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We aspire to support the awakening of hearts and the relieving of suffering, helping human beings unfold their soul’s purpose and live harmoniously.

The Sufi Ruhaniat International was founded by Murshid Samuel L. Lewis shortly before he died in 1971. We are in the stream of the ages-old wisdom lineage of Sufism brought to the West in 1910 by Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan, 1882-1927, under the title “The Sufi Message of Spiritual Liberty,” and his disciple Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Samuel L. Lewis (Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti). This work was continued by Hazrat Pir Moineddin Jablonski, the spiritual successor of Murshid Samuel Lewis, who guided the Ruhaniat from 1971 until his death in 2001. It continues today under the guidance of Pir Shabda Kahn.

The Invocation of Hazrat Inayat Khan reads:

Toward the One, the perfection of love, harmony and beauty, the only being; united with all the illuminated souls who form the embodiment of the master, the spirit of guidance.

With this invocation, we affirm our desire for unity of heart with all spiritual seekers on all paths toward God. Celebrating diversity within unity, we affirm our unique heritage and universal spiritual transmission through the life and work of Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti. This connects us principally to the Sufi lineage of Hazrat Inayat Khan, but also many other illuminated souls, known and unknown to the world. This transmission includes blessing streams from Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti’s many teachers, who include: Swami Papa Ramdas, Mother Krishnabai, Nyogen Senzaki, Sokeian Sasaki, Sufi Barkat Ali, and Mata-ji Ruth St. Denis.

The Ruhaniat family is composed of sincere mureeds (formally initiated students) who tread the path of initiation and discipleship, seeking the truth of the inner life through personal practice and direct experience—just as the disciples of Christ, Buddha, the Divine Mother, Mohammed, and other illuminated souls, known and unknown, have done through the ages. Because Sufism is based on experiences and not on premises, we affirm the preciousness of an initiatic relationship of spiritual transmission between initiator and mureed. It is a fundamental principle of the Sufi Ruhaniat International that each mureed have an initiator to serve as friend, guide and reality check. This primary initiatic relationship provides a living matrix within which student as well as teacher may develop in character and spiritual experience.

Further activities of the Ruhaniat include an Esoteric Studies program, the International Network for the Dances of Universal Peace, the Dervish Healing Order, the Service of Universal Peace and ministerial training, Spiritual Psychology and Soulwork, Ziraat, and many other inspired teachings of the leaders and lineage holders of the Ruhaniat.

Many contemporary tools are available to help us in our personal and spiritual growth. At the same time, we represent a tradition that has its roots in prehistory. The sacred practices and teachings that have arisen from diverse climes and cultures have been carefully cultivated and prepared for us to be planted in the soil of today’s heart.

We aspire to serve humanity in experiencing love, harmony, and beauty, by embodying the unity of religious ideals, and by working for the awakening of humankind to the divine light and power that is the essence of every human being.

From Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan

Objects of the movement: To establish a human unity with no consideration of caste, creed, race, nation, or religion. Differences produce disharmony and cause all miseries in the world.

To spread the wisdom of Sufis, which has been until now a hidden treasure, it being the property of human-kind which does not belong to a certain race or religion.

To attain that perfection where mysticism remains no more a mystery, which relieves the disbeliever from ignorance and the believer from falling victim to hypocrisy.

From Hazrat Pir-o-Murshid Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti (Murshid Samuel L. Lewis)

Our work is to spread the knowledge and love and light of God. By stressing the positive, the affirmative, the true, we help ourselves and all humanity.

From Hazrat Pir Moineddin Jablonski

Aspirations for those on the path: Deepen your compassion. Love the wounded places in you that need healing. Open yourself to the grace of illumination. Give freely of your joy. Share your neighbor’s burden. Through all these avenues, discover your Soul.

May all beings be well!
May all beings be happy!
Peace, Peace, Peace.
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Bismillah, er-Rahman er-Rahim — We begin in the name of Allah, who is mercy and compassion

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Hazrat Inayat Khan

There is one Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only scripture that can enlighten the reader.

The Sufi, when the eye of his soul is opened and his sight is keen, reads in the manuscript of nature the divine law, which has been read from the same source and taught by the teachers of humanity to their followers. Though language does not suffice to express the inner Truth, yet what little of it could be expressed in words has been inscribed by the pen and handed down to posterity, from time to time, as a sacred book. Men have fought and disputed over the authenticity of these books, and would not accept any other book of similar character; and clinging thus to the book and losing the sense of it, have formed diverse sects.

The Sufi has in all ages respected all such books, and has traced in the Vedanta, Zendavesta, Kabbala, Bible, Koran, and all other sacred scriptures the same truth which he reads in the incorruptible manuscript of nature, the only Holy Book, the perfect and living model that teaches the inner law of life.

All scriptures before nature’s manuscript are as little pools of water before the ocean. To the eye of the seer every leaf of the tree is a page of the Holy Book that contains divine revelation, and he is inspired every moment of his life by reading and understanding the holy script of nature.”

Murshid Samuel Lewis

From commentary on Hazrat Inayat Khan’s *The Inner Life*:

Tassawuf: In the Sufic esotericism it is taught that the Mind is as a field. It has to be plowed, to be weeded, to be turned over. This means actually and not any thought about it. One must submit to the renewal of one’s personality, or even as Jesus Christ has said, to be ‘born anew.’

The ancients had what has become called Nabathean culture. It has a relation to agriculture on the one hand and to psychology on the other. It is, in a sense, a companion to Alchemy but it has been mostly lost.

One does not see his mind as an open field, or as untouched ground. When the mind can be treated as a field, it does not destroy it, it helps to perfect it and enables man to use his spiritual forces in and with the mind as a dietitian does with the body.

There are forms of Meditation which can be called the vacuum cleaners of the mind. But there are some which almost destroy the mind, which work against it. The true Zen brings out Essence-of-Mind which is the Buddha nature and is full of all potentialities. It is only then that one overcomes obstacles.

In making telescopes it is necessary to polish and clean incessantly. It is only by becoming empty that the telescope can function efficiently.

The uprooting of samskaras must be a thorough act or it is useless. And thus it is that man overcomes, not by any dualistic cleaning but by attaining to his true and pure state.
Ziraat: A Slender Thread

from Vakil Forest Shomer, Ziraat Activity Coordinator for the Sufi Ruhaniat International

Ziraat is a thread that connects the present to a beyond-ancient past. Remote human ancestors lived for uneventful millennia, in deep communion with the Great Nature. Drawing on both sides of the brain, they knew intuitively and honored ceremonially their relationship to Pachamama (“Mother world”) while slowly developing their reasoning, inventive faculty.

