



INGE HAERI

IN THE COURTYARD OF THE BELOVED THERE IS HEALING

A Danish Woman's Journey into Spiritual Islam

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*'When your heart is emptied of being it becomes filled with Being,
and from that moment love is born between you and other beings.*

*If you act purely towards your Creator, all creatures will manifest goodwill
towards you.'*

Sufi Barkat Ali

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Book Description

‘Throughout the journey of my life I have been drawn to the wisdom practices and knowledges that teach us about healing, health and wholeness. For me the whole notion of healing has come to involve the physical, mental and emotional as well as spiritual. In this book I hope to explore with you essential elements of the process of healing from my perspective as a believer in the Oneness of God.’ – from the Introduction

The unusual journey of Inge Haeri’s life has exposed her to the rich interior world of the human spirit and its wonders and delights, through Islam and Sufism. In the devotional tradition of the ‘*Kashkool*’ (*Miscellanea*), this book is a collection of personal experiences, readings, insight and commentary on the nature of healing the human spirit and keeping it in the best of conditions. Over her lifetime the author has had many encounters with living saints of the Sufi tradition and illuminated teachers from other esoteric traditions, each of which transmitted gifts, insights and blessings. Inge Haeri shares what has touched and influenced her.

About Inge Haeri



Inge Haeri nee Jacobsen left her birthplace of Copenhagen as a young woman to study in Wales where she met her husband Fadhlalla, and then found herself on a journey that has taken her to four continents. She had no idea then that her life would take her to Iraq, Lebanon, England, America and then South Africa. Along the way she learnt Arabic and studied Education and English literature. Her love for Sufi writings was fed by her time in Beirut where she first had access to her friends' libraries. Born and raised a Lutheran, she believes she was always a Muslim at heart, since Muslim means 'one who surrenders to God'.

For many years she assisted her husband in his writing projects, working quietly to help make available the essential and life-transforming teachings of Islam.

She has 3 daughters and one son and many more to whom she is 'Mama Zainab'.

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Introduction

Throughout the journey of my life I have been drawn to the wisdom, practice and knowledge that teach us about healing, health and wholeness. For me the whole notion of healing has come to involve the physical, mental and emotional as well as spiritual. In this book I hope to explore with you essential elements of the process of healing from my perspective as a believer in the Oneness of God.

Growing up in Denmark I was exposed to the holistic tradition of herbal and natural remedies and to Lutheran influenced notions of the importance of an uncluttered and tranquil heart. Life was simple: we ate lots of oats, spent summers outdoors, swam and walked everywhere and sang hymns of praise every day in our home. Daily doses of cod liver oil and B vitamins ensured we remained cold-free in ice-cold winters – for vitamin C was hardly available in those days as even oranges were a rarity.

I grew up with an unspoken but practiced awareness of the importance of a good and simple diet and exercise. A sound knowledge of the Bible and catechism was expected of us and I would take great comfort from the psalms that spoke to me of a loving caring God that had set an angel to watch over me. I had an inner certainty that God was above all generous and merciful, in contrast to the behaviour of some of our religious teachers who had often resorted to humiliating corporal punishment.

‘Behold, two (guardian angels)

Appointed to learn (man’s doings)

Learn (and note them)

One sitting on the right

And one on the left.’

(50:17)¹

The allegory is that an angel is one’s companion on the right and on the left, who try and help one stay on the straight and narrow, and not deviate from what is right. Angels follow God’s

¹ The Qur’anic verses in this book will be referenced as ss:vv, where ss is the Surah number and vv is the verse number.

will; therefore, they connect with humans as He sees fit, which could mean in a dream or levels that are far removed from the mind and the senses. I remember when going to regular church meetings as a young child, I was taught about the two accompanying angels, wherever one is at any time in one's life.

It is interesting to note that my journey through life has taken me to countries, such as Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan and South Africa, which have been through so much turmoil. I came from a country that was peaceful but as a child I lived through the German occupation during WWII. This left me wondering how people could manage to get on with each other in life without blaming or accusing each other. My life has been a journey of learning how to live with oneself and others, in a peaceful and conducive way, whatever country you may be in.

Having moved to Iraq with my husband in 1960, we had rented a small house in Kirkuk, a northern town in Iraq. It was fairly fine, but the loudspeakers from the nearest Mosque blasted the call to prayer so excruciatingly loud, that I automatically would place my hands over my ears. This made me feel quite uncomfortable, and I began to wonder at living like this, with this noise every day.

But then one day I decided to actually listen. So I sat down to listen to the *adhan* (call to prayer), and I found the experience touched me deeply. From that day onwards I would stop whatever I was engaged with and listen attentively, which made such a difference living in close proximity to a mosque. Also getting to know such delightful neighbours, life began to look more promising.

As a young married mother in a Lebanon that soon became wracked by a bloody civil war, I observed firsthand the misery and suffering caused by armed conflicts and man's lust for power and control. This propelled me to seek answers that could transcend such failings of the human condition.

An inner yearning for an all-encompassing truth and whole way of life lead me to the inner traditions of Islam, that is, the teachings of Sufism. Sufism touched my heart and life long before I embraced Islam properly as the path I wanted to follow in my life's journey. I sought out literature of this Islamic tradition to get to know and imbibe its teachings.

The contents of this book touch on all the aspects of healing as I myself was stirred and moved to walk this path of life for my own healing and self-unfoldment. I visit the various states

and stages upon this glorious path that is anchored by the Divine Names. Contemplating and reciting the Divine Names of God has been the fundamental key to transforming my life and it is to share some of this experience that I have put pen to paper.

