



Githa
Dhyana: Meditation

by

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Githa Dhyana: Meditation

Ed—The following introduction is by the Sufi Order International. It illustrates the uncertainty of the author. According to Saadi Douglas Klotz these Githas were written by Samuel L. Lewis: "Hazrat Inayat Khan would not have had time to give enough classes to mureeds in San Francisco (or California) during the time of his visit to account for three series of ten papers each. There are two drafts of each paper in the first two series, a practice Murshid Sam frequently used. It's likely that the second draft (in each series) was his later one. They are quintessentially Murshid Sam throughout."

The italicizing mentioned below has not been maintained, but the peculiarities such as the extensive but inconsistent capitalization are retained and the indication of certain important words by leaving spaces between the letters in Series III are kept here by using bold letters. Another peculiarity is the use of words that are not in the dictionary. These "peculiarities" are common in other writings by Samuel L. Lewis.

Series II numbered with "A" are included in the "Complete works of Hazrat Inayat Khan."

Introduction to Gita Dhyana

The five series of ten papers each known as Gita Dhyana have a complex and uncertain history which requires considerable explanation. Unfortunately, there remain a number of unanswered questions which must await the uncovering of more evidence before a convincing account can be given. Much of what follows is of necessity conjectural.

When Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan was in San Francisco in the spring of 1923, he gave many public lectures, of which the surviving texts are given in this volume. But, of course, he also gave private classes for the mureeds initiated on his behalf by Murshida Martin, who had so anxiously awaited his return after an absence of twelve years. Some of these classes, probably those for the more advanced mureeds, are the apparent origin of Gita Dhyana. Someone, perhaps Murshida Martin herself, perhaps Samuel Lewis, who belonged to that circle, must have taken down what Pir-o-Murshid said on these occasions (it is not known whether anyone there knew shorthand), and from these notes new sets of papers were created.

These were modeled on the series of "lessons," later called "Githas," worked out in London by Sharifa Goodenough in 1917-1920. In these series, the teaching on a particular subject is normally divided into ten short papers, designed to be read aloud to mureeds at the classes.

The Githa Dhyana, in the state in which it has come down to us, reflects different degrees of editing. Some of the papers remain very close to what Pir-o-Murshid might have said; others add words, phrases and even whole paragraphs exhibiting a mode of speech or line of thought quite different from the Pir-o-Murshid's. It may be that in some cases the material from the classes did not suffice to make up a series of ten papers, so other materials may have been added to fill out those series.

This collection has become known in Europe mainly through the agency of Sirdar van Tuyl, who received it from the legacy of Murshida Martin. Sirdar's wife, Saida, wrote in 1966:

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“Although Sirdar at one time considered these series of Githa Dhyana as not authentic, later on, after Sirdar had passed away, many questions asked by other mureeds who owned parts of them (in German) caused Saida to read those she had in English once more. She gave them also to Sakina to read again, whereupon both came to the conclusion that these series Githa Dhyana must be for the greater part Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan’s own words, only taken down by Murshida Martin, who worked them out and rendered them in places in her own words. The underlined parts (words, phrases and sentences) in these three series contain expressions we never heard Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan use....”

After a very careful study of the papers, the present compiler concluded that in a few cases underlined words were in fact most likely to have been used by Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan himself, whereas quite a few passages not underlined actually represent additions to what was said by him. Therefore, instead of here reproducing the underlinings of the old copies, all words now considered not to have been spoken by Pir-o-Murshid are put in italics, whether substitutions (of words or phrases) or additions (of sentences or paragraphs or more). These changes would appear to have been made by Murshida Martin, or, in many cases, by her pupil Samuel Lewis. The italicized material has not been indexed, and is included here for the sake of completeness of the Githas as they exist in the archives. Editing and stylistic adjustment must, quite clearly, also be assumed for the “authentic” passages.

Certain peculiarities of the texts have been retained here, such as the extensive but inconsistent capitalization and the indication of certain important words by leaving spaces between the letters. Those familiar with the teachings of Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan will perhaps be surprised to find the name “Allah” used so often for God, or the word “talib” for the mureed, and a much greater than average frequency of other Arabic words. Murshida Martin was Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan’s first initiate in the West, and the teaching he gave her in 1911, not long after he had left India, made much use of traditional Sufi terminology, which of course continued in use in her centre. It may be that returning after twelve years, Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan was prompted by the established usage in that centre to take up this earlier terminology, even though he by that time had gradually been giving up the use of non-Western terms in his lectures in Europe.

A particularly vexing problem arises with respect to the numbering of the papers. In the case of both Series I and Series II, we have not one set of Githa Dhyana, but two. These papers in most cases are not, however, two versions of the same talk, but distinct treatments of related subject matter. In most cases, both sets appear to contain substantially the words of Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan himself. There is no satisfactory explanation for the existence of these parallel sets. It might be that the second set in each case was drawn up from answers to questions asked at the end of the talks represented in the first set, as it was Pir-o-Murshid’s habit to entertain questions, and no other record of his possible answers has come down to us. This would explain the closeness of subject matter, but does not really explain why the papers should have been presented as though they were separate lectures.

In order to keep these parallel sets distinguishable, the compiler has added a bracketed A after the Arabic numeral identifying each paper of the second set. Thus we have:

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Series I, Number 1 and Series 1, Number 1[A] and so on to the end of Series 1
Series II, Number 1 and Series II, Number 1[A] and so on to the end of Series II
Series III, Numbers 1 - 10

These papers are in the archives in the form of carefully prepared copies made under Sakina Furnée's supervision, typed by her secretary, Mrs. E. von Derschau, and checked by Sirdar's secretary, Miss An Spirlet. They were made from originals in Sirdar's collection which cannot presently be located. All of this applies as well to Series II, Numbers 1-10 and Series III, Numbers 1-10.

Series I, 1 - 10

This series exists in only one set, the carefully typed copy supervised by Sakina Furnée, (see Series I, 1 - 10) made from a copy originally in Sirdar's collection in The Hague which can no longer be located.

Series I, 1[A] - 10[A]

In the archives of the Biographical Department, these papers exist in the form of a photocopy of an old typescript (o.t.) in a small type. Nothing is known about the location of the original from which this photocopy was made.

Series II, 1 - 10

These papers are again known in the typewritten copy prepared under Sakina's supervision (see Series I, 1-10), of which the originals have yet to be found.

Series II, 1[A] - 10[A]

These papers are known in two copies, one in photocopy from files of papers used by Samuel Lewis in San Francisco (S.L.), the other a photocopy of a stenciled set in Sirdar's files in The Hague (o.t.). There also exists a German translation of this set, apparently made quite early. Mrs. Laura Hoeber, an American mureed belonging to the San Francisco centre, went to the Summer School in Suresnes in 1923, and stayed in Europe to work for the Sufi Message (cf. Biography of Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan, London: East-West, 1979, p. 514). In 1924, Pir-o-Murshid gave her charge over the centre in Munich, Germany, and she may have wished to use Gita Dhyana in her work there, sent for a copy to Murshida Martin, and translated the papers. (Mrs. Hoeber may have been of German origin.) This is one possibility to explain the connection between these classes given in America and this early, literal German translation. Both the "o.t." and this German translation are designated as "Series III"; however, "S.L." is designated as "Series II," and the closeness in subject matter to the other known set of Series II makes it clear that that is correct. The German translation appears to be closer to "S.L." than to "o.t.," and for this and other reasons we have taken "S.L." as the basic text here.

Series III, Numbers 1 - 10

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Githa

Series I: Number 1

Meditation is the name given to the process of the stilling of mind which is most important in spiritual development. Without this stilling of mind, the Divine Spirit does not manifest in the personality, for otherwise one is held in the sway of the ego. Both quieting of mind and body and the soothing of the emotions are necessary if one desires to become a mastermind, which is to say, if one wishes to avoid the jarring disturbances of life which disturb most people.

In order to meditate attention is first given to the body, to see that it is relaxed, yet comfortable. Sitting in too soft a chair may make one too drowsy while too hard a chair may make one uneasy. A moderate degree of composure is desirable whether one is seated or in posture. The room should be neither too hot nor too cold, and it is generally best if one is not too hungry, although meditation after a full meal is not so easy nor always so advantageous.

One should learn to breathe rhythmically and to refine the breath by the process called **Safa**. In this respect the Sufi meditation differs from that of the Buddhists for the Sufis use the names of God, which is to say the ninety-nine names or attributes offered in Qur'an, or repeat some sacred phrase or Darood which helps to refine the breath. The refinement of breath is a balm to the body and also a chain upon the nufs which seeks refuge in the mind as the body is brought into control.

The doors of the senses should be held closed; shutting the eyes partly or entirely is beneficial. The room should not be too brightly lit nor too dark, but it is by self-control that one must shut out other disturbances. Nevertheless, especially for the beginning, a quiet place is desirable and sound-proof rooms may be used.

Rhythmic breath holds the mind in place also. Keeping the thought of God before one refines the breath. Sufis practice esotericism mostly, which has the same general effect as silent meditation, but when they meet in groups or when strangers are present such methods are undesirable. However if one can maintain a calm, rhythmical, refined breath, after a time he will not even have to keep the thought of God before him. Thus he becomes an empty cup, only in meditation one keeps the cup empty, one empties the mind of everything.

Meditation is verily the fasting of the mind.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series I: Number 1[A]

The first thing that is necessary in meditation is to realize it is an act of attunement, an attunement with God. Therefore while it is necessary to relax, while it is important to control the emotions and the functions of mind and body, it is also important to raise, so to speak, the pitch of the heart, so that this attunement can be accomplished.

It is first necessary to relax the body, to be comfortable, but not to sit in too soft a chair or to lie down, for while the body is resting in meditation it is not in the same condition as in sleep. The reason is that the body is also in meditation, the body also breathes; it breathes through the pores of the skin, and it is necessary to keep the whole body in meditation. This is impossible while lying in a covered bed or among soft cushions. As mystical training is to make the body the temple of God, the body must not be neglected.

Neither must the mind be neglected. It is not enough to subdue thought, it is to raise the pitch, and although it may be said that to overcome one's thoughts, to become master of one's mind, is most difficult, one must face that battle. If one passes into sleep or into a dream or musing state, the mind is relaxed, but it is not properly relaxed. This is running away from the battle, thinking one has won it. One may think one has won the battle, but what has one won? The answer is easily seen when one looks at the great tasks which have been accomplished after meditations, which show that meditation is a positive action, not merely a relaxation.

This is what is meant when it is said that the Sufi is negative to God and positive to man, that he takes all that is given him, and gives all that he has. The Fakir may resemble, so to speak, a strainer or colander, through which much passes, and which retains nothing. He is also a cup which must empty itself to be filled. And of what does the cup of the Sufi empty itself? First, it empties itself of itself.

When this is understood, such legends as those of the cup of Jamshyd and the miraculous pitcher of Baucos and Philamon become clear. The pitcher will hold milk no matter how often it is emptied, and the crystal cup of Jamshyd is always full of wine, the Divine Love. The same is seen in the stories of Christ dividing loaves and fishes. What were the loaves? They were Christ's body. And what is Christ's body? It is Divine Wisdom, Sufism.

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Githa

Series I: Number 2

In meditation the control over mind is exerted through breath and mind. The breath is kept rhythmical and refined and it becomes ever more refined as the consciousness is turned upon it and the light of man's inner being manifests thereon. If the breath is not kept in rhythm, thoughts will enter and this battle against thought, especially against ego-thought, is the battle that every saint and sage has to combat continually. For this also will-power is needed. So in Sufism the talib is given a symbolical concentration in order to strengthen the will-power, so that not only will this power manifest, but that it can be used to control one's lower nature.

When the breath is kept in rhythm and is refined, the magnetism which is ordinarily consumed in the activities of mind and body is preserved. In whatever we do and in all our thinking and imagining we consume energy. This consumption of energy brings on old age and weakness. Contrariwise it may be that meditation of itself may cure man's evils, whatsoever they be. For all arise out of nufs, and meditation is the best means to crush nufs.

When one does that, the magnetism which is ordinarily wasted or consumed, is absorbed into one's personal atmosphere. This makes of him a battery of life. It is this battery which is used by teachers and healers and all mystics. It is the same energy which is mentioned in *Nayaz*, that it comes to man through the rays of the sun and the waves of the air and the all-pervading power of space. Through breathing the energy which is conveyed on the air enters the personality through the breath; by silence and by stilling the mind one draws upon the endless resources of space. This absorption is a veritable alchemy and the knowledge of it is the secret of the adept.

There is some benefit when meditation is performed constantly in one place, whether one has devotions in a room alone, or in a hall or chamber where many gather together. Such a place offers the right accommodation for the highest and finest vibrations and establishes an atmosphere of stillness. This makes it easier for others who come to such a place. The saints are often called upon to preserve the stillness of holy places.

