

MTO Sufi Association Newsletter

Flying through the cloud
Traveling through the mist
Driving through the fog
Wondering through the roads
Lost in dense forests
These are the options of life!
Where is the light at the end of the tunnel?
-Nader Angha¹



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Welcome, all new Sufi Association members!

So you've signed up, enjoyed your \$2 barbeque and heard about our mysterious free mediation and body balance classes. But there are probably unanswered questions still lingering in your mind – what exactly is Sufism? Where did Sufism come from? Why is Paris Hilton famous? Hopefully, this special edition of our monthly newsletter will clear up (most) of these questions.

Letter from the Editor

“If there were only one in the world, and that one were you, what would be your name? Who would you be? Would you hate? would you love? If there were one, and that one had all the knowledge of the universe, and could respond to all your needs and all your wants, what would you do?...Sufism is about this ONE”²

Sufism aims to increase

our awareness of who we are, what we are and the purpose of our place in the universe.

Over 1400 years Sufis have used various forums such as art, poetry, stories and science to teach about love, joy, purity and transcendence, and how we may find these within our lives today, and for eternity.

This issue aims to intro-

duce Sufism through some of these mediums. It is our hope that these monthly newsletters would bring you as much joy, hope and love as we have experienced in preparing it for you.

Any comments or questions about the newsletter can be emailed to cotact@sufiassociation.com

Searching for the Truth

Have you ever wondered about who you are and where you have come from? Or have you ever asked yourself why are you here, and where are you going?

The quest to answer these questions has perplexed the human mind for eons. So then why is it that in each era only a select few the likes of the prophets and the saints are able to attain the illumination

which nourishes their heart's most deep yearnings for ultimate cognition of who they are?

In Sufism we learn that each and every human being regardless of their gender, race, culture, history, beliefs, or faith, has the innate potential and ability to cognize the truth of their own being, however to achieve this we need to stop searching outside of ourselves and

begin looking within. We also learn that self-cognition can only be achieved through seeing, hearing, and experiencing the grander truth and reality at the core of our limitless being, and not through the precepts of the limited senses or the mind. Once we begin to look within and past the sensory illusions, we will see that the truth is within us!

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*I looked for Him on the Christian cross,
But he was not there.
I went to Hindu temples and shrines - but
nothing.
I visited the Ka'aba in Mecca,
I did not find Him.
I questioned learned scholars,
But He outstripped their understanding.
Finally, when I peered into my own heart -
There, and nowhere else, was His home.*

-Rumi³



What Happened To Me

As the new year of university commences and the pressure of exams, countless assignments and never ending quizzes commences, the question that is asked is...how do I manage my studies whilst also maintaining my style in fashion, my part time job and social time with the friends? Wait a minute,

I know that I have forgotten about something....oh yes...ME. What happened to the time that I spent just on me!

Not what the world wants, not about my studies, or traditions or my friends or my work or my family but going back to ME...BEING FREE.

Whilst it may be so obvi-

ous that you may not even realize it, the most important person in the world is you. If there was no you...then there would be NO world.

So start this semester, try and spend 10mins at least every day and reflect just on yourself. Believe me...the greatest friend that you will ever have is yourself.

Benefits of Meditation⁴

Today, people all over the world are discovering the benefits of meditation. It is no longer regarded solely as a spiritual discipline for holy men, prophets, mystics, seer and gurus. This freedom from conditioning, is rapidly gaining recognition in everyday living.

Recent medical and scientific studies indicate that meditation develops beneficial behavior patters that produce widespread positive effects on physiological and psychological functioning. Some of these effects are:

- Reduction of chronic pain
- Reduction of blood pressure
- Reduced anxiety and depression

- Reduction of serum cholesterol and blood cortisol levels
- Increased feelings of calm, contentment and happiness

Gradually, as we learn to be still and go within our heart, we begin to see that the comfort, love and respect we are seeking is inside. It is within our heart, our spiritual heart, which we begin to know the personal truth of our being.

Bohlul and the Bridge⁵

Bohlul was sitting on a bridge, watching the river flow by. The king saw him, and immediately had him arrested.

"A bridge is for passing, not for staying!" said the king.

Bohlul then replied to the king, "You should take a look at yourself. Look at how you are clinging to this life."

- Improved concentration, clarity and creativity
- Sufism teaches us to sustain and nourish ourselves with concentration and meditation, looking within for the source of life that sustains us.

References

1. Angha, N. (1996). *Whispering Moments: Inspirations*, Riverside, CA: M.T.O. Shahmaghsoudi Publications.
2. Angha, N. (1996). *Sufism and Knowledge*, Riverside, CA: M.T.O. Shahmaghsoudi Publications.
3. Freke et al, 1997, *The Complete Guide to World Mysticism*, London: Judy Piatkus.
4. Wilcox, L., 2003, *Notes from Introduction to Sufi Meditation Workshop*, Sydney: MTO Shahmaghsoudi.
5. <http://www.vedantaatlanta.org/stories/Sufi.html> (Date visited 10/09/04).

*Why are your lips dry when the cup is full?
Conceive an impossible plan - as Noah did!*

Live the life that you love.
-Rumi³

*"He who looks outside dreams; he
who looks inside wakes"*
-Carl Jung⁵

This is only a brief insight into Sufism. Many pages could be written about its history, practices and teachings but the best way to gain knowledge is through experience. By coming along to our workshops and lectures, hopefully you will learn a lot more about Sufism and have first hand knowledge about what we teach.