

Hermetic Living – Sunday 29th June 2025

Opening music = Elijah Bossenbroek Rest from album *Carpe Lumen*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xp9RxVwnjnU> (3 min 50 secs).

Opening quote =

“My discourse leads to the truth; the mind is great and guided by this teaching, it is able to arrive at some understanding. When the mind has understood all things and found them to be in harmony with what has been expounded by the teachings, it is faithful and comes to rest in that beautiful faith.”

— Hermes Trismegistus

Introduction

Poppy

Good morning! A big welcome to one and all from myself and Margaret. However, you are joining us, live in person, via Zoom or after the event via the recording.

Margaret and I have the honour of holding our sacred space today. We have called our time together Hermetic Living as we consider the benefits of adopting the principles of Hermetic Philosophy into our lives. You may learn that you already do apply some but didn't realise that there were Hermetic Principles. The opening quote is ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus.

Now, Hermetic philosophy, also known as Hermeticism/Hermetism is purported to come from the work of Hermes Trismegistus - a figure of ancient wisdom, who may or may not have actually existed – but, whose teachings have provided profound insights across the ages into the nature of the universe.

Elements of Hermeticism can be found in Greek philosophy and various religious traditions. For example, influences are noted by scholars in Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

Some people believe Hermes Trismegistus is the merging of Hermes from Greek mythology and Thoth (Thoth or F-oath) of Egyptian mythology – where Hermes is a purely symbolic figure who represents the wisdom of the Hellenistic period. Before we delve into the principles, let us take a moment to light our chalice, the symbol of our free religious faith. I would like to invite Gill

up to light the chalice whilst I read a quote from Craig Rowland, a Unitarian Universalist from the Salem congregation. If you are joining us from home and wish to do so, I invite you to light your own chalice or candle now.

Chalice lighting = “As we light this chalice, may our breath remind us of the sacred rhythm of life, the pulse of creation, and the power we hold to shape the world around us.” UU Worship Web – Craig Rowland

Thanks to Gill, for lighting the chalice for us. 😊

Why Hermetic Living?

Margaret

The reason I thought this would be a good subject is because I feel it is relevant to us in our modern times and can benefit us in many ways.

The material is based on a book called ***The Kybalion***. I came across this book several years ago before the first Covid lockdown at a time where I was having many deep spiritual philosophical discussions with a friend. They suggested I read ***The Kybalion***. The 7 principles of Hermetic Philosophy I learnt in the book then, still help me today, so I wanted to share its wisdom with you all.

Poppy

I have always been interested in philosophy and when Margaret asked if I had read ***The Kybalion – a study of Hermetic Philosophy of Ancient Egypt and Greece*** – my interest was piqued. Philosophy was one of my favourite subjects at college and university. It didn't take a second for me to suggest we the book over a period with meetings alongside to discuss the text and share our thoughts. So that happened, and now you get to hear about the principles today. I recognised numerous familiar ideas from other religious and philosophical texts and I enjoyed applying my thoughts to my life - was I living a life that reflected my beliefs or had I let things that matter to me fall to the wayside by letting autopilot take over? In considering the hermetic principles outlined in the book I was dedicating time and space to my spiritual self and hopefully this morning, we can provide food for thought which inspires you to do the same.

Now, we are holding what we call a circle service. In the church we have tables and chairs. The tables have paper and pens or pencils on them should you wish to note anything down. There will be two activities during our time

together with opportunity for those online live today and those here in person to share thoughts and/or experiences if you wish to. If you are watching on catch-up then feel free to take the time to self-reflect during that time.

Let's come together now in song as we sing our first hymn...

Hymns 1 = P33 Enter rejoice & come in

Sing your Faith' (aka 'Purple Book')

Enter, rejoice and come in.
Enter, rejoice and come in.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice and come in

Open your ears to the song.
Open your ears to the song.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice and come in

Open your hearts everyone.
Open your hearts everyone
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice and come in

Don't be afraid of some change.
Don't be afraid of some change.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice and come in

Enter, rejoice and come in.
Enter, rejoice and come in.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice and come in

Words © Louise Ruspini from her book '*Journey to Freedom*'

Music Louise Ruspini 'Rejoice' © 2009 Arrangement General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

Margaret

The book *The Kybalion* provides a straightforward introduction to Hermetic Philosophy and the Seven Hermetic Principles. We will summarise these

principles and propose ways we can incorporate them into our daily lives to develop our spiritual connection or personal intuition and awareness.

Poppy

These principles continue to be shared in spiritual and esoteric circles as they are understood to allow us to grow, understand the interconnectedness of the universe and our place within it – they are believed by subscribers to aid overall wellbeing and providing skills to help us navigate the complexities of life.

