

## 'Thought Energy' - 25th March, GUC. Lyanne Mitchell

[King James Bible \(Cambridge Ed.\)](#) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

My theme this morning is 'Thought Energy'. How we use our energy is a subject which has fascinated me for many years. This morning I'll be sharing some ideas on how we use our minds' energy. William James, described as an American pragmatist philosopher & psychologist wrote -

*' A great many people think they are thinking when they are really rearranging their prejudices. The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter their life by altering their attitudes of mind.'*

There's a book currently in circulation called 'The Secret'. It is a book about positive thinking and has achieved a bit of 'cult status'. The power of Positive Thinking is the subject of hundreds, if not thousands of self-help books over the years. Let me read what it says on the back cover - "*You hold in your hands a great secret. It has been passed down through the ages, highly coveted, hidden, lost, stolen, and bought for vast sums of money. The centuries old Secret has been understood by some of the most prominent people in history : Plato, Galileo, Beethoven, Edison, Carnegie, Einstein - along with other inventors, theologians, scientists and great thinkers.'*

The book is really a series of quotes from life-coaches ancient and modern. These contributors write from a wide variety of fields - philosophy, psychology, sport, medicine and spirituality. I was particularly interested by words by Prentice Mulford (1834 -1891). Along with Ralph Waldo Emerson and others, Prentice Mulford was a leading light in the New Thought Movement and was a recluse for much of his life. He influenced countless writers and teachers with his work, which deals with mental and spiritual laws. He wrote '*Thoughts Are Things*' and the '*White Cross Library*,' which is a collection of his essays.

Mulford taught that thoughts are THINGS, (I ordered it from Amazon) that they actually possess dynamic power. He believed that we can think ourselves into and out of situations...that we can make ourselves ill with our thoughts and by the same token we can heal ourselves with our thoughts. Think one way, and you attract the conditions which that type of thinking indicates. Think another way, and you can

create an entirely different set of conditions. Conditions, he believed, are created by thoughts far more powerfully than the other way around - ie conditions creating thoughts.

He writes :- *'You have in a sense, two minds - the mind of the body and the mind of the spirit. Spirit is a force and a mystery. All we know or may ever know of it is that it exists and is ever working and producing all results in physical things seen of the physical sense - and many more not so seen.'*

*'Of whatever possible thing we think, we are building, in unseen substance, a construction which will draw us forces or elements to aid or to hurt us, according to the character of thought we think or put out.'*

*'Persistency in thinking health, in imagining or idealising yourself as healthy, vigorous, and symmetrical, is the cornerstone of health and beauty. Of that which you think most, that you will be and that you will have most of.'*

'The Secret' is to first, become aware of your thoughts - think positively, and you set in motion, positive forces which bring positive results to pass - and the same goes for negative thoughts. This is one of the greatest laws of the Universe - the Law of Attraction. Whatever we focus on - grows...and grows.... and GROWS!

Positive and negative thinking are both contagious. All of us affect, in one way or another, the people we meet. This happens instinctively and on a subconscious level, through thoughts and feelings transference, and through body language. People sense our aura and are affected by our thoughts, and vice versa.

Although on first reading, this book came over to me as hugely far-fetched (especially the chapter on money, which advises to write blank cheques to ourselves, which will eventually materialise!)....it was nevertheless a kind of personal 'wake-up' call, reminding me of some core beliefs I have proved to be true in my own life. I suddenly realised that by changing the *frequency* of my thoughts, my *feelings* could be transformed and this impacted directly on my *actions*.

For example, an old friendship of over 50 years, which I had believed to be lost, was saved and re-kindled as a result of reading this book. Our lives had taken very different directions and it felt as though our mutual warmth and affection had been replaced by competitive, negative feelings. We both acknowledged these changes - we knew what was happening. We both tried very hard to fix it - but eventually, we decided we were 'flogging a dead horse'.

I was given 'The Secret' by a Reiki patient and it seemed to start a whole chain of positive changes. My old friend and I both realised, we had been focussing on '*what our friendship had lost*' - '*what it no longer was*', and how we were mutually disappointing one another which led us to eventually, call it a day. 'The Secret' woke me up and turned my thoughts around. It turned out that my friend also had the book sitting on her shelf, unread. We experienced a complete reversal in our thoughts about one another, remembering not what we had lost, but how much we had shared over many years and how *precious* it was. We gained a new perspective and a new, more realistic acceptance of one another. I am happy to say that our friendship is thriving again.

A positive frequency of thought, includes many deep qualities - gratitude, patience, compassion, forgiveness, understanding - and all of these lead directly to kindness in word and deed. I do believe that thoughts have real energy, like electricity - input /output.

They also have a mysterious magnetic quality - attracting more and more of the same. As the old saying goes - *'Be careful what you wish for'*. The Universal Law of Attraction may well deliver it!

This is how 'The Secret' summarises the chapter on the law of attraction :-

*'The law of attraction says like attracts like, so when you think a thought, you are also attracting like thoughts to you. Thoughts are magnetic, and thoughts have a frequency. As you think thoughts, they are sent out into the Universe and they magnetically attract all like things that are on the same frequency. Everything sent out returns to the source - you.'*

*You are like a human transmission tower, transmitting a frequency with your thoughts. If you want to change anything in your life, change the frequency by changing your thoughts.*

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I wonder how you felt, singing that great, old, traditional psalm this morning ? Psalm 23. We don't often sing it in our services. This is such a familiar hymn to many of us from our childhoods. Singing a different musical setting of it in my new choir on the Isle of Bute, allowed me to meet it again and see it in a fresh light. Unitarians may not easily identify themselves as sheep (!) ..... but I became aware of the power of the words. It really is a wonderful, positive affirmation for faith and living well.

