

The Attitude of a Mureed



(Note: a *mureed* is an initiate in a Sufi Order.) A mureed's attitude towards life must be hopeful; towards his motives courageous; towards his murshid faithful; towards the cause sincere; towards that object which he has to accomplish earnest without the slightest doubt. In every aspect of life it is our attitude which counts and which in the end proves to be creative of all kinds of phenomena. Both success and failure depend upon it, as in the Hindu saying, 'If the attitude is right, all will come right'.

There is a natural tendency in the seeker on the spiritual path to wonder if he is really progressing. And very often he begins to wonder from the day he sets foot on the path. It is like asking 'Shall I be able to digest?' while one is still eating. The spiritual path leads to selflessness. The more we worry about ourselves,

The Winged Heart

a newsletter for

The Sufi Order International (Toronto)
An Interfaith Approach To Spiritual Growth

Volume 15, Number 2

June — August 2006

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

the less progress we make, because our whole striving should be to forget the self; it is mostly the self which obstructs the path. The path is made for the soul, and it is natural and easy for the soul to find it. Therefore when a person is wondering about his progress he is wasting his time; it is like standing still on the path on which one must go forward.

Can anyone distinguish how his face and body change day by day? No, for one cannot point out distinct signs of change from one day to another; and if one cannot properly distinguish any change in the external self, then how can one expect to distinguish change in the inner process? It is not something that can be weighed on the scales as one weighs oneself on coming back from a holiday and sees that one has gained or lost several pounds. There is no such gain in spiritual progress.

Then there are some who imagine that they have progressed for a certain time but are then going backward. They are discouraged and say, 'I thought I had arrived somewhere, but surely it must have been an illusion.' But life is like the sea, and the sea is not always calm. There are times when the sea is rough and then the boat naturally moves up and down, and to think while the boat is moving downward that it will sink is a mistake. It is going down in order to go up; it is its movement; it is natural. A mureed is subject to such experiences in the path of life. Life will take its own course. The one who sails will have many times to meet a rough sea; he has to be prepared for this and not be frightened or discouraged. He still has to go on through life. If life's journey were soft and smooth there would be no need for spiritual development. He has to have control of the rudder to be able to go through both calm seas and storms.

Sometimes the mureed wonders what others are saying and if they are displeased or pleased; if they are displeased he thinks he is not progressing. But this has nothing to do with progress. Those who are displeased would be displeased even with Jesus Christ, and at the same time they might be pleased with the worst person. The displeasure of others does not mean that one is not progressing.

Then if conditions are adverse the mureed thinks that he is not on the right path. But does it mean that the ship is not on its right course if a storm meets it? Neither the murshid nor God are responsible if the conditions are adverse, and the best thing is to meet them, to be more brave and courageous and to make one's way through them. Ghazali,

the great Sufi writer of Persia, says that spiritual progress is like shooting at a target in the dark. We do not know where the target is, we do not see it, but we shoot just the same.

The true ideal of the spiritual person is not great power nor a great amount of knowledge. His true ideal stands beyond power and knowledge; it is that which is limitless, incomprehensible, nameless, and formless. There are no milestones to count; one cannot say, 'I have gone so many miles and there are so many still before me.' This does not belong to a spiritual journey. The pursuit of the limitless is limitless, of the formless, formless; one cannot make it tangible. But then what is it that assures progress, what evidence have we to go on? There is only one evidence and that is our belief; there is one assurance and that is our faith. If we believe we can go on, if we are convinced we will, we must, reach our goal.

There are innumerable outer signs of one's progress, but one need not think in the absence of these signs that one is not progressing. What are these signs of progress? The first is that one feels inspiration, and that things which one could not understand yesterday are easy today. Yet if there are things which one is not ready to understand one should have patience till tomorrow. Agitating against lack of inspiration means closing the doors to inspiration. Agitation is not allowed on this path; agitation disturbs our rhythm and paralyses us, and then we prove in the end to be our own enemy. But people will generally not admit this and blame others instead; or if they have kind feelings towards others then they blame the circumstances, although very often it is their own lack of patience rather than other people or the conditions.

The next sign of progress is that one begins to feel power. To some extent it may manifest physically and also mentally; and later the power may manifest in one's affairs in life. As spiritual pursuit is endless, so power has no end.

