

Sufi Ruhaniat International Esoteric Studies



God is Breath Program

Course 1:

Breath, Concentration, and the God Ideal

Lesson 4 - 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.*

On the Performance of Zikr
An Original Sangatheka by Murshid Samuel Lewis

Series II Z: DO

The Dove
(excerpts from Murshid Sam's practice of visualizing the Dove
while breathing fikr before or after Zikr)

This concentration is often given after success in Zikr to further the success in it.

When persons have entered into hal and do not understand it and who are apt to misinterpret the experience, this is a very good practice.

Persons who have visions, who are clairvoyant or clairaudient, who have dreams and strong impressions, will spiritualize them by this method.

This induces the hal of gentleness, of love, of tenderness, with action and willingness. This softens all qualities in order to make them more useful.

The healer can often benefit from this practice after magnetism has been developed; this regulates psychic magnetism and preserves spiritual magnetism.

This also relieves the mind from worries and is good for certain troubles, such as high blood pressure and acidity.

This may make the heart very sensitive; it is for the development of the intuitive faculty after it is once aroused.

It also removes pride and vanity and brings spiritual contentment.

Ryazat (Practice) from Wali Ali
Two breath practices visualizing the Dove along with Zikr:

As you inhale visualize the Dove descending to your crown and hear the sound of the breath as huuuu ...

At the pause at the top of the breath accept the guidance it brings and direct your attention to your heart where you visualize the Name Allah written in light ...

As you exhale you send forth the expression of the divine as a beacon of powerful compassionate vibration that is sealed with the imprimatur of the Name Allah shining forth in it.

Now breathe, visualizing thousands of doves descending as the one breath enters thousands of people, and expresses itself through their hearts.

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Sangithas of Hazrat Inayat Khan: Series I

Tasawwuri Murshid

Tasawwuri Murshid, or the thought of Murshid, is not given only that mureeds may concentrate on a form from which they seek their inspiration, but also that they may keep before themselves an ideal, not only to look up to, but to come up to. And this can be done by trying every moment of one's life to think as Murshid thinks, to see as Murshid sees, to feel as Murshid feels, and to act as Murshid acts in different situations. This means a perfect self-effacement, which makes the soul a mirror. The Murshid, reflected in that mirror, becomes the spirit of the mirror, and therefore one becomes the same spirit which one holds in one's soul.

There have been several Buddhas in the tradition of Buddhism, not only Gautama Buddha who is known to us as Buddha. The other Buddhas were the ones who did not only look up to Buddha, as the other Buddhists did. They came up to Buddhahood and become Buddha themselves. That is the ideal to arrive at. After the Prophet Muhammad's time there came Khalifs who succeeded him. Every Khalif of the four Khalifs of the Prophet showed one or the other quality of the Prophet to perfection, if not all qualities, proving thereby that they did not only follow Muhammad but they became Muhammad. This is the whole secret of mysticism, which is neither studied in books nor merely attained by meditation.

The whole secret of it is to make an ideal, to follow an ideal and to become it. It is in this that the purpose of esoteric work is fulfilled.

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Githas of Hazrat Inayat Khan

Ryazat: Esotericism Series II

Number 7

Development of the breath means its development in two directions—in volume and in length, the symbol of which one may see in the Cross.

There are some people who have breadth of breath. Perhaps they have a loud voice, a strong, vigorous voice, but a short compass. In India a singer is considered to be of great quality and gift who has, besides volume of voice, a large compass, who can touch the very high note and can produce the very deep note and at the same time every note may have clearness, strength and vigor. This gives the idea of the breath, that it is not necessary that the breath should have volume, for even the most material people may have volume of breath. No doubt they will have great magnetism and power over others, but that is not the only sign of spirituality.

If the compass of the breath is lengthy, one can be conscious of all planes of their existence; they can have clairvoyance, clairsaudience, visions, experiences with unseen beings and unseen worlds. But if they have a lengthy compass and no volume, then perhaps they have great experiences and no power. It is just as an intelligent person with a thin, silky voice may be speaking of high ideas before an assembly, and a rough person with a loud strong voice may come and stop the other from speaking, where the former has no power over the latter. So it is with half-developed breath. Volume gives power; compass gives vision. Both together make the development complete, and the balance of both is mastery.

