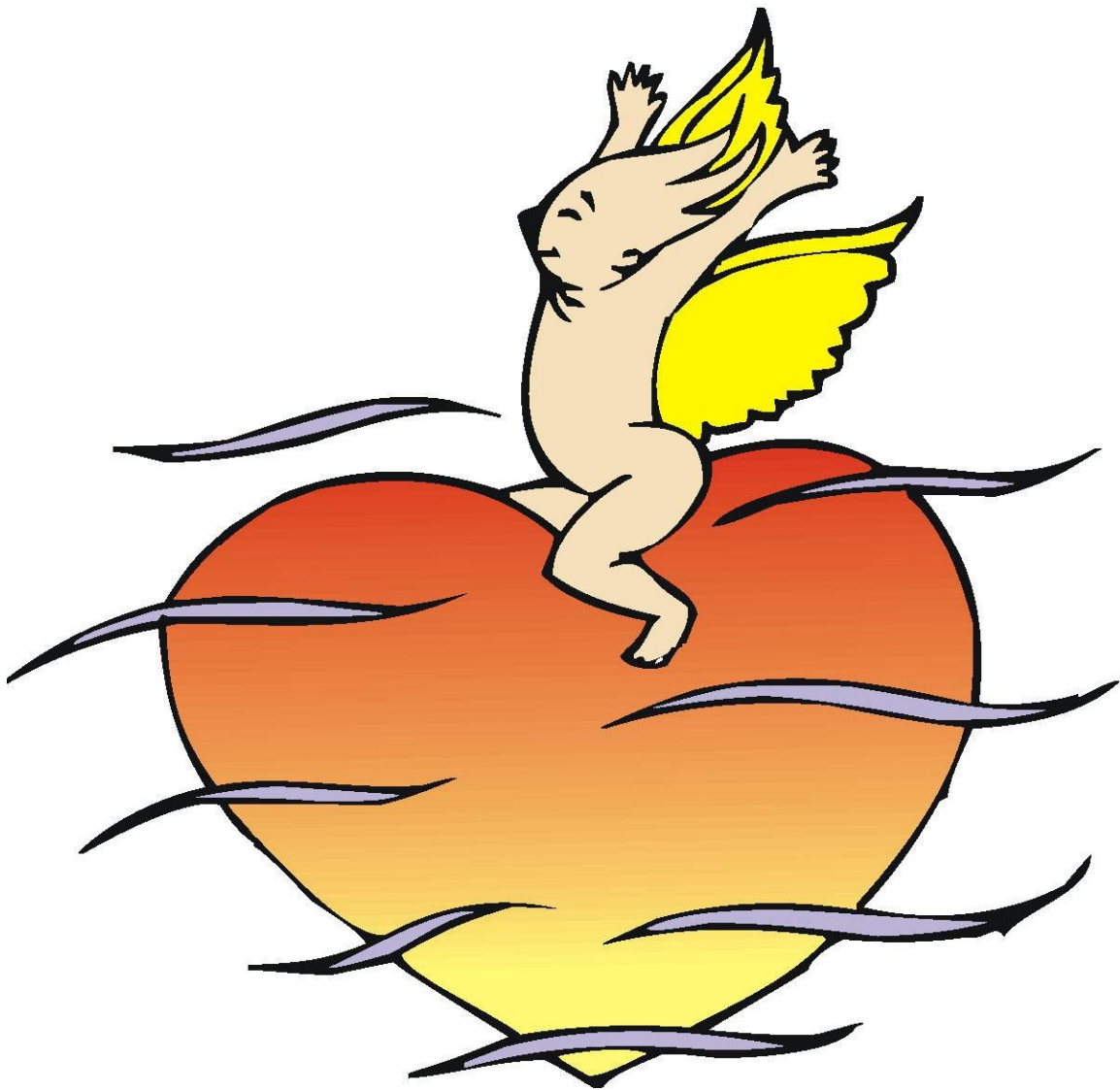
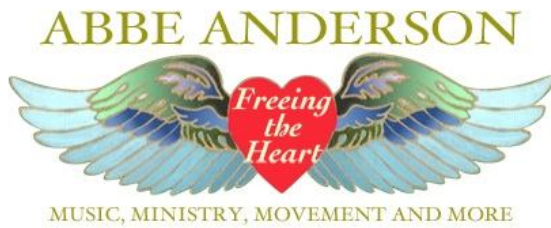


Stalking Ecstasy

Meditative Practices to Free the Spirit

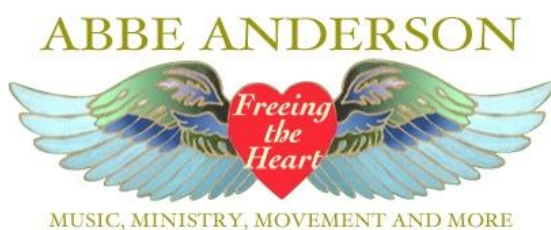
by Abbe Anderson





Index

Introduction.....	3
Exercise, to quiet the mind, sacred space, attune to great beings..	4
Open heart, invocation.....	5
Ten Sufi thoughts.....	6
The God ideal, sacred sound.....	8
Prayer.....	9
Prayer as contemplation.....	10
Nature as teacher.....	12
Breath, purification.....	13
Healing.....	17
Middle of the Night.....	19
Contemplation.....	20
Body as gateway to Spirit.....	21
Magnetism.....	22
The Four Immeasurables.....	23
Light, Who am I?.....	24
Meditation.....	25
Retreat.....	26



Introduction

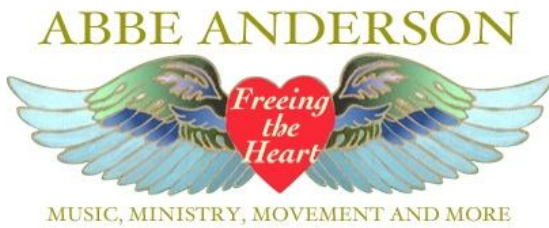
Have you ever felt communion with all of life, a state of such perfection that the mind has nothing to do but bask in bliss? There are many spiritual teachings to help you create this experience. You can invite grace and ecstasy into your life, taking steps to facilitate their arrival, but you have no control over the when and where they will actually appear. Be patient. The practices are largely pleasant, so even if you don't feel you have found nirvana, the journey is worth taking.

