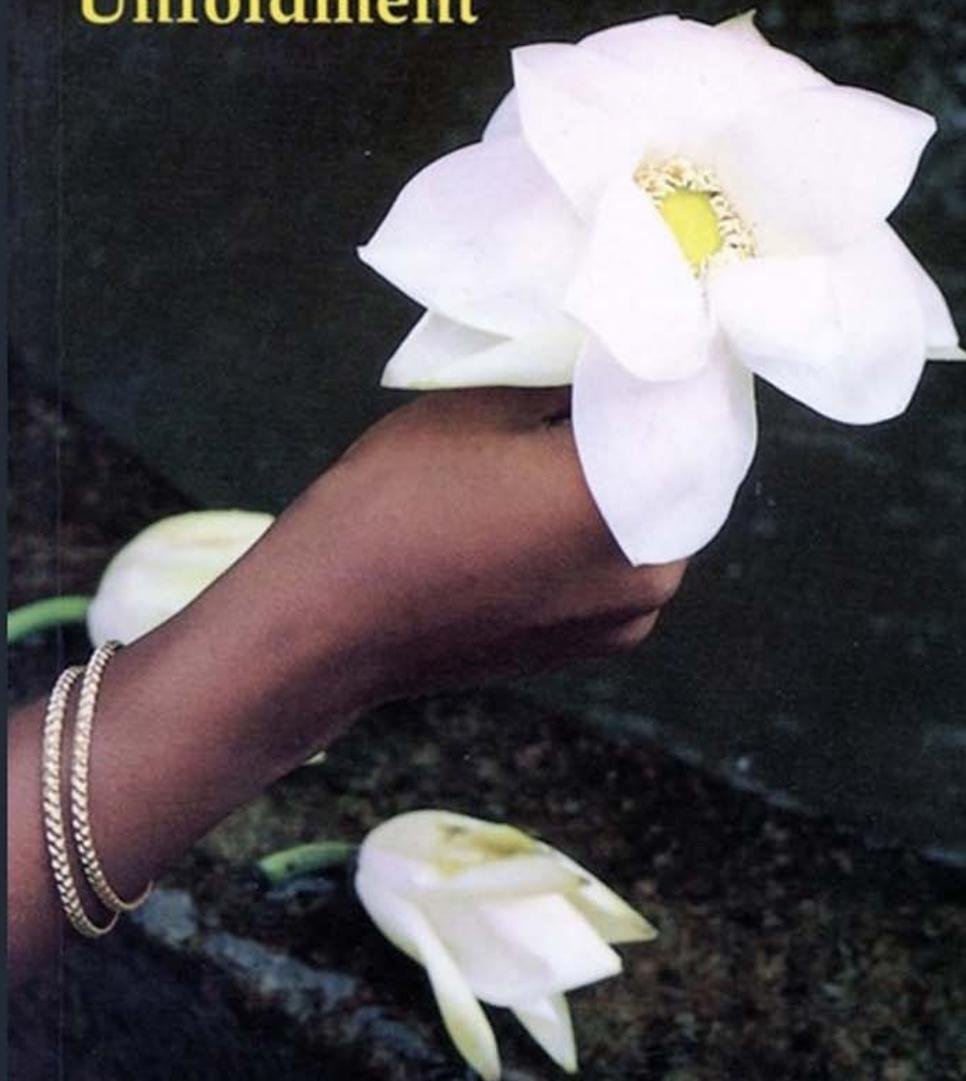


The Sufi Way to Self- Unfoldment



Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri



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Book Description

“There can be no doubt that there is only one message in man’s heart, to be fulfilled, to live a life that is honorable and fearless, that has within it no darkness, ignorance or abuse.”

The sixties and seventies witnessed resurgences in various spheres of mysticism, spiritually and related endeavors or topics, including the manifestation of formal prescriptive Islam in various forms. The reactions were both positive and negative, causing many people to begin to awaken to a better understanding of this ever vibrant faith, the last revealed of the world’s great religions.

These talks attempt to show the gnostic and mystical origin of all religions and indeed the original creation of man himself. They endeavor to relate the inner meanings and awakenings that all these spiritual paths intend to bring about as a result of outer disciplines and practices. We can realize in our own lives that Nature’s way for mankind lies in the direction of total, unconditional freedom.

About Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Acknowledged as a master of self-knowledge and a spiritual philosopher, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri's role as a teacher grew naturally out of his own quest for self-fulfillment.

He travelled extensively on a spiritual quest which led to his eventual rediscovery of the pure and original Islamic heritage of his birth, and the discovery of the truth that reconciles the past with the present, the East with the West, the worldly with the spiritual – a link between the ancient wisdom teachings and our present time.

