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# M.T.O. Sufi Association Newsletter

*The rain falls upon your head,  
but over time you will dry.*

*The snow flakes fall upon your head,  
but they will melt away.*

*The harshness of living will fall upon your head,  
but over time you will overcome.*

*The coldness of night will cover you,  
but the darkness of night will fade away.*

*The sun of life is setting,  
but life has not blossomed yet.*

*-Nader Anghia<sup>1</sup>*



## Know Yourself

*Extracted from Sufism and Knowledge<sup>2</sup>*

Just like other organisms in nature, the physical dimension of the human consists mostly of water, and the remainder is minerals, chemical, salts, etc. This isn't a being. A piece of wood, rock, a flower, an animal and the human are all similar in the composition of the various elements in their physiology. However, it is his "being" which distinguishes the human from other life forms on earth. It is the

"being" that has created the human.

It is the "being" who is the subject of the message of the Prophets. They (the Prophets) are addressing the "being" who has existed ever since the baby was born, and continued to be constant throughout the changes that the child underwent until it reached adulthood. Everything changed—the body, ideas, ideals, thoughts, goals, etc.—but the "being" called "I" always remained constant.

In essence, this is what the message of all Prophets has been through time: Know yourself. Know the "being" who is everlasting and not restricted to the body, to desires and all the action and reaction that takes place continuously. Know the "being" who is your true identity, the source of your becoming, the source of knowledge, so you may live in peace and balance, so you may know your eternity.

*"The soul has the choice of uniting with the body...or with God...If it is united only with the body, it must die with the body. But, if it unites with something that is immutable and enduring, it will necessarily endure with it"*

*-Spinoza, the 17<sup>th</sup> century philosopher<sup>3</sup>*





# How do you really know God exists?

*A famous parable of Rumi<sup>4</sup>*

People were sitting around informally, chatting and discussing their ideas. Late into the night, a wise man among them invited them all into a large tent. It was a dark night, and in that tent it was even darker. The wise man positioned various people in different areas and asked them to explain what they were experiencing based on the object they were feeling. Each one touched a different part of the object that was in front of them. When they had finished they were asked to come out, and the wise man asked them to explain what it was that had been experienced through their physical senses.

Each one portrayed what he or she had understood through his or her feeling of touch. One described: "There was a post or column of some sort, which was holding something and was rough...". Another depicted a fan, which was rough and moving,

changing the air within the tent. Another experienced a water pipe that was flexible and moving, and so forth. Each person had touched a different part of the object and perceived and described it based on the experience of his or her physical senses. Each disagreed with the others, based on his or her separate experience and own perception. An intense argument began.

One said, No, it was a post. It was holding something and it was this dimension, and so on ...

Another said, No, it was a fan.

The show was on, the argument went on, then the wise man removed the curtain and lighted the lamp (removed the veil of ignorance). The tent was opened, and the unknown object, which was an elephant, could be seen. The people who were fighting over their own presumptions about the object finally saw the reality of what existed.

## Hope

In the world we live in today, it is hard to find the strength to carry on sometimes. Situations are harder than they were for our parents and the demand to succeed keeps rising, as do the expectations we have of ourselves and other people. Those who don't give up eventually reach their dreams and those

who can't attain their goals make new ones.

On the road to success however one might stumble so many times that they find their hope run out and their strength run dry. But no matter how hard or how painful the situation, it is important to remember that with every fall there is a precious lesson learnt and that "heroes attain victory in defeat".<sup>5</sup>

### References:

1. Angha, N., *Whispering Moments: Inspirations*, 1996, Washington, DC: MTO Shahmaghsoudi Publications.
2. Angha, N., *Sufism and Knowledge*, 1996, Washington, DC: MTO Shahmaghsoudi Publications.
3. Angha, N., *Sufism The Reality of Religion*, 2000, Riverside, CA: MTO Shahmaghsoudi Publications.
4. Angha, N., *Sufism A Bridge Between Religions*, 2002, Martinez, CA: MTO Shahmaghsoudi Publications.
5. Angha, S., *The Mystery of Humanity: tranquility & survival*, 1997, Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc.

### Illustrations:

- Top Pg 1: "Girl" by Ostad Farshchian, <http://ivizlab.sfu.ca/arya/Gallery/Farshchian/Girl.jpg> (Date visited 22/10/05).  
 Below Pg 1: "Spinoza Portrait", <http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/spin.htm> (Date visited 22/10/05).  
 Pg 2: "Life At Camp" by Mir Sayyed Ali, [http://www.superluminal.com/cookbook/index\\_galler\\_y.html](http://www.superluminal.com/cookbook/index_galler_y.html) (Date visited 22/10/05).