The third sign of progress is that one begins to feel a joy, a happiness. But in spite of that feeling it is possible that clouds of depression and despair may come from without, and one might think at that moment that all the happiness and joy which one had gained spiritually was snatched away. But that is not so. If spiritual joy could be snatched away it would not be

spiritual joy. It is not like material comforts; when these are taken away from us we have lost them; but spiritual joy is ours, it is our property; no death nor decay can take it away from us. Changing clouds like those which surround the sun, might surround our joy, but when they are scattered we will find our property still there in our own heart. It is something we can depend upon, something nobody can take away from us.

There is another sign of progress, and that is that one becomes fearless. Whatever be the situation in life, nothing seems to frighten one any more, even death. Then one becomes fearless in all that might seem frightening, and a brave spirit develops, a spirit which gives one patience and strength to struggle against all adverse conditions however terrible they seem to be. It can even develop to such an extent that one would like to fight with death. To such a person nothing seems so horrible that he would feel helpless before it.

Still another sign of progress is that at times one begins to feel peaceful. This may increase so much that a restful feeling comes in the heart. One might be in the solitude, but even if one is in a crowd one still feels restful. Life in the world is most exciting; it has a tiring effect upon a sensitive person. When one is restless the conditions in life can make one experience the greatest discomfort, for there is no greater pain than restlessness. And if there is any remedy for the lack of peace, it is spiritual progress. Once peace is developed in a soul, that soul feels such a great power and has such a great influence upon those who approach it and upon all upsetting conditions and

Special Notices

Saturday, June 17th is the second Urs (the anniversary of the death) of Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan

Sufi Order Classes in Toronto

- Classes will not be held during the month of August.
- Classes will resume on Wednesday, September 6.

Sufi Order Classes in Brampton

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

jarring influences coming from all sides, that just as water makes the dust settle down, so all jarring influences settle down under the feet of the peaceful. What do we learn from the story told in the Bible of Daniel who was thrown into the lions' den, what does this story suggest? Was it Daniel's hypnotism which calmed the lions? If it was hypnotism, let the hypnotisers of today go to the lions and try the experience! No, it was his inner peace. The influence of that peace acts so powerfully upon all passions, that it even calms lions and makes them sleep.

One may make the excuse that one's surroundings are worrying one, that one's friends are troublesome or that one's enemies are horrible; but nothing can withstand that peace which is awakened in the heart. All must calm down, all must settle down like dust after water has been sprinkled on it.

But if this power does not come immediately to a mureed, let him not be disappointed. Can one expect this whole journey to be made in a week? I would not be surprised if many mureeds do expect this, but it is a lifelong journey and those who have really accomplished it are the ones who have never doubted that they would progress. They have never allowed this doubt to enter their minds to hinder them. They do not even concern themselves with this question. They only know that they must reach the goal, that they will reach it, and that if they do not reach it today they will reach it tomorrow. The right attitude is never to let one's mind feel, after one has taken some steps, that one must go to the right or to the left. If a man has that one strength which is faith, that is all the power he needs on the path. He can go forward and nothing will hinder him, and in the end he will accomplish his purpose.

Coming Events

June 3-4, in Ottawa: A weekend Seminar with Aziza Scott and Wajid Gallien. For details, please see the enclosed flyer or contact Qutb'Ud-din or Shanti: by phone: (613) 725-5509; by email: cioc@magma.ca or visit the Ottawa website at www.magma.ca/~mkalsi

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 1:30 pm on the **second Sunday** of the month, except July and August, at the Gallery Arcturus, 80 Gerrard Street East. For information, please contact Leslie Mezei at (416) 226-2869 or info@interfaithunity.ca

Universal Worship services are also 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 via email at berketa@3web.net and by phone at (416) 782-6612

Contact Information

Sufi Order of Toronto

% R. K. Carell
605—1603 Bathurst St.
Toronto, Ontario M5P 3J2
Phone: Khusrau (Bob) (416) 653-6787
email: khusrau@SufiOrder.toronto.on.ca
Website: SufiOrder.Toronto.on.ca

Sufi Order of Brampton

% Terry Wedge
37 Chapel Street
Brampton, Ontario L6W 2H5
Phone: Sirdar (Terry) (905) 452-6358
email: tawedge@sympatico.ca