, and of the needed distinctions between them. Also, the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859 introduced a whole new perspective on the possible relationships between different types of creature. Although it is still in use today, the Linnaean approach has now been supplemented by a different system that relies not just on the general structure, but also on the genetic similarities and differences between species, and how this relates them to one another in evolutionary terms. This method of classifying creatures involves the use of sophisticated statistical techniques and DNA analysis, so it is not so readily understandable to the general public. It has produced some quite surprising conclusions – for example, that fungi are more closely related to animals than to green plants.

Is this then, the 'true' version of the tree of life? And if so, does it help the average person in thinking about how we ought to relate to the other kingdoms of nature? Taking the question

of truth first, we ought to be rather cautious about this. There are many uncertainties involved in constructing such a complex scheme of classification, as any scientist involved in this work would acknowledge. And science has a habit of revising its own theories in the light of new evidence. It might be better to say that this model is more *useful* to many scientists, in the light of their current theories and observations, than the older Linnaean model. As for the average person, it seems likely that the older model is actually more useful, as it 'divides up' the world in a way that is more in accord with common sense. To a lay observer, the immobility of both green plants and fungi seems a much more important resemblance than details concerning their DNA.

When we consider our relationship with the other kingdoms, one aspect that inevitably comes up is the question of the origin of living things, and our physical relation to them: in other words, as mentioned above, the question of evolution. As we have seen, modern biological science has concluded quite firmly that human beings and other animals are 'descended' from earlier, and more primitive forms of life. Thus, this theory emphasises humanity's kinship with other forms of life, in itself a positive thing. Naturally, not everyone accepts this theory, and the most well-known opposing theory is the religiously motivated theory¹ of creationism, which does not accept the idea that humans are directly descended from more primitive life-forms.

Alice Bailey, and other Ageless Wisdom writers, take a position that is somewhere in the middle, agreeing with creationism on the point that the human physical form is *not* the evolutionary product of previously existing animals, but that the life and consciousness that energises that form *has* evolved through the various preceding kingdoms, even including the mineral. Explaining this somewhat paradoxical point of view would take us too far afield, but the interested might like to consult *The Secret Doctrine: Anthropogenesis* by H.P. Blavatsky² and *Occult Science: An Outline* by Rudolf Steiner.³

In fact, there is no certain way of ascertaining just how life emerged, as the evidence is veiled from us by vast stretches of time and equally large uncertainties about the actual conditions that prevailed during those periods (even including the possibility of differing physical laws). But this need not prevent us from recognising our relationship with other creatures. The writings of Alice Bailey, and other writers in the Ageless Wisdom tradition, make a distinction between the biological activity of the form and the energy of Life itself, which, like the energy of physics, can be neither created nor destroyed. It is the unseen driver behind all biological activity, and it simply passes on when the biological activity that we call physical life has ceased. This Life is identical in all creatures. We can rest back on this insight that the mysterious energies of life can be perceived pulsing through all forms, and this fact alone is sufficient warrant to claim a direct and unbreakable bond of community between the various kingdoms of nature, however we conceive their origins and eventual destiny.

People are now generally familiar with the Darwinian observation that evolution proceeds through natural selection, or to use the shorthand phrase, the “survival of the fittest”. Unfortunately, this doctrine has been simplified and distorted by some, into a picture of brutal competition, and then applied to human society. The implication is that only the strongest individuals (or companies or societies etc.) survive and prosper. A few even take a further step, suggesting that only the strongest *ought* to survive and prosper – a slippery slope that can lead to eugenics. But Darwin’s original observation was far more subtle than this mischaracterization – for example, ‘fitness’ does not equal strength, but can refer to any number of inheritable traits that make it more likely that an organism will survive and reproduce. Also, while it is true that many species do prey on others, or compete with one another for food, symbiosis, where species engage in long-term interactions that may benefit one or both, is widespread within the animal and plant kingdoms. Indeed, the biologist Lynn Margulis argues that symbiosis is a major driving force within evolution. So it would seem that physical evolution does not give any clear guidance on how humanity should relate to the lower kingdoms. For that, we need to consider evolution in a different light, the light of consciousness.

