



Moving Forward Together with Resilience and Service

Theosophical Order of Service

February 21, 2021



Welcome to this Webinar:

Goals for Today

- To provide an opportunity to connect with you and each other across the county.
- To understand how things are going for all of us during the pandemic.
- To discuss ways to take care of ourselves.
- To discuss ways to support each other.
- To find ways to support our groups.
- To find ways to move forward as leaders in service with the Theosophical Order of Service

MEET THE TOS BOARD MEMBERS

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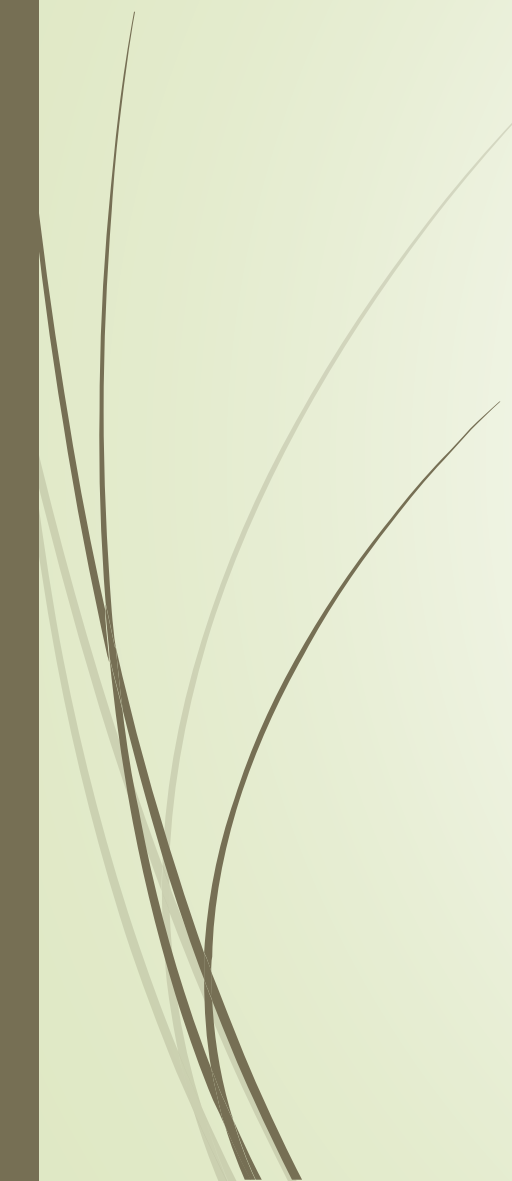
Let's Find Out Who is in the Audience (Anonymous Poll)

- Members of the Theosophical Society
- Member of the Theosophical Order of Service only
- TOS Liaison for my local group.
- Friends of the Theosophical Society and the Theosophical Order of Service
- International Member
- A participant interested in the topic.




Welcome to 2021

2020...What a Year It was!

- As we move forward in the new year, many of us have experienced additional challenges due to health issues, loss and grief, financial instability and adjusting to working from home and remote learning for our children and grandchildren.
 - These affect people in very different ways and many are reporting increased levels of anxiety, depression and isolation.
- 




**We are all experiencing impacts by the
pandemic that Create Challenges and
Disruptions to Family and Household
Activities and Routines**



**For the purpose of understanding what we are all experiencing,
please indicate which of the following have impacted
your family during the Pandemic.**