When a cataclysmic event occurred to disrupt the planet’s stable climatic system more than 10,000 years ago, some humans were already prepared to receive the gift of perhaps the first World Teacher, Zarathustra, the first Farmer, and apply the teaching to urgent survival needs. We became seed savers, plant breeders, and botanical traders, cleverly adapting to new climatic conditions. Our sustenance relied less on tree crops than before, more on grains and the flesh and milk of domesticated animals. This knowledge was dispensed in central Asia and disseminated rapidly to other continents. The essential, sacred wisdom of farming descended through many human generations, together with its rituals, relatively unchanged until the force of heavy metal implements, impelled forward by petroleum, uprooted the old way. Farm folk were obsolesced by mechanical efficiencies, forced into cities and cut off from the ancestral earthwise way of life.

In his short lifetime, Hazrat Inayat Khan, living in two worlds, was a witness to the increasing spiritual poverty that accompanied the loss of connectedness to farming and the soil. In 1926, on the eve of his terminal journey back to India, he bequeathed his Sufi mureeds a body of teaching named Ziraat (sacred agriculture). Together with his barely begun Nature Meditations, he left a pathway (Rainbow Bridge) linking the pres-

Nature mystic Richard Jefferies speaks about how one night he felt himself as wandering amongst the stars. They were no longer above and he below; he realized that the stars were all around and even beneath the Earth. We are floating in space, traveling amongst the stars. Then he recognized that he could maintain this awareness even in the daytime, even though the daylight sky was like an obscuring mist. He was aware of the celestial bodies all around, aware of occupying celestial space, aware that space is not somewhere high above. We’re in the midst of the cosmos. We’re surrounded by swirling planets, suns, galaxies colliding. This discovery is not a matter of learning something new. We already know it. What’s new is living in its awareness, overcoming the illusions that we project upon our experience, illusions that disenchant the world. We’re plunged right into the midst of a cosmic mystery, if we would just open our eyes and recognize it.

The cycle of the day and night is a sacred affirmation of the mystery of our place in the cosmos. We work in the day, we rest at night. There is an in-breath and an out-breath. There is turning within and turning without. There’s activity and repose. There is darkness and light. And presiding over our day and night, there is always a luminous sphere; in the day the disc of the sun, in the night the disc of the moon. And by some cosmic coincidence that no one can account for, these two discs appear to our eye exactly the same size. So we live on a planet where cosmic balance is symbolized for us by day and night.

Of course the energies of the sun and the moon are different, and if one begins to acquaint oneself with their personalities and moods one can more and more sense the unique quality of the sunlight as contrasted with the moonlight. We all know this down deep, but perhaps we don’t yet know it consciously. We relearn it when we lie out under the full moon at night and receive the cascade of emanations from the moon, and when we receive the fiery rays of the sun as they reflect on the surface of water and pass into the optic nerve.

What’s happening, of course, is that the very substance of the sun, traversing the gulfs of space, is pouring forth over the surface of the Earth, penetrating our physiology. We are drinking in with the eyes the light of the sun, we are assimilating the luminous body of the sun. When we go about our day, when we have our breakfast, lunch, or dinner, what do we consume? All of our nutrition derives from photosynthesis, which itself derives from the power of sunlight. We literally consume the sun. The action of our body is fueled by the sun, and our vision too is entirely dependent upon the sun. I don’t see any one of you, nor do you see me. We only see light. All that we ever see is light. Light ricochets off surfaces, enters the eyes and lights up the brain.

We come to understand that the sun is not a disc in the sky. Rather, we reside in and are immersed in the sun’s photosphere, which fills the solar system. We metabolize it physically. It fuels our every motion. It even fuels our thought, our inspirations. We live within the sun. We are a cell of the sun. And at some level, you may say we are the sun experiencing itself within itself.

If we were to similarly re-imagine our body, we would discover a sort of animism or elementalism which has to do with the old hermetic principle of sympathies, proposing that whatever exists in the cosmos exists within. Each of us is a microcosm. We are the personification of the cosmos, the personification of the Earth. In our body and mind we possess attributes that reflect and correspond to the elements that surround us. This perspective overcomes the feeling of boundedness...
and isolation that contributes to the idea that we, the human species, have somehow transcended nature, that we stand above and beyond and can control and manipulate it at our pleasure. Instead it reaffirms our embeddedness. Then we discover that embeddedness, which we might have feared as a source of dependence, is instead a source of renewal, of regeneration, of awe and wonder. We find that our direct physical embeddedness in the landscape and in the cosmos is really the most powerful resource that is available to us.

The Sufis and the Yogis have both traditionally worked with this. When the Sufis and the Yogis met in India they found that though they had very different theologies, they had a common language in the theory of the elements earth, water, fire and air, and they agreed on the value of elemental practice. For example, witness the earth element in one’s body. That means witnessing the hard core of one’s body—the skeleton, the flesh, the weight and density of the body—and feeling the resonance of that earthiness with the Earth itself, more and more experiencing one’s body as a figure of animate clay, the churned substance of the planet that has awakened to its senses so that Earth can touch and feel itself.

Then there’s the element of water, which brings us to a more internal experience of ourselves via the flow of blood and lymph, the throb of the heart, the pulse in the extremities. This is what one learns in the path of meditation, for when one stills oneself one becomes aware of this inner rhythm. And this inner rhythm corresponds with the rhythms of bodies of water, with the rivers and the oceans. One feels more and more one’s kinship with the whole hydrological cycle of the Earth. The water in one’s body calls out to the water in the Earth, and vice versa. The more one awakens these elements within oneself, the more they become animate, and the more the boundary of one’s skin is overcome in moments of communion.

Then one feels oneself less and less contained in a personal self, and increasingly one feels the sky, the earth, the waters and the stars pouring themselves into you. Your bones are the stones of the mountains, your blood is the waves of the ocean, the heat of your body and your glance are the heat and light of the sun. Your breath is the air of the atmosphere. You feel yourself as a cosmic being. You feel yourself as the universe having personified itself to survey its contours and to praise, to glorify, and to ecstatically embrace its divine essence.

Another nature mystic, a novelist and poet named John Cowper Powys gave a name for this sort of process. He called it cavoseniargizing, and he defined it as “the secretive psycho-sensuous trick of ravishing the four elements with the five senses, and of doing it with these latter so fused together that it was like making love to the Earth mother herself.” I love that definition because it combines the four elements and the five senses. The senses are, of course, the means of contact through which we experience the treasures of embodied life.