The understanding and knowledge of the healing one can obtain through submerging oneself in the study of the Divine Names or Attributes of God will have the effect of giving one tranquillity, compassion and patience in every situation that one must inevitably pass through. To gain access to the Attributes of Allah we must combine special devotion and obedience to Him in order that we may reflect these qualities in our own actions and character.

By writing this book *'In the Courtyard of the Beloved There is Healing'* I am inviting especially young women and men, Muslim or non-Muslim, to take on the quest along the path to healing and self-transformation. This is a very personal look at various aspects of how health is affected by subtle and spiritual realities. Many of my own experiences are included, and they range from dreams to meetings, to poems, and to my extensive readings. I hope to share how it is possible for anyone to heal themselves if they truly focus on wanting to be free of disease and be totally at ease within themselves.

In relating my own journey of discovering the glorious message that is in the Qur'an for all mankind, I hope to make accessible to people of all ages the wonderful possibility of finding healing for one's heart. If one can feel His love, then in turn one becomes capable of sharing His unconditional love with other people, for He is there, at all times, for every creature on earth.

First and foremost it is essential to live a well-adjusted and regulated life. For that a clear and sensible guidance can be found in taking on the knowledge given to all humanity through reading the Glorious Qur'an and making it the direction for the unfoldment of one's spiritual awakening. The healing of one's heart and one's physical health follow naturally from such an orientation.

To assist in the healing of various ailments and sufferings of another human being is a skill one can acquire, echoing God's compassion for His creation. Unconditional love emanates continuously from our Creator to us.

It is my hope that this book will be a most useful and valuable tool to whomever is interested in putting the healing practices to use first for themselves and in turn for others to apply them anytime in their lives when the need arises. The origin of any illness suffered can be

discovered by the person him/herself, once they seek to know themselves truly, so as to alleviate what is causing the un-wellness. A greater sense of well-being and feeling of being healed or made whole can be brought about by recognizing the primary cause, by doing one's utmost in taking on good lifestyle habits, and by cleansing the conflict a person suffers between their Mind and Soul. For that conflict to be removed both mental and spiritual effort is needed for true healing to take place. Uplifting one's mental outlook will in turn help to heal oneself.

To uplift my mental outlook I must first of all understand that the thoughts I generate in my mind can be detrimental to my state and as a result I am prone to be affected by disease, especially if my thoughts are of a negative nature. To establish an inner balance for optimal health my mental outlook must altogether change to one of optimism not pessimism, strength not weakness, patience not impatience, compassion not capriciousness. We are continually exposed to situations that require our own effort to act and not react, and to have the courage to do what is right at all times.

'Without application of strength one cannot make a step; the application of strength requires effort, and effort requires patience. Be patient in the sure hope, that your labour will be rewarded in the end. Patience crowns everything and gives support and strength.' – St. Theophan the Recluse

Our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh²) said: 'Patience is half your Faith', which tells us how patience crowns everything and gives us strength and support for dealing with everything in our life's journey.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also said: 'God has assigned two guides to man: one external to him, the messenger of God, and the other internal, his own power of thought.'

God created man and enabled him to speak in many different languages. Being revealed in Arabic, the Qur'an gives us many descriptions of God's Attributes or Names. When we call upon God using the Divine Names in the Arabic of the Qur'an, we invoke a vibrational energy that encourages the healing or rebalancing needed. The vibrational impact of such words first and foremost makes them, I believe, echo in the heart of the one who voices or invokes these words, and, when recited over some time will give immense healing and peace to the person reciting

² pbuh – Peace Be Upon Him. An invocation whenever the Prophet's name is mentioned.

them. This is what we call remembrance (*Dhikr*) and supplication (*Du`a*). But first and foremost the healing of oneself takes precedence.

In this book I will look at health and faith as well as the remembrance of God using the Noble Qur'an for the direction of healing, and the healing effects of travel in pilgrimage. Purification of one's heart is a central theme and will come about through meditations and invocations of the Divine Names as well as the ritual approaches to healing, like ablution, prayer, the purifying wealth tax, and fasting. Serving others is a tremendous catalyst for well-being, which brings about subtle healings, but Divine Love in all its forms figures as the greatest force to be embraced at all times. For our goal is to arrive with a tranquil heart at peace and in full submission to Allah our Creator.

I myself am never alone on the path. My husband Fadhlalla was and is my companion on the journey in life and the permission (*idhn*) that came forth for him to take on the responsibility of becoming a Shaykh or a spiritual teacher gave our life together a new dimension. This path of remembrance and Love has been travelled by many Masters whom I have met and spent time with, such as Sai Baba, Swami Chinmayananda, Shankara, the Wali of Bahalil, Shaykh Bashir Othman, Shaykh Ikram, Sufi Barkat Ali, Shaykh Abdul Qadr and Shaykh Asaf. Moreover I have spent many hours in the company of past enlightened Masters of the Path, who live on through their books, like Hujwiri, Rumi, Ibn al-Arabi, the Ghazzali Brothers, Ahmed and Hamid, Ibn `Ata'ullah, Jilani and Jami, Farid-ed-din Attar – all have inspired many a thought and action in my life's journey and still do.

POEM

Beloved Bird

My Beloved Bird what will I do

Without you

In my garden singing

HIS praises all day long

When you are winging

From branch to branch in song

So sweet and tuneful

With every eventful
Move to yet another treetop
To make your Love reach high up
For HIM to hear
Your crystal clear
Voice singing HIS praises
With perfect and fine graces
Embracing all that is HIS
Knowing full well your place
In HIS garden of Grace
Is reserved for you
When this life of yours is through.