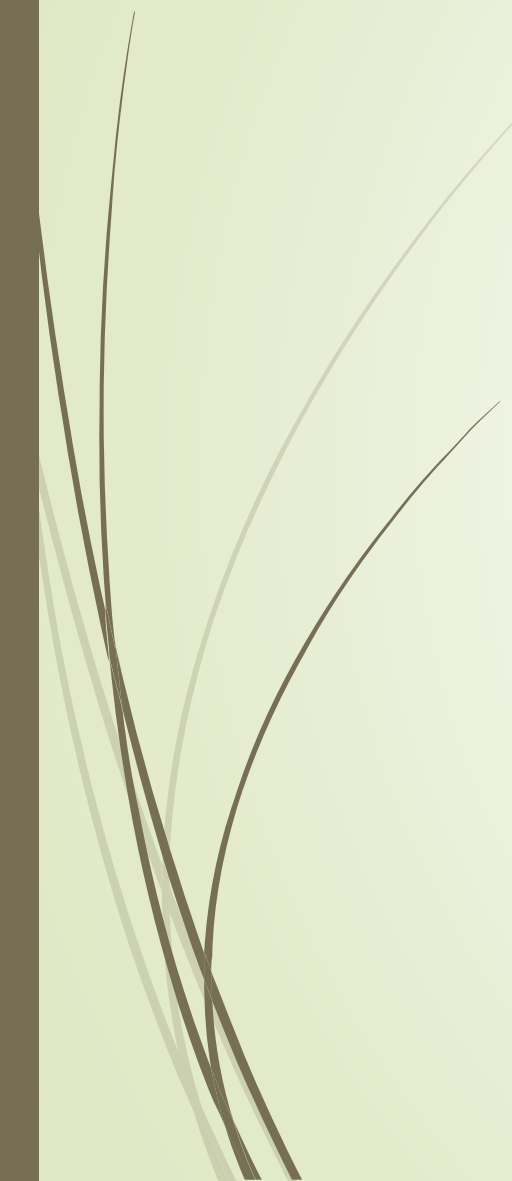
Select all that apply in this anonymous Poll

- Employment/loss of job
- Loss of family member
- Lack of child-care
- Depression/mental health issues
- Internet or technology issues
- Family health issues

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- Just about everything concerning 2020 has highlighted how crucial having a strong support system can be for our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well being.
 - Having a strong support system has been the major tip from experts when asked how to deal with the various challenges of the ongoing pandemic and current political, social and economic climate.



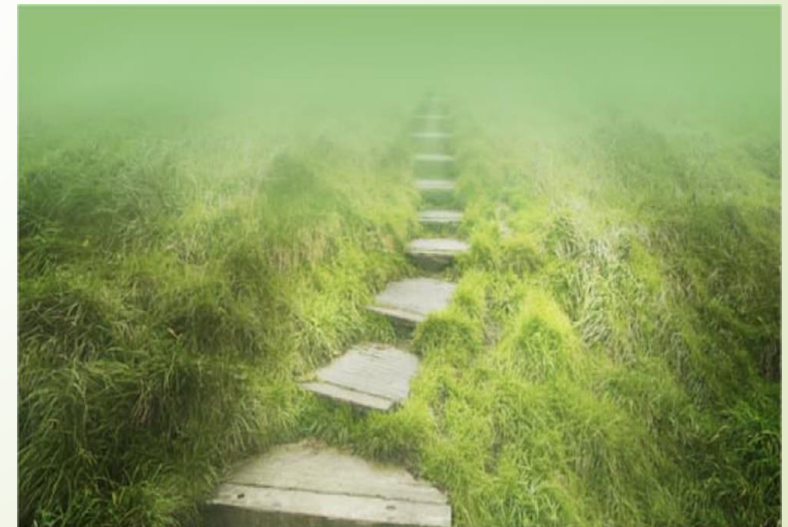
A Positive Support Approach to Life: How We Can Support Ourselves and Others

- It is critical to identify strategies and supports for yourself and your family to cope with the changes we are facing and continue to adapt to changes in our community and with our schools.
 - It is helpful to identify new activities, skills and supports which will help us navigate these changes.
 - It is beneficial to respond and react to our own needs and those of others in a helpful, supportive way, knowing that we are all trying to do the best we can.
- 

Moving forward

- The idea of moving on from and even thriving after extremely difficult or traumatic circumstances may seem unfathomable, but *it is possible*.

- The process can be summed up in one word: **resilience**



Resilience

- According to the American Psychological Association (APA), resilience is “the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands.”
- The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.
- The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape; elasticity.
- The Quote: “Nature always finds a way”.





How are we finding our way? Are we developing and maintaining our resilience?

Resilience is made up of five pillars:

- self awareness
 - mindfulness
 - self care
 - positive relationships
 - purpose
- 

Checking in with you (Anonymous Poll)

- **Which of these personal strategies have you followed to take care of yourself?**
 - I Set time aside to meditate.
 - I Find a mantra to say throughout the day.
 - I Avoid news on your TV and phone, etc., first thing in the morning and last thing at night.
 - I Stay informed by using reliable sources.
 - I Focus on what I can do and accept the things I can't control.
 - I Set time to do some type of physical activity.
 - I know how to reach out for help.