The teacher can, by his presence, make the accommodation for still finer vibrations. So there is at least one advantage to have a teacher who is more than a leader, who can elevate the feeling of a room. Yet the faith of people, their prayers and their attitudes also help to strengthen the atmosphere of a chapel, a hall/ I/ or a temple. All things that lead away from self, lead to God.

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Githa

Series I: Number 2[A]

Beloved ones of God:

In meditation the control of the mind and body is exercised through the breath, and not only in meditation but in all acts and aspects of life, the control of the mind and body is through the breath and this can be discovered when the sight is keen. There are two aspects of this.

First is the creation of one's own atmosphere, and this also has two aspects. There is the regulation of one's breath, the adjustment to the proper rhythm, together with the control of the body and mind. One constantly changing breath can neither meditate nor perform any other function. Therefore breathing exercises and practices are given. These affect the aura about one, and develop the personality. This is the gradual change which takes place during spiritual development unperceived, perhaps, yet very definite.

Besides building this atmosphere about oneself, one affects one's environment. One is able to radiate a magnetism which may be healing, and not only in the sense of helping sick people, but of helping everybody. For who is not sick? It is not only those who have diseases of the body, but everybody who is in need in some way, and the spiritual person can help.

But the best atmosphere is that created in a place where one stays often. That is why it is so important to have a room, a room in which one meditates. The highest vibrations one is able to build up will always remain there, and when one builds still higher vibrations, they raise the pitch of that room. Therefore, when one meditates in such a room, they can heal themselves and send out healing and helping thoughts to another.

This helps us to understand the second aspect of building an atmosphere in meditation, that is the use of a chapel or room or temple where spiritual students can congregate. By combining their efforts, they collectively build such an atmosphere, an area of calm and quiet, the centre of fine vibrations, which becomes a healing center. People often imagine about healing pilgrimages and some do not believe in the miraculous cures, but this is a mistake. The faith of the people, their prayers, build up this atmosphere, and the healthy ones who go there actually heal the sick, and the sick, in the area of these purified atoms become well. Therefore the Sufi who understands, will never speak against this type of cure or healing; it may truly be said to be spiritual.

Finally, as one builds up an atmosphere in one's room, so the spiritual teacher builds up the atmosphere in the meditation hall, bringing in his purified personal atmosphere, and raising the pitch so that all who can attune themselves will rise nearer and nearer to that consciousness which is the goal of all who travel on the Path of God.

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Githa

Series I: Number 3

While one does not perform meditation for selfish purposes, nevertheless there is a great gain in personal magnetism and if one needs magnetism or desires it, there is no better manner of obtaining it than through meditation. For then it is that the battery is recharged which has been giving out so much energy in thought, speech and action. All of these things consume vital magnetism and the silence of the sages is to conserve the power that it might be transmuted or used only to benefit the world.

Such things as holding one hand in the other, or folding hands or crossing the legs under the body or even kneeling tend to keep the magnetism from scattering. The body is a bio-electric vehicle as the scientists are now learning. Breathing in the silence draws energy into it. The healing practices help even more. But besides this, when one restrains the ego in speech, thought and action, and when one refrains from these things, already the power begins to return to the vehicles of the soul.

Magnetism leaves the body through the nostrils, fingers, eyes, ears, tongue, lips, feet and all over. The controlling of these centres and organs makes of the body a human temple of God. Rhythmic breathing, rhythmical schedules and all practices of rhythm are also beneficial. Otherwise the gain that might come in meditation may be frittered away and lost.

To make sure of one's gain it is best to meditate regularly at a certain hour, every day if possible, or less often if this is not possible. This adds to the music of life also. For the gain of one person in magnetism can be the gain of all. The teacher or leader in meditation helps the others because of his increased capacity and also because of his ability to draw the cosmic energy.

It has not been meant that we should be subject to pain, suffering and disease. It is even possible to live a long time in the body without feeling the ravages of years. Moses stayed one hundred and twenty years and departed in the full vigor of his energies because he knew how to tap what some have called the cosmic reservoir. Yes, no doubt the reservoir is there and it is not wrong to tap it. Sufism is wisdom and wisdom does not mean to refrain from everything that will bring personal satisfaction or happiness. One does not have to put these things first. One may lead a perfectly balanced life and obtain all the blessings thereof without any danger to oneself or hindrance of spiritual evolution.

The greatest gain, however, is peace, which is paramount even to magnetism. This is obtained in the silence by complete restraint especially against the ever constant activity of mind.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series I: Number 3[A]

Beloved ones of God:

Something has already been said of the posture in meditation and also of the need of poise. The purpose of posture is to control the magnetism, to control the currents which are generated. If one went into a room where the vibrations are very poor and held out the hands, and separated the feet, the magnetism would be scattered. This might be good for the room, but would not help one very much.

The spirit enters through the breath, but the magnetism of that spirit is transferred to the nerves and blood and carried to the extremities. The magnetism that leaves the body is not through the nostrils, but chiefly through the fingers, the toes and the head area, and in the head area through the eyes, ears, and a little through the crown, chin, nostrils and through speaking. By controlling these avenues of egress one retains the strength from Prana, and in that way builds up his own powers. This develops not only the power of the breath, but the power of healing, the power of the word, all powers come through this breath.

The purpose of poise or position is to keep the body in equilibrium, so that one will not sway nor have to exert a force to retain this position, to keep steady. For this reason some mureeds are trained in certain postures and others otherwise, and each exercise or prescription given by Murshid may vary, for the purpose is to help the mureed according to his need.

Rhythm is also necessary, and this rhythm is of two kinds; rhythm in breathing and rhythm in daily life. In meditation the rhythm must be steady, as one learns in the study of Fikr. This is more important than to fix a rate, slow or fast, or to have a light or deep breath, although all of these are important in their effect on body and mind.

But as the whole body, mind and soul unite in meditation, it is important, to have a fixed hour or fixed periods for meditation, to arrange one's time so there are hours for work, play and eating, studying and meditation, and to keep these hours as much as possible. When one is traveling a change may be necessary, but otherwise this should be kept foremost. Fifteen minutes a day regularly will help one much more spiritually than two hours a day at one's convenience. Why? Because these fifteen minutes are devoted to God, and those two hours for the self, and this is not true meditation, which seeks for nothing but the realization of God.

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Githa

Series I: Number 4

The atmosphere is itself most helpful to those in meditation. Of course there are monks and ascetics who meditate alone in different parts of the world, but even they build up their own atmospheres. There is a great deal of strength gained by a person who can retire to his own atmosphere, and the more sensitive he is the more will he feel it.

Meditation helps one to become more receptive. However if by this term is meant the receiving of knowledge or of wealth or of anything in particular it is not so. Yes, there have been in ancient times and there are today and there may be in later times also those who seek to use spiritual devices to obtain material or selfish ends for themselves. But ultimately they must pay for these things and they do not rise thereby above the real, of karmic interplay.

The receptive person draws the energy of the sphere into himself. For instance it is by such means that **Shifayat**, the healer, makes of himself an instrument whereby divine energy can find a channel through which it goes in order to reach ultimately the mind and body of a sick person. This shows that the energy can be directed, but in meditation one does not even think about energy. That would be a concentration and would draw forces in a particular direction. In meditation one tries to strip himself of every kind of thought and of every type of motive.

No doubt the one who practices meditation gains in sympathy and in insight. This ability to sympathize is most important for it helps to further break down the differences and distinctions which divide men. In the negative state one may feel the suffering, pathos and pain of another; if he remains there he cannot be helpful. For this reason Sufis practice Darood or repeat an Invocation before meditation, so that they can better be united with the whole stream of life, which manifests through the chain of illuminated souls, who form the Spirit of Guidance.

The development of insight leads ultimately to expression. One does not primarily practice meditation for the sake of gaining an answer to his problems or questions, yet if one is overburdened he can bring one question with him into meditation, sit quietly, remove all thoughts, watch the breath at every instant and find himself receive a knowledge or instruction as if the universe itself were speaking to him. Then and thus will he recognize the Voice of Wisdom. For in the Silence God Himself becomes the Teacher, the Teacher of all.

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Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Githa

Series I: Number 4[A]

Beloved ones of God:

The Quality of atmosphere enables one to become more quickly receptive. Receptive to what? To the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, the Only Being.

Some people believe that meditation brings a relaxation and then one should receive everything. This shows lack of discrimination for there are impressions and thoughts and suggestions that are of no value. What is attunement? It is altering the pitch of the personal will to the Will of God. Whatever one holds before oneself, to that will he become attuned, but if everything is allowed to pass before one's mind, it can become affixed on nothing. It is the same as one first viewing a great city or marvelous scenery; they do not fix their gaze on anything. The Sufi, knowing this, fixes his gaze on God.

In healing, if one does this, he gradually draws the magnetism of the universe and dedicates his body for a healing work. But if he thinks that negativity means attuning to the sick patient, he draws on the condition of the patient instead of the Divine Help, and may take on the illness without helping the sick person much. This comes from a wrong view of sympathy.

Sympathy means an attunement, a feeling with, but there is a negative way and a positive way of sympathizing. In the negative way one feels the suffering, the pathos, the pain, and unites in grief but does not bring much help. In the positive way, one raises the other from sorrow; one is able to give them their better condition without taking on the lower condition. This is true healing. That is the reason why one must repeat "Towards the One" so much during the healing service, and gradually attune oneself to the Divine rays which are health-giving.

But this is not only so in healing, but in all forms of inspiration, in poetry, music, art, invention, and all aspects of the creative process. The more one meditates the more one rises to the essence of things, becoming a vehicle for divine expression. There every aspect of life becomes an art and a science.

One going to his meditation feeling, "God is my Teacher, I have something to learn from Him, I will listen attentively," will be rewarded with the greatest blessing, receiving in the Silence and Meditation that which he is capable of understanding, and by this gradually his purpose of life will be unfolded.

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Githa

Series I: Number 5

Nothing is more valuable in the spiritual life than meditation. If he only knew it is more valuable than food, sleep or any of those activities which seem so necessary to him. And this need is known even to the animals. For instance one often sees cats rest with their paws under them. They try to produce a state of calmness in which there is neither thought nor emotion. Many other animals make use of the silence although birds also indulge in praise to God aloud.

Even the machines that man makes break down and need reconditioning and overhauling. There being no perpetuality and there being action and reaction, man has to learn how to recharge his vehicles. Instead he usually argues that he "has not the time" for meditation. Yet meditation is the very thing that will give him the time, and most of all for his own self, for his own welfare.

Meditation is not only the way to healing, it is the key to all things. If all studies were stopped and if there was only esotericism and meditation nothing of Sufism or of spiritual philosophy would be lost. One can dispense with study papers and literature. The real truth is to be found within one's own being. But if there is constant activity and if there is all attention to the world outside, how can man ever come face to face with himself? Instead he grows older with the years and displays loss of vitality so very often. For not only when body is fatigued or mind tired does this loss manifest, but in every display of emotion also.

Meditation is thus far more important than any and all intellectual study. Through the intellect one can only receive what has come to the intellect of others and as they are limited, so he is limited. Besides, he does not get their real knowledge thereby, he only obtains a reflection of it. It is only when one relaxes body and mind that he begins to learn the Cosmic Language. This language is universal and omnipresent, and is understood by the awakened heart.

There should be a balance between meditation and activity. If this is continued one will find his meditation even in his everyday life. So it does not mean retiring to the closet for long periods, expecting some reward therefrom. It is only as the ego is restrained, one increases the capacity within himself for the Divine Light and comes to a realization of his true being.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Githa

Series I: Number 5[A]

Beloved ones of God:

Actually nothing is needed more in life than meditation. It is more important than even food and sleep and all the activities of life. Those who are only a little observant will notice that cats often lie with the paws under their body, in a posture of meditation, and this is so, they are meditating. They meditate in Silence. Birds, on the contrary, practice Zikr, praise to God, but throughout creation, from rocks and trees to man, everything is in meditation sometimes.

Even the machinery which man makes will breakdown if it is not given rest and overhauling, but to man's own vehicles, his body and mind, this is not considered so important or necessary. Many people constantly put off taking up spiritual studies because they "have not the time." They do not see that a little spiritual training will not only give them more time for what they must do, but will enable them to know with their whole heart and soul what they must do. This will make it possible to eliminate all unnecessary acts in life, to devote one's energy to what is vital. Even pleasure and pain become the greatest of mysteries and problems to those not on the spiritual path.

Meditation is not only the key to healing, it is the key to all things. If all the studies were dropped and only the spiritual practices, the invocation and the prayers were retained, nothing of Sufism would be lost. The soul would remain and could build up new bodies. It would be like throwing away one's clothes and thinking the body is lost, but it might be the gainer by such an act.

Meditation is not only far more important than study, it is true study. When one completely relaxes the body and mind, and becomes receptive to God, then the Voice of God will speak to him in the language of the soul. This is true Sufism which can never be explained, yet can clearly be understood.

