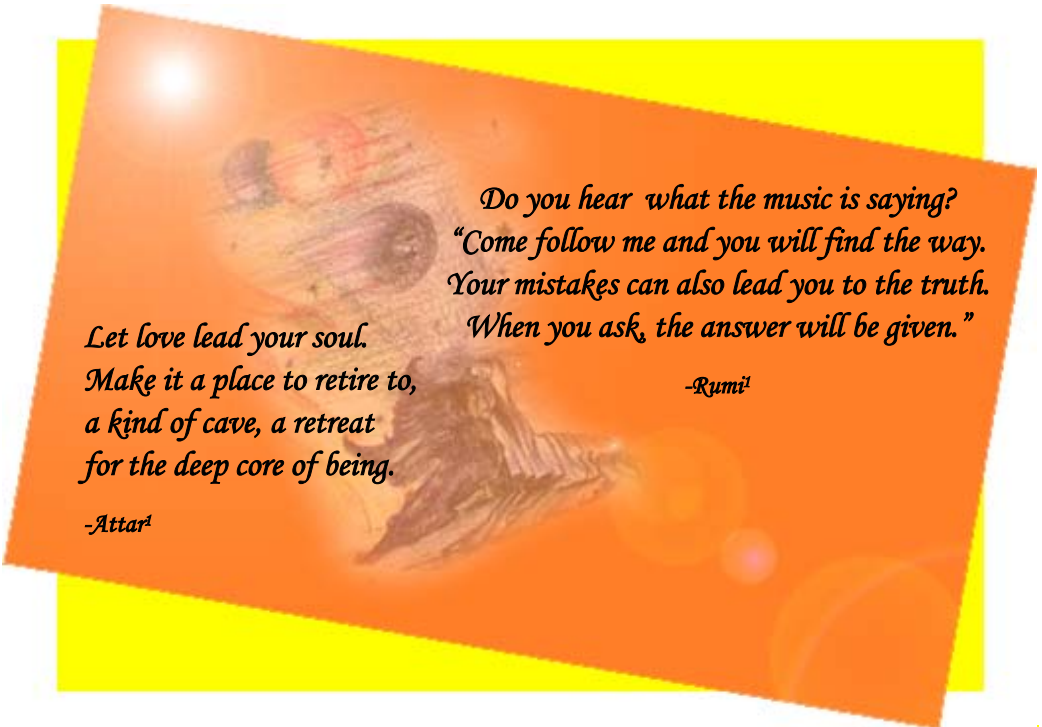




**M.T.O. Sufi Association
 Newsletter**



*Do you hear what the music is saying?
 "Come follow me and you will find the way.
 Your mistakes can also lead you to the truth.
 When you ask, the answer will be given."*

-Rumi¹

*Let love lead your soul.
 Make it a place to retire to,
 a kind of cave, a retreat
 for the deep core of being.*

-Attar²

**GOAL SETTING
 FOR 2006.....**

On behalf of M.T.O. Sufi Association, I would like to wish all of our members a very HAPPY NEW YEAR filled with all the success, health and happiness in the world.

It's time to set goals for 2006! Instead of thinking about the things that you would like to bring into your life or get rid of, this year try something different. Choose an internal goal; one that focuses on how you will develop yourself personally or strengthen your character during the next year

M.T.O. School of Sufism teaches that long lasting changes start from the inside, "Man can have nothing but what he strives for".² By brightening your inner light, you will NO doubt find that you will begin to attract opportunities and resources that support your external goals.

Activity:

1. The quality I would like to develop the most in 2006 is...
2. The three actions I will take this week are...

Dare to Dream

Dreams and sleeping are two topics that I have always found interesting. While the beneficial functions of sleep are well reported in scientific literature, the reasons for unusual sleep-related phenomena such as lucid dreaming and sleep paralysis are largely unknown. I first experienced sleep paralysis a few years ago, when I 'awoke' and found that I had floated over my sleeping body and was bobbing below the ceiling like a helium balloon. I felt an urgency to return to my body, and was afraid of being trapped 'outside' it forever.

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So who can find satisfaction pursuing his desires? Only a fool... He can never enjoy the gift of the present and is forever anxious about the future. The person who consistently pursues his wishes spends himself chasing his own illusions.

-Prof. Sadegh Angha³

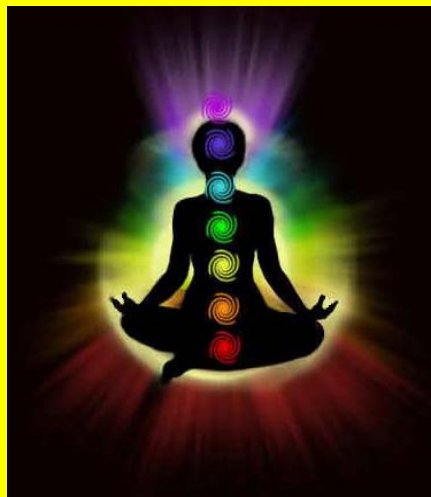
Dare to Dream

My experience was not uncommon, and most people will experience sleep paralysis once or twice in their lives.

Low levels of serotonin have been suggested as one cause of sleep paralysis.⁴ The often bizarre nature of dreams also has a scientific explanation. Long-term memories appear to be stored in 'dream-format', shown by studies where electrical stimulation of various regions of the brain associated with long-term memory in conscious patients resulted in the recollection of dream-like imagery.⁵ Dreaming may therefore, be due to stimulation of the long-term memory system. Another explanation for the strange quality of dreams has been proposed by Freud, who states that the mind creates metaphor-like dreams to conceal subconscious wishes and desires.⁶ Déjà vu however, seems to escape scientific explanation; one theory is that we are actually experiencing an event we had witnessed in a previously forgotten dream.

What does Sufism say about dreaming? Professor Carine Raheb⁷ recounts a dream in which he is driving through the countryside. After a while, he reaches a house with an open window facing the road. Under the window he sees a woman wearing a flowered dress and white hat, sitting with a child of three years. Two other children are in front of this house, playing with dogs, and they are sitting close to where the chickens, sheep and horses are kept. Three young men with

black hats are sitting at a table near the house, eating and talking. Three years after having this dream, unexpected, he traveled to Italy where he witnessed the same scenario that had occurred to him in his sleep. At the time of his dream, the chickens and some of the children would not have been born. Astonished, he asks himself how he could see things, events and people that did not exist at that time. In the book *Az Janin Ta Janan*, Hazrat Mir Ghotbeddin explains that with a cleansed soul and properly functioning chakras, one can see the future.⁷



Proper alignment of the chakras can be achieved by regular and frequent Sufi meditation, and it is possible to reach this prophetic dream-like state when deep meditation is attained. The human being has vast spiritual potential, and seeing the future is only a tiny slice of our capabilities.



The Centre

The centre of anything is the key to that beings' existence. The centre of an atom for example, is what the electrons turn around, the centre of a cell (nucleus) is the source of its knowledge. Take away the centre and you take away its existence.

So why do humans not think this applies to them? We superficially spend hours fixing our exterior, trying endlessly to make ourselves presentable yet everything we touch is a manifestation of what is buried deep within ourselves, our true identity, our centre.

Sufism encourages every human to return to their centre, because from there the root of every problem can easily be discovered and solved. By only fixing the problems that surface, we are ignoring the main cause of the problem.

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