Tips To Support Yourself

- Be aware of your own feelings and reactions.
- Routinely engage in activities and practices that calm you down.
- Limit media exposure especially when children are around.
- Keep your communication lines open so you have people to talk to, especially if you are alone with the children.
- Set reasonable expectations and break your “goals into chunks” and priorities.
- Celebrate your accomplishments.
- **Sometimes it helps to get “outside” yourself through service projects.**



As the virus spreads and mutates, it brings challenges to organizations in all parts of the world.

- Pandemics naturally pull people apart.
- Fear can overwhelm our best intentions
- This calls for a unique blend of service and care for others.
- Care for ourselves, our families, friends, and loved ones is first and foremost.
- We also must consider providing new types of services for our theosophical group members, our community, our country, and those in other parts of the world.
- Social distancing is necessary but potentially isolating



Value of the Theosophical Order of Service

- The first object of Theosophy teaches the fundamental unity of all living things, and that consciousness exists in all forms of matter
- The practice of Theosophy creates an unfolding of our consciousness and understanding of the unity of ourselves with all that is
- This unfolding is experienced through altruistic love, or Agape as the Greeks called it, which unites our actions with this universal love
- The path to altruism led to the founding of the Theosophical Order of Service, which aims to serve all that suffer.


Recognition of the unique value of every human being expresses itself in reverence for life, compassion for all, sympathy with the need of all individuals to find truth for themselves, and respect for all religious traditions.

— The Theosophical World View

National TOS Projects



- Despite the pandemic and the cancellation of many programs, the TOS still had somewhat of an active year.
- Like everyone else, it was difficult to adjust to the complete shutdown of many things. Much of the work TOS workers do is in person. The Covid-19 pandemic stopped all of that. Yet, earlier in the year, we coordinated efforts with various people around the country to distribute food to medical workers at several different hospitals. Much of this was done remotely and while the pandemic continues, we hope to be able to offer our services again in some other fashion to those on the frontline.



➤ The TOS would like to, once again, thank all of you who either donated money or set up meals with local restaurants and had them delivered to local hospitals.

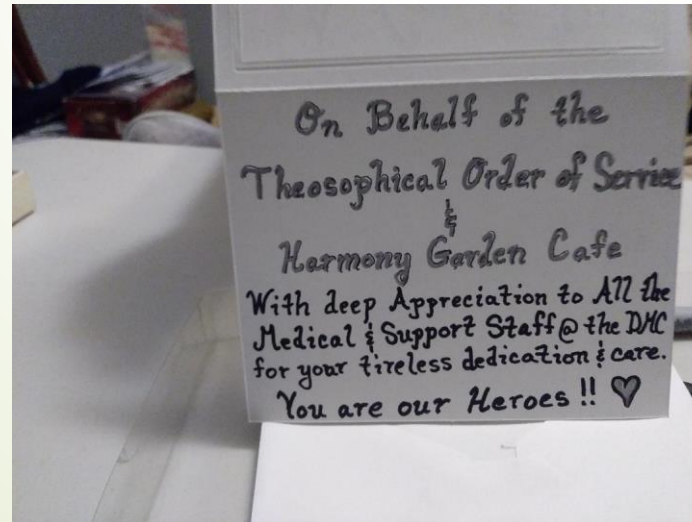
➤ The food and attention were appreciated by so many medical workers who were risking their health and lives at an overwhelming time.

➤ Pictures of the various hospitals helped are posted on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/theoserviceusa>.

Covid-19 Program and results! Together, we made a difference....Thank You!



- ⇓ Program initiated to find ER & First Responders in “Hot” zones impacted by Covid and provide Vegetarian meals
- ⇓ We received over \$8000 in donations and donated 900 meals, helping both the recipients of the Food and the restaurants suffering from the economy
- ⇓ TOS members nationally helped us, as we were able to run programs from Washington State to Virginia, and a lot of locations in-between



One of the recommendations during the pandemic is to try to keep a routine. The TOS is no different. Despite being very disappointed at not being able to meet in person at the Summer National Convention, we met online to discuss the budget for the following fiscal year.

