

KAMAAL INSANI

(ATTAINING PERFECTION)

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Perfection

“Perfection as a human being lies in the fact that having entered the realm of ‘*Fana-fil-Allah*’ (the state of absorption in Truth), one is firmly rooted in ‘*Baqa-Billah*’”

The purpose of human life is to get absorbed and be firmly rooted in Truth, which is the ideal and the perfect state. Having travelled through the path, when one enters the domain of Truth, it is known as ‘*Salokyata*’ and ‘*Samipyata*’ i.e., the ‘state of being in the abode of Truth’ and the ‘state of Nearness’. This is also called as entering into the state of ‘*fana*’ (absorption or dissolution of self). ‘*Sarupyata*’ (attaining the same form) is called ‘*Baqa*’ and ‘*Sayujyata*’ (union with the Truth) is called ‘*Baqa-dar-baqa*’ or ‘*Baqa-Billah*’. Moving ahead on the path observing and experiencing various states is called ‘*Sair*’ (the journey). But then getting firmly rooted in the Truth being the real objective, greatness lies in concentrating entirely on that objective. Traversing the path observing and gaining experiences of various stages is not comparable to the former.

‘*Wasl*’ (meeting the Beloved) means withdrawing entirely from all worldly objects and focussing one’s attention towards the God and getting absorbed in His thought. Meeting the Beloved or ‘*Yoga*’ (getting united) is the state of first getting detached from worldly objects, garnering devotion towards that, who has no colour, no form no name and then getting absorbed in that which is the root of all roots; no dependence on anything and being one’s own *Aadhar* (support).

The First Stage

“The first stage on the path of perfection is being completely oblivious of self and surroundings, which is also the state of the dead but in death there is no presence whereas in this state, one is in the presence of Truth”

The first stage of this state of absorption (‘*fana*’) is being completely oblivious of the self and withdrawal of attention from the sense organs. Such a withdrawal of attention from the sense organs is akin to the condition in death. The difference between this state and death, however, is that in death there is nothing, no presence of anything before the dead but *fana* is the ‘state of presence’, which means such a state of oblivion that one is completely absorbed in the One, he is aiming at and for all others one becomes like dead. This is the ‘state of Presence’ (*Huzoori*).

The Realm of Wilayat

“When the seeker touches the periphery of the above state, he enters the ‘realm of *wilayat*’, though he may have attained this state only momentarily.”

If the seeker starts experiencing the above mentioned state, even though it may be for a very short duration, he gets connected to the ‘*Virat Desh*’ (the causal world), which is the storehouse of everything and all powers. Such seekers and Sadhus in the Islamic tradition are called ‘*Wali*’. If the state of affairs of such a *Wali* is alright, he is called ‘*Asahab-Tamkin*’ (the one having abode in that state). If such a state is attained quickly sometimes and belatedly at other times and if the seeker then remains in that state of self oblivion and gratitude, he is called ‘*Asahab-Talbin*’ (the one who has been summoned).

If a seeker having access to the *Virat Desh* and *Roop* (form) acquires such a state that for a few days he remains in a state of exhilaration, emotions, delight, effortlessly focussed on the divine with no sense of the physical-existence, as if he was drunk, and then after some time or after a few days this state disappears with the state of bliss existing no more, mind in a state of flux, heaviness in body and even on making effort not being able to regain the earlier state of bliss, such a Sadhu is called *Sahab-e-Talbin*, who passes through the states of ‘*Kabz*’ (contraction) and ‘*Bast*’ (expansion). Till the condition of the seeker does not remain same and keeps on changing, he does not attain stability in any state. As opposed to it, if the seeker constantly remains in the state of *Kabz* or *Bast* and does not bother about it, he is called *Sahab-e-Tamkin* i.e., one who has got the abode in that state or who has attained the state of unwavering mind. But if the seeker gets stuck to such a state of self-oblivion that he does not come out of it and continuously remains in that drunk-like state then he has also not attained the state of *Sahab-e-Tamkin*. A *Sahab-e-Tamkin* is one, who is always conscious but is neither restless nor worried.

Those Sadhus, who are engaged in performing ‘*Pranayam*’¹ (breathing exercises) and ‘*Pratyahar*’² (retraction) i.e., those who are engaged in ‘*Dharana*’ (concentration), ‘*Dhyan*’ (meditation) and ‘*Samadhi*’ (trance or absorbed in some thought)³ but have not entered the state of

¹ ‘*Pranayam*’ (breathing exercises) is an important part of the *Ashtang* yoga. The essence of breathing exercises is to gain control over breathing. A composed posture helps in performing breathing exercises. Breathing has three phases i.e., inhalation (*Puraka*), holding the breath (*Kumbhak*), and exhalation (*Rechak*). Some seekers also practice a fourth phase of remaining without breath (*Brahmya Kumbhak*-holding without breath). The three phases of breathing are performed for a proportionate duration of time; inhalation for two units of time, holding it for eight units of time and exhalation for four units of time. Along with practicing *Pranayam* the seeker also concentrates on different Chakras, starting with *Mooladhar* Chakra and gradually moving up. The duration of the unit of time is also increased gradually. *Pranayam* helps in strengthening the body and mind of the seeker and helps him in concentration.

² ‘*Pratyahar*’ (retraction) a part of the *Ashtang* yoga involves withdrawal of the senses from their external engagement to internal focusing. This does require a firm determination on the part of the seeker to restrain senses and prepares him for the higher spiritual practices.

³ ‘*Dharna*’ (concentration), ‘*Dhyan*’ (meditation) and ‘*Samadhi*’ (absorption) all three are important parts of the *Ashtang* yoga, which require higher mental involvement. ‘*Dharna*’ refers to thinking of an object with full mental concentration. If the mind deviates from the object, one needs to drag it back (retraction). Gradually this can lead one to the state of *Dhyan* (meditation), where one remains focused on the object of meditation. The deeper state of meditation where one gets absorbed in the thought of the object is called the state of *Samadhi*.

'*Jajb*' (the state of being attracted or pulled towards divine), they have not yet entered into the realm of *Wilayat*. '*Hans*' and '*Paramhans*'⁴ do enter the periphery of *Wilayat*, but both of them belong to the category of '*Sahab-e-Talbin*' because ups and downs keep on occurring in *Hans* and in *Paramhans* also but *Paramhans* do not attach much importance and do not pay much attention to such occurrences and enter the domain of saints. Saints belong to the category of '*Sahab-e-Tamkin*' and *Paramhans* are still higher in status. A seeker focussed entirely on attaining the state of *fana* in Truth is sure to achieve his goal. If, however, the seeker starts looking here and there i.e., if he is distracted towards acquiring miraculous powers etc., the way to the straight path is lost.

If a wayfarer entertains the idea of having a glimpse of the light of sun or moon ('*Noor*'), appearance of various forms before him in meditation, reading the mind of others, establishing contact with spirits, acquiring occult knowledge or miraculous powers, he is distracted by these '*Rajoguni*' and '*Tamoguni*'⁵ desires. The wayfarer should stick to the middle path, the *Satogun*, otherwise he is likely to be distracted from the straight path. If he is firmly committed to merely focus on his aim of realising the Truth and attain the *Satpad* (the seat of Truth), he is sure to reach his goal. It is, however, a common experience that most people are attracted towards yoga and other spiritual practices only with the objective of acquiring some miraculous powers so that they can impress and acquire some status in the eyes of others. When their desire is not fulfilled, because the teacher wants to guide them to the real objective, they get disinterested and start blaming the teacher that he is no Sadhu or Mahatma and that he knows nothing.

It should be understood that if the seekers stick to the practices and the path to attain the spiritual stages (*Mukam*), described in the books on *Sulook*⁶, they would not be distracted and would be encouraged to untiringly make effort to attain the same. If a seeker is engaged in some spiritual practices, he should consult the books on *Sulook* and the practices and the path adopted by him should conform to those suitable for the particular *Mukam*. If he is following the right path, he should be firmly committed to follow it, so much so that he should not sit at rest till he has attained his goal.

Every person can take pride in doing so. But in my opinion the seeker after discharging his responsibilities and other obligations ordained by the scriptures should focus on the '*Kalma Tauhid*' (the formula proclaiming the Unity of God-i.e. *La-Illa-illallah*), engage himself in '*Jikr*' (remembrance), '*Fikr*' (contemplation) and '*Uns*' (selfless love) and for some days engage in offering voluntary prayers (additional *Namaz* prayers beyond those that are obligatory), reading the Holy Qur'an, tell beads and other similar spiritual practices so that he may move on a higher platform to gain spiritual experiences giving up the desire to earn appreciation from others and constantly try to get absorbed

⁴ '*Hans*' and '*Paramhans*'- Sadhus are categorised as '*Hans*' or '*Paramhans*', depending upon their spiritual attainments.

⁵ *Satogun*, *Rajogun* and *Tamogun* are the three modes of *Prakriti* (Nature) or the three-fold energy, the preserving energy, the creative energy, and the dissolution energy, which mythologically are referred to as the *Trigunas* of the *Prakriti*. The *Tamogun* is born of ignorance, which deludes all creatures and binds the embodied soul through negligence, indolence and sleep. The *Rajogun* is born of desires and attachments and binds the embodied soul with the fruit of action. *Satogun* though purer than others and is illuminating and free from distortions, but it also binds the embodied soul with a sense of possessing knowledge and feeling of happiness. All these modes of Nature bind the embodied soul in one-way or the other. The *Satogun* attaches one to bliss, the *Rajogun* to action and the *Tamogun* to negligence.

⁶ '*Sulook*'-The way of moving step-by-step ahead on the path, starting from the lowest of the spiritual chakras-the *Mooladhar* chakra and gradually activating and subjugating the higher chakras.

in the Truth. It may then be expected that the Divine Grace may raise him above the feeling of 'self' and lead him to the state of '*Fana-ul-fana*' and gradually enter him in the domain of '*Baqa-ul-baqa*', where he would be in the Presence of Truth and would realise that everything is the manifestation of God and it is all His '*Leela*' (playful activities).

It is well known that each person has a different personality and aptitude with different habits and impressions and, therefore, different people need to be guided differently according to their suitability and capability to accept any particular method of training. Some people may be more adoptable to focussing on '*Shabd*' (utterance of a '*Mantra*' or vibration), some may be more inclined towards meditation and so on and accordingly they would benefit more from such practices which suit their individual aptitudes. But in guiding the seekers, Sufis consider it important that the seekers are first guided to turn their attention towards '*Parmarth*' (benevolence or desire to seek beatitude) and in doing so they should first fulfil the obligations cast on them such as offering the *Namaz* (prayers) ordained by the Holy Qur'an. It is to be followed by complying with those instructions, which have been emphasised by the Prophet and then those things, which have been mentioned by the Prophet or his companions as desirable but have not been emphasised. Now comes the stage when the seeker should focus on reciting the '*Kalma Tauhid*' and thereafter he should engage himself in '*Jikr*', '*Fikr*' and '*Uns*' i.e., he should spend his time in recitation, contemplation and in *Satsang* (in the company of holy persons). A few days may be devoted to scriptures, telling beads, reciting the *Mantras* and in hearty prayers. He should avoid wasting his time in unnecessary engagements or in meaningless discussions or in observing rituals and instead he should concentrate entirely on attaining the state of absorption. It is expected that the Divine Grace would raise him above the feeling of self (ego) and bestow upon him the state of *fana* and enter him in the domain of *baqa* and *baqa-ul-baqa*.

When such a state is attained, the seeker would be rooted in *Satpad* (the seat of Truth) and would see the manifestation of Truth in all beings and in all that is happening around. One should indulge only in such deeds, which help making progress and avoid all such actions, which obstruct his progress. All the followers of this '*Silsila*' (the Sufi Order) agree with it. In other words, the seeker should engage himself in such actions only, which take him to the state of oblivion of the self. *Jikr* and *Fikr* help a lot in attaining such a state. *Jikr*, however, has various forms and for some it plays an important role. The '*Mashayakh*' (Masters) of this Order have preferred these in that order.

It is also desirable that the seeker should engage in such things that help him enhance his spiritual experiences rather than those which distract him. All the seekers, who have been before and those existing now, they all stand a testimony to it. Seekers should, therefore, adopt such practices that help them forget the self. *Japa* (recitation), *Dhyan* (meditation) and *Dharana* (retention or firm determination) are the most beneficial practices to achieve this objective. There are many forms of *Japas* (recitation) having different effects. Various saints have categorised and described them variously but Hazrat Abu Abdul Rahman Aslami Rahmat-Ul-Allah (RAU) has described them best. According to him one of the forms of recitation is '*Jikr-Jubani*' i.e., recitation by mouth, which is well known to all. The other form of recitation is by heart, which is highly effective in removing ill-thoughts, dilemmas and doubts and gradually pulls seeker's heart towards remembrance of God.