Mentalism – 1

Margaret

“The all is mind. The universe is mental” – this axiom expresses the Principle of Mentalism which is the fundamental principle of Hermetic philosophy.

In hermetic philosophy – what some people refer to as a deity, nature or matter is called **“The All.”**

Poppy

What is The All? It is all there really is – nothing exists outside it, it is infinite and immutable. Matter, which we see all around us forms the physical foundation of energy. As modern science has shown, matter is interrupted energy, so contained energy if you will. The All is the source of this, of all, energy. We, all things, are part of The All. According to ***The Kybalion*** The All is **Infinite Living Mind**, the womb of the universe - and the illumined call it **Spirit**. When reading the book, aspects reminded me of the Tao in the Tao Te Ching – the All is like the Tao – the great mystery.

Margaret

The Principle of Mentalism is about Mental Transmutation which is also sometimes known as Psychic Phenomena, Mental Influence, Mental Science, New Thought Phenomena, and many more. To transmute is to change, to transform mental states. It has also been known as Mental Chemistry or a practical application of Mystic Psychology. Basically, our mind creates our world – it truly shapes our reality and in understanding the principle and the power of transmutation, we recognise that the mind is the primary force

behind our reality and that our thoughts create our experiences and influence our feelings, moods – and those of others. Mental transmutation can be used in a negative or positive way according to the Hermetic principle of Polarity – which we will discuss more later.

Poppy

The phrases such as “**Mind over Matter**” and “**Energy flows where attention goes**” are well known and they encapsulate the Principle of Mentalism clearly. Our thoughts, our intentions are powerful. We can change so much with the use of our minds. A strong example can be seen in the placebo effect – a person’s belief, a person’s thoughts cause an inert treatment to garner physical or psychological positive changes. Similarly, I am sure many of us have felt nervous or scared and have spoken to ourselves in a way to improve the physical and emotional state we found ourselves in. If said in a confident and loving reassuring way you may have found it worked?

By recognising how much our thoughts manifest our experience and by actively paying attention to this and taking control – by cultivating a mindset of gratitude, of growth, of love and kindness – we can actively manifest positivity for us and others – and by doing so we will see heartening outcomes.

How do we apply this to our lives though? There are so many ways, what comes to my mind straightaway from my lived experience is the use of Mindfulness and Affirmations whether exclusively or part of a Yoga, Meditation or Metta practice.

Practitioners of hermetic living also suggest that alongside or within the practices just mentioned, the use of visualisation techniques are recommended to help manifest desired outcomes.

In a moment there will be time for you to reflect, share and discuss how the Principle of Mentalism has manifested in your life – have you any examples of this? You be invited to take a few minutes to think and then have a few minutes to discuss it if in church. Those of you online, please feel free to utilise the chat function.

Before our first activity though, Margaret would like to lead us in prayer:

Margaret

Prayer = "O Divine Source, we humbly acknowledge your presence within us and throughout the universe. We offer our hearts and minds as vessels of your light, guiding us towards greater understanding and wisdom. We seek to

connect with the divine spark within ourselves and others, fostering compassion and unity in all our interactions. We thank you for the gift of life, the beauty of creation, and the opportunity to learn and grow. May we live with intention, purpose, and gratitude, embracing the path of self-discovery and enlightenment. Amen.”

Margaret

Exercise One – examples of Mentalism in your life?

We will now hand the floor over to you – take a few minutes to consider when you have experienced or witnessed the principle of mentalism in action. Those of you online, please feel free to utilise the chat function.

Poppy

Invited people to share. 😊

Correspondence – 2

The second principle is the Principle of Correspondence – it has a quote which I am sure most of you have heard or read = “As above, so below, as below, so above.”

Hermetic philosophy considers that the universe can be divided into 3 classes of phenomena or planes: -

The Great Physical Plane

The Great Mental Plane

The Great Spiritual Plane

Within all of the planes exists energy taking on different forms.

The quote, “As above, so below...” expresses the principle – what occurs on one plane is reflected or mirrored on another, there is a correspondence between the macrocosm (the universe) and the microcosm (could be us or smaller systems in the universe).

By understanding and taking time to reflect on the interconnectedness of the microcosm - the self - with the macrocosm – you can begin to recognise your daily habits, experiences or needs are reflections of the larger community, country, planet and universe.

