



### A Sufi Message

#### Living Joy! Reconciling Distinctions and Differences

Inspired by the Teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan

*Edited and Presented by Murshida Nuria Stephanie Sabato*

The more elevated the soul, the broader the outlook.

– Hazrat Inayat Khan –

Attitude is the principal thing in life. It is not the conditions in life which change life for us, but mostly it is our attitude towards life and its conditions upon which depends our happiness or unhappiness.

The attitude becomes high and broad when we look at life from a higher point of view. When our point of view is not high, the range of our sight becomes limited; we become narrow in our outlook on life, and in our feelings, thought, speech and action this narrowness is expressed – this limited point of view. Why is God pointed out on high, toward the sky? Why not toward the earth, for God is everywhere? The reason is that within the range of God's sight the whole universe stands as a little grain of sand, when one flies in the balloon [or in an airplane] and looks down from high, the whole city comes within the range of sight. When one stands on earth one sees no further than the four walls which keep the whole world covered from sight.

What does it mean to become spiritual, or godly? It means to have a higher view of life. It is the high point of view in life which ennobles the soul.

Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan teaches us: We blame others for our sorrows and misfortunes, not perceiving that we ourselves are the creators of our world. Once we know this, we realize this world is our own creation. We may create hideous spirits in our thoughts, and they will become monsters which will work against us and will ruin our own life. But if we create the spirit of love and kindness, we will always be surrounded by love and kindness.

Once we realize this our life becomes different; we become healers; we sympathize with the trouble of another; we serve in the difficulty of another. **A word may help;** a thought of kindness and sympathy will help. Whatever we do to others we do to ourselves, because every thought of kindness or goodness or sympathy has generated a world of sympathy. Even if we go to a land where no one knows us or understands us, we can still attract sympathy and love, if we have created that within ourselves.

Thoughts have prepared for us that happiness or unhappiness which we experience. The whole of mysticism is founded on this.

If thoughts can accomplish this happiness or unhappiness which we experience so can love or imagination; even a dream can accomplish it according to the impression which it makes. Some thoughts are like things, like objects, other thoughts are like beings. Some thoughts are like angels by our side, and some can be like devils.

Thoughts are all round us, either helping us towards the accomplishment of the objects before us or drawing us back from those things we wish to accomplish. Bebe Crosby story!

First one must know what we need and become the master of ourselves and of our thoughts and our life. Then our personality will become agreeable and pleasant to others, and we will become a blessing to all we meet in this world.

We learn to understand that there is a world in oneself, that in our mind there is a source of happiness and unhappiness, the source of health and illness, the source of light and darkness, and that it can be awakened, either mechanically or at will, if we only knew how to do it. Then we do not blame our ill fortune nor complain of others. We become more tolerant, more joyful, and more loving toward our neighbor, because we know the cause of every thought and action, and we see it all as the effect of a certain cause.

In Sufi Message Volume XIV, in the Chapter on The Awakening of the Soul we read: The bringers of joy are the children of sorrow. Every blow we get in life pierces the heart and awakens our feelings to sympathize with others

... every living being has a time of awakening. Sometimes there is a gradual awakening, and sometimes there is a sudden awakening. To some persons it comes in a moment's time - by a blow, by a disappointment, or because their heart has broken through something that happened suddenly. It seemed cruel, but at the same time the result was a sudden awakening, and this awakening brought a blessing beyond praise. The outlook changed, the insight deepened; joy, quiet, independence and freedom were felt, and compassion showed in the attitude. A person who would never forgive, who liked to take revenge, who was easily displeased and cross, a person who would measure and weigh, when his soul is awakened, becomes in one moment a different person.

That is why we receive great blows in life. The person becomes thoughtful as soon as the fire appears. And looks at things differently. But of life's changes and great blows the wise realize that joy, rest and peace come.

The purpose of our life on earth is to look at all the distinctions and differences without being overwhelmed by them. We should go on, rising above them all, and at the same time experiencing them all. The one who has received all the good that has come to them with grateful thanks and who has felt it, and at the same time has also felt the harm done to them and has forgiven and pardoned it all, such a person is the one who has seen the world and who will go beyond it.

There are Lojong Slogans in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition. Lojong slogans are designed as a set of antidotes to undesired mental habits that cause us suffering. There is one Logan Slogan that states: "Drive all blames into oneself." It's not advocating martyrdom. What it implies is that pain comes from holding so tightly to having things our own way and wanting the world to conform to our view. When we find ourselves in this place, we have the tendency to blame others for our disquieted mind, our hurt feelings, or our disappointment.