There is another form of recitation known as '*Jikr-e-Sirr*', practising which fills the heart in such a way that no '*Khatara*⁷ or ill-thought can even dare enter one's mind. It thus appears that '*Jikr-e-Sirr*' develops as an effect of '*Jikr-e-Qulb*'. '*Sirr*' is the name of one of the spiritual chakras (centres of spiritual energy), which is located a little above the *Qulb*. '*Jikr-e-Sirr*' leads one to the state of '*Huzur Dayami*' i.e., it has the effect of focussing one's attention so much so that one forgets everything else except the object of attention. It is the special effect of the activation of this chakra and until this chakra gets activated the state of '*Huzur Dayami*' cannot be attained. In the '*Jikr-e-Qulb*', there are always ups and downs and, therefore, '*Huzur Dayami*' is not possible to be attained through it.

There is another form of *Jikr*, known as '*Jikr-e-Rooh*', which has the characteristic quality of making one forget that it is he, who is doing it, i.e., he forgets that he is the doer. In this *Jikr*, one forgets everything else, even his own self and feels that it is the God, Who is engaged in the *Japa*. When such a state is attained, neither the *Japa* is left behind nor does one carry any impressions of that state. It is expressed in the couplet:

“JAP MITE AJAPA MITE, ANHAD BHI MIT JAAYE,
SURATI SAMANI SHABD MEIN, TAHI KAAL NAHI KHAYE”

This state is often attained in *Satsang*, when seekers in the presence of the Master⁸ immediately start feeling the occurrence of '*Jikr-e-Qulb*' and soon thereafter it disappears giving them an impression as if it is their mistake or they have fallen from that state. This feeling occurs because of their ignorance about the above mentioned state.

After this Hazrat Abu Abdul Rahman Aslami RAU states that similar to various forms of *Jikr*, there are various forms of *Fikr* (contemplation), as well. It can be explained through the example of *Samadhi* that is attained after *Dhyan* (meditation) and *Dharana* (retention or firm determination). '*Samadhi*' (trance or absorption) is the state in which the seeker gets deeply absorbed in some thought and remains absorbed in it till he desires to come out of it and no other thought enters his mind. One seeker may contemplate on the sins committed by him or the acts against the dictates of scriptures, which keep appearing in his thoughts and he repents and seeks forgiveness of the Almighty; another seeker may contemplate on the kindness and the benevolence of the Almighty and his ungratefulness or inadequate thanksgiving, feeling ashamed and repentant on his conduct and the third seeker may contemplate on the impressions of the past, i.e., impressions of those good or bad deeds which are not attributed to the present life (past lives), which have now surfaced and cannot be wiped off, whether good or bad and their brunt would have to be borne in this life and, therefore, he takes refuge in the God. A verse of the Holy Qur'an is related: "*MUQABBULQALAM BAMAHU QUAIAN*"-meaning thereby that the pen got dried after writing the fate. Here one also contemplates as to how to get over what has been ordained as fate. Besides in *Samadhi* one may also contemplate over the splendour of the Almighty, endless universes and wonders created by Him. One may also contemplate upon the brilliance and marvel of the Creator, which leaves an impression of the greatness of the Almighty in his mind and he recollects his remembrance of God.

⁷ *Khatara*-Such a thought which starts agitating a doubt in mind and ultimately pulls one down from his spiritual state.

⁸ Master-The Guru; the Sheikh; the spiritual guide; one, who is authorized to teach others.

Hazrat Abu Abdul Rahman Aslami RAU then states that in contemplation one works through his 'Nafs' (psyche or the lower self), whereas in *Jikr* the grace of God works. It is well known that in contemplation one's attention may be diverted since in contemplation there is presence of mind, intellect and ego. In *Jikr* (*Shabd* or vibration) one is focussed on the God and is connected with Him, because *Jikr* is related to the '*Dhur Shabd*'⁹ (original vibration or the word) and the possibility of delusion is remote. The faculty of contemplation originates from the intellect but *Shabd* has originated from the Creator. *Jikr* has been given preference over *Fikr* because it is considered that *Jikr* is the attribute of the God and besides that *Fikr* is subordinate to *Jikr* while *Jikr* is not subordinate to *Fikr*. *Jikr* has much higher status as compared to *Fikr* being more complete and pure. This is so because in *Fikr*, one contemplates on *Taubah* (repentance) but in *Jikr*, one's focus of attention is on the God, whom one is remembering. As against this in contemplation, one does not pay attention to the remembrance of God nor does one focuses on the attributes of the God. The difference in *Jikr* and *Fikr* is similar to that between the original and a copy of the original. This is pointed out in one of the *Ayats* (verses) of the Holy Qur'an, which states 'you remember Me and I remember you'. In this verse the Almighty has used the word '*Jakir*' i.e., the one who engages in *Jikr* of Him and not the one, who engages in contemplation. It is my (Mahatma Ramchandrajai Maharaj) personal experience that when one does not engage in remembrance or when one enters the state of *Samadhi* (trance), there is always a possibility of *Khatara*, so much so that one may start imagining like fools, which is just a waste of time. At times, one may get engrossed in such thoughts, which are beneficial neither worldly nor in making spiritual progress. On the contrary, because of deep contemplation such a thought gets so firmly rooted that it has its effect on the nerves and muscles and forms a '*Sanskar*' (leaves a deep impression on the mind), which at times does not erase till death and also affects others. The mind would engage in some activity and, therefore, in *Samadhi* also it would project some thoughts. It is, therefore, better that one performs his duty diligently and engages himself in remembrance and meditation, as recommended by various saints.

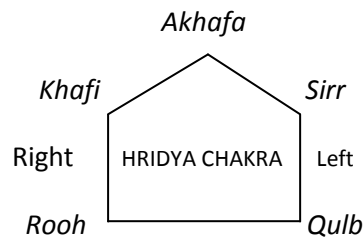
If someone is unable to appreciate my above submission, I request him to come and discuss it with me so that I can explain him the matter, which is a bit complex. At times it may not only waste all the effort but may make the seeker arrogant and turn him into a Satan. Mercy of God be upon him.

Arif Rabbani Hazrat Abdul Karim Gailani Juvedi RAU states that the sign of the activation of *Jikr-e-Qulb* i.e., mental remembrance is that the seeker according to his strength and ability sometimes or often feels the *Japa* (vibration) everywhere or at certain points, for example at the left side or right side or at the centre of the heart, or at the centre of the eye-brows or at the right or left ear or in the entire head. The sign of the activation of *Jikr-e-Rooh* is that such a person feels the presence of the *Shabd* (vibration) in all sounds whether originating from animals, trees or other things. For example in the ringing of the bell, or in the sound of grinding or in the sound emanating from the movement of the branches of trees, he feels the occurrence of *Shabd*. There is, however, a difference in the two in as much as in *Jikr-e-Qulb*, the seeker feels the occurrence of the *Shabd*, which he practices i.e., 'Om' or 'Ram', but in *Jikr-e-Rooh* one listens to the different sounds emanating from different objects though he feels that all those vibrations are emanating from none else except the God.

⁹ *Dhur Shabd*-The 'word', from which the entire creation manifested-as mentioned in the Holy Bible and other scriptures that in the beginning it was the word from which the entire creation manifested.

In *Jikr-e-Qulb*, one remains in the presence of the Truth but the world also remains present. In *Jikr-e-Rooh* one predominately remains in the presence of Truth. In *Jikr-e-Sirr*, the seeker remains entirely in the presence of the Truth. It means that in *Jikr-e-Qulb*, whether one is focussed on the God or on worldly affairs, in both the conditions he remains engrossed i.e., he feels the vibration and remains in the presence of the God and is also attentive to the worldly affairs. In *Jikr-e-Rooh*, the attention remains focused more on the divine and much lesser towards the worldly affairs. In *Jikr-e-Sirr*, the attention remains focussed on the God and is not diverted towards worldly affairs.

The position of these spiritual Chakras (*Lataif*) is as under:



Latifa Qulb i.e. *Qulb*-Chakra is located under the ribs on the left side in the chest where one feels the sound of the beating of the heart. *Latifa Rooh* i.e. *Rooh*-Chakra is located opposite *Latifa Qulb* on the right side. *Latifa Sirr* is located a little above the *Latifa Qulb* and similarly *Latifa Khafi* is located a little above *Latifa Rooh*. *Latifa Akhafa* is situated at the centre of *Latifa Sirr* and *Latifa Khafi* but a little above these centres, as shown in the figure above. Some Sufis associate these five Chakras with emotions, consciousness, intuition, deep intuition and the deepest intuition respectively.¹⁰

¹⁰ The *Latifa-e-Qulb* is closely associated with *Nafs* (psyche; the lower self or the carnal soul) and the other four *Lataifs* bear a strong relationship with the individual gross elements directly derived from them. *Latifa-e-Rooh* is associated with the element air; *Latifa-e-Sirr* with the element water; *Latifa-e-Khafi* with the element fire and *Latifa-e-Akhafa* with the element earth. These subtle Chakras need to be activated and awakened in order to reintegrate them with their latent spiritual principles in the form of pure light of different colours in the World of Order. It is believed that the five subtle organs lost their original purity-luminosity due to their association with *Nafs*, during their descent into the World of Creation. They, therefore, need to be purified so that they may acquire their original uncontaminated state. Each of these Chakras is associated with a different colour. Yellow is the colour associated with *Latifa-e-Qulb*, red with the *Latifa-e-Rooh*, white with the *Latifa-e-Sirr*, black with the *Latifa-e-Khafi* and green with the *Latifa-e-Akhafa*. These five Chakras together with the *Nafs* and the entire physical body made of the gross elements constitute the seven subtle centres (spiritual Chakras), the purification of which ensures their reintegration with their latent spiritual principles.

The causal body in the man is reflected in five constituent organs i.e. the five spiritual centres namely the *Qulb*, *Rooh*, *Sirr*, *Khafi* and *Akhafa*, which pertain to the World of Order and govern the inner aspects of the man. The subtle body is reflected in the *Nafs* (the psyche) i.e. the heart or the mind and the gross body is reflected in the physical body comprising of the gross elements. The five spiritual components pertaining to the World of Order are considered to be the principle of and bear a strong relationship with the individual elements pertaining to the World of Creation and directly derived from them. They bear the relationship of the cause and effect. These five energy centres (the spiritual Chakras) are all located in the *Hridaya Chakra* of the man by the order of God.

Since the physical heart is located in the left side of the chest, one feels the vibrations a little stronger here. On the right side the vibrations are not felt so clearly, rather only a faint feeling of vibrations, which is difficult to appreciate and many seekers even do not experience it. In *Latifa SIRR*, sometimes the vibrations are felt and sometimes not. In *Jikr-e-Khafi*, the feeling of self gets absorbed in the *Rooh*, as in the case of *Jikr-e-Sirr*, the feeling of the world entirely disappears. That *Japa* where vibrations are not felt is called *Jikr-e-Khafi*; the body-consciousness disappears in it or in other words *Jikr* or *Shabd* get absorbed in *Surat* (consciousness) in the same manner as *Shabd* gets absorbed in *Surat*. In *Jikr* and *Shabd*, there is no wrong, omission or negligence. It is, therefore, the best and the right path to follow. This practice may take any form but one thing needs to be remembered that any practice, which makes one forget one's objective is of no use, it is false and taking the wrong path. In view of the same all activities of a Sufi, which makes him alert towards his objective and leads him to remembrance are called *Jikr* or *Japa*. Similarly, all such activities, which lead him to oblivion, are not *Jikr* or *Japa*.

Some people describe various forms of *Jikr* or *Japa*. *Jikr* or *Japa* by mouth may be loud or low. It is called *Jikr Lisani (Jubani)* and this *Jikr* or *Japa* can be *Jikr-e-Qulb*, *Rooh*, *Sirr*, *Khafi* or *Akhafi* and is practiced at any of the spiritual chakras. It is practiced through utterance keeping the shape of the words in mind and at times some words may be uttered earlier and at times later in the sequence of utterance. There are peculiar ways of reciting the individual words with pauses or peculiar stresses, which are well defined. If these words are spoken, it is called '*Jhihar*' and if uttered silently so that one alone may hear, it is called '*Khafi*'. Here the word *Khafi* refers not to the spiritual chakra but means 'hidden'.

In *Jikr-e-qulb* or the mental remembrance it is the repeated focussing on the form of the word or focussing on the presence of the one to whom the name belongs (Naami-one to whom the name belongs) in such a way as not to pay attention to what precedes or succeeds the word but to witness in mind the presence of the word and the pauses or stresses attended to the word. *Jikr-e-rooh* is associated with the forgetting of the name (or the word), which one intends to remember but instead feel the presence of the one to whom the name belongs. In other words the focus is not on the name or the word but the remembrance of the God.