A descendant of five generations of well-known and revered spiritual leaders, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri has taught students throughout the world for many years. A prolific author of more than forty books relating to the universal principles of Islam, the Qur'an, and its core purpose of enlightenment, he is a gifted exponent of how the self relates to the soul, humankind's link with the Divine, and how consciousness can be groomed to reflect our higher nature.

The unifying scope of his perspective emphasizes practical, actionable knowledge that leads to self-transformation, and provides a natural bridge between seemingly different Eastern and Western approaches to spirituality, as well as offering a common ground of higher knowledge for various religions, sects and secular outlooks.

Introduction

This book is based on a collection of talks which were given recently in the United States. The sixties and seventies witnessed resurgences in various spheres of mysticism, spirituality and related endeavors or topics, including the manifestation of formal prescriptive Islam in various forms. The reactions were both positive and negative, causing many people to begin to awaken to a better understanding of this ever vibrant faith, the last revealed of the world's great religions.

These talks attempt to show the gnostic and mystical origin of all religions and indeed the original creation of man himself. They endeavor to relate the inner meanings and awakenings that all these spiritual paths intend to bring about as a result of outer disciplines and practices. There can be no doubt that there is only one message in man's heart, to be fulfilled, to live a life that is honorable and fearless, that has within it no darkness, ignorance or abuse. We see, however, that throughout the ages man's history has been one of turmoil, and all civilizations, be they good or bad, have been cyclical. This phenomenon is part of the nature of creational Reality. It signifies that this existence is one of continuous change and dynamic movement. Any change implies a certain fixed parameter by means of which it can be measured; a fixed parameter that lies in man's heart and which he recognizes as being the ultimate model that is fit for this highest creational manifestation, man himself.

This noble way of living has been described by prophets, gnostics and men of awakening in different fashions, according to different cultures and times. These descriptions of the ultimate way of living show us the role man has to play in his own evolvment, by following a path of correct conduct that will lead him through dynamic action and continuous purification of intentions to freedom from useless and negative anxieties. It is as though Nature intended a certain direction for mankind, yet at the same time has given man a degree of freedom so through experimentation he may discern and understand what was originally intended of him. The sufferings and difficulties, that he experiences, act as danger signals warning him to avoid

situations that will cause him anxiety and anguish. Our own inner preferences guide us to learn Nature's way.

These talks are published in their present form with the hope that they will be of benefit to other seekers of truth and those who recognize that outer material solutions, necessary though they may be as early steps, cannot in themselves bring about a state of awakening and ultimate fulfillment in man. The author sincerely hopes that the reader will find in them a connecting thread, which is man's ultimate desire for total, unconditional freedom and awakening.

Chapter 1: The Model: on Body – Mind – Intellect

Who are we? If we know who we are, then we know everything. Before we can answer that, we must observe our actions, for they are the direct result of our thoughts and our thoughts are colored by our inner make-up. In every culture, system of knowledge or religion, whatever is of any significance has its core self-knowledge. Whoever knows himself knows creation. This is the greatest dilemma which faces man, because no sooner does he try to identify some aspect of himself than he finds another and, since he cannot grasp or pin them down, he is constantly disillusioned.

So, what are we doing about this quest? In whatever we undertake we seek knowledge. Every action man takes, if we observe it deeply within ourselves, points or leads us towards self-fulfillment through knowledge. I imagine, for example, that I will be more fulfilled by speaking to people who are on a similar wavelength. Depending on the level of our intellect, mind, or upon the state we are in, we are always seeking self-fulfillment.

The body

The motivation towards self-fulfillment can be arranged in a hierarchy. The first motivation to act is physical, is that of preserving the body. Every one of us wishes to preserve our body. We need to eat and have shelter. Try to keep anybody hungry for several days, no matter who he is, and the reaction will amaze you. Nature has encoded in the chromosomes of every human being the urge to preserve the body. It is unavoidable.

What is the body? It is a complex system of interrelated physical and non-physical systems. There are, to begin with, five systems: the digestive, the circulatory, the respiratory, the reproductive and the nervous systems. Some of these are gross, like the digestive; it is earthy. We eat from the earth, whether it is first-hand, vegetable, or second-hand, meat. The nervous system is the subtlest. It is a complex network of electromagnetic grids. All these systems are

interrelated with only subtle boundaries between them. Under normal conditions, when we are well and happy, there is total ecological balance between them.

