

SUFI RUHANIAT INTERNATIONAL

God is Breath Program

Created by Murshid Wali Ali Meyer



Course 1

Breath, Concentration, and the God Ideal
Lesson 3 - Readings

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*Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty, the Only Being,
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the Spirit of Guidance.*

Gathas of Hazrat Inayat Khan, with commentary by Murshid Samuel Lewis

Naqshibandi: Symbology

Series I Number 5: The Symbol of the Dove

GATHA: The bird represents the wayfarer of the sky, and at the same time it represents a being who belongs to the earth and is capable of dwelling in the skies.

TASAWWUF: In ancient times there were sacred birds in many lands. Thus we have the Eagle in the old Olympian religion, sacred to Jupiter and Zeus. The Egyptians revered the Hawk as the sky-bird and the Ibis dwelling below. In India the Goose or Swan was particularly sacred, due in part to the sounds which they gave they were called hamsa-birds. Birds were also used as Messengers; the carrier pigeon is a messenger to this day. Both the Dove and Raven are mentioned in the story of Noah.

But the sound of the Dove was regarded as especially holy, for the Dove gave off the sound hu, which is the sound of the Holy Spirit. And in the Jewish writings the phrase, "the sound of the turtle" represented the principle that the Divine Presence was manifest.

GATHA: The pigeon was used as a messenger, to carry a message from one place to another, and therefore the symbol of the Dove is a natural one to represent the Messenger from above.

TASAWWUF: We have it in the Christian teachings that the Holy Spirit descended as a Dove on the shoulders of Jesus, and it is certain that this sound can be heard. This is also taught in the "Mysticism of Sound." ...

GATHA: Spiritual bliss is such an experience that if a bird or animal were to have it, it would never return to its kind. But it is a credit due to humanity that after touching that point of great happiness and bliss, they come into the world of sorrows and disappointments and delivers their message.

RYAZAT: Concentration on the Dove helps to arouse ecstasy. This is true of all wings of all symbols. They help to raise one above the denseness of the earth. But the Dove is an emblem of return and it is also given to bring sobriety to those who are too ecstatic, and the same is true for those who take to drugs. It is not necessary to correct them. Right concentration on this symbol helps to restore balance....

GATHA: This quality can be seen in the Pigeon also; when the pigeon is sent it goes, but it comes back faithfully to the master who sent it.

RYAZAT: This symbol also helps to promote fidelity, to adherence to duty, and thus to concentration. It also builds up selflessness because the dove only thinks of its errand, its purpose, its mission.

GATHA: The spiritual beings perform this duty doubly. They reach higher than the human plane, touch the divine plane, and bring the message from the divine to the human plane. In this

way instead of remaining on the divine plane, they arrive among their fellow beings, for their welfare, which is no small sacrifice.

TASAWWUF: This is the general mission or dharma of the Bodhisattvas, to live on earth, to dwell among people, to carry on earthly duties as if they were divine, and by not separating themselves from human-kind, to help others. Making differences is not the way to help others.

The Bodhisattva is able to function on all planes. As one great Sufi teacher, Abu Said ibn Abi'l Khayr put it, the Sufi lives like other people; works and plays, marries and begets children, does everything like everybody else but does not forget Allah for one instant. It is the constant Zikar which allows us to reach fullness, and then to withstand the conditions on all planes.

GATHA: But then again, they perform a duty to God, from Whom one brings God's message that they deliver to human beings.

TASAWWUF: ...Jesus Christ repeated, "Ye are Gods." It is our work to restore this sanctity in ourselves and in our fellow beings. The restriction of holiness to a few people is one of the prime reasons for the decay of Dharma. It is our attunement to and our union with God that enables us to experience life on all planes and not be pulled down by a troublesome world. If the Message is interpreted to mean that only a few or a single person has this ability, this function, it is no Message. The purpose of the Message is to keep humanity in constant Zikar and therefore thankfulness.

GATHA: They live as human beings, subject to love, hate, praise, and blame, pass their life in the world of attachment and the life that binds with a thousand ties from all sides. Yet they do not forget the place from where they have come, and they constantly and eagerly look forward to reach the place for which they are bound.

TASAWWUF: Therefore on the Sufi path there are only certain periods for retirement, called khilvat. The Sufi does not follow the Indian tradition of temporary withdrawal or the Buddhist practice of monkery. This makes a distinction and difference among humankind.

No doubt there are periods wherein one seems encompassed by loneliness and there are periods in which one benefits from withdrawal.

RYAZAT: Practices such as Zikar and Fikar maintain for the mureed constant remembrance and awareness of Allah. The concentration on the Dove is helpful when one is pulled down too much by the denseness of the earth, when one feels harassment, sorrow, pain. One can also see it when there is strain in the face or countenance; to stimulate feeling then this concentration is very helpful.