The Ageless Wisdom tradition, of which Alice Bailey’s works form a part, prioritises the evolution of consciousness – therefore the moral obligation is to seek to allow, and to nurture where possible, the development of that indwelling consciousness. This nurturing process has special relevance in three areas: animals with significant intelligence; pets; and farm animals. These three areas overlap in significant degree. The animals that are most in touch with the general populace are pets. It is interesting to note that the definition of the word “pet” includes not only the relevant “domesticated animal kept for companionship or amusement”, but also, “a special loved one” and in the verbal sense, to “stroke or caress gently”. These additional definitions give an expanded view of the human-pet relationship. The first one hints that the nature of the relationship can sometimes act as a substitute for human relationships. The obvious analogy is an adult-child relationship, since an animal is, like a child, heavily dependent on the adult human for its care and development. There is little doubt that strong affections can develop between pets and humans, and that this can be mutually beneficial. However, as with all relations, there is a danger of it going to extremes. Just like a child, a pet can be ‘spoiled’ – in other words, over-indulged. The creation of services such as ‘pet spas’ illustrates this point. The main goal of parenting is to help the growing child to discover their own strengths and develop them; and also to discover their weaknesses, and how to overcome them. The same should hold for a pet animal, insofar as strengths and weaknesses in character can be recognised; and the existence of trainers for animals is a positive sign of this.⁴ And where a child is given partial responsibility for a pet, this can provide a fruitful source of life lessons.

Another part of human-pet relations is found in the area

of competitive breeding for specific traits of a given sub-species or ‘breed’ – is this then an attempt to develop the consciousness of the animal? The answer is not fully clear. On the one hand, it could be seen as the attempt to purify the expression of the qualities that a given type of animal exhibits, with the goal of producing the perfect specimen. But ‘perfection’, like ‘fitness’, is a term that is open to interpretation: so, for example, while selective breeding may produce attractive physical features in an animal, this may sometimes come at the expense of its overall health. There is also the question of whether human competitiveness obscures the intention to assist the animal. Again, the touchstone should surely be the positive development of the animal’s consciousness. The practice of selective breeding is also of great importance in the plant kingdom, and humanity has bred plants both for improved crop yields, and the more subjective goal of increased beauty. Is it possible to conceive of doing this, not for the benefit of humans, but chiefly for the benefit of the plant itself?

The other dimension of ‘pet’, the verb meaning to stroke, shows the way in which the affection between humans and animals is often expressed. In fact, this simple gesture has been shown to be a significant reducer of stress in humans, and for this reason, there are now dogs and cats that are trained as therapy animals. These animals can go in to hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes etc. and provide residents with the comfort of animal companionship. Indeed, this concept has been extended to include other species, including rabbits, birds, dolphins and even elephants. And while plants do not actively comfort human beings, there can be little doubt of the therapeutic power of gardens – both the activity of creating and maintaining them, and the radiant beauty of the plants themselves.

Closely related to pets is the area of working animals, as an animal may be both – one obvious example is a sheep dog. Of course, animals do not just work on farms – there are a whole range of tasks that humans have trained animals to perform. Some examples include racing, hunting, helping fishermen, guarding, detecting drugs, therapy animals (as mentioned earlier), assisting the blind and deaf, and the whole related category of service dogs, which includes dogs that can aid with mobility, assist those who are susceptible to seizures or hypoglycaemia, and assist those with certain types of psychiatric disabilities (in addition, some monkeys have been trained to assist quadriplegics). Animals have also been trained for entertainment on stage, in movies, and in circuses.

While many of these examples of animals serving humans are inspiring, and may lead in many cases to the nurturing of the animal’s consciousness, when we come to the topic of farm animals, two major issues arise. The first is the moral question of whether humans should consume animals at all. This is closely related to the question of the benefits to human health from laboratory animals being used in biomedical research: both of these issues present hard moral dilemmas, that every individual should consider. The second

is the moral question of how farm and laboratory animals are treated during their lives, which is a question for society. We have already touched upon this issue in a previous newsletter (*Custodians of Sustenance*, 2007 No.3),⁵ so we will not rehearse the arguments here. One group in particular who work with this issue are Compassion in World Farming.⁶ It is also worth noting the work of one pioneer in the compassionate treatment of farm animals when they actually come to the end of their lives, namely, the scientist Temple Grandin, who believes that, while it is ethical to consume animals, humans owe them a decent life and a painless death, and to this end, has collaborated in the construction of humane livestock facilities.

While farm animals have been habituated to their surroundings through long association with humans, another category is that of wild animals that are made captive in zoos or animal parks. This happens for a number of reasons, some of which could be said to be in the interests of the animals, such as the preservation of endangered species; and some of them more concerned with human interests, such as research, or the familiarisation of humans with the wonderful diversity of creatures. There are unfortunately examples of animals being poorly looked after in zoos, and becoming psychologically traumatised. Yet there are also examples of very carefully constructed enclosures, with feeding regimes designed to mimic nature as far as possible. Whether in fact a given zoo or animal park is of any benefit to animals will depend on the balance of the reasons that it has been established, along with the ethos of the people who operate it.