The five senses of the body are hierarchically arranged from the gross to the subtle. The crudest is taste; it requires a liquid medium with which to assimilate the object. Then come touching, smelling, hearing, and lastly, seeing. These are senses with which we relate and communicate with our environment. We also have the sculptured part of the body, the hair, the skin, the mucus, the bones, the marrow. And we have something which we call the mind. There is in the Eastern system of knowledge a better description of that; it is called *nafs*, which can be translated as ‘self’ or ‘I’. One aspect of *nafs* is mind.

The mind

We all have minds. For the purpose of establishing a basis of communication between us, we will define it as ‘thoughtflow’. It consists of a computer-like memory bank, which stores information from our past experience, but is activated by the dynamics of input – process – output. You only call it a mind if it flows, if it has dynamism. Otherwise, it is not a mind, it is a dead data bank. When you say, ‘My mind is agitated,’ that means the flow is more than you can normally cope with. ‘I want to have peace of mind’ means that you want to reduce the amount of thought-flow.

Because one of the characteristics of mind is ‘flow’, like anything else that flows it must have quality, quantity and direction. If a river is fresh from the mountains, it is pure and clear. You will find that mind will have quality of thought, be it good or bad, charitable or selfish, constructive or destructive, positive or negative. And, like a river when it contains too much water, mind can also be flooded by too great a quantity of thoughts. Some rivers have useless direction; they may just gush straight from the mountain into the sea without serving earth or man. The thought-flow of mind may also have no direction and thus be of little use to anyone or anything. True direction is like a river which flows through an orchard nourishing the roots of the trees. The direction of thought is related to intention; the overall result is shaped according to your aim, according to the quality of your thought and the ability to maintain it.

Mind is based on the storage of past experiences. Therefore it is the seat of emotion. Many animals have a certain degree of mind. Dogs and cats, as we know, have minds of their own; that is, there are certain amounts of that quality we call ‘mind’ in them. But animals do not have what we call intellect, that which sheds light on the state of our mind. It is the intellect which tells us, ‘All this is your emotion; you are emotionally disturbed’. How do you know if you are emotionally disturbed unless there is something within you that enlightens the mind in you? This is insight. It is like a torch, it shines to reveal what is there.

The two aspects of mind

We find that mind has two aspects or characteristics, one being prescriptive, or encyclopedic. It is that part of the mind we use in language, science, technology, electronics, cooking, driving, etc. This part of our mind never causes us harm, as such, because we are using that faculty in a computer-like fashion; it only poses technical problems. If, for example, I am a linguistics expert and point out that you have made a terrible grammatical error, you will readily accept the correction. It will not upset you, because I am a recognized authority in that particular field. If, however, someone suddenly says ‘You are ugly’ or ‘I hate you’, your reaction is bound to be different. It therefore stands to reason that we should abandon this second, psychological, or personal, aspect of mind if we seek a rational, balanced and happy existence.

So that they do not become imprisoned by the psychological aspect of mind, interaction between people in every worthwhile culture has been based on courtesy. In order to tackle any system, and to create a situation conducive to happiness, you have to have the right approach, the correct and efficient means. The means to harmonious living in a community is to have the correct courtesy towards the neighbors, the family, the old, the young.

We are made up of body, mind and intellect – body, the grossest; mind, which has the characteristics of quality, quantity and direction; and the intellect, a higher, subtler attribute, which sheds light on the condition of the mind.

Pure life and individual personality

The body, the mind, the intellect plus that subtler aspect in us which we call ‘life’ result in a sentient living person. Every one of us recognizes ‘life’, for we a way talk about ‘my life’, ‘his life’, and so on. Life is that element which is untouchable, indiscernible, and undefinable. But without the presence of this system which constitutes the ‘I’, it would not function or exist. And, depending on the quality of the prism, the light which enters it emerges with a certain color scheme. If it is a pure prism, it produces the full rainbow. But if the prism is full of cracks, the color red may dominate.

In the same way, what comes out of our prism is what is called ‘personality’. Pure life, imprisoned in the body – mind – intellect prism, emanates this so-called ‘I’. If I have a limp, it is bound to affect my personality. Or if my mind is agitated most of the time, I shall try to hide it or put up a good appearance. Generally speaking, I would try to hide the fault as much as possible, because we all like perfection. Pure life is perfection itself.

We now have a model upon which we can reflect. The differences between individuals in this society of ours arise when we look at the output end of the diagram, the so-called ‘personality’. You can say, ‘I am very different from him’, but what does that mean? The difference is superficial: your likes or dislikes differ. But how do we recognize this difference unless the consciousness or the understanding of liking, hating or loving is within us? The fact that we recognize, let alone condemn, someone who is violent means that we understand what violence is; its seed or consciousness is in us. When I admire someone’s generosity, how do I recognize generosity unless its meaning, root or seed is also in me? When I admire someone’s courage, or condemn fear and cowardice, how do I understand these characteristics unless the seed of that knowledge, the light or consciousness of it, is in me? Differences between individuals only come about when pure life has interacted through this complex being, and has emerged from it as an individual personality.