There are levels of working with the senses. The first level is reawakening the senses. One can do this sense by sense. For instance, suppose you take a day or a week and work with just one sense, like the sense of touch. “Today, whenever I touch something, I will do it mindfully, with presence.” Feel what it means to be an angel that has descended to Earth and in this moment is actually pressing flesh to stone. And know that you will not always have this experience. There are other realms of being, but here and now, this mode of witnessing has been given to you, so feel it completely. When you walk on the Earth, feel the touch of the soles of your feet with every footstep. When you grasp something, feel its texture in your hand. Feel the touch of the air on your cheek.

Then do the same with each of the other senses and highlight just one. Then recombine them one by one. In this way, animate the senses cumulatively to the point where you are fully experiencing all of the senses in unison. This might lead to an experience of synesthesia, a mysterious intermingling of sense perceptions. This is the domain of poetic awareness, where you discover that mode of being where touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing all converge in a meld of presence in the heart, a pure distillation of Earthly experience. The heart’s awareness is the sensus communis, the “common sense,” the sense behind all of the senses.

But even that is not the final destination. Just as sound waves that hit your eardrum are converted to biochemical signals in the brain, the heart’s knowledge via the senses is carried over to another level of consciousness. It doesn’t end with the personal self; ultimately it is traced right back to the universe itself, to the One Being.

We are the senses of the One Being, which has produced this world for the purpose of knowing itself. As we go about the various tasks in our life, we tend to forget the basic reason for our having been born in the first place: to be the sensory organ through which the universe senses itself, and to return our sensations back to the Source, to distill the essence and send it back to God—the Real, the Whole—on waves of praise.
Early in my life I made the choice to put God first. To me, putting God first is not just following guidance or commandments, though this is an invaluable stage. Instead, putting God first means that one enters into a closer relationship with the love within, choosing to love rather than to act from simple obedience. The Findhorn Foundation community developed out of the commitment of Eileen and Peter Caddy and myself to put God first and do what we called God’s will. Each of us had experiences of the Sacred and attempted to live according to inner guidance. We found that inner contact was relevant at all levels of our lives; the brilliant and unusual garden growth that Findhorn became known for was just one example of the practical evidence of that relevance. We sought to choose love in everything we did. I certainly found that when I followed my constant inner reminders to do everything with love, I felt better, things worked out, relationships with others improved.

Now at 90, the bottom line of my life remains an unshakable knowing that each and every one of us can have a personal and direct relationship with the Divine, and that through that relationship we can also have a co-creative relationship with the soul essence of nature. Those two facts have been the bedrock of my actions for 55 years now. Frankly, I don’t anticipate that that will change during whatever years remain to me.

The wonderful experiences that have clarified my being have stemmed from “listening” to my inner knowing, to God the Beloved. I grew up in Guelph, Ontario, and in my teens wondered about the purpose of life, but my church gave me no satisfying answers. I finished college in 1940 and volunteered for war work in New York. My job was with the British Secret Intelligence Service in North and South America, and after about a year in New York I moved to work in Panama. There I met, and following a deep intuition, married, an Englishman who was the first person to give me answers about life’s purpose that did make sense to me. He was a member of the Sufi Order—who like me accepted that all religions led to the same God within and believed that studying the different religions was mind broadening. In 1943, he and I went to England, where I met Peter and Eileen Caddy, and with a small group of other like-minded spiritual seekers we began to meet and study together.

All the teaching that I received led me to believe that acting with love was the ultimate truth. In London after the war, I received the choice of an inner test to commit myself to act in a very loving way. I believe my adherence to this commitment led me to experience the divine, God, as within me, not just as a belief, but as a knowing. This changed me completely, and led to a long period of making that inner connection three times a day, and writing down the meaning of what I received in my own words, as I do not hear or see anything at those times. Since then I have lived my...
Do you truly appreciate the wonder of a plant? There is the pattern, held in consciousness by us on what you call
the higher levels where energy is particularly clear and powerful, dedicated to the mighty purposes of life of which
a planet is the outcome. Then on the lower levels are the results of these different energy patterns: each leaf distinct
and beautiful, each flower exquisitely planned and executed, each seed carrying its own life message, each with
a flavor, scent and power in some realm of planetary life. Some plants help a wound, some the eyesight, some an
emotion, and so on. Is it not a miracle?

It is a miracle of the Oneness of life. You are each intimately related to plants and they to you, and to all creation here
on Earth and beyond. In the divine order which sees all things, life is delicately adjusted for its fullest expression
on this and other planets, and the whole is affected when the part is out of balance.

Now that your lack of sensitivity is threatening life, your answer is to be more sensitive, to appreciate the miracle of
life and, in your wonder and the love evoked by it, to expand in consciousness. This can be done in scientific terms
for those who find wavelengths relevant, but all who see the wonder of life, in a plant or elsewhere, will want to
express something of its effect on them. As we are all related, everyone will be relating to each other and to us in
their particular art of living.

So appreciate the wonder of life, and expand the planet into its greater destiny.
What is the voice of nature we yearn for, connect with and ultimately obey? Down through the ages, yogis, mystics and shamans have worked to evolve and reveal this from teacher to pupil. Yet the way of discovery is ultimately individual, and each of us finds our own doorway into the nature that is there only for us. Once through the portal we recognize, from within, its universality. We understand, but not with the mind, our participation within this celebration that is being, and our responsibility within it.

To all peoples nature has spoken and her voice has been heard and interpreted by the wise. Yogic breath teachings based in swaro-daya wisdom connecting elements, chakras, astrology, breath, channels and planets are congruent with our own Sufi teachings and Western mysticism. Other world-views may seem more difficult for our minds to grasp, but they are revealed in the experiential heart.

As Inayat Khan said in the third Sufi thought, “There is one holy book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only scripture which can enlighten the reader.” His pupil Shamcher Beorse quoted this in the few days between his stroke and final collapse before going to the hospital. He said to those of us who were with him, “Everyone is trying to bamboozle you about the truth. Nature is the only book that can truly enlighten the reader.”

Everyone is trying to bamboozle you about the truth. Nature is the only book that can truly enlighten the reader.

— Shamcher Beorse

It isn’t only the mind and heart and spirit that are soothed and made whole in nature. It is also all the innumerable beings in the mind, in the heart and in the spirit. As Inayat Khan said, there are many beings that make up our seeming selves. These all take sustenance in the harmony that is nature, the harmony that can be achieved within each of us.