One can never meditate too much. This does not mean going into one's closet, but it means keeping the heart fixed on God, to keep the mind fixed on the invocation, every moment day and night, so the very breath will keep on calling, "Towards the One." Then the hour will arrive some time when the Talib will realize his true being. And what is that true being? It is God, the Only Being.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Githa

Series I: Number 6

Harmony is a most important essential in life. Although there have been multitudes who have proclaimed their belief in the brotherhood of man, the accomplishment of it seems to be far away. If one investigates he will discover that harmony between person and person is missing. This brings up a question, is there any way by which harmony can be produced? Yes, persons who mingle often in the same atmosphere may grow closer together, there will be a common bond.

There is one of the reasons why people meditate in group, with or without a teacher or leader. The teacher or leader serves to draw them closer together, to harmonize them, like the conductor of the orchestra harmonizes the musicians and their instruments. In the orchestra it is not only the instruments which are brought into attunement to each other but the players themselves. And in the meditation hall the atmosphere serves to tune the hearts of the devotees, to bring them, so to speak, into consonant pitch.

The Healing Service of the Sufis depends upon internal harmony. Therefore the number of participants has been wisely limited. The more persons who join the circle, the more difficult is it to create and preserve a lasting living harmony. Besides, negative persons in it would be attracting the energy to themselves and limiting the healing power. Sometimes even a single undeveloped person can destroy the efficacy of such a Service; sometimes a single undeveloped person may create a disturbance at a meditation group. To protect the group as well as themselves many teachers restrict the number and are careful to examine newcomers.

When a person who lacks understanding enters the meditation group he brings in his lower atmosphere as well as his undesirable thoughts. These interfere with the atmosphere already created and draw energy from it. To use the terms of electricity they discharge it. And sometimes it takes months to create a sacred atmosphere which can be so destroyed in a moment.

Therefore less developed persons are instructed in meditation alone, or they are given opportunities for silence at the Universal Worship and at other meetings which they can sustain. But for the undeveloped, the silence held too long can be harmful. People who have been over-strained in public corrective institutions have been known to go mad.

One should therefore begin with quite short silences and increase them as one is able to restrain the mind. The quality of the meditation itself may be quite as important as the length of time used in maintaining silence.

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Githa

Series I: Number 6[A]

Beloved ones of God:

Harmony is most necessary when two or more mureeds unite for spiritual purposes. In the study of lessons, unless they have a cordial feeling, both will miss the purpose, which is as much to attune their personalities one to the other, as to gain intellectual development from the manuscript. One might even say that that was the real lesson. And when more than two come together, the same adjustment is needed, but when there are several persons, sometimes one or two serve to harmonize others who may not understand each other's nature.

In the Healing Service the presence of a sick, or an unharmonious or an undeveloped person, or one who is not suited for this work, has the tendency either to draw the magnetism to that person or to disperse it, so it will not be of much value. For that reason, it is best to select properly fitted persons for this line of work, and groups should be limited to about seven people. Discrimination of the workers, however, is most important, and if there are less it does not matter, and if there are more, it is better to divide the work and have two groups.

The presence of an undeveloped person has the tendency to break the tension and to discharge the atmosphere. Under such conditions a true positive meditation is impossible. Among the oracles in ancient Greece, it was not only necessary to have the oracle and the seer lead a very pure life, but all those who assisted by forming a magnetic circle had to be pure.

When a person lacking understanding enters a meditation room, it makes it difficult for those who form the embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance, to direct the true spiritual work. They will not convey lessons or impressions or messages, or else they will require a silence on the part of the one who is learning from them. Sometimes it is important that such people be dismissed from the room. It is also important to arrange classes of people of the same degree of evolution, for they assist one another instead of hindering.

Of course, group silences, in the presence of a teacher, or in a room especially adopted for this work, have always been part of the Sufi training. In this congregation, the earlier Talibs are greatly benefitted, and the more advanced are not held back for they have learned to attune themselves to the atmosphere. By preserving the silence in the room, by closing the doors to the outside world, a condition is brought about so that in time the place becomes holy, and those who feel it will become more and more reverent, and this in turn will increase the sanctity of the atmosphere, that even those who are not on the spiritual path will feel in awe, and be constrained to silence and meditation.

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Githa

Series I: Number 7

The laws of the unseen world are not different from those of the seen world although no doubt they concern more vital forces and atomic formations than we see in the objective manifestation. The same word "magnetism" is used to apply to various types of ultra-physical phenomena and the same principles hold except that the magnetism of the scientists is closely associated with iron and steel and some other metals; while the vital magnetism makes use of the elements and of the atoms and vibrations of all planes.

In the Healing Service the silence is used to increase the current between several persons; while in one's own practices it is employed to revivify one's own self. But when several persons join in the Service, those who do not give out absorb and by their absorption, they weaken the value of the service. But if all present have practiced meditation by themselves they can increase the vital electricity which is sent by thought-power to the sick person.

The undeveloped person acts like an insulator to the mureeds, and can discharge the electricity. This is why Christ said he felt a force leaving him when a woman touched the hem of his garment. To protect against this condition one should have his own room for private meditation, even if it be a cell. He should have his devotions there and not use it for any low purpose. Even smoking is inadvisable in such a place. Thus he will create his own atmosphere, add power and magnetism to it and make of it a centre for vital forces and electricity.

The same is true of the meditation hall. The less conversation of all kind that goes on there the better. Ordinary conversation should be restricted. But more subtle is the conversation that goes on within every person. For as soon as there is silence the thoughts begin to move about and to agitate. To overcome that one is urged to repeat a spiritual phrase or to watch the breath. In the presence of a teacher, however, all may concentrate upon the breath of the teacher or the heart of the teacher.

The teacher himself seeks to overcome the less developed breath of the pupils and thus increases their capacity. If the pupil has any difficulty in catching the rhythm of the teacher's breath—and this is by no means always easy—then he can concentrate a little upon the teacher's heart, doing this mostly by feeling, and gradually relax all his thoughts first, and then his feelings afterwards. Thus he enters the state that "I am not" which is most beneficial for all students on the path.

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Githa

Series I: Number 7[A]

Beloved ones of God:

The same laws hold in spiritual development as in the physical world. This can be observed most easily in the study of electricity and magnetism. For instance, when a battery is made up of several cells united, the efficiency is determined by the condition of the poorest cell among them. If one cell is weak, the battery will be weakened, and if one cell is dead, the battery will not function.

In the same way, in the healing circle, if there is one who cannot contribute to the magnetic force, the whole circle is of no value; even if all the others are highly charged with spiritual power, they cannot function as a group with a negative person among them. Likewise, there is such difference between the meditation in the Universal Worship, and that for mureeds only. Therefore, the Murshid, who is a very positive power, does not lead the meditations in the Universal Worship, which are given to Cherags who do not read the sermon. At the same time, the most developed one should give the blessing, for the blessing is given in the center, where the personality serves as the instrument of all the illuminated souls, who form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

In electricity there are conductors which carry the energy, and insulators which do not, but the term is relative, as there are good conductors and poor conductors, and even the best insulator conducts electricity a little, although perhaps immeasurable. So, all persons are on the spiritual path, although most may not know it. But if they did not so function they would be dead in the truest sense, they would be entirely dissolved.

The undeveloped person is like an insulator among mureeds, and can discharge an atmosphere, exactly like the discharging in electricity. On the other hand, the Murshid constantly charges the atmosphere. The Murshid is like a dynamo which draws power from its Source and by means of which many electric lights may illuminate humanity. Without the dynamo the lights are nothing, and without the Source of Power the dynamo is nothing. In the same way, without the Murshid the mureed is nothing and without God the Murshid is nothing.

An electrical body may be charged to the limit which is called capacity, and a Talib may receive to a limit which is also called capacity. But the capacity of a body may be increased through certain means and the capacity of a Talib may also be increased. And after a body is charged and functions, the power of its function is called potential, which depends upon its own capacity and the capacity of the receiver of that electricity. Likewise the power of the mureed depends both on his energy and the ability of the person whom he is aiding. As an insulator will not receive electricity, but causes a discharge, so must the spiritual person have discrimination, otherwise it will be, as Christ said, casting pearls before swine and that which is holy to the dogs. Verily, in all departments of nature can one find God, if one truly seeks and looks.

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Githa

Series I: Number 8

Many people claim that they desire enlightenment, that they seek self-purification and perfection and are looking for the highest wisdom. Yet when it comes to a question of the acceptance of someone as teacher, they refuse to look to any human being for guidance. They say that God has no favorites, that God is before all and that all are equal to God.

Yes, they are right, and besides God is the only teacher, we all learn from Him. But when they go to school to learn arithmetic or spelling or geography or music, do they learn from God? Then at least they accept the teacher in human form. They may have a little knowledge and they accept the teacher to learn more. When it comes to the esoteric sciences which are much harder to learn and far more subtle in form, then they want nobody, and this very attitude shows the lack of one of the greatest elements in spiritual unfoldment, self-surrender.

What is teaching but the manifestation of divine power through the human heart. It is not the personality of Sheikh or Khalif or Murshid which is the guide. It is that such people have reached a state wherein their own hearts have opened to the degree of making a suitable accommodation for the Spirit of Guidance. Then the light and wisdom may be communicated to pupils through speech or through silence.

The presence of the teacher at meditation acts like a condenser in electricity. It draws the atoms together quickly and charges them with living energy. This is like offering spiritual sustenance to pupils. Pupils rise when the teacher enters, not so much out of respect to the personality as to help in that attunement which may be of so much benefit to themselves. This inner harmony of itself can be a great help to anyone who is on the path to God.

Restraint of speech and thought is most helpful whether a person meditates alone or with others, in the presence of the teacher or not. After a while he comes to be at one with the atmosphere. Thus the first stage of development is accomplished. After that he begins to grow through that atmosphere and he also helps that atmosphere to grow. This is the second stage. The first stage is closely associated with fana, self-effacement; the second with baqa, realization. Those are the two aspects of spiritual development.

When the atmosphere of a meditation hall seems low or depleted, it can be restored through Zikr. Zikr helps elevate the material atoms and vibrations so that they also can become accommodation for baraka, spiritual blessings.

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Githa

Series I: Number 8[A]

Beloved ones of God:

Many people seek enlightenment without a teacher. This shows they have no idea about it, for in enlightenment and with enlightenment there can be no separation, there is no "I" nor "thou." What is the teacher? Is it the personality who is the guide? No, it is not that personality although we call such a one Sheikh or Khalif or Murshid or by other terms.

What is teaching is the Power which is manifesting through that personality, and the love which is in their hearts. It is the power and love which teach, not the personality. When that same personality is not reflecting power and love they are not teaching. The true guide will understand first his own processes, whether he is really reflecting power and love, and then he will understand the mureeds.

The presence of the teacher forms what corresponds to a condenser in electricity. Such a one draws the atoms together quickly and charges them; without a teacher the mureeds could no doubt attain the same condition after a time, but the Murshid does this immediately because he carries his atmosphere with him. When a Murshid enters the Meditation Hall, the atoms at once take the proper arrangement, they become charged, they stand up before Murshid. Therefore when the mureeds rise also, it is not only because of respect, but by that act they attune themselves with the very atoms, otherwise one could say the atoms have more spirituality than those persons. This is true in all cases, even in the Universal Worship, but to a less extent.

In the presence of the teacher, therefore, the positive meditation begins immediately upon his entering the room. The preparatory work should be completed. And how is it completed? By refraining entirely from speech and as much as possible from thought before the Murshid comes. Five, or even three minutes is sufficient for this, but fifteen minutes in the meditation room with the mind wandering, and especially with speech, is harmful. Those who must enter the Chapel for preparation should refrain from speech for at least fifteen minutes before the meditation time; half an hour would be better, but more than this is not necessary. Zikr chant must not be considered as speech, for it has the effect of arranging the atoms, in the same manner as the influence of the Murshid.

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Githa

Series I: Number 9

Meditation may be regarded as consisting of two portions, the preparation and the performance. In preparing for meditation one should try to guard against all undesirable thoughts, speech and acts until the hour of the meditation. One should also sit in silence a little before the teacher arrives, watching the breath and keeping the mind as free as possible from thoughts of all sorts. Even idealistic thoughts are out of place in meditation.

Of course the preparation can continue until it includes the entire daily life. Then one can go on from that and identify meditation and the everyday life. This is its perfection. To accomplish this Sufis repeat Darood which is most helpful. It tends at all times to restrain nufs and uses the mind as the body is used. That is to say, just as there are certain hours for eating and others for abstinence from food, so there can be periods in which the mind is used for thought and other periods when it is not used.

The ultimate aim, of course, is to elevate the mind to its buddhic condition. The instructions on the cultivation of insight are also most important. The difference is that in developing insight one may do it consciously, one may be watching the heart and its impressions and thereby become responsive to the All-Pervading Spirit of Wisdom. In meditation one does not try to receive anything, but the purification of mind thereby often opens up the door to inspiration. At least it makes it much easier to receive impressions and hear the Voice which cometh constantly from within.