Life is one. The more it interacts with or activates prisms, the more you will find diversions and differences in the personality kaleidoscope. Therefore differences between persons are of

secondary importance, because the primary cause, life, is one and the same. There is basic unity in the source of creation, there is only one Creator, and the whole of creation is interrelated because it has come from one and the same source. In essence there is no separation, but if you look at the branches of a tree, each branch appears to be different.

What does humanity mean? Why is there affinity among people? Basically it is because we have to come from the same source and have the same life essence or consciousness. Life in one person is no better than in the next.

Matching the inner and the outer

What is the root of action? Why do we do anything? We have said there is a hierarchy to satisfy our needs. All we are trying to do when we act is to create a balance, to relate or equalize the needs and expectations of the so-called 'I' with the outside world. We try to match intellectual expectations with others. At the body level we want to relate to objects, because the body understands the physical.

The ground level is the body. If your body is unbalanced, you will find that the hierarchical priority drops to that level. You want to be well, you want to be in balance, you want to function. The hierarchy moves from the gross, to the subtle, to the subtler. That is why we say that the first thing a society needs to attain for everyone is sufficient food, clothing and shelter. These are basic needs. It is for that reason when any of us sees a society in which poverty exists alongside luxury, we know it is unbalanced and that this imbalance is bound to come to a head. Examples of these adjustments sometimes manifest themselves in full-scale revolutions or wars. The one who is hungry and deprived will come out with a gun and demand the basic requirements to preserve life. You cannot stop it. That is why we say that as long as there is poverty in this world there can be no peace. It is a hypothetical and romantic notion to expect peace and the quest for higher values as long as there are people who are hungry and have no roofs over their heads.

The mind, which is the seat of emotions and whose nature is thought-flow, tries to relate and match itself with the world of emotions. That is why you find people of similar cultures cluster

together. When you say, ‘We are emotionally incompatible,’ it means that you are trying to match your emotional coloring and expectations with someone else’s. You may say you are very compatible emotionally, but not intellectually; which is to say that emotionally, yes, you have both been spoiled as badly, but intellectually, no, she is more musical and I am not inclined that way. You must reflect upon this deeply within yourselves, and try to discover this entity, the body – mind – intellect complex, and how it tries to relate at all times to the world outside. This attempt to balance, relate and unify is the cause of all actions.

Reflect upon what happens when there is a match between you and the world outside, or a lack of it. There is the system of ‘I’ and there is the bigger system of the world, which is the world of objects, emotions and so on. And we are always trying to bring about harmony and unity between the two systems. Let us illustrate this with an example.

What is noise? We can define it as a form of dissipated energy which is the measure of the non-compatibility of two or more systems having interacted with or been superimposed upon each other. From the point of view of the energy level of the systems which have interacted, it is dissipated energy. In other words, the more the systems are compatibly meshed, the less noise there is. We do not like noise because we do not like inefficiency and discord. We like harmony because it is an aspect and attribute of unity.

Actions are grossified thoughts; they are the visible or tangible proof of a thought. If a thought is aborted or frustrated, then it does not come out as action. There is no clear-cut barrier between action and thought, since they are interrelated. That is why men of wisdom say your work is as good as your intention. You cannot separate intention from action. One is inward and hidden, the other is outward and visible. If we separate intentions from actions, it is only for the sake of discrimination or illustration because, in reality, where do we draw the line of separation?

Most of our actions are brought about in order to match our expectations (which are the result of pure life coming through the prism of the individual, colored by our body – mind – intellect) with the outside world, in a certain hierarchical order and according to the energy and resources

available. We tend to refine this match and continue to refine it. There is no end to the process, because there is no end to changes in us and in the world outside. The system is in dynamic flux.

At the physical level we want harmony in body, we want health and well-being. At the mind level, we do not want to be agitated. On the emotional side, we want to be loved. At the intellectual level, we want to be in environments which are comfortable to us, we want to relate to experiences based on our past habits and expectations. Our habits are based on what we have been used to.

We said that in this matching process we are trying to unify. The perfect match, balance, harmony or unity are all aspects of peace. We want peace in every aspect. Peace is noiseless, is it not? We are born wanting peace in everything. And yet we are dynamic entities; this system of body – mind – intellect is in dynamic flux, seeking harmony, peace, stillness, and, in a way, death!

