



Sufi Newsletter

South African Newsletter 012
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**"Slow breath gives
tranquility to the mind,
and all the creative
faculties of mind have
scope of work given by
this rhythm.**

*From Gathas
By Hazrat Inayat Khan*



A note from the Editor

In this busy start to 2016, I was reminded how important it is to create "soft places to land." Spaces where I can find refuge from the stresses of my daily activities and to spend quiet time there!

I realise how these "soft landings" can be created in different places; my home or garden, the fishpond at the Sufi Temple, in a yoga practice, during Universal Worship.

I hope this issue inspires you to find that "soft place to land!"

Love and Light
Caroline

Extract from The Sufi Message

The Teaching of Hazrat Inayat Khan. Vol.13, Gathas, Purification of the Mind

The principal thing to attain happiness, is to purify one's mind from all things that disturb it and create inharmony. There are not only bad impressions which disturb the tranquility of mind, but there are many feelings of resentment and resistance against things which do not agree with one's own idea which disturb one's mind. The person who has some business to carry out, some profession to attend to, requires a tranquil mind, but especially the one who journeys on the spiritual path needs tranquility of mind most. Prayers, concentrations, meditations make no effect when the mind is not purified from all disturbances.

Therefore, for an adept, no cost and no sacrifice is great enough to keep harmony within himself. A Sufi tries to keep harmony in his surroundings, the harmony which demands many sacrifices. It makes one endure what one is not willing to endure, it makes one overlook what one is not inclined to overlook, it makes one tolerate what one is not accustomed to tolerate, and it makes one forgive and forget what one would never have forgotten if it were not for the sake of harmony. But at whatever cost harmony is attained, it is a good bargain. For harmony is the secret of happiness, and in absence of this a person living in palaces and rolling in gold can be most unhappy.

Harmony is brought about by attuning oneself to all beings, to all things, to all conditions, to all situations. And he who cannot tune himself tries to tune others, and while trying to tune others he breaks the string. It is like a person who has a violin in his hands wishing to tune the cello. If he wishes to be in tune with the cellist, he must tune his violin to the cellist's pitch. Every soul, as its nature, seeks constantly for harmony, but rarely there is to be found a soul who really knows how to create it. If one says, "This noise which goes on always next to my ears makes me mad," he cannot stop the noise. He must know how to close himself from that noise; if he cannot, to accustom himself to that noise so as to be able to bear it and eventually to rise above it, that it may no more create inharmony.

**The Sufi Volumes are available for purchase at the Sufi centres
around the country.**

Inspirational "Soft Landings":

Written by Madisyn Taylor – Your Comfort Zone:

"Our day-to-day demands can quickly take their toll on our well-being if we are not vigilant about caring for ourselves as best we can. One way we can ensure that we have an opportunity to relax and recuperate each day is to create a soft place to land when we arrive home. This landing pad, whether it is an entire room or merely a small corner of a larger area, can provide us with a safe and comforting refuge in which we can decompress and recover from the day's stresses. There, we are enveloped in feelings of security that transcend other issues that may be unfolding in our homes. Our landing pads also act as way stations that enable us to shift our attention away from our outer-world concerns and back to our inner-world needs.

To create a soft place to land in your home, begin by scouting potential locations. Or perhaps your entire home is your landing pad in which case you may only need to declutter. Your habits can often provide you with insight into the perfect spot, as there may be an area of your home you gravitate to naturally when you are in need of comfort. Any space in which you go to with stress and anxiety can become your landing pad. A basement or attic, spare room, or unused storage area, furnished with items that soothe you, can give you the privacy you need to unwind. If you appreciate the elements, you may find that spending time in a section of your garden or outdoor patio helps you release the day's tensions. Preparing these spaces can be as easy as replacing clutter with a small selection of beautiful objects that put you in a relaxed frame of mind. Remember to consider noise and activity levels while choosing the site of your landing pad. If you know that ordinary human commotion will distract you from your purpose, look for a secluded spot.

The soft place to land that you create should inspire within you the mantra, "I can breathe here. I can relax here. I know I am safe here." When you return to your home after braving worldly rigors, you will feel a subtle yet tranquil shift occur inside of you as you settle in to this most personal of retreats and feel centered once again."