The teacher can, by his presence, raise the pitch of the soul. The mureed does not surrender before the teacher in order to give special reverence to the teacher as a personality. It is for his own sake that the disciple lays aside his desires and his thoughts. He lays them before the teacher when he practices fana-fi-Sheikh, while in meditation he lays them before God at all times, that is to say, whether the teacher be present or not.

By meditation one relaxes the mind so that it becomes recharged with magnetism. After a little practice one feels it a little; after continual practice one feels it more. Therefore one gradually lengthens the time in the meditation. He either meditates for the sake of resting and restoring the mind, or in order to receive impressions, that is, to develop his intuitive faculty.

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Githa

Series I: Number 9[A]

Beloved ones of God:

Meditation should be considered as consisting of two parts, the preparation and the performance. The preparation consists, first, in refraining from all wrong thoughts, speech and acts until the hour of meditation, and in maintaining a short silence before the Murshid enters. If this is done, then one will be ready for the second part of meditation.

The teacher first charges the atmosphere and by this the true Silence is established. This Silence is of great help to spiritual knowledge; it is Saute Surmad or Abstract Sound, which cannot properly be called either Sound or Silence. By attunement with it, one becomes attuned to all in Nature.

But the teacher does more than magnetize the atmosphere. The teacher is the conductor, so to speak, of an orchestra. The instruments must be attuned, and there must be some key note, and it is the Murshid who supplies that key note. What is meant by Fana-fi-Sheikh or Fana-fi-Murshid is that first the Talibs must become attuned to their teacher. After that or during that process they become attuned to each other without the least effort; even those who have very different dispositions become attuned one to another.

This lesson is taught in "The Mysticism of Sound." Unless it is practiced, the study of that book is of little value. And when can it be practiced? It is practiced in every spiritual study and in every meditation. It is not necessary that one should pretend to be friendly or harmonious with a person whose keynote is discordant to his; the way of the Sufi is to introduce other notes to produce a symphony.

The teacher by his presence raises the pitch of the soul higher and higher, the atmosphere becomes more and more peaceful. After a while the Talib begins to understand the function of meditation, that it is not only a period for rest and relaxation, and revitalization, but that it is a period of communion with God, for inspiration, for Divine Guidance. If this were not so, the Spirit of Guidance would not be the Spirit of Guidance, but when it is understood, one knows beyond doubt what is the Spirit of Guidance which leads one to the Goal.

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Githa

Series I: Number 10

The breath of the teacher is, so to speak, a ladder by means of which the mureed climbs on his way to God. The breath of the teacher helps to establish rhythm in meditation and also to refine the atmosphere. The finer the vibrations that are received into the atmosphere, the more beneficial is it to those who participate in the silence. If the pupil is able to adjust his breath to that of the teacher it is most helpful. At the same time the teacher does what he can to reach the heart of every pupil in his presence.

The more the mureed sits in silence before the teacher, the easier is it to adjust the breath of teacher and pupil. It is by this means that the pupil receives the blessing from the teacher. This may be no special knowledge. However it does mean that the heart becomes more sensitive and through its sensitivity it can grow in wisdom, insight, compassion and love.

The Silence itself is a great healer and it is a mistake to depend upon the teacher too much. That is to say, the thought of the teacher can become a hindrance. Teacher should not be regarded so much as a personality before one as a gate to God. There is a fundamental purpose of life and this is uncovered as we remove the vestiges of self one by one. There are many ways by which different people can become sensitive to the silence. Whatever way is successfully followed brings something to the talib.

This is an increase of feeling for life itself. The body and mind become purer vehicles of soul. The radiance of the personality and the charm of manner often follow. Thus meditation provides a psychological and moral training.

It is also possible to take a problem into the silence and lay it before God. This means to bring the problem and hold it before one as if in concentration, in order to keep other thoughts away. Then to drop this thought, so to speak, into the lap of God. This is done by keeping silence of mind and repose and often it happens that then one receives the guidance. Fikr, of course, can be used to help in this.

The more the pupil can receive an answer to his requirements from the silence, the surer will he be in his footsteps forward and the closer every day of his life will he be drawing the Spirit of God toward himself.

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Githa

Series I: Number 10[A]

Beloved ones of God:

The breath of the teacher is, so to speak, a ladder by which the mureed climbs on his way to God. It is the breath of the teacher which establishes a rhythm in the meditation; just as his personality and atmosphere create the harmony. Both harmony and rhythm are necessary, also pitch.

In the attunement of a violin string, one must turn the peg slowly or the string will break; the same process is in spiritual development which is a gradual change in pitch, but very definite. The vibrations gather around the teacher and flow from the teacher's being. All who are in the room benefit but even the atmosphere about, the building, the grounds, and the vicinity benefit.

After a time, the mureed will adjust his breath to the teacher. This cannot be done consciously by outward observation so much as by silent resignation. In resignation one uses his positive faculties to keep the thought and emotions quieted, but the negative faculties are surrendered to God. In the tuning of an instrument it is only necessary to adjust one string or one note to the key note, and then to adjust the other strings or notes to that one note. This is done not only in the orchestra but in the tuning of pianos and organs. The Talib therefore, should not endeavor to attune all parts of his personality to the teacher, but to gain the key note by resignation of his will.

The next step is to attune the rest of his personality to that Will which has become harmonized and attuned. Then he creates the harmony in himself, for the motto of the Sufi is Unity, not uniformity. At the same time, especially when one finds difficulty in this, one may adopt any customs or habits of the teacher. It is like the violin player who has difficulty in attuning his A string, but may adjust his E or G string with ease, and then fix his A string properly. Therefore, attunement with the teacher is most important, obedience and surrender of the will being most essential, but even imitation, personal devotion, strict attention to the words, to the study, to daily duties, all these help. This is explained also in the Bhagavad Gita that there is a best road, and at the same time there are many roads, and by whichever road one comes to God, for that person that is the best road.

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Githa

Series II: Number 1

Some people try to meditate in order that they may receive a personal benefit. Others mean by personal benefit a particular gain such as health, wealth, youth or happiness or the attainment of some possession, fame or power. Yes, no doubt these things can be gained by use of inner power, but in the end a price will have to be paid for them.

When Boddhidharma, the great Buddhist Patriarch, came to China, the Emperor told him of all the fine things he had done and wanted to know what merit he had gained. He was told, "no merit." For meditation is not a practice of the self as conceived and does not bring anything to self. It has nothing to do with gain or loss, good or evil. The continual practice of restraint of thought, however, does cultivate peace of mind. When the mind is properly cleared from thought it becomes like a palace of shining mirrors, which reflect easily the impressions gained from the life within or without.

The ability to receive these impressions and to respond to them correctly results in the development of the intuitive faculty. Besides that one may gain in ability to control emotions and speech, and so rise in the moral scale of evolution. This is sure to be so when one does not waste any effort thinking of oneself.

No doubt there are times when one should meditate on his own problems. Thinking quietly, one may obtain the answer after a while. This does not mean to hold the problem so much as to use it to drive away other thoughts, then let it slide away "as the dewdrop into the shiny sea." The effort itself may often bring the answer without any long indulgence in silence. This shows prajna, kashf, or intuition, the living light from within.

By this means also one becomes able to help others, for that same light which brings wisdom to the mind concerning oneself can also bring wisdom concerning another. To help in this one should watch the surface of the heart; after a while one can feel the waves rise and fall. Then one can control those waves or rise and fall with them as one chooses. As those waves are of finer vibrations they take the consciousness beyond the sphere of mind.

Thus while in meditation there is a stilling of mind, there is not a stilling of life. Meditation is far removed from death or sleep. Rather does it increase one's capacity for life and light although if one thinks about these things it is not so. The gain comes when one does not think. Then one may be said to be within the domain of Divine Grace.

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Githa

Series II: Number 1[A]

No one need ask: "What shall I gain by Meditation? In what ways shall I benefit?" If one only knew, it is by means of Meditation that all is gained, not only things are gained, not only attributes and qualities are gained, but even God is so gained.

It is God Who would reveal Himself to us, but so long as we keep our minds on anything else but God, He may be speaking but we do not hear. When we hear His Voice, all knowledge, all direction, all guidance will be ours, everything that we need will be ours. With this understanding one can breast the waves of life; to turn back the tide and to surmount obstacles will become possible.

Speaking of Intuition is of itself of little value. The mystic does not speak, he uses the inner faculties in everyday life and so Insight becomes a means of sustaining and understanding realities. To every question there is an answer and the key to the answer is in the question. One of the best means of finding the answer is to enter into Meditation. The question may arise: "Should I meditate on this problem?" It is not wrong to meditate on any problem but it is always wise to seek Divine Guidance. Meditating in a prayerful attitude, knowing that God will help, relieves one from further concern, and there is nothing in life more valuable.

Sometimes the answer will come as a simple direction, easily understood. Sometimes a feeling will come which may not seem so clear or direct, but when one follows the guidance which comes from the heart, often one will find the obstacles in life disappear like a dissolving mist. Care and worry prevent a proper solution, while surrender of self always helps to clear the path from the perplexities of life, bringing calm and peace. The Sufi who does this knows that God is All-seeing, All-knowing.

For that reason, over and over again the Invocation is repeated, repeated at different times and bringing each time one closer to the Reality which it expresses. All problems may be as tests in life. In the ancient Egyptian mysteries, the Hierophant is reported to have said to the neophyte: "You have nothing to fear but yourself." It was Jesus Christ who said: "My yoke is easy, my burden is light," meaning, give up your problems, take them before Allah in loving surrender and they will be solved and you will be healed.

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Githa

Series II: Number 2

The great obstacle to be overcome in meditation is the false ego, or *nufs*. When the body is restrained it seeks refuge in the mind. People who are nervous, who have digestive troubles, or are suffering physically should not meditate in group. It is not for them to receive the finer vibrations. Yet meditation is the best medicine for them, if they can keep quiet only a few moments. Those who are indisposed should meditate often and for only short periods.

In preparing for meditation one should have regard for his stomach and body generally. That is why attention is first given to the physical vehicle by the Sufis. Those who might otherwise find it hard to keep silence may be instructed on the path of sound and develop through music and *Zikr*. While this training has the tendency to produce ecstasy, it also develops a capacity for receptivity of finer vibrations, and although in a different way from meditation, it is beneficial. The Meditation Hall itself can be elevated through the use of holy music and repetition of *Zikr* at certain times.

The repetition of the Invocation is the first step toward mental control. A concentration—if one wishes to call it that—on the Invocation may be used to soothe the ego-thoughts which are otherwise so disturbing. Whether reason or memory or imagination agitates, one should repeat the Invocation or perfect a *Darood* and keep on with his repetition in order to avoid any personal thoughts. For no one has room in his heart for God and self both, it is one or the other.

The tendency of *nufs* is to turn us from the One to the many, enticing us with the intoxication of the endless things of the manifest world. Thus man becomes attached to the stream of nothingness. Then he loses sight of his true being. This it is which brings him all his troubles. At first he turns to meditation so that his troubles will not bother him so much. Then he learns to control those affairs that have been troubling him. Finally he develops calmness and that calmness he can carry with him when he leaves the meditation hall. The stronger that calmness the surer he will find his footsteps in life.

Nevertheless one has to be sure of himself first and the wise have maintained their silence for long periods. Besides this helps those who take up concentration and thus indirectly helps man in every line of progress.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Githa

Series II: Number 2[A]

The great obstacle to be overcome in Meditation is the false ego or nufs. What is it that prevents us from concentrating our thoughts and feelings on God? It is the nufs. In the Hebrew religion there is the Shema or cry, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our Lord, the Lord is One." And there is the answer to the Cry, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart and with all thy Soul and with all thy Mind." And these directions should be considered as a unity for the light of the soul shines in the heart and is reflected in the mind.

Plato wrote that we lived in a shadow world, where we confused the shadow of ourselves with reality. This is the nufs, the false ego, which stands in the light before God, causing, so to speak, a spiritual eclipse. In Meditation, one does not have to hold such a thought for this false self is overcome through meditating upon the true Self, which in reality, is God. The modern devotee may repeat the Invocation, "Towards the One," etc., instead of the Shema and it will produce the same effect. There is no difference between them in the language of heart and soul; the forms in words may be different, but the acts, thoughts, feelings and results are the same.

Whenever the nufs seems to hold us in its sway, it is through meditation we may find freedom. To the Sufi, pure meditation includes more than going into one's room only; any act of life which is done with dependence upon Allah or which makes us aware of Him, whether in reading or studying or working or contemplation or prayer or meditation or any duty of everyday life—all may become part of a universal meditation which marks every breath and every heartbeat in life. Then as we observe more plainly the true purpose of life, the momentary obstacle which may have appeared like a great cliff, becomes as a tiny step through our growth and understanding, and by taking this step, what was once a hindrance becomes an aid to our development

The nufs turns us from the One to the many, enticing us with the things of the world. Then man attaches himself to one thing after another which brings at best momentary satisfaction; through his spiritual practices the Sufi learns to chain the nufs, to perceive it is only a shadow of reality, and finding the sun of truth within his being, looking upon it, one is no longer aware of the shadow.