The fact that every one of us wants to have a holiday is a proof of wanting peace. But we are not sufficiently driven to want a holiday every day. We hope or expect that during a holiday the outside agitations are lessened at body – mind – intellect levels and therefore we are more at peace. Even if you take a holiday to go shopping on Fifth Avenue, the motive of seeking peace is also true. You take a holiday in order to increase the possibility of the match between your desires and achievements.

Look at the average family man during his vacation. He pays more attention to his children because he is not harassed by his boss or his banker. He has more time for other things. He is less agitated in his mind. He is more charitable. If an old lady boards the bus he gives her his seat, whereas when he was commuting to his office from upstate New York he could not care less. During a holiday, there are no constant interruptions and demands and less agitation. The quantity of thought-flow is therefore less, the direction of thought improves and our man is less selfish.

Tending towards the subtle

We veer towards that which elevates us, which makes us more subtle naturally. It is ingrained in every human being to veer towards the subtler, from the body to the mind to the intellect, towards purity. We all basically want to be pure. It is for that reason we all love holidays. We all want to be on a perpetual holiday. We want to be in that holiday mood, when we are more open-minded, we have more time, more energy, less fear.

It is in our nature to be in harmony, to be in that equilibrium which we described, within the dynamic system of the so-called 'I' and the outside world. In fact, there is no separation between the two, they are part of one ecology. Separation only exists from the individual's point of view, from his expectations, his self, or his discriminating intellect.

In every aspect, we start from the gross, physical level, the body level, and then we dive deeper and deeper. These are laws whether we like it or not. All that is needed is for us to see the picture.

Action as a means to peace

We have now come to the discovery of what the motive is behind all our actions. Every action we take is in order to quiet ourselves, at the body – mind – intellect levels. Questions arise constantly in order to be neutralized by the answers. You have a question in your mind and you are therefore agitated. When both the positive and negative are there, then the agitation dies; it is neutralized. Then you are pacified and at peace. This occurs at the mental level: every action we take is to bring about peace to that system.

We are born going towards peace. Generally speaking, during the first twenty years we are children. We are growing, physically and otherwise. Usually in the second twenty years, if society, environment and culture are conducive, we try to raise a family and also earn a living, during which time we may be fortunate enough to have periods of reflection and wonderment as to what it is all about. Is it only about a spouse and children? 'Who am I? – I am born to die' is

the only statement we can share at all times with all other human beings, irrespective of all other constraints or variables. The moment we are born, we are one second closer to death. A child who is one hour old is one hour closer to death, whatever his destined time may be. This fact does not change.

But is it acceptable to a normal human being that this is all? We are all born with the zest for knowledge. The first thing that a crawling child does is to explore, whether it is a pile of filth or a bed of feathers, because he is born wanting to know. But at his level it is crude; the first thing he does is to touch and put the object into his mouth. As we said earlier, taste is the grossest of the senses. The baby therefore starts at the gross and moves on to the subtler levels.

So we have discovered that we want peace. The reason we mentioned death is because it is the ultimate peace. We have come from the darkness of the womb, and return to the darkness of the tomb. And in between, those of us who have sufficient time and energy and have not been hooked by football, television or other preoccupations, can question, for our own use, ‘What is the meaning of this existence?’ We know it is about living well, we know it is about learning prescriptive knowledge; there is nothing wrong in this. But we want more. The more we take, the more we want; there is expansion and there is no end to expansion. The more we take of knowledge, the more we find there is, because there is no end to it. There is no end to the Creator who is the Source of all knowledge.

We said we are all veering towards peace. Peace comes to us in an instant, it is instantaneous. No sooner has what my mind set about to achieve been achieved, than the next objective is immediately set. This is because of mind’s own nature; it cannot exist in a vacuum. Try to have no thoughts! We take pills because we have abused our system, and the thoughtflow has exceeded the boundaries. Like a reservoir flooding over a dam we need to take drastic measures, some bulldozers in the form of drugs to plug the holes. But this is extreme and palliative. Once the mind is satisfied, it instantaneously moves towards the next desire. Once the body is satisfied with one form of pampering, it wants another. Once the intellect is satisfied in admiring this particular painting, it seeks another. It cannot stop. The ultimate peace in reality is death. But that pure energy which is in me, which has been tarnished by me, which has come from life, which

has been affected by my thoughts and actions during my lifetime, that energy is not lost by death. Life is a form of energy; it does not get lost as such. There is nothing gained or lost in creation. Everything is interchangeable and is in balance. We have, for example, only recently and clumsily discovered that matter is interchangeable with energy. And we are only at the tip of the iceberg in scientific discovery of the total unitarian dynamism of the cosmos.