GATHA: Therefore in both these journeys, from earth to Heaven and from Heaven to earth, the idea of the Dove proves to be more appropriate than any other idea in the world.

TASAWWUF: The Dove may thus be associated with all aspects of breathing; inhalation, retention, exhalation. When one appears to be too ecstatic or 'high' more attention should be given to the exhalation, to bring the consciousness downward. And when one is always too sober, more attention to drawing the energy from space. We do not have to derive from chemicals or vegetable essences that are in the space itself.

RYAZAT: Jesus has said, "Be ye wise as serpents and as harmless as Doves." Here the serpent represents more of Jalal, no doubt, but both Wisdom and Harmlessness are part of Jamal temperament. If disciples are too quarrelsome, put on this discipline they will become

more peaceful. If a person is too self-centered, giving them this concentration will help to balance their nature and functions. No one can understand the purport of Ryazat until they have had some experience....

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Githas of Hazrat Inayat Khan

Amaliat: Psychology

Series II Number 8: Development of Power Through the Breath

The breath is the only power that works directly or indirectly. It works indirectly when it works through channels. It works directly when one is inhaling and exhaling. Its channels are not only the physical organs of the body, but all organs of the body radiate the power of the breath.

One who knows how to direct its power can even turn water into tonic and food into medicine; they can send with a flower the healing power; can charge any object with the electricity of the breath. The finer the substance the more power it absorbs. For instance, bread or wine can be more charged with psychic power than stone or wood, although powerful breath can affect anything, however fine or gross it may be. The presence of a spiritual person has a soothing and healing effect, and cures a patient.

The secret is the breath that is purified and developed becomes a stream of nectar. In the first place, breath is life, and when its current is attached to the inner life, the life eternal, it becomes more radiant life and it gives life to all mortals. It cures illness, because illness is caused by lack of life. It takes away depression, for it is light; when it is arisen, it takes away the clouds of depression. In the East, people seek the presence of a spiritual person, and often among them are such who never speak or teach or argue or discuss.

There are some who do not even utter a word of blessing, and yet their contact gives life to the lifeless, takes away depression and sorrows, clears away confusion and heals all maladies, for it is life that they radiate, and those in contact with them are benefited. It is an evident phenomenon that needs no proof. The atmosphere that a spiritual person charges with their magnetism is the testimony of their power. People call it psychic power, and yet psychic power without spirituality is a lame power and a blind power. When the psychic becomes spiritual, or when spiritual people develop psychic power, they become the fountain of life, continually flowing in this mortal world.

Series III Number 3

The use of psychic power is allowable to those who have insight into the law of nature; but without this knowledge the use of psychic power would be most harmful. By psychic power one can heal oneself and another, one can construct one's own affairs as well as the affairs of others, one can acquire riches and position; also, one can destroy things. The difficulty is in this question: What is really beneficial? For our fancies in life change at every moment, and what at one moment we think good and attainable at another moment we think useless; at one moment we think a certain thing profitable and the same thing after more reflection begins to

seem disadvantageous.

For instance, by psychic power people attract wealth and perhaps the same may have become harmful to their children, or desired a position and occupied it by psychic power and situated themselves in a position where there was danger to life. One always sees this by deep study of life, that one gain causes a loss of a certain thing and one loss brings about a gain of a certain kind. And this is the necessary thing in life; there would not be a balance if it were not so.

The first thing that is desirable, or that which is most desirable in life, is wisdom. The next is power. As a foolish person would not be able to make good use of their wealth, so a person with psychic power without wisdom is apt to harm themselves with their own power rather than to do any good. Every atom in this world has its peculiar charm and attraction, and humankind, so attracted by things that seem for the moment attractive, whether wealth, power, position or a friend, does not necessarily know the outcome of their attainment.

Everyone is as blind in their desire of attainment as a child attracted to anything beautiful, be it a toy or a knife. And when they cannot attain to it they feel as disappointed as a child that is not allowed to play with the knife. And it is keen sight into life that makes us see what is really good for us in our life. Selfish both are, the wise and the foolish; only that the foolish with their selfishness meets with disappointment while the wise with their selfishness gets the benefit. The nature of power is to cover the eyes and hide from our sight the true nature of the things we wish to attain. When power leads and wisdom follows, the face of wisdom is veiled and we stumble; but when wisdom leads and power follows, then we arrive safely at our destination.

Series III Number 7

Psychic power is like a spring of water—ample water and constantly pouring; and motive forms a channel for this water and thereby limits it to a certain extent. As by the channel formed by water, the farms are supplied and the water can become useful, so by a motive psychic power can become useful; without a motive it is useless. As many motives, so many channels; and as many times the water divided, so many times the power divided. It is therefore that people with many motives have much less success, but with a single motive sure success is achieved. When a person has no motive it is no fault of psychic power if nothing is accomplished. Even in a motiveless person it is possible that there may be a store of psychic power. When psychic power is directed in a channel it becomes like sweet water of a river, for by motive several virtues are developed. When psychic power is stored up and there is no motive, perhaps it is as wide as an ocean, but it is brackish water. Without motive a person is indifferent in everything.

