

The Mystic and the Mind



I would like to speak of the knowledge a mystic attains mentally which prepares the mystic to find his or her way to the truth. Reasoning is a faculty which the mystic uses, and which may develop like common sense or practicality; the difference is only that the mystic does not stop at the first reason, but wishes to see the reason behind them all. Therefore in everything, whether right or wrong, the mystic inquires for the reason. But the immediate answer to that is a reason that is not satisfactory, for the mystic sees that behind that reason there is another. And so the mystic goes on, in the knowledge of all things, which is far greater than the knowledge gained by one thing.

Therefore neither right nor wrong, neither good nor evil, excites the mystic too much, nor does it give the mystic a great shock or surprise. For everything seems to have its nature, and it is understanding which makes the mystic feel at one with all existing

The Winged Heart

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*These quotations were selected from the works of
Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan*

things. What can one wish for more in life than understanding? Understanding gives one harmony in the home with those near and dear to one and peace outside the home with so many different natures and characters. If one lacks understanding, one is poor in spite of all that one possesses of the goods of this world; it is understanding which gives a person riches.

If life could be pictured, one would say that it reminds one of a sea in the storm with waves coming and going; such is life. This understanding gives one weight which can endure rain and storm and all vicissitudes. Without understanding a person is like a jolly boat which cannot get through the storm on the sea. By understanding a mystic learns. The mystic learns tact and is tactful under all circumstances. The mystic's tact is like a ship with a heavy load, which the wind cannot move and which stands still in the midst of the storm on the sea.

The nature of life is such that it easily excites the mind and makes one unhappy in a moment's time. It makes people so confused that they do not know where to take the next step. Contrary to this, the mystic stands still and inquires of life its secret, and from every experience, from every failure or success, the mystic learns a lesson. Therefore failure and success both are profitable to a mystic.

The ideal of a mystic is never to think of disagreeable things. What one does not want to happen one must not think of. All disagreeable things from the past a mystic erases from their mind. The mystic collects and keeps his or her happy experiences and makes out of them a paradise. Are there not many unhappy people, who keep a part of the past before them which causes them pain in their heart? Past is past, it is gone. There is eternity before you. If you want to make your life as you wish, do not think of disagreeable thoughts or of painful experiences and memories that make you unhappy.

Thus life becomes to some extent easy for a mystic to deal with. For the mystic knows every heart and every nature, whereas others, untouched by the mystic's secret, suffer from their difficulties at home and difficulties outside. They dread the presence of people they do not understand, they want to run away from them and, if they cannot escape, they feel as if they were in the mouth of a dragon.

Perhaps they are placed in a situation which cannot easily be changed. Consequently they heap confusion upon confusion. And how very often one sees that where two people do not understand one another, a third comes and helps them to understand each other, and the light thrown upon them causes greater harmony. The mystic says, "Whether it be agreeable or disagreeable, if you are in a certain situation, make the best of it; try to understand how to deal with such a situation." A life

without such understanding is like a dark room which contains everything you wish — it is all there, but there is no light.

The world after all is a wonderful place, in spite of so many souls wishing to leave this world. For there is nothing which is not to be obtained in this world. It is all there: all things good and beautiful and all things precious and worthwhile are there, if one knows their nature, their character, and how to obtain them.

If you ask a person what is the nature of life, they will say, "The farther we go in the strife for happiness the farther we are removed from it." This is true. But one takes the wrong way who does not know that unhappiness does not exist. Besides, happiness is more natural than unhappiness, as good is more natural than evil, and health than illness. And yet people are so pessimistic. If you tell them the good of anyone, they cannot believe this to be true. But if you tell them the bad of a person, they say, "Yes, that is really true."

The work of the mystic therefore is to study life. For the mystic life is not a stage play or an amusement: for the mystic it is a school for learning in every moment of life. It is a continual study. Therefore the scripture of the mystic is human nature. Every morning the mystic turns a new page of this scripture. The great ones have brought the Message to the world from time to time and their books have become scriptures to the world for thousands of years. Generations of people have taken their spiritual food from this interpretation that they have given. Therefore the sacred scriptures always have the same sacred feeling behind them.

The mystic has respect for all religions and understands all the different and contrary ideas, for he or she understands everyone's language. The mystic can agree, without dispute, with the wise, the foolish, and the simple. For the mystic sees that the nature of facts is such that they are true in their place: the mystic understands every aspect of their nature. The mystic sees from every point of view. They see from the point of view of each person and that is why they are harmonious with all. A person comes to a mystic and says, "I cannot believe in a personal God, it means nothing to me." Then the mystic answers, "You are quite right." Another person says, "The only way of making God intelligible is in the form of the human." The mystic says, "You are right." And another person says, "How foolish of these people to make of this person a God: He/She is above comprehension." And the mystic says, "You are right." For a mystic understands the reason behind all the opposing arguments.