We are all in constant change and revolution. This is a test for you to be alert, to see, to move on, to find out that there is no end to it. Then you recognize the nature of reality. Mind is the same in all of us, although aspects of it may be different. We all have hates, loves, anxieties, fears, etc. Only the extent and outer forms of these attributes are different. Her anxieties are different from yours, your anxiety now may be different from your anxiety next week, and so on. The quality of it differs as does the quantity. Our world is one unified whole in constant flux and change, never ending, and yet simple in its meaning.

It is up to each of us to reflect upon this, to test and internalize it so that we may begin the process of awareness and awakening.

Chapter 2: On Happiness

Let us now dwell upon what is conducive to peace, and what is not: in other words, what brings about happiness?

What is happiness? What is my happiness or yours? What is your happiness now, what will it be tomorrow? And when do you say ‘Oh, I’m so happy now!’? Suddenly the postman comes with a letter bearing good news and you are so happy! What does it mean? If you reflect upon it, you will see that happiness occurs when whatever is desired, expected or wanted has been achieved. I desired money, the postman delivered the letter of success, and I am happy! It will probably take a few minutes before I find another thing that I want, because we are in dynamic flux and mind is self-perpetuating. The more we have our desires satisfied, the more we are happy. Is that not right? And we always want to be happy.

Again, happiness is synonymous with peace; it is matching what ‘I’ (the body – mind – intellect) desire with what the world can provide for me to satisfy or equalize the desire. When the match has happened, I say ‘I am lucky’ or ‘God is merciful!’ But when the neutralization has not happened, I may have doubts, agitations, discontent and unhappiness.

So how can we bring about a situation where we are most happy or least unhappy? Is it easier to be happy if we have more expectations and desires or less? The answer is obvious: less. But we are driven by our present-day culture or civilization to consume and want more.

Most of us, however, at one time or another, want the same sort of thing. At the body level, we all want to have comfortable and beautiful homes, sympathetic surroundings, fine clothes and so on. At the mental level we want to be loved, pampered, admired, and applauded. At the level of the intellect we want to be engaged in whatever is our intellectual orientation, this type of music, or that aspect of philosophy. We are herded together and there is a lot of competition, for there are limitations to goods and services available. It is for that reason that the fewer desires we have, the easier or more likely it is to achieve them. There are four and a half billion of us on this

earth, and all of us want to have a three-car family and vacations. All of us want to have more and more holidays because we are created wanting peace, wanting to neutralize and match, inwardly and outwardly. We are all born to be unitarians, but we do not know it. All it takes is for us to begin to unravel what Divine Unity basically means in terms of today's culture and the so-called 'I'.

Detachment and desires

We have just found that our chances of being happy are greater if we have fewer desires. Our chances of so-called happiness are obviously greater if these desires are fulfilled. The more power we have, the more likely we are to achieve these desires, that is why we all love money. Money is naked power. Like pure, naked electricity, we can make it run a fan, a heater, a cooler, everything that brings about comfort and neutrality. It is a raw source of power with great potentialities. In every action, the subtler we become the more we veer towards purity, because essentially we are pure, for life as such is pure. Similarly we seek happiness only because happiness is our essential nature.

We are all veering willy-nilly towards the Source of creation. All it takes is for us to recognize the real cause behind our actions and thoughts. With that recognition comes real progress and awakening. If not, our way is circular and barren, constantly repeating the same pattern over and over again. But once we see what we are doing, then there is a de-clutching process that takes place. We may still do a lot of the same things, but they will not have the same influences or effects on us. There is a neutralization. We become more observant, not artificially detached.

But beware: there is no detachment as such, you are one part of the totality. Detachment is not true except in your mental attitude regarding your actions. You go up a mountain for meditation and then you hanker to know what is going on down below, and you send cables. You cannot be detached. I knew an Englishman who, after many years in the mountains of India, was left with only one attachment, chocolates. He used to walk for many hours down to a post office every Wednesday to collect his parcel of Swiss chocolate sent by friends. He was a renunciate and

owned only a loin-cloth. He had given up everything but chocolate. Yet on Wednesday mornings he was like a madman.

What we are saying is that detachment is a mental attitude. It has nothing to do with what you do, or how you dress; it is your relationship with it. Ask yourself whether you are using material wealth or if material wealth is using you. Are you enslaved by it or are you using it as a slave in order to have time for what matters, self-knowledge? It is this you have to live with. You have come naked into the world, and you return naked back to the earth.

Happiness is basically an arithmetical coefficient: when you say you are happy, it means that you had a desire and that desire has been fulfilled, so the coefficient is one. You are satisfied, you are one, you are united. Now you are happy.

