

to genuinely accept in our own hearts that other people are doing the best they can. We don't know what other challenges they have: health, family, finances or even a difficult childhood that may make them react irrationally. Being non-judgmental is the greatest gift that we can give other people. And that doesn't mean we give up judging policies, procedures, actions, etc. We just don't make it personal. It is hard to avoid implicitly criticizing someone unless we have raised our own level of perception to that of buddhi-manas. That means that we genuinely see others as our equals, deserving our respect and compassion. When someone fails, we should be more concerned to find out what's going on with that person rather than immediately trying to blame or problem solve.

3) *People matter.* In *The Key to Theosophy* Madame Blavatsky said: "It is not what is done but the spirit in which the least thing is done that counts." Without that spirit of mutual support and love we lose our enthusiasm and creativity. For me, that is the real goal of unity and cooperation: to foster the best in each of us as we work together.

I have painfully learned that I need to focus not so much on our goals as on the thoughts and feelings of the people working with me toward that goal. Whether we are trying to "produce" a conference, an article, or new by-laws; the process, for me, is more important than the resulting product. It is not the perfection of our outward activities that counts. Rather it is the sense of contribution and appreciation that each member of the team experiences.

We are going to leave behind our bodies, personalities, titles, organizations and achievements. So let's focus on what will be enduring: our loving thoughts and communion with other beings.

4) *Avoid being self-righteous.* Sometimes we are so devoted to our own vision of truth so we are often unaware of how strident we sound to others.

5) *Tune in to feelings.* Feelings are important. We learn in Theosophy not to give in to our passing and changeable feelings. We learn to control our emotions. Still, we have to see our feelings as warnings from our subconscious. We need to be aware of the feelings of others, to know what they need. As Madame Blavatsky said: "we are trying to effect a reform in human nature" (*The Key to Theosophy*, page 231).