Then the nufs is not destroyed but harnessed. The whole of man's being is attuned to God and everything within him serves God. This is the work of all on the path of illumination, of whatever school they may be. There is no other obstacle than this false self and there is no better means of controlling it than by meditation and by practicing the Presence of Allah.

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Githa

Series II: Number 3

Meditation is the one general practice which is open to all mureeds and to the generality as well. It is introduced as a silence in the Universal Worship and in the meetings of the social and educational department of the Sufi Movement, known as the Brotherhood.

Meditation is the most universal means of the spreading the message, which in a certain sense is no message, only the call of humanity to praise God and to show consideration one for the other.

As meditation is new to the West there may be practical aids which help in the first stages. For instance the talib, after his Bayat, may be given a sacred phrase to repeat, which will be generally known as a Wazifa. The Wazifa is based upon a sacred phrase which holds as though some attribute of God. It has a positive and negative use. The negative use is for purification and the positive use is to build up the characteristic within the personality which is needed for success and attainment in life.

Wazifas are generally repeated audibly, a certain number of times as esoteric exercises. But they may be repeated mentally and silently and thus used as Darood. This helps in keeping out all unwelcome incoming thoughts, by which is meant any thought that interferes with the goal in view. In meditation all thoughts, of any nature whatever, are wayfarers and should be removed. Unwelcome thoughts have no more place in the meditation hall than have unwelcome persons, only it is that we can easily prevent the unwelcome persons from entering, while a constant warfare is required to restrain the unwelcome thoughts.

Sufism is not a code of rules. The purpose of instruction is to help the pupil to help himself. Through peace of mind one not only helps himself, he can more easily help others. Peace of mind removes the obstacles which stand between personality and personality. If there is any loss which comes in not having peace of mind it is a loss which everyone can feel and know. Although in the spiritual life one need not seek happiness directly, the struggle for peace of mind removes most of those things which stand in the way of our experience of happiness.

Therefore as one is successful in maintaining meditation a short while, he is encouraged to keep up longer meditations. Those who find it hard to do this in the everyday life are welcomed to the practice of Khilvat by which they, at stated times, can withdraw from worldly activity and be guarded and protected in their hours of silence, meditation and devotion.

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Githa

Series II: Number 3[A]

Besides meditation, each talib is given special instructions suited to his need, while journeying the path toward Unity. One such form of instruction is the **Wazifa**, or repetition of sacred phrases for various purposes.

If it be asked what is the purpose, it may be answered that as the purpose of all rain is to return to the ocean, so the purpose of every soul is to return to God. Some drops unite in little streams, to flow down the river which ultimately loses itself in the ocean. So the practice of each Wazifa may be for some particular purpose, yet all these purposes unite just as the streams unite, and finally come to their destination.

Wazifa is both positive and negative, to build up faculties which are necessary and to remove undesirable qualities. So Sufis use Wazifas in purification, but the Sufi always recognizes God as the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, as the Perfection of all qualities, and as the Perfection of Perfections. If strength is needed, strength comes from God; if love is required, God is love; if one must perform Justice, God is Judge and Forgiver.

Wazifas may be repeated audibly or silently in the performance of any act or duty in life. By this means the devotee draws from God the help he needs, attuning himself to the qualities of God at that moment. So besides the regular practice of Wazifa a specified number of times as assigned to the talib by his teacher, so one may meditate upon the Wazifa at all times and use it even when it is no longer part of one's spiritual exercises.

Sufism is not a code of rules; the purpose of Sufism is to bring souls to God realization. Allah is beyond all Attributes and Qualities, being All Essence. Understanding this, every breath can become a meditation wherein one puts full dependence upon Allah and there will be no moment which will not be a meditation, no moment of separateness from God.

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Githa

Series II: Number 4

There is always a question of how much one can develop through silence and how much through sound. In answer it should be stated that ultimately all development leads to the Universal Sound which has been called the "Voice of the Silence" and which is silence with respect to the noises and clashings of manifestation but which is not nothing-ness or death.

Zikr practice is of tremendous advantage to the young in that it helps elevate their vital forces and even to experience ecstasy. Thus they are drawn away from passion and materiality. The music has a certain influence of itself, and along with the sacred phrases that form the words there is a most elevating effect. This elevating effect can be felt within the personality as one practices Zikr more and more so that after awhile he will be able to witness his own progress. It also has an effect upon meditation, that sometimes after Zikr meditation is much easier.

In the orient, especially in the Buddhist countries, gongs and other instruments summon the worshippers. After a gong is sounded one often finds it easier to meditate. No doubt it causes a certain stirring up of the air of the room and when this air vibrates it affects all the physical processes in the room. This effect is communicated inwardly through the channels of breath, and often results in the removal of the thought that has been present. Most forms of music in this respect tend to cleanse the mind of the thoughts it has been holding and may take it into a reverie.

Reverie itself is not meditation. Reverie helps to control thought but does not stop the memory or imagination. For this reason the mureed is instructed how to watch the breath and keep it flowing rhythmically. Every thought produces some change in the breathing. If the breath is held constant by will-power, it chokes off the incoming thoughts; then they find no rootsoil in the mind. But this is not enough. In addition one tries to purify the mind constantly. This is done through the use of sacred phrases although Zikr is also helpful in that. Then, after a while one may be able to control the elements of the breath, to keep the ether dominating, or to add to the light.

By such means the calm and peace of the soul come to the fore, and penetrate the outer personality. All exercises which aid in this accomplishment are to be considered as parts of the inner life. The theory of this is not involved and requires no knowledge of metaphysics.

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Githa

Series II: Number 4[A]

There is a question, if meditation is required to develop in the Silence, why is Zikr sometimes chanted and why are some practices said aloud? The answer is, that there are certain purposes in each practice, and that the ordinary distinction between Sound and Silence does not hold true from the Divine point of view.

For instance, in Zikr one may become able to arrange the atoms in order and rhythm and harmony. When mureeds chant in groups, they often magnify the power of the atoms. Often this brings the same effect as the presence of the teacher, but generally Zikr awakens the soul so as to produce alertness or even ecstasy.

In Zikr the thought is kept on all the syllables and sounds, making it difficult to think of anything else. If the Zikr becomes automatic and is recited without proper thought and feeling, it still is of value because of the intrinsic power of the atoms responding to sound. Besides that, it harmonizes one with the atmosphere and attunes one with all Zikr atmospheres, so one cannot continue the practice without developing out of it the necessary thought and feeling which will then carry one along.

When this is accomplished, one becomes attuned to the spiritual souls higher in evolution and becomes awakened to impressions, and may even arise to that state when the separateness between mind and heart disappears in the realization of Zikr. So Zikr may be called the finest thought expressed in the finest material form with the highest spiritual purpose. It becomes the perfection of the sounds uttered by the tongue.

Zikr is best understood through its performance. In singing and chanting one purifies one's being, even one's mind. Then one develops into a Zakir, who is the embodiment of Zikr and the vehicle of the Message of God. The Zakir is the mureed perfected in Zikr.

The moral of Zikr is humility and in its performance the nufs is absorbed like the shadow when light is turned on it. Zikr is important for those needing power and inspiration, while meditation is for those desiring calm and peace. Each are necessary for those who seek God in all forms, and each is only of value when practiced; then each fulfills its purpose better than any explanation can give it.

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Githa

Series II: Number 5

Fikr is a practice which is indulged in by most Sufis by which they keep before themselves the nothingness of ego and the Allness of God, to learn and feel until they know that God is the Only Being. One may say that the disciple in Fikr can be called Fakir, the poor one, the unattached person. For the fulfillment of Fikr is that there is nothing in the world, in heaven or upon earth, which can cling to the personality who is determined to complete his journey back to God.

Therefore Fikr aids much in the purification of mind. It forces the thoughts away, it may be called the vacuum cleaner of the mind. It helps to preserve mental magnetism and to restore it when lost. It is valuable in strengthening any mental faculty, and in restoring those which are lost. So in a certain sense Fikr accomplishes the same results as meditation.

Meditation consists of preparation, performance and application, which means action. Then when one holds the spirit of unity at all times the whole of life becomes a meditation. In this meditation differs from Fikr which has to be performed in a certain way and which cannot very well be done in the presence of others or when there is any possibility of a disturbance. The performance of meditation can reach the goal, however, when one can maintain full inner rapport without there being any impediment to outward activity.

Meditation aids greatly in the development of insight which can become the deepest faculty of the mind. There is no limit to the length of time one may indulge in it either. Akbar, the great Sufi Mogul Emperor of India, was able to get along with practically no sleep, often meditating for hours at night instead.

Meditation may be performed at any time although there is a certain advantage if the same hours can be used every day. The length of it does not matter so much although it often requires several minutes to accomplish that stillness which is the real meditation. Some persons cannot do it in less than thirty minutes; therefore a gradual lengthening of the period of meditation to that time is advantageous. But after one is able to control thought, it does not matter so much, one can obtain the stillness ultimately even with a single breath.

Nevertheless from time to time a meditation of two hours is valuable, or in its place, a silence over a longer period in which there is full restraint of speech and as much as possible of thought and action.

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Githa

Series II: Number 5[A]

Fikr is the perpetual possession of the Sufi, and the devotee has often been called Fakir, the poor one. But what is this poverty? It is the poverty of non-attachment, of those who are poor in spirit but blessed by Allah. The Sufi may be outwardly poor, yet inwardly he may not be called rich for he may be said to possess everything and nothing. His satisfaction is in God and he may be master of wealth, while those who own wealth among the generality are better termed servants of wealth.

Every meditation is a Fikr when rightfully performed. In meditation heart and mind are centered upon God, and this is true in Fikr also. Only in Fikr one is given special syllables or a special form, which is absent in general meditation. Yet Fikr can be called an intensification of the highest meditation, keeping the heart fixed on God.

Meditation consists of preparation, performance and application, which means action. So the true meditation is not separate from the rest of life. This is especially true when one gains power and magnetism through meditation to be applied in healing or other spiritual work.

In meditation there are two general results: the development of the faculty of insight and the growth of the personal atmosphere. Once this atmosphere is built, Fikr becomes a natural performance, and as it is said in Salat, at every moment of our lives we draw closer to God. Through this surrender of self, through keeping the gaze and concentration steadfast on God, all becomes natural, and it is the most natural thing in life to be ever aware and responsive to God.

The goal to be attained is that the spiritual condition be continuous through all of life. As the great Sufi saint, Abu Sa'id ibn Abi-l-Khair has said, the Sufi may eat and drink, work and play, sleep, and trade in the market, yet he does not forget God for one single instant. That is the life of the true Fakir and that is the Fikr, which unites the inner and outer lives in the completeness of God realization.

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Githa

Series II: Number 6

The watching over the breath is important both in meditation and out of it. By guarding the breath one learns to control the ego, and from a practical view one develops in efficiency in action. For this purpose there are many esoteric exercises which are given the disciple by the teacher at various stages of his development, also according to his particular need.

In meditation one should observe the rhythm of the breath until one is able to get the mind quiet. If the mind cannot be quieted, one may just watch the rhythm of the breath continually. Yet one may also purify the breath, as by Darood. After a while there may be a tendency for the breath to become more and more refined. Then one will find that it is difficult to watch and indeed there is no need to observe breath when one enters the real silence.

As one enters the real silence he begins to receive the energy of space which is the energy of life. Nevertheless the talib should pay no attention to it. Sometimes he will become sensitive to light and after a while this light may increase more and more until his whole inner being may become radiant with light. Nevertheless he should pay no attention to it. The heart may pound, the heart may beat, the heart may consume all the fires of consciousness until there is no more thought. Nevertheless the talib should pay no attention to it.

There may be visions, or there may be light or there may be colors or there may be nothing. The talib should pay no attention. For those may be called the delights of heaven. If one is able to control all thought and emotion and then enters into a sphere or a state of unworldly phenomena, that only means that he has passed a certain place, it does not indicate his place of arrival. Anything which attracts or detracts keeps the seeker away from the goal.

Of course there may come a time when one is drawn into the light or drawn into the heart-sphere, when one feels that line of demarcation between person and person depart, when one is conscious of space being within oneself and not without, and when one has no longer any time-conception but feels as if living in eternity. Such a one may be said to be in meditation, such a one may be said to be at the gates of Samadhi.

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Githa

Series II: Number 6[A]

It is often difficult to keep the mind in condition during some breathing exercise. In the Purification Breath it is not enough to keep the mind on the syllables **Ya Shaffee, Ya Khaffee**. At first the thought will bring strength and purity but the advancing talib should ever bear in mind that this practice and all practices are means of uniting the soul to God. God is the healer and the practice is His medicine which is used to heal and purify His vehicle so he may occupy and use it.