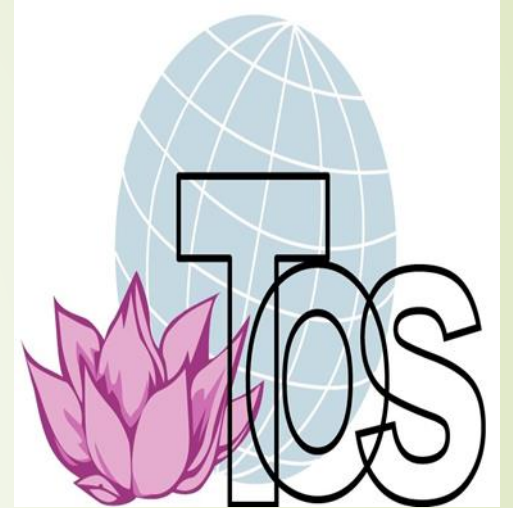
We disbursed over \$16,000 in grants to following organizations and efforts:

Program	Donation
Vinah (VietNam Humanitarian Foundation)	1500
Oglala Nursing School Scholarship	4000
Lakota Waldorf School	1500
Midwest Center for Homeless Vets	500
USA Covid Relief Fund	1000
Olcott Women's Vocational Center	1333
Golden Link College	1333
TSA Prisoner Program	600
Indralaya Diversity Fund (TT)	1000
Adyar Theosophical Academy	1333
Animal Dispensary in Adyar	500
Caregivers Retreat	1500



Ways the Theosophical Order of Service, can be a strong support to you as you identify service projects:

- Projects and Grants
- Seed Money
- <https://www.theoservice.org/tos-grants-and-local-group-seed-money>
- TOS Healing Service Project





What can you do to help?

- **Donate Time!**
 - Talk to Lodges, TSA members, like-minded organizations and Evangelize!
 - Organize!!! We need local support to facilitate and promote ToS actions
 - Use Volunteer opportunities to promote ToS actions locally
- **Donate Money!**
 - Become a Platinum (\$50), Gold (\$25) or sustaining (\$10) monthly contributor
 - Directed Giving; If you want to help one of our specific causes (Native American relief, Covid support, Theosophical Camps and Schools) and others
 - Please use our website to lower our processing costs