The purpose in this world-view is unique to Ziraat: the transformation is not only internal but also external, a gift given to the nature we experience not only in the subtle planes but very much on earth. It is not merely esoteric, but has outer application in this world-garden.

And even more, for those who can learn to bear it, beyond the worlds of gardening and psychology: the areas of education, of economics, of energy and politics. Nature is here also and waiting for our contact.

As an engineer and economist, Shamcher knew this well, for decades pioneering benign solar power from the sea called OTEC (Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion). This is engineering based on the simple and natural understanding of the difference in temperature between the heat of tropical ocean surface water and the cold of the deep. The difference creates energy via a turbine that can deliver electric power, and in some versions can also desalinate to provide useful drinking water. OTEC is a component in the solution of both energy and economic problems. As well as reducing dependence on fossil fuels, it is a very safe alternative to nuclear power. At heart it is a technology based on the union of hot and cold, sun and moon, pingala and ida, seawater and sun fire. Is such a mechanism also nature?

Where does nature start and where does it end? Are we included? What about our works, our lives, our Internet? Can all of this stuff, this muck and mess, be

Shamcher Beorse holding his OTEC model. Photo courtesy Shamcher Archives.

Click here to continue Loving Relationship, page 16
There is one Holy book, the sacred manuscript of nature, the only scripture which can enlighten all readers.

These words from Hazrat Inayat Khan point to the basic teaching in Ziraat—giving a bridge or link between the outer world and the inner, between the physical and the metaphysical. As sensitive humans, we love, we respect, and we feel sorrow when the earth is degraded, and we say prayers for the earth’s healing. But Johanna Macy, well known ecologist and visionary, says, “Healing our relationship to the earth is what is needed, not healing the earth.” So how do we actually become unity with nature?

Thirty years ago, I bought land on an island off the coast of Washington state and had my first BIG “aha” moment—moving beyond my intellectual approach to a purely emotional connection with nature. It was acres of tall, stately fir trees, thick and lush. I was so excited to have finally found a place to build a home for me and my children. But to do this I had to create a clearing big enough for a house.

I was petrified to cut down these beautiful trees, but I knew it was a necessity in order to live my dream. I don’t know what prompted me, but I started talking to the trees. I would ask permission to cut it down. I listened, and heard in my head and heart a “yes” or a “no.” If a yes, I asked if it wanted to be a pole for my octagon post and beam house, or to be turned into lumber for the house, or reduced to firewood. I received clear answers and followed them. I even followed the nos—when I asked four trees on the southeast side, they said no and have turned out to be a powerful windbreak against the winter winds.

That was the true beginning of my “knowing through my own experience,” that all life forms have consciousness that we can engage in dialogue.

Following a desire to discover the subtle energy of sense of place, I spent many years going to sacred sites around the world. I thought that if places can hold the vibration of attraction over thousands of years, there must be a tangible quality there that I could discern. Being on these pilgrimages, I discovered the characteristics of the science of geomancy—that divining the earth spirit was ever present and accessible through listening with all senses. The transfer of information was received and given through the emotional field. I had to work at getting out of my head, letting thinking drop and coming to knowing through my senses.

Then, about 15 years ago, I felt like I stumbled into my life’s purpose. On the inner plane I was being told over and over that I must go alone to Scotland and England to “work” with stone circles. I had no idea why, no idea how—but this inner voice would not let me be until I went. Little did I know that I had been preparing the previous 15 years for this task. I had developed a practice of connecting with nature through my emotional field. I was a trained semazen of the Mevlevi order who in the Turn learns to be a hollow reed in order to move energy from the Divine (or Cosmos) through one’s own heart into the earth. I was familiar with the subtle energies of man-made sacred sites and had a passion for the attunement of pilgrimage.

So, in 1997 I spent two months traveling on my own to more than 60 stone circles and megaliths in Scotland and England. It only took a few days into my “assignment” to learn I was to be a conduit of energy to help reawaken these circles.

I learned much about trust, about the power of ancient...
When I first went into nature to be part of a guided retreat, it was 1974 and I was with eight or ten other enthused and young companions. Most of us had been in college together and hungered for teachings to move us beyond the states that drugs or intellectualizations had taken us. So Janaka, our teacher, friend and guide, a man in his sixties, decided after a year together that the time was right to spend some days in the wilderness on the west side of Glacier Park in northwest Montana.

Those few and sweet days in the wilderness changed me, the first of several points in my life where nature and guidance came together and were the impetus in shifts in my own consciousness and behaviors. On that particular retreat I shared with Janaka that I had no feeling of success in getting rid of my ego. And he, in his wisdom, told me to first work at becoming friends and knowing my ego, to shape into a healthy state, and that getting rid of it was not the reason for retreat. We go into retreat more to know ourselves—to be undistracted by so many mirrors, that is, other people, who can so often give us very distorted reflections of ourselves.

Khilvat, the Sufi word for retreat—when experienced in a natural setting—draws a parallel to backpacking, or even hiking any distance outside. As they say, there is no bad weather, only poor clothing! Consequently, winter has become one of my favorite seasons to be in nature, especially for retreat purposes. In the north country of Idaho and Montana where most of my experience with nature and spiritual retreat tend to be, snow, cold and very little sun go hand-in-hand. Alhamdulillah! (All praise to God!) we say for that gift which blankets and cocoons us, assisting us in turning our vision and attention ever inward.

For a number of years now, each winter I have been fortunate to be the guide for a five- to seven-day retreat in north Idaho on the eastern shore of Lake Coeur d’Alene at a wonderful and affordable retreat site which has incredible wild beauty and very few people in the winter.

One of the retreatants and friends I’ve had the honor of guiding had left her career, home and community of over 20 years, truly struggled during her week there. We had several check-ins during this time and she persisted in letting go—letting go and connecting with faith of a deeper sort. The beauty of her struggle was the lack of distraction from other people, media and the chaos so often found outside of nature. She later wrote how supported she felt.

Another of my khilvat companions is setting a new bar for retreat—she will be engaged to her Beloved after a three-day retreat in the woods. Wanting to enter into the next phase of their journey in as deep and pure a way as they can, they will be married at the end of the retreat in a very simple yet profound marriage ceremony. Whenever I meet couples who share a depth of love for the natural world, it feels as if their connection as a couple is strengthened and supported by nature.