Since people have different aptitudes, the forms of *Jikr* or *Japa* also differ to suit their taste. For example some people experience the *Jikr* only at times and some others experience it most of the time. Some do not experience it till they are on the death-bed but experience it with great intensity at that moment of death. Nevertheless they all know that they are '*Jakir*' (engaged in *Jikr*). They keep themselves engaged in *Japa* and feel the link established between them and the one whom they remember through the *Japa*. The best form of *Japa* is where one is oblivious of the *Japa* and the one engaged in *Japa* (the doer) and only what remains is the One, Who is being remembered, forgetting even the bliss flowing from the *Japa*. Such a state is achieved in *Jikr-e-AKhafa* and *Jikr-e-Akhafi Akhafa*.

Jikr-e-AKhafa is related to the chakra, as shown in the picture above, which is in the centre of the top. *Akhafi Akhafa* is related to '*Nuktaye Suvaida*', which is located in the forehead, at the centre of the eyebrows. *Jikr* at the throat is very strong and distinct and lasts long. It is possible that *Akhafi Akhafa* is related to this, which needs to be enquired and confirmed.

Hazrat Sheikh Sharfuddin Muneri RAU mentions about four states of *Japa*. The first is the *Japa* by mouth in which mind is not associated and is not conscious of the *Japa*. The second is where the mind is also associated with the *Japa* by mouth and is conscious of the *Japa* but it sleeps at times though the *Japa* continues. In the third the *Japa* is performed by the tongue of mind and the mouth, with consciousness, but at times both fall into oblivion. In the fourth, the tongue has no role to play but the mind is conscious and remains in presence. This is a great state of *Japa* and the most important thing here is presence and alertness.

The State of Presence

“When the mind is continuously engaged in *Japa* and one feels that *Japa* is going on, it is called the state of presence.”

Aagahi (being alert) means awareness and knowledge. This is the essence of *Jikr* or *Japa*. The seeker here acquires such a status that he listens to the *Shabd* occurring in his heart without anyone else hearing it.

Some say that for the beginners *Jikr* or *Japa* is more beneficial; for those, who are at the middle of the path, *Swaadhyay* (reading scriptures) is better and for those, who are near the other end of the path, offering *Namaz* or *Sandhya* (ritualistic prayers) is better. But in my opinion it is better to engage in *Jikr-e-Khafi* i.e., mental *Japa* and to keep away from the impressions formed by the company of strangers and undesirable people, be totally focussed on the divine and be fully committed to pin-pointedly remain in presence with full attention and thus garner the love and attachment for the Truth, dissolve the feeling of self and get absorbed in it. This in my opinion is the sure and the shortest path to reach the Real Destiny.

Now some *Aadab* (important things or etiquettes) that are helpful in *Jikr* or *Japa* are mentioned, which make it easy to engage in *Japa*. If these things are not observed, seekers may feel difficulty and the objective may not be achieved easily. These are twenty in number; five to be observed before engaging in *Japa*, twelve to be observed while engaged in *Japa* and three to be observed after the *Japa*.

The things to be observed before engaging in *Jikr* or *Japa* are as under:

1. *Tauba* or repentance-Firm commitment not to indulge in acts or omissions that are against the dictates of scriptures and to seek pardon for such acts or omissions committed in the past.
2. To keep the mind quiet and at peace.
3. To observe cleanliness and hygiene (bathing and wearing clean cloths and keeping the surroundings clean).
4. Seeking help and guidance of one’s Sheikh (Master).
5. To know that seeking the help of Master is same as seeking the help of the divine.

The things to be observed while engaging in *Jikr* or *Japa* are as under:

1. To sit in a suitable *Aasan* (posture). It depends upon individual's preference. One may sit in a posture adopted at the time of offering *Namaz* but the best posture appears to be *Siddha-Aasan* (cross-legged posture) with both the hands resting on the thighs.

2. Make that place fragrant by either lighting an incense-stick or using flowers etc.

3. Putting on clean cloths and putting off the lights.

4. Closing both the eyes and ear-holes. (In our system, putting off the lights and closing the ear-holes is not required)

5. Keep the image of the Sheikh or the Master in mind.

6. To accept and adopt *Kalma-e-Tauhid (La-Ila-Ilallah)*, i.e. to express firm belief in the unity of God expressed through the formula *La-Ila-Ilallah*. (In our system it is not considered necessary. One needs only to focus on the *Shabd* i.e., vibration. This is mentioned as per the old tradition)

These disciplines relating to keeping the image of Master and the meaning of *Kalma-e-Tauhid (La-Ila-Ilallah)* in mind have been mentioned, as these help in attaining the desired results.

The things that should be observed after the *Japa* are as under:

1. After the *Jikr* or *Japa*, the seeker should sit silently for some time.

2. One should hold on to the breath for some time.

3. One should avoid exposure to cold air and avoid drinking cold water for some time. This may cause losing of the warmth of the heart and cold setting in the opening of nerves.

If, in spite of reciting the *Kalma-e-Tauhid* (which should garner love for the divine), one does not feel attracted towards the divine, it is an indication that the *Japa* has not been performed properly and one should repeat it properly, as ordained.

Some Sufis state that through *Jikr-e-Jubani (Japa* by mouth) seekers attain the state of mental *Japa (Dil Ka Jaap)* i.e., their *Hridaya Chakra (Qulb* or the spiritual centre located at the heart) is activated. But when the mind is associated with the tongue in doing the *Japa*, there is no doubt in attaining excellence.

The Sufis belonging to Naqshbandia Order believe in *Jajb*¹¹ or *Batin* (being pulled towards the divine by the grace of the Master) and *Jikr-e-qulb* and the beginners start with this form of *Jikr*,

¹¹ The spiritual seekers can be placed in two categories, one following the path of *Bhakti* (devotion) and the other following the path of Yoga. These paths are also called '*Jajb*' and '*Sulook*'. *Sulook* is the way of step-by-step journey i.e. starting from the lowest, the *Mooladhar Chakra* and gradually moving up to the higher states, whereas *Jajb* is the path of love and devotion.

In *Sulook*, the seeker has to pass through various stages, i.e. he has to move from this station of death up to the station of the Truth crossing all the intermediate stages. This is like a passenger, who starts from his residence to a distant place and halts at the place where the night falls and in the process visits all buildings, rivers, townships etc. that fall on the way and acquires the experience and knowledge of them. Another person who although passes through the same route but travels in a motorcar, looks at things only if they

as is well known to the seekers belonging to this Order. The beginners following the Naqshbandia Order gain strength through the mental *Japa* and get connected to the cosmic world (*Virat Roop Aur Desh*). Seekers belonging to other Sufi orders gain strength through the mental *Japa* only towards the end of their spiritual journey. There is thus a lot of difference in the two approaches.

Some Sufis consider it great to hold the breath during *Japa*, as they consider it to be very effective in avoiding *Khatra* (dangerous or ill-thoughts entering the mind). The Chishtiya, Qabardiya, Shutaria and Qadariya Sufi Orders consider it necessary to hold the breath. In the Naqshbandi Order it is neither considered necessary, nor do they deny that it could be beneficial whereas the Sufis belonging to the Suharavardi Order do not approve of this practice.

With regard to breathing there are two things. One is '*Habs-Nafs*' (to hold the breath) and the other is '*Hizr-e-Nafs*' (restraining from breathing). There are two variations of *Habs-Nafs* - *Takhlia* (emptying out) and *Tahalia* (digest or hold). In *Takhlia*, which means emptying out, one has to first pull breath from the stomach, from naval and around the naval towards the back and then hold it in the chest or in head. *Tahalia* refers to inhaling and holding the breath. This results in the swelling of the stomach and the naval is pulled away from the back. In *Takhlia*, lot of warmth is generated and in *Tahalia* digestion is improved.

In *Hizr-e-Nafs*, one exercises restraint over breathing and holds the breath, as it is, for some time. There is no doubt that this warms up the heart but the warmth produced in *Habs-Nafs* is more intense.

It is not necessary that one should close his nostrils, ears or eyes forcibly with fingers, as normally people do and followers of Radha Swami Tradition are known to be doing. One technique, which Hazrat Khijr Alehissalam¹² revealed to Hazrat Abdul Khaliq-al-Gujhdewani was to do this exercise by submerging oneself in a water tank, which is likely to be extremely beneficial.

The warmth that is produced because of breathing exercises (*Pranayam*) is felt more by the *Musafirs* (beginners) and not by the *Muqims* (adept). *Musafirs* are those, who have began these exercises and have not gained enough expertise, they are moving ahead on the path and not yet travelled adequate distance on the path. Those, who have gained expertise and spent adequate time practicing these exercises, are called *Muqim* or the adept. The adept do not feel the warmth or the cold nor do they fear any ill-effects of *Pranayam*. It is, therefore, advisable to practice these exercises under the guidance of a knowledgeable person and it is expected that if one engages in

happen to fall before his eyes, but does not make any deliberate attempt on his own to look at them or to acquire knowledge about them. There is yet another person who leaves the first few stations altogether and riding on a fast moving vehicle reaches his destination quickly. While the first person is said to follow the path of *Sulook*, both the later persons are said to follow the path of *Jajb*. *Jajb* literally means absorption, getting attracted or being pulled upwards. In the aforesaid example, the motorcar is the shelter of the Master, who by his grace takes the seeker much faster to his destination. In the case of the last person, who is made to leave the first few stations, he cannot do so on his own. Only a competent Master can pull his disciple from any station and take him to any station, as he desires, leaving behind the intermediary stations.

¹² Hazrat Khijr-An eternal Paigamber (prophet), who guides and helps the needy; a long living angel.

Japa with *Pranayam*, one would reach the state of *Ajapajap* i.e., the *Japa*, which occurs effortlessly on its own. More one engages in it, more would one attain the state of presence.

It should also be known that during the period one engages in *Pranayam*, one should avoid cold and sour foods. It is also possible that in the beginning there may be bleeding through nose, ears or in stool, which is not to be worried about, as it would disappear with time. Similarly, one should also avoid very hot food, as that may also cause some harm.

It is also not desirable that one should immediately start devoting a lot of time to *Pranayam*, rather one should gradually increase the duration. The breath should be exhaled slowly and through the nostrils rather than mouth, as exhaling through mouth may harm teeth. *Pranayam* should also not be done with empty stomach or immediately after the food. The stomach should neither be totally empty nor filled, but in-between. These restrictions are for the beginners. The adept know and can do *Pranayam*, as they like. In my opinion, one should learn *Pranayam* from an expert, but it is difficult to find an expert now-a-days, nor does the health of people now-a-days permits them to engage in *Pranayam*. In my opinion, therefore, one should not bother about *Pranayam* and in our Order there is no need of engaging in *Pranayam*. The saints belonging to our tradition have not considered it appropriate to engage in *Japa* with *Pranayam* and, therefore, I advise the followers of this tradition (Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi-Mazhariya-Ramchandriya) not to engage in *Pranayam*.

Some scholars say that when one attains the state of '*Tankiya-Batin*' (purity of mind) and rises above the desire to inquire and experience and is blessed with the treasure of *Jikr* and *Huzoori* (presence), one is connected with a link (*Nisbat*) that develops love for spirituality with the mind getting enlightened through that link and then he enters in *Mushahida* (the state of vision, or the state of witnessing the Truth).

Some Mahatmas are of the view that when one's mind and inner-being (*Antakaran*) is cleansed of all impurities and all veils are removed, no attachment or desires towards worldly things, then as a result of constant remembrance, he enters the state of presence and attains a sort of connection with the *Ruhani-Mandals* (spiritual world) and because of this connection his mind gets enlightened. He then attains access to *Satpad* (the seat of Truth) and acquires firm faith. He now acquires the capability to understand the divine will and order and to know and enquire about all that is before him or hidden from him (beyond his body and senses) and such a person moves beyond the physical and subtle body.

Seekers should know that in the journey of a wayfarer, the first *Muqam* (station) is that of *Tauba* and the last is that of *Hairat* (astonishment), though some scholars consider *Raza* (Thy will be done) or *Taslim* (surrender or obedience), as the last state. *Hairat* is that state where the seeker not knowing what is happening or going to happen, stands astonished. It does not mean that he stands still or not able to move or attend worldly affairs or behaving like mad but he behaves as a worldly man but his mental condition becomes like that of an *Majjub* or *Avdhut*¹³, who neither feels happy if someone comes nor sorrow if someone goes and is unable to explain his state of affairs.

¹³ *Majjub* or *Avdhut*-An accomplished fakir but stuck up or absorbed somewhere and, therefore, lost, unable to explain his state of affairs.