Number 8: Rhythm in Kasab

Rhythm is most important in Kasab, for there ought to be a balance in the breath. Inhaling and exhaling must be even in rhythm, but the holding of the breath should not necessarily be even with the rhythm of inhaling and exhaling. For it makes three bars of an even rhythm, but three bars make a phrase or sentence of music odd in rhythm; to make it even, four bars are required. Therefore, the holding should balance evenly with inhaling and exhaling both, in order to make it four bars.

But it is difficult for everybody to hold the breath for that length of time. Also, if a person can hold the breath, they cannot retain it in the proper place where it ought to be. Therefore, when breath is held it may sometimes enter into any function of the body, which may perhaps cause injury and may result in danger. Those who practice the breath by the help of books or by the advice of an inexperienced teacher call such breathing deep breathing, often not knowing how long the breath should be inhaled, how long it ought to be held, and how much longer it ought to take to exhale.

The breath makes a difference in every direction in which it is sent, difference in mind and difference in the body; and when one thinks that simply deep breathing is beneficial, instead of doing good to self one does a great deal of harm. Often, insanity and nervousness are the consequences of wrong breathing exercises. At the same time, if it is right, it can cure one of any disease and weakness, since on the rhythm of the pulse and beats of the heart and head one's health depends.

And doctors can sometimes realize by the change of rhythm the condition of a person's health. The rhythm has a great influence upon the state of one's mind and body, and the rhythm can be kept even by keeping the rhythm of the breath even. For the breath is like the pendulum in the clock, on the movement and rhythm of which the regularity of the clock depends—so on the rhythm of the breath the order of the body and mind depends.

Number 9: The Sign of Having Been Benefitted by Kasab

When one feels, after practicing Kasab for a year at least, that the breath seems to have freedom in inhaling and exhaling, and one feels the breath light and pure, a feeling of happiness such as one feels when out in the country where the air is pure and bracing—that is the time when one may understand that Kasab has benefitted one. Also, the practice of Kasab develops the strength and energy which may be called the spirit of the breath or the real breath. That develops, and one feels that one's breath has become wide in its volume and long in its reach, and yet not heavy and depressing, since all depression mostly comes from lack of development of the breath. One sleeps well, and one feels hungry and thirsty and cheerful.

Besides that, it gives a feeling of lightness to the body and an ethereal development; one feels that one is becoming finer in every respect. Besides that, one begins to feel the atmosphere of others more, and one becomes sensitive to the pleasure and displeasure and the likes and dislikes of others. And if one is keen in their inner sight, they, by the help of Kasab, soon begin to see into the space. First, forms and colors appear to them, then glimpses of what is called the aura. This appears at times and disappears at times, as the condition of the inner sense happens to be.

It is of no use to a person who, seeing all this, cannot understand what is meant by it all. Also, it is not necessary that one should indulge in the satisfaction of curiosity in phenomena. And every step increases this. Therefore, those who stop, interested in phenomena, at the first step may remain there, wondering about it; whereas those who see it on the way and yet are not attracted to it so that it may chain their feet, go along safely to the ideal destination of life.

Number 10: The Attainment of Inner Being by Kasab

When we trace that the source that holds our life is nothing but light, then we realize that the nature of light is to extend its rays and spread them around it. So it is with the light of the soul. The soul spreads its light, which is breath, and extends it to the right and left. By that, all things external become lighted, that both eyes and mind may see. But

when this light, instead of extending, is concentrated—so to speak, instead of spreading is thrown inward—then it lights up the inner planes and all that is there becomes clear. This is done by Kasab, for in Kasab we master both the powers of light, in extending and throwing them inward, and thereby in time develop the light within us which guides us on our path toward the journey within.

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On the Performance of Zikr
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Series II Z:F

Fire
(excerpts)

Concentration upon Fire or the fire breath, while not generally given to mureeds, has very definite purposes.

It enables Zakir to sing higher notes.

It is excellent before engaging in strife or turmoil as it banishes fear.

It brings latent power to the surface; if continued it can become harmful.

It warms Zakirs, and often makes them uncomfortable for this reason, yet even in cold weather it should not be overdone.

It is fine for lethargic people, to awaken them.

It may produce an outer intoxication; it always takes one away from sobriety. In most instances it needs to be followed by action.