The more desires we have, the more difficult it will be to satisfy ourselves. If we have a hundred desires, these hundred will have to be satisfied in order for the coefficient to become one. If fifty desires are fulfilled, I am half happy. If ten desires are fulfilled, then I am only one tenth satisfied, and I compromise and rationalize. That is why the fewer desires we have, the greater is the likelihood of our being happy. Whatever desires we have – be they to do with the body, mind or intellect – they are of our own doing. Each one is naturally different, because what comes out of each of us is slightly different from every other prism. But yet, as we said, we are basically the same. The fewer desires we have, the easier it is to satisfy them. What if we have no desires?

Desires lead to expectations, which in turn arise from our actions. We all have to act, we cannot avoid it. We are questionable according to our actions, and we will benefit or suffer according to whether our actions have pure motives or expectations behind them. If we have expectations, then we are happy or unhappy according to what results from these actions.

This brings us to the meaning of pure action, acting for pure charity: the test of the pure motive is that we cannot find a definable cause for it. That is why we call it ‘for God’s sake’, i.e. it is not for any other purpose no matter how noble or ignoble that cause may be.

We shall see later that, in reality, the state of happiness actually comes about by the removal of unhappiness. You need to act to achieve or satisfy a desire or expectation you yourself decide upon. By the removal of the potential cause of unhappiness, you revert back to the state of neutrality and happiness, Peace, peace peace... That is why we said happiness is the normal state of awakened human beings.

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Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Commentary on chapter *Yasin*. This is traditionally read over the dead person: if we want to know the meaning of life, we have to learn about death.

Keys to the Qur'an: Volume 4: Commentary on Surahs Al-`Ankabut, Al-Rahman, Al-Waqi`ah and Al-Mulk

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

The Shaykh uncovers inner meanings, roots and subtleties of the Qur'anic Arabic terminology in these four selected Surahs.

Keys to the Qur'an: Volume 5: Commentary on Juz' `Amma

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Insight into the last *Juz'* of Qur'an, with the objective of exploring the deeper meanings of Qur'anic Revelations.

The Essential Message of the Qur'an

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Teachings from the Qur'an such as purpose of creation, Attributes of the Creator, nature of human beings, decrees governing the laws of the universe, life and death.

The Qur'an in Islam: Its Impact & Influence on the Life of Muslims

`Allamah Sayyid M. H. Tabataba`i

`Allamah Sayyid M. H. Tabataba`i shows in this gem how the Qur'an contains the fundamental roots of Islam and the proof of prophethood as the Word of God.

The Qur'anic Prescription for Life

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Understanding the Qur'an is made accessible with easy reference to key issues concerning life and the path of Islam.

The Story of Creation in the Qur'an

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

An exposition of the Qur'anic verses relating to the nature of physical phenomena, including the origins of the universe, the nature of light, matter, space and time, and the evolution of biological and sentient beings.

Sufism & Islamic Psychology and Philosophy

Beginning's End

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This is a contemporary outlook on Sufi sciences of self knowledge, exposing the challenge of our modern lifestyle that is out of balance.

Cosmology of the Self

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Islamic teachings of *Tawhīd* (Unity) with insights into the human self: understanding the inner landscape is essential foundation for progress on the path of knowledge.

Decree & Destiny (Original and a Revised Version)

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

A lucid exposition of the extensive body of Islamic thought on the issue of free will and determinism.

Happiness in Life and After Death – An Islamic Sufi View

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This book offers revelations and spiritual teachings that map a basic path towards wholesome living without forgetting death: cultivating a constant awareness of one's dual nature.

Leaves from a Sufi Journal

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

A unique collection of articles presenting an outstanding introduction to the areas of Sufism and original Islamic teachings.

The Elements of Sufism

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Sufism is the heart of Islam. This introduction describes its origins, practices, historical background and its spread throughout the world.

The Garden of Meaning

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This book is about two gardens, one visible and fragrant, the other less visible but eternal. The beauty and harmony of both gardens are explicated in this magisterial volume, linking outer to inner, physics to metaphysics, self to cosmos.

The Journey of the Self

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

After introducing the basic model of the self, there follows a simple yet complete outline of the self's emergence, development, sustenance, and growth toward its highest potential.

The Sufi Way to Self-Unfoldment

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Unfolding inner meanings of the Islamic ritual practices towards the intended ultimate purpose to live a fearless and honorable life, with no darkness, ignorance or abuse.

Witnessing Perfection

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Delves into the universal question of Deity and the purpose of life. Durable contentment is a result of 'perfected vision'.