There are great souls in the east who are called *majdhub* (also spelled 'madzub'). In their fullness of spiritual perfection they naturally have no motive, for no motive seems to them worth caring for in life, and therefore, with ocean-like psychic power, they accomplish nothing. Those who know about their power get some benefit out of their power, but they consider it as dangerous to approach them as to play with fire. If anybody can get them to consent to their wish it is sure to be granted, for it is just like the whole ocean making waves to grant their desire, and yet from their part there is no movement. If they have said yes with the yes of another they have not meant it. The majdhub is a marvel, and in the form of the majdhub the secret of God is hidden; for if God ever walks on earth, God walks in the form of the majdhub.

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Murakkabah: Concentration

Series III Number 3: Singlemindedness

Single-mindedness as a nature becomes a great help to concentration. People with a great many responsibilities and people with a great many interests in life cannot keep up single-mindedness, which indeed is a great power. This nature can be developed by concentration, but one can develop this nature by a great many things in everyday life which help towards its development.

It is a first essential thing for one who practices concentration to allow one thought at a time, or one action at a time, and to keep mind and body busy together. When people do something, they should not be thinking of another thing while doing it, and if they wish to think out something they must not be doing something at the same time. Single-mindedness is complete absorption of one's whole being in a single thought, speech or action.

Also, there is another side to it. Single-mindedness can be developed by dwelling on a subject until the thought be finished, and while thinking on the subject, not allowing the mind to take up another subject. The same law should be observed in speech. One must not change the topic in the midst of the speech. And the same law should be observed in action; one must busy oneself in action without taking up anything else until the action undertaken be finished. In this way one can develop concentration at every moment of the day and night. And by acquiring this one acquires mastery over one's own life as well as over life in general.

Asrar ul-Ansar: Mysticism

adapted from: Series III Number 4: Kamal

When the mystics notice their breath and state to be in a Kamal condition it is a certain sign of destruction—especially in the sense of the dissolution of that which is transient. At such a time when the question comes up for them, “Shall I be successful in my business, profession, enterprise?” Kamal in the mystic will answer, “No,” except in these sort of questions, “Shall I finish my course at the university this year?” “Shall I be released from my present imprisonment?” “Shall I obtain a divorce in the divorce court?” “Shall I be able to rid myself of the present influence? To all these questions they will answer, “Yes.” However if the question was asked in a different form they would answer “No”, such as “Will this present influence continue?”

In the question of spiritual advancement, in the question of union with God, or any union or assimilation or merging or annihilation, the Kamal state promises great success.

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Ryazat: Esotericism

Series II: Number 5

Our inner being is our soul, and our outer being is our body. These two poles of our being are linked by the breath, and if there is any way of experiencing life distinctly through the physical body and experiencing life clearly through the existence of the soul, it is Fikr.

By Fikr one becomes conscious of one's mind. Sometimes one becomes so absorbed in the mental plane that, for the moment, the physical body does not exist for one. When a person rises above this plane and wishes to be conscious of their soul, then Fikr helps them to attain this, for the breath is the only current which runs through all planes of our existence. The breath may be considered as a lift which can take you to any floor of the house you desire. The planes of our existence are like floors; through the power of the breath, one can reach any floor.

One may ask what practical benefit it is to realize one's soul. The answer is that the soul is our true being, and if we have not realized through life which our true being was and remained all through life in the illusion of considering the vehicles of our life as our being, we are greatly mistaken. Besides this, the realization of every plane of one's being gives that much more power and inspiration, and as much of our being we have realized, so great do we become in our power and inspiration.

Number 6: Kasab (Qasab) *(excerpt)*

Breath is the most important part of our life; in other words, breath is our very life. The one who is ignorant of its nature is ignorant of life. The one who is led by the breath is the slave of life, and the one who controls breath is the master of life. The words "led by breath" mean that it is the breath, its speed and its change into different elements and into different directions, which conducts all the affairs of our life. Those, ignorant of this fact, are led by the breath and experience conditions in life as they happen to come, and therefore life becomes not their realm but a prison.

When we become aware of this truth, we wish to gain control of our thoughts, feelings, emotions, passions, and of our affairs. Such people, by the help of Murshid, learn and practice the control of the breath which is called Kasab. This practice develops in time the volume of the breath, purifies it, and makes it rhythmic and powerful. This practice should not be exaggerated, nor should it be repeated oftener than prescribed by the Murshid.

Kasab first purifies all the breathing tubes of the body, which in time helps to purify every vein, even every nerve of the body....