There are two kinds of *Hairat*, one *Hairat Majmum* i.e., unmeritorious and the other *Hairat Mamduh* i.e., meritorious. The state of *Hairat* can be explained through an example of an illiterate villager, who has never been out of his village, when taken to a royal palace in the presence of the king stands speechless, mesmerized by the affluence and glory of the royal surroundings or through the example of a person, who on suddenly encounters a divinely beautiful lady feels stunned. Same is the condition when a seeker witnesses the majesty and brilliance of the God and stands astonished looking at the divine glory and splendour. In the state of *Hairat*, however, there is no doubt or suspicion in the mind but one loses all sense to think about or question anything.

It is, however, difficult to distinguish between the state of astonishment and the state of suspicion and, therefore, there is always a doubt whether the seeker has really attained the state of *Hairat* or he is in the state of suspicion. The difference lies in the fact that the state of *Hairat* is attained after the wayfarer has completed the journey and it is the state of culmination of his knowledge. As opposed to it, the state of suspicion arises from ignorance and foolishness. Besides, the other distinguishing feature is that one enters the state of *Hairat* when one is in the state of presence i.e., the seeker is aware of the 'name' and the One to Whom it belongs but in the state of suspicion there is confusion and absence of mind.

There is yet another difference in the two. One in the state of *Hairat* entertains the desire and intends to instantly and certainly ascend in order to know the truth of his state of being whereas one in the state of suspicion tends to immediately jump into the well of ignorance.

Hairat comprises of two elements, one, the knowledge of the existence of the physical body and the other not knowing the cause of the formation of the physical body. In other words one is aware of the physical body and ponders about its existence and of other things and how and why they were formed. Both ignorance and suspicion appear to be associated with it. It also appears that the knowledge of such a person comprises of such elements, which include suspicion and doubt and the component of knowledge is difficult to prove. In such a condition ups and downs keep on occurring. The suspicion of this kind is called *Hairat Majmum* or the unmeritorious astonishment. The condition opposed to it is called *Hairat Mamduh* or the meritorious astonishment. *Hairat Majmum* relates to common people and the *Hairat Mamduh* relates to saints and Mahatmas.

At times seekers see light or illumination, which may be white, green or red and in the end blue or black. This blue or black colour is *Jabruti* (illusionary), which appears because of the real light falling on the elements of other colours. If the light or the illumination appears towards the right side and touching the right shoulder, it relates to the angel appointed for noting down the good deeds. If it does not touch the shoulder, it relates to one's spiritual Master. If the light or illumination appears in front, it relates to the Hazrat Paigamber (Prophet Muhammad) or other prophets. If it is felt on the left side, touching the left shoulder, it relates to the angel appointed on the left shoulder to note the bad deeds or creating bad impressions. If it does not touch the left shoulder, it relates to the Satan. Similarly, if one sees some image on the left side, it should be taken to be a satanic delusion. If the image appears above the head or in the back, it relates to those angels or gods, who have been appointed for the supervision of the body, for example Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Aditya, Indra etc. If not in any particular direction or if not visible but one feels frightened or after the image disappears the seeker loses the state of presence, then it should be taken as a satanic delusion. On the contrary, if the state of presence or peace of mind remains while seeing an image or the light

etc. and after the image or light disappears, there is a craving to witness it again, it is an indication that it was the experience of the divine. If it is felt above the chest or the naval, it should be considered to be satanic illusion; but if it is above the heart it, should be considered related to the cleansing of the mind (*Nafs*). A true seeker, however, should not bother about all these things, as these are all intermediary stages and not related to the real objective of the seeker. These are all mirages, an expression of *Maya* (relativity or illusion).

There is a difference of opinion amongst venerable saints whether an *Aala-Aarif* (great scholar or knower) is always in the state of *Mushahida* (vision or witnessing) or not. One group agrees, while the other group disagrees. One scholar states that *Mushahida* is an intermediary stage between light and veil. Some say that *Gyani* (knower or scholar) and *Dristi-Margi* (those following the path of vision) are always in the state of witnessing (*Darshan*) and some others say that they do not always have the *Darshan*. It, therefore, appears that *Mushahida* i.e., something seen with eyes and the belief in what is seen, is definitely light but this light in fact is only a veil (of illusion) and not the Truth, as the Truth has no form or colour. Light or illumination, therefore, is subtle *Maya* (subtle illusion). In other words the meaning of '*Mushahida* being an intermediary stage between the light and veil' is that in *Mushahida* or vision, there is some element of Truth and some element of illusion. *Tazalli* (light or illumination) is of two kinds; one '*Jati*' (relating to the Truth or the light of the soul or Self) and the other '*Sifati*' (illusionary or having an element of *Maya*).

Tazalli-Jati (the light of the Truth) is *Alakh* (which cannot be seen), *Aroop* (formless-having no form or shape) and *Agam* (beyond reach-unapproachable) i.e., it is beyond perception, which cannot be seen, understood or comprehended. It has no relativity (*Maya*) nor any attributes but *Tazalli-Sifati* has attributes and is capable of being perceived, though through the inner eyes (intuition). The group that states that there is no *Mushahida* for a *Gyani*, it should be understood in the context that a true *Gyani* is one, who has attained *Tazalli-Jati*, where there is neither form nor appellation and in that state there is no importance of *Tazalli-Sifati*. Such a seeker moves beyond the state of *Tazalli-Sifati*. For him truly there is no *Mushahida*. But I would say that there is *Mushahida* (vision or witnessing) and this vision is that of *Tazalli-Jati* or the Truth and it is forever. The vision of *Tazalli-Sifati* for him is gone. A seeker, who has not yet crossed the state of *Tazalli-Sifati* i.e., who has not moved beyond the domain of *Maya*, for him vision of both *Tazalli-Sifati* and *Tazalli-Jati* exist i.e., the one, which is being witnessed and the other, which he would witness later. Alternatively, one may both affirm and negate *Tazalli-Jati*, because in the real sense it is there but being beyond perception, it can be said to be non-existent.

Permanance of Attainment

“When through practice a perfect link is established with the *Latifa-e-Sirr* and there is harmony, then there is no fear of losing what has been attained, though there may be sighting of light at times and not at other times.”

When the mind and intellect are purified i.e., when *Tazkia-Nafs*¹⁴ (cleansing of the psyche) and *Tasfia-Qulb* (purity of mind) are attained and when the mind is effortlessly engaged in the *Rabt* (spiritual practice or *Jikr*) and rooted in *Latifa-e-Sirr* and when one has no doubt in *Sakshatkar* (witnessing or having the glimpse of the Truth), then whatever has been attained (spiritual accomplishment) is never lost. Though it happens that he sees the light (of Truth) at times and not at other times or at times one sees it frequently and at other times after some gap.

Wazud Mutalak

“In the state of *Mahaviyat* (absorption) and *fana* one attains such a state of *Gaibat* (non-existence of the self) and *Bekhudi* (oblivion of the self), which is indescribable and in that state nothing exists except *Ahadiyat* (devotion) and the *Wazud Mutalak Subhan Tala* (the existence of the *Sagun Brahm* or the Truth with attributes). If someone says that *Wazud Mutalak* cannot be perceived in *Subhan Tala* and that whatever can be perceived is *Hadis* (not original but added later or descended) and that what is perceived is worldly and worldly things are *Hadis*, then if the perception is of the Truth, how can it be *Hadis*, and the One, Who is *Kadim* (Eternal but more appropriately Essence of all essences) cannot be perceived.”

Gaibat-forgetting self-existence, *Bekhudi*-self oblivion, no feeling of one's physical existence, *Mahaviyat*-getting totally absorbed in something and *fana*-dissolution of the self, all these are such states, which cannot be described. In these states nothing exists except the Truth and *Wazud Mutalak*. *Wazud Mutalak* is supported on its own and has no dependence on anything else.

A question can be raised that *Wazud Mutalak* being beyond mind and intellect, one cannot perceive *Wazud Mutalak* because what can be perceived is *Hadis* i.e., descended and does not have permanence. Besides whatever can be perceived through the senses and intellect is worldly and the world is *Hadis*, which would not remain forever. Now since *Wazud Mutalak* is *Sat-Purush* (*Sagun Brahm* or the Truth with attributes), how can It be *Hadis* and the One, Who is Eternal (or Essence of all essences), cannot be perceived through senses and intellect.

“The answer is that the question is right but there is a difference. The difference lies in the fact that in the state of *fana*, the seeker is not conscious of the *Nisbat* (link), which connects the two ends, the seeker and the sought. This is called *fana-e-fana*. This is the state of the absence of perception and not the state of perceiving the absence.”

¹⁴*Tazkia-Nafs-TAZKIA* (cleanliness of spirit) could be attained through true beliefs and righteous actions.

In fact the objection has rightly been raised that *Wazud Mutalak* or the *Sat-Purush* is eternal and, therefore, beyond perception of the mind and intellect but the seekers perceive Him. It is explained by the fact that to connect two things, there has to be a third thing. It is called '*Surat*' or '*Tavajjoh*' (consciousness or the attentive power of the soul). Through the ascension and descent of this *Surat* or *Tavajjoh*, a link is established between the *Jeev* (the embodied soul) and *Brahm* (the Truth). Here, when the seeker attains the state of *fana* or *laya*, in that state the power that establishes this link (*Nisbat*), is that third thing, which moves towards both the ends. It could be explained as below:

- i) The power which connects-It is called *Surat* or *Tavajjoh*;
- ii) The one, who seeks this link-The seeker; and
- iii) The one with whom the link is established-The one, who is sought i.e., the God or the Truth.

In the state of *fana* or *laya*, it is this *Surat* or *Tavajjoh*, which connects the seeker with the God; it establishes the link between them. In that state the seeker, whose *Tavajjoh* is in *fana* or *laya*, enters a state of oblivion and incapacitation. This state of oblivion and incapacitation is called *fana-e-fana*. Here the seeker loses the sense of perception; it is not the state of perceiving nothingness or vacuum.

Shahud-Jaat

“Sufis also say that there is *Jaat ka Shahud* (the Truth can be witnessed), *Jaat ki Tajalli* (Truth is resplendent), *Jaat ki Maiyat* (Truth pulls one away from all other things) and *Jaat ki Marfat* (that Truth can be known). What do they mean by it? Our reply is that enquiry should lead one to give due importance to everything. Everything should be used and given the status it deserves. Nevertheless, what we are enquiring about is, one, the Truth all by itself and the other about all other things. The former is the real thing whereas the later is not. The former cannot be perceived through knowledge whereas all other things can be perceived, as they are perceived through knowledge. Therefore, one who exercises knowledge in the former and the one, who abstains from exercising knowledge in the later, would be dragged away from his objective. The role of knowledge is to establish the truth of what is true and to establish falsehood of what is false. Absence of knowledge about something does not mean that it is devoid of what is not known. Therefore, it is established that the Truth (*Haq-Tala*) is Reality and beyond perception. *Shahud-Jaat* (witnessing the Truth), therefore, refers to the state of oblivion, forgetting everything else, except the Truth.”

What is meant by '*Shahud-Jaat*' is that we can witness the Truth. But then Truth being *Alakh* (Invisible), *Aroop* (Formless) and *Agam* (Unapproachable), how can we see or witness It? The answer to it is that seeing the Truth here has been mentioned in the context of seeing the Truth through the eyes of *Gyana* (Knowledge or through the inner-eyes). It does not refer to seeing in the usual context like seeing any worldly object. Seeing through the inner-eyes means that though nothing is seen in the physical sense but there is such a firm belief of witnessing the Truth, as if one is seeing the Truth. If such a person is cut into pieces, even then he would say that I am seeing the Truth in the same manner as you are seeing me. The utility of *Gyan* and *Vigyan* (science) lies in knowing the true nature of things and to appropriately use them without considering anything to be useless; giving due importance to things as they deserve.

Now what are we enquiring about are two things:

- i) The Truth all by Itself-Which has no attributes;
- ii) The others, which have a mix of *Maya* and attributes in them.