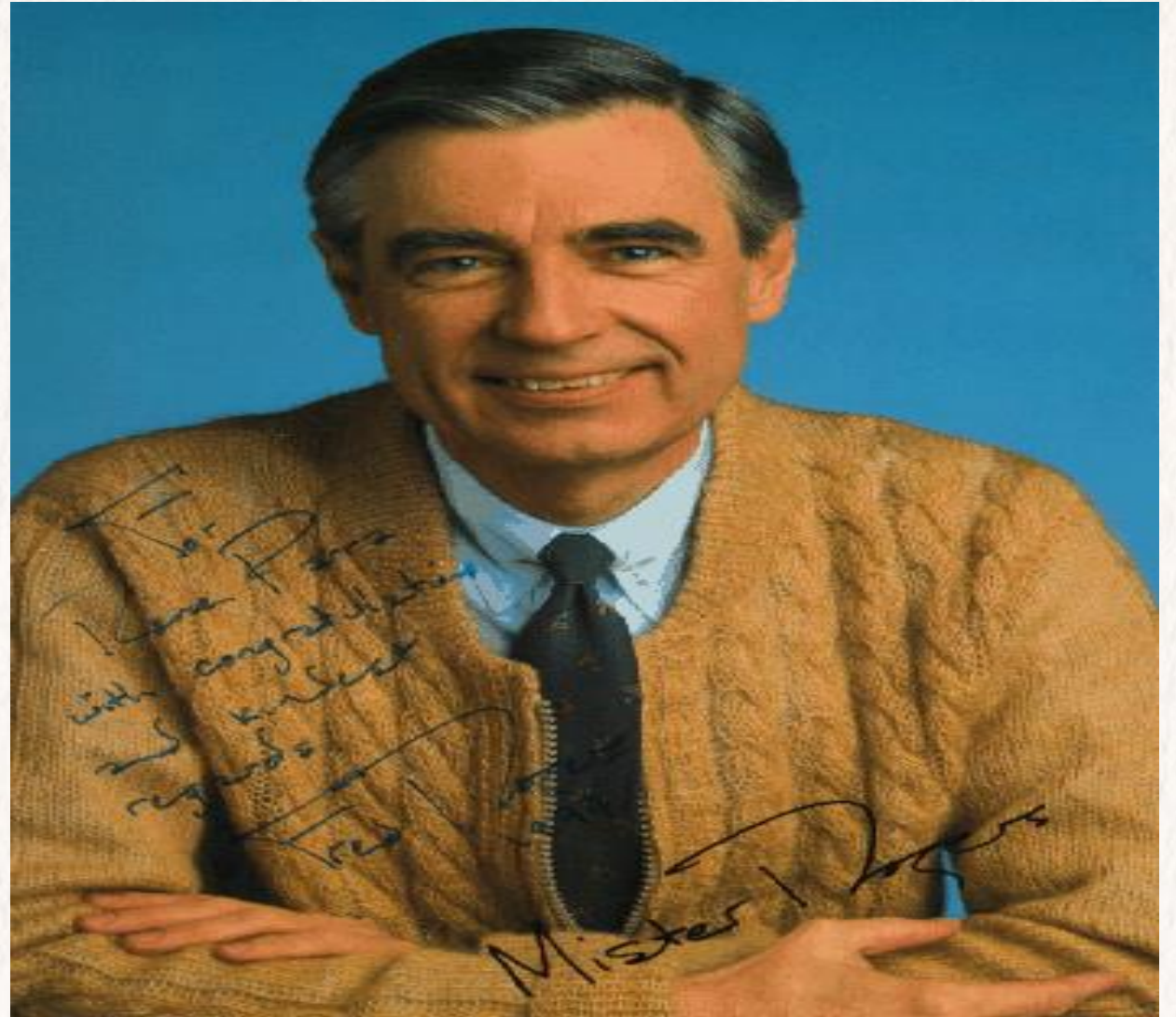
www.theoservice.org/donate-tos



Discussion Questions

- Have your groups been able to continue with your TOS efforts during this last year? How has the pandemic impacted your projects?
- How do we keep safe and yet determine how to identify:
 - (1) what projected are needed?
 - (2) what projects can be developed?
 - (3) What projects can be implemented during the pandemic?

"It's tempting to think "a little" isn't significant and that only "a lot" matters. But most things that are important in life start very small and change very slowly and they don't come with fanfare and bright lights."



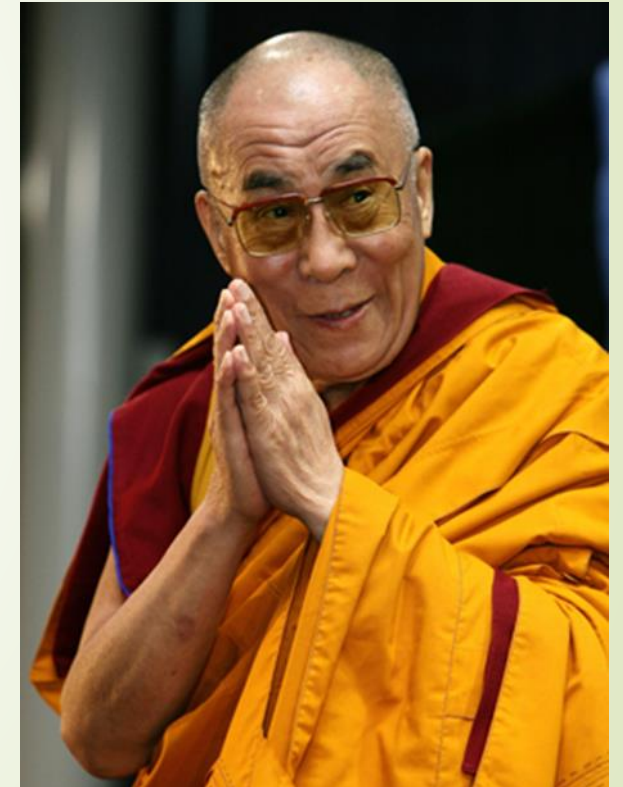


The World Needs Kindness From All of Us: Some TOS Groups have Kindness Projects

- We love our family but really, 11 months is a long time to be together.
- Incorporate kindness into your daily routines and community activities.
- Showing compassion and gratitude boosts the feel-good hormones (serotonin and dopamine) and actually help you feel better.
- Partner with a family, spiritual, and community group in kindness projects.