Written by Paulo Coelho from his book "Like the Flowing River" - Thoughts and Reflections:

"Juan always used to attend the Sunday service at his church, but he began to feel that the priest was always saying the same thing, and so stopped going. Two months later, one cold winter night, the priest came to visit him.

'He's probably come to try and persuade me to go back,' Juan thought to himself. He felt that he couldn't give the real reason for his absence – the priest's repetitive sermons. He needed to find an excuse and, while he was thinking, he placed two chairs beside the fire and started talking about the weather.

The priest said nothing. After trying in vain for some time to start a conversation, Juan gave up. The two men sat on in silence for nearly half an hour, staring into the fire.

At that point, the priest got up and, with one of the logs that had not yet burned, he pushed one piece of coal away from the flames. Since there was not enough heat for the coal to continue burning, it began to cool. Juan quickly drew it back into the centre of the fire.

'Good night', said the priest getting up to leave. 'Good night, and thank you very much', replied Juan.

'However brightly a piece of coal may be burning, it will soon burn out if you remove it from the flames. However intelligent a man may be, he will soon lose his warmth and his flame if he distances himself from his fellow man. I'll see you at church next Sunday.'"

Written by Hazrat Inayat Khan from Volume 13 on Inner Tranquility:

"The great lesson which one learns, which helps most in keeping that tranquility in life which helps insight, is to be able to become like ebb and flow. When the first is needed then to become ebb, when the next thing is needed then to make oneself in that way; when it is necessary to express then to express, when it is necessary to respond, then to respond, at will. In this manner one will always manage to preserve tranquility in life."

From Sufi Volume 4, Mental Purification, Mystic Relaxation:

"The question is, how does one relax? It is not by sitting silent with closed eyes; for when the mind is giving attention to the body by thought or feeling, then the body is not relaxed, because the mind is torturing the body. And when feeling is giving attention to the mind, then the mind is tortured. And this torture, even if the eyes are closed, even if we are sitting in a certain posture, does no good.

With relaxation one should consider three points of view:

1. the point of view of the physical body,
 2. the point of view of the mind, and
 3. the point of view of the feeling.
1. The point of view of the physical body is that one must accustom oneself to get power over, or to have influence on, one's circulation and pulsation; and one can do that with the power of thought and with the power of will together with breath.

By will-power one can bring about a certain condition in one's body so that one's circulation takes a certain rhythm. It is decreased according to will. One can do the same in regulating one's pulsation by the power of will. No sooner has the will taken in hand the circulation and the pulsation of the body, than the will has in hand a meditation of hours. It is for this reason that sages can meditate for hours on end, because they have mastered their circulation; they can breathe at will, slower or quicker.

And when there is no tension on one's nervous or on one's muscular system, then one gets a repose that ten days' sleep cannot bring about. Therefore to have relaxation does not mean to sit quiet; it is to be able to remove tension from one's system - from one's circulation, one's pulsation, and one's nervous and muscular systems.

2. How does one relax the mind? The method for relaxation of the mind is first to make the mind tired. He who does not know the exercise for making the mind tired can never relax his mind. Concentration is the greatest action one can give to one's mind, because the mind is held in position on a certain thing. After that it will relax naturally and when it relaxes it will gain all power.
3. Relaxation of feeling is achieved by feeling deeply. The Sufis in the East in their meditation have music played that stirs up the emotions to such a degree that the poem they hear becomes a reality. Then comes the reaction, which is relaxation. All that was blocked up, every congestion, is broken down; and inspiration, power, and a feeling of joy and exaltation come to them.

It is by these three kinds of relaxation that one becomes prepared for the highest relaxation which is to relax the whole being: body in repose, mind at rest, heart at peace. It is that experience which may be called *Nirvana*, the ideal of thinkers and meditative souls. It is that which they want to reach, for in it there is everything.

In that condition each person becomes for the time as a drop that is assimilated or submerged in its origin. And being submerged for one moment means that all that belongs to the origin is attracted by this drop, because the origin is the essence of all. The drop has taken from its origin everything it has in life. It is newly charged and has become illumined again."



Events & news from the Western Cape

Cape Town

Jake de Villiers, husband of long-time mureed Pauline de Villiers, passed away late last year after a long illness, and we extend deep condolences to Pauline and her two daughters. A warm and well-attended Sufi memorial service was held for Jake on Sunday 3rd January at the Sufi Temple. This service took place during a major cricket match in the nearby Newlands cricket grounds, and parking was at an absolute premium. However Pauline worked her magic with the traffic police, and they reserved the whole street area near the Temple for her!