Now, our intention is to establish that the *Malik-e-Kul* (the Lord of all-Almighty or the Truth) is Eternal, Who existed for ever and Who would exist forever and the effort is to establish Him as our real objective and to try and reach Him. This is '*Asbat*' (positive) and as against this drawing away from what is worldly and made of *Maya* is '*Nafi*' (negative). *Gyan* and *Vigyan* (science) may not recognise or have an understanding of the Truth. For other things i.e., worldly things, science understands those things and places them according to their characteristics and utility. It thus establishes that seeker should be committed to reach the *Satpad* (the seat of Truth) and realise the Truth and need not know or understand the *Mayavi* (made of Maya-worldly) things, otherwise he would be drawn away from his objective. It is, therefore, the purpose of science or knowledge to establish the truth of what is true and to establish falsehood of what is false. The result is that through the power of knowledge (through *Japa*), it is established that though beyond perception, the *Satpad* is reality and that there is no doubt in its existence. Garnering such a firm faith is called *Shahud* or witnessing the Truth, which is thus established. The real meaning of *Shahud-Jaat* is to be completely oblivious of all other things and having no *Tavajjoh* (attention) towards them, except the Truth. The meaning of *Tajalli-Jaat* is that even these things seen through the inner eyes also disappear and only the resplendence of the Truth is seen, which has no colour or form and refers to the illumination of *Gyan*. *Maiyat Jaat* refers to the state where one is totally detached from all worldly things, having no attachment or inclination towards them. *Marfat Jaat* means becoming ignorant of all things, all causes and acquire the knowledge of God relating to His attributes, *Karma* (actions or deeds), *Swabhav* (inherent nature or character) and names, since the knowledge of God can be acquired only relating to His names, attributes and His *Leelas* (playful actions) and not about *Asal Jaat* (HIS REAL SELF). And this knowledge too can be acquired only to the extent that something happened but the knowledge why it happened cannot be acquired because the door to know the cause is closed. This door is closed because the Cause of all causes is the God-the Truth, Whose Reality cannot be known: He is the Reality of all realities and it is beyond anyone to know this REALITY. Thus, one cannot know the reality of anything and this is the true and the height of knowledge. Someone has said it beautifully: "I have known that I know nothing". To attain this knowledge about one's ignorance is the real knowledge. Another person has made an interesting statement:"The initial state of an ignorant is the last state of wise". Ordinarily common people are

ignorant and wise also reach this state of ignorance at the end of their journey, after completing the whole journey when they come to know that they know nothing; the ocean of knowledge is so deep that the more one dives, one finds newer depths to be explored. The more one explores, the more one knows how ignorant he is.

Now it should be known to all that what has been mentioned above concerns with various stages and practices through which they can be attained and explanation about these states. But *Himmat* (courage) is something different, which is beyond all these things.

Himmat means the spiritual power-the will power. To gain this power, disciples spend their time in *Satsang*¹⁵ with their Master. This is in accordance with *Dharma* (religious practices). Help of the Master can reach and does reach the disciple, whether the disciple is in front of the Master or located distantly only through this *Himmat*. It is the Master's *Tavajjoh* (attention) and will power that opens the door of grace and blessings for the disciples.

Participation in *Satsang* is the best, simplest and most beneficial way for the seekers to receive the divine grace. Often ignorant people look for some such thing which does not need a Master. Sufis consider that one who is not under the shelter of a Master, he is under the shelter of Satan. It is, therefore, incumbent upon everyone to look for a competent Master but the problem is how to ascertain, who is competent or the right Master for the seeker. They are also not able to find whether the Master is *Sahab-e-Himmat* (has the will power and competent to give *Tavajjoh*) or not. They, therefore, often mistakenly confuse between a competent and incompetent Master.

Hazrat Sheikh Sharfuddin Mureri states that it has been the divine will that there is no time without the presence of some *Buzurg* (great Master), nor there would ever be such a time when there is no competent Master to guide the true seekers. It is, therefore, the duty of true seekers to look for such Masters of the time, who are known and follow this path. They should seek their shelter and spend adequate time at their feet and keep an eye on their inner condition whether there is any improvement or not; whether the flow of useless thoughts has reduced or the thoughts are stuck in the mind, as it is. If one feels some relief from dangers and doubts entering the mind, one should not leave that door, which has blessed him with this treasure. He should firmly stick to that door and should know that if this be the gift in a few days, much more is expected as a result of further association. If, however, one does not feel benefitted after spending adequate time at the feet of any *Buzurg*, one should conclude that the share of his luck is not with that particular *Buzurg*. He may knock at another door, but with no ill-feelings towards the earlier one, as that would be against etiquettes.

When a seeker presents himself at the feet of the Master, the Master should ask him to observe fast continuously for three days. It is better to remain totally without food, but if that be not practicable, allow him to take milk and fruits. If the seeker belongs to Islamic tradition, he should recite "*La-Ilaha-Ilallah*" a thousand times and also keep on reciting '*Istigafar*' (seeking pardon for one's sins; seeking refuge in God) and '*Duruood-Shareef*'¹⁶. On the third night he should present himself

¹⁵ *Satsang*- Spending time in the company of Master or in spiritual assembly or in the company of holy persons

¹⁶ *Duruood-Shareef*- Durood or Darood Shareef (from Persian: درود dorood) or aṣ-ṣalātu 'ala -n-nabī (from Arabic: النبي على الصلاة) is an invocation which Muslims make by saying specific phrases to compliment the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The Islamic view is to say durood whenever a Muslim reads, speaks or hears the

before the Sheikh after taking a bath and the Sheikh should ask him to recite 'Sur-e-Fatiha' (the first chapter of the Holy Qur'an) and purify himself by reciting *Ikhlas-Istighfar* etc. (ritualistic recitations for purifying oneself in accordance with the Islamic tradition) and to sit in front of the Sheikh in the traditional posture (*Do Jaanu*-Sitting with knees folded inside, as one sits while offering *Namaz*). The Sheikh may now initiate the process of *Baiyat*¹⁷ (ritualistic initiation) saying-"You have taken *Baiyat* (oath of allegiance) at the hand of this *Jaif* (old man) and at the hand of my *Buzurgan-e-Silsila* (the Masters preceding me in the Order-my Master and his Master and so on), at the hand of Hazrat Paigamber Saleh-Alah va Alehi-Vassalam and Hazrat Rabbul-Izzat and you have taken the oath that you would tread the right path and give your heart in the love for God". The Sheikh now would put his right hand over the right hand of the disciple and the disciple would then say-"I accept the *Baiyat* (take the oath of allegiance) and undertake to follow the righteous path and adhere to the dictates of scriptures and I give my heart in the love for God". The Sheikh now may offer him a robe to wear as a symbol. Now the Sheikh may guide him to perform the *Jikr* (remembrance), as suited to his individual requirement, without anyone else being a party to it.

The process that my (the author-Mahatma Shri Ram Chandrajji Maharaj) Sheikh (Hazrat Shah Maulana Fazl Ahmad Khan Sahab alias Janab Huzur Maharaj) adopted was that he did not use to straight away initiate Hindus in general and Muslims in particular. Not only that, for a long time he would not even talk about it, nor would he point out any indication towards it. Instead when he observed that the seeker has garnered a desire of *Baiyat* in his heart, he has made some progress on the way and that he is a keen seeker expressing his desire to be initiated, he would give him the *Baiyat*. He would not ask the seeker to observe fast etc. For months together, he used to gladly shower his grace and guide the seekers with no hesitation at all. He did not differentiate between those, who were initiated and those, who were not. If someone did not express his desire to be initiated, he would not do so but would keep on attending him and guide him, with no discrimination. Often, however, it was seen that those, who were given the *Baiyat*, if they indulged in something against the dictates of scriptures, he used to get annoyed and at times used to express his annoyance but with others, who were not given the *Baiyat*, he would not get annoyed. This was the only difference between the two.

Since I have drifted to a different aspect, I return back to the topic. It should be known that *Jikr* (*Japa* or recitation) should be given importance over *Maraqiba* (meditation). In other words seeker should first engage in *Jikr* and then only he should be lead to meditation and contemplation.

name of Muhammad. Durood, which is a kind of prayer and is mentioned in hadith as well as in Qur'an, are recited in the form of Wazifa. **Durood-i-Shafi'i**-O Allah! Shower blessings on Muhammad and his children whenever he is remembered by those who remember him, and shower blessings on Muhammad and family whenever he is not remembered by the negligent, and grant him peace constantly in abundance.

¹⁷ *Baiyat*- The word *baiyat*, occurring 14 times in the Qur'an is derived from *ba'ya* meaning sale and purchase, bargain or transaction. In Arabic the word *yabi'u* means *to sell*, *ba'a* means *he sold*, *al-bai'u* means *sale* and *al-baya* means *sale and purchase*. In Islamic terminology, the term *baya* refers to an agreement or undertaking between the master and his followers. Other synonymous expressions appearing in the Holy Qur'an are *al-ahd* (13:19-20) and *al-mithaq* (33:7, 5:14). Thus, *baya* or *baiyat* means an agreement or spiritual undertaking between the Lord and his followers. When one swears an oath of allegiance (*baiyat*), he gets guarantee from his Lord.

Source- Encyclopaedia of Ismailism by Mumtaz Ali Tajddin

Jikr or *Japa* is more essential, which should first be accomplished. At times some *Buzurg* (Masters) in the first meeting itself ask the seeker to meditate. If the inclination and capacity of the seeker is such then it is fine. But in my opinion it is appropriate and better that the seeker is first coloured with the colour of *Jikr* and *Japa* and filled with enthusiasm and eagerness and then he is given stability and rested through meditation and contemplation. In *Jikr* or *Japa* also, it is important to ascertain what kind of *Jikr* or *Japa* would benefit him the most. For example, if a seeker is more attached with the worldly things, *Nafi-Asbat* (a kind of *Jikr*, discussed later) would be more beneficial for him. For another, who shows the prominence of the elements of love in him, he should be taught *Ism-e-Jalali* i.e., the *Jikr* of Allah, the God. One, who exhibits qualities of soft-heartedness, detachment and freedom from bondage, should be guided to the practice of '*Hoo*'. Similarly, seekers should be guided to other practices according to their inclinations and capacities, since not all practices are equally effective for everyone.

It is not necessary to describe thousand different kinds of *Jikr* or *Japa* or to mention various kinds of meditation and contemplation, since that is not the focus or purpose of this book. Rather, the purpose of this book is to mention the main and the most effective kinds of *Jikr* or *Japa* and meditation and contemplation, which can be considered to be the essence of these practices. It is also useful to mention that describing higher categories of practices would obviate the need of giving details of others.

Nafi Asbat Char Jarbi- For this *japa* one should sit in a comfortable cross-legged posture in a small dark room. Keep the back straight, close eyes keeping both the hands on both the thighs and press right foot against the left inner thigh, which helps in warming up the heart. With the tongue and heart together one should start the *japa*. While doing the *japa*, one should keep in mind the image of his Master, the thought of the Almighty and His Qualities and Attributes. One should then attentively lift the breath with the word '*la*' from under the navel (or from below) and take it up to the crest of the head, recite the word '*ila*' on the right shoulder and then recite '*illallah*' at the heart (on the left side of the chest where physical heart is located), exhaling the breath forcefully. While taking the word '*la*' from under the navel to the head, one should think that nothing exists, neither anything that is seen nor the seeker himself. While reciting '*ila*' on the right shoulder one should think that there is something and that something is the God in the heart. One should get so absorbed in this *Japa* that the *Jikr* continues uninterruptedly. It should be known that *Khatra* (dangerous or ill thought) or *Khayalat* (undesired thoughts), which enter the mind are of four kinds: i) Satanic-this arouses feelings of anger, jealousy, vengeance, arrogance etc.; ii) *Nafsani*-this gives rise to the desire to relish good food, accumulate wealth and live affluently; iii) *Malkani*-this relates to angels, which prompts one to engage in veneration and welfare of others etc.; and iv) *Rahmani*- This leads to the state of pure '*Hoo*', which means cessation of all artificiality or duplicity in conduct and character, exalted feeling of love and to seek the God. I (the author-Mahatma Ram Chandraj Maharaj) have written elaborately about these in some other book and do not desire to repeat it here.

The left knee is the seat of and concerns with Satanic *Khatra*, which can be overcome through this knee. The right knee is the seat of and concerns with *Nafsani Khatra*, which can be overcome through the right knee. *Nafs* and Satan associate with each other in misleading, obstructing and dragging away seekers from the righteous path. The right shoulder is the seat of and concerns with *Malkani Khatra*, where such dangers can be tackled. The angel appointed for writing

down the good deeds and thoughts is stationed on the right shoulder. *Dil ka Aakash* (the top of the heart) is the saet of *Khatra Rahmani*. It is because of these that the *Jikr Char Jarbi*, meaning thereby four-pronged *japa*) has been suggested to tackle these four dangers. Some *Buzurg* (Masters) opine that this *Jikr* should be taught at the last in order to minimise the effort and the time. It may also be mentioned that more appropriately this recital should be mental. It is, however, not necessary that one must recite '*la-ila-illallah*'¹⁸ verbatim. What is important is the essence of this *japa*, which one may recite in any language, Hindi, English, Persian or Bengali etc. depending upon the understanding of the seeker. It has been so stated by Hazrat Shah Kalimulla Sahab, who has been a great Sufi saint.

