



Lessons from Jami al-Sa'adat Part II

Session Two

Human perfection has many levels. The greater the amount of self-discipline and effort on the part of the individual, the higher the level of perfection that he would attain.



The Faculty of Anger



Inner movement (spirit, drive) to rectify things.



The Example

Imagine a traveller on horseback accompanied by a dog and a man who is a spy for the bandits.

The mounted traveller represents reason.

The mount represents desire and passion.

The dog represents the power of anger and fierceness.

And the spy represents the imaginative power.





Benefits of the Faculty of Anger

- 1) Defends the self and others. This is required for the smooth running of society.
- 2) Speaks up for the truth and resists oppression of rights.
- 3) Triggers movement towards perfection.
- 4) Initiates struggle – against the self, against evil and all obstacles that stand in the way of perfection.





Diseases of the Faculty of Anger



1) Deficiency

Deficiency in the power of anger would make the human soul reluctant to take any action.



It would be afraid, have low self worth, seek comfort, accept oppression, be indifferent to wrong in society....





Diseases of the Faculty of Anger (Deficiency)



Timidity



By products:

- 1) Fear
- 2) Inferiority complex
- 3) Apathy
- 4) Distrust and cynicism



Timidity



Lack of movement under circumstances which call for immediate strong action. It the opposite of angry and violent temper, results in a feeling of inferiority, irresolution, melancholy, and lack of self-confidence



اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْبُخْلِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْجُبْنِ

O God, I seek refuge in You from miserliness and cowardice.

Holy Prophet (s)





Treatment



The way to treat this disease is to stimulate anger and spirit in oneself and take a strong course of action when it is not too dangerous to do so, until the soul arrives at the state of courage, which is the moderate condition of the Power of Anger.



He must then be on his guard not to move out of the state of moderation towards the condition of excess.





1) Fear

Fear is an uneasy expectation that something unpleasant might happen. For example, one may be afraid of boarding a ship or sleeping all alone in a house. It is clear that there is a difference between timidity and fear.



Fear is of two kinds. Firstly, there is the fear of God and fear of sins and Divine punishment. Secondly, there is the fear of things other than God. The first kind of fear is praiseworthy and leads man to perfection; whereas the second kind of fear is an undesirable vice brought about by the disease of timidity.





Treatment



The root cause of these fears is spiritual weakness, which can be removed by self-examination.



Fear of God annihilates all other fears,
The greater and the deeper one's understanding and knowledge of God is, the greater his fear of His power shall be. The Holy Qur'an says: *Only those of His servants fear God who have knowledge* (35:28)



The Prophet (s) is reported to have said:
Whoever fears God, He will make all things fear him; whoever is not afraid of God, He will cause him to be afraid of everything.





2) Inferiority Complex



This is a feeling of low self-worth, especially in comparison with others. The person feels that others are better than him in all things.



This vice, caused by cowardice, is a condition that results when an individual lacks courage to intervene positively in important matters and fails to carry out his social responsibilities.





Treatment



Treatment of this disease is the same as that which was described in the case of cowardice. The individual affected by this moral vice should know that a true believer in God is never subjected to disgrace, and that God has bestowed honour and dignity on the believer. The Holy Qur'an says: *Honor belongs to Allah and to His messenger and the believers (63:8)*



A Hadith of the Prophet (s) says; God has assigned to the believer the duty to [suffer] everything except humiliation of his own self.





3) Apathy

This means being content with lower and basic attainments.

It shows in a lack of enough attention to take care of matters which need attention and care.

There is little interest, enthusiasm or concern for matters. Apathetic people allow things to slip by, feeling they cannot do anything about it. They are not bold enough to initiate change.





Treatment



The person must remember that effort is required to attain success, both of this world and the hereafter. Without effort there can be no achievement.




Treatment must include recognizing the attitude and changing it by forcing oneself to action. Think about the disadvantages of being passive and do things that stimulate action.








4) Distrust and Cynicism



This is a condition which arises when an individual harbours distrust and cynicism in regard to God, His creatures, and their works, interpreting everything in a negative manner. It is also a consequence of cowardice and product of an inferiority complex.



A weak characterized person acts according to impressions that his imagination may produce. Often these impressions are negative assumptions.





Treatment



The way to counteract this vice is to overlook whatever one may see or hear about his brother in faith, and to preserve a favourable opinion of him in one's heart, maintaining a respectful and loving attitude towards him.



Imam Ali (a) says:

Think favourably of what your brother does, unless you find something that proves the contrary; don't distrust what he says as long as it is possible for you to consider it right and good.

