

Being a Sufi in this World

by Es-Seyyid Es-Shaykh Taner Ansari

Bismillah Al Rahman Al Rahim [In the name of Allah, The One Who Acts with Mercy, The Source of Mercy]. All praise belongs to Allah. Allah owns everything. All power belongs to Allah and not to us. May Allah's peace and blessings be on Prophet Muhammad and his family and on all the other prophets and their families.

First of all, I would like to thank you for just being you, for whatever you are and whatever you are doing. But I especially would like to thank you for choosing Allah and not leaving me alone on this path. This is called planet earth where all ways of every kind are being sold on the market. The other day I was reading in the paper that one hundred billion people have lived on the earth so far, and there are seven billion on earth just this year.

We don't judge anyone

The trick of being a Sufi in this world/universe is this: Although you have to keep your thoughts on Allah and be adamant on this focus, you still must live a balanced life and have a balanced relationship with all the creatures of Allah without judging them. We can say this action is good and this action is not good but we shouldn't judge the people who are doing it. Now, that is hard for me to do; I don't know about you. But, that is what is expected. And you have to keep your relationship with the others in a fashion that shows them understanding, mercy and consideration whether they deserve it or not. Why? Because you have to attain maturity in action on the job, not in words. This has to be proven by your interactions with others. When you look down on others for any reason, you are saying "*I am better than them.*" This means pride and this is a "no-no" on the way to Allah. When you see the actions of others or yourselves, if you don't like them that is *nafs*. If you like them, that is Allah. But everybody has these two things: Allah and *nafs*. You can talk to Allah in each other and then you are in sync. Show respect not to the *nafs*, but to Allah who is playing this *nafs*, acting as whomever.

How can you be focusing on Allah if you cannot see Allah everywhere?

Your first job is to identify and acknowledge this Energy everywhere. What is Allah and what is not Allah? Allah is everywhere. All the buildings and shapes – material or immaterial are of Allah. All the good actions which are in accord with the criteria of right and wrong are of Allah. He is communicating with one of, or a combination of, His Beautiful Names to you. So, no matter what you are doing you are in relationship with Allah, even if you are washing dishes or changing a diaper.

For some, Allah is only a concept, not reality. Allah is The Reality. It is called *Haqq*. We have a blanket that we use in healing. Our *tariqa*'s emblem is on that blanket. Some people who have a different angle on things say, "How can you put Allah's name on the floor, because sometimes you put the blanket on the floor?" Well, I hate to say this, but this is how I became a Sufi. I asked, "Is Allah in the bathroom or not?" If I ask, "Where is Allah?" Everywhere. In the beginning, I didn't accept this; that is why I said Sufism is wrong, but then I thought about it. If Allah is not in the bathroom, as Ali Baba [a Naqshbandi Shaykh] said, "I can do everything in the bathroom - Allah is not there - that is good." For Allah, no material is bad or abhorrent. Just remember: You ate that thing that came out of you the next day, or whenever. It is the same thing.

In this path you have to be courageous. So how can you put that blanket on the floor? By knowing that everything on the floor has Allah in it.

How can we keep doing what we are doing? How can we take it?

Over 24 hours is how long we have to go to travel back from Australia, and your body has to adjust from 600 miles per hour [airplane speed] to 0 speed, time change, air change, environment change – all these your body and your brain have to adjust to.

You can help [yourself adjust to the changes] if you do the following:

- Drink a lot of orange juice (you need vitamin C).
- When you are traveling, you are depleting vitamin B, so you need to carry vitamin B-complex with you.
- If you can, take a saltwater bath.

And wherever we go, we stay at the same place, every year. So, we leave some of our stuff there. We have our own sheets and pillows, so we feel like we are at home. That feeling helps us a lot — we are not traveling; we are at home now and we need this. We don't eat out much except at the Turkish store. We drink pure water, tea, one cup of coffee a day. Keep it simple and then take one day at a time. We don't think of the whole itinerary at once. Do not crowd your head.

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