A variation of *Nafi Asbat Char Jarbi* is '*Jikr Do Jarbi*' (meaning two pronged *Japa*) in which holding his breath the seeker recites '*la-ila*' on the right shoulder and while exhaling breath forcefully he recites '*illallah*' directed towards the heart. After completing this *japa* 3,5,7 or 9 times, one recites '*Muhammad Rasul Allah*' once¹⁹. '*La*' means not (denial), *Ila* means except and *Illallah* means the God. *La-Ila Illallah*' thus means there is nothing except the God. *Eko Brahm Dwitiyo Nasti*. Neither me nor the world, everything is bound to perish, what would remain in the last, is the God. It is further explained in this way that '*La*' means there is nothing but You are my *Mabud* (*Ishta*-the One I seek) before Whom I bow down. Then again *La*-whatever is visible, all is perishable but my target is You, to Whom I seek. Thereafter *La*-meaning thereby that there is nothing but my *Matlub* (the One with Whom I am concerned) is You, to Whom I seek. In the last *La*-meaning thereby that nothing would remain but You alone are present i.e., whatever would remain in the last, it is You.

The God is considered to be *Nirakar* (formless) and *Sakar* (with form). *Nirakar* has no name, form or attributes, whereas *Sakar* is with name, form and attributes i.e., with qualities and attributes. His name, form and appearance are *Raj*, *Sat* and *Tam* or *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Mahesh*. *Para Prakriti* (the higher nature) and *Apara Prakriti* (the nature comprising of physical elements) in association with the *Atma* (Soul) is called *Jivatma* (embodied soul). *Mahatattva* (*Chitta* or thought) is the first appearance or manifestation in which all the attributes are present. Saints belonging to Islamic tradition refer it as Muhammad Rasulallah Sallalallah Alah Va Sallam. It is because of this that in this *Japa* first the *Japa* relating to *Nirakar* is recited and then in the last the *Japa* relating to *Sakar* is recited once. In other words it means that it is first the *Nirakar* and then *Sakar* and from below it is first *Sakar* and then *Nirakar*. Moving from the world, the first step in the ladder is this higher nature, the reality and root of which lies in the *Mahatattva*. But then without a physical body where would the soul reside? And then *Malik* (the owner, the Lord) is the one, who possesses '*Milk*' (*Jaydad* or property) and the property exists when there is an owner thereof. In this *Jikr* or *Japa*, therefore, both the things have been taken together. This two-pronged *Japa* has a much wider scope than the

¹⁸ *La-Ila-illallah*-Mahatma Radha Mohan Lalji (a great Sufi saint and nephew of Mahatma Ram Chandraji Maharaj) in this regard has said that '*la-Ila-illallah*' has been given by a living saint (Prophet Muhammad), a few centuries ago, and, therefore, is very effective. '*Eko Brahm Dwitiyo Nasti*' is equivalent to it but that was given by sages in ancient time and has lost its chain of succession.

One could also recite *Om-Tat-Sat* in place of *la-Ila-illallah*. In reciting *Om-Tat-Sat*, one should lift the breath from naval (or from below) reciting *Om*, holding the breath, take it up to the crest of the head, and recite *Tat* on the right shoulder and then *Sat*, exhaling the breath forcefully directed towards the heart. While reciting *Om* one should think that the God is all pervading. While reciting *Tat* one should think that whatever seen is not real and that in place of everything including the seeker, there is Divine Light. While reciting *Sat* one should feel that the heart is filled with the essence of God.

¹⁹ One could also recite *Om* in place of *la-ila*, *Tat-Sat* in place of *illallah* and *Hari Om* in place of *Muhammad Rasul Allah*.

four-pronged *Japa*. Consequently, the usual obstructions do not trouble the seeker on the way, nor the seeker gets restless. It is so because if the seeker has to ponder about a few things, his mind is likely to get confused and distracted.

'*Jikr Laklaka*' is one in which one recites the name '*Allah*' in a very low tone, with mouth shut or opening only a little bit. While some Sufis recommend holding of the breath, some others do not insist on it. In '*jikr Sahpaya*' is a three pronged *Japa*. It is like a tripod, which would not stand if one of the legs is not there. This *Japa* has three elements, first the name of the Almighty without any Qualities or Attributes, second, the name of the Almighty with the Qualities and Attributes and the third being in-between, which is also called '*Barzakh*'. Seven things are to be kept in mind in this *Japa*, which are *Sifati* i.e., with qualities, which generate interest, attachment and enthusiasm about the *Japa*.

- i) *Barzakh*-Meaning thereby something lying in-between two opposing things. Here it is used in the sense of the image of the Master (the link between the seeker and the sought). (In the Sattaria Order of Sufis, one recites the name of the Almighty by tongue or mentally and focuses attention on the name of the Almighty with Qualities and Attributes keeping at the same time the Master in one's thought.)
- ii) *Ism-Jaat* i.e., to recite Allah, Hoo or Om.
- iii) To consider that the God is Omnipresent, Omniscience and Omnipotent.
- iv) 'Alif' of Allah be given sufficient prominence (the word 'A' in Allah).
- v) Begin the recitation of 'Allah' from below the naval forcefully.
- vi) Complete the recitation in the mind.
- vii) Lay emphasis on 'Allah' in the recitation.

All these things must be properly understood personally from the Sheikh (Master), as it is difficult to grasp them through mere reading. Besides, this *Japa* should be performed by holding the breath.

The recitation 'Allah' should be began (with deep inhalation) from below the naval collecting all the breath in the chest, reciting in heart '*Allah-Samia*' (God is the listener) focussing his attention on the meaning of it; then '*Allah Baseer*' (He sees everyone) and in the last '*Allah Alim*' (He knows everything). All along the seeker should focus his attention on these attributes of God. This process is called '*Uruj*' meaning thereby ascension. After this the seeker should reverse the sequence reciting first *Allah Alim* then *Allah Baseer* and in the last *Allah Samia*. This is called descent. The seeker should now again repeat the recital in the original sequence i.e., *Allah-Samia*' then *Allah Baseer* and then *Allah Alim*. This is called the second ascension or '*Uruj Sani*'. The seeker should practice holding of the breath to such an extent that gradually he may make hundreds of ascensions and descents in the same breath, which may produce such heat in him that all resolutions and negations in the mind are burnt with no more thoughts occurring and the seeker attaining the state of self-oblivion.

The reason for the reversal of the sequence of the recital in ascension and descent should be understood. The sphere within which one may listen is smaller than the sphere relating to vision.

The seeker, therefore, is within the arena of '*Buddhi*' (intelligence) and *Shahadat* (witnessing) and this arena is smaller than all other arenas. Therefore, when the seeker first recites *Allah Samia*, he enters a subtle state. When he focuses on *Allah Baseer*, it is subtler than the earlier state and *Allah Alim* relates to the causal state. Thus the seeker progressively moves to higher states in ascension. In descent the sequence is reversed. The nitty-gritty, however, needs to be understood from the Sheikh, books are of little help.

This ascending and descending has also been mentioned in Gita (Srimadbhagwadgita) with reference to '*Atma-Roop-Darshan*' (realising the Self) and '*Virat-Roop-Darshan*' (witnessing the Cosmic form of the Lord). On the one side, the soul is at the highest platform compared to all other elements and on the other side soul is at the lowest platform compared to other elements²⁰.

One, who has thoroughly mastered the *Brahm-Vidya* (theosophical knowledge) and philosophy alone can understand the real reason behind the above. It is seen that while offering the ritualistic prayers when first recites 'Om' before reciting '*Chaksh Chaksh Om Nabhi Nabhi Om Shrotram Shrotram*'. It is similar to this Japa, where one recites *Allah Alim*, *Allah Baseer* and *Allah Samia*, which is descent (descending) and then *Allah Samia*, *Allah Baseer* and *Allah Alim*, which is ascension.

To begin the *Japa* from below the navel has lots of advantages and disadvantages but beginning the *Japa* not from below the navel is not meritorious and cannot be done. Seekers engaging in *Japa* should keep on doing it regularly and if they pay due attention to their diet, there is little scope of any ill-effects.

In the Sattaria Order of Sufis, one recites the name of the God by tongue or mentally and focuses attention on the name of the God with Qualities and Attributes keeping at the same time the Master in one's thought. Remembering the God with Qualities and Attributes means that He is the Listener, He is the seer and He is the Knower. They begin the *Japa* from below the navel and take it up to the palate of the crown of the head. It has two variations-reciting the *Japa* once in one breath and reciting it a hundred times in one breath. The sequencing of the ascension and descent, as explained above needs to be observed. In the second variation of *Japa*, seeker should keep the image of his Sheikh in his mind, hold the breath and recite the *Japa*, so much so that he attains the state of self-oblivion. This is more suitable and beneficial for those engaging in practices like severe fasting and remaining awake.

'*Jikr Shish Jarbi*' is helpful in understanding the real meaning of the scriptures and knowledge of the souls. Here one recites the name of the Almighty in six directions e.g. North, South, East, West, towards the Sky and towards the Ground. However, without keeping the image of the Sheikh in mind, it is impossible to derive any benefit from the *Japa*.

The method of practicing '*Jikr Hadadi*' is to pull forcefully *La Ila*, focus on the image of Sheikh, begin from the left and stand up on both the knees and then forcefully strike *Illallah* at the

²⁰ Perhaps it could be understood in this way that in the process of creation, it is the soul which manifests in various forms. In other words soul is the first from which emerge various elements. On the other hand, the highest endeavor for creatures is to realize the self i.e., the soul. Therefore, viewed from different perspectives, soul could be considered to be the first or the last in status.

top of the heart and sit down, in the same manner as the blacksmith hitting the piece of hot iron holding hammer in both the hands.

The method of practicing '*Jikr Paas Anfas*' is to recite *La Ila* with forceful exhalation and to recite *Illallah* with forceful inhalation and keep on repeating it with every breath in such a way that it continues like a thread with eyes focussed on the naval. This practice should be continued with such intensity that it becomes a habit and is repeated all the time effortlessly. This results in doubling the life-span.

A variation of *Jikr Paas Anfas* is *Jikr Arra*. In *Jikr Arra*, one recites *Allah* through inhalation and *Hoo* through exhalation, as if this breathing is the tongue of the heart and keeps it doing continuously like a thread. If the sound of '*Allah-Hoo*' is produced through breathing, it is known as the *Arra* of the nose. This *Jikr Arra* causes lot of swelling and burning sensation in nose and heat and dryness in mind. If that be so, one may use '*Badam-Rogan*' (almond-oil). This *Jikr* is perfected and culminated in attaining a state where one is *Jakir* (engaged in *Jikr*) in the awakened state even while attending to the worldly affairs.

Jikr Sina-ba-Sina is meant for such ordinary seekers, who have yet not been exposed and influenced by the effect of any form of *Japa* or meditation etcetera. The Master should ask the seeker to sit in front of him with his knees folded and touching the knees of the Master. The seeker should be asked to rest his chin at the chest, sit erect with chest protruding and eyes closed. The Sheikh should now tune his breathing in such a way that the he exhales his breath on the breath being inhaled by the seeker and when the seeker exhales the Sheikh should inhale his breath. If this is practiced for a little while, it would suddenly produce a peculiar sensation in the seeker in such a way that the most active spiritual centre (*Muqam*) of the Master (the Sheikh) would be reflected through the tongue and breath of the seeker and people would be astonished. The effect could lead even to bleeding through nose or ears of the seeker. This is called *Jikr Sina-ba-Sina*. If the seeker, however, had engaged himself in some sort of *Jikr*, *Japa* or meditation, especially with breath being held, there would be no effect on the seeker and instead the Sheikh would be affected by the state of oblivion of the seeker.

In *Jikr Kashf Rooh* (*Japa* to attract departed souls), one has to recite twenty-one times '*Ya-Rub*' at the place where the *Rooh* (the departed soul) is supposed to be and thereafter say '*Ya Rooh-ul-rooh*' and forcefully exhale at the heart and then raise his head uttering '*Ya-Rooh-Masha-Allah*'. After finishing this *Jikr*, attention should be focussed on the *Rooh* of the person concerned. This would result in the appearance of that *Rooh* sometime while awake or in dream. If this *Japa* is repeated two thousand times, the result is expected much faster.

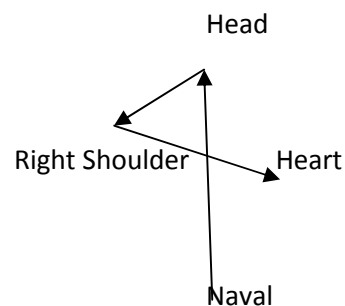
In *Jikr Ha Hoo Hi*, one should recite *Ha Hoo Hi* and strike forcefully (mentally) first towards the right, then towards the left and then on the heart.