Chapter One: Intersections of Health, Faith and Remembrance

A Seminal Moment

In the year 1958 I was studying in North Wales for a degree in English Literature. One evening I was invited out by a young student to a College Dance. He came by car to fetch me and while driving along the narrow roads to the college, he suddenly lost control of the car and it skidded from side to side on the road until it eventually came to a halt inches from a thick wall. Had we rammed into the wall, we would almost surely have wrecked the car and possibly finished ourselves too.

During the ordeal I had screamed so loud that I passed out of sheer fright. Whilst in that faint, I distinctly heard voices singing a beautiful and soothing song and there was such blinding 'Light' streaming all around, though I could see no faces of those who were singing. Furthermore the words of the song were in a language I had never heard of before. It went like this:

'Roohee tuhaddithunee bi'anna haqeeqatee

Nooru 'l-ilaahi fa laa taraa 'illaahu.

Law lam 'akun nooran lakuntu siwaahu.

'inna 's-siwaa `adamun fa laa tardaahu.

Wa 'idhaa natharta bi `ayni sirrika lam tajid

Ghayra 'l-ilaahi fee 'ardihi wa samaahu.'

I heard quite clearly these three verses of a song I had never known or heard of before and they have remained with me ever since. I noted the words down in 'phonetics' later that night, hoping to find out one day what the words might mean, for they had had an extremely strong impact upon me. After this near fatal accident I did not really want to proceed to the College Dance with this young student, although he had woken me up by slapping my face and, trying to save the situation, he pretended that we must now have woken up in a new life. I thought he was silly talking like that, but nevertheless I recovered myself, and since the car was not totally

wrecked, we did proceed to the Dance. We spent the evening with all the other students dancing and listening to the Jazz Band, but I was still fairly shaken over what had taken place.

This experience of hearing these angelic voices and seeing the nearly blinding Light was beyond what I could possibly have expected to experience by pure chance. I somehow felt that I was destined to hear these verses as though my life was being guided by a ‘life force’, an energy from another source and it made me feel excited yet somewhat scared. The whole mystery of the experience made me feel there would be more to come in that direction in my life on this planet earth. I began to question my life more whenever I had certain premonitions or dreams and this process seemed to bring about more changes in my life in so many ways but most of all in a spiritual way.

Shortly after this ‘accident’ the young student proposed to me and we were married and carried on with our studies at university.

Years later I was to discover the true meaning of those verses I had heard sung to me. It was now the year 1977 and I was sitting with friends in a circle of invocation (*dhikr*), in London where we were now living. Along with my husband I had just joined this group of people and we would sit and sing praises to Our Creator in Arabic odes. I was stunned when all of a sudden that same song I had heard so many years before rang out and in the book I was given to sing from there was the translation of the self-same verses. The title of the Song was ‘Withdrawal From All That is Other-Than-Allah’. The meaning of the verses were:

‘My *ruh* (soul) speaks to me and says:

My reality is the Light of Allah,

So do not see other-than-Him.

If I were not a Light I would be other-than-Him.

Indeed otherness is nothingness,

So do not be content with it.

If you look with the eye of your secret you

Will not find other-than-Allah in this earth or heaven.’

It was such a wonderful discovery that tears streamed down my face and I was overcome by the realization of the glorious ways in which one's journey in life will unfold according to His Decree.

As my journey in life began to unfold, I became very interested in knowing about health and well-being, since they are important tools in order to access a fulfilled, healthy and happy life. So I determined to find out how to proceed to get to know where to go from here.

The Direction of Health

Man's direction in the pursuit of health generally begins outwardly and moves inwardly. The less concern one has with outer physical health the more one is free to attend to inner spiritual health, and that can only be achieved if one is fit and healthy in every sense of the word.

We are able to recognize the constant shifting from one extreme to another, from illness to wellness, yet we know there is a foundation of equilibrium within 'man' against which we are able to gauge this oscillation. The wise woman or man recognizes that the solid foundation within lies beyond turmoil because it is based on the quality of timelessness, on a course that is unchanging. This timeless quality comes from our soul. The soul is from God, placed in every human being and it reflects therefore the Divine Attributes. It is the light of these Divine Attributes that illuminates our understanding of how healthy we may be in any given moment.

We have no choice but to seek help and we should recognize that the purpose of outer health is to produce inner health. This cannot be maintained unless the immediate environment is conducive as it is not separate from the outer environment, from the overall environment, and indeed from the whole earth and entire universe. Hence we must recognize a universal health.

If we start from the microcosmic level of health (us human beings) we end up with the macrocosmic health (the universe). Therefore, if we want to be healthy we must also want to heal those around us. Balanced outer health will eventually lead to inner health; self-knowledge is its lifeblood and self-ignorance is its death. If we feed and nourish the self-knowledge which is already ingrained in each individual ready to unfold, ignorance will vanish and the result will be complete health and harmony between the outer and the inner.

Power belongs only to God. He breathed into 'man' the breath of life and man became a living creature able to empower him/herself. Breathing happens naturally by itself, so breathing

is therefore the key to all inner transformation, for being aware of your breath you are in the present moment.

Here faith becomes a vital part of one's life since it is about being certain internally to be able to control one's own thoughts. Man is always observed by the One, because He is the All-Seeing and the All-Hearing and awareness of this gives one the freedom to worship Him and only Him.

In our daily life we will always be faced with negative and positive experiences. Negatives are not 'bad' as long as the lesson is truly learnt and the emotion transmuted, and only a sound mind can achieve the goal of transmuting emotions at all times. It is also a gradual process and not an overnight total shift. The object is to attain self-mastery, by transmuting all perceived negatives to positives instead. Thus fear is shifted to faith, revenge to forgiving, jealousy to empathy, and so on. To attain self-mastery is therefore a total learning curve in every aspect of one's life.