The roots of the word ecstasy have to do with standing away from the self. They involve detaching from the ego. It is important to balance the mundane concerns of the day with quiet reflection. Spiritual practice reinforces the part of you that is one with everything, and knows only love and light. This is your true self. This e-book contains practices that I have found particularly nourishing. Try them and see which ones feed you.

My spiritual home is in the Inayati Sufi tradition, because it makes space for all the other traditions. It doesn't matter what name you give to the great mystery, whether God, Goddess, Great Spirit, the universe, or the field. Increasingly, the division between science and religion are being narrowed. What is most important is that you feel awe and reverence.

It takes discipline to establish a regular spiritual practice. For this reason, many people choose to work with a teacher, attend classes and retreats for a deeper immersion without distraction. But there are advantages to practicing on your own at home, as this is where you will be most of the time, and where you will be called to live out the fruits of the work you have done. If you have the time and resources, it is worthwhile to work with a spiritual guide, but if not, the information below will hopefully help you on your path.

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Exercise, to Quiet the Mind

Many people stop meditating because they have no success stopping or controlling their thoughts. It is a process that takes years to cultivate. Yoga can facilitate your progress. Yoga postures are often done purely as exercise, but the intention of yoga is to prepare a person for meditation. Find a yoga practice that works for your body. If you find another form of exercise relaxing, do that. Exercise is a shortcut to the meditative state.

Sacred Space

Dedicate a portion of your house, even if it's only a corner of a room, for your spiritual practice. Create an altar, and place on it things that inspire you. Suggestions are incense, candles, a crystal, a representation of a great being, and flowers. When you come here, the mood will already be set for you. It is said that when you practice in a consistent time and place, the benevolent beings from other realms await your presence, and join you there.



Attune to great beings

If you were told to become the perfection of love, harmony and beauty, it might feel an overwhelming task. Yet the great masters, saints and prophets knew how to radiate such a presence. Let them inspire you to cultivate divine qualities within yourself. On one level, you might consider it play-acting to pretend you were one of these

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highly evolved souls. On another level, if we are all connected, then these paragons of virtue are part of us, and accessible.



There are various ways of attuning to the great beings. One is to sit with a photo or representation of one of them and gaze at it, as if that person is seated before you. Imagine what it is like to be with them. Breathe in their atmosphere.

The next stage is to internalize that being's presence. Ask questions and wait for guidance. Merge with their essence. Become one with them.

When you are called upon to exhibit a quality you don't feel you have, don't despair. Ask yourself what great being manifested this quality. Invoke that being, and feel their presence moving through you. As this character, you can effortlessly draw forth the quality you didn't feel you possessed. Spending time attuned to the great ones, we cultivate the qualities we wish to manifest.

Open heart

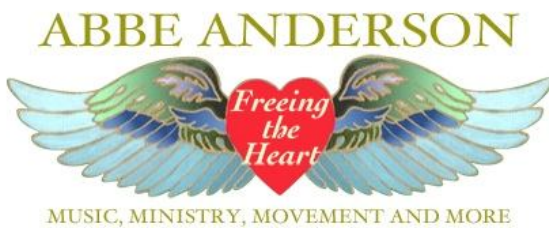
Spiritual practice only works when we are sincere. Vain repetition does nothing but take up time. Come to your practice with the desire to open to your higher self. Recommit to that desire when you find the mind wandering. You have no control over whether or not the heart opens. But you can set the stage by being fully present.

Invocation

It is helpful to begin your spiritual practice with an invocation. This sets aside the time and space for your higher Self. There are many forms of invocation. The Sufi invocation calls the Spirit of Guidance to flow through us. Guidance comes as intuition rather than rational

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thought. It is most likely to appear when we quiet the mind. Spiritual practice creates the spaciousness for guidance to appear. The Spirit of Guidance is how the Divine Being expresses itself in you.

If you do not have the faith to invoke the Spirit of Guidance with any sincerity, attune to a great being whose faith was unquestioned. In communing with that being, your own faith will increase. After your invocation, sit for a few breaths and feel the presence of your higher self.

This is the invocation of Hazrat Inayat Khan.

Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty, the Only Being, united with all the illuminated souls who form the embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.

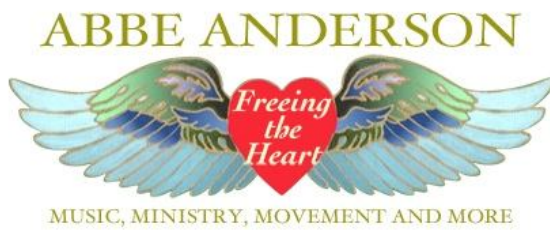
This is the invocation of Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan.

We invoke the one whose body is the cosmos of the galaxies and our own bodies, whose mind courses through our thinking, and whose ecstasy arouses our acts of glorification, whose personality is customized as our personalities, whose presence is always there, whose consciousness is focalized as our consciousness, and whose reality is beyond our reach.



Ten Sufi thoughts

Hazrat Inayat Khan brought Sufism to the west in the early 1900's. He summarized it in the following way. Each thought is worthy of contemplation.



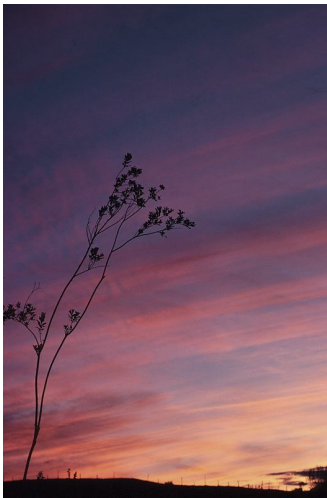
1) There is one God, the Eternal, the Only Being; none else exists save God.