Another companion in this journey wrote this after he had been in retreat for a number of days:

I quite literally felt as if my heart expanded to include the forest trees, plants, snow, rocks, deer, elk, squirrels, raven—that was easy. But then it expanded to include the buildings, cars, pavement, rubber wheels, drivers, pilots, passengers, busses, railings, concrete sidewalks, steel and glass skyscrapers, cubicles, carpeting, computers.... Then came a connection to the electrons buzzing through everything and lighting the darkness, passing on these words to you over the trillion miles of cable...then the connection and enveloping of the water that holds and fills us all and the oceans that dance their gargantuan dance with the moon. And finally, but not really finally, my heart expanded to an intense and awesome connection with the exploding stars, our own moon, planets and sun and the distant planets circling their own suns.

Speak, God, to me Through Thy nature.
—Hazrat Inayat Khan
I used to think that Nature was something other than myself, something external, that which exists “out there” as if there is an external reality that I am witnessing, but somehow it is separate from me because normally I can’t experience it as inclusive of and integral to my own Being. I, like most modern socialized humans, created a false reality in early childhood that assumes that I am independent of my surroundings and ignorant of the forces which control the functioning of every cell in my body and every electrical/chemical action in my brain.

I’ve done this to function seamlessly in a complex universe in which I survive and thrive according to social standards that I have internalized through repeated exposure to my environment and adaptation to my culture. I have learned to maintain rhythms of sleeping and waking consciousness. I have learned to promote healthy physiological processes. And I’ve learned to interact socially without most people knowing that I can simultaneously entertain myself in an entirely different and quite magical universe at will. I don’t know if that is part of the path of self-mastery or merely the pitfalls of an overactive imagination, but when my teacher, Pir-O-Murshid Moineddin Jablonski, told me that my imagination was my biggest impediment to spiritual progress, I had to take a hard look at my own nature and preferences and re-evaluate my path toward self-mastery. It’s so easy to get hung up along the way. I think of Dorothy in the poppy field in The Wizard of Oz (which, incidentally, was written by a Theosophist).

Jesus said that to enter the kingdom of God, one must become like a little child. But little children are preoperational thinkers, not yet fully developed, so they can’t understand the world from any other point of view than their own. They place themselves in the center of the universe. They make cute mistakes like nodding their heads when put on the phone with Grandma and she asks, “Are you there?” They think that everyone else knows everything that they know. They attribute human or animal characteristics to inanimate objects. In truth, I think of my own intellectual development as not quite adhering to the normal human sequence, because I never wanted to transcend the

Hi, I’m the soil. Some call me the fundament. I am very pleased to meet you.

I very seldom speak, so help me with your imagination. Think about me, standing before you, as a tall column with many different layers, many different textures and materials, soft browns and yellows. The moist aroma of fresh, exposed earth. I want you to know me better, to understand what I am and what I mean to you.

I am topsoil and I am old growth. I am very old compared to you and your civilizations. It takes 10 or 20 thousand years or more just to form one foot of me. As I am alive, my complexity and productivity grows over time, but very slowly. Try this: If you were in a time machine and looked at a forest soil in cross-section like, well, like me right now. Now speed the flow of time up ... so that you can actually see the soil growing, depth increasing, humus accumulating, structure getting more open and complex, and all. you would have to go at such a speed to see my growth, that the trees growing on top would just be flickering in and out very quickly. I am the real old growth. I am ancient.

I am topsoil and I am stardust. Every 50,000 years or so, an inch of stuff falls to earth from the burn-up of meteors from space. Since I am about half a million years old, that would make about 10 inches of stardust in me, quite a lot. You are walking on starstuff, my friend.

I am topsoil and I am bug poop. Yep, all of me has passed through the guts of soil arthropods, the many many small bugs that live in me, at least once, most if it many many times. So, I am poop, bug poop, all bug poop. Wheee, bug poop!

I am topsoil and I am habitat. Do you know where the greatest biodiversity can be found? Right here in my upper layers. It’s true. E.O. Wilson has said that a handful of soil is like the Amazon rain forest, just more diverse. I have tremendous species diversity. I am teeming with intense and super intricate ecological interactions.

I am topsoil and I am tissue, like an organism turned inside out. I am alive. I have bones, the
ent post-industrial era to Zarathustran times. We are called to rewire our brains to accommodate again the ability to simultaneously hear the voice of Nature while processing exponentially increasing quantities of information.

Murshid Samuel Lewis “caught” the seed thrown by Inayat Khan, and dove wholeheartedly into gardening and seed exchange. He established centers that perpetuated a Sufi tradition by taking “garden” names: Mentorgarden; Garden of Inayat; Garden of Allah. We have the book In the Garden, testifying to his devotion to the Ziraat seed (though SAM scarcely utters the word “Ziraat” in all of his papers).

Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan retrieved the Ziraat teaching from behind the cultish veil of secrecy, that nevertheless kept the teaching alive for 40 years, and brought it to the attention of the emerging generation of Western Sufis in the late 1960s.

Among Inayati Sufis there developed a reluctance to accept the farming language of Ziraat as both symbolic and literal. Murshida Vera Corda best explains the metaphor in her essay, Ziraat (1985), forging a renewed connection between soul and soil.

Pir Moineddin Jablonski urges a linkage between Ziraat, Permaculture, and Deep Ecology. The practice he gave us, Sufi Soulwork, reveals a most fertile area to be explored: dialoguing with our innate nature to guide us as planetary gardeners.

Pir Hidayat Inayat Khan, as an invited guest to the Ruhaniat Jamiat Khas in 1996, was given the opportunity to speak about Ziraat, laying a foundation stone to help bridge the ocean between hands-on eco-friendly American Inayati Sufis and their elder spiritualist counterparts in Western Europe.

My own journey to "Experienced Farmer" proceeds through early years in Chicago (motto: Urbs in Horto, city in a garden); called to commune within the cathedrals of piney woods of the Great Lakes region; on foot into the Sierra Nevada, Olympic Mountains; and later the Andes, practicing what poet Gary Snyder calls the "lonely yogas," to Berkeley’s People’s Park, whence a gardening immersion with gentle Quaker, Lucie Hupp.

Then, 37 years ago, during the same spring of my Bayat, I received a vision for abundant life, which blossomed into the nonprofit seed foundation I began and directed for two decades — bringing SAM’s inspiration for seed exchange into the lives of many thousands of gardeners. I took a place in the lineage of seedsmen and herbalists/wildcrafters, was refined in the hot crucible of business.

And then, I responded to an inner call to move beyond raising food crops, beyond the perimeter of the garden, to all that is native. Planet gardening: hands-on care for the whole vegetated Earthscape. The Holy Land is where we are, all the Earth is sacred. In ecological service as well as in home gardening, the active aspect of Ziraat may be revealed. As Ziraati we are not apart from Druidry, from aboriginal lifeways, from Zen gardening. All paths on the Rainbow Bridge are kindred.