What came to my mind is how the cyclical nature of the seasons can be likened to nature of human life spring for birth, summer for growth, aging in fall and death in winter. This simply illustrates the principle of correspondence – and there are many others. Another well-known example is fractals – in geometry they are never-ending patterns. Fractals look like smaller versions of themselves when zoomed in – a quick basic example could be broccoli – the way the florets are organised remembers a smaller version of the whole. One of the most well-known examples of that of the Fibonacci spiral which can be seen on a nautilus shell, the same pattern is observed for the formation of a hurricane and then even larger when you see an image of a spiral galaxy.

Practically and spiritually, we can adopt the principle in our daily life to seek clarity and encourage growth. In addition to being encouraged to embrace change and adapt to new situations throughout life as you move through its seasons – you can incorporate a daily check in to see how your inner world is impacting your outer world and visa versa. Ask yourself - is what I am doing/where I am - having the impact I want?

In doing this you may find yourself living a more intentional and meaningful life. Similarly, you could consider the wider implications of your actions – how does this impact the bigger picture, the relationship, the family, the town – the world.

Applying this principle is all about understanding our connection to our inner selves and the outer world. When we understand how our interactions impact us and others then we can recognise patterns which make it easier to choose to live positively in alignment with the universe. This way of living can apply to our physical, mental and spiritual selves. Even though Spirit is considered unknowable – I believe we see and experience glimpses.

Please join me as we sing in spirit of spirit with hymn no 147 in the purple book – Spirit of earth, root, stone and tree.

Hymn 2 from 'Sing your Faith' Purple Book 147 'Spirit of earth, root, stone and tree'

Spirit of earth, root, stone and tree,
water of life, flowing in me,
keeping me syable, nourishing me,
O fill me with living energy!

*Spirit of nature, healing and free,
Spirit of love, expanding in me,
Spirit of life, breathe deeply in me,
Inspire me with living energy!*

Spirit of love, softly draw near,
open my heart, lessen my fear,
sing of compassion, help me to hear,
O fill me with loving energy!
 Spirit of nature, healing and free,
 Spirit of love, expanding in me,
 Spirit of life, breathe deeply in me,
 Inspire me with living energy!

Spirit of life, you are my song,
sing in my soul, all my life long,
gladden and guide me, keep me from wrong,
O fill me with sacred energy!
 Spirit of nature, healing and free,
 Spirit of love, expanding in me,
 Spirit of life, breathe deeply in me,
 Inspire me with living energy!

Music: 'Leaving of Lismore' Traditional Scottish melody Arr by David Dawson
Words: © Lyanne Mitchell used by permission

Poppy

Vibration – 3

Now – how do you feel? I feel invigorated – singing has that effect on me. Especially one with words that express my own thoughts and feelings. I recognise that singing has a positive impact on me. I know not all of you enjoying singing or experience that impact though. However, for me, I think this is an example of the third hermetic principle – the principle of vibration. I believe singing can reconcile energy within me if feeling out of sorts.

The opening axiom from ***The Kybalion*** for this principle is “Nothing rests; everything moves’ everything vibrates.”

According to hermetic teachings there is a pole or spectrum of vibration – Spirit is at one end of the pole and matter in its various forms of energy is at the other end. Alongside the vibration spectrum is movement – energy flows – it goes up and down the pole.

In addition to physical matter, every thought, emotion or mental state has its own corresponding rate or mode of vibration. When our vibration is low, we experience the sort of feelings or negative thoughts that come to mind if someone said they are feeling “low” or “down” – and when we are positive, we feel “high” or “up” – we feel energised. Sometimes we feel scattered, erratic – our energy is all over the place. Grounding – stepping barefoot onto the earth

whether soil, grass, pebbles or sand can hold you and help in these situations. Perhaps you have found this yourself?

The hermetic text states that masters with the knowledge and experience of vibration can – through an effort of will, reproduce mental states through telepathy and also carry out what we may refer to as miracles by being able to manipulate the principles. Hermes, the purported founder is a central figure of alchemy so that is such an example.

I don't know about that myself – I certainly have a way to go as I am not capable of transmuting things from the mental to the physical plane...yet? Kudos if you have achieved that already. 😊

I am aware of non-medical therapies whereby practitioners' channel and realign energy to help a client with physical pain or difficult thoughts and emotions. Practices such as Reiki and EFT (tapping) are two you may have come across or experienced yourself. You or someone you know may also be a practitioner of the Chinese traditions Qi Gong or have Acupuncture whereby blockages are removed and so one's energy flow and vibrations are adjusted. People report a similar experience after a massage or find healing through simple vibrations like from bird song or the purr of a cat.

