



Sufi Message Volume 4

Mental Purification – Unlearning, Part 2

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It is most difficult to forget what one has once learned. Learning is one thing; and unlearning is another. The process of spiritual attainment is through unlearning.

Spiritual attainment, from beginning to end, is unlearning what one has learned. But how does one unlearn? What one has learnt is in oneself. One can do it by becoming wiser. The wiser one becomes, the more one is able to contradict one's own ideas. The less wisdom one has, the more one holds to one's own ideas. In the wisest person there is willingness to submit to others. And the most foolish person is always ready to stand firm to support their own ideas. The reason is that the wise person can easily give up their own thought; the foolish holds on to it. That is why a person does not become wise because a person sticks to their own ideas; that is why they do not progress.

Mental purification therefore is the only method by which one can reach the spiritual goal.

1. Take another's point-of-view

In order to accomplish this one has to look at another person's point of view. For in reality every point of view is one's own point of view. The vaster one becomes, the greater the realization that comes to one, the more one sees that every point of view is all right. If one is able to expand oneself to the consciousness of another person, one's consciousness becomes as large as two persons. And so it can be as large as a thousand persons when one accustoms oneself to try and see what others think.

Practice: Ya Wasi' (yaa WAA-si') The All-Embracing, The All-Pervading, The Boundless

- The One whose power, knowledge, mercy and generosity are boundless.
- Release old boundaries.
- Antidote rigid habitual boundaries.
- *If life calls us to a greater capacity to feel deeply, we have two choices: stretch or break. The training of the heart in Sufism begins from this interplay of need and capacity. The student brings the need, the guide brings the capacity.*– Douglas-Klotz, Neil. *The Sufi Book of Life*

2. Look for the Right in the Wrong and the Wrong in the Right

The next step in mental purification is to be able to see the right of the wrong and the wrong of the right, and the evil of the good and the good of the evil. It is a difficult task, but once one has accomplished this, one rises above good and evil.

One must be able to see the pain in pleasure and the pleasure in pain; the gain in the loss and the loss in the gain. Mental purification means that impressions such as good and bad, wrong and right, gain and loss, and pleasure and pain, these opposites which block the mind, must be cleared out by seeing the opposite of these things. Then one can see the enemy in the friend and the friend in the enemy. When one can recognize poison in nectar and nectar in the poison, that is the time when death and life become one. Opposites no more remain opposites. That is called mental purification. And those who come to this stage are the living sages.

Practice: Ya Halim (yaa ḥa-LEEM) Divine Forbearance, Divine Calm-Abiding

- Manifestation of healing wisdom.
- Wisdom bringing balance and harmony.
- Halim - *A state that descends upon us in tune with the purpose of our lives can free us from a rigid view of who we think we are.*
- *[Dissolving] tension and [freeing] ourselves from our conceptions of the past. This is why Sufis emphasize unlearning. What we need is not more information, but a deeper knowledge of ourselves.* – Douglas-Klotz, Neil. *The Sufi Book of Life*

Reading: We are the picture of the reflection of our imagination; we are as large or as small as we think ourselves. – Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan

Commentary from Murshid SAM (Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti, Samuel L. Lewis):

So long as our thought is centered around our concept of a limited self, we are limited by the power of thought; when we rise to the fullness of life in the Cosmic Unity, finding that God Alone is and is the True Self, we are no longer limited. And what was it that limited us? It was nothing but our own thought. Just as thought can obtain all knowledge of matter, so can spirit gain all knowledge of thought, and so can God-attainment give all knowledge of spirit.

Closing:

- Welcome Friend, A Poem by Shamsuddin Jim Norton
- [Click to View/Download the Text of this Poem](#)
- Book by Shamsuddin, available on [Amazon](#)

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