As a personal path, Ziraat is fulfilled when one recognizes the tilled field as one’s self, undergoing transformation. As a collective endeavor, our deep listening to the true inner voice as revealed through moments of grace and as a fruit of practice, enables us to perform in concert with our sangha as a body, lending our energies to the continuous breath-by-breath healing and reintegration of our parent body, Gaia, whose own initiatory path is toward becoming a sacred planet.

Sheikh Vakil Forest Shomer is coordinator for the Ziraat activity (Sacred Symbology or Spiritual Agriculture) in the Sufi Ruhaniat. He was introduced to Sufism by Shamcher Bryn Beorse in 1971. A Sufi murreed since 1973, he was set on the path of Ziraat by Pir Moineddin Jablonski in 1975. He published the Ziraat Reader in 2004.

Vakil is the owner of Inside Passage Seeds, the premier source for native seeds of the Pacific Northwest. Founder and director of the nonprofit Abundant Life Seed Foundation until 1992, he has grown and collected seed from more than 400 kinds of plants and traded seeds internationally for nearly four decades. A performing musician for more than 50 years, he plays and records on classical and folk flutes, hand percussion instruments, marimba, and crafts gourd shakers (hosho) used in African music.

A long-time resident of Port Townsend, Washington, on the Olympic Peninsula, Vakil Forest serves on the boards of Port Townsend City Parks & Tree Committee, the proposed Make Waves! Aquatic Recreation Center, and the Zimfest Association (Zimbabwean Music Festival USA). He was a nominee for Port Townsend Citizen of the Year in 2006. He gladly lives in the same community as his daughter and grandchildren.

Join Vakil at the Sufi Ruhaniat Ziraat Retreat:
November 8-10, 2010, in North Carolina
More information on Vakil’s website:
www.olympus.net/personal/ziraat
Here is a poem from the great nature poet Andrew Young:

God, you’ve so much to do,
To think of, watch and listen to,
That I will let all else go by
And lending ear and eye
Help you to watch how in the combe
Winds sweep dead leaves without a broom;
And rooks in the spring-reddened trees
Restore their villages,
Nest by dark nest
Swaying at rest on the trees’ frail unrest;
Or on this limestone wall,
Leaning at ease, with you recall
How once these heavy stones
Swam in the sea as shells and bones;
And hear that owl snore in a tree
Till it grows dark enough for him to see;
In fact, will learn to shirk
No idleness that I may share your work.

I love that last line: “To shirk no idleness that I may share your work.” There’s a juxtaposition here between idleness and work. What seems from a human perspective as idleness, like watching the clouds rolling in the sky, from the divine perspective, belongs to God’s work. It means attending to what is going on in this web of life, among these creatures, among the owls and the seashells and the rooks in the trees. Our work is to drink it in and to offer it back to God. That’s why we’re here.

Cosmology, continued from page 7

I would like to close with words of the great ecotheologian of the 20th century, Father Thomas Berry:

Even as we glance over the grimy world before us, the sun shines radiantly over the Earth, the aspen leaves shimmer in the evening breeze, the coo of the mourning dove and the swelling chorus of insects fill the land, while down in the hollows the mist deepens the fragrance of the honeysuckle. Soon the late summer moon will give a light sheen to the landscape. Something of a dream experience. Perhaps on occasion we participate in the original dream of the Earth. Perhaps there are times when this primordial design becomes visible, as in a palimpsest when we remove the later imposition. The dream of the Earth. Where else can we go for the guidance needed for the task that is before us?

Pir Zia Inayat-Khan is the son and successor of Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan and president of the Sufi Order International. In addition to the interfaith mystical training he received from his father, Pir Zia studied Buddhism under the auspices of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and Sufism in the classical Indian tradition of the Chishtiyya. Pir Zia is editor of A Pearl in Wine: Essays on the Life, Music, and Sufism of Hazrat Inayat Khan (Omega Publications 2001). He holds a doctorate in religion from Duke University.

Ensouling Intelligence, continued from page 9

Over my life I have continued to receive help from God in understanding this cooperation with the devic kingdom. God said:

Mingle with these beings. It is an exchange and a beginning of a unique and far-reaching cooperation. They are amazed and delighted that their cooperation is sought, and then followed so faithfully. It is not only important, but vital, that a new relationship be established.

Our experience in the Findhorn garden was an experiment and an example of what can be possible when we cooperate with nature’s deepest intelligence. It is my belief that all of us can engage in this new relationship with nature. With an attitude of honor and respect and through simple acts of love and appreciation in our own yards and neighborhoods, we each open the doorway to a cooperation and loving exchange that will create a new wholeness in our world. I invite you to join in the experiment.

Dorothy Maclean was born and brought up in Guelph, Canada. For five years during World War II she worked with the British Secret Intelligence Service in North and South America and in Europe. During her stay in South America in 1942, she was introduced to and initiated into the Sufi Order. Following the war, Dorothy lived in England where, together with Peter and Eileen Caddy, she co-founded the Findhorn Community in Scotland. Findhorn’s world-famous experimental garden is based on Dorothy’s attunements to the essence of the forces of nature. After spending eleven years at Findhorn, Dorothy traveled the world sharing her teaching. Dorothy’s books, including Come Closer, Seeds of Inspiration, and To Hear the Angels Sing: An Odyssey of Co-Creation With the Devic Kingdom, are available from the Lorian Association Web site, www.lorian.org. Today, Dorothy has returned to Findhorn to enrich the community once again.
clarified and brought into a harmony toward the one? This world is our garden.

We know from gardening with patience and resonant open heart and hands that nature reveals herself in the relationship. She nurtures us and teaches us something we feel humanity has always known but that somehow we had almost forgotten.

The intricate complexity of meaning, significance and events that occur within and without time in conjunction with what we call nature (or even Force Majeure) is incomprehensible to our finite minds. Nature is a vast and wise teacher with a voice and a message for each one of us at each instant. We can take it in or we often ignore it, but the message is always there. The wonder is that this is a simultaneous communication to all, yet profoundly personal for each. This is the nature that enhances and embraces our lives from our first breath.

We are naturally drawn to the purity of places that haven’t been overexposed to human beings. We feel them restore our souls, reset our balance and bring equilibrium. This purity can also be found in exposure to the pure elements—earth, water, fire, and air—bringing a peace to the tumult in our being.