2) There is one Master, the Guiding Spirit of all souls, who constantly leads all followers towards the light.

3) There is one Holy Book, the sacred manuscript of nature, which truly enlightens all readers.

4) There is one Religion, the unswerving progress in the right direction towards the ideal, which fulfils the life's purpose of every soul.

5) There is one Law, the law of Reciprocity, which can be observed by a selfless conscience together with a sense of awakened justice.



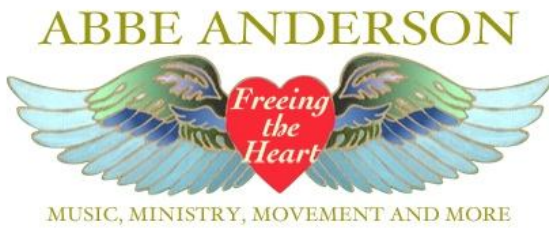
6) There is one human Family which unites the children of earth indiscriminately in the Parenthood of God.

7) There is one Moral Principle, the love which springs forth from self-denial, and blooms in deeds of beneficence.

8) There is one Object of Praise, the beauty which uplifts the heart of its worshipper through all aspects from the seen to the unseen.

9) There is one Truth, the true knowledge of our being within and without which is the essence of all wisdom.

10) There is one Path, the annihilation of the false ego in the real, which raises the mortal to immortality and in which resides all perfection.



The God Ideal

The Sufis were nomads. Since they lacked a consistent place of worship, they had to carry the holy ground within them. They developed their own concept of God, and made it real as they developed a relationship with it.

Ultimately, the divine is nameless and formless, but it is expressed everywhere. What image, what qualities, what feelings do you associate with that which is beyond life, yet sustains it? As you create your ideal of the perfect being, you grow closer to the ineffable, and you draw the qualities you admire to you.

Spend time cultivating your ideal and communing with it. You may think you are only pretending, but over time, as you amplify your feelings for the ideal, the Divine Presence will become real.

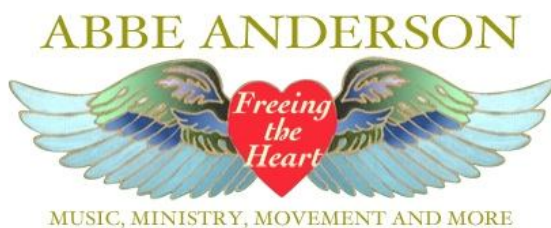
If the Divine Being feels too vague to commune with directly, you might imagine you are sitting in the presence of a trusted spiritual guide or teacher who knows how to do this, and will help show you the way. You can feel the atmosphere of your guide as you do the practices, and let their faith and skill envelop and direct you.

Sacred Sound



Many spiritual traditions use sound as a path to the ecstatic experience. Each vowel and consonant is said to activate a particular energy center or pathway in the body. The Sufi word for mantra is wazifa. Each wazifa is said to be an angel, a being who knows only love and glorification.

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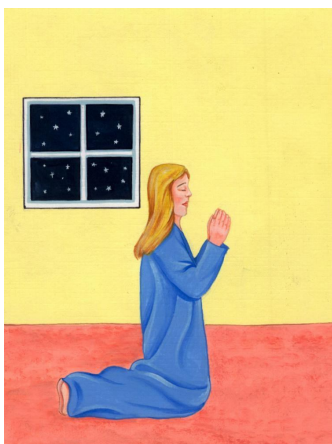
One wazifa that is fun to say is *faz'!*. It confers blessings, and Divine Harmony. As you say *faz'!*, feel yourself as Divine Harmony, showering and receiving blessings.

Become the embodiment of *faz'!*. Repeat it 33 times aloud, enjoying the sound, experimenting with pronunciation. Play with the sound, enjoying how it rolls off the tongue, extending the length of the word, finding harmonic overtones in the vowel, moving the lips to experience the full range of expression. Then, say it 33 times internally. Finally, sit in silence and receive the fruits of your repetition. You may feel wonderful or nothing at all. Don't be attached to the immediate benefits of the practice. You are sculpting a relationship with an angel.

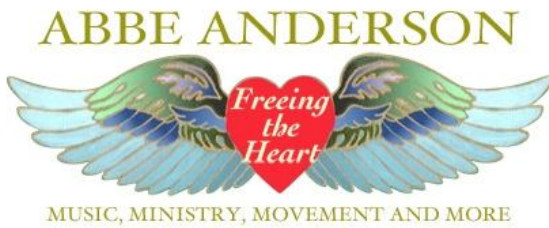
Prayer

Prayer is a great way to get out of yourself, to clear your conscience, and to commune with a greater being. It has been said that prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening to God. The Sufis divide extemporaneous prayer in five parts. You can do them in order, or select what feels appropriate. This five-step process incorporates both. Some of these stages may feel more natural than others. You will develop greater facility with them over time.

1. Gratitude. This is an excellent practice to open the heart, particularly when you feel more like complaining. Some things on your gratitude list may spring to mind easily. If you are having trouble summoning any, consider all the miracles you take for granted, like breath, light, life, itself.



2. Contrition. Bare your conscience. What are you sorry you did? Commit to not repeating your transgression. If you repeat it, you are, of course, forgiven. The key is to be sincere. If you think you can simply admit what you did wrong and then repeat it without consequence, then the



prayer is just an exercise. Feel the weight of your misdeed being lifted from you as you ask for forgiveness.

3. Petition. What do you want for the world, for your friends, for your enemies, for yourself? Some traditions suggest you not pray for yourself. If we are all connected, it probably doesn't matter whom you pray for. You will receive the benefits. This process helps you clarify your dreams and desires. Feel them, and hasten their realization.