A Mutual Journey of Care and Growth for Each Other

- “When people are overwhelmed by illness, we must give them physical relief, but it is equally important to encourage the spirit through a constant show of love and compassion.
- It is shameful how often we fail to see that what people desperately require is human affection. Deprived of human warmth and a sense of value, other forms of treatment prove less effective.
- Real care of the sick does not begin with costly procedures, but with the simple gifts of affection, love, and concern.”
- How can we provide this when we must self-isolate or when we can't be with friends and family when critical?
 - What kind of support networks can we create?
 - TOS Healing Network that submits monthly names for healing.
 - Create our own long-distance healing groups for our local members.




A Force of Beneficence



- Theosophical gatherings should be occupied discussing theosophy, not daily events. They should be spaces where participants can find solace to soothe themselves through deeper study and reflection from the heavy outer world minutiae.
- This not only helps us, but others at the unseen level. Yet, our work should not stop there. If we are truly committed to the mission of theosophy and want to live a theosophical life, we must be the force of beneficence in the everyday physical realm as well.
- Through the lens of a balanced view, our voice, word, and actions can contribute to the betterment of the world and all its living beings. That is true service.
- -From “The President’s Desk”. TOS Website,

September 28, 2020 <https://www.theoservice.org/presidentsdesk/force-beneficence>



Leading with service is more challenging and may continue to be more challenging in the year to come.

- Through our study groups and Lodge meetings, we can strengthen the bonds of human connection.
- Let's find ways to uplift each other so we can approach this new year with joy and action!




Let's ask ourselves: Will we choose to trudge or leap forward into 2021?

- Many of us hoped that by January 2021, we would be talking about COVID-19 in the past tense.
- Together, we can we move forward
 - With gratitude for positive for the things that have happened this last year.
 - With our Humanity- by placing service as a priority.
 - And--can we move forward with resilience, strategies, action and hope in our hearts.





Reflect on one word--

- that describes what you plan to do as you go forward in 2021.
 - Write it in the chat box.
- 



RESOURCES

Self Care Expectations

Self Care Behaviors



be

Safe

- Create an emotional support team.
- Double check on friends.
- Ask for help if you feel sense of hopelessness
 - Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255



be

Engaged

- Be aware of your stress level.
- Recognize and name the emotions you are experiencing.
- Pay attention to joy.
- Do a body check for areas of tightness, discomfort.
- Take movement breaks, hydrate.



be

Respectful

- Nurture your body with healthy food.
- Build calming routines for sleep including meditation.
- Build routine for daily exercise.

Resources for those in need of Emotional or Healing Support

- Submit names on the TOS Website for the Long-Distance Healing Ritual this is performed by TOS and TS Members all over the United States

Phone: 1- 800-838-2179 (USA National).

<https://www.theoservice.org/special/names-by-email.shtml>

➤ Suggestions on Ways to Stay Healthy

- Mental Health America (www.mhanational.org) is a great website that has provided many resources for all of us combatting the new normal of staying home. MHA provides resources for financial help, tools to deal with anxiety, how to connect with others when feeling lonely due to social distancing, support for various communities such as the LGBTQ and Veterans, as well as tips on all around self-care.
- The National Alliance on Mental Illness (www.nami.org) has some wonderful posts on living in isolation and posts by others who have been affected by the change in lifestyle.

Our last poll for today...


- We want to continue offering a series of webinars in order to continue the connections we made with you today, and to discuss future service projects.
- We need recommendations from you on how often to meet and when on which days are best to meet?
- Monthly?
- Every other month?
- Shall we meet on Saturdays?
- Shall we meet on Sundays?





**Thank you for spending time with us today.
Please contact us if we can support you.**

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Theosophy is who Theosophy
does, not thinks, not studies,
not feels but does.

H. P. Blavatsky

quote fancy