In the caves of Cuba last December, a group of us joined with the shaman Panchito and his daughter Idalis for a tobacco ceremony and prayers. Here in the depths of the earth, where the indigenous people had hidden from the Spaniards’ dark genocide, we joined in prayer with one of the last living Indian elders in the country. Pictographs on the cave walls indicated that people had prayed and done ceremonies in this cave long before the arrival of Columbus to the island. After Panchito’s deep and heartfelt prayers to the seven principal powers, and Idalis’ song, the cigar was passed through the group.

We then performed an impromptu Universal Worship service in the cave. Seeing a different person holding a candle for each major world religion, I felt a great resonance with one of the early intentions for Universal Worship as a way to harmonize and bring together the nations of the world. An English yogi held the Hindu candle, a woman from China carried the Buddhist light. Then an Afro-Cuban woman, a Jewish man and a young Cuban Christian woman held candles, with a Canadian Sufi holding the light for Islam. The light of Truth was held by a very tall Cuban man, and back in the cave behind them all, an Argentinean yoga teacher held the light of God, from which all the candles were lit. Her eyes sparkled in the dark cave each time I came toward her to acknowledge her light before igniting the next candle. “To the glory of the omnipresent God…” Our prayer of unity joined Panchito’s call for peace in the way that prayers have been said for centuries, and it echoed deep within the earth. In that mother womb, we were simple brothers and sisters together. After sharing Idalis’ cassava with Baracoan honey, we left the cigar burning beside a candle on a ledge in the cave, with a little cassava offering, and then we climbed up into the sunlight of the world above.

Developing an understanding of nature integrates metaphysics, prayer, intuition and gratitude. Natural life harmonizes human complexities, giving us more access to the currents of strength and intuition so needed in these times when the cry of the earth is stronger than ever. We can each in our own way join with the powers of nature not only to pray for all beings but also to work directly for the survival of humanity and our world.

Carol Sill (Sufia) was introduced to Sufism through Shamcher Beorse, and over the years has been involved in the Ruhiyati, the Sufi Order and the Sufi Movement. She manages the Shamcher Archives and has published a book of element study, Human Ecology: Notes on the Sacred Element Work. She has just completed editorial work for In Love with the Mystery, a book and CD project by Ann Mortifee with music by Paul Horn. A grandmother of two, she lives in Vancouver with her husband, the abstract painter James K-M.

Shamcher Archives: http://shamcher.wordpress.com
Carol’s blog: http://carolsill.wordpress.com
On twitter: http://twitter.com/carolsill
Shamcher on Facebook: www.facebook.com/Shamcher
cultures and their connection with natural energies of the earth. Stone circles are like acupuncture points on the earth. Similar to acupuncture on a human body, stimulating electromagnetic meridians facilitates the flow of chi or life energy. Communication with the stones themselves was through the emotional field. Each had different energies and I felt them as emotions. The emotion from them was gratitude, but my overwhelming feeling was awe for the magnetism, the geometry, the sound resonance, and the portals of energy that were bridges into other ways of “knowing.”

I was in awe of these ancient cultures, which were able to read the energetic system of the earth and map it with huge structures that often took decades to create.

Seven years later, in 2005, I was called again to go to the British Isles, this time including Ireland, and to research and lead some retreats in sacred sites. My big “aha” this time was my exposure to crop circles in the county of Wilshire in England. I spent two weeks “crop circle chasing” as they call it, and was able to stand in 11 circles. The very first day I went into one that had been made about two weeks earlier. It was beautiful sacred geometry, but I didn’t feel much energy. In the second one, I felt no magnetic energy at all and knew right away that it had been made by humans.

The third circle changed my life—again. I was standing on the edge of Avebury Stone Circle, a huge monumental complex, and it was late afternoon. I happened to look over across the field and said to my companion, “could that be a crop circle?” We walked to it and discovered that we were the first people to be in it. Immediately, walking into the huge geometric pattern, I was overwhelmed with emotions of love, of gratitude for my life. It took about an hour to walk the whole circle and in that time I felt a strong magnetic presence. Four workers from the French department of health arrived and set up meters to measure the electromagnetic field. The meter rose to the top. They also placed a crystal human shaped skull in the middle to absorb the energy.

Crop circles are usually made at night over a very short period of time. Though some are man made, the major-
Perhaps nature’s greatest gift to us goes far beyond the wonders she can exhibit, the power ever present or the quietude available, waiting to be experienced. Go deeper and feel the true essence of nature. What holds it together? What is it about its beauty that touches even the toughest of hearts? What would happen to our hearts if we were never allowed to connect with nature again?

One of my favorite teachings is called Wasi in the Sufi tradition. By my understanding, it would be referred to as the essence of the four immeasurables in the Buddhist tradition, and the expression of total Bhakti in the school of Raja yoga. This most profound state of Wasi, the limitlessness of the heart, is a state I continually yearn to realize and experience—and most likely in the conscious hearts of most of those reading this writing.

Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan wrote, “The lover of nature is the true worshipper of God.” I suspect that a great part of our awakening comes down to the realization that each of us is a manifestation of nature. But the realization must be just that: an experience of the truth of nature, an experience of the truth of ourselves.

Khalif Saladin Pelfrey lives in Hamilton Montana, and has been a traveler on the inner path for 38 years. Initially, his practice emphasized yogic pranayama and meditation. Now, holding in his heart the Sufi Message of Pir-o-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan, Saladin offers classes and workshops; guides khilvats/retreats; serves as a cherag/minister; conducts the Dervish Healing Service; and explores the elements of spiritual agriculture as a Ziraat farmer. Contact him at: walkingthewoods@verizon.net.

In the preoperational level (the natural state of most 3 - 6 year olds), I maintained a private and separate inner universe or inner playground, like Alice in Wonderland, and clung to it long after most kids moved on. This place is, by my own admission, largely a projection of my own imagination.

But part of it is not. Part of it is shared by others who have had similar experiences to mine, and this has created a separate, but very real, collective archetypal environment—the ineffable place where mystics meet. I have accessed that place by the Grace of God, by my desire—hemma—longing, and with the help of practices.

I think Murshid SAM referred to this reality of simultaneously living in an inner and external universe as “controlled schizophrenia.”

The difference between the immature cognitive status of a preoperational child and the connectedness of a mystic is that the brain develops logical, rational, sequential, organized ways of functioning—while still maintaining its secret, inner world. Preoperational thinkers can only see one aspect of something when performing a task. Mystics see the whole picture.

