

To Achieve a state of harmony, individuals must first unlearn all the limiting customs and habits they have acquired throughout the years.

-Nader Angha¹

Who is a Sufi?

Who is a Sufi? What does it mean?

Is it a religion, a sect or merely a way of life for the heart that is keen?

When does it start and when does it end?

Or is it merely the journey my friend?

The questions are no longer troubling my mind

As within myself all the answers I will find.



What does the above painting mean to you? There are as

many answers to this question as there are stars in the sky, and not one answer is incorrect or correct. In order to view the world, our eyes communicate with our brain and the image that we 'see' is laden with judgment from our past experiences or things we have been told by others. The excess baggage that clouds our vision means we do not see the world at all, rather we see our own fanciful interpretation of it. We have forgot-

ten how to view the world with our heart, rather than our minds, and as a result the world appears a vapid and colorless place. The heart sees through the exterior and finds the essence, leaving no room for false judgment and preconception that the brain creates. Sufism teaches that in order to view the world this way, we must become like the newborn - free from unnecessary attachments and full of love.

Did you know...

The part of the brain that manages our emotional reactions plays a major part in food addictions in addition to mood and anxiety disorders.² Foods, our sense of safety or fearfulness, intimacy, comfort, and trust are the factors that strongly influence this part of the brain. This is why over involvements with food and "food thoughts" are the ways people with emotional eating issues use to self-regulate intense feeling states, in another word they use food to disconnect from feelings and from self.

It has been shown that imbalances strongly affect neurotransmitters (such as dopamine, serotonin, GABA and endorphins) and cause breakdown in this part of the brain. Reducing stress with energy therapy, massage, meditation and regular exercise help to balance dopamine and endorphin levels, vitamin B6 and magnesium help make serotonin, and valerian root enhances GABA production.²

Sufism teaches that healthy food intake, plenty of fluids to flush the system, time outside

in natural light to nourish the central nervous system, healthy breathing patterns, regular exercise, adequate rest, and regular meditation and prayer can help us achieve health, balance and wellbeing.³

References

1. Angha, N., 2002, Theory "I" The Unlimited Vision of Leadership, Riverside, CA: MTO Shahmaghsoudi.
2. Harmony, No 15 July 2004: <http://www.mtohhc.com/htm/HarmonyIssue15.htm>.
3. O'Riordan: Sufism The Science of the Soul, 1:2.