Humanity has also discovered, through observation, that some animals display considerable intelligence, which raises the intriguing possibility of inter-species communication. The most well-known examples of intelligent species include apes, dolphins and whales; and there is now increasing evidence of intelligent tool use in corvids (the bird family that includes crows, jays, magpies etc.). There have been a number of pioneering workers who have investigated such animals in their natural habitat, and three of the most famous are the trio of women sometimes referred to as Leakey's Angels (because of their mentorship by the eminent archaeologist Louis Leakey). Dian Fossey worked with mountain gorillas until her untimely death, while Jane Goodall's work with chimpanzees and Biruté Galdikas's work with orangutans continues to this day. Their investigations have uncovered a range of intelligent social behaviours; and, in captivity, a number of apes have been taught various types of sign language. The behaviour of cetaceans (dolphins, porpoises and whales) has also been studied in some depth, revealing complex social patterns and tool use. But the audible language of cetaceans and other animals is still something of a mystery, and the goal of a full understanding of our fellow creatures through scientific study alone appears elusive.

Perhaps because spoken language is such a powerful component in human thinking and reason, we may grant too much weight to this mode of communication. For example, octopus and squid can communicate via changing colour patterns

on their skin. Maybe the lives of animals, and therefore the ways in which they view the world, are just too different for humans to be able to make an effective translation. Or maybe what is required is more than just a clinical, scientific investigation, but a fully sympathetic immersion in the animal's world. Such an immersion was, and continues to be enjoyed, through necessity as well as choice, by indigenous peoples, who depend on their close understanding of animal behaviour for their survival. Now, there are innovative investigators from a non-indigenous background, such as the wolf behaviourist, Shaun Ellis, and the bear behaviourist, Else Poulsen, who are prepared to invest the time and effort to acquaint themselves with animal ways. The horse trainers known as 'horse whisperers' are another recent example that has gained media attention, although the notion that horses can be trained in a non-coercive manner can be traced back as far as the Greek soldier and writer Xenophon (ca. 430–354 BC).

In *Kinship with All Life*, J. Allen Boone describes encounters with a number of animals, most notably the German Shepherd dog Strongheart that appeared in a number of movies. Boone indicates that his most meaningful communication with animals was essentially wordless, or telepathic. The biologist and author, Rupert Sheldrake, has conducted experiments, and compiled evidence from other studies, on the existence of animal-human telepathy, including dogs, and an African Grey parrot, N'kisi. The following quote from Alice Bailey relates to this work: "The service of the animal to man is well recognised and of ceaseless expression. The service of man to the animals is not yet understood though some steps in the right direction are being taken. There must eventually be a close synthesis and sympathetic coordination between them and when this is the case some very extraordinary occurrences of animal mediumship under human inspiration will take place. By means of this, the intelligent factor in the animal (of which instinct is the embryonic manifestation) will be rapidly developed and this is one of the outstanding results of the intended human-animal relationship."⁷ There is also evidence that plants respond to music, and the work of Cleve Backster suggests that plants may also be sensitive to human thinking. All of these observations are consistent with the idea that life and consciousness form one great continuum, expressing themselves in varying degrees through an almost infinite diversity of forms.

Through their long-term association with human beings, animals, plants, and even minerals have entered into myth, legend and fable, as allies and antagonists. So we have the traditional association of characteristics with certain animals: the courage of the lion, the patience of the elephant, the cleverness of the fox. This is also true to a degree of plants: the strength of the oak, the sweetness of the rose, the purity of the lily; and minerals: the brilliance of diamond, the solidity of granite, the magnetic allure of gold. These recognitions, of characteristic qualities that various creatures display, can be linked to the writings of Alice Bailey on the seven rays, which are said to be the seven basic energies that qualify all forms in all kingdoms of nature. In this view, every species will be

predominantly qualified by the quality of a specific ray. In humans, the expression of a given ray is more complex, but the same seven basic qualities are also present in greater or lesser degree, which may explain why certain individuals display particular affinity for certain species. Thus, a wide study of the rays, together with deep and careful observation of oneself and all other creatures, might produce a positive revolution in the relations between humanity and the other kingdoms of nature, a revolution that is sorely needed as the pressures of human consumption continue to threaten the ecological fabric of the planet.⁸

In conclusion, humanity's present relations with the lower kingdoms are complex, stretching from outright cruelty and exploitation, through indifference and detached observation, all the way to a deep and abiding sympathy. All people of goodwill can find ways to strengthen the sympathetic part of this spectrum, so contributing to a future in which every kingdom in nature, from the spiritual to the mineral, is held within the circle of the synthesising will-to-good.