In those few moments in my lifetime when I have had a true mystical experience—a direct experience of the connection between myself and everything else that is—a cellular memory formed inside me. Everything in my normal waking consciousness will be weighed against that barometer for the rest of my life.

Joe Miller described the goal: “unendurable ecstasy, infinitely prolonged.” Mysticism is just a tool to that end.

Aziza (Patricia) Riely-Twaddle has been involved with the Sufi Ruhaniat International since 1989. She has a M.Ed. in Counseling Psychology and currently works in a community college in Missouri as an administrator, career counselor and instructor. She speaks to national, state, and local groups on a variety of topics related to education and career development, and serves as an editor and contributor for college textbook publishers. She is married to Zakir Twaddle, has three grown children (Michael, Jeremiah and Sarah Riely), and one infant grandchild, Charles Michael Riely.
mineral part of me. I have organs—innumerable bacteria, fungi, actinomycetes, arthropods—and all sorts of living parts, each with a function. In every gram of me I have 5 billion live bacteria alone. And I have a digestive system. Put a piece of food on me and I will digest it. I eat constantly. I breathe as the many living things in me breathe. Yes, I breathe.

I am topsoil and I am the placenta of life on Earth. I am in the middle, between us and the forests and the farms, between us and the mother earth. I am all productive. You could think of me as the womb of terrestrial life on earth. The “mother earth” of Inayat Khan’s Ziraat ritual means me, topsoil.

I am topsoil and I am a vast reservoir. There’s lots of space in me that is not solid. When I am healthy, half of my volume is open for where water and air can move through or hang out. About half the water from rain and snow drains through me to gravity; some quickly, some slowly, some very slowly. Half the water that fills my pores does not go downstream at all. I hang on to it, for the plants that grow in me, that need water all the time.

I am topsoil and I am the plumbing system of the landscape. Most of any watershed’s plumbing is inside of me. When a raindrop falls on me in the forest, it first travels through me (oooh, I love that feeling), through billions upon billions of minute pathways, a fractal matrix of quintillions of tiny streams and pathways, connected pipes, trickling and oozing through me. The vast majority of the streams in the watershed run out of sight, in me. I am chock full of pipes.

I am topsoil and I am the engine of the land; the engine of the watershed, the engine of the ecosystem. I run the productivity of the whole thing. Think of it like this: organic matter is the fuel, decomposers are the cylinders, the food web is the cylinder firing order, local environmental factors are the carburetion. I am humming. I am like the flywheel of the whole ecosystem.

I am topsoil and I am a chemical factory. That’s because I am often made of a lot of very small particles, like clays and humus molecules, which have immense surface areas. In a typical soil, there are about 6 acres of surface to the ounce. Think about that. These surfaces are active places where things live, where water and solids and air react, where things stick and adhere, and exchange, and adsorb, and cohere, and all that. Most of my surfaces are electrically charged. I’m a churning urn of burnin’ funk for ya, baby.

I am topsoil and I am capital. That’s right, I am ultimate form of capital, the true wealth of the land: the basic investment and infrastructure from which all commodities and amenities flow on terrestrial Earth. Trees and grasslands and crops, fish and wildlife habitats, the water I purify and meter out... these are the profits. They come from me, but I am not used up. Good capitalists never, ever spend their capital, but build it. Do you see?

I am topsoil and I am history. I am the record of land use and stewardship of each generation, and I am absolutely accurate. I bear the imprint of your wisdom or your waste. I am the landscape’s long-term memory. Yes the soil itself is a record. Your wise Franklin D Roosevelt once said that the “history of every nation is eventually written in how it cares for its soils.”

I am topsoil, the fundament of life on Earth, and much like your soul. Stewardship of soil is part of many of your wonderful human spiritual traditions. Abraham, the father of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, was instructed in his covenant with God to, "Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell." Wherein I dwell.

Seeing the land as the embodiment of the Great Spirit is central in many native cultures, such as the American Indians and the Australian aborigines. In Buddhism, all life forms are sacred. Aristotle saw soil as the central mixing pot for the other elements of the world: air, fire and water, in the formation of all things. Confucius taught that the earth’s thin mantle sustained all plant and animal life and minerals that people treasure. The connection between human spiritual longing and the soil is strong and abiding. Our land ethics and deep appreciation for soil must be renewed, again and again, lest we lose our roots. Humans and humus and humidity are all the same old word.

I give you birth, and wealth, and water. I give you plants and animals, and form the tissues of your history and sustenance. I am your landscape, your outer and inner landscape, inside out and outside in, holding all. I am many more things, even more than that which you need. I am you.

Michael Furness is a Sufi initiate and farmer in the Ziraat tradition. He lives in Arcata with his wife and has two grown children. He gratefully acknowledges his teacher Aslan Sattler for inspiration, Andy Maldenke for the bug poop insight, Nathaniel Shaier (1841-1906) for the placenta insight, and his wife Kerima for her astute and insightful reframing and editing.
Let me not be drowned in the sea of mortal life.

I stand as a bridge between Thee and Thy nature.

O nature sublime, speak to me through silence, for I am waiting in silence, like you, for the call of God.

Let my heart become a planet in Thy heaven.

Every movement of Nature is a signal from Thee.

Let me stand by truth in all calamities [inhalation], as the mountain stands unshaken through storms [exhalation]."

I see the Beloved’s beauty in all colors and forms.

I recognize Thy divine grace in the tenderness of woman’s heart.

I hold my ear to the depth of Thy blessing when the storm breaks through life’s sea.

Minutes from the most recent Sufi Ruhaniat International’s Board of Trustees meeting are online: http://ruhaniat.org/pdf/SRIBoardMeetingMinutes2010-Spring-public-v2.pdf
**Physicians of the Heart: Sufi Guidebook to the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah - Pre-Order Now!**

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This is the redesigned re-publication of a 1970’s classic, made new with Murshida Fatima Lassar’s beautiful drawings. It includes many stories of Murshid Sam, some of his writings, and poetry. Eight hardbound copies still available: $30 plus $5.00 shipping in USA, $7 to Canada, $12 overseas. It is available in soft cover as well: $16.95 plus the same shipping charges as above.

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This is an upgrade CD to the first version from 2000. The CD now includes all of Murshid SAM’s commentaries on HIK plus around seventy other esoteric papers. The Sufi Order International has given us permission to include “The complete works of Hazrat Inayat Khan” for which we are deeply grateful. The PDF files are indexed and searchable on the CD. Also included is the “Ruhaniat Companion” (formerly the “Mureed Manual”).

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