Now besides inspiring us to book in for a massage or acupuncture appointment. How does this help us? Well - when you are aware that everything is in a constant state of vibration (me, you, the building you are in, the chalice, the chair you sat on etc. then you are in a great position to appreciate and learn techniques to support your vibrations and by extension – the vibrations of other beings, places and experiences. By having this skill, you would have insight into what may not be safe or beneficial for you. You can read people – their body language and the atmosphere around people changes with our vibration. Our vibrations impact others – like the principle of correspondence and mentalism. We are not islands – we are part of something bigger.

How can you gain this insight – not surprisingly, meditation and breath work are considered by far the best techniques to learn. Focused breathing is so holistic. Perhaps you will take a few minutes next week to sit with yourself and your body and do a body scan with your mind to see if you can sense anything.

Exercise Two – vibration/energy exercise – what do you feel?

We will now have our second activity – you may have done this before. We will see if we can sense our energy. After the exercise we will have a few

minutes for you to share what you experienced with your tables and/or fellow Zoomers via the chat.

To cultivate a sense of energy in our hands, first - focus on the sensations you can sense now. Place your hands near to each other – palms moving towards each other. Maybe rubbing your hands together, a couple times and rubbing your fingers on your palms. Okay? Let's try this then.

Let us ground ourselves with a few deep breaths – relax your body, let go of any tension you are holding. Clear or calm mind then focus on your hands. You can have your eyes open or closed, whatever you prefer.

Rub your palms together quickly – we will do that for 20-30 seconds. Heat and friction will enable us to feel the energy. You can also twist your wrists almost like you are quickly screwing a lightbulb – we can do that for 20-30 sections too – or you can rub palms twice if you prefer that.

Okay – now pay close attention to any sensations you feel between your hands as you slowly separate them. Do you notice any warmth, tingling, or lightness?

You may want to focus on your fingertips can you feel energy at the points?

You may also want to play with the distance between your hands, noticing if you feel any sensation and that changes as they move closer and further apart. You might perhaps feel a connection or magnetic pull.

Thanks for having a go – we will now give you a few minutes to discuss your experience and then if you'd like to, you can share with us all. Zoomers, if you'd like to put anything you'd like us to share in the chat.

Invited people to share. 😊

Margaret

Polarity - 4

Polarity is the 4th hermetic principle. All manifested things have two sides, opposites of two poles. The two poles are extremes of the same thing, in between these poles and degrees.

There are degrees of temperature between extreme cold and extreme heat, light and darkness, love and hate etc. We hear people speak of truths and half-truths – there is a reverse side to everything.

Spirit and matter are but the two poles of the same thing – between spirit and matter are varying degrees of vibration, but the same thing. Hermetics can transmute from one mental state into another. From the polarity of hate to love, or fear to courage. This only is possible if in the same class. For example, love can never become east or west.

In the mental states we can see the poles as negative and positive. The negative pole being hate and the positive being love. Through mental transmutation we are able to change our mental state from hate to love and visa versa. This is achieved by raising or lowering our vibration.

By bringing the two extremes together, instead of having polar opposites – we bring unity and balance into our lives, to others and into the wider universe.

Rhythm - 5

The principle of Rhythm is the 5th hermetic principle. It says that everything has a rhythm, like the swing of a pendulum – backwards and forwards, or like the ebb and flow of the tides.

This occurs on the physical plane, mental plane and spiritual plane and can be witness across the universe – the sun, worlds, animals, men, mind, energy and spirit etc.

We can see the swing of the pendulum in ourselves. The changes in our moods and feelings – we can notice that this can cause negative and positive mental states.

The experienced Hermetics are said to be able to raise their vibrations above the unconscious plane of mental activity. If you look back and think about a period of your life where you were low or experiencing depression – it would have likely been followed by a period of enthusiasm. That is an example of the principle of Rhythm in action. By being aware of this principle, we can rise above it – we can become more balanced in our emotions.

We can see this principle in action when in one moment we feel excited and happy, followed by a feeling of deflation and sadness.

What can help our rhythm is being self-aware – where our pendulum is at the present moment. Then we notice when our peaceful thoughts change, for example of anger after an annoyance or conflict. By noticing this and acknowledging it, we then can actively focus to change it.

Let us now sing again, our third hymn is...

Hymn 3 = 165: 'The Spirit Lives To Set Us Free' (Sing your Faith, aka 'purple book')

Words: Anonymous.. Music 'Walk in the Light' Traditional Arr David Dawson

The Spirit lives to set us free,
walk, walk in the light.
It binds us all in unity,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

The light that shines is in us all,
Walk, walk in the light.
We each must follow our own call,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

Peace begins inside your heart,
walk, walk in the light.
We've got to live it from the start,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

Seek the truth in what you see,
walk, walk in the light.
Then hold it firmly as can be,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light.
Its light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

Poppy

Cause & Effect – 6

The 6th principle is that of Causation – cause and effect. According to ***The Kybalion***, “nothing happens by Chance; [...] Chance is merely a term indicating cause existing but not recognised or perceived, [...] phenomena is continuous, without break or exception.” This appeals to me as it aligns with my view of the universe – of everything being interconnected.