The psalm's theme portrays God as the shepherd feeding and caring for his flock (verses 1 and 2). I found a surprising interpretation on the Internet which I would like to share. It suggests that King David is using the shepherd / sheep analogy, very specifically and in every single verse of this psalm...more specifically than I had previously thought.

The guidance and protection of the shepherd, from danger and death, is acknowledged in verse 3 - *'For thou art with me, and thy rod, And staff me comfort still'*. These are the implements of a shepherd, which David would have used himself as a boy.

*'My table thou has furnished'* (verse 4) - rather than being a table for humans, as I had thought, may refer to the old oriental shepherding practice of using little raised tables to feed sheep.

*'My head thou dost with oil anoint'* (verse 4) Perhaps, like me, you took this as a reference to King David's Royal Coronation, being anointed as King ? - but he *could* be referring to an ancient form of externally applied medicine for sheep. The shepherd poured it on the head and along the backline of a freshly shorn sheep to control lice or other parasites. In the British Isles, it is called *'pour-on'* or

'backliner'—this was also used as a healing oil for sheep wounds. David may have been speaking as a sheep, not a King!

David's background as a shepherd would have made him aware of how fitting these analogies were for the people of his day. Perhaps he wrote these lines, not only as a powerful expression of his own faith but also as an inspiration, using a familiar terminology, for others to hold a vision of a caring, protective, loving God.

At the risk of being flippant, someone suggested that "Goodness and Mercy" (verse 6) could be two sheepdogs following behind the flock...'*Goodness and Mercy Shall surely follow me.*'

Psalm 23 is traditionally sung by Jews in Hebrew at many Jewish celebrations. For Christians the image of God as a shepherd evokes connections not only with David but with Jesus, described as 'The Good Shepherd' in the Gospel of John. The phrase about "*the valley of the shadow of death*" is often taken as an allusion to the eternal life given by Jesus.

I would like to share my 'take' on this text, which has been brought to life and immortalised by being set to music. 'The Lord' is for me a metaphor for 'Higher Energy' which guides and protects; it constantly reminds me to connect with Nature and to take time out to be still ( pastures green / quiet waters); My spirit is nourished by tuning into this energy. It *feeds* and *heals* me on a deep level and encourages me to live with an attitude of gratitude for all that I have; being connected to this Higher Energy gives me courage in dark times and helps me to overcome (or come to terms) with fears about death; and finally, I am guided by goodness and kindness and will try to tune into these qualities all my life. I really like the idea of these two faithful collie sheepdogs, Goodness & Mercy, (I think I'll call the second one 'Kindness') running behind me every day, rounding me up when I get lost in dark hills and guiding me back to the safety and security of 'home'.

(We sang this hymn as a prayer ....we remained seated and sang it quietly together. No 66 in 'Hymns for Living' - on that occasion, to the lovely traditional tune, Crimond from the Scottish Psalter, 'The Lord's my Shepherd'.)

Recently, I tried out the same 'translation process' for a whole programme of 'Songs of Praise' on Sunday night, BBC 1. The words 'God', 'Jesus' 'the Lord' were replaced with 'Higher Energy' and I found I was in agreement with every hymn!

Try it yourself, using your own terminology. Now I don't know enough about Islam or Buddhism or Hinduism, but I geuss this translation may well work pretty well for most religious lyrics and words.

So to sum up....This is where I am as a Unitarian. I have found my own way of tuning into a *positive frequency of thinking*. I don't always manage it, of course, and often find I have allowed my thoughts to stray back on to a negative channel with lots of nasty intreferece. I need to constantly re-tune!

Most of us need help to keep our thinking on the right track - inspiring teachings, wise words, affirmations, examples to follow, faith fellowships - all of these help to pull us up, out of our negative thinking habits when we have become bogged down with resentment, anger, blame, fear etc.

Essential tools for me, are :- visualisation, meditation, the use of affirmations and Reiki healing which draws on Universal Energy or Life Force. I really like the idea of these two faithful collie sheepdogs, Goodness & Mercy, (I think I'll call the second one 'Kindness' rather than 'Mercy') running behind me every day, rounding me up when I get lost in dark hills and guiding me back to the safety and security of 'Home'.

I believe we all can find the right thinking channel which connects meaningfully to us. I respect all who are believers in loving, liberal paths and who follow their own teachings - not as a banner to march under, or as an incitement to violence or intolerance or bigotry..... but as a channel for good thoughts, a reminder to be grateful and an inspiration to help and understand others.

I believe that all the great religious paths, are in essence, channels or frequencies for right thinking. If tuning into Jesus or God or the Buddah or Allah or Hindu Gods or Earth Spirits etc, provides affirmation and encouragement to be kind.....it matters not what we call that channel or which language it uses.

May we learn to :-

*See with kind eyes*

*Speak with a kind tongue*

*Hear with kind ears*

*Think with a kind mind*

*Feel with a kind heart*

*and take action, with kind hands.*

Thank you for listening.