

# The Journal of Psychological Studies

Science, Philosophy and Religion

## Happiness

**Evanise M Zwirtes**

What is happiness? How is it achieved? These are important questions in the process of personal fulfillment.

The majority of people seek happiness as an end, and not as a means thereto. Perhaps, because of this, it seems to be so difficult to reach. Only when we understand that the world is not to be disputed, but shared, will we start to perceive and understand that humbleness is one of the greatest privileges and the proper route to reach happiness.

Being humble and treating others as equals help us improve as human beings. And what is the reward? It is to receive the same consideration and to experience the taste of joy day after day.

Happiness is a succession of moments in the present. It originates from our inner strength, from the vital force, from our faith. It is the capacity to face life in a positive manner.

It is not so much doing what you want, but doing what you have to do with joy.

Therefore, happiness is an unfolding path, it is growing hope, it is the courage to renew oneself, it is loving each moment to the full.

It is self-fulfilment with balance inviting us to harmony; feeling serene and assured that persevering in the truth we will overcome evil in the reconstruction of goodness, for peace.

The causes of happiness are not found in places determined in space. They are within us, in the depths of our soul. "The kingdom of heaven is within you", said Christ.

So, for example, smiling innumerable times, looking on the good side of everything, forgetting mistakes from the past, getting up again after each fall and renouncing envy and ingratitude are attitudes which make our life much better. Perhaps this attitude is not easy to accomplish, but everything is a question of learning.

It is in the inner life, in the flowering of our faculties, of our virtues, that the wealth of present and future happiness resides.

In synthesis, we can say that happiness is an activity of the soul.

**Evanise M Zwirtes is a Psychotherapist and Coordinator of The Spiritist Psychological Society in London.**

## Book: Heaven and Hell



01.08.1865

Also called "**The Divine Justice according Spiritism**", this book offers an examination of the philosophies concerning the passage from corporal life to spiritual life.

**Heaven and Hell** puts within everyone's reach all knowledge of the mechanism through which Divine Justice takes place, in accordance with the Evangelical principle: "To each according to his works".

## Love Always

**Adenauer Novaes**

Love is the propelling force in the Universe. It is the first and ultimate reason of human existence. It is the causal principle and the essential motive needed for life to fulfil itself and for human beings to know themselves. The growth of love in our conscience has been gradual and it has, promoted the integration of an important divine law. Even though we are aware of the need to love and to Love always, even though we have a great number of examples in our life, such as maternal love, brotherly love, love between friends, etc, we are still far from being able to say that we can truly love. The difficulty is more internal than external. Most people wish to have love, to love someone. However, they do not know how to obtain it or how to overcome the shadows which still hover in themselves.

Inner obstacles hamper interpersonal relations with defences, inhibitions, fears and all types of imagination regarding each other's feelings. Relationships between two people towards true Love is a challenge, as we are all different from each other. Bridging this gap is the great challenge. There is plenty of willingness to do it, but our inability to make it work is enormous. Love is a feeling which must be materialised into actions, as the simple awareness of its existence in our heart is not enough for it to actually become of the personality as acquired knowledge. Repeated actions which consolidate the feeling and its spontaneous realisation are fundamental for us to be able to acquire this capacity to love. The family is the best place to acquire this capacity. It also constitutes a field of tests and of constant learning. In the physical space of the family, our soul's expressions materialise, and we are not able to camouflage what we actually feel. If we are unable to live the basic expressions of love within the family, we will hardly be able to do it somewhere else. Love within the family is the embryo of true love, which one day shall take hold in all humanity.

**Adenauer Novaes is a Clinical Psychologist, living in Brazil. He is one of the directors of the Foundation "Lar Harmonia" in Salvador - Bahia Brazil.**



## The Awakening of Conscience

**Sônia Theodoro da Silva**

Pythagoras, that great thinker of ancient times, affirmed that Earth was the dwelling place of opinion. We could say that if, Earth was so recognised in his time, we have not moved too far from regarding Earth as a place of opinion today. By moving closer to "this dwelling place of opinion" more and more, we distance ourselves from the most important and suggestive process there has ever been amongst us - which was also brought by a wise man, who guided the development of knowledge from Man himself. This wise man, Socrates, was of humble character according to Jesus' concept - as he is considered humble because the truly humble people has no need to appear "strong" since they recognise in themselves a portion of Divinity through the exercise of their latent virtues. Socrates taught, or rather, guided his followers and listeners through the harsh path of opinion, until they would recognise that human beings knew much about others, yet, very little or nothing about themselves.

