

**ART OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION
OVERHEAD NOTES FROM CD RECORDING: ISLAMIC-SUFI TRADITIONS
RICHARD GROVES**

ISLAM

[Root: SLM= Salaam = Peace/Submission]

MOHAMMED

Born in Mecca in 570 AD- died in Medina in 632 AD

al-Lah ["The" God]

PRINCIPLE MUSLIM SECTS

SUNNI VS. SHI'ITE

Population:	90% Majority	10% of Muslims
Leadership Lineage:	Pragmatic Choice	Strict lineage back to Mohammed
Politics:	Theocracy	Reformist [radical Islamist]
Leadership:	Lay	Clerical
Spirituality:	Fundamentalist	Inclusive: Music, Art, Saints, etc.

SHARIA

[Five Pillars of Faith]
SHAHADA [Creed]
SALAH [Daily Prayer]
ZAKAT [Alms]
HAJJ [Pilgrimage]
RAMADAN SAWM [Fast]

SHAHADA [Muslim Creed]

Allahu akbar [Praise God who is Great!]
La ilaha illa-Llah... [There is only one God]
...wa anna Muhammad rasulu Llah
[...and Muhammed is God's prophet]

QUR'AN [The Recital]

114 *suras* [chapters] each composed of various *aya[at=plural]* [verses]
“Each verse of the Qur’an has an inner and an outer meaning.” Mohammed

SURAT AL-FATIHA [The Opening]

Bism illah al rahman al-rahim

“In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful... Praise be God, Creator of all worlds and the Giver of Mercy.” Qur’an 1:1

99 EXCELLENT NAMES OF ALLAH [Asma-ul Husnaa]

“Allah’s names are excellent, invoke God by these names...” Qur’an 7:180

“Commit the ninety-name names to memory...and you will enter Paradise. Allah is One and ninety-nine is the odd number that Allah loves.” Ibn Umar

MISHABA [99 Names of God]

Practice of DIKHR [remembrance] -repeating over and over

Prayer beads = Mishaba

Done with rhythmic breathing

Attempt to turn the 5 senses inward

Leads to FANA [state of self-forgetting] Shalam

ALLAH...

AL-MALAK [OF THE ANGELS]

AL-NASUT [OF THE HUMAN CONDITION]

AL-JABARUT [OF POWER]

AL-LAHUT [OF DIVINE GRACE]

AL-BARAKA [OF BLESSINGS]

AL-FAHIM [OF UNDERSTANDING]

AL-TASSARUF [OF THE TRIBE]

AL-NAQUOT [OF ALL KNOWING]

AL-HAFIZ [OF THE SUN AND THE STARS]

EL HAQQ [OF TRUTH]

AL-HUJWIRI [OF REVELATION]

AL-TAHANAFF [OF WHAT IT RIGHT]

AL-NURUDDIN [OF BEAUTY]

EL RUH [OF THE SPIRIT]

AL-IKHFA [OF ALL CONSCIOUSNESS]

AL-KHAFI [OF INTUITION]

AL-RABI [OF SPRINGTIME]

AL-SHITA [OF WINTERTIME]

AL-NAQSH [OF CREATION]

AL-NASHAR [OF RESURRECTION]

AL-HAYYAT [OF THE WISDOM OF LIFE]
AL-QALB [OF THE HEART]
AL-ZIKR [OF REMEMBERING]
AL-TARIQUA [OF THE WAY]
AL-MULHAMA [OF INSPIRATION]
AL-MUTMAINNA [OF SERENITY]
EL NAIB [OF TRUST]
AL-NIYAH [OF RIGHT INTENTION]
AL-AYHMAD [OF PRAISE]
AL-BID'AH [OF RENEWAL]
AL-AYAT [OF WONDERS]
AL-DHIKR [OF CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE]
AL-GHAYBAH [OF HIDDENNESS]
AL-HANIF [OF THE SEEKER]
AL-ILAHIS [OF SONG]
AL-SALAM [OF PEACE]
AL-UMMA [OF THE COMMUNITY]
AL-TAWHID [OF UNITY]
AL-WALI [OF THE SAINTS]
AL-TAKBIR [OF PRAISE]
AL-ZABUR [OF THE PSALMS]
AL-SIYASA [OF FLEXIBILITY]
AL-MUSTAMIN [OF PROTECTION]
AL-MASALLAH [OF MARVEL]
AL-ISHTITHNA [OF HOLY PROVIDENCE]
AL-HAYY [THE EVERLIVING]
AL-AYAH [OF MIRACLES]
AL-SUF [OF THE DANCE]
AL-NAFS [OF THE SOUL]
AL-IMAN [OF FAITH]
AL-DA'WA [OF THE CALL]
AL-KUN [OF ACCEPTANCE]
AL-MITHAQ [OF THE COVENANT]
AL-HIKMA [OF WISDOM]