1. There are, however, also other religiously motivated theories that have no problem with the idea of biological evolution.
2. This can be consulted online at www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sd/sd2-1-01.htm
3. This can be consulted online at http://wn.rsarchive.org/Books/GA013/English/RSP1963/GA013_index.html
4. However, even training can be a rigid structure that makes no allowance for the specific qualities of the individual animal. In his book, *Kinship with All Life*, J. Allen Boone makes a distinction between *training* an animal, in which the human imposes its view of how the animal should behave, and *educating* it, in which the human seeks to understand the animal, and to cooperate with it in its development.
5. Available in print from World Goodwill at the addresses on the back, or on our website, www.worldgoodwill.org
6. Compassion in World Farming, River Court, Mill Lane, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1EZ, UK. Tel: + 44 (0)1483 521 950; Web: www.ciwf.org.uk
7. *The Destiny of the Nations*, Alice Bailey, 1949. Available from the Lucis Press/Publishing Co. at the addresses on the back, or via our website at www.lucistrust.org
8. A good place to start a study of the seven rays is *A Treatise on the Seven Rays* Vol.1, Alice Bailey, 1962. Available from the Lucis Press/Publishing Co. at the addresses on the back, or via our website at www.lucistrust.org

“...the long fore-ordained work of humanity... is to be the distributing agency for spiritual energy to the three subhuman kingdoms. This is the major task of service which the fourth kingdom, through its incarnating souls, has undertaken. The radiation from the fourth kingdom will some day be so potent and far-reaching that its effects will permeate down into the very depths of the created phenomenal world, even into the mineral kingdom.”

(The Destiny of the Nations, Alice Bailey, p.124)

Book reviews

A New Science of Life Rupert Sheldrake (Icon Books, London, 2009)

A New Science of Life is a fully revised edition of the controversial science classic published in 1981. The unsolved problems of biology have still not been explained by conventional research, making Sheldrake's thesis more relevant than ever. *A New Science of Life* outlines a radical new model of science and re-evaluates our view of genetic inheritance. Rupert Sheldrake argues that phenomena become more probable the more often they occur. Individual plants and animals draw upon and contribute to the collective memory of their species. Even crystals depend on a kind of memory. When chemists crystallize new chemicals in one part of the world, they become easier to crystallize elsewhere. Sheldrake sees these processes as examples of *morphic resonance*. He explains how past forms and activities of organisms can influence organisms in the present through direct connections across time and space.

Agenda for a New Economy – From Phantom Wealth to Real Wealth David C. Korten (Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 2009)

In this timely book, David Korten sets out a radical agenda for reforming economics which significantly decreases its reliance on the financial sector. While written from an American perspective, the book's arguments are universally applicable. He draws a distinction between a 'Wall Street' economy and a 'Main Street' economy, and claims that the former is based almost exclusively on the generation of phantom wealth, money created out of nothing as loans by financial institutions, which is then further manipulated through complex financial instruments, with the chief purpose of enriching those companies and individuals who can afford to deal in them. He cites the current credit crunch as evidence of the total failure of this model, and contrasts phantom wealth with real wealth, i.e. the real products and services that human beings need to maintain a healthy life, together with the mutual bonds of trust and care that build communities and families. He sets out a twelve point plan for the transition from a 'Wall Street' to a 'Main Street' economy, a transition which he acknowledges may be painful, but which he believes is necessary if we are to end a way of life that is destructive of communities, the environment, and ultimately humanity itself. He concludes with guidelines for participation in the worldwide movement which is seeking to make the needed changes.

THE GREAT INVOCATION

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ* return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

Adapted version

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into human minds.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into human hearts.
May the Coming One* return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide all little human wills –
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the human race
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

* Many religions believe in a World Teacher Who is to come in the future (hence 'Coming One'), knowing Him under such names as the Lord Maitreya, the Imam Mahdi, the Kalki avatar etc.. These terms are sometimes used in versions of the Great Invocation for people of specific faiths.

HELPING TO BUILD RIGHT HUMAN RELATIONS

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is recognised by the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organisation and is represented at regular briefing sessions at UN Headquarters. The Lucis Trust is on the Roster of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

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www.worldgoodwill.org is the address for World Goodwill on the Internet. The newsletter is available on this site.

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