It aids very much in the circulation of the blood, which is really the mainstay of bodily warmth, mental perseverance and moral courage.

It enables people to stand up and often stimulates those who feel sleepy.

It is wonderful in protecting oneself from another, but it can cause fear and harm, and is not desirable before dealing with friends of the Zakir.

It may be used against the enemies of the moment, providing the Zakir always dominates the breath. Then it will achieve success.

When one has to be fearless, or cast aside sentimentality, it is very good.

This form of Zikr is often practiced by those who are being prepared to continue their evolution along the path of Malik or Mastery....

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Githa Series I: Occultism

Number 9: The Impression About the Affairs of Others

To the wise, apart from the mystical way, even in the realm of intelligence the conditions of others are manifest. First of all the action, speech, form and features of people tell the wise so much about themselves, and every movement tells one about the cleverness and stupidity of another, but the Sufis generally read another as clearly as a letter by sensing from the impression of the person reflected in themselves.

The nature of reflection on one's heart is just like the reflection in the water. If the water is pure, the reflection is clear; if it is dirty, the reflection is dim; if the water is still, the reflection is distinct; and if the water is moving the reflection is indistinct.

So it is with our heart. If the heart is pure from distinctions and differences of this illusionary world, the reflection is clear; if the heart is impure with falsehood, bitterness or deceit, the impression cannot become clear. At the same time, the heart may be pure but restless; it cannot have distinct reflection. Distinct reflection is to be found in the heart that is calm and powerful.

Do not depend upon looks and speech, not even on actions; for people can make themselves look much better than they are, can speak more wisely than they are, and can act like a saint, being a devil at the same time. The best thing is to take the impression of another person upon oneself and see in the mirror of one's heart what that person reflects. For people can put on the way of speech, the manner of deed and good appearance, but cannot create out of themselves an atmosphere different from what they are...

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On the Performance of Zikr
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Series III Z: EL
(Excerpted from Murshid's teachings on attuning to the Prophet Elijah)

By the Prince and Preceptor of all Initiates, Elijah, the Ghaib or Hidden One, the Sustainer of God's Message:

I need not appear when people praise God, for in God's Presence there is no need for aught.

God can only select for prophethood those who have selected God for Master. Every psalm is a paraphrase of Zikr.

The real descendant of David is the one who creates psalms of praise out of their own being in pure love for the Divinity.

Who cannot praise God cannot love God, cannot serve God, cannot become God.

The so-called solar body of initiates is composed of the sacred sounds they utter, for Heaven, Shemayim, is the abode of celestial sound.

The light actually went out of Israel when they ceased to repeat Ya Hu and Hallelujah. Pronunciation of these phrases day by day, and hour by hour, actually illuminates our bodies, hearts and souls.

The Sufis who practice praise of God are the true Ya-hus, the true Christians, the true followers of Islam and the true disciples of Allah.

Now is the Merkabah mystery explained which comes from the master of the earth, water, air and fire breaths by the assimilation of the Divine Breath through the intonation of the praise of God, Shema, Zikr, Takbir and Azan.

Dedicating every breath to God, the chariot of the soul is perfected, which is the same as Burrak only that Merkabah is also the means of the creation of the world, the projection of God's Divine Spirit as well as its return.

Continual repetition of the Holy Name builds in Heaven an accommodation for the Zakir which becomes a thebah or refuge for all souls. This is the true ark of the Lord which

saves humanity from the deluge caused by the decay of society's living connection with the One.

The Scripture says there was a wind and earthquake and fire and the Lord was not in them, but was in the still small voice. This shows that air and earth and fire as well as water serve the Lord, but in the Kemal breath of perfection is the Hu, the sound of the foundation of the world.

Many seek to perform little miracles not understanding the nature of the great event. What is the great event? When the human being becomes God. And when does a human being become God? By identifying self with the words of God's Mouth. How is this? Because the Scripture says the breath shall return to God Who gave it. What is this breath? It is the breath of remembered connection with the Source. The Zikr.

The Glory of the Lord becomes manifest to the one who glorifies the Lord.

How does the Lord enter? Through the breath. How does God depart? When speech, sound and music are sacrificed to God. This is the real sacrifice of the Spirit, to return to Allah that which Allah has bestowed.