4. Glorification. What are the qualities of the Divine Being? The Sufis have 99 names of God. The Hindus have thousands. Bask in amazement at the all powerful, all knowing, all seeing, all hearing, merciful, compassionate, radiant, life force. Not only does this feel good, it draws those qualities to you.

5. Communion. Swim in the divine presence. This is a meditation. Become One with all that is.

Prayer as Contemplation

It is a lifetime practice to live up to the intentions of some prayers. Dwell on each word, dedicating your self to its fulfillment. Feel your capacity to commit to this practice.

Prayer for Peace

Hazrat Inayat Khan

Send Thy Peace o Lord, which is perfect and everlasting, that our souls may radiate
peace.

Send Thy Peace o Lord, that we may think, act and speak harmoniously.

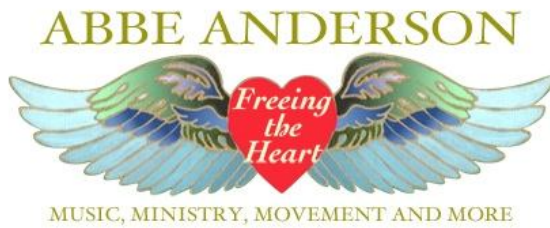
Send Thy Peace, o Lord, that we may be contented and thankful for thy bountiful
gifts.

Send Thy Peace, o Lord, that amidst our worldly strive, we may enjoy Thy Bliss.

Send thy peace, o lord, that we may endure all, tolerate all in the

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thought of Thy Grace
and Mercy.

Send Thy Peace, o Lord, that our lives may become a Divine Vision,
and in Thy Light, all darkness may vanish.

Send Thy Peace o Lord, our father and mother, that we, Thy children
on earth may all unite in one family.

The Chalice Prayer

Francis Nuttall

Father, to Thee I raise my whole being, a vessel emptied of self.
Accept, Lord, this my emptiness and so fill me with Thyself, Thy Light,
Thy Love, Thy Life, that these, Thy precious gifts may radiate through
me and overflow the chalice of my heart into the heart of all whom I
may contact this day, revealing unto them the beauty of Thy Joy and
Wholeness, and the serenity of thy Peace, which nothing can destroy.

Khatum

Hazrat Inayat Khan

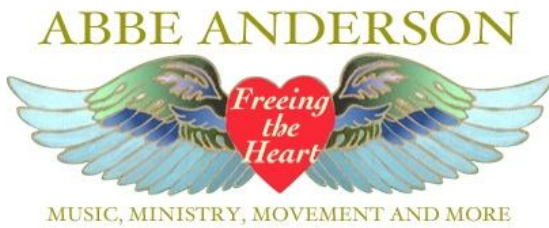
O Thou who art the Perfection of Love, Harmony
and Beauty, the Lord of heaven and earth, open
our hearts that we may hear Thy Voice, which
constantly comes from within. Disclose to us Thy
Divine Light, which is hidden in our souls, that
we may know and understand life better. Most
Merciful and Compassionate God, give us Thy
great Goodness. Teach us Thy loving
Forgiveness. Raise us above the distinctions
and differences which divide us. Send us the
peace of Thy Divine Spirit, and unite us
all in Thy Perfect Being.



Answered prayers: The *zikr* of wish fulfillment affirms God's presence
and responsiveness to us. *Zikr* means "remembrance." It has
movements that amplify the practice. This is done sitting on the heels.
Repeat it 33 times aloud, 33 times silently, and then sit and let the
practice reveal itself to you.

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Saying *Ya Qarib*, look at the right shoulder, invoking the nearness of God.

Saying *Ya Raqib*, turn to the left shoulder, invoking the God who watches over us.

Saying *Ya Muhit*, rise onto the shins, thighs perpendicular to the floor, arms lifted above the head, reaching out to the all-embracing God,.

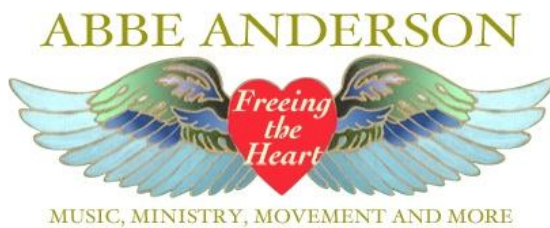
Saying *Ya Mujib*, draw the hands to the heart and sit back on the heels, affirming God's responsiveness.

Nature as teacher

It takes little effort to appreciate the beauty of the natural world, as an observer. But we can have a more direct relationship with the elements. We have all come from the same source. Consider all of nature to be sentient. Ask questions and intuit wisdom from a tree, rock, bird, river, or star.



Nature evokes qualities that lie within us. Experience yourself as earth, air, fire and water. Earth may remind us of our stability and our ability to rebound after a hard time. Water may allow us to feel reflective, clear, and adaptable. When we see fire, we remember enthusiasm, heat, brilliance, and light. Air rekindles our vastness, spontaneity, and infinite potential.



Breath

One of the definitions of Allah is, "the very breath." Breath is the bridge between body and mind. It defines our mortal existence. When we stop breathing, our bodies disintegrate. When we focus on the breath, it brings us into the present moment, where the great mystery resides.

Where does the breath come from before it enters your body? Where does it go after it leaves? Who has breathed your breath before it came to you, and who will receive it after it leaves you? When you contemplate these things, you can see that the entire universe has made its imprint on your breath, and you in turn will influence the entire universe with your own.

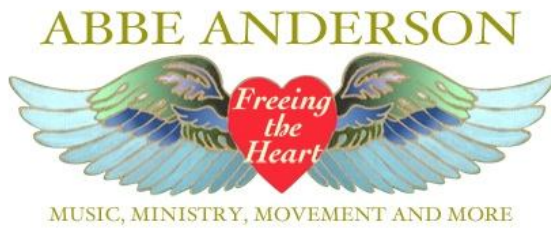
You have access to all the beings that have ever lived or will ever live. You can draw them to you on the breath. Whatever wisdom you need is as close as your breath.