Jikr Kashf Kabur is the *Jikr* to attract the *Rooh* in *Kabr* (grave). Through this *Jikr*, one may either have a glimpse of the *Rooh* or may know about its condition after death. This *Jikr* is to be performed sitting near the grave and raising the head towards the sky reciting '*Akishfully Ya Nuro*' and striking (mentally) forcefully at the heart. Thereafter pointing towards the face of the dead in the grave recite *Akishfully* and mentally strike it at the grave. Now utter '*Inihala*', which would result

in knowing the condition of the dead either while awake or in dream. In Muslims, the face of the dead is kept in the west.

'*Jikr Qubul-e-Dua*' is done for the acceptance of *Dua* (prayer). In this *Jikr*, one needs to first recite 'Ya-Rub' on the right armpit and then at the heart. Repeat it with the recitation 'Ya-Rubbi'. It should be repeated a number of times and should be finished by raising both the hands reciting 'Ya-Rubbi' and then stroke both the hands on the face, keeping the essence of prayer in mind.

The "*Jikr Asli Fakir Naqshbandia*" is practiced by the seekers belonging to the Naqshbandi tradition of Sufis. In this *Jikr* the seeker attentively lifts the word 'la' from under the navel and takes it up to the crest of the head, recites the word 'lla' on the right shoulder and then recites 'Illillah' at the heart (on the left side of the chest where physical heart is located, as indicated in the figure below), exhaling the breath forcefully.



Keeping in mind the essence of this *Japa*, the seeker should consider himself to be non-existent and that Truth alone exists. In other words 'La' means nothing exists, neither the world nor the seeker himself. Accordingly, keeping the essence of the word 'la' in mind it is lifted to the head. It is to be firmly kept in mind that nothing exists, neither the seeker nor the world, nothing at all, everything dissolved in the Essence of all essences. When this state is impressed upon the mind, the attention is focussed on the right shoulder and brought back striking it at the heart that it is only the Truth and Truth alone that Exists.

In lifting the word 'la' from under the navel up to the crest of the head, from there going to the right shoulder and then striking at the heart, the seeker should not move his body i.e., it is not to be done physically but should be done mentally. The *Japa* should be continued and while finishing it the seeker should mentally recite 'Muhammad Rasool Allah'. The benefit of this *Japa* is that it produces the state of *Laya* (absorption) or presence, as required. If in spite of repeating this *Japa* twenty-one times, one does not feel any effect or does not enter the state of *Laya*, one should restart it considering that he must have omitted some step or committed some mistake; otherwise this *Japa* would have definitely shown its effect.

Another form of *Japa* is to engage in two or four directional *Nafi Asbat Do Jarbi* or *Char Jarbi*. Another *Jikr* to come out of the state of exhilaration is to recite 'Ya Ahad' on the right, 'Ya Samd' on the left and 'Ya Watar' on the heart. To fulfil worldly desires, one should wash hands and feet, go to a lonely place in night or on the roof, bare footed, point face towards the sky, raise hands upwards and recite 'Ya Wahab' seventy times.

Another very effective *japa* is '*jikr Akadam*', which is done while walking. If one is walking fast, 'Illallah' is recited mentally with every step moved. If walking slowly, one may recite 'La' on

moving the right foot and '*Ilaha*' on moving the left foot. While walking at normal pace, one should recite "*Allah*" on every step.

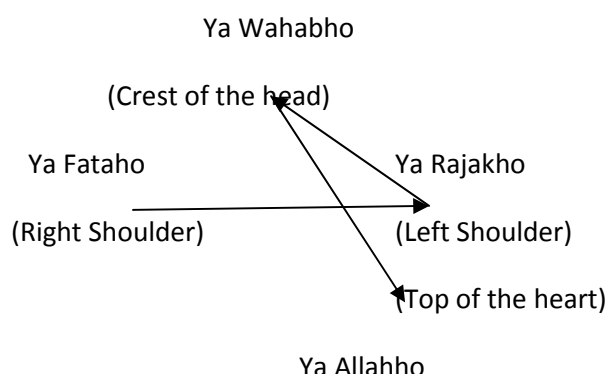
It should be known that the recital of '*La Ila Illallah*' is '*Nasuti*' (earthly) and that of '*Illallah*' is '*Malkooti*' (angelic) and recital of '*Allah*' is '*Jabruti*' (relating to cosmos or divine). The recital of '*Hoo*' is '*Lahuti*' (relating to the state of absorption), which is beyond the *Trigunas* (the three modes of nature i.e., *Satva, Raja and Tama*). My Master used to suggest recital of *Allah* and later of *Hoo*. The earlier two were rarely suggested only to those, who were more inclined towards worldly things.

Now some *Jikr* or *Japa* are mentioned, which are taught secretly i.e., *Sina-Ba-Sina* (from heart-to-heart). These are taught when the seeker has attained purity of heart and has attained perfection in *Jikr*. It is risky for those, who have not yet attained such a state. One of such *Jikr* is '*Jikr Maiyyat*' (as if one is dead). If it appears that the seeker has not yet attained perfection in the *Sakar* and *Nirakar Darshan* or *Sakshatkar* (witnessing the Formless and Truth with attributes) then this *Japa* is suggested. The sitting posture is similar to that adopted while offering *Namaz* (with knees folded backwards) but the feet are protruded beyond the buttocks and buttocks resting on the ground. The seeker should firmly hold left arm with the right hand and right arm with the left hand. Now he should be asked to recite the following *Japa* in five strokes. '*Ya Mui, Ya Mui, Ya Mui, Ya Hoo, Ya Hoo, Ya Hoo*'. The first stroke (forceful exhalation with mental recital) between the right foot and the right knee; the second stroke towards the sky; the third stroke between the left foot and the left knee; the fourth stroke at the liver and the fifth at the top of the heart. It should be borne in mind that '*Hoo*' refers to the One, Who has no parallel i.e., the *Sat-Pad* (the seat of Truth), which is its own support and nothing is comparable to it. During this *Japa*, the seeker should live only on milk mixed with a little rice and wear some perfume etc. Some Masters adopt a variation in as much as the sitting posture remains the same but they suggest the recital of *Ya Hoo* and *Ya Mui* only three times, with the stroking of *Ya Hoo* to be directed towards the sky and *Ya Mui* directed towards the heart. There are several other forms of *Japa*, but the intention here is not to go into details; those, who are interested, may refer to books.

Now I come to that special and blessed *Japa*, which has been very kindly and mercifully given to us by Hazrat Maulana Makhduma Janab Qibla Maulana Fazl Ahmad Khan Sahab Naqshbandi, Mujaddidi, Mazhari, Raipuri. He used to say that this has descended on him (from the divine). It definitely has a special place amongst all *Japa* in which all important aspects have been included and it meets with almost all the requirement of the seekers. I (Mahatma Ram Chandrajii) have found it to be an extremely effective and spiritually powerful *japa*, which I practised throughout my life and received immense help and benefits from its recital. The *japa* is to be performed as mentioned hereunder.

After taking a bath, the seeker should do this *Japa* in a secluded place, if possible, and it should be done every day without neglect. If it is not possible to do this *Japa* in the morning, one must do it at any other time in the afternoon, evening or even before sleeping. One need not necessarily bathe if not well or in severe winters, though one must wash his hands and feet and put on clean cloths. This *Japa* is '*Ya Fataho*' (Brahma-the Creator), '*Ya Razzako*' (Vishnu-the Preserver), '*Ya Wahabo*' (the Almighty), '*Ya Allaho*' (the God). The method to recite it is that after inhaling the breath, the seeker recites mentally '*Ya Fataho*' at the right shoulder, holding the breath the seeker recites '*Ya Razzako*' on the left shoulder, '*Ya Wahabo*' at the crest of the head and then '*Ya Allaho*'

directed towards the heart, exhaling the breath forcefully²¹. In our Naqshbandia, Mujaddidia, Mazharia tradition after repeating the above *Japa* thrice, one couplet of the *Shijra-Sharif*²² is recited, which pulls the seeker towards the higher planes of spirituality.



Now various forms of meditation are described. In Sufi terminology, keeping a watch over the mind is known as meditation. Watching the mind, in fact, means to ensure that no other thought except that of God enters the mind. Sufis consider irrelevant thoughts entirely undesirable. There are three causes of thoughts entering the mind. The first called *Hadis-Nafs*, is the tendency of the mind to indulge in affirmation and negation. This is a voluntary act of the mind. The second is the thoughts occurring on their own without any will or control of mind, known as danger (*Khatra*) in the language of Sufis; and the third is the thoughts occurring as a result of impressions created by organ of senses such as seeing, listening, smelling, touching or tasting or as a result of acquiring knowledge about them. Sufis consider *Jikr* or *japa* extremely helpful in getting rid of thoughts. For getting rid of the thoughts occurring as a result of exercise of will, remembrance of God in the Absolute form (such as *Allah* or *Om*) is very helpful. For the thoughts occurring on their own without any will or control of mind, one should remember any of the Names of the God with His Qualities and Attributes, while focussing attention on his Master, which is called '*Rabta* or *Barzakh*'.

Reciting the name leads to the one to whom the name belongs. Name can be *Jati* (relating to Absolute with no qualities or attributes) or *Sifati* (with qualities and attributes). In the first, the qualities and attributes remain in a dormant state. In the later the qualities and attributes are prominent, as in the case of plants and trees where in the seed the flowers and fruits are in dormant state but in the plant or tree the fruits and flowers are prominently visible. Here effort is made to meditate upon the qualities and attributes and thereby realize the essence thereof. Meditating upon the Pure, Absolute and the Essence means the moment one thinks of "Om" there is immediate recollection of the Absolute (God), as the Creator, Sustainer and Dissolver and similarly, with the thought of the word "Allah", immediate recollection of Allah, as the Creator, Sustainer and Lord of the universe.

²¹ One, who desires to recite this in the Sanskrit language, can recite *Hiim* in place of *Ya Fataho*, *Kriim* in place of *Ya Razzako*, *Mien* in place of *Ya Wahawo*, and *Om* in place of *Ya Allaho*, which are the *Beej Mantras* or the seed formulas.

²² *Shijra Sharif*-A composition of couplets, dedicated to each of the Masters of the tradition in the order of their succession in the chain of Masters of the Order.

The meaning of witnessing the Truth is to be mindful of the Absolute (the God, the Truth with no qualities or attributes) beyond all limitations, Unbound and Indescribable and always keeping a perfect watch on the *Qulb-sanobari* (on the purity of heart). But then not everyone is suited to adopt this practice, nor does everyone possess such capability or brilliance. For them it is useful to consider the meaning of the name as pure light in which they are immersed and dispersed or as if it is an ocean of light and they are a drop in that ocean. One may also consider it to be a sphere of absolute darkness and he himself as a shadow, because the shadow on moving to darkness gets merged in the darkness, leaving no distinction between the two.

Sufis, however, consider meditation as the practice to get absorbed in the Master or the God. Some Sufis, therefore, suggest that one should focus his attention on the image of his Master, and when one starts feeling the vibrations (which happens after some time), one should consider his subtle body to be the image of his Master, rather the Master himself. But to witness the presence of the subtle body is very difficult. An easier method is to focus one's attention at the place where physical heart is situated i.e. on the left side of the chest and do it so intensely that all faculties are absorbed in it. The physical heart and the spiritual heart are so intensely connected to each other, as no other part of the body is. Focusing one's attention in this manner is sure to lead one to the state of self-oblivion and absorption. Considering this state of self-oblivion as the straight path to the Infinite, which is never going to end, one should keep on moving ahead.

If during this practice one gets stuck to some thought, one should try to get rid of it. If, however, one is unable to do so, one should meditate on the subtle body of one's Master. Even if this does not help, one should try to empty out his mind, by exhaling forcefully, failing which one should focus his attention on the Name of the God with His Qualities and Attributes. Generally this proves to be extremely effective but if one is still unable to get rid of the thought then one should get hold of the thought and taking it to be in the form of a dense smoke lift it from the naval up to the crest of the head and then to right shoulder and from there throw it away towards one's back. While doing so the breath that was held so far should be forcefully exhaled and while exhaling one should recite *Allah* or *Om* in the heart. This process should be repeated a few times. If the thought is still stuck, one should become unmindful of its existence and let it be as it is, diverting one's attention to something else such as reading or listening to music and for the time being refrain from meditation. Mostly this results in a favourable outcome.