In the same way, the practice of Kasab can become more potent when faculties are unified. Concentration on the practice helps, but if difficulty occurs it is not wrong to do some self-examining. All conditions are reflected in the breath, and if any obstacles persist, one should consult the spiritual teacher. At the same time, proper meditation also helps, for any thought whatever has a harmful effect on a breathing practice.

Activity of the mind greatly alters the rhythms. Therefore Kasab is more related to concentration than to meditation, only it should be natural. So before all practices a meditation is of benefit, during which time, by the suppression of thought, the breath takes on a natural rhythm, invigorating the body and healing the mind, which makes the practice of Kasab easier.

The goal of all meditation is balance and in balance the goal itself is to be found. In the progress toward that goal rhythm may appear to be more important than balance yet nothing should be done to force the breath in its depth, in its power, in its otherwise natural movements. Disease and crime are often the result of irregularities of the breath, so of all things, this order and balance should be preserved and it is best preserved through meditation.

Therefore it is not necessary to consciously strive to alter the breath rhythms, but the steady repetition of those spiritual exercises which have been given to one by the teacher helps more than anything else on the path toward God.

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Githa

Series II: Number 7

The inner life is not separate from the outer life, being only a larger life, which takes into consideration far more than appears on the surface manifestation. Although when we speak of “inner life” we include esoteric practices, meditations, dreams, visions and various experiences and efforts, it does not exclude the everyday life. Instead of adding any burdens to an over-troubled world, meditation shows how to avoid difficulties and overcome burdens.

One need not try any special posture in meditation other than that which is common to the country where he finds himself. Lying down, however, is not satisfactory for then the heart-currents change in direction and besides, it is easier to fall asleep, which would destroy the purpose of the meditation. Of course when one is alone one may use any position or posture which one finds convenient and beneficial. The object is always to get into the silence; the method is not so important.

Meditation, being universal in application and scope, need not be regarded as a substitute for prayer. In some countries people meditate, in other places pray, elsewhere they have different sacred customs. All of these basically maybe accepted by the Sufi. He prays when he is in need and he prays when he praises God; praise of God is his chief prayer, like it is that of the angels. Yet there is always need to enter into the silence above sound, and find the peace which is above even joy. Therefore meditation is an ultimate practice which stands alone and in this respect is above all other methods.

As man enters the silence, so does the silence enter into him. As he unites with the universe, so does the universe manifest in him. This is true, no matter what be his path or his training. Ultimately he arrives at this destination. But this is the silence of all-life, which without containing anything may be said to contain all-things. Therefore one is said to enter the world-egg or world-womb. This accounts for the teaching of the Mother of the World, the Divine Mother, the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara or Kwan-yin. It represents the stage of realization of union with the silence, and as all may so unite, all are said to have a common mother. The silence of the womb and the silence of Universal Sound are each used to symbolize the other.

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Githa

Series II: Number 7[A]

The inner life is not separate from the outer life, but is a fuller and larger life. What is necessary is to put first things first. The mystic does more than quote scriptures; he not only says "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God," his whole life is absorbed in that seeking. Therefore some people have thought that through meditation everything can be gained and all their desires be fulfilled. From a certain point of view this is true, but it does not take into account what is one's desire.

The outer life is full of change and in all circumstances the desires are different. When a desire is granted often it is no longer a desire, and more often it does not have the effect sought. In many cases it is discovered that the thing or event brings a quite different and even contrary result than the one expected.

The Sufi looks to God for all things, praying to the God of Health for vigor and to the God of Wealth for his sustenance, keeping steadily before him the idea and ideal that there is one God, from Whom all blessings flow. He does not consider it wrong to seek guidance from God concerning his daily affairs. Yet as the heart strengthens and insight increases all becomes more and more clear, and at the same time life continually presents its puzzles. So most necessary in life are seeking the will of God and performing it. These things are more important than anything else.

So the talib makes God his continued need and often his daily problems become clear to him. Then one learns also to understand the difficulties of others, to sympathize with them and to help them. The difference between the ordinary person and the spiritual seeker is that the ordinary person is quick to praise and blame, enjoys being praised and seldom wants to be corrected; the seeker reserves his praise for God, is willing to take blame, striving to understand the critic and feeling sorry for his ignorance, which in the end only does the other one harm.

Sufism has been called the path of blame (*malamat*), of blame from and by the world. But Sufism is also the path of satisfaction, of satisfaction in and with God. In meditation one rises above praise and blame, above good and evil, above wickedness and virtue, and attains Wisdom. One sees the hand of God in all things and at all times and praises Him every moment of his life. This is the true spiritual way of living and is not connected with asceticism or needless discipline; it is a natural life, the most natural way of living.

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Githa

Series II: Number 8

One speaks of entering into the Silence in meditation and one may wonder whether there is an entrance into the Silence which is different from the union with God. Christians speak of God as the Word and so associate God with life and movement. Buddhists accept the doctrine of the silence and ignore the existence of any God, and assume thereby that there may be no Universal God Who is All in All. Thus the different religions, based upon the same realization, have given out doctrines which are radically different. This is because no two mind-views or mind-moulds of supermental life may be the same.

The object in meditation is to enter the supermental life. One calls it entering the silence because one finds that silent life which is fundamental to all things, which is described in the opening section of "The Mysticism of Sound." That, however, is the first step. For if one remained there he would enter the stage of no-being, instead of the stage of all-being.

According to the Buddhist teachings man first identifies himself, in thought at least, with the objective world; then with the subjective world; then with the union of the subjective and objective. But between the union with the subjective and the ultimate state there is one of nothingness, which has been called the Void. All have to pass through that and some mystics have called that stage, "The Dark Night of the Soul." Then one seems to be alone and speaks of "The Flight of the Alone to the Alone." But this is not the ultimate stage.

One does first have to contend with external noises in meditation. Then one has to struggle with one's thoughts and this is such a battle that sometimes all of life is not enough. Yet there are periods when one can rise above the mind, when the mind grows fatigued, and falls below the will-power. Then one enters the silence. Often one abides there thinking this is the ultimate state. The Arhats of Southern Buddhism still think so with the result that their realization does not bring them into union with all things. They deny the existence of God, and it is no wonder, for their realization is not the Divine Union. They get into the Void, the nothingness and remain there.

But there is a higher stage and for this love is needed which comes through self-sacrifice on the one hand and heart-awakening on the other. Even in meditation, when the heart is alive, one may find that union. It often comes through union with the teacher first (*fana-fi-Sheikh*); it ultimately leads to union with God (*fana-fi-lillah*). The realization it brings, *baqa*, proves to one that the false self is not the real self and the life which appears in us, which we refer to as *ourselves* is not different from the universal life.

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Githa

Series II: Number 8[A]

One can always take his questions to God. Of course one often has his spiritual teacher, his Murshid or Sheikh near at hand, who may and often must be consulted when doubt arises. The spiritual teacher can best help the mureed when the mureed looks upon the teacher as a link on the chain which connects him to God.

The saints and sages who have been gifted with insight often commune with God and through their inner heart development have been able to achieve God's purpose in this world. In meditation one is consulting with God, feeling God. This does not mean that one has a special meditation for every little problem. Keeping fixed periods for communion with God, establishing rhythms and devoting the whole heart to God at those times helps more than anything else.

Especially early morning meditations are valuable for consulting with God, and receiving help. Gradually this spiritual communion will become such a power, such a reality, that it will continue day and night. The heart will awaken and the intuitions tell one how to act, when to move, to travel, to marry, to make any important change in life, or even to meditate or perform extra spiritual deeds. In this condition gradually all of life takes on a grand unity.

The Sufi always meditates before taking any important steps in life. When the mind is clear and passive and the heart awake, God will speak. The Sufi does not enter meditation for something special, for his desire may not be God's desire. The true lover, the devotee, seeks union rather than reward and the union is the greatest of all rewards. Yet meditation is the method by which Allah Himself works and all great Murshids meditated when they had great duties to perform, for they realized that not they but Allah was the real Actor and Performer.

There are many blessings in meditation, there are many blessings in preparing for meditation, there are many blessings resulting from meditation, but meditation itself is the greatest of blessings.

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Githa

Series II: Number 9

Students of Oriental art have observed that the methods and techniques used in the West are different from those in the East. The Occidentals seem to spend more time in execution, the Orientals in planning. Yes, this may be so, only when we study the fundamentals of Oriental art deeply we find that the real preparation of the artist is himself. If he can get himself into the right mood, if he has established the right rapport with his subject matter, the work is not so different from the playing of a piece of music in the West. Even though it is a creative, it seems to follow a silent pattern, an invisible form which is there to be copied, and the executive of which brings inspiration.

Now this shows that the Silent life is not the void and instead brings all the seeds of life. Those who are only able to go so far in meditation do not reach the place where they can partake of the tree of life. Sometimes they keep the self-conception before them. Often they do not surrender fully. And this may be because of a lack of response to beauty. The esthetic sense, which is not always far from the spiritual feeling, may be undeveloped in them.

In meditation one's energies are turned Godward. That is to say, not only into the silence, but into the life which is the soul of the silence. Sufis call that, The perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty." Often the single words "love: "harmony" and "beauty" fail to impress one fully. There is an expectancy of them from others. The true mystic instead seeks to uncover them from within himself. And the difference between the Sufi and the ordinary man is that in the former it is as if God Himself were speaking and acting.

Many know about the simile of the empty cup; few there be that find the attainment of it. It is as one voids oneself of one's self, and then is filled with light. Man's duty is to action, that is, the emptying of ego; to God go the fruits of the action, which come to man as the filling of light, which we call inspiration. Therefore Mohammed used to consider himself only as the pen of God. He refused to be classed along with authors and poets. He said that Qur'an was more than man's poetry for it echoed the Divine Wisdom. He challenged his opponents to produce such a book, and they could not.

All the great artistic achievements of the Orient as well as Qur'an have come from the emptying of self, which is followed by the pouring in of the Silent life into one's being. That Life represents all wisdom and beauty, in other words, God. Thus the artist who practices his meditations not only finds God, but makes use of his knowledge in his everyday life.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
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Githa

Series II: Number 9[A]

It is often wondered how artists and musicians in the Orient could advance in their development far beyond those of the West. The reason is that they spend so much time in meditation. Sometimes the whole life of an artist is absorbed in a single task, and many beautiful things have been made in this manner.

In truth it is God Who is the Master Mind. The great Sufi poets who have been among the most famous on earth spent much time in meditation. Their whole life was like a meditation and their poetry was the result of meditation and it consisted of praise of God, rejoicing in the Beloved and songs to the Source and Goal of humanity.

Even today we find some mystical poets and artists in the East. They meditate many hours before taking up their tasks. Without a definite purpose, a work has not much use or value and the efforts are often wasted. Real Beauty should not be considered as something different from Wisdom nor Wisdom as apart from Beauty.

In Meditation all one's energy is turned Godward and so becomes strengthened many fold. This explains why it has been possible for mystics to write great works without becoming fatigued. There is no fatigue when one works as an instrument for Heaven. The difference between the Sufi and the ordinary man is that the Sufi realizes that it is God Who performs all actions. When the average man writes a letter, his arm becomes tired, yet the pen is not tired. But when God writes and man is His instrument, man is like that pen, he can work for a long period without becoming tired.

Mohammed used to consider himself only as the pen of God. He refused to be classed as an author. He said the Qur'an was more than man's poetry for it echoed the purest Wisdom of God. So He challenged his opponents to produce a Qur'an and one proof of his Prophethood is that he alone was able to produce such a book.

Sufis and mystics have inspired much of the great spiritual architecture of the world, whether of India or the other parts of Asia and the Indies. The tomb of Akbar, the Taj Mahal, the temples of Angkor and Borobudur all point to marvelous spiritual inspiration. The men and women who labored in such places probably found great inner joy; they had to spend much time in meditation and their outward performance was the reflection of their inner lives.

The Sufi realizing God as the perfection of Beauty, is the lover of Beauty. He appreciates all true beauty and endeavors to make his life beautiful in all its aspects. There is nothing in life which cannot be brought to perfection.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series II: Number 10

It may be asked if there is perfection in meditation, and the answer to this depends largely by what one means. Yes, there is a state called "Samadhi" wherein one continues to live, when one lives and moves and has his being in God, or at least one has a realization which is not limited by the ego outlook. The attunement to God which comes through meditation and heart-awakening is such that openly and consciously as well as conscientiously one finds himself beyond the distinctions and differences which divide men.

The term "Baqa" is used by Sufis to denote realization. It is then that one finds the Divine Life in the Silent Life. One can call it Silent Life which is the void, which comes when one is freed from attachment to subject and object, when one is attracted neither by the pleasures of this world nor the joys of the next. But if one continued in such a state there would be a tendency to retirement, to asceticism, to the crushing of the life-force in oneself, as if only by the destruction of life could sorrow and inharmony be terminated.