Sigh like a breeze, dissolving thoughts and feelings. Inhale, relaxing the brain, eyes and forehead. Be aware of the flow and rhythm of the breath. Note the breath's rhythm in conjunction with the heart, as the dance of spirit and matter. Feel the echo of the heart pulsing in the hands, around the shoulders and head, all around the body as a pulsing layer. Inhale and exhale through the pulsing magnetic field and feel it move like a wave. The magnetic field surrounds you like a mandala. The body and soul inside are like a seed, fertilized by the ebb and flow of a cosmic breath.

Purification

The element breaths: A great way to get out of your self and connect with nature is through the purification or element breaths. This is a fundamental, daily Sufi practice.

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Breathing in and out the nose, contemplate the qualities of earth. Draw to you its strength, stability, and resilience. Imagine yourself as a mountain, and all the qualities this would confer. If you are feeling stuck or resistant, let those feelings drain back into the earth on your exhale.



Breathing in the nose and out the mouth, contemplate the qualities of water. Draw to you its clarity, flexibility, and power. Imagine yourself as the ocean, feeling your depth, and your ability to flow. Exhaling, release whatever you have taken on that is not yours, and let it float away.

Breathing in mouth and out the nose, contemplate the qualities of fire. Draw to you its light, and passion. Imagine yourself as the sun, feeling your generosity. Exhaling, release any anger, and resentment or self-destructive tendencies, and return them to fire.

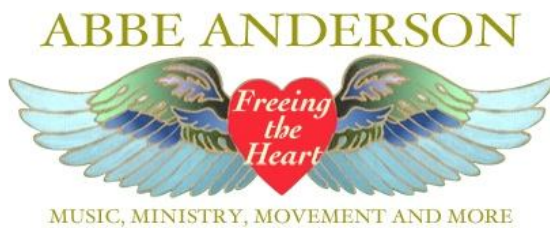
Breathing in and out the mouth, contemplate the qualities of air. Imagine yourself as the wind. Feel your freedom, spaciousness, and spontaneity. As you exhale, release your capacity for distraction or feeling spaced out back to the element of air.

Release conscious control of the breath and allow yourself to be breathed. As you attune to the element of ether, breathe in the qualities of this essence of all elements. This is the mystery. Don't think about it. Just experience the miracle of the breath and of life itself.

Conscience: Ecstasy requires a clean conscience. If you have done something you wish you hadn't, but are sincere about your regret, and intend to do all in your power to not repeat the transgression, God forgives you. If God has forgiven you, it is grandiose to hold onto guilt.

This version of the Christian practice, *Kyrie Eleison*, is done sitting on your heels. As you say *Kyrie*, "Lord," place your burdens before God.

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You can extend your arms on the floor in supplication or bow your head to the floor. As you say *Eleison*, meaning "have mercy," you feel God lifting you back to a seated position, allowing the grace of forgiveness to wash over you. Repeat this practice 33 times aloud, 33 times silently, and then sit in silence. Surrender and let the divine bring about transformation.

Bringing spirit into life is the acid test of one's practice. Life presents one with ample opportunities to live up to one's ideal. The rules below, enumerated by Hazrat Inayat Khan, are guidelines to help you feel good about who you are and how you show up in the world.

Golden Rules:

My conscientious self:

Keep to your principles in prosperity as well as in adversity.

Be firm in faith through life's tests and trials.

Guard the secrets of friends as your most sacred trust.

Observe constancy in love.

Break not your word of honor whatever may befall.

Meet the world with smiles in all conditions of life.

When you possess something, think of the one who does not possess it.

Uphold your honor at any cost.

Hold your ideal high in all circumstances.

Do not neglect those who depend upon you.

Silver Rules:

My conscientious self:

Consider duty as sacred as religion.

Use tact on all occasions.

Place people rightly in your estimation.

Be no more to anyone than you are expected to be.

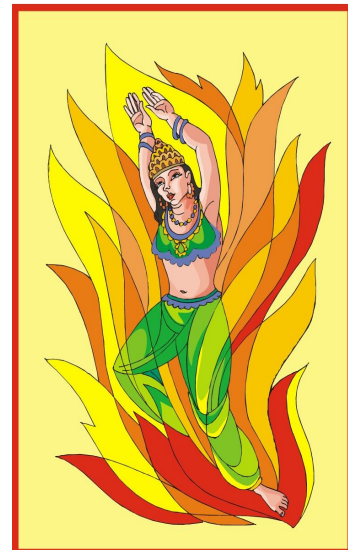
Have regard for the feelings of every soul.

Do not challenge anyone who is not your equal.

Do not make a show of your generosity.

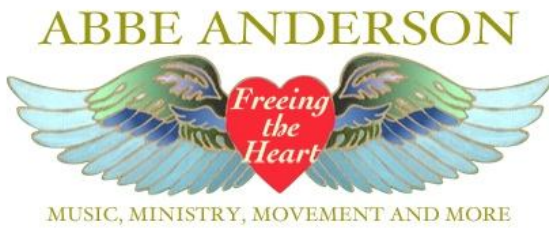
Do not ask a favor of those who will not grant it to you.

Meet your shortcomings with a sword of self-respect.



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Let not your spirit be humbled in adversity.

Copper Rules:

My Conscientious self:

Consider your responsibility sacred.

Be polite to all.

Do nothing which will make your conscience feel guilty.

Extend your help willingly to those in need.

Do not look down upon the one who looks up to you.

Judge not another by your own law.

Bear no malice against your worst enemy.

Influence no one to do wrong.

Be prejudiced against no one.

Prove trustworthy in all your dealings.

Iron rules:

My conscientious self:

Make no false claims.

Speak not against others in their absence.

Do not take advantage of a person's ignorance.

Do not boast of your good deeds.