This slogan is a helpful and an interesting suggestion that we could begin to shift that deep-seated, habitual tendency to having everything on our own terms. This slogan helps us to be mindful of this tendency. So, when we feel the tendency to blame something outside ourselves, we try to get in touch with what it feels like to be holding on to our view so tightly that it creates the reaction to blame. In

this way we realize, we ourselves are to blame for our discomfort, and we can loosen the bounds of our limited view.

Murshid says: It is the understanding of all things from every point of view which enlightens us, a point of view which neither refuses to believe, nor believes in a blind way. Cannot our own mind, and also our situation in life, be turned from hell to heaven and from heaven to hell? This is where we see the difference between the two, and at the same time their oneness. [Have you noticed that throughout this teaching Murshid is highlighting a series of koans? And what is a koan? *It is a paradoxical anecdote or riddle, used in Zen Buddhism to demonstrate the inadequacy of logical reasoning and to provoke enlightenment.*]

As the people of different races, nations, and religions each have their own standards of right and wrong, their own conception of good and evil, and their own ideas about sin and virtue, it is difficult to discern the law governing these opposites. It becomes clear, however, when we understand the law of vibrations. Everything and every being may appear separate from one another on the surface of existence, but beneath the surface on every plane we are nearer to each other, while on the innermost plane we all become one. Another koan!

The idea of opposites [differences and distinctions] keeps us in illusion. Seeing this to be the nature and character of life, the Sufi says that it is not very important to distinguish between two opposites; what is most important is to recognize that “One” that is hidden behind it all. Naturally when we come to this realization, the Sufi climbs upward on that ladder which leads to **unity**, to the idea of unity which comes through the synthesis of life, by seeing the “One” in all things and in all beings.

When a person awakens to the spirit of unity and sees the oneness behind all things, then their point of view becomes different, and their attitude changes.

But our sight is very limited, and our conception of right and wrong and good and evil is only our own, and not according to God's plan. It is true that if we see it as such, it is such for us; but when it comes to God the whole dimension is changed, the whole point of view is changed.

Another important point: It is a great pity if a person does right or good because they want to progress or become spiritual. For what is goodness after all? It is a very small price to pay for spirituality; and the person who depends upon their goodness to attain spirituality may just as well wait a thousand years. For it is just like a person who is collecting all the sand they can to make a hill so that they may climb to heaven. If one is not good for the love of goodness, if one does not do right for one's love of justice, but instead for one's own satisfaction, there is no meaning in doing right, there is no virtue in doing good. To be spiritual is to become nothing; to become good is to become something. And to be something is like being nothing, **while to be nothing is like being all things**. The claim to spirituality hinders the natural perfection; self-effacement is a return to the Garden of Eden.

What does it mean to become spiritual, or godly? It means to have a higher view of life, to look at life from a higher point of view. It is the high point of view in life which ennobles our soul, it is by a broad outlook on life that spiritual aristocracy is realized.

*Pope Francis before his passing called upon those of the Catholic faith to be Missionaries of Peace and Mercy. And Murshid gave us these words as touchstones, steppingstones on the path, and those words are Love, Harmony, and Beauty. If we think, speak, and act with these as our measure we can create heaven on earth.*

The Third Patriarch of Zen  
Hsin Hsin Ming – "Inscription on Faith in Mind"  
by Seng-T'san

The Great Way is not difficult  
for those who have no preferences.  
When love and hate are both absent  
everything becomes clear and undisguised.

Make the smallest distinction, however,  
and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.  
If you wish to see the truth  
then hold no opinions for or against anything.

To set up what you like against what you dislike  
is the disease of the mind.  
When the deep meaning of things is not understood,  
the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail.

The Way is perfect like vast space  
where nothing is lacking and nothing in excess.  
Indeed, it is due to our choosing to accept or reject  
that we do not see the true nature of things.

Live neither in the entanglements of outer things,  
nor in inner feelings of emptiness.  
Be serene in the oneness of things and such  
erroneous views will disappear by themselves.