The Buddhists and Hindus have used the term Nirvana to indicate the state when one rises above distinctions and differences. This seems to have a negative emphasis to followers of other religions who emphasize rather the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom of God rightly speaking is beyond heaven. Heaven is really the kingdom of man, the state in which all of man's desires are fulfilled. It is not the Kingdom of God. In Malakut no doubt all of man's desires are accomplished, which makes Malakut the sphere in which Kadar, the human will "holds sway," just as on earth, ladar, the necessity of nature "holds sway." But there is beyond these another state.

Lahut is the name given to the plane of oneness beyond all differences and distinctions, in which one experiences the life as a whole and from which one receives all energies and functions and power, serving God there from. But Hahut, which has been called a plane, represents that in which God alone is, in which God is all in all, and there is none else.

The perfection of meditation is therefore that which produces the perfection of consciousness. It begins as a clearing of man's mind, in removing the false ego. It terminates not only in the attainment of divine consciousness by man, but the reverberation of that consciousness through man as if in reality and in all realization only God exists. Sufis call this state Risalat, which is the perfection of humanity.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series II: Number 10[A]

It may be asked whether there is a perfection in meditation, and the answer may be “yes” or “no” or both “yes” and “no” and still neither “yes” nor “no.” For the perfection in meditation is the perfection of all perfections.

Through right meditation one becomes attuned to God and so to all creation including humanity. There are many grades and steps in spiritual devotion, wherein one becomes attuned to his teacher, to the world teacher, to the prophets of God, and to Allah himself. Even after one reaches the last stages it is only a beginning, for then man ceases to be and God lives truly in and through one. This is called “baqa” by the Sufis. Of this condition Christ has said: “Many are called but few are chosen,” and Krishna taught that very few realized his being and of these only a few sustained that realization.

The true work of the Sufi is not only to attain to God-consciousness but to make this realization absorb more and more of life. In that condition one never loses sight of Allah for an instant, day or night, asleep or awake. This may truly be called the purpose of life, the fulfillment of the inner life.

But progress does not cease there. In that state called *fana-fi-lillah*, when the soul is absorbed in God, one loses the false sense of being and finds the true reality. Then one finally experiences what is termed “baqa-i-fana” where the false ego is annihilated and merged into the true personality which is really God expressing Himself in some wondrous ways. This is the same also as Nirvana where the true reality of life is experienced and expressed. This means that the true life is in God, the Only Being, and through God-realization man finds his true self. Initiation is the beginning and perfection is the end, the making complete. But where is the beginning and where is the end? They are both in Silence, in God. In the Silence we were born and to it we return.

Therefore the perfection of meditation is meditation. It is the perfected souls who continue ever in meditation, being absorbed in meditation, creating from their meditation and living in that meditation. The spiritual life is the drawing of sustenance through the breath from God. It is a life of praise, yet of sobriety and balance, a life of fullness and emptiness both, being empty of self and filled with God. This is the true purpose of initiation and spiritual training from the moment the mureed takes Bayat until the Eternity of Eternities, Time without Ending.

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Githa

Series III: Number 1

Meditation is the task of escaping from the control of the lower mind and living in the heart. It is only when the consciousness is in the heart that the soul can be free. By "heart" is meant not only physical heart but all that is physical that is connected with the heart, and at the same time it includes all the higher emotions, purer thoughts and deep intuitions. All these belong to the heart.

Heart differs from the mind and body in that body cannot heal itself and mind cannot heal itself. Mind can heal body, but this healing will not be permanent unless the mind is also purified. Heart not only heals mind and body, heart heals itself. Through the bloodstream heart heals the body, and to a certain extent helps the mind, but through breath, will and the inner light, heart can completely purge the mind of all its pain.

All birth, growth, and decay, as the blessed Buddha taught, are accompanied by pain. In disease and injury this pain is more acute, but the average man is continually in pain. As pain at ordinary times is less than during suffering, it is not noticed. Souls released from the body or enjoying the ecstasy or spiritual release while in the body, discover the great distance between what man has set up for himself and what God has ordained for him.

Pain arises from thought. If there were no thought there would be no pain. This is observed to some extent when nerves are removed. Even if thought were a chemical activity as some materialists claim, it would only mean that the pain took on a chemical form. It is not so difficult to understand that outer change requires adjustment and so brings some suffering, and the same is true with inner change—it is often accompanied with suffering.

When mental activity is inspired from within and though it is still associated with the senses without being dependent upon them, then the intellectual functions may continue without this pain and suffering. This is the true Nirvana, wherein faculties are continued unimpaired, without being joined to the nafs, the ego. Then the light of the soul, pouring from the heart, illuminates the mind. This is the buddhic or intuitional condition.

One of the main purposes of meditation is the control of thought so that the mind will be illuminated by this life and light from within. Spiritual practices which purify the breath make it possible for the breath also to be used as a vehicle of the soul. Breath is the greatest help yet can be the greatest hindrance. In meditations, especially according to the Sufi methods, no direct attention is paid to the breath, yet the more it is purified, the easier it is for the heart to illuminate the mind.

One physical aspect of this is that the whole being is in rhythm in meditation. The body is at rest, the flow of the breath and blood is rhythmical, the mind vibrations become quiet, and gradually through long practice, all the functions of the mind such as thought, reason, memory, I-ness, become dormant. Sitting at ease or in posture, holding a divine thought, the heart gradually controls the mind and the inner light becomes visible, so to speak, before the naked eye.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Another aspect is the activity of the blood itself. The bloodstream touches every part of the body and brain, so heart touches every aspect of life. It is this life in the heart which is the destiny of the soul to experience either upon earth or in Malakut, and one need not wait for it until he returns to the sphere of the heart itself. By meditation one not only brings heaven to earth, but reaches the heaven of heavens while here.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series III: Number 2

Every manner of concentration draws blood to a center. In thought blood is drawn into the brain area. If all the blood were withdrawn the life would be withdrawn, and the nerves would become dormant. Alcoholics and dope fiends interfere with this rhythm and so destroy the connections between the physical body and more subtle vehicles of the soul. This may eliminate pain but it does so by destroying life. Strictly speaking, every drunkard and partaker of drugs is to a certain extent dead.

Whenever an injury occurs and whenever there is any damage done to the body from within, inflammation follows. That is, blood rushes to that part and if there is any break in the normal rhythm, pain follows. Keeping thought on the pain serves to increase it by drawing still more blood and giving more life to it besides increasing the irregularity of rhythm. On the other hand, suggestion sometimes turns the life force in other directions and relieves the physical and psychological strain.

Meditation has a great advantage over suggestion for it not only keeps the heart in rhythm, it places the center of life-force there. When the mind assumes a burden from the body, the body may benefit, but the mind bears the burden. But when the heart takes the load from mind and body, it heals itself. The heart is its own medicine. Therefore meditation can cure every ill of body, mind or heart.

All these are the negative value of meditation, the purgative processes by which body, mind and heart are purified. Yet life is more than negation or purgation. Life is something real, something positive, something magnetic. So continued meditation draws all strength to the center of one's being, to the heart, and from there it radiates to all parts of body and mind.

Just as the body has its breaths with inhalations and exhalations, so mind has its periods for observation and inner concentration, and so heart has its periods of contraction and expansion. It is the contraction and expansion of the heart which draws the blood to it and circulates it through the body. The purified blood not only carries physical energy and prana, it is the vehicle for all spiritual energy in the body.

Just as the animals in the ocean draw their sustenance from the sea water, so the body of man really draws all sustenance from the blood. It is the blood which assimilates the food from the intestines and distributes it everywhere, and it is the blood which removes waste particles and poisons. So the blood and heart nourish, purify and energize this physical vehicle.

Likewise the heart and blood purify the mind and this is accomplished in meditation. People who do not read or think overmuch are not so susceptible to pain. Savage warriors often fall without a murmur. This is partly due to their daily life which does not focus all consciousness in the brain and partly due to their use of music and song which make them insensible to pain while under its influence. This magnetic anesthetic influence often lasts for hours or days.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

It is our artificial and highly specialized intellectual life with unnecessary concern and worries which destroys the rhythm of the heart-beat and makes it difficult to place the center of gravity of the personality where it belongs. Sleep at best gives only partial relief. Meditation and the practice of the Divine Presence remove self-consciousness, the greatest obstacle to calm and peace. Pure meditation itself is the desirable condition and brings all desirable results.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series III: Number 3

Pure meditation aids one to reach into the inner recesses of the heart. Concentration is principally concerned with mind, whereas meditation, while not entirely unconcerned with mind, centers the soul where it belongs: in the heart. Anyone can be called eccentric who has not found the center of his being, and spiritual balance is impossible until this is accomplished.

Spiritual life is one of unity, not of separation. Whoso believes that life in the heart means withdrawal from the body does not know the meaning of life. Blood plays a more important part in physical existence than anything else. Thus Sura 96 begins: "Read in the name of your Lord Who created, He created man from a clot."

Now this has great significance for it is blood which distinguishes animal from vegetable more than anything else, and in the evolution of higher forms it is the organization of heart and veins and arteries which becomes most complex. They serve not only the physical body but make feeling possible. So increase of function in all worlds corresponds to the importance of the heart life in those worlds.

And what is heart? Heart is the seat of life. So Allah has been called the Beneficent and Merciful. The whole life becomes clearer when these processes are understood. It may even be said, there is more of divine energy in those animals where heart is most important, and there is still more divine energy when the consciousness is centered in the heart and bloodstream.

Now peace comes when self is in harmony with the rhythm of the heart. This is accomplished in two ways. In silent meditation all vibrations are stopped and one enters into the life-stream in the heart; in music, the rhythm and harmony are directed to and through the heart so that it takes up the proper pulsation.

Everyone knows that all music affects the heart, but such effects may or may not be beneficial. So for many it is not required to exercise this control over the heart and mastery comes through love and surrender. So if there is any form of concentration to be used in meditation, it consists in first getting into the rhythm of the heart, even though it be by watching the heartbeats, feeling them and harmonizing with them.

Then one centers all feeling in the physical heart and out of feeling selects love, and out of love, Divine Love. So meditation may be said to begin with a great sweep at the outside of a circle, getting further and further within that circle until one reaches the center of the circle, and at the same time that very centralizing of attention draws to one all that God has, for to him that gives all to God, Allah bestows whatever is his need.

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Githa

Series III: Number 4

The Sufi does not wait until the hereafter to attain his spiritual independence. He does all he can here and now, realizing that the Presence of God does not depend upon the fact that he is inhabiting a gross or subtle body. Qur'an teaches that man is the Khalif of God, meaning that he can seek and serve God here and now.

Life in the heart is not dependent upon the soul being in Nasut, Malakut or Djabrut. Life in the heart comes when consciousness is centered in feeling. The first object of feeling is to attune feeling, thought and action within oneself. Among the Hindus Bhakti, Jnana and Karma Yoga are often considered as different, but in the Sufi system they are united. No attempt is made to consider any part of life as fundamentally separate from the rest of life or to consider each as intricate parts of a whole.

The mystic conceives life as a whole and does not separate it into divisions. The first unity to be attained is the unity of the self, the **real self**, and not only what thought can grasp of being. This self is higher than thought and thought is its faculty. In the common life instead of thought being a faculty of self, selfhood has become a faculty of the mind and this causes endless confusion.

This confusion comes to an end when God is perceived. By meditation one finds it is possible to exist without thought and that cessation of thought does not mean cessation of knowledge. Instead it often means the beginning of knowledge. When one escapes from the thought of self and self-consciousness, real knowledge becomes possible, which is called **Ilm** by the Sufis.

Of the faculties of mind, none are of greater importance to the soul than the collection of knowledge, yet knowledge is the means, not the end. When by centering consciousness in the heart one can perceive freely into the mind, the knowledge of both this world and that world are one's possessions.

Meditation therefore leads to unity of one's being by linking body, mind and heart to God. Cessation of movement, thought and feeling, instead of bringing death, bring life. All that was shut out when one depended upon his feeble insight, his limited intellect and his untrained feeling become the possessions of the heart, where the light of Allah is burning upon one's inner shrine.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series III: Number 5

Those who are always longing for peace with others, who want to lead others, to teach others, to bring others to God or to some earthly goal and who have not found peace or God or that earthly goal, what can they accomplish? Only those who have joined mind to heart can link the mind of another to heart. Man's control over his body often makes it possible for him to move it or stop it at will, but for every thousand men who can stop their legs, perhaps one can control his mind, and for every thousand who can put brain to work or rest at will perhaps not even one has power over his heart to control all feelings.

Now the purpose of Meditation can be called a purpose of man or the requirement of God. Man needs Meditation to attain voluntary control over his being and to unify each part of his being with the whole. God also needs Meditation for in the beginning He existed without action or thought and when He completed the Universe, He again entered into His primordial state of stillness.

