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## Inspirations and Creative Thoughts

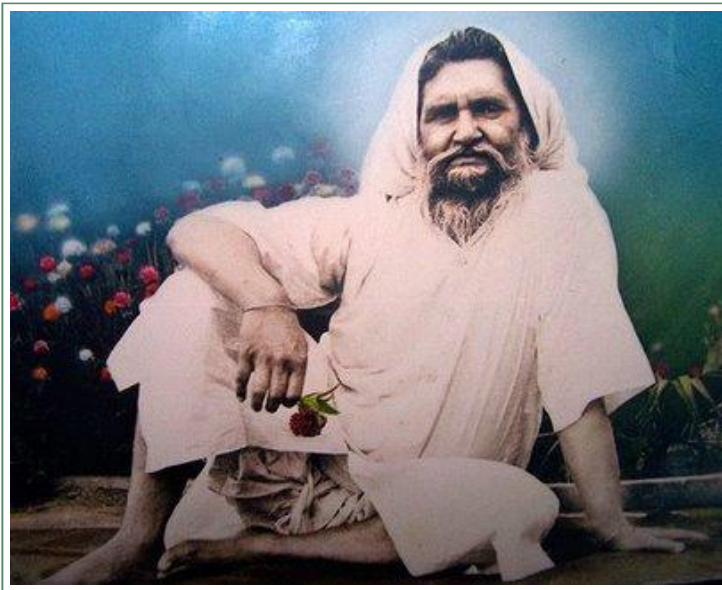
In sacred remembrance of Divine | Reflection on Life and Spirituality | An evolution of Spirituality | Knowing thyself | Yours and my thoughts | Appreciation for all faiths | Mysticism and Integral Comparative Spirituality .. Hal jazaa ul ihsani illal ihsani? Is the reward of goodness other than goodness? (Quran 55:60)

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:: peace be with you. my peace & bliss i give unto you. not as the world giveth, but as Beloved giveth unto the worlds.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 03, 2008

### Spiritual Traveler: Finding a Teacher | Dr. Stewart Bitkoff



*Pure love for one's spiritual teacher is a signpost of 'the journey'.  
- S. Salim*

*You may follow anyone. If you can see from those meetings that some love is awakening in your heart for God Almighty, then you must keep with those meetings. - Shaykh Nazim*

*Are those who know and those who do not know - alike? Mindful only are the people of understanding. - The Quran 39.9*

Each spiritual traveler's journey is both individual and collective. With the sequence of learning experiences varying according to the person,

### About Me



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Knowing me is knowing nothingness. Knowing The Truth is knowing the Real. afterall we are all dispensable .. "And I do not make myself free of blame, for the human soul is inclined to ignorance, except what my Lord has mercy on. Surely my Lord is Forgiving, Merciful." (Quran, 12:53). ... "O my Lord! bestow wisdom on me, and join me with the righteous." (Quran, 26:83). . . "O my Lord, Sustainer of all that lives, Your real face is covered by Your dazzling effulgence. Kindly remove that covering and exhibit Yourself to Your pure devotee". (Isha Upanishad). "When you realize how perfect everything is you will tilt your head back and laugh at the sky". (Buddha). "Satis Est, Domine, Satis Est" / It is Enough, O Lord, It is Enough. (St. Francis Xavier)

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the time, and their higher as opposed to emotional need. This sequence is established by the Teaching, the teacher, and the path. It is a sequence that originates from another dimension, has baraka or grace attached to it, and operates within its own rules.

### . Finding a Path

In our culture, many are searching for a path that will bring them personal happiness. In this respect, this search is similar to other cultures and times. However, because of the present societal emphasis upon the role of the individual and the importance of personal fulfillment, many believe they can pick and choose a path or teacher like they are shopping for a new car. Having specific requirements they are searching for the right deal or fit.

Often spiritual travelers seek a path that is fulfilling in a manner as defined by them. They want learning experiences that will 'make them whole, peaceful, happy and connected to the larger universe.' Of course, travelers are free to want these things and establish their own learning criteria. However, authentic paths do not adhere to this structure. Like other serious forms of learning, the path has its own entrance requirements that the traveler must meet. The path exists to fulfill a function and is secondarily concerned with individual emotional need.

In understanding this structure or requirement, the traveler is usually lacking. Often insisting upon emotional stimuli a true path cannot meet, and unaware there might be other criteria necessary for learning. For example, the path exists to teach the traveler how to quiet emotional stimuli, and bring forward, from within, latent spiritual capacity. This capacity will not operate when the traveler is overly expectant or concerned about feeling happy or peaceful; this expectation or mind set actually blocks the higher element from coming forward. To be accepted, the traveler must have the innate capacity to push aside or detach for a time from specific emotional stimuli. Usually, beginning travelers do not realize, they have defined their spiritual search in emotional and expectation terms.