For example the fear of death I had felt during the car skidding experience in Wales, and for some while after gradually had me realize, that this so called negative experience gave me more faith and hope in life – because of the beautiful and angelic singing I had heard and the blinding Light I had seen – that I would attain more helpful and positive experiences for me to develop and journey on in my spiritual life. After all my life did not end at the time of the accident, it was to carry on for me to experience more in life.

Every human being alive is a unique individual expression of the universal wholeness. We each have the freedom to give full force to our creative imagination. By consciously using this spiritual 'life-force-power' we will develop enough conviction and naturally contemplate their opposites or positive sides instead. We can turn from sickness to health and unhappiness to being happy by active awareness of creating harmony in and around oneself rather than discord, and believing that good will always overcome evil and light eliminate darkness.

'Verily God will not deal unjustly with man in aught. It is man that wrongs his own soul.'

(10:44)

'O ye who believe! Give your response to God and His apostle, when he calleth you to that which will give you life; and know that God cometh in between a man and his heart, and

that It Is He to Whom ye shall (all) be gathered.' (8:24)

‘It was We Who created Man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him:
for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.’ (50:16)

‘Whoever works righteousness, Man or Woman, and has faith, verily, to him will we give
a new Life, a life That is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward
according to the best of their actions.’ (16:97)

Qur’an – A Source Guide for Wellness

The Qur’an is an exposition of reality. Reading and reciting certain verses and chapters of the Qur’an give helpful indications of how health and healing can come about. It is a description of man’s existential reality and that which is beyond it. In the Qur’an you will find those factors which govern your ‘self’ laid bare. You will find in it that which governs interaction between people and therefore within communities and societies. In it is revealed the story of creation, how it came about with a big bang, and also what will happen after the end of this physical creation. It is a vast exposure to the ocean of Truth.

The first chapter in the Qur’an is named Surat al-Fatiha (the ‘Opening’ Chapter), and signifies the opening of knowledge and so the victory over ignorance. The root word *Fataha*, means to open, reveal, imbue, conquer. Surat al-Fatiha is therefore the key to accessing the Qur’an. This chapter is so named because if you follow it in your heart, you will be victorious. You will conquer and an opening will come for joy. If it is completely absorbed, and if every word you utter comes from a pure heart, you will cease to talk about opening and you will recognize that the vastness of God’s Mercy is never-ending. You can then only strive to increase in every way, for after the constriction of ignorance, there can only come the expansion of knowledge.

Whatever good you send forward for yourselves, you will find it with Allah – better and greater in reward. Allah is the Best and the Highest Good, and for you He is the highest reward. Because everything comes from Allah, is by Allah, and goes to Allah. If you are acting in a manner suitable to Allah, as one who is truly and utterly in submission, and you recognize that the act of submission has, in a real sense, nothing to do with you, and that it is a release from what appears to be the shackles of the life of this world, then from this action you obtain the highest reward. Your actions and their rewards are only as good as your intentions.

Access to the Qur'an is through our heart, but our heart must be purified. Once purified all becomes clear. The word for heart in Arabic is *qalb*, from the word *qalaba*, to turn. The heart is purified by turning away from the clutter of attachments and instead turning to Allah, just as the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did, meaning that the Qur'an was clear in his actions. So we must approach the Qur'an from that point of view, as an encoded transmission, cellular, living.

The Qur'an is a tool for one's transformation and healing if we endeavour to absorb its message fully. It can make one be able to see the light in all. For when we say, 'There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God,' we are professing the truth. To live by that we must endeavour to be morally correct, and at the same time dedicate ourselves to be liberated from our lower self. 'Withdrawal from anything other than Allah' is the doorway to a new state of higher consciousness.

The experience I described earlier, when I was in a car accident in Wales, and heard what seemed to be angelic voices, gave to me a clear indication as to the direction I was to take in my life. Once I became aware of the true meaning of this song, it has in many ways opened doorways along my life's journey.

My purpose in life is to perfect my worship of Allah, for he is the One and Only to worship. We are from God – with God – to God (*min Allah, ma`a Allah, ila Allah*). We are hanging on the 'breath' of God.

Faith and Virtue – *Iman* and *Ihsan*

To have *Iman* or Faith means one believes in God, His Angels, His Revelations, His Prophets or Messengers, and the Day of Judgment. *Iman* is one aspect of Islam with its rites and the laws that follow in life. *Ihsan*, or virtuous conduct, is part of it too and it refers to the fruit of Islam and *Iman*, which manifests in the nobility and excellence of our behaviour in every circumstance, great or small.

Having faith will give one a strong and firm assurance not to fear the comings and goings of life. It also means that one does not give up on oneself under any circumstances. With faith in one's life one comes to know the limitless power of God, the Creator of the Universe, is there at all times and manner, so one's heart can remain calm and strong.

'He Who gave everything its nature and guided it.'

(20:50)

God's greatest gift to us human beings is our intelligence. Using our intelligence we can learn and become aware of God and in response we can profess our faith in Him, which will make us love Him.

With faith we can come to recognize that knowledge of God begins inside oneself and gives one life. Thus we can elevate our earthly nature and refine ourselves through prayer and fasting as well as charitable duties. This way we can begin to understand who we really are, and what we can accomplish in our life.

Reading the Qur'an we find that it is very specific about the requirements of faith, which are, that we believe in God, the Messengers, the Last Day as well as the discernment of good and evil in the world.

'Say ye: We believe In God, and the revelation given to us,
and to Abraham, Isma`il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes,
and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given
to all Prophets from their Lord; We make no difference
between one and another of them:
and we bow to God in submission.'