All conditions of God: rest, action, thought, concentration, meditation, love, ecstasy, song and silence are co-existing. God enjoys His Nirvana in His highest state and in His lowest state. Man, because of his faculty of analytical conception, considering rest and activity separate, finds it difficult to attain Nirvana here and now.

Man, engulfed in this world of activity, loses sight of his inner being, forgets how to rest and is a stranger to peace at heart. The great sages therefore have come to remind him of the treasures he carries with him and to attain them he has to enter into rest and silence. At the same time it cannot be said that one has attained to the highest condition of meditation until one is able to meditate even in the midst of action and struggle. If unity is once attained there, it is not so difficult to bring others to the doors of salvation.

Control of breath and mind are not so difficult when one knows the uses of Wazifa and Darood. To keep the heart at rest and peace, Fikr is important. If Fikr is continued at all times, day and night, asleep or awake, then it is God Who dwells there and this is the highest state man can achieve of himself. Anything of a marvelous nature that seems to come after that comes not of his effort but through the beneficent Grace of Allah.

Leader will he be who leads himself, ruler will he be who rules himself and benefactor will he be who has supreme control over his heart; who is not driven hither and thither by all the turbulent waves of life, who can control even passion and sentiment in his heart and who can keep his glance upon Allah whether he walk on a path of primroses or face the greatest difficulties in the turmoil of his life.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series III: Number 6

Meditation contains the cure for all troubles, the remedy for every difficulty, the balm for every pain. What may be called Cosmic Consciousness may be considered in two aspects: A growth of sympathy and feeling, or the expansion of the heart until it is filled with nothing but the light, thought and feeling of God.

In the first condition while one may not be in the highest **hal**, yet one is a true **hakim**, a physician and a wise man who can heal himself and others. When the heart overflows with love, the body and mind are surcharged with magnetism and so great is the power of this magnetism that it can benefit others thousands of miles away. Yes, it is possible to concentrate on loved ones and through Meditation, when one is bathed in the Ocean of Divine Love, such factors as distance and time do not matter.

Thus religion teaches to pray for the dead. How can we benefit the dead? We can, if the prayers come from sympathy and benignity, but if they are painful duties we do little good to ourselves or others. Better than prayer is the communion of saints which becomes possible when Meditation is maintained in the heart; then the sympathetic vibrations pass from plane to plane and one on earth can help one in heaven and one in heaven can assist many upon earth.

The brotherhood of Sufis is not determined by time or space. Unity is beyond all imitations. The words of Khatum, recorded as prayer, are really assertions of metaphysical realities: God is the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, Who is the Lord of Heaven and earth. He opens our hearts and then we hear His Voice which is constantly coming from within. He gives us His great Goodness and He teaches us His loving forgiveness. He raises us above the distinctions and differences which divide men, sends us the Peace of His Divine Spirit, and unites us all in His Perfect Being.

This is the state of God and becomes the **makam** of the sage. By placing himself in God's position, and maintaining that attitude he attains to the first kind of Cosmic Consciousness, one of universal love and feeling. All growth of heart makes this more and more possible.

In Meditation, therefore, listen to Allah speak, and record your impressions. Feel His Love and Presence, perceive His Glory and Light. All are there within the heart of man, the **arsh** of God. And by constantly maintaining this state, all of life becomes a meditation and a blessing.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series III: Number 7

When man speaks God is silent and when man is silent God may speak. It is foolish to talk and discuss Cosmic Consciousness. It is, perhaps, even less unworthy to speculate upon what to do when dead. It is easier to fly an airplane under earth, or for a camel to walk through the eye of a needle than for one to consider Cosmic Consciousness. When Jesus used this last phrase about the rich man not being able to attain to the Kingdom of God, he meant that one who cared for the things of creation left no accommodation for the Creator, and as man cannot serve both God and Mammon, either the heart is attached to those things which are smaller than itself—whether with the riches of earth or heaven—or it is filled with the Divine Light which is even greater than the heart. Yet the heart can become larger than all the Universe when filled with this light.

In the state of Unity there can be no variety. Bathed in the light of the Divine Sun, selfhood seems lost but only seemingly so. What is the soul? Ruh is the ray of the Divine Sun. As ray has no existence apart from sun, so soul is nothing but God. In the existence of soul beyond the heart sphere there are not souls strictly speaking. This has been called the **oversoul**; by mystics it is sometimes known as **Nuri Mohammed**, where man escapes manhood with its limitations and only God exists. And what is the condition of God there? It is there that Allah is clothed in all His Attributes, in His Glory and Majesty, upon His Great Throne.

Man does not approach God in His Throne except in the state of Godhood. This is told in the Masnavi in the story of the man who approached the highest heaven first as the servant and then as the slave of God, but was rejected. When he came the third time as the very self of God, he entered into the Glory of God. This same allegory is also the basis of the Mantiq-ut-Tair of Attar, with its tales of the Simurgh.

The purpose of Meditation is to enter upon a state of unity, thought of unity, feeling of unity, life of unity. When we study the Nature of Allah we find in His Higher State, when He had not yet touched the condition of Nuri Mohammed, He was in a condition of Unity. This state is called **Wahdat**; it is the condition of the Unity of God, where He is conscious of Himself and recognizes His Unity. In this state God was in Meditation, yet was conscious of Himself.

Now from this condition of Meditation He projected His being outwardly into the condition called Wahdaniat, and there all the merits of God appear: His Being, and Goodness and Love and all merits. They came in this projected condition which He projected out from the Heart of His Being when He was in Meditation in the state of Unity.

Sufism says: follow God. So first it is to attain to this condition of unity, which comes through Meditation in the heart. Then when one discovers the reality in the heart is nothing but God, and life is nothing but God, the next step is to attain to the Divine Grace, **Hariat**, as was projected into the condition called Wahdaniat as a condition of God, but Nuri Mohammed as the goal of the whole humanity, where every blessing is attained and the soul drinks of the waters of everlasting life.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

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Githa

Series III: Number 8

The life of God is an art. Without the practice of Meditation the spiritual man is a theoretical being. Meditation being an act based on the behavior of Allah, it is the means by which all divine attributes are attracted to man.

The spiritual man is not necessarily the same as the moral man from the worldly point of view. He is the master of morals, knowing that the true moral is Love. Through love for God and by Union with God he attains the state of Cosmic Unity where the life of God, **baqa**, becomes the reality. In fact when one reaches this stage of God-realization, he can no longer be judged. His actions are determined by Wisdom, not by judgment.

Bodhisattva was one who through Meditation had thrown off the shackles of the limited self and so experienced and expressed reality while on earth. The ideal of the Sufi is the same and the Sufi makes all life as one, so that his spiritual deliverance need not lead him to disobey the accepted rules or customs of life about him, and also, that by being an example to those around, he may lead other persons Godward without any interference in their general routine or manner of life.

One who has reached spiritual attainment through Meditation looks upon all aspects of life both as God and as man. As man he may or may not express personal preferences and exhibit distinguished habits; as the Khalif of God he does not place great value in anything except those acts which enable the soul to attain and retain union with God, such as Meditation, Prayer, Breath Control, Safa and Concentration.

The manner of the sage is important not as an end in itself, but as a means for helping others. Those who pattern their outer lives after a saint gain something through the harmony affected, but those who take for an ideal standard the inner life of the saint have definitely placed themselves on the ladder which leads upward to God.

Difficult as it is to attain Cosmic Consciousness, ten thousand times more difficult is it to retain that condition. So soon as one feels toward another, "Thou art different," then it is lost. So soon as one sees another as other than Allah, then it is gone. Even kindness toward another without feeling of union, without deepest sympathy, turns one from unity to duality. Goodness, kindness, piety are not enough; any feeling except of unity debars one from unity and so from God. Consequently every breath may have to be watched, to maintain at every moment of our lives extreme care and watchfulness.

As Iblis, the angel of light, was rejected from Heaven because he would not bow down to man, so one who has attained the highest mystical states, who has entered into supreme union in Allah, Who has sat on the Arsh-throne higher than Djabrut, and to whom all the angels have given obeisance, even as Iblis, King of the angels, will he be expelled from Eden the instant he fails to bow down to the humblest man, and show every respect and consideration to the least of God's creatures. For unity with God is only completed when God is seen as Love, Lover and Beloved, and when all in existence partakes not only of the Nature but of the very Essence of Allah.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

Githa

Series III: Number 9

Meditation is the method for the attainment of all things, all states, all conditions. It is both a means and an end. It is the life of God in man and of man in God. The supreme achievement of Meditation is the constant condition of harmony with God, with oneself and with the world. This is called Samadhi by the Hindus.

In this state comes the end of desire and the satisfaction of the desire. Desire comes to an end because it is seen that all those things which attracted the limited self have no permanent value, and at the same time the love of Allah, which is the supreme desire, has its fulfillment in the peace and unification which comes to the heart. And again, if there is perseverance in Meditation, the state will give rise to indifference so that there can be no desire.

Heart is the source and fountain-head of life. Even physical life will be lengthened when people perceive the value of the heart's functions, how even the most vital centers and organs of the body are dependent on it. Here is also the fulfillment of dreams, for when the light of the inner spheres falls upon the surface of the mind and is reflected in the eye, then the faculty of Insight is gained which makes life easier and enables one to see into the future.

Future is determined partly by the past and partly by the energy which is poured from the physical sun in this world and from its counterparts in the higher worlds. Even insofar as it arises from the past, this can only be perceived through the faculty of Insight, for until one is capable of rising above the intellect, one is bound by time, space and conditioned existence.

All disease and pain, all illness and affliction end when life is centered in the heart. Then through sympathy and harmony one controls the vibrations in others which have already been mastered in oneself. Sympathy and attunement make it possible to circulate one's atmosphere of peace after it is once attained. This achievement of peace with oneself which comes mostly through Meditation, is the supreme achievement of man.

All the higher stages, all the higher grades, all the places in the Spiritual Hierarchy become filled only by those who have attained this inner peace. By that they have been able to touch the source of pain everywhere and anywhere and so bring healing to suffering humanity. This faculty of healing, this power of helping; this ability to teach need not be sought. Those who have trodden the path to God and acquired self-control through Meditation will discover that these possessions are theirs, only because their hearts have been set on God, they have not always been aware of the many gifts and treasures He has bestowed upon them.

Verily to him who hath surrendered to God, there is no end of power for wonder-working, but greatest of all wonder-working is the manifestation of Divine Love in and through and around one's being.

Githa *Dhyana*: Meditation

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Githa

Series III: Number 10

In the Silent Life all this confusion that appears on the outside subsides into a gentle hum, a hum which can be called the music of the spheres. These vibrations fill all space within and without one's being and can be heard by a keen ear. They may be called the vibrations of life itself which fill the Ocean of Life. All things live and move and have their being in them.

In Meditation as one approaches unity, one begins to perceive more of this inner silent life, and as it is expressed through one, one feels more of the Divine Purpose of being. All thought, action and speech then affect the heart favorably or unfavorably. This is much higher than conscience, for while conscience gives one the best in oneself, the illuminated heart can receive even the best that is in God.

Meditation is the suppression of all conscious personal thought and feeling. It is not the prevention of consciousness, feeling and thought. The conditions of Allah are these: That He became aware of Himself (Wahdat); that He gave rise to Love and all feelings because of this awareness (Wahdaniat); that He brought this consciousness to the surface through thought and so projected the created worlds.

Man, through habit, perceives the outer world and then carries that experience inward to his mind and then carries the thought deep into his heart. This can be regarded as the opposite of the Divine activity, but really it is the reciprocal. From the condition called Wahdaniat come all activities of Sifat, which manifest in all forms. It is only the power of spirit which makes this possible. While spirit condenses, so to speak, in matter, matter also etherealizes into spirit. When man transforms action into thought, he does it, and when he transmutes action or thought into feeling, he does it still more.

From the cosmic view it can be seen that all this work of man transmuting action into thought and action or thought into feeling is nothing but the reciprocal method Allah has used to bring spirit back to spirit, after it has entered the dense condition of matter. In other words, all this comes from the Divine Inhalation and Exhalation by which vibrations become coarse when passing from the One to the many and become fine again in passing from the many **toward the One**.

Even animal bodies are too coarse to complete this refinement. Only in man, the hu-man, is it possible, and only then when man has perceived this special union with God, which was true all the time, only the truth had not embedded itself in his consciousness. In his spiritual awakening he realizes this and so serves as the means by which the spirit can return to God Who gave it, as the Bible and Qur'an teach.

So while Meditation may be considered as the means by which man returns to God, as the means by which matter is re-transformed into spirit, as the means by which the cosmic balance and reciprocal activities and mechanics are maintained, in its final aspect it is the means by which God returns to God, by which Sifat is permanently united to the Zat and the ultimate and absolute Unity of the Cosmos eternally maintained.