Because this need may not be conscious or the traveler may be unable to minimize their need for emotional fulfillment, without further work, what is generally provided by authentic paths is education about the matter. 'Before being accepted by us, first you must learn how to learn,' and are not ready for what we have to offer. Familiarize yourself with our materials, then, when you are ready (i.e., learned what you needed to learn), present yourself.'

Typically, the spiritual traveler does not understand the need to make oneself ready for admittance to a mystical school, and wanders about wondering why they cannot seem to find the right teacher or path.



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 BY Pt. Ajat Chakrabharty  
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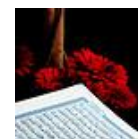
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### Enlightenment from the Final Testament

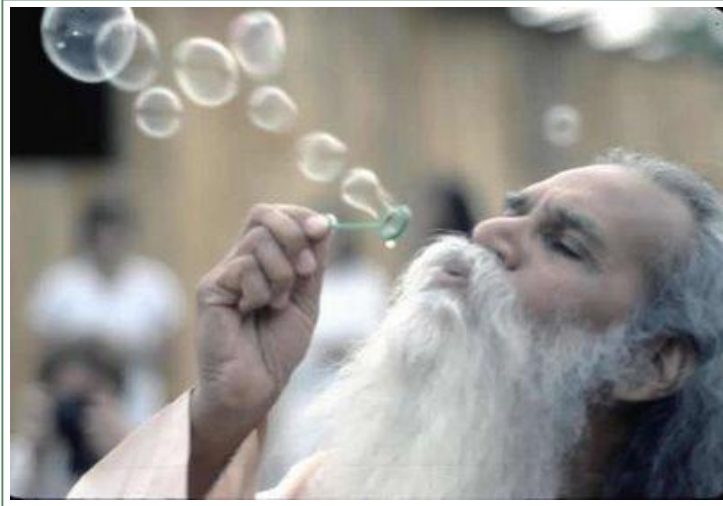
Are you not aware that it is God whose limitless glory all [creatures] that are in the heavens and on earth extol, even the birds as they spread out their wings? Each knows indeed how to pray unto Him and to glorify Him; and God has full knowledge of all that they do

-Quran (24:41)

- [The Final Testament, Quran](#)
- [Get your free copy of Quran](#)



MysticSaint Poetry



### . Need for a Teacher

Instead of fully examining the need for necessary preparation, what happens is an emotional response at being rejected or perplexed as to why the teacher has not yet called them to this form of learning. In all complex learning systems, the entrance criteria are multiple, often refined and subtle. Ultimately being set by the Teacher and dependent upon what is being taught. Consider the skills necessary for the surgeon, before he can actually attempt brain surgery; consider the extensive preparation required before working on a human brain. Here the requirement is similar.

When the traveler is ready, the teacher will call. Perhaps, at this point, the traveler may feel a need to present themselves for admittance. All prospective travelers are observed for the necessary qualities. This evaluation is ongoing and occurs on many levels. Usually, the prospective traveler is unaware it is occurring. Because we are dealing with 'the original classroom without walls,' students can be observed and evaluated at a great distance. Usually, it is not as mysterious as this, and the evaluation occurs while the prospective student is in close proximity; while at work, school, attending worship or perhaps a lecture on spiritual studies.

A question arises concerning what travelers can do or how they should occupy themselves while waiting to begin formal study.

- Examine personal assumptions about readiness for this type of learning.
- Develop 'sincerity' concerning motives and why one is interested in higher consciousness.
- Lead a balanced life. Fulfilling the minimum requirement necessary for the social structure in which you live.
- Consider that much of your responses to this learning are emotionally and



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[4 Sufi Haiku](#)

[Seek only His Face](#)

[why are you here](#)

[Love me](#)

excitement laden, and are the door which is in your way.

- Familiarize yourself with the body of work by a teacher; the entrance criteria will be specified. For example, read the material (20 + books) developed for this purpose by Idries Shah; or contact: The Society for Sufi Studies, Box 43, Los Altos, CA, 94022 for instructions.
- Associate with other travelers who have something to offer concerning the inner journey. Usually, these travelers will present themselves as ordinary, not strange, and having adapted to their present culture. Typically, being the type of person you would feel comfortable introducing to your mother and bringing home for dinner.
- Pray morning and evening to fulfill your higher destiny and the higher destiny of the universe.
- Remember in this endeavor it is a question of love. The lovers who wish to serve are accepted. Love is never an easy path.