Do no claim that which belongs to another.

Do not reproach others, making them firm in their faults.

Do not spare yourself in the work that you must accomplish.

Render your services faithfully to all who require them.

Seek not profit by putting someone in straits.

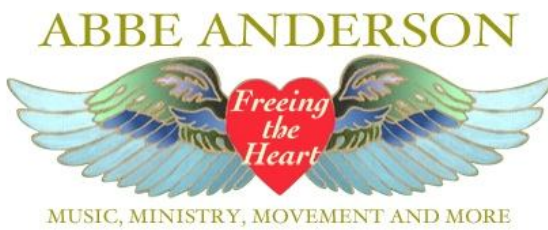
Harm no one for your own benefit.

"We must not confuse detachment with a lack of love. When people cannot put up with conditions around them, they may think that they are superior; but in reality, the conditions are stronger than those people. Unhappy are they who look with contempt at the world, who hate human beings and think they are superior; the ones who love think only that others are going through the same process that they have gone through, themselves."

--Hazrat Inayat Khan

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Healing

The Sufi believes it is God that does the healing. These practices open the channels to Spirit for healing to take place.

“Miraculous healing occurs when something takes an individual beyond her ordinary state of awareness in which she feels separate from the rest of creation. An act of prayer or faith may at least temporarily enable a person to experience the meeting-point of the human and divine aspects of herself, freeing the quantum wave function of that person’s being to a state in which results are possible which could not occur in ordinary reality.” Donald Weiner, PhD

Experience this healing prayer as if it is being realized as you speak it. Feel the presence of the Divine Being you are invoking.

Nayaz

Hazrat Inayat Khan

Beloved Lord, Almighty God, through the rays of the sun, through the waves of the air, through the all-pervading life and space, purify and revivify me, and I pray, heal my body, heart and soul.



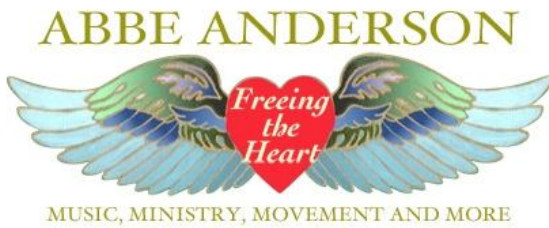
Energy Centers: Many traditions have discovered energy centers along the spine. The Hindus call them chakras, meaning wheels.

Different traditions offer different colors for each center, so if these are not the colors you associate with them, use your own, or experiment with something new.

The first center at the base of the spine governs your connection to the earth, your grounding. It is red.

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The second center, above the pubic bone, governs your instincts, your desires, and your creativity. It is saffron-colored.

The third center at the solar plexus, rules your personal power, emotions, and drive. It is orange.

The fourth center, at the heart, governs your capacity to share, to give and receive love. It is gold.

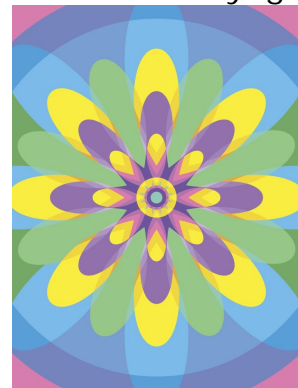
The fifth center, at the throat, rules your ability to take in information and communicate clearly. It is green.

The sixth center, at the third eye, between and above the eyebrows, rules your intuition. It is violet.

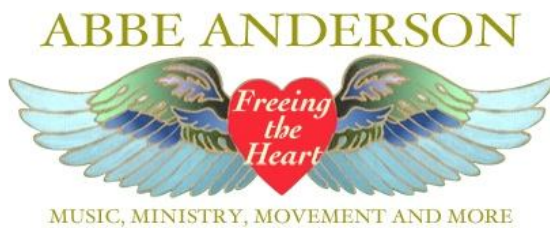
The seventh center at the crown, or fontanel, the soft spot on the skull, rules your connection with the spirit world. It is diamond-like, reflecting all the colors of the spectrum.

It is important to keep all these centers open and flowing freely. If some are open and others closed, life is out of balance. Kundalini yoga is especially proficient at working these centers. The Sufis purify them with repetition of the Divine Names.

Nur is the all-pervading light that cannot be seen. It is the light within us. *Ya Nur* opens the heart to receive this light. Repeat *Ya Nur* seven times in each center, beginning at the base of the spine. Attune to a radiant being as you say this. If you can visualize colors, you can see the color of each center brightening and purifying as you recite the wazifa.



Quddus is the quickening of the Holy Spirit. Imagine a bolt of lightning coming through your head, purifying and transforming everything. Attune to a being who is receptive to pure spirit. The Virgin Mary is associated with this wazifa. Recite *Ya Quddus* seven

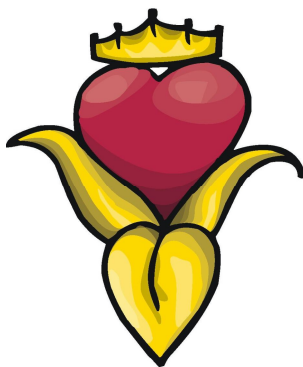


times in each center, starting at the crown and moving down to the base of the spine.

Ya Shafee, invokes the Divine Healer. *Ya Khafee* invokes the remedy. Repeat these seven times in each center.

Throne of the Heart: The Sufis invoke four healing energies, sources of support that are always available to us. Say each wazifa aloud seven times, silently seven times, and then sit with the practice and let it reveal itself.

The first is the energy of the earth. *Ya Muid* calls forth restoration to our original energetic blueprint. Recite *Ya Muid* and feel the earth renewing your original perfection. Feel yourself as substance of the earth, drawing on its power.



The second is the energy all around. *Ya Hayy* invokes the life force. Feel life pulsating everywhere, in a state of perpetual creative ecstasy. Draw in the vitality of your environment.