Socrates' concept and irony, when applied to the development of the most profound and true piece of all knowledge: self awareness naturally leads thought and reason to another moment: the knowledge of oneself - know yourself, then be truthful to what you have discovered.

At present, humanity seems to be going through this process, and that is where deviations from route take place. Human beings have become accustomed to reduce the comprehension of things to the perceptions of their our own mind, as it is difficult to break away from established reference points and to allow his Spirit to break new qualitative ground to other dimensions of knowledge, transcending the limits imposed by past experiences of structured thoughts on the same old reference points.

This is what Prof Rivail, later to be known as Allan Kardec, accomplished. On being informed of the phenomena occurring around the whole world, particularly in Paris, and being an expert on the laws of magnetism and of the inconsequent utilisation of its mechanisms in the hands of illusionists for frivolous shows, he transcends himself and the structures of linear knowledge of that time. He thus accepts the greatest charge a human being could accept: the effective fulfillment of one's own mission, which had certainly been accepted before reincarnation while he was still in the spiritual dimension. This mission, liable of alterations, if we take into account his own free will, was to bring to human conscience its own

true nature, i.e. the spiritual nature, with all its consequences. That was accomplished without religious atavism and demanded from him the undertaking of an extremely heavy workload, in which discernment, impersonality and self-sacrifice were present at every step. This commanded full dedication, hard work, steadfastness and constant courage.

The humility of this great wise man makes him realise that real knowledge is vast and can never be covered in only one existence. He then completed his immense task, leaving for those who he called "spiritists" (therefore introducing a new word in the vocabulary at the time) a true and valuable inheritance which would never be subjected to transitory opinions, even though, they were based on levels of intellectualities possibly enviable, however limited and conditioned to the temporal evolution of those who elaborated them and were, therefore, restricted, bounding and restrictive. So, the path was already traced. The Socratic process, free from reductionist edges, consolidates the firm and secure route by which human beings can travel without fears.

Self-Knowledge, in the spiritist point of view reveals to the human being that it perpetually evolves in an ascending spiral and, therefore, if self-knowledge is well understood, it can free us from fear. Being free from fear means that hatred would end for humanity. Freed from hatred, we would be free from greed, envy, war and the haste to kill and to destroy. Fear is necessary for the preservation of life, yet as a pathology - fear of failure, pain, death, humiliation, loneliness, lack of love, fear of oneself and fear of fear - is insidious, manipulated and manipulator. It is an instrument of negative and destructive forces which imposes itself to those intimidated by the prospect of self-knowledge.

Spiritism, with its clear and elevating message, postulates the Socratic maiuetics as method of safe self-knowledge. This is within reach of those who do not fear to know themselves in order to renovate themselves, to come out of the dark cave of their mistakes of perception of a supposed reality, of appearances, in order to reach higher steps, rehabilitating themselves with the Divine Laws of conscience, becoming one with the Lord like in Jesus' promise.

*Sônia Theodoro da Silva is a translator and graduated in Philosophy. She lives in São Paulo, Brazil, collaborates in FEESP, Casas Andre Luis and writes articles for spiritist magazines and newspapers.*

## The Individual and Society

**Rodrigo Machado Tavares**

Joanna de Ângelis, in her book *O Homem Integral* says: "man is a bio-social mammal, developed to have constant and constructive experiences and initiatives". Based on that, it is correct to say that individuals are alive to interact amongst themselves in a fraternal way according to Jesus teachings.