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**Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan
Volume 5 Spiritual Liberty**

METAPHYSICS

Our Constitution

Our Physical Constitution

Our physical body is constituted of the five chief elements, which compose even the whole universe. The skin, flesh, and bones show earth properties. The blood, perspiration, and saliva represent the water element. The heat in the body and the digestive fire in the system denote the fire element. The breath and its inner work within the body, which enable us to stretch and contract, and the power of movement, which does not allow us to keep still for one moment, represent the air element. The ether element in us is that which controls our activities and gradually consumes all other elements. It is for this reason that a child is more active while an aged person is still and inclined to inactivity.

The different parts of the body roughly correspond to the different elements: the bones with the earth element; the flesh with water; the blood with fire; the skin with air; the hair with ether....

The Nature of the Senses and Their Organs

... Each sense has its dual aspect, Jalal and Jamal, the strong and the gentle aspects of life, which are represented by the right and left side, their action being expressive and responsive. Therefore, although the sense of sight is one, the eyes are two; the sense of hearing is one, but the ears are two. In reality, there is but one sense, and it is the direction of its experience, which is perceived through a particular channel. This being so, each experience is different from the other. Therefore, we may call this sense the five senses, although in reality it is one.

Whichever element predominates in a person's nature, the sense relative to that element is the most active. And as breath changes so many times throughout the day and night, its element acts in accordance with the senses. This is the cause of every demand of the senses....

The Source of Bodily Desires

The source of our bodily desires is one: the breath. When the breath leaves the body all desires leave it also. And as the breath changes its elements, and the elements – earth, water, fire, air, and ether – predominate in the breath by turns, this being caused by the different grades of activity in the breath, so the desires change. Therefore, in a certain climate one feels hungry, and in certain weather one feels thirsty, because the influence of weather on the breath kindles in the breath more of a certain element....

There is always a possibility of confusing desire with avidity, which is not a bodily desire, but the desire of the mind that has experienced its joy through the bodily desire. Even in the absence of the bodily desire, the mind demands and forces the body to desire. In this aspect every bodily desire is out of place and undesirable, and enslaves one....

The soul becomes captive in this physical body, which is subject to death and decay, and forgets the freedom and peace of its original abode. That is why at times Sufis experience the satisfaction of desires, and at times abstain by the power of will, to allow the soul to experience its original joy, being in its own essence, independent of mind and body.

By doing so the soul knows its first and last dwelling-place, and it uses the body, its earthly abode, to experience life on earth. It is as undesirable, according to the Sufi's point of view, to kill the bodily desires by absolute or partial renunciation, as to over-indulge them and enslave one's life to them. The Sufi means to possess the desires, not to be possessed by them.

The Source of Our Emotions

The source of our emotions is our breath, whose impurity brings confusion and whose purity produces radiance. As the breath changes from one to the other element it produces in us an inclination towards a certain emotion. But according to the power of our will we control or give in to its unruly expression.

Every emotion has its color and its savor. One emotion develops into the other, since the proportion of activity of the mind, in its increase and decrease, produces emotions. No emotion is undesirable so long as it is under the power of the will, but when uncontrolled even the least effect of it is a mistake. Fear has the influence of the earth element. Affection has the effect of the water element. Anger has the effect of the fire element. Humor has the effect of the air element....

With light, the influence of the earth element produces caution. The influence of water with light produces benevolence. The fire element with light produces ardor. The influence of the air with light produces joy and ether with light produces peace....In fact, it is one emotion, and by controlling ourselves we control all things in the world.

The Soul Itself Alone

The soul in itself alone is not other than consciousness, which is all pervading. But when the same consciousness is caught in a limitation through being surrounded by elements, in that state of captivity, it is called soul.

The Chinese use the simile of a bee when describing the soul. It is symbolical, and really denotes the eye, the pupil of which is like a bee. In other words, the nature of the soul may be studied in the nature of the eye. All things exposed to the eye are reflected in it

for the moment. When the eye is turned away, the reflection is in it no more. It had received it for the moment only. Such is the nature of the soul.

The soul has no birth, no death, no beginning, and no end. Sin cannot touch it, nor can virtue exalt it. Wisdom cannot open it up, nor can ignorance darken it. It has been always and always it will be. This is the very being of humanity, and all else is its cover, like a globe on the light....