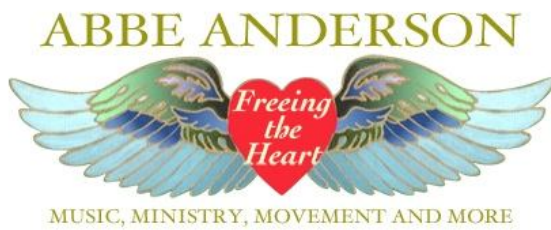
The third is the energy of your heart. *Ya Muhyi* invokes regeneration. Know your capacity to rebound from loss with resilience and to love even more fully and deeply. Love springs eternal.

The fourth is the energy of the heart of God. *Ya Quddus* invokes the quickening of the Holy Spirit. Feel yourself completely transformed by each repetition. Consider your heart to be rooted in the heart of God. Draw on that infinite love.

Middle of the night

Some believe the middle of the night is a sacred time for spiritual practice. If you happen to wake up then, rather than toss and turn, try these ideas.

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Landscapes of the soul: Visualize a scene in nature. Let it come to you without creating it. What does this image say about you? What qualities does it evoke?

Midnight messenger: Some believe that if you wake up in the middle of the night, it is because a great being has brought you a message. Intuit who is tapping you on the shoulder and what wisdom they have to impart. Feel love coming through the messenger who visits you.



Attune to the stars: Each star is a sun. Commune with the galaxies. Identify with them. What does it feel like to be a star? Feel the immensity and radiance of your being. Fly around the universe as a being of light.

Contemplation

It is useful to sit with questions and wait for answers to arise from the heart. Surprise yourself. If you jump to conclusions to satisfy the racing mind, you won't learn anything. Here are some questions that are worthy of your time. The answers will change as you do.

Attune to a great being and look at your goals, intentions, values, and motivations. Examine them from a place of truth.

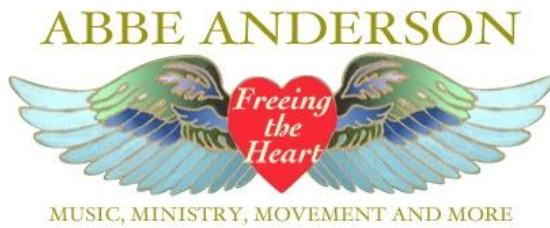
How did my attitudes and motivations arise?

What do I desire most?

Examine thoughts, attitudes, speech and action in relation to others. First look at current circumstances. What are my intentions? Motives? Expectations? Why did I act as I did?

Next, look at my overall objective in life. Where does the energy go?

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What are my ideals? Am I living up to them? What are my values? Which ones do I prioritize? What really matters?

Which habits make me feel alive? Which suppress my vitality? What reinforces my sense of livingness?

Sacrifice the feeling of inadequacy. What is the fear behind it? Freedom comes from overcoming the ignorance of not knowing. Then the limited self will stop overriding the Divine Self.



What is really bothering me? What do I need to release that's holding me back? What's behind it?

See situations from another's point of view to step outside your own vantage point.

Increase tolerance by seeing the right of the wrong, wrong of the right, evil of good, good of evil, pain in pleasure and pleasure in pain, gain in loss and loss in gain. Overcome the dichotomy of self and other. Identify with what one is not.

Consider the soul as a ray of light from the sun. Meditate on the sun. Where does its light originate?

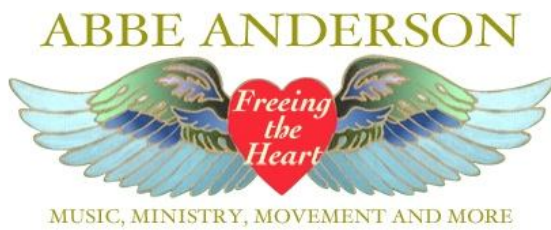
Contemplate rigidity. Why do I like, dislike, decide good and bad, judge? Why do I have these patterns? Who is the true judge? Can one accept and live by Divine will? Judgment brings rigidity, so one loses the fluidity of the soul. Recognize the parts that bring rigidity. Replace judgment by accepting divine will to dissolve the limitation.

What is a new perspective? What is the new potential?

Body as gateway to Spirit

The Sufis see our existence on a continuum. On one end, we are limited and human, essentially flawed. On the other end, we are the Divine Being, inherently perfect. The spiritual path extends from the limited to the unlimited. We are humble in the knowledge that our

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humanness will always be limited. On the other hand, we feel the exaltation of the Divine Potential within us.

The external *zikr* is a reflection of this paradox.

External *zikr*: Hold an image of yourself in front of you. Using your right index finger, draw a line from the left to the right shoulder, saying, "This is not my body." Draw a line from the crown downward, saying, "This is the temple of God." Repeat, saying, "This is my body. This is the temple of God."

Feel Spirit coursing throughout the limbs, organs, cells and atoms of the body. We are a hologram, signifying the Divine Presence.

Imagine a flower bud. Let the light of the heart center unfurl the bud.



Imagine all things as cells of a single living being.

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole, whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

--Alexander Pope

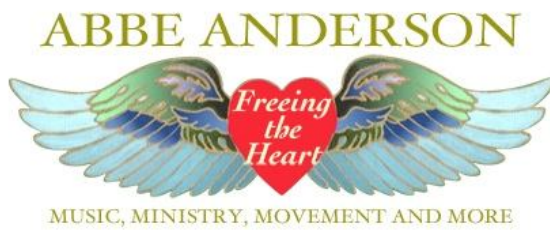
Magnetism

Magnetism draws all good things to you. The Sufis have identified five types of magnetism, and suggested ways to build it. They also alert you to ways that it is lost. Repeat each wazifa 7 times aloud, 7 times silently, and then sit and let the secret of the practice reveal itself to you.

1) To cultivate magnetism of the body, repeat *Ya Hayy*, calling upon the life force. This magnetism is lost during illness.