*And parting words by Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan, ... never for one moment think, as many do, that a spiritual person means a sorrowful, dried up, long-faced person. Spirit is joy, spirit is life; and when that spirit has awakened, all the joy and pleasure that exists are there. As the sun takes away all darkness, so spiritual light removes all worries, anxieties, and doubts. If a spiritual awakening were not so precious, then what would be the use of seeking it in life? It is treasure that nobody can take away from us, a light that will always shine and will never be extinguished, that is spiritual awakening, and this is the fulfillment of life's purpose.*

**Closing:** Dedication of Merit

Khatum

[Join our mail list](#)

*Practices For This Month on Last Page of this Document*

Gratitude is expressed through Generosity!

[Donations Welcomed-Click to Donate](#)

*Ref.*

*Sufi Volume 8, Sufi Teachings, Pairs of Opposites*

*Sufi Message Volume VII - In an Eastern Rose Garden, Mental Creation*

*Sufi Message Volume IX, The Unity of Religious Ideals, Part II, The God-Ideal*

*Sufi Message Volume 8a, Sufi Teachings, The Awakening of the Soul (1)*

*Sufi Message Volume XIII The Gathas,*

*Part II, Kashf: Insight, Gatha II, 1. The Reproduction of the Mental Record*

*Part VII, Tasawwuf: Metaphysics, Gatha III, 1. Attitude*

*The Third Patriarch of Zen, by Hsin Hsin Ming by Seng-T'san*



A Sufi Message  
Living Joy! Reconciling Distinctions and Differences  
Phrases for Meditative Concentration

*Please Read and Concentrate on One Phrase for Two Day Before Moving to the Next Phrase.  
Continue to do this until our next class.*

1. The more elevated the soul, the broader the outlook.
2. Attitude is the principal thing in life. It is not the conditions in life which change life for us, but mostly it is our attitude towards life and its conditions upon which depends our happiness or unhappiness.
3. It is the high point of view in life which ennobles the soul.
4. If we create the spirit of love and kindness, we will always be surrounded by love and kindness.
5. Whatever we do to others we do to ourselves, because every thought of kindness or goodness or sympathy has generated a world of sympathy. Even if we go to a land where no one knows us or understands us, we can still attract sympathy and love, if we have created that within ourselves.
6. Thoughts have prepared for us that happiness or unhappiness which we experience. The whole of mysticism is founded on this.
7. If thoughts can accomplish this happiness or unhappiness which we experience so can love or imagination; even a dream can accomplish it according to the impression which it makes.
8. Thoughts are all round us, either helping us towards the accomplishment of the objects before us or drawing us back from those things we wish to accomplish.
9. First one must know what we need and become the master of ourselves and of our thoughts and our life. Then our personality will become agreeable and pleasant to others, and we will become a blessing to all we meet in this world.
10. The purpose of our life on earth is to look at all the distinctions and differences without being overwhelmed by them. We should go on, rising above them all, and at the same time experiencing them all. The one who has received all the good that has come to them with grateful thanks and who has felt it, and at the same time has also felt the harm done to them and has forgiven and pardoned it all, such a person is the one who has seen the world and who will go beyond it.
11. It is the understanding of all things from every point of view which enlightens us, a point of view which neither refuses to believe, nor believes in a blind way. Cannot our own mind, and also our

- situation in life, be turned from hell to heaven and from heaven to hell? This is where we see the difference between the two, and at the same time their oneness.
12. The idea of opposites [differences and distinctions] keeps us in illusion. The Sufi says that it is not very important to distinguish between two opposites; what is most important is to recognize that "One" which is hidden behind it all. the idea of unity which comes through the synthesis of life, by seeing the "One" in all things and in all beings.
  13. It is the high point of view in life which ennobles our soul, it is by a broad outlook on life that spiritual aristocracy is realized.

14. The Third Patriarch of Zen  
Hsin Hsin Ming – "Inscription on Faith in Mind"  
by Seng-T'san

The Great Way is not difficult  
for those who have no preferences.  
When love and hate are both absent  
everything becomes clear and undisguised.

Make the smallest distinction, however,  
and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart.  
If you wish to see the truth  
then hold no opinions for or against anything.

To set up what you like against what you dislike  
is the disease of the mind.  
When the deep meaning of things is not understood,  
the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail.

The Way is perfect like vast space  
where nothing is lacking and nothing in excess.  
Indeed, it is due to our choosing to accept or reject  
that we do not see the true nature of things.

Live neither in the entanglements of outer things,  
nor in inner feelings of emptiness.  
Be serene in the oneness of things and such  
erroneous views will disappear by themselves.

15. Spiritual awakening is a treasure that nobody can take away from us, a light that will always shine and will never be extinguished, that is spiritual awakening, and this is the fulfillment of life's purpose.