Once a missionary came to a Sufi in Persia, as he desired a discussion to prove his point of view right about the Sufi teachings. The Sufi, in his silent, quiet attitude of rest, was sitting, with his two or three pupils by his side. And the missionary asked some questions. The mystic answered: "You are right." But the man went on to dispute and the Sufi said only: "That is quite true." Then he took another turn and put his question in an eloquent manner. The man was very disappointed as there was no opportunity for argument. The Sufi saw the truth in all. The truth is like a piano. The notes may be high or low, you may strike a 'C' or an 'E', but they are all notes.

The difference between ideas is like that between notes. So in daily life with the right and the wrong attitude. If we have the wrong attitude all things are wrong; if we have the right, all things are right. The one who mistrusts him or herself, will mistrust even his or her best friend. The one who trusts him or herself, will trust everyone.

Things which seem to be apart, such as right and wrong, light and darkness, and form and shadow, before the mystic come so close that it is only a hair's breadth that divides right and wrong. Before the mystic there opens out an outlook on life, an outlook in which is the purpose of life.

The question which the mystic puts to him or herself is: "Which is my being? My body? No. This body is my possession. I cannot be that which I possess." The mystic asks him or herself: "Is it my mind?" The answer comes, "No. The mind is something I possess, it is something one witnesses. There must be a difference between the knower and the known." By this, in the end, the Sufi comes to an understanding of the illusory character of all the things one

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possesses. It is like a person who has a coat made: it is one's coat, it is not oneself.

Then the mystic begins to think: "It is not myself who thinks, it is the mind. It is the body which suffers, it is not myself." It is a kind of liberation for one to know, "I am not my mind." For one wonders: "One moment I have a good thought, another moment a bad thought, a right thought or a wrong, one moment an earthly thought, the other moment a thought of heaven. It is like a moving picture, and it is I who see, who am dancing there."

By seeing this the mystic liberates him or herself, which, owing to illusion, was buried under mind and body. What one calls a soul was lost; it was a soul not aware of the mystical truth that body and mind are the vehicles by which to experience life. In this way the mystic begins his or her journey towards immortality.

Coming Events

Dec 1-3, near Toronto: A weekend group retreat with **Noor Nicolai**. This retreat will emphasize the unfolding and development of inner qualities. For registration information, please contact Eric Mercer at mercer @ muridae.com or 416-929-7920.

Dec 10: Festival of Lights: A Universal Worship Service at 1:30 pm at Gallery Arcturus, 80 Gerrard Street East. We will each light our own candle, there'll be a dance with a crown of lighted candles, musicians, treats, etc. Bring family and friends.

This will be the last regular monthly service at the Gallery Arcturus. Contact: Rev. Gabriel Leslie Mezei: leslie @ barberry.ca or (416) 226-2869.

Dec 31: New Year's Eve Universal Worship and Dance: For information, please contact: Amina Berketa: (416) 782-6612; janetberketa @ gmail.com; or Qahira Jo (416) 778-0473; Jo_Oppenheimer @ hotmail.com

April 20-22, 2007, Toronto: A weekend workshop with Amir O'Loughlin, master musician and senior spiritual teacher. This will be a rich feast of music, meditation, spiritual teachings, zhikr, dancing, etc. Please indicate your interest now, to help us with planning. For information, contact: Amina Berketa: (416) 782-6612; janetberketa @ gmail.com

Special Notices

Sufi Order Classes in Toronto

- A class will not be held on Dec 27th.

Sufi Order Classes in Brampton

- Please contact Sirdar at (905) 452-6358.

Activities

The Message Class: provides an opportunity to experience the teachings and practices of the Sufi Order on an ongoing basis. These classes, based on teachings given by Hazrat Inayat Khan and Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan, are deepened through the use of complementary meditation practices which may use the breath, light, Dhikr (remembrance of God) and Wazifa (mantra).

Classes in the Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan are held, in **Toronto**, each **Wednesday at 8:30 pm** and, in **Brampton**, every **Thursday at 8:00 pm**. The last meeting of each month is dedicated to the practice of Dhikr. For this evening only, no instruction is offered.

Mureeds Class: This class is for initiates in the Sufi Order. For information, please contact Hafiz: by phone at (416) 658-7340; via email at: nrothenberg @ rogers.com

Dhikr: means remembrance of God. Participants unite in intensive exploration and experience of this central practice of the Sufis. *If you have never been to Dhikr, please call in advance.*

Healing Circle: Open to members of the Sufi Healing Order. The Healing Circle is held in Brampton, at 9:30 am, on Saturdays. If you wish to attend, please phone Sirdar at (905) 452-6358.

Universal Worship Service: Universal Worship services are held at 7:30 pm on the **third Tuesday** of the month in the Bathurst and Eglinton area. For more information, please contact Janet Amina Berketa: email at janetberketa @ gmail.com; phone: (416) 782-6612