44

THE PROCESS

of

SELF-EXAMINATION



Hazrat Dr. Zahurul Hassan Sharib

Gudri Shah Baba IV, M.A., L.L.B., Ph.D.

Head of the Gudri Shahi Order of the Sufis

43 LECTURE—APRIL—1991

All rights reserved including the right of translation.

Our banker : Indian Overseas Bank, Ajmer ✲ Published by Inam Hassan M A; M. S. M. General Secretary. The Society of Mystics, Sharib House, Jhalra, Ajmer-305001, India. Tel : 0145-20424 ✲ S.M. Information Centres in Europe **Holland** – Mr. Mohammad Siraj Elschot M. S. M.; Baljuwstraat 2,2922 V A Krimpen a/d Yssel Tel : 01807-17884 **England**—Mr. Faiz Ahmed Ferguson M.S.M., 22 Ashton Gardens, Chandwell Heath Romford, Essex, Phone : 01-598-8158 ✲ Mr. Jamil Morris M.S.M.; 4—Polygon Court. The Polygon Soton 501-26T, Southampton Ph. : 0703—220978 **Italy**—Mr. Qamar ud Din Corrado M S.M.; Piazza Tra i Rivi, 4 Trieste 34135 Ph. ; 040-417743.

S. M Membership Subscription ✲

	Foreign		India
One year	4.00 (US) Rs.	70/-Rs.	10/-
Two years	8.00 (US) Rs.	140/-Rs.	20/-
Five years	20.00 (US) Rs.	350/-Rs.	50/-
Life	200.00 (VS) Rs.	3600/-Rs.	1000/-

Remittances payable to "Society of Mystics"

✲Same amount applies to individuals as well as to institutions.

The Process of Self-Examination

Let me welcome you once again.

I extend to you my cordial greetings and all the good wishes.

I suppose that you have read carefully the last lecture. Do you find yourself changed to some extent ? Now, do you hate hating and love loving ? If that is so, it is, indeed, a personal achievement.

So long as you are engaged in hating, you are dissipating your energy. But, once, you begin to shake off that negative approach to life, you will find yourself entering a state of bliss.

To change habit and to overcome prejudice, requires change of outlook. Change of outlook requires the exercise of self-control, and self-discipline.

The thought pattern should also be considerably changed. To insist on positive thoughts is of crucial importance.

It has been aptly said:—

"Sow a thought, reap an action;
Sow an action, reap a habit;
Sow a habit, reap a destiny;"

One must try to practise self-control in every day life. There are some good occasions furnished for the practise of self-control.

These days, we have the month of Ramadhan. It is a month of fasting. Fasting as enjoined by Islam is rigid. Nothing can be taken in the day, whether it be food, fruits or water. Fasting, thus, trains the will power and furnishes an occasion for the practice of self-control.

Self-control makes a person trained and disciplined. Fasting is good for inner purification. Inner purification leads to inner illumination.

Fasting is good in another way. It inculcates the spirit of sympathy and fellow-feeling. It also diverts the attention from the temporal and transitory things to the permanent and lasting spiritual values. Fasting, in fact implies voluntary self-denial as opposed to self-indulgence. It is, also conducive to good health, physical and spiritual both.

Fasting diverts our attention towards self-examination. Self-examination is the mark of a developed soul. It is a revealing process. It has no end.

Self-examination is a spiritual direction from within. Hark and hear it, and pursue it with tenacity and determination.

It occupies a pivotal position in spiritual life, leading to purgation, illumination, self-development and self-conquest.

It unfolds a sense of awareness, which enables us to know and understand our personal history. It attunes us to the Divine grace.

According to the mystics and the Sufis, self-examination is important and necessary for spiritual and moral development.

But, what is self-examination ?

Self-Examination is to judge and assess one's own thoughts and actions every day. It may be done every night before going to sleep. One should know that God keeps a record of what one does.

It leads to self-improvement. One should show no leniency and examine himself strictly. It is better to examine one's own thoughts and actions when alone.

Every night before going to sleep, one should raise his accusing finger towards himself, and see what wrong he has done and what mistakes he has committed. And one should analyse also one by one the triumphs he secured, the failure he avoided, the tenptations, that he owercame, the passions, that he opposed, and what vices he avoided and what virtues he acquired.

Every transaction of the day should be carefully, minutely and diligently assessed and reviewed.

One should ask himself the question, and answer the same himself as to whether he has fallen from his

ideal, which he has set before himself or whether he followed it with rectitude and courage Was there something which should have been done but which was left undone or half-done?

It is not enough to examine one's own motives and feelings, but, it is also necessary to ask and reply himself the question whether he believes, sincerly in God and His teachings and also whether he is ever ready and prepared to obey the Commands of God and to act upon them.

Instead of criticising the people for their faults, it is necessary that one should focus his attention upon his own faults, short-comings and limitations. One should assiduously try to improve himself by getting rid of those faults.

Nobody is perfect. Everybody has his own weaknesses and limitations. But, before criticising the weaknesses of others, one should see whether he does not posses the same weaknesses and limitations.

Self-examination is an aid to co-operative living. It teaches a person to acquire mastery over himself.

Self-conquest is a long process requiring a real urge, patience and perseverance.

For the one, who is keen to improve himself it is incumbent upon him to retire every day for a short time

and begin a revealing inner search. He should examine his interests, passions, sentiments, desires, attitudes, his likes and his dislikes and his moods and motives.

One should eradicate lust, greed and avarice. One should go further and free himself from egoism selfishness. One should try to be an asset and not a liability to society.

Self-examination, taken in its widest sense, is a part of self-education. Here, one is his own teacher and his own pupil.

The one engaged regularly in the process of self-examination becomes more creative and productive. He acquires more capacity for self-development. New ideas come freely and new talents are awakened. Self-examination gives a renewed sense of psychic values. One is freed gradually by his negative approach to life and its problems.

Anxiety is replaced by satisfaction, greed by contentements, and egoism by altruism. Malicious joy is renounced. It is replaced by sympaty in one's misfortune. There is good will and mutual sympaty. There is, also, sharing of joy and sorrow.

Instead of fear, doubts and diffidence, there are faith and hope to give a new content to life, and to make it dynamic.

The sense of security and the desire to improve spiritually and morally give a better understanding of the mysteries of life and a unique feelings and sustained interest.

Self-examination is conducive to the control of the wandering mind and thus, conferring upon the mind peace and tranquility.

A person is a creature of circumstances. Some of his limitations and short-comings are due to his environment. His outlook is moulded by external circumstances. He can overcome his prejudices, assumptions, errors and belief by his own effort

Likewise, he can get rid of his disappointment and frustration.

Self-examination furnishes the remedy. His self-examination will reveal to him the causes leading to disappointment and failure. He can find out the cause of his negative attitudes like anger, irritation, and bitterness and try to be freed from them slowly and gradually, and if one is earnestly determined, he may do it quickly.

People desire peace. They want to achieve it. But, they must know it, that satisfaction of selfish and egoistic desires can not give peace. Without service and sharing, without love and devotion and without self-control, there can be no peace of mind.

One should forgive and forget, display mercy, dispense justice, exibit patience, perseverance and fortitudes and ask for courage to face the problems besetting human life.

Soft words, kindly speech, cheerfulness, hope and optimism give added dimensions to life.

To cultivate a sense of proportion and prospective is to seek and to get harmony.

To ignore disappointments and failures, treating them as the stepping stones to success is to move on ward and forward with single-minded devotion towards the goal, one has in view.

It is better to look before and after and in and around and to find out underlining cause of one's own dissatisfaction, and discontent. It is a question of give and take. If one gives love, he will, in return, get love. If one inspires courage and confidence in others, he will get the same in abundant measure.

One's failure may be due to himself. One is judged by his actions.

Self-examination is to take an account of one's thoughts, actions and transactions. If one's negative thoughts and actions exceed the positive thoughts and acts, then, one should make amends for the same.

If the positive thoughts and acts exceed the negative

thoughts and acts then one should be content, but he should continue to increase them further.

If the positive and the negative thoughts and acts are equal then one should try to eliminate the negative thoughts and acts and increase the positive acts further.

The object of self-examination is to examine and assess one's thoughts, deads and actions and renounce the vicious and ignoble actions.

To feel grateful to God for His grace and gifts is the mark of an enlightened person. One should be also well aware that misuse of the gifts given by God will attract punishment. One may be deprived of the gift given by God.

It is also necessary to take an account of one's thoughts. The negative thoughts should be replaced by the positive one's.

One should also try to assess his states. The states of multiciplity should be controlled and decreased, and those of unity should be increased. Those who take to self-examination regularly do not go unnoticed. They are marked out by certain traits of character.

Speech and actions proclaim the man. They are recognised by their speech and actions. Their speech is sweet and soft. It is coincise and clear. It does not

show any vanity, pride or self-conceit.

Their actions are praise worthy and laudable. They can not be termed anti-social actions. They are the people endowed with iron will and firm determination.

The desires and the dictates of the self do not overawe or overcome them.

They stick to their promise. Once they have made a promise, they are determined to fulfil it. At the same time, they do not want to commit themselves. They avoid making a promise as far as possible.

They have love for everyone and hatred towards none. They do not abuse or curse people. If they are abused or cursed they bear it patiently.

They have no spirit of retaliation or revenge. They forget the harm done to them, and they forgive the one who causes injury to them.

They have a marvellous spirit of tolerance and forbearance.

They do not sit in judgement over others. They believe that a person can not be expected to avoid mistakes all the time. His mistakes of omission and commission should be overlooked.

As God forgives our mistakes, likewise, we should forgive the mistakes of omission and commission of the people.

They dissociate themselves from that, which is not truth.

They are far from committing sin either inwardly or outwardly.

Greed, lust and avarice can not seize them.

They are free from envy and malice. Envy and malice do not allow a peaceful co-existence. They lead to conflict and confusion.

They bear calmly and patiently the pain and suffering In time of pain and suffering they exhibit patience. In time of prosperity they are not proud. They are meek and humble, ever grateful to God for the grace shoun.

They do not put their burden upon others. They bear the burden of all, but, they carry their burden themselves.

They are free from hypocrisy, which is a whole time job.

They de not assume superiority complex.

Attainment of spiritual perfection keeps them moving towards the goal, which they have set for themselves.

They do not criticise others, but, accept the criticism of the people, directed against them, with a broad smile They only guide and teach, and expect nothing from the people.

Peeping into the faults, limitations and short-comings of the people cannot be justified on any account. Such an action has no moral or ethical basis. It is avoided by people who have, attained spiritual maturity through self-examination. What they are most concerned is to free themselves from the burden of their own faults and short comings.

They are cheerful and contented people, exhibiting pity, mercy and kindness,

It is self-examination, which enables a man to become of what he is capable of becoming.

It is talking an account of one's transgressions, thoughts an actions.

Self-examination is, in fact, an antidote to violent passions, pessimism, pedantry, vanity, pride and self-conceit.

It secures for an individual the coveted virtue of plain living and high thinking, sobriety, sincerity and generosity.

Its object is to train the mind and the senses, and to inculcate the spirit of self-reverence, self-respect, and self-control.

Self-discipline without self-examination is rather difficult to achieve All the states, thoughts and actions should be judged minutely and carefully every day and

every hour.

In order to judge the progress made and set-backs suffered, it is better to keep a diary, or a note-book, containing the every day triumphs and defeats, and victories and failures. It should also indicate how far one succeeded and where it was that he failed.

One need not feel discouraged or suffer from an inferiority feeling, if one find himself overwhelmed by too many negative thoughts and actions.

Self-awareness has given a person a chance to know himself and has furnished an opportunity to improve himself by his own unaided effort. One should feel happy to get such an opportunity.

One should have the ability to do, to his utmost satisfaction the things which he has to do Thy should be done whether one likes them or not.

Character is a complex fibre, woven by inclinations, propensities, tendencies, ideas, passions, sensibilities, habits and the likes and the dislikes.

In order to attain the desired goal, and in order to achieve the ideal one has in view, it is necessary, that all those things, making the complex sum known as character, should be well looked after, and maintained in good spiritual and moral health.

Reconstruction of character calls for discipline,

organisation and unification.

Character is marked by unity and stability.

In the process of self-examination, a person is himself the patient and his own physician.

And he himself is his judge and his jury.

The spiritual exercise, which enables one to know himself is, infact, useful not only to him but to others too.

Self-examination affords an opportunity to exercise discrimination.

Discrimination is not only a better part of valour, but, it is, also, a mark of mature wisdom.

Kaushal P. Press, Kaiser Ganj, AJMER

PAST LECTURES

Rs. 6/- For Sale

By Hazrat Dr. Zahurul Hassan Sharib Gudri Shah Baba

1. Reflections on Mysticism. 2. Dimensions of Mysticism.
3. The Role of the Mystic in Modern Society.
4. The Path of Perfection. 5. The Inward Peace.
6 The Making of a Mystic. 7. The Significance of Prayer.
8. Tackling Tension. 9. The Mansion of Mysticism.
10. The Mystical Capsules. 11. The Mystical Surgery.
12. The Mystic View of Suffering. 13. The Mystic Law & Practice of Self-Surrender. 14. The Thought Pattern of the Mystics. 15. The Mystic Insight into Death. 16. The Life Pattern of the Mystics. 17. The Mystic Concept of Dreams. 18. The Mystic Interpretation of Colours. 19. The Spirit of Toleration. 20. The Mystic Search for Silence. 21. Signature of Happiness. 22. The Sanctifying Grace of Seclusion.
23. The Sustaining Power of Patience. 24. Breathe Gently and Live Happily. 25. Mystical Mathematics. 26. Guidelines For Positive Living. 27. Have Belief & Get Relief.
28. Pursuit of Spiritual Progress & Perfection.
29. Mystic Vision. 30. Magnetic Touch of Concentration.
31. The Faculty of Clairvoyance.
32. Will to Get what you will 33. The Technique of Telepathy.
34. The Positive Role of Self knowledge.
35. The Foundation of Introspection.
36. The Saving Device of Contenment. 37. Change Attitude and offer Gratitude 38. The Touch of Spiritual Healing.
39. Grace Comes Before Greatness. 40. Implications of Spiritual Direction 41. The Dynamics of Hope. 42. Stop Hating—start Loving.