ON SALVATION

“Righteousness does not consist in whether you face east or west. The righteous are those who believe in Allah... giving their wealth to relatives, orphans, beggars and the redemption of captives.” Qur'an 73:9

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

“You will attain nothing until you observe the Torah and the Gospel and all that has been revealed from the Lord... Believers, Jews, Sabaeans and Christians- whoever believes in God, and does what is right shall have nothing to fear or regret on the last day.” Qur'an 5:65-69

COMMENTARY BY ABU SAID ALKUDRI

“Tread the same path as was trodden by those before you, inch by inch and step by step so that if they had entered the hole of the lizard, you would follow them in also. And we asked Allah’s messenger, ‘Do you mean Jews and Christians, by those before you? He said, ‘Who else?’”

SEVENTH HEAVEN [Steps of the Ladder]

MOHAMMED is the HAJJ to Heaven through...

ADAM
ABRAHAM
JOSEPH
MOSES
ENOCH
JOHN THE BAPTIST
and JESUS *‘Isa*

[the Prophet second only to Mohammed]

ECUMENICAL ISLAM

‘The seal of universal holiness above which there is no other holy is our Lord Jesus. We will meet other saints and contemplatives in his heart. I have myself been united to him several times in my ecstasies and by his ministry I have returned to God at my conversion. He has given me the name of first and has prescribed austerity and nakedness of spirit.’

Spanish Sufi Muihi-al-Din Ibn’Arabi [1165-1240]

MUSLIM-JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

Let there be no compulsion in religion.
Qur’an 2:257

If God had pleased, He would have made only one people and one religion. But He hath chosen to do otherwise.”
Qur’an 5:48

We have made a covenant with the Israelites and you shall not be guided until you observe the Torah and the Gospel.”
Qur’an 5:70,68

O People of the Book! Let us come together upon a formula which is common between us- that we shall not serve anyone but God.”
Qur’an 3:64

Let all believers [Jews, Christians and Muslims] engage in the work of holy emulation... vying with each other only in performing good works.”
Qur’an 5:48

ORDER OF PRAYER
[*Arkan*=Bodily Elements]

WUBU= ABLUTION/CLEANSE: Preparing to pray

QUIAM= STAND: Commitment to respond [*Allah u Akbar*]

RUKU= KNEEL: To receive

QUIAM= RESUME STANDING POSITION

SAJUD= PROSTRATE: Submission to God’s Will

SITTING=REST then repeat prostration [tranquility in all actions]

AT-TASHAHUUD= SITTING WITH OPEN HANDS: Forgiveness

TASLIM= KISS OF PEACE:
‘Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatu Allah.’
To the right side then the left:
‘May God’s peace and mercy be upon you.’

**SUMMARY ORDER OF PRAYER
NIYAH**

=

CLEANSE: Preparing to pray

QUIAM

=

STAND: Commitment to respond

RUKU

=

KNEEL: To receive

SAJUD

=

PROSTRATE: Submission to God’s Will

AT-TASHAHUUD

=

OPEN HANDS: Forgiveness

TASLIM

=

KISS: Greeting of Peace *'as salam*

DIE BEFORE YOU DIE

You must die before you die.
This Truth alone brings peace.
So surrender to your death now.
The seed breaks open and dissolves into the ground
Only then does it become a new fig tree.
There is no paradise without death.
But before every death
There comes three deaths:
The white death of passions
The green death of liberty
Then the red death of your entire will.
Can you sacrifice
 that which you love for some greater Love?