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On Wednesday 6th January a small New Year ceremony was held at the regular evening meeting.

The Sufi New Year Prayer:

“O Thou Who abidest in our hearts,
Most merciful and compassionate God,
Lord of heaven and earth,
We forgive others their trespasses
And ask for forgiveness for our shortcomings.
We begin the New Year with a pure heart and a clear conscience,
With courage and hope:
Help us to fulfil the purpose of our lives under Thy Divine guidance.
AMEN

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On Sunday 21st January a picnic was held at the Sufi Temple in Newlands after the Universal Worship service. It was a gentle and special occasion.

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The passing of Murshid Inyat Khan (on 5th February 1927) was commemorated at the Wednesday evening meeting on the 10th February. In the Sufi calendar the 5th February is known as Visalat Day.

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On Saturday 20th February the Sufi wedding of Harold Epstein and Anja Gerber was held in Pringle Bay. It was well organised by the couple with many guests, good food, music and blessings for all.



Cape Town

On Friday 26th February the well-known Desert Rose singers gave a well-attended public performance at the Sufi Temple in Newlands.

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Cape Town has experienced its hottest and windiest summers for many a year, and so it was only on the 8th Wednesday evening of 2016 that we could bring out our fire emblem. It was a bit late to think of the New Year, so instead we sat around the fire outside the Temple and focused on the dancing flames and glowing emblem in a concentration practice, guided by Murshid's words:

"The Spirit of Divine Fire in the heart is awakened ... by one's love, by devotion, by service to one's fellow man, by humility and modesty, by sympathy for those around us, by consideration in every word and deed, by showing meekness and tenderness, by sharing the pain and suffering of another.

"It is these things that awaken the Spirit of Divine Fire in the heart."

"... and then, the contemplation of the blaze and that light ... leads one to a realisation of God, perhaps to such a degree that one's limited self remains no more, is no longer before one's view." (Complete Works 1922, Vol 2, Sep-Dec, p124)



Fire drum made by Ivan Alberts

Sufi Inner School

**Programme for Wednesday evenings at the Sufi Temple in Cape Town.
These meetings are for mureeds or by invitation:**

All meetings start at 19h30.

March 2016

02 Mar	Confraternity & Teachings for mureeds
09 Mar	Healing & advanced meditation
16 Mar	Confraternity & Message evening
23 Mar	Healing & advanced teachings
30 Mar	Healing & Confraternity

April 2016

06 Apr	Confraternity & Teachings for mureeds
13 Apr	Healing & advanced meditation
20 Apr	Confraternity & Message evening
27 Apr	Healing & advanced teachings

May 2016

04 May	Confraternity & Teachings for mureeds
11 May	Healing & advanced meditation
18 May	Confraternity & Message evening
25 May	Healing & advanced teachings

This programme will be up on the notice board in the Sufi Temple.

To find out more about the Sufi Inner School and if anyone is interested in attending these Sufi Order (=inner school) meetings please chat to either:

- Waldo on 083 555 5002 / essen@bucknet.co.za
- Louis on 083 271 3797 / info@therippleeffect.co.za
- Magda on 082 449 8058 / itsmagda@iafrica.com
- Frances on (021) 671-8807
- Nisa on 082 200 6751



**“There are living words and
living words are for eternity.
Even if the world had ended
the words of the Message
will live”**

Cherag's address 1926

By Hazrat Inayat Khan





"I asked for strength,
 and God gave me difficulties to make me strong.
 I asked for wisdom,
 and God gave me problems to learn to solve.
 I asked for prosperity,
 and God gave me a brain and brawn to work.
 I asked for courage,
 and God gave me dangers to overcome.
 I asked for love,
 and God gave me people to help.
 I asked for favors,
 and God gave me opportunities.
 I received nothing I wanted.
 I received everything I needed."

By Hazrat Inayat Khan

Universal Worship Dates
 for Cape Town
 10h30 to 11h30

March 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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April 2016						
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May 2016						
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Contact

If you would like to give some
 feedback on the newsletter,
 or contribute to this newsletter
 please contact Caroline at
sufinews1@gmail.com