

Key Points of Theosophy

1. Infinity

Behind all forms, planes and entities lies a principle that defies definition – not because it is unknown, but because any name given to it already limits it. Theosophy calls it the Absolute, the Boundless, the Nameless. It is not an object of worship, but the horizon of thought — the point at which understanding in words gives way to silence

2. Divine Realms

Reality cannot be reduced to a single divine entity or a single plane of existence. Theosophical cosmology recognises a multitude of conscious entities at various stages of development, which inhabit and help shape the fabric of the cosmos far beyond the human horizon. Both monotheism and the materialist concept of a 'single world' capture only a fragment of a far richer reality.

3. Cosmic Planes

What is inherent in human beings as a layering or seemingly differentiated planes is reflected in the cosmos as a whole. Theosophical cosmology recognises corresponding planes of existence, ranging from the densest to the most subtle, which are inhabited and governed by beings at different stages of development. The microcosm and the macrocosm are structured according to the same principles — human beings are not foreign bodies within the cosmos, but its miniature reflection.

4. Higher Forms of Existence

Human beings are not the crown of creation, but a stage in a far more comprehensive structure of development. Above the human realm, Theosophy recognises beings who have completed earlier cycles of development and now act as formative forces within the cosmos. Modern humankind's relationship to them is roughly akin to that of a child to a mature adult.

5. Energies and Rays

Reality is permeated by energies of varying qualities, which are not only physically measurable but also conscious and purposeful. Bailey and D.K. describe seven primary rays as qualities of energy that permeate and shape the cosmos, nature and humankind, ranging from the willpower of the first ray to the magic and ceremonial order of the seventh. Every individual, every nation and every epoch is under the influence of specific cyclical ray constellations, which help to determine their character and developmental task.

6. Reincarnation

Human consciousness undergoes a succession of incarnations in physical matter. It is not the personality that continues, but an enduring core of being which absorbs the

essence of each incarnation and carries it forward as a store of experience into the next life cycle. Death is not an abrupt end, but a structural transition within a long process of development.

7. Karma

Every action, every thought, every intention produces effects that return to their originator, not as punishment or reward, but as an exact consequence within a universal principle of balance. Karma is not a fate to which one is at the mercy of, but a law that is actively shaped through conscious action. It extends beyond individual incarnations and is inextricably linked to the principle of reincarnation. A distinction must be made between beneficial karma, which fosters development, and hindering karma, which demands correction and balance.

8. The Threefold Nature of the Human Being

Human beings are not one-dimensional beings, but a structure comprising three distinct principles: spirit, soul and body. The body is the time-bound instrument of incarnation; the soul is the link between the transitory and the enduring; the spirit is the very core of the being, which outlasts all incarnations. This tripartite division is not a theological schema, but a working concept for orientation.

9. Layers of the Human Being

Within this tripartite division, Theosophy distinguishes further layers: the physical body and its vitalising ether; the astral body as the vehicle of feelings and desires; and the mental body as the seat of thought and discernment. Above these lie planes that are no longer directly accessible to ordinary everyday consciousness, and the unfolding of which constitutes the goal of a long path of development. This model is not a dogma, but a map.

10. The Senses

The five physical senses provide a reliable but limited picture of reality; they perceive the densest level of being, not the whole. Corresponding to the inner layers of the human being, higher sensory faculties are inherent, which unfold in the course of development and open up access to finer realms of reality. What is regarded today as extrasensory is, from a theosophical perspective, the sensory experience of tomorrow.

11. Subtle Presence

One aim of the theosophical path is to become increasingly aware of the finer layers of one's own being, not as an extraordinary experience, but as something that becomes increasingly natural. Those who do not merely passively experience the astral and mental planes, but are able to act consciously within them, extend their sphere of influence far beyond the physical realm. This is not an esoteric privilege, but the natural fruit of a long process of development.

12. Subtle embodiment

Embodiment does not necessarily imply physical densification. Beings at higher stages of development operate from subtle planes without requiring a physical body; their presence is real, and their capacity for action is undiminished. What appears to the physically bound consciousness as absence is, from their perspective, a different—and no less valid—form of existence. There, too, embodiment takes place, as densification on their respective plane.

13. Feminine–Masculine

The polarity of the feminine and masculine principles is not a biological coincidence, but a fundamental cosmic principle that recurs at all levels of being. Every human being carries both aspects within them, irrespective of their current incarnation, which, for reasons of varied experience, alternates physically between male and female (until, in later stages of development, the individual themselves decides upon the gender that best serves the purpose of their incarnation). In the long term, development aims at the inner integration of both poles. External gender is an expression of a phase in the long path of incarnation, not its end point.

14. Truth

In Theosophy, truth is not a fixed body of doctrine, but a horizon of knowledge towards which the individual approaches through the increasing expansion of consciousness. Every tradition, every science, every religion and every honest inner experience may touch upon fragments of this horizon; none of them possesses it in its entirety. The claim to absolute truth is therefore not theosophical, but its opposite.

15. Learning

From a theosophical perspective, learning is not a process limited to the acquisition of knowledge, but a comprehensive process of the unfolding of consciousness that spans many incarnations. Every experience — even painful ones — contributes to the development of inner capacities that remain permanently inscribed in the core of one's being. In this sense, the human being is a learning being par excellence, whose true curriculum is life itself.

16. Knowledge

Knowledge in the theosophical sense encompasses more than accumulated information — it includes direct inner realisation arising from lived experience and conscious development. There is a qualitative difference between knowledge gained from reading and knowledge gained through experience, which cannot be bridged by mere study. Genuine knowledge transforms the knower.

17. Community

Theosophy recognises no salvation as an isolated event — development takes place within and through the fabric of conscious beings who are interdependent. Community is not a social add-on here, but a prerequisite for the path: whatever a person gains in consciousness feeds back into the whole. The boundary between individual progress and the progress of the whole is more permeable than modern consciousness usually assumes.

18. Family

The family is the most immediate training ground for human development — not a random arrangement, but a karmically shaped field of relationships in which old connections are continued and unresolved issues are brought to maturity. The intensity of family bonds, including their frictions, is no coincidence, but part of the plan. What is not learnt here will return.

19. Warmth / Love for Humanity

Theosophy is not a purely intellectual matter — the heart holds the same status within it as the mind. Love for humanity is not a sentimental afterthought, but one of the driving forces of the path, which proves its worth in concrete behaviour towards other people. Where insight remains devoid of warmth, it misses its mark.

20. Culture and Ethics

Cultures are not random historical constructs, but forms of expression of collective levels of consciousness that contribute specific abilities and insights to the development of humanity. From a theosophical perspective, ethical action is not a matter of social convention, but a consequence of an understanding of universal interconnections — those who take karma and community seriously act differently. Culture and ethics are thus not superstructural phenomena, but indicators of the respective level of consciousness.

21. Work

In the theosophical understanding, work is more than a means of earning a living or a social function — it is the place where inner attitude is translated into outer reality. Every activity carried out with awareness and care has a value that extends beyond its immediate result. Service to the whole often begins right where one stands.

22. Sharing

Whatever a person possesses in terms of knowledge, ability or material resources is not exclusively their property; it has been entrusted to them. Sharing is therefore not a matter of voluntary generosity, but an expression of a consciousness that takes the interconnectedness of all beings seriously. Withholding without necessity creates stagnation; passing things on keeps the flow moving.

23. Freedom of Inquiry

The theosophical principles are not presented as articles of faith, but as proposals for further exploration. Each person examines them in the light of their own experience and reason, and retains the right at all times to accept, set aside or reject them. This freedom is not a reservation, but a fundamental prerequisite for any serious engagement with them.