SUFISM

Mystical Lineage of Islam [*shaykh/Persian pir*] traceable to the Prophet]

Not a sect but a movement to reform [like monasticism]
 Rejection of wealth and opulence
 Happened after Islamic conquest
 Movement to radical poverty of spirit [like Beatitudes in Matthew's Gospel]
 Suf- wore primitive wool not silk
 Bowl- begging moment by moment
 Living in providence
 Call back to desert roots
Surrendering of Will - to discern Divine Will
Practice of Ma'rifat
 Not result of direct mental process or logic or ritual
 Infused [mystical] knowledge the INEFFABLE
Rumi asks theologians:
 Do you know a name of a thing without a thing answering to it?
 Have you ever plucked a rose from R.O.S.E?
 You name His name; go and seek the reality behind the name
 Look for the moon in the sky not in the water
 If you desire to rise above mere names and letters
 Make yourself free from self at one stroke

Become pure from all attributes of self.
That you may see your own bright essence
Without book or letter.

12TH Century Lay Communities [*Tariqas*]
Schools of Spiritual Discernment

JELALUDDIN RUMI

'Poet of the Heart'

Born in Persia? in 1207 AD

"First lose yourself in your Sufi guide... then in Jesus... then in Mohammed...
then in Allah." Shams of Tabriz

"I am so small I can hardly be seen
How can this great love be inside of me?
Look at your eyes. They are small,
But they see enormous things." Rumi

"The seal of universal holiness above which there is no other holy is our Lord
Jesus. We will meet other saints and contemplatives in his heart. I have myself
been united to him several times in my ecstasies and by his ministry I have
returned to God at my conversion."

Spanish Sufi Mwyhi-al-Din Ibn'Arabi [1165-1240]

"Oh God, if I worship you for fear of hell, burn me in hell. If I worship you in hope
of paradise, exclude me from paradise. But if I worship you for your own sake,
grudge me not your everlasting beauty."

Rabi 'a al-'Adawiyya, Sufi Woman teacher [d. 801]

SUFI PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Need for a Faithful Guide and Community

- *The path to God cannot be walked alone but only within Tariqua [Religious Community]*
- *Seek the living wellsprings of Baraka [Charisma]*

Trust your experience

- *"Only your experience can lead you to the Ineffable." Muhammed*
- *Prayer of Dikhr [Remembrance Practice]*

Teach the Way of Surrender

- *Forgiveness through Remembering and Self-forgetting [Fana]*
- *“Take my memory, understanding and entire will”*

The Practice of *Ma’rifat* [Contemplation]

- *Real knowing is the result of being one with God*
- *“Look for the moon in the sky not in the water.”*

Faithfulness to Your Path

- *Job of Spiritual Guide: Holding us to a discipline*
- *“...Until the soul is in pure union with no thing intervening.” Mulla Nasruddin*

*“Because of superficial thought
What appears to be hypocrisy in the enlightened ones
Is in fact better than
What is felt to be sincerity in the beginner.”*

Hadrat Bayazid el-Bistami
Dervish Order of Taraqa ibn Isa
HAKIM = SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

=
PHYSICIAN
MYSTIC
INTUITIVE
MENTOR
POET

JOB OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

- 1) Respect individuality
Not authority
A person who is just a step ahead of us
Trust your experience
- 2) Contemplative knowing
Hold to discipline
- 3) Stay out of the way

LOOK INTO THE WELL

Seek the well of your own desire
Inside the Great Mystery that already is.
We really don't own anything there
Save the reflection of our face.
Listen first into the well
And you will hear the echoes of Paradise
Then Smell the smell of the well
The wetness is from your mother's womb
Look into its watery silence
Can you see the diamonds beneath the water?
They are the objects of desire
Don't settle for your own reflection.
Finally, drink the wine water of intoxication
Drink and drink away water's illusion
Drink away your reflection.
You will become the cup and the water and the thirster.

ADVICE FOR SPIRITUAL GUIDE

“Because of superficial thought
What appears to be hypocrisy in the enlightened ones
Is in fact better than
What is felt to be sincerity in the beginner.”
Hadrat Bayazid el-Bistami, Dervish Order of Taraqa ibn 'Isa

CLOSING REFLECTION

He who walks in the way of God is distinguished by five things:
He is free from anxiety about his daily needs.
Everything he does is done for the glory of God.
He struggles constantly with his weaknesses and negative feelings.
He strives to remember himself always and in everything.
He remember that he is mortal and may die at any moment.

Found in A Pupil's Journal, Stanley Nott
[attributed to George Gurdjieff through P.D. Ouspensky, 1919 Tbilisi, Georgia]
Paraphrase of 'Awakenings' cf. Reflections at the Sarmoun Sufi Brotherhood

***Though we seem to be sleeping, there is an inner wakefulness
That directs the Dream and that will eventually startles us back
To the Truth of who we are.***

Rumi