Practices & Teachings of Islam

Calling Allah by His Most Beautiful Names

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Attributes or Qualities resonate from their Majestic and Beautiful Higher Realm into the heart of the active seeker, and through it back into the world.

Fasting in Islam

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This is a comprehensive guide to fasting in all its aspects, with a description of fasting in different faith traditions, its spiritual benefits, rules and regulations.

Prophetic Traditions in Islam: On the Authority of the Family of the Prophet

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Offers a comprehensive selection of Islamic teachings arranged according to topics dealing with belief and worship, moral, social and spiritual values.

The Wisdom (Hikam) of Ibn `Ata'allah: Translation and Commentary

Translation & Commentary by Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

These aphorisms of Ibn `Ata'Allah, a Shadhili Shaykh, reveal the breadth and depth of an enlightened being who reflects divine unity and inner transformation through worship.

The Inner Meanings of Worship in Islam: A Personal Selection of Guidance for the Wayfarer

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Guidance for those who journey along this path, from the Qur'an, the Prophet's traditions, narrations from the *Ahl al-Bayt*, and seminal works from among the *Ahl al-Tasawwuf* of all schools of thought.

The Lantern of The Path

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq

Each one of the ninety-nine chapter of this book is a threshold to the next, guiding the reader through the broad spectrum of ageless wisdom, like a lantern along the path of reality.

The Pilgrimage of Islam

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This is a specialized book on spiritual journeying, offering the sincere seeker keys to inner transformation.

The Sayings and Wisdom of Imam `Ali

Compiled By: Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Translated By: Asadullah ad-Dhaakir Yate

Carefully translated into modern English, a selection of this great man's sayings gathered together from authentic and reliable sources.

Transformative Worship in Islam: Experiencing Perfection

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri with Muna H. Bilgrami

This book uniquely bridges the traditional practices and beliefs, culture and language of Islam with the transformative spiritual states described by the Sufis and Gnostics.

Talks, Interviews & Courses

Ask Course ONE: The Sufi Map of the Self

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This workbook explores the entire cosmology of the self through time, and maps the evolution of the self from before birth through life, death and beyond.

Ask Course TWO: The Prophetic Way of Life

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This workbook explores how the code of ethics that govern religious practice and the Prophetic ways are in fact transformational tools to enlightened awakening.

Friday Discourses: Volume 1

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

The Shaykh addresses many topics that influence Muslims at the core of what it means to be a Muslim in today's global village.

Songs of Iman on the Roads of Pakistan

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

A series of talks given on the divergence between 'faith' and 'unbelief' during a tour of the country in 1982 which becomes a reflection of the condition occurring in the rest of the world today.

The Connection Between the Absolute and the Relative

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

This is a 1990 conversation with Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri, in which he talks about wide-ranging topics on Islam and presents it as the archetypal, universal, Adamic path that began when humanity rose in consciousness to recognize duality and began its journey from the relative back to Absolute Unity.

The Spiritual Path: A Conversation with Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri On His Life, Thought and Work

Professor Ali A. Allawi

In this wide-ranging conversation with Professor Ali Allawi, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri talks about his life story and the spiritual journey that he embarked on and the path he has been on ever since.

Poetry, Aphorisms & Inspirational

101 Helpful Illusions

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Everything in creation has a purpose relevant to ultimate spiritual Truth. This book highlights natural veils to be transcended by disciplined courage, wisdom and insight.

Beyond Windows

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Offering moving and profound insights of compassion and spirituality through these anthologies of connections between slave self and Eternal Lord.

Bursts of Silence

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Inspired aphorisms provide keys to doors of inner knowledge, as well as antidotes to distraction and confusion.

Pointers to Presence

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

A collection of aphorisms providing insights into consciousness and are pointers to spiritual awakening.

Ripples of Light

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Inspired aphorisms which become remedies for hearts that seek the truth.

Sound Waves

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

A collection of aphorisms that help us reflect and discover the intricate connection between self and soul.

Sublime Gems: Selected Teachings of Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani

Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani

Spiritual nourishment extracted from Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani's existing works.

Autobiography

Son of Karbala

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

The atmosphere of an Iraq in transition is brought to life and used as a backdrop for the Shaykh's own personal quest for self-discovery and spiritual truth.

Health Sciences and Islamic History

Health Sciences in Early Islam – Volumes 1 & 2

Collected Papers By: Sami K. Hamarneh

Edited By: Munawar A. Anees

Foreword By: Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

Health Sciences in Early Islam is a pioneering study of Islamic medicine that opens up new chapters of knowledge in the history of the healing sciences. This two volume work covers the development of Islamic medicine between the 6th and 12th centuries A.D.