



The Path of Initiation
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The most important factor in the Sufi Movement is the esoteric school, although it is not the most important activity, for the reason that this school has to do with some few, not with the multitude. The esoteric school is not for all and will never be for all; it is only for the few.

Often people have asked me why the Sufis of past ages did not try to spread Sufism. I have always answered that formerly only one factor of Sufism existed, and that was the inner school, which always kept itself exclusive and which will always be kept in the same way. Propaganda is for the betterment of humanity, it is for the message of brotherhood, not for the inner school. The inner school is for the few who earnestly, steadily, and with patience seek for the truth, who are awake to the voice of truth and will have patience all along the journey. The inner school is not something a man follows, a form, a dogma, or a belief. The inner school has neither a dogma nor a belief; the work of the inner school is to tune the soul, to raise the individual from the plane where he stands, to uplift the soul. This is a school where one learns to know oneself, where one comes to understand life. It is, like the picture given in a poem in the Divan. Once a lion was wandering in the woods and found among some sheep a lion cub. It also ran away with the sheep, and when the lion followed the cub and approached it, it was very frightened. "Why are you afraid?" said the lion, "you are a lion too!" "No, no," said the cub, "I am a sheep; I am no lion, I am frightened, I tremble." But the lion said, "I will not let you go among the sheep, you are a lion." The cub was very much afraid but followed the lion. They came near a pool of water, the sun was clear, the water still. The lion said, "While you drink this water, look at your reflection and then look at me". And it saw for itself and thought, "I am the same as this lion; why do I run among the sheep? Let the sheep go and I will do the work of a lion!"

This is the work of the inner school. The initiation, which Murshid gives to the Mureed is as the call of the lion. The heart is the lake. When in the heart one begins to seek, one finds self, the secret of which one did not know fully before. Therefore know that you have to expect nothing from initiation, that it does not give a new or great power or visions; no, this school does not pretend to give things of that sort. It is a school of tradition, thousands of years old, to which belonged saints and sages whose names are found in the scriptures of the past, whose names are not imaginary names, whose lives can be found in history. Therefore know that behind us is a backbone of tradition of masters, prophets, wise men, and sages, who have proved that they understood the secret of life. We do not work for worldly success; our movement aims at something greater. We will remain conscious of the dignity of the tradition behind us. We will not pretend to be on this side or that side; we will not try to be popular or to attract the masses. We do not mind how few we are; if only we are earnest in the task we have before us. Success in this school does not belong to great numbers, it does not depend on worldly things, but on the unfoldment of those who belong to it. Knowing this we shall be conscious of the dignity of the path of initiation in the school of the Sufi Movement.

How can this dignity be observed? First by closing our lips. It is the light-hearted who give out all that is given to them, who speak of spiritual matters to anyone. This should not be your manner. You must show the lion's heritage, keeping the lips closed on sacred matters. Mind not if another has a different belief, a different conception. The Sufi is above the differences of opinions. The whole secret of this path is to travel with lips closed. No discussion, no argument, not much talk on the subject of the soul, which is too sacred to be talked about with everyone. Besides, if you disagree, if you feel contempt for another custom, another manner, it shows your limitation. By tolerance, by understanding, by forgiving, one shows that the heart is large enough to assimilate all things. The ordinary mentality respects certain things, and other things it does not like. The more spiritual one becomes the more will one

assimilate, understand. The higher a man is spiritually evolved the greater is the willingness, the readiness, to forgive. To know all is to understand all.

One might ask, what does one learn in the school of initiation? No principles? What principle does one have to adopt? There is only one principle and that is the largeness of your heart. And who will judge it? You yourself. Every thought, word, and feeling you must weigh, you must find out whether it is large or small, or whether it shows lack of evolution, imperfection.

Man has an earthly body but a heavenly soul. His earthly parentage is apparent; his real parentage is God's parentage. The more aristocratic and noble, the more conscious, the more there is the expression of the divine. Then whatever one thinks or feels or does one expresses the divine. This is the right principle. There is no need for Murshid to tell you what is small or large. As the eyes can discriminate, so the heart can discriminate whether what we think, say, or do is small or large. A person may have a high rank or position, he may possess great wealth, but if his heart is small he is a small person, and whatever he does will be small. Another may lack all that belongs to the world, and yet if his heart is large he is great. In this way, by struggling with the self, one will find nobility, which is a divine heritage, and thus life will become harmonious, an expression of the divine.

Besides there is another thing and that is meditation. By this is not meant praying on Sunday, or even every evening, nor closing the eyes for a few minutes. That is the beginning. But it is not what I mean; our whole life we should be in meditation, with everything we do; not one single moment should pass without it. By this one accomplishes a task, which is the only yearning of the soul: to seek perfection. Remember in which boat you are traveling: in the boat of responsibility. Keep before you the dignity of your ideal, and by persevering faithfully you can be sure of the desired result, without any doubt.