(2:136)

Our faith will awaken our soul with the spirit of God, and gradually this spirit, miraculous and mysterious as it is, integrates us with its harmony and its light.

With the certainty that comes from perfected faith or realized nearness to God, we come to know that He is the Source, Centre and Goal of all things in heaven and earth. Everything goes back to Him.

Upon reading many a times the Surah Ikhlas (Purity of Faith or Sincerity) and coming to know and understand the meaning it contains, one can come to realize that He is Allah in all His Glory.

Faith is the trust that, as time passes, one will come to know. This is the inner security of the individual of faith. It is not blind faith, for that is useless dogma. Faith implies trust that the

cause behind the entire creation is a merciful and beneficent one, and that what we perceive as death cannot be an end. There must be a balance or relationship between what is in the heart and Reality. The fact that we do not want to die is a mere echo of the One never-ending (*al-Baqi*). In a Hadith Qudsi, Reality (Allah) describes the situation as:

‘The Heavens and Earth do not contain me, but the heart of a *mu’min* (one who has faith) contains me.’

Knowledge has its root within the heart of wholesome individuals, otherwise it is not permanent. Information, on the other hand, is acquirable. It is not inherent within the heart of man and the knowledge we are seeking is a permanent kind, which is not bound by time and will not end with death. Faith ends in the Absolute. Faith will bring one to the source of knowledge. It is the gateway to knowing God, to experiencing the mercy and reality of God. Faith is the door to Reality, and the correct path is the key to that door. The purpose of this existence is to recognize the way out of inner bondage. For inner freedom we have to apply outer discipline, a willingness to harness the ‘self’.

Faith is a positive, liveable, usable and dynamic force that brings about its own reward. Life is a great blessing from God. There is only God and may He guide us along the path of submission and surrender, and drown us in the ocean of eternal Love and Oneness.

The Frequent Remembrance of Allah

‘O ye who believe! Celebrate the praises of God, and do this often.’

(33:41)

Allah has ordered us to remember Him frequently, the following verses of the Qur’an shows us that to remember Him frequently is different from the order to pray, supplicate or contemplate:

In difficult circumstances:

‘O ye who believe! When ye meet a force,
be firm and call God in remembrance much (and often);
that ye may prosper.’

(8:45)

In safety:

‘If ye fear (an enemy) pray on foot, or riding, (as may be the most convenient) But when ye are in security, celebrate God’s praises in the manner he has taught you, which ye knew not (before).’

(2:239)

Each one of us with our faith in God will have bound ourselves to Him in our journey through life and will come to love this commitment to Him and this confirmation only comes with the frequent remembrance of God, The Glorious and Magnified.

Al-Ghazzali wrote that the early education of children is an important duty, and every child is a trust in the hands of their parents or guardians. The child’s heart is like a fine and clean precious stone, without any engraving or writing on it. It is capable of developing in any direction. Therefore if the child is educated in the path of goodness, such a child will surely follow the truth when grown up, and will attain happiness, a happiness which will be shared by the child’s parents, guardians or teachers. In a sense we must as guardians of our children impart to them the faith that we ourselves practice in life. Growing up in Denmark and truly being educated to practice goodness, especially by my mother and also certain schoolteachers, has definitely set me on a path to follow the Truth.

Our inner practices acknowledge the unification of the cosmos and the One God; our preoccupation is worship. Our unifying factor is the acknowledgement that there is oneness in this universe and that the individual is not separate from that oneness. We practice our prayers, invocations and meditations so as to be in total submission to the One. We do not say there is one God – we say there is only One, therefore there is only Unity, there is only this vibrating totality in which a human is manifest in this final and most perfect form, the form of a human being and the One sends you His healing.

‘O mankind! There has come to you a direction from your Lord

And a healing for the (diseases) in your hearts, and for those

Who believe, a guidance and a mercy.’

(10:57)

Man has come about and into this world in order to evolve fully towards inner knowledge of unity. The object of man's existence is to inwardly recognize his glory and to recognize his position in this cosmos, which is that of the highest being, a divine being who surrenders into that unity.

If one's heart is pure, then inner knowledge and inner awakening come about, therefore one must try to have a stronger orientation towards one's own purification. Purification cannot occur unless we serve, so we must want to serve, help, and be of use in this world. One of the major ways of being of service is through outer healing or physical healing. Ultimately, the giver is the taker.

It is all to do with one's heart. Real cure, or the knowledge of it, comes from a pure heart. And it is to do with one's intentions, because one's actions are as good as one's intentions.

The one who extends help to a friend is first of all helping him/herself for it is an alchemical process. If the help comes from a pure heart, the person who performs the help is him/herself transformed. In a spiritual path you find the truth that the more you give, the more you receive. 'Man is the inheritor of God on this earth, he is the representative of Reality.'

POEM

A Mighty Play

When is it not
Artificial
if the
whole thing is
a mighty play?

Chapter Two: Health and Healing

‘And we have sent down through this Qur’an all that gives health and mercy to those who believe.’

(17:82)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) used to say in prayer:

‘O Allah, I ask of Thee good health and gratitude for good health in this world and the next.’

Imam Ja`far Al-Sadiq said:

‘Surely you have been appointed as your own doctor; sickness has been explained to you, you recognise the signs of good health and you have been shown the cure - so watch how you take care of yourself.’

Some years ago, before *Fajr* one morning, I dreamt a shaykh was suddenly near me; he looked at me sternly and said that I must also be good to myself, and then he left but not before he gave me a piece of paper upon which was written the numbers 1, 6, 10, 99 and 34.