2) Magnetism of the mind is built invoking *Ya Alim*, the. It is depleted

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by self-doubt.

3) Magnetism of the heart is cultivated by *Ya Rahman*, the merciful. It is lost by selfishness.

4) Magnetism of the soul is built with *Ya Azim*, ecstasy. It is lost when we are out of touch with divine presence.

5) Magnetism of the spirit is built with *Ya Quddus*, invoking the quickening of Holy Spirit. This is the ultimate healing power. It is lost with lack of faith.

The Four Immeasurables

This is a Buddhist motivation prayer.

By the power and truth of this practice, may all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness, be free from suffering and the causes of suffering; may they never be separated from the great happiness devoid of suffering and live believing in the equality of all that lives.

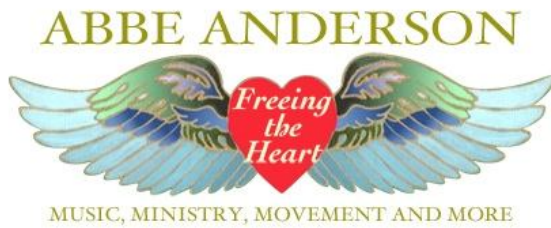
With the thought of love, let me contemplate the world. And may this love, extend to its four horizons. And then, with the thought of love increasing beyond measure, let me encompass the whole universe up to its confines.

With the thought of joy let me contemplate the world. And may this joy extend to its four horizons. And then, with the thought of joy increasing beyond measure let me encompass the whole universe up to its confines.

With the thought of compassion, let me contemplate the world. And may this compassion extend to its four horizons. And then, with the thought of compassion increasing beyond measure, let me encompass the whole universe up to its confines.



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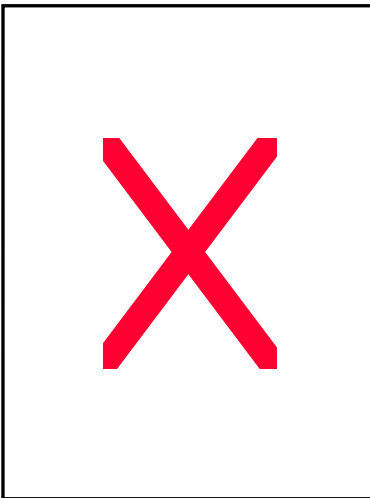


With the thought of peace let me contemplate the world. And may this peace extend to its four horizons. And then, with the thought of peace increasing beyond measure let me encompass the whole universe up to its confines.

Light

The Sufis do not divide life into good and evil. Evil is not a discrete entity. It merely indicates that light has been obscured. We use light practices to purify the darkness within us. Invite light into the center of the pain.

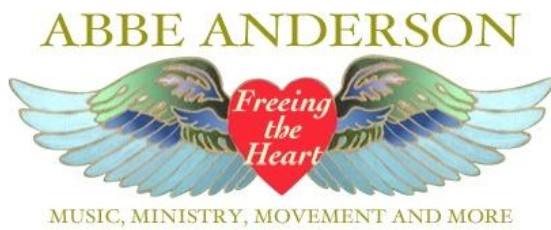
With the eyes closed, index fingers placed gently over them, visualize light at the source. Be conscious of the light that surrounds and permeates the body. We live in the body of the sun. We are stardust. The body absorbs and emits light, transformed into light of the atmosphere.



Prayer of Muhammad

O God, place Light in my heart, Light in my soul, Light on my tongue, Light in my eyes, Light in my ears. Place Light to my right, Light to my left, Light behind me; Light before me; Light above me; light beneath me. Place light in my nerves, Light in my flesh, Light in my blood, Light in my hair; Light in my skin. O God, give me Light. Increase my light. Make me light!

Who am I?



The Sufis view our experience on earth as an opportunity to customize the Divine Being's knowledge of itself. This dignifies our purpose. Contemplate this Sufi adaptation of the Satipattanas:

This is not my body. This is God's vehicle for interfacing the nonmanifest and manifest aspects of the divine in life, by the human meeting the divine.

This is not my mind. This is the unfolding realization of the divine thinking, as what is gleaned from human experience encounters the divine viewpoint so that a new type of thinking emerges for both the human and the divine.

This is not my heart. This is the place of birth of new emotions, as human and divine emotions meet, as the emotions of life encounter the emotions of the higher realms.

This is not my personality. This is the formation of new fruits on the tree of life, as the worldly part of my tree of life is cross-pollinated by the eternal part of my tree of life.

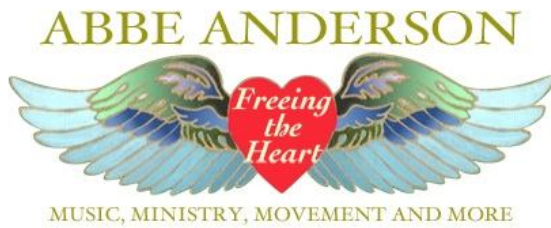


This is not my consciousness. This is a new type of consciousness emerging from a condition of biunity.

Meditation

The exercises in this e-book have offered various methods to help you get out of your own way and discover your essence. They may make you more comfortable when you finally sit in meditation. Or they may seem too complex, when all you want to do is sit. In any case, try sitting without any expectation of the serenity of your experience. Meditation is about showing up, accepting the moment unconditionally. Sometimes you will be in bliss. Other times you will be challenged to find even an inkling of comfort. Meditation creates benefits you may

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not realize for years. The Buddhists know the intricacies of the mind and can be great guides in this practice. Join a local *sangha* if you are interested in developing this skill.

Retreat

Take time to experience and satisfy the longing of the soul. Many people do not prioritize that which uplifts the spirit. They explain why life does not allow them this luxury. But a meaningless existence is no life at all. A guided personal retreat will help you clarify what is important and support this conviction with radiance and joy.

Click here to sign up for a guided personal retreat in Kennebunk Maine or Silver City, New Mexico. For information call the number below.