

“It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits, that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body.” (*H. P. B. to the American Convention 1888*)

To share a vision we need to talk about it, learn about each other's perspectives, and actually construct this idea of unity in our minds eye. The guidelines that we want to follow when doing so are the Theosophical Principles as laid down by H. P. B. and the Masters. They are essential in laying a strong and stable foundation for the future and making sure we remain a Theosophical movement, instead of degenerating into the umpteenth new age group.

Anyone who ever had a difference of opinion knows that having a constructive dialogue is not always easy. In my experience it actually becomes harder once you think you know and understand something thoroughly. Working in educating professionals I again and again stumble upon people who are seen by others (or themselves) as experts that find it hardest to develop a new skill, or change how they conceive a certain situation. In the parable of Plato's cave they have managed to get out of one cave only to trap themselves in another.

The only way out is a willingness, hunger if you will, to learn. This is an attitude, a way of life that keeps us both humble and open to cooperate with others. It means that we leave the door wide open for a different or higher knowing. Like Dalai Lama, who once called himself 'nothing but a simple monk', stated:

“If science proves some belief of Buddhism wrong, then Buddhism will have to change.” (Dalai Lama in *The New York Times*, 12 November 2005)

If we are prepared to do this, to leave our preconceived notions behind, we can start to have a constructive dialogue.

The whole idea of dialogue is to share perspectives, whereas a discussion (from the Latin *discutere*: break up) is all about defending and attacking points of view.

So let us investigate: what have these different Theosophical organizations produced in terms of knowledge and ways to apply Theosophy? When can we call something Theosophical and when not? What can we do to work together as Theosophical organizations to light a lantern of Truth in a