When I woke up I thought that each number must denote a divine name. One is *Rahman*, the One Who has absolute Compassion for His creation. Six denotes *al-Mu'min*, the Absolute Certainty of Protection. Ten is *al-Mutakabbir*, the One beyond Glorious. Ninety nine is *As-Sabur*, the Ever-Patient and thirty four is *al-Ghafur*, the All Forgiving. So it was incumbent upon me to write these Divines Names and reap the benefit of reciting them myself.

Health and Creation

It is vital for us human beings to be in good health so as to govern our lives wisely and positively and therefore maintain well-being at all times.

It is obvious that we receive energy from the sun. Each point on the body is an opening for the cosmic energy to pour through. This vibrational energy carries information and nourishment to every cell in the body, connecting the body to the cosmos.

When we enter the molecular structure of the human body we find that our solidity is composed mostly of emptiness, of space if seen from this perspective, the human body would

appear like a thick cluster of stars in the vastness of space. The mind too, in deep states of meditation, may dissolve its sense of separateness.

Within Chinese medicine, cosmic energy is seen as the source of life. We are constantly affected by vibrational waves of energy, such as light, reaching our planet from space. Ultraviolet light is vital and that is not present in artificial light.

It has recently been discovered that photons (particles of light) circulate in the human body specifically in the spine where they circulate in the cerebrospinal fluid.

The minutest event, inside an atom, has an effect on every other atom in the universe. The nuclear industry has increased our exposure to low level radiation, which undermines human health, and electricity brings with it electromagnetic fields, which can also be damaging.

Consciously choosing to spend time absorbing sunlight and directly connecting to the vibrations of the moon, stars and planets may be considered part of our subtle nourishment.

'It is illness that ultimately makes us heal-able. Illness is the turning-point at which un-wholeness can start to be turned into wholeness. But in order for this to happen, we have to lower our guard and instead learn to hear and see what illness has to tell us. As patients we have to listen to our inner selves and enter into communication with our symptoms, if we are to learn what they have to tell us. We have to make the symptoms superfluous by letting into our consciousness whatever we are lacking, for healing is always bound up with an expansion and maturing consciousness....

'Everything visible is merely a likeness of the invisible, just as a work of art is the visible expression of the invisible idea in the mind of the artist....

'Everything stands in an analogical relationship to everything else. As Above, so Below; as Within, so Without.' Dethlefsen and Dahlke

Healing with *Prana*

The universe is full of energy. We can consciously connect to it for the purpose of healing and restoring balance. *Prana* originates from Sanskrit, and is similar to *chi*, *pneuma*, *mana* and *ruach*, and means life force or energy. Healing requires no physical contact and no drugs. By moving the hands around the perimeter of the body, the attuned therapist is able to scan the

client's aura or energy body for imbalances, removing diseased energy and transferring fresh energy to the affected areas. In fact, anybody can feel energy fields, and one way is to hold the hands about a metre apart from each other and slowly bring them together. Through systematic training a student of *Prana* learns to transfer solar energy, air, earth energy and divine energy to the body in a healing capacity.

In order to take on the responsibility of being in good health we have to clarify to ourselves who we are and how we connect with totality that has come through us, a whole new vision of who we are is needed.

God decrees the birth of every being, when He says: 'Be, and it is' (*'Kun fa Yakun'*). In every being God has placed divine qualities, so we have no option but to Love Him – Our Creator.

Life though is not exclusive to any one person, for we know we have all started out as a small, sticky clot; it is mentioned in the Qur'an (Surat al-'Alaq – 96:2): 'He created man from a clot.'

So we are all made exactly the same way: we all have skeletal bones, manifold tissues, muscles, internal organs, blood coursing through our veins as well as an enveloping skin that holds us together in a human shape.

Besides this human shape that is us, we must grow in consciousness and develop and take it upon ourselves to learn and understand that this universe, every single atom of it manifests and points us to the realization of a loving, merciful and all-powerful Creator.

'O mankind! If ye have a doubt about the Resurrection, (consider) that We created you out of dust, then out of Sperm, then out of a leech-like clot, then out of a morsel of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order that We may manifest (Our Power) to you; and We cause whom We will to rest in the wombs for an appointed term then do We bring out as babes, then (foster you) that ye may reach your age of full strength; and some of you are called to die, and some are sent back to the feeblest old age, so that they know nothing after having known (much), and (further) thou seest the earth barren and lifeless, but when We pour down rain on it, it is stirred (to life), it swells, and it puts forth every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs).'

(22:5)

‘This is so, because God is the Reality: it is He Who gives life to the dead, and it is He Who has Power over all things.’

(22:6)

‘Does Man think that he will be left uncontrolled, (without purpose)? Was he not a drop of sperm emitted (in lowly form)? Then did he become a clinging clot; then did (God) make and fashion (him) in due proportion. And of him He made two sexes, male and female. Has not He, (the same), the power to give life to the dead.’

(75:36-40)

‘Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay); Then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed; Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (foetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be God, The Best to create! After that, at length ye will die. Again on that Day Of Judgment, will ye be raised up.’

(23:12-16)

This human shape that is us, however, is made of much more than bones, organs and red blood. We are a whole cosmos and as such we echo the macrocosm as a microcosm. As this microcosm we are surrounded by electromagnetic aura and bio-energetic fields that interweave us intricately with the natural rhythm and natural laws of the universe.