Whatever one feels through his organ of senses or through his conscience can be real or delusion. Some Sufis belonging to the group of *Wahadat Wajoodiya* (those believing in the unity of existence), consider both to be the part of the same Reality. At times *Sat* (reality or the Truth) also reflects in a form. According to Hajrat Muiuddin Junedi whatever one's soul experiences, one should treat it appropriately. If there is existence of anything positive, there is also a negative existence, such as light and darkness, good and bad. Knowledge and wisdom lies in knowing the true nature of things and in treating them accordingly, depending upon the need of the occasion. The great Sufi Masters have, therefore, refused to enter into the argument of existence of the God as an Absolute Being (*Nirakar*) or with Qualities and Attributes (*Sakar*). It is a different matter that one may not agree to accept the fact because of obstinacy or adherence to a view point. What has been stated above that at times *Sat* (reality or the Truth) also reflects in a form is, therefore, not incorrect and it should be viewed with glory.

If, therefore, one gets a bad thought, one should consider that also to be originating from the same Source. One, however, needs to distinguish between the good and the bad; to treat them alike is a sign of ignorance. If the thoughts were not to occur then how can one distinguish good thoughts from the bad ones? One should, therefore, not entangle himself in the duel of good or bad and waste his time and effort; rather one should try to see the light of the Truth in both the good and the bad thoughts. One need not be frightened of the bad thoughts, rather in accordance with the dictates of the scriptures one should accept the good and the real thoughts and reject the bad and illusionary thoughts. This would help one immensely in achieving the wonderful state of self-oblivion and revelation of the Divine Knowledge.

Still better than seeing the light of the Truth in everything is to think that whatever is seen, one does not see it. This means to forget both good and bad, and to move beyond the stage of discrimination to the state of complete self-oblivion. Sufis belonging to the school of *Wahadat Wajoodiya* do not consider it good to come out of this state of complete self-oblivion. They consider this state to be the beginning of the state of Astonishment and the last stage of spiritual attainments. Sufis belonging to the school of *Wahadat Shahadi* do not consider this state of complete self-oblivion as the last stage of spiritual attainments and take it as the intermediate stage of Pure Ego (*Shuddh Ahamkar*). The *Wahadat Wajoodi* saints belong to the school of *Aham Brahmaasmi*, who consider everything in the world to be *Brahma (Hama ost)* and are known as *Advaitwadi*. The *Wahadat Shahadi* saints belong to the school of *Vishishtadvait* and consider everything to have originated from *Brahma (Hama-aj-ost)*. This is thus only a matter of difference in the point of view. The *Wahadat Wajoodi* saints are in the state of *Sushupti* (deep-sleep or complete self-oblivion), whereas *Wahadat Shahadi* saints are in the *Turiya Awastha* (fourth state where one retains consciousness in the state of self-oblivion).

The wayfarer should keep a watchful eye on his cosmic mind (subtle body) and try to see his subtle body through his heart and experience its existence. He should analyse all his deeds and conditions. Gradually he would be able to see his subtle body present in everything and everything existing in him. He would start seeing reflection of his self in everything and it would appear to him that the universe is the body of which he is the soul. In Sufi terminology this state is described as *Umi-ul-jama*. When one achieves perfection in it, one starts acquiring knowledge of what good or bad is going to happen, since the *Rooh* (embodied soul) must know about its pains and pleasures.

One of the methods adopted by some Sufis for meditation is to concentrate on the script *La-Illa-Ilillah* or *Ism-Jalal-Hoo* written on a paper or in mind and to reach the state of complete self-oblivion or unconsciousness, so much so that one forgets not only about this script he was meditating upon but also he forgets about forgetting. Some Sufis concentrate on any object without letting the eyelids drop, while meditating in the heart on the Absolute God and reach similar state of self-oblivion. Some others practise complete withdrawal of their attention from all faculties, knowledge or beliefs and focus their attention on the Absolute Truth. (Meditating at the tip of the nose, at *Agya Chakra* i.e. at the centre point between the eyebrows etc. (the third eye) is also suggested by some saints.)

Some Masters say that the seeker should focus his attention (*Tavajjoh*) on the God with such intensity that he rises above all mental distractions (*Tafarrukat Mukhtalifa*), senses, physical and subtle body (*Kuvaye Kullia and Kuvaye Jujia*) and empties himself of all knowledge (*Ilm*) and beliefs

(*Etkad*) and there remains nothing except the Truth (the God), as He really is, Perfect and with nothing parallel to Him.

All worldly things and various relations, which have attracted the mind towards them, are called *Tafarrukat Mukhtalifa*. The organs like heart, brain, liver, eyes, nose and ears etc., which are used as centres of action by the soul and the life-force are called *Kuvaye Kullia* and all other organs, which work on their strength are called *Kuvaye Jujia*. The physical and subtle bodies are called the *Jahiri* and *Batini Sharir* respectively. All kind of knowledge is called *Ilm* and all sorts of beliefs are called *Etkad*. All the worldly things, whether tangible or intangible, are not the God. The mind should be emptied of all such things and focussed only on the One, which is the real objective.

Now what should be the objective? It should be such, which is beyond both *Jamal* (magnificence or glory) and *Jalal* (splendour). *Brahman* (the Creator) has two forms or appearances. One the *Vishwaroop Darshan* (or the cosmic form) and the other *Atmaroop Darshan* (in the form of the Self). These are called *Mahato Mahiyan* and *Ano Aniyen* or *Tanjia* and *Tashbia* respectively. *Tanjia* is that form and appearance, which has no name, colour or form; no time, space or matter. On the other hand *Tashbia* is that which can be identified and has name, colour and form. Here *Kaaran* (the causal body), *Suksham* (the subtle body) and *Sthool* (the gross or the physical body) are given their due place.

Here attention has been drawn towards such *Tavajjoh* (focussing attention) where the object has no name, colour or form. It is then said, *Tavajjoh* should be so intense and spiritual that it encompasses in it all kinds of *Sure-Husna* (goodness) and restraints. With purity of conduct and focussed mind, one should keep himself engaged in it without discontinuity or discomfort.

If it is not possible to engage in the above mentioned *Tavajjoh*, then one should focus his attention on the subtle and causal qualities and attributes of the Divine, whether these qualities and attributes are related to the absolute (non-manifested) form of the Divine or to the manifested form of the Divine. These may or may not be perceivable by the mind, intellect or senses. It means that these may be related to the lower (*Apara-* worldly) or the higher (*Para-* cosmic) *Prakriti* (nature). One should firmly take to one of these two with no discontinuity or discomfort.

It is incumbent upon the seeker to watch his progress from the initial state (*Muratib Tajilat*) to the final state (*Muntahe Maratib Tajjaliat*) and keep an eye on it.

“*Wajood Mutalak* and *Wajood Mukaiyad*”- Another is *Wajood Haqiqi* (the real existence or the Truth)- the mind or the *Chit* (intellect), which is same in both *Wajood Mutalak* and *Wajood Mukaiyad* and *Mutalak* and *Mukaiyad* are merely from the point of view of belief or link between them and to distinguish between them is like spoiling the party. The seeker should recall his initial experiences of seeing various kinds of light and keep an eye on the kind of lights seen towards the later stages and make it his duty to be mindful of the same (or should make it his point of view). One should be so engrossed in it that he should not be looking at anything else except *Wajood Mutalak* and *Wajood Mukaiyad*. *Wajood Mutalak* here refers to that which on its own is in action with no other support of anything else whereas *Wajood Mukaiyad* is that which works on the strength of something else.

It is then said that both these (*Wajood Mutalak* and *Wajood Mukaiyad*) exist on the basis of belief or link between them, meaning thereby that when these are distinguished and viewed as distinct, they are distinct otherwise they are one and the same. If the seeker or the wayfarer engages himself regularly in this practice, he would develop great attraction towards it. One way is to close both the eyes and garner a firm belief in his mind that the *Haq-Tala* (the Truth or the God) is omniscience and is with him (the seeker). The other method is to keep both the eyes open and fix the gaze in front or above and let not the eyelids drop. This leads to various kinds of light being seen and produces burning sensation in eyes, which then spreads in the whole of the body arousing a feeling of love for the divine.

The method of meditation at the tip of the nose (*Mukam Nasira*) is to fix the gaze at the tip of the nose with both eyes open, so much so that the mind is totally withdrawn from all other things. One may, however, sit in any posture, as one may like. If the gaze is fixed at the middle of the eye brows (at the location of the third eye), it is known as *Mukam Mahmuda* or the meditation of eye brows (*Bhrukuti Ka Dhyana*).

Yogis have mentioned of eighty-four postures, one of which was adopted by Sheikh Bahauddin Qadri Quddussaroh (the Holy Soul), in which the seeker sits with folded knees and both the feet collected together. The toe of the left foot kept under the testicles and the right foot brought near the left, resting buttocks on the feet, pulling the breath upwards and naval towards the back, closing the mouth and the tongue touching the palate. Now the seeker should contemplate in his mind that it is He alone, Who exists. He should observe fast and keep awake. If he continues like this for three days he would enter into such a state of self-oblivion and unconsciousness that he would acquire the knowledge of the Unknown. Now he would come to senses or would become a *Majjub* (a fakir absorbed in meditation but outwardly looking as if intoxicated and lost somewhere). If one does not attain this state within three days, he should give a gap, eat and sleep for a while before repeating the above exercise and keep on repeating it in the same manner, giving a break after every three days. If he continues without a break, he would become useless and mad. I would, however, like to urge no one to practice this form of meditation, as it was alright for the seekers of earlier days, who had capacity to perform it, but people of today do not possess such capacity.

One of the methods of meditation for adept seekers is that the seeker should sit in the posture adopted for offering *Namaz* (or *Vajraasan*, *Siddhaasan* or *Sukhaasan*) and considering that he is sitting in front of his Master he should focus his attention on the Qualities of the God that He knows everything (*Allah Alim*); He listens to everyone (*Allah Samia*); and that He sees everyone (*Allah Baseer*). On being firmly rooted in this state, the seeker should now mentally look towards his heart and try to feel the Presence of the God in his heart. Having steadied him in this state, the seeker should now, sitting in the same posture, mentally look towards the sky, feeling as if he is dying, and that the soul leaving the body has crossed the Skies and is in the presence of the God. If one achieves perfection at it, he would see a green coloured cord extending from his heart across the Seven Skies. This is considered to be the best form of meditation. The great Masters, however, generally keep it as a secret. It helps immensely after the demise of one's Master, particularly as one

does not have to focus his attention on the physical body of his Master.²³ The first state is called *Maraqaba* (meditation), the second *Mushahida* (vision or witnessing or seeing in front-acquiring such a firm belief that I have known Him, Whom I was looking for) and the third *Muaina* (taking the same form as that of the one meditated upon). Hazrat Shaikh Nasiruddin Chirag Delhavi adopted this form of meditation, which was first introduced by Hajrat Nizamuddin Auliya.

It has come from Hazrat Mir Saiyyed Muhammad Gesu Daraz Aliulrahmat that the seeker should be steadfast in thinking that he does not exist. It is He (God) and He (God) alone that exist. This is surely the shortest path to reach Him. One engaged in meditation and in the remembrance of God, would receive the light of the whole world. Hazrat Multanul Arfin from his childhood to death was engaged in this practice. It is stated in 'Maraqiba Mairazul Arfin' that one should consider everything in the world as a mirror and whatever he perceives of them through senses or intellect as a reflection of the divine qualities and attributes; rather one may consider the whole world as a mirror and see in it the reflection of the qualities and attributes of the Divine. It would surely lead him to a state of *Mushahida* (witnessing the Truth) from the state of *Mukashifa* (knowing the hidden secrets-miracles). After attaining perfection at it, the seeker should now move to the thought that you (the seeker) know that it is you, who has taken everything in his fold, and everything is embedded in you, therefore, you are the reflection of them all. Earlier you (the seeker) were seeing the *Haq-Tala* (the Truth-the God) in others but now you see Him in you. Now you (the seeker) should move still ahead. To the extent possible, consider everything as invisible and remove them from the scene, seeing everything as the light of the Truth. In other words see only the light of the Truth and firm rooting in the Truth. Now whatever would be seen, it would be a grandeur and splendour of the Truth. Move still further and dissolve the existence of the self and, therefore, now whatever would be seen or known, it would be knowing and seeing the Truth. He (the God) alone is the One, who is the Seer and the Seen.

The foundation of the Silsila-e-Aaliya-Naqshbandia is laid on three things:

- i) First is *Tavajjoh* (transmission of spiritual vitality by the Master to the disciple by focussing attention. It is a transmission from heart to heart) and *Maraqaba* (meditation);
- ii) Second is '*Shagal-Rabta*' meaning thereby to focus attention on the image of the Master (or Sheikh) and to consider the presence of the Master in place of himself (the seeker); and
- iii) *Jikr-e-Tahlil, La-Illa-illallah* and *Nafi Asbat Do Jarbi* or *Char Jarbi*.

INSHA-ALLAH

²³ A reference of this method of meditation is also found in the Eleventh Chapter of Srimadbhagwadmahapuram, where Lord Sri Krishna revealed it to Uddhav.

