



Title: [The Sufi's Development of Trust:](#)
Being Content with Allah's Will
DVD title: (the same)

Opening duas.

Allah (swt) has given us good guidance in the Holy Qur'an when He tells us:

But the Messenger and those who believe with him strive with their wealth and their lives for whom are good things. Such are they who are successful.

Also he tells us:

Contentment is the greatest road to Allah, and the experience of it is heaven on earth.

What a wonderful message that is, a message very important for us both in our financial state and in our internal wealth. Allah (swt) performs the miracles of giving us good things and gives us success, and then also tells us that contentment is the best road to Allah, to be satisfied with what we have, whatever it is. The experience of that is heaven on earth. It's a great blessing that we probably won't remember beyond this *khutbah*, but it would be good if we did.

I've been talking about the road to perfection and *iman*, and certainly the belief in Allah (swt) is trust in Allah, and belief in someone is trust in someone. You don't believe in someone you don't trust, and you don't trust someone you don't believe in. It's almost synonymous. Belief in the truth is trust that the truth itself has power. Belief in freedom is a [trust] that freedom has attributes of goodness for all of us. It's not just freedom for myself, but for all people. Belief in health means that you trust that if you have health, your body will function correctly. We know by extension, our minds and emotions are affected. So belief and trust are very close together.

Imam al-Ghazāli was certainly one of the greatest scholars in the world, and he talked about trust in Allah (swt) in very Sufic terms. From the psychological perspective, belief in Allah is the re-emerging of the trust we have in our early infancy, when we are totally without any personal power, other than our life itself. Think about Mona (3 month old baby). There is total trust at this point. She can't walk, she can't talk, she can't feed herself. While there is a difference between the Sufic sense of trust and a psycho-therapeutic sense of trust, there are also some very basic similarities. Certainly, the earliest trust we know as physical human beings comes from our mothers and fathers and siblings. The differences are also many between the child's trust and the Sufi's trust.

First of all, a child has no choice. Survival of an infant depends on the bond between the parents and the child; therefore, a basic trust is necessary. The infant has no cognitive awareness of the process of trust; it doesn't know that there is such a thing. When the girls were younger, one could look at them and realize they are not thinking, "I should trust my parents to pick me up now or to feed me." But it's there, in a non-cognitive way. On the motor and perceptual level, the infant responds automatically. Usually also a basic trust is given to a child; that's why Allah (swt) made them so cute and so sweet. That's why we love their faces; we want to eat them! It's easy to love your child, and that's why all the best of us comes out when we look at them, so then they can trust us. If you have nasty faces all the times, or were ugly all the time, and had fangs, we wouldn't have much of a bond together.

The Sufi's development of trust is not that easy. It's based on belief. It's a hard battle, because a Sufi / Muslim /real believer has to go through many trials, difficulties, life transitions, and has to work through a lot of defenses. There are many illusions. Close your eyes, and see yourself standing before multitudes of people making *dawa*. You know that the way they would be trying to convince you of Islam would not necessarily [make you] trusting of their motives. There is a lot of peeling away of the ego, and of the tendencies of self-aggrandizement and narcissistic behavior. Most Sufis begin this

journey not like a baby automatically bonding to the love; it would be nice if it was that way.

Sometimes we find our *shaykh* and love our *shaykh* right from the very beginning. To begin this journey with the same sense of love and affection we get when we look into the eyes of a child, or a child looks into the eyes of the mother, father, brothers or sisters, or friends; to begin this journey with a lot of high hopes and a lot of sincere effort, one doesn't have to be a committed surfer to swim in the ocean. Few people are blessed with that kind of drive that one wants to just dive into the ocean of Tasawwuf and surf the waves of life. A person who is experienced and trusts in Allah, may manifest many different attributes. They may be totally involved in their search for Allah as if their whole life depended on it.

There are people who may have a lot of initiative and who work hard, and who have deep security inside themselves, who know who they are. Certainly, there are many mystics who have a child-like joy or enthusiasm that can be contagious. Most have trust and faith, of course. Many people on this journey, even when they have a failure, are energized by that failure and learn something. "Oh, I learned something good from that. Now I have to really succeed on the next step." You will see that most mystics and seekers of truth are persistent, patient, and aware of what they observe, and have a very astute and acute ability to perceive things. One of the things they perceive is a sense of unity and oneness underlying so many different things – synchronicity.

So there is a similarity; but at the same time, we have to grow to those levels of trust and belief. A mystic, a seeker of truth, or just a person who has a religious experience and nearness to Allah is someone who can probably very easily live with people of diverse kinds, cultures, races, backgrounds, classes, [even] the poor, the oppressed, knowing all are manifestations of Allah (swt). A Sufi or deeply profound person who has experienced Allah through His Attributes holds very little anger and animosity toward

others. They have indeed great appreciation and (as the quotation above says) gratitude for life itself, and everything that lives. Even things that you have to get rid of periodically, like a poisonous snake, a couple of mosquitoes, chiggers, a tick, or a couple of flies flying in your face. One of the common things they experience is a similar ability to go beyond time and space, yet is it not something they discuss or dwell upon; they just do it. Last but not least, they don't do it because they fear death and what is unknown, the way other people do.

Over all this, there is an abiding sense of contentment and gratitude, and that's where that quotation from the Qur'an comes in. It is a deep contentment, a deep satisfaction that is the stone that grinds away the *nafs ammāra*. That is the process which we discuss in detail last night about the *nafs lawwama*. In every circumstance, if you can find some element of contentment, it grinds away the *nafs ammāra*. A person who reaches that level of contentment, even that low level, that ability has accomplished a great deal. Contentment is the greatest road to Allah (swt), to awakening that Allah is present. This experience is really one of heaven on earth. Allah (swt) is content with those who are content with Allah. The Sufi has nothing, and in a sense, we have everything; therefore, you can't lose, no matter what. You don't have anything, and you have everything. You can't lose, no matter what. They don't become rich by anything, even if they are wealthy in money. They don't become poor by anything, even though those conditions might be ones of poverty.

They asked the Sufi shaykh, "What was the thing that pleased Allah (swt)?" He answered, "The heart that is not sullied by hypocrisy, because hypocrisy is the opposite of harmony. The state of being well pleased is the essence of harmony."

Each one of us leads to the harmony of others when we are pleased ourselves.

Ibn Ayyub, who was a Sufi mystic and great scholar and sage, lived at the time of Harun al Rashid (rah) in the 8th century. One day the Sultan Harun was very

despondent. He went with one of his companions to visit a wise man to help him with his depression. He went to visit Ibn Ayyub and knocked at the door, but the shaykh was reluctant to associate with people in power. However, the Khaliph insisted, so he opened the door, and here is what was related.

He extinguished the lamp, and stood in the corner. Harun went in and tried to find him. Their hands met and Harun said, "Never have I felt a softer hand!" Harun began to weep, and wept so violently that he swooned. When he came to himself, he said, "Give me a word of counsel." And the shaykh said, "O Commander of the Faithful, our ancestor was an uncle of Mustafa, the Prophet (sal). He asked the Prophet (sal) to give him dominion over men, and the Prophet (sal) answered, 'O my uncle, I will give you dominion for one moment over yourself. That one obedience to Allah is better than a thousand years of men's obedience to you. Dominance brings repentance on the Day of Resurrection.'"

When he was leaving, Harun asked the shaykh whether he had any debts, and the shaykh said, "Yes. The debt I owe to Allah (swt), obedience to Him. Woe to me if He called me to account for it!" Harun said, "But I am speaking of debts to men." The shaykh said, "Allah be praised. His bounty toward me is great. I have no reason to complain." Harun offered him a purse with a thousand dinars, saying, "Use the money for some purpose of your own." Ibn Ayyub said, "O Commander of the Faithful, my counsels have done you no good. You are here again behaving wrongly." Harun exclaimed, "How is that?" He said, "I wish you to be saved, but you will cast me into perdition. Is that not unjust?" And he took leave of Harun with tears in his eyes. Harun said, "Ibn Ayyub is a king indeed."

This shows you how content a Sufi can be. He had no material longings, no worldly expectations, and look at the strength he had. Rumi once wrote about the Pirs of Tasawwuf,

Listen to the story of those travelers who freed themselves from plights in the universe. I know a group of Pirs who have even closed their mouths to prayers. Their happiness comes from contentment in Allah's will. They see the enthusiasm in love. It would be hypocrisy and duality to seek relief from Allah's Will. Their hearts are open to benevolence and deep trust. They do not wear the dark clothes of despondency. They are content with anything that comes to them, whether it is the elixir of life or the torment of fire. Poison in their mouths is sweet sugar. Stones in their paths are jewels and diamonds because of their inner benevolence, and good and bad are the same to them."

Imam al Ghazali related:

A religiously devoted man of Jewish faith spent many years in prayer, and one night while dreaming he was told of a woman companion he would have in paradise. So he asked Allah swt to see her, so that he might gain insight into the nature of her devotion. After finding out that she did not spend sleepless nights in prayer or fast frequently, he asked her, "What have you done to deserve paradise?" And she replied, "Nothing but what you see." He insisted, and at last she said, "I have a small attitude." "What is that?" "If I am sick or in affliction, I don't desire health. If I am in the sun, I do not desire to be in the shade. If I am in the shade, I do not desire to be in the sun. I am content with anything." The devoted man raised his hands in awe and said, "This is not a little attitude. This is a great virtue!"

The lesson of today, *inshā'a-llāh*, is it to be content with the will of Allah (swt), which is the highest state. There isn't anything greater than that, because love is the highest thing of all. Contentment with Allah is the greatest gift of Allah's love, and Allah's love is the fruit of our love. *Asalaam aleikum.*