Causation deals with events not things and an event is defined as “that which comes, arrives or happens, as a result or consequence of some preceding event.” So according to the text, everything that happens is merely a

preceding link in the great orderly chain of events flowing from the creative energy of The All.

Now, the majority of people are carried along through life – they perhaps do not live in line with their values because they do not consider the power they hold in their actions. Perhaps they do not follow their own desires but follow the will or suggestions of others – they follow the herd, not really making decisions to lead life but just going wherever they are led.

Like the principle of mentalism highlights, our thoughts are actions are extremely powerful – the decisions and actions we make all have consequences. Whether they are the outcome of a small regular choice (like what to eat) or a significant life decision (changing career).

This principle encourages us to live mindfully. To consider the power of our actions, by the consequences of them. By being so engaged we become more responsible of our actions and more confident in our choices. We can also become more like movers in the game rather than pawns always being moved about.

I personally try to be mindful about what I eat – perhaps not as often considering the impacts on myself. I have in mind others – other beings and the environment – is what I am eating impacting them negatively? So – room for improvement there or me. I will endeavour to consider the impacts on me – financially and health-wise - by undertaking some mindful meal-planning next week! Is there anything you could consider next week to help develop your mindful decision-making? Have a think – make a note on the paper if you wish.

Margaret

Gender - 7

The principle of Gender is the 7th hermetic principle. In hermeticism the masculine principles are considered positive and the feminine negative in the same way that a battery is positive and negative.

This can be seen on the on the pole of polarity and can be observed in all of creation.

The word Gender in Latin means “to procreate”, “to produce”.

The feminine negative principle is the mother principle of electrical phenomena. It generates electrons which forms matter – so it is a creator, it creates.

The feminine electron activity seeks a union with a masculine electron which creates a new form of energy or matter, an atom. This in turn manifests light, heat, electricity, magnetism, attractions, repulsion etc. and the reverse. This cannot occur without both the masculine and feminine electrons.

We see examples of this principle everywhere around us. These masculine and feminine sides can be interpreted as our logical and intuitive sides. Balance between the two is essential – too much reflection means nothing gets done, whereas too much action with little consideration can result in disaster. The key is to embrace both sides.

Poem - introduced by Poppy and read by Sheila

In a universe so wide and vast,
A cosmic law, principles cast.
From the ether, a soft refrain,
The Principle of Mentalism reigns.

Thoughts, perceptions shape reality,
An echo of the mind's duality.
Mirroring worlds, below, above,
Through the Principle of Correspondence, we move.

Nothing rests, everything in tune,
A cosmic dance, a rhythmic rune.
Under the Principle of Vibration's guise,
In diverse forms, the universe lies.

Polarity's rule, a paradox spun,
Opposites meet; duality undone.
In every rhythm, a tide resides,
Under the Principle of Rhythm, life abides.

Every cause, every effect,
In an intricate cosmic network, they connect.
No act is chance, no fate astray,
Under the Principle of Cause and Effect, they lay.

The dance of the masculine, the feminine sway,
In all things, their balance play.
In each principle, a cosmic theme,
Through the Principle of Gender, we dream.

Author – ic7zi - <https://www.ic7zi.com/esoteric/seven-hermetic-principles/>

Closing statements

Margaret

What can we take away with us from this service?

That everything has polarity. That we can improve our lives by realising that we can change our energy by changing our thoughts and remembering the axiom “The All is Mind; The Universe is Mental”.

Poppy

For me the take home is the axiom: -

“To change your mood or mental state – change your vibration”

Our closing music is a bit different. We have two videos of the same song, performed three times. In the first video I invite you to watch and/or listen to

and then a second video will play whereby we have the musical accompaniment so we can raise our vibrations in song singing hymn no 148 in the purple book Spirit of Life. So, we listen first to the song, then singing and then we can sing ourselves.

Closing music = P148 Spirit of life – closing music listening/watching <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdnr4fNuR74> first (2 min 22 secs) and then singing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrQV0JkEah0> to raise our vibrations!

(1 min 27 secs).

Purple Book no. 148 'Spirit of Life'

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close, wings set me free;
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

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Thank you all – I will end our service with the extinguishing of our chalice and then Sheila will share updates.

Poppy

Chalice extinguishing = “As we extinguish this chalice flame, may the warmth of its light remain within us, guiding our steps and our hearts.” UU
Worship Web – Craig Rowland