DHIKR/REMEMBRANCE IN SUFISM

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FOREWORD

Next to exercising Allah’s will at every stage of one’s life, or translating it fully into a state of being, tasawwuf is also defined as the bestowment aspect of Islam. And the essence of tasawwuf is to know one’s self. And the most important ritual for knowing one’s self is dhikr (to remember).

In tasawwuf, dhikr is the path to being liberated from one’s primitive self, and existing in the Universal Being; it is the aspiration to attain Allah. It is to break free from carnal desires to turn toward the eternal. Dhikr is to be revived and to find liveliness. In this sense, fana and baka are two central concepts in tasawwuf. While fana is liberation from the ego, or nafs; baka is to claim one’s integrity to become one with the Universal Being. Dhikr is one of the most important methods employed by Sufi orders for enabling the individual to attain the state of fana. It is the first lesson.

Allah explains the importance of dhikr, which is man’s attainment to self-integration and true existence, saying “You remember my name, and I will remember yours.” In his Masnavi, Mawlana shares the following story on this topic: There used to be a man who remembered Allah’s name every night with genuine pleasure. One night, the Devil whispers into his ear, saying: “All these years, you have remembered Allah’s name, while He has never returned your remembrance saying ‘Labbayk!’ (Yes, please) to you? How many more nights will you remember His name?”
Upset by this misgiving, he goes to sleep in anguish, abandoning his ritual of remembrance. And he dreams of al-Khidr (pbuh), wearing a green robe and a green turban, who asks him:

“Tell me, why have you quit dhikr? Why have you given up remembering Allah’s name?”

He answers, “I do not hear back ‘Labbayk.’ I fear that He has rejected me from his door.”

Khidr explains, “You saying ‘Allah!’ is also Him replying ‘Labbayk!’ to you. You are feeling troubled and looking for relief only because you have been accepted to his door in the first place. So, each time you say ‘Allah,’ you are indeed silently replied “Labbayk.”

Therefore, one’s searching, lamenting, suffering and remembering are all blessings from Allah. One should be able to lead his life with this consciousness knowing that there is no other door to take refuge at.

This book, which consists of a foreword, two chapters and an afterword, attempts at discussing dhikr, one of the central topics of tasawwuf, from a fundamentally Sufi perspective.

The book dwells on such subjects as dhikr in the Holy Koran; dhikr in Hadiths; dhikr in tasawwuf; the three states of dhikr; the importance of dhikr, the continuity of dhikr; the impact of dhikr on the building of the Being; the union of reflection and dhikr; the universal aspect of dhikr; the socio-psychological aspect of dhikr; the encompassing nature of dhikr; the importance and impact of constant dhikr; the contribution of dhikr to the building of personality and to becoming the Perfect Man; the dhikr-reflection relationship; the dhikr-knowledge relationship; the dhikr-union relationship; the dhikr-space relationship; the dhikr-gratitude; and the relationship between dhikr and other forms of
religious exercises. This book is the result of compiling two articles previously published in the Ankara University Faculty of Divinity Journal and the Social Sciences Journal, and summarizing and translating certain parts of our book titled “Dhikr: A Means For Union With Allah.” We have also included in this book views of Es’ad Erbili, one of the more recent Sufi opinion leaders, on the topic of dhikr.

We would like to thank Mr. Salih Tahir and Ms. Zeynep Darici, who made the biggest contributions to publish this book in English, and also translated articles we have previously published in various journals.

We hope that this book will become a work that makes a significant contribution to the field of tasawwuf.
DHIKR IN SUFISM

Self-Knowledge

One of the most important subjects in Sufism is that of man and self-knowledge. Man needs to know the inner world and features that come from his creation to recognize oneself. Human have been installed both taqwa and sedition (fucur). Human has the potential both to be the Pharaoh and Hz Moses. The main goal of Sufism to introduce himself to the people; therefore, to restructure the personality. Man is a creature composed of body and soul. Except for the perception of apparent "ego", human has another eternal “self” that Provides the contact to the divine. Man is also a creature who inhols eternal self and eternal self appears in himself. In this article, while the general place of dhikr In tasawwuf is discussed, and the subjects like the relationship between dhikr and elest, dhikr and idea, dhikr and love, dhikr and ultimate union, dhikr and place; the degrees of dhikr, the importance of permanent dhikr is going to be contacted and in this way what the importance of dhikr In tasawwuf is, will be put up. Finally, relationship between the self and dhikr, and the importance of dhikr in self-transformation will be put on.

Meaning of the dhikr and Dhikr in Qur'an

As well as Dhikr, in the dictionary means, " memorize and protect someing, remember, glory, advice, salaah the divine books and praising ", it means "To remember the forgotten, to memorilize constantly not to forget" (Ibn Manzur, 1955: 308; Ragib, 1324: 179). In the Sufi terminology, it means to commemorate Allah with certain words or phrases, to glorify him...
by seeing his a thousand manifestations in the universe. (Ateş, 1966: 295; Kelâbâzî, 1992: 154). In the Qur’an al-Karîm, the word dhikr is mentioned in two hundred and ninety-one places together with its derivatives. (Abdülbaki, 1990: 271-275). Dhikr both concretely and on the social formation of human is a different obedience that have important influence. This worship is a spiritual re-formation and starting a new life. Because in the dhikr, the first stages to forget the human ”self” and think constantly of only The Creator who has the divine manifestation in all beings, objects; in other words think of the ”Absolute Being” with the whole self in every moment and place and to be honored the manifestation of his attributes. As the dhikr continues salik feels himself alone with God. This is a case that human errors and sins are abandoned and all senses are filled with divine love. Mürid has come to an extent that is now freed from the feeling that his all behaviors are observed. By evanescing in his own dhikr he has gain such a condition that, he does not return to his self (ego) any more. This case is the transition from traditional self to universal self. By Allah's manifestation, he has gained a universal qualification beyond being a social asset. Now that he has become an outstanding character embracing all people with love. The importance of dhikr is clearly indicated in the verses from Quran: “They remember Allah standing up, sitting down and lying on their side.” (Ali İmran 3/191). ”By men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the Remembrance of Allah” (Nur, 24/37). Like these, many verses from Quran emphasizes the importance of dhikr. On the importance of dhikr, the Prophet (pbuh) says: “How would you like if I told you that the most beneficial deed of all is to remember Allah.” (Tirmizi, Deavat, 6). Again he (pbuh) says: ”chanting allah by tekbir, tahmid, teşbih ve tehlil unit the sun rises