Despite that, the individuals, which are social beings, generally do not take their decisions based on the Divine Moral. In other words, the individuals instead of behaving themselves according to the Law of Love; become easily influenced by the external factors imposed by society. (And these factors do not follow necessarily the Divine Moral). As a consequence of this, their actions are mainly dominated by the society's values rather than the God's law. Therefore, those experiences, which should be constructive, start to cause troubles to the individuals' lives on many levels, namely: personal and professional.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that only when the individuals start becoming the Worldly Person (see *item 10 of Chapter XVII of The Gospel According to Spiritism*), we will have a better society, because each individual will be better. And no matter what society's values are, we should always remember: "all things are lawful for me, but not everything is beneficial" (*I Corinthians 6:12*).

*Rodrigo Machado Tavares is an Engineer and researcher, living in London. He is a member of the Allan Kardec Study Group-UK.*

**"FAITH IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE HUMAN CONTEXT, WHOSE CONTRIBUTION STRENGTHENS THE NOBLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOCIETY"**

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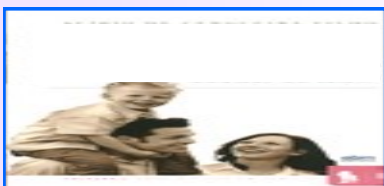
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## Family Conflict

Ana Cecília Rosa

Each individual has a unique position in the world in relation to their genetic and behavioural characteristics, perceptions, beliefs and needs. It is in this context that families and societies are formed. It is in human and spiritual relationships that emotions and experiences are exchanged, in which anxieties and expectations are created and emotional charges converge, triggering emotional interactions which adjust themselves or come into friction against each other, establishing family conflicts.



We observe that, despite these conflicts, the family is "unique" in its determinant role in the development of sociability, of affectivity and of physical well-being of individuals. Looking at this idea from the spiritist point of view, we receive in our home, by the law of affinity, those with whom in the past we shared every order of activities. Here we should stress that affinity does not necessarily imply empathy, but mere attraction. Thus, many of the conflicts between couples come from relationships that are not based on spiritual empathy, the only form of association which establishes and strengthens lasting affective ties. Therefore the troubles originating from liaisons or relationships mediated by material values, inevitably end up in divorce or even worse, in crimes of passion, which will be sources of new reincarnatory commitments.

As for the children, their parents are depositaries of God's trust, who requests the exercise of true love with the aim of guiding them in the path of goodness. When parents observe in their children the presence of lower tendencies, which are carried over from previous incarnations, they should try to combat them, so that these vices do "not take deep roots". They will be thus carrying out their divine task as "sowers of good characters". If we bring up our children seeking the perfect balance between love and justice, we will attain the improvement of these souls for a peaceful life in the home and in society.

The responsibility involved in living together in the home is the ultimate commitment we have in face of God and our own conscience.

**Ana Cecília Rosa is a Paediatrician Consultant, living in Brazil. She is a member of the Institute of Spiritist Divulcation in Araras -Sao Paulo State - Brazil.**

## Attachment and Renouncement

Manuel Portásio Filho

Some thousands of years separate us from the moment of the awakening of conscience and free will, when we started to have a clearer notion of ourselves and the surrounding world. From then on, human beings have managed to find solutions for their basic needs more quickly. However, we are still very much imperfect and ignorant. Our most characteristic human behaviours results from these traits and amongst them there is attachment, a byproduct of insecurity and fear.

We easily become attached to material things and to people around us thanks to our ignorance of the spiritual world and the life which awaits us beyond death. "Attachment to material things is a notorious evidence of inferiority, because the more Man cares for things of this world, the less does He understand his destiny." (The Spirits' Book, question 895). We become attached to all our things, with either material or emotional value. We hoard things in our houses which we will hardly ever use. We hoard papers, magazines and books which we will never read. As things of this world are accessible to our senses, they fascinate us by their form, colour or symbolism.

Yet, the most serious type of attachment is still the one which connects us to certain people. It is true that there generally is a basis of affection in these relationships, but we invariably take these relationships to the last consequences. We feel that there are certain people who make us happy and, therefore, we feel incapable of living without having them beside us. So, we become "magnetically" attracted to each other, both mentally and emotionally, and in certain extreme cases this attraction can be identified as true obsessions. The departure of our "other half", by separation or death, normally becomes unbearable. An event like this puts us one step away from madness, depression or suicide.