Finally, after considering this list of requirements, the traveler may become discouraged and wonder: is it worth the trouble? Surely, there must be an easier way? These requirements are just to get started. In this journey, it is a matter of burning. Those who reach journey's end are those who have to travel. For them, there is no other choice. They must reach the object of their love or perish.

**. Finding a Teacher \***

Q: Is a teacher absolutely necessary in the Sufi Way?

A: Yes. For practical purposes, absolutely necessary.

Q: How should people seek teachers?

A: By fitting themselves for the search, by familiarizing themselves with the materials which a teacher provides for primary studies. Then by approaching a teacher and asking whether one can become a pupil.

Q: But is that not what people always do?

A: Very far from it. They do not bother to think whether they have taken the trouble to absorb what a teacher may have provided, preferring to look for a teacher and to put all the onus upon him to teach them. This attitude debars them from learning, because the assumption is based on the vanity which the preliminary familiarization is designed to help to reduce.

Q: Where exactly is the vanity in just looking for a teacher?

A: It lies in believing that one can and should be taught direct by the teacher without taking the preliminary step of getting to know his



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[Description of the Holy Prophet Muhammad](#)



O My Lord, forgive

work on the primary level.

by Dr. Stewart Bitkoff

# Reference:

\* Finding a Teacher, question and answer segment taken from: Idries Shah, The Commanding Self, The Octagon Press, London, 1994, pgs. 102-103.

For more introductory material on Sufi learning, see Dr. Stewart Bitkoff, A Commuter's Guide to Enlightenment, Llewellyn Worldwide, 2008.

# Further:

- . Seeking the complete human
- . We are in your quest
- . Sidi Hamza's talk: 15 Signs of True Shaykh and Finding an Authentic Shaykh
- . The Teacher
- . Jesus the Murshid and Sufi Master
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- . On Mysticism and Mystic School

Labels: article, sufi, sufism, teaching, wisdom

Post to Del.icio.us | posted by MysticSaint @ 7:14 PM 4 comments links to this post

4 Comments:

At 10:33 PM, Anonymous said...

Teacher need not be a Human always.

We learn from everyone something. From the good people about good things. From the bad people about what bad things to avoid. So in a sense all are our teachers.

He is always doing the needful from Inside and Outside.

Besides what is the use of half baked ( Not realised teacher). He cannot give 100% correct interpretations.

One is blessed and lucky to have a Qutub or Fana-fied master.

Just my view. I could be wrong.....

Allah hu alam

At 5:21 AM, Anushka-AliasGrace said...

I'm forever blowing bubbles,  
Pretty bubbles in the air,  
They fly so high, nearly reach the sky,  
Then like my dreams they fade and die.

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me and forgive any showiness of this blog. Let this work be for You and for You only. Shower your Infinite Grace on us, on this place and make it sacred. My Lord, with Your Light

Fortune's always hiding,  
I've looked everywhere,  
I'm forever blowing bubbles,  
Pretty bubbles in the air.

I'm dreaming dreams, I'm scheming schemes,  
I'm building castles high.  
They're born anew, their days are few,  
Just like a sweet butterfly.  
And as the daylight is dawning,  
They come again in the morning!

CHORUS

When shadows creep, when I'm asleep,  
To lands of hope I stray!  
Then at daybreak, when I awake,  
My bluebird flutters away.  
"Happiness, you seem so near me,  
Happiness, come forth and cheer me!"

CHORUS

\*

In 1919, when the song was written, James Kendis, James Brockman, and Nat Vincent all had separate contracts with publishers that led them to conflate their names into Jaan Kenbrovin for credit on I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles

Indeed, teachers can be found every where and in every thing and we absorb their primary teachings all the time yet most are completely unaware of what they are hearing. They hear a pretty song with catchy lyrics, an 'old-fashioned song' from a bygone era.

I tend to think the Teachers despair of students who think they will turn up 'looking' like a Teacher...authoritative, under a bodhi tree or sitting within a temple. Such expectations are also from a bygone era....

At 9:43 AM,  Anonymous said...

There is no difference between window shopping and finding a teacher, they both bring relief.

At 7:21 AM,  Anonymous said...

If window shopping can be another word for seeking, then those who long for a true, and real guide/teacher must look. that's just the way we are built. the difficult part is being open to who comes and when. i should know.

thank you my dear friend for this post.



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show us the Truth. Surely You are the Guide, and You show the path to whom You will. Purify our heart, remove the veils of ignorance and let the realization of the Truth make us free. There is none i can turn to forgive but You. O Beloved, we can not know You completely, since You can only know Your TrueSelf. But

zed.

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grant us the vision necessary to Love You. All Glory be to You.



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