‘We are as human beings made up of material, mental and subtle patterns, which interact with levels of energies and lights. These energies and lights are given power and movement by our soul within, which illuminates our intellect and our higher cognitive self. In turn the ‘animal self’ or ‘lower self’ and all other facets of the self are energized. We have the power within us to regenerate and really heal ourselves. It is not imposed on us from anything outside. Thus the person who performs a healing treatment on another person is essentially just an agent, channeller or transformer transmitting the energy already available to us all’. Regan and Shapiro (1989)

Laying on of hands as a form of healing or helping someone to find ease from distress, emotions and sufferings has been part of mankind’s life throughout history, whatever the

lifestyle, religion or philosophy that people followed or believed in, and today there is a growing awareness of hands-on-healing treatments and other natural methods of healing such as massage, therapeutic touch, shiatsu, polarity therapy, kinesiology, quantum touch and of course Reiki. All these natural methods are essentially holistic, since they treat the ‘whole’ person and not just the symptom of a person’s disease.¹

Channelled energy is the name used for a treatment when a practitioner lets the divine vibration energy flow through him/her to the client, and the client then uses that channelled energy him/herself to bring about their own healing. In order to heal by channelling divine vibration energy to a client, the practitioner must of necessity ‘let go of his/her own ego’ in order to become a perfect agent or transformer.

For any practitioner to let go of ego and self-importance, there must be a total surrender to the ‘divine vibration energy’ as that is the true ‘healing agent’. To set yourself aside to be compassionate towards your fellow human beings calls for patience, commitment and honesty, to an endless degree first to oneself and then to others.

Setting oneself aside was a practice that came absolutely naturally to Saint Hildegard of Bingen, who lived about 800 years ago in Germany. She was considered a most remarkable woman because throughout her life, she wrote about her numerous illuminations or visions, that gave her the insight into nature, medicine and theology. She wrote:

‘Everywhere in creation (trees, plants, animals and precious stones) there are mysterious healing forces, which no person can know unless they have been revealed to them by God.’

And also:

‘In humans, God has completed all divine work... not only the four elements, fire, water, earth and air are included in humans, but also the virtues of the happy person.’

Hildegard of Bingen was convinced that the most important thing in life was to take responsibility for one’s own health. Her illuminations had taught her that, and she herself taught, preached, wrote books, composed music and healed. She was truly a most glorious Saint (a title bestowed on her by the fifteenth century Papacy). She said:

¹ See [Appendix One](#) for more information on Complementary Therapies and Energy medicine.

'Knowledge is nothing without wisdom and faith'.

'Wisdom is the female aspect of Godhead.'

'The soul is the green life-force of the flesh; it maintains the body and dwells within it, but its force extends throughout the world.'

To Hildegard, the whole life, 'Integra Vita', did not exist unless the soul is fully realized. Faith is the nourishment of the soul, and intentions, or action, its clothing: good works adorn the soul and immoral ones pollute it. In her book 'Physica' she wrote:

'With earth was the human being created. All the elements served mankind and, sensing that man was alive, they busied themselves in aiding his life, in every way'.

What affected me most about Hildegard of Bingen when reading and learning about her and her life was that she was so utterly convinced that the most important aspect in a human being's life was to take responsibility for one's own health. To do so is vital to oneself as Hildegard of Bingen made very clear to us in her own life.

Human Beginnings

Every single atom of this universe manifests and points us to the realisation of a Loving, Merciful and All-powerful Creator. A Hadith states it thus:

'The foetus is a clot for 40 days in the womb, then for 40 days it is an attached clot. Then a further 40 days it is like a clump, after which an Angel will blow into the foetus his/her soul.'

Therefore it behoves us all to be generous to our offspring and bring them up well for they are gifts (*Amana*) from God placed in our custody.

Thus, key points that determine everyone's future are:

1. Conception in the womb.
2. Nine months in the womb at a physical level.
3. Moment of birth (comfort and harmony or shock or disharmony).

4. The first 2 years in which the ‘inner *fitra*’ (nature) gets developed. The gaze of the mother, what she eats, what she reads and if she gives in totally to the act of taking care of you.
5. The next 7 years you will now start to relate to more people not just the mother, but other family members and friends as well.
6. To full age of maturity at around forty years of age. If you are not seeking the answers to the life puzzle, there may be a slim hope for one, to live peacefully with oneself.
7. By now the priority of the knowledge of the Higher and God and your allegiance to Him become very important. The equality in the Eye of God is that even if you have not had all the right starts in life you can still reach above if you do commit for sure to seeking His pleasure.

Every child born is an expression of absolute purity, and in total submission to enter life. Every child is a container for the re-emergence of raw life-energy – unadulterated, undifferentiated. Each child is born into surroundings of a particular nature, both physical and emotional.

At a certain point after two years the pure life energy and undifferentiated consciousness of the new born child have, over a period of time and through exposure to a particular environment, together with the child’s genetic coding, identified in a particular way with their body and become limited and individualized in it. Given a different environment, a child would adopt a different self-form. The reality of the child lies in the pure life energy and undifferentiated consciousness it starts with, not the limited and constricted self-picture he/she may later develop.

Gradually we learn from our experiences, to negotiate with existence. In other words, we try to find a balance, between the raw material of our acquired self-picture and in this way, the original self-picture becomes covered over, layer upon layer, according to the demands of different life situations.

By the use of our intellect, we must arrive at the conclusion that what is true for everything else in the universe must also be true for us, since we are an inseparable part of the whole structure. Just as the basic function of everything in the universe is worship, so worship must also be the keynote of our own existence.

Our purpose in this life is therefore to outwardly conform to the natural boundaries imposed on us by the form which we have been given, and that we inwardly realize our capacity for decoding what we see around us and accept that existence is what it is, a generous and compassionate outpouring, the self-manifestation of the essence of the One God, the Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything between them.

The opening chapter in the Qur'an, Al-Fatiha, contains the Essence of the Book, because it teaches us the perfect prayer. The seven verses form a complete unit by themselves in giving us a glimpse of the source from which we have come, and where our final goal will be in our spiritual journey.

We constantly experience crossing bridges (Isthmus or *Barzakh*) of matter, as Shaykh Sharafuddin Maneri writes: 'There are two bridges, the bridge of this world and that of the next.'

There is a need for us to perform our prayers at the prescribed times, so as to make it a most graceful part of one's day to disappear into the submission of the One and Only.

The Qur'an also distinguishes between light (*nur*) for the Moon, torch (*siraj*) for the Sun. The first is an inert body which reflects light, the second a celestial formation in a state of permanent combustion, and a source of light and heat. The word star (*najm*) is accompanied by another qualifying it (*thaqib* – piercing flame). *Kawkab* definitely means the planets, which are celestial formations that reflect but do not produce light like the Sun. The Qur'an describes God's principle Attribute as Light: 'Allah is the Light (essence) of heaven and earth.'

Light is energy and energy is potential matter and every physical entity or form is on its way to be released as energy, and we as human beings are discernable matter and the subtlest of all energies or light. If a person sees lights in the form of sublime lights in dreams or visions such as the stars, moon or the sun they are generally held to be spiritual entities that have manifested in a pure form on the highest stratum of the soul. The Qur'an says:

'Soon we will show them our signs in the (farthest) regions (of the earth) and to their own souls, it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth.

Is it not enough that thy Lord doth witness all things?'

(41:53)

Soul and Self

'The tongue is a curtain covering the soul.' - Rumi

As human beings we are both soul and self. Our soul transmits pure consciousness and manifests the divine attributes giving hope and purpose to the self. The self of every being is different and in its own way evolves towards the soul.

Our self relates to the manifest aspects of our being; and is like the companion to our soul. Our self is the earthly and outer form, and its growth and evolvment relates to its conscious alignment with our soul. The anatomy of our self includes a mineral domain, a vegetative function and the animal state. Its physiology comprises of bestial, predatory, rational and other combined selves. Its path of development has many phases, which we can group into several stages or layers of our self. Like a mirror our self can clearly reflect our soul if it faces it and it can reflect the shadowy ego. Usually our self moves on a pivot between these two poles. Our self at any one time can be aligned to our soul and resonate its qualities, like the moon reflecting the sun, or be dark reflecting nothing like a new moon.

The mind develops in relation to our self and its interaction with the soul and the world around us. So the level of reasoning and rationality is the most evolved level of our mind, and the intellect enables our self to complete its development to the point of pure consciousness by the recognition of our self's relationship with our soul. This relationship will evolve naturally, since we constantly question it in our everyday comings and goings of the life that we lead.

Relationships

'If you are not a tongue of God, then be an ear.' - Rumi

Everything in the universe is held together by relationships, and we human beings are driven to unite and gather, because of our love for harmony and peace in relationships with other people.

But for us to be able to understand others and form good relationships we need to first know ourselves, which means we have to exercise accountability, responsibility and self-reflection in all our endeavours in life.

We come to know that we humans differ from each other in form, shape, longings and desires, yet we all strive to seek health and healing, wholesomeness and happiness. To gain

understanding and be compassionate towards others there is a need for us to exercise modesty in the form of steadfastness, patience, self-control and self-discipline.

Gaining more understanding of our own innate power to change ourselves can be a lifelong process that we undertake once the desire to do so lights up the ‘flame’ in our hearts. This can come about by being in the company of like-minded people whom we have grown up with or that we meet and spend time with, such as family, friends and teachers.

We will also benefit further if we seek to find and spend time in the company of a spiritual teacher. Such a spiritual teacher is not a true teacher, unless he or she possesses the following qualities: compassion and forgiveness for even the worst of sins; show love and gentleness; truthfulness and honesty; sincerity; devotion and generosity; justice and humility; knowledge and courage.

‘Sustenance of the outer man comes from the movements of the body, sustenance of the inner man comes from the movements of the heart; sustenance of one’s innermost being is through tranquillity; and sustenance of the intellect is through extinction of one’s consciousness of tranquillity, so that the servant is tranquil for the sake of God, through God, and with God.’ – A Gnostic

What then is it that screens us from reality or prevents us from living self-fulfilled and by God? The Arabic word for it is ‘*wahm*’. *Wahm* means illusion. It is like the film of the past in the mind. It is illusion which envelops or screens reality. It is illusion that is the barrier. So if illusion is removed, then vision or witnessing must take place. It is because of illusion that we do not come to know God. But whoever has remembrance and discrimination and yearning is the human being who will absent him/herself from illusion by insight, for then clarity begins to take place.

Thus the freedom we are seeking, the objective of being-ness, health and wholeness that we aspire to, can be achieved if we act and do not react.

The most important requirement is our energy, or rather, the extent of our yearning. It is the yearning that makes us desperate for that state of being-ness, which is the state of total inner balance, tranquillity, peace and submission. Feeling healed through and through.

The Prophet Muhammad was told by the Angel Gabriel ‘Read in the Name of Thy Lord,’ which I take to mean that the ‘Book’ – the Qur’an – is already in one’s heart, and the Prophet’s

heart, for all he had to do was to turn the pages and to READ, as the Angel Gabriel was urging him to do. And so he did and we have the glorious Qur'an for us to read by turning its pages and imbibing its wisdom.

POEM

The Coolest Water

That inner longing for You never stills

It is a constant presence in my heart

At times it burns so much

that I think I will become nothing more than dust

to be blown away by the wind in all directions

yet at times it is the coolest water on an open wound.