The "cult of the body" is common in many cultures. In many cases, we think of ourselves as being extremely beautiful and true clones of Narcissus, and will do anything to maintain this beauty or to improve it. When physical exercises are not enough, we use tanning. When something cannot be corrected through regular methods, then we resort to liposuction, or even to plastic surgery, in our search for the source of eternal youth. And the appeals of the media reinforce the

idea of our body being more important than the soul, which makes us spend fortunes on making our body "perfect".

The idea is not new and it has been with us at least since Ancient Greece, where gymnasia were created for this purpose. In Rome of the Caesars it was common to say: *mens sana in corpore sano*. In item 5 of chapter 17 of *The Gospel according to Spiritism*, Kardec teaches us how easy it is to pass through the wide door which leads us to the cultivation of bad inclinations. In truth, Jesus taught us to look more after our soul rather than our body. His life was an example of this and many of his teachings were aimed at renouncing the things of this world. Such was the case of his recommendation to the rich young man (Matthew 19:16-24); i.e., the need to collect treasures in the heavens (Matthew 6:19-21); and to look inside oneself, for example as in the case of paying more attention to what comes out of our mouth.

However, renouncement is not easy for us, in the present evolutionary level of earthly humanity. Renouncing often implies going against our own pride and letting go of our great selfishness, letting go of our evident vanity in order to benefit another person. Renouncing means coming out of ourselves and walking towards the next person.

Renouncing is to allowing the other to be himself or herself. Renouncing is to face suffering, difficulties, sacrifices. Every "sacrifice undertaken at the cost of one's own happiness is a sovereign act worthy in the eyes of God, because it is the practice of the law of charity", according to the Spirit of Truth (The Spirits' Book, question 951). The Spirit of Truth also tells us that "the merit of a good deed is in its difficulty". (question 646).

"Renouncement, how very few people are able to understand it in its sublimity", in the blessed lesson of Jeronimo Mendoca, in the book *An Angel's Footprints*, page 38.

**Manuel Portasio Filho is a lawyer who lives in London. He is a member of the Solidarity Spiritist Group, London - UK**





## III SPIRITIST MONTH - APRIL 2010

Main Theme:

# ALONG THE PATHS OF LOVE

### Programme:

Date: 04.04.10 - Starts: 05.00pm

#### Seminar:

Theme:

The Spirit and Its Choices

Lecturer: Ana Cecília Rosa (Brazil)

Date: 11.04.10 - Starts: 05.00pm

#### CONFERENCE

Theme:

FAMILY: Learning Process of Love

Speaker: Maria Isabel C.P.Saraiva (Portugal)

Date: 18.04.10 - Starts: 05.00pm

#### CONFERENCE

Theme:

Spiritism in the Dissemination of Love

Speaker: Emanuel Cristiano (Brazil)

Date: 23.04.10 - Starts: 06.45pm

#### SEMINAR

Theme:

Happiness Without Guilt

Facilitator: Adenauer Novaes (Brazil)

Date: 25.04.10 - Starts: 05.00pm

#### SEMINAR

Theme:

Self-Love During the Spirit's Evolution

Facilitator: Adenauer Novaes (Brazil)

## Other Events

with

**Adenauer Novaes**

**Brazil**

**Date: 24.04.10**

**Time: Morning**

**LECTURE:**

**SPIRITISM and INNER ENLIGHTENMENT**

**VENUE: To be confirmed**

**BRITISH UNION OF SPIRITIST SOCIETIES**

**Information: 0207 729 3214**

**Date: 24.04.10**

**Time: 04.00pm**

**SEMINAR:**

**SPIRITISM, PSYCHOLOGY and QUANTIC UNIVERSE**

**VENUE: The Wharf Rooms, Imperial Road, SW6**

**THE FRATERNITY SPIRITIST GROUP**

**Information: 0207 702 8253**

**Date: 25.04.10**

**Time: 11.00am**

**SEMINAR:**

**SPIRITUAL OBSESSIONS and its PSYCHOLOGICAL CORRELATIONS**

**VENUE: 269, Caledonian Road - N1 1EE**

**SIR WILLIAM CROOKES SPIRITIST SOCIETY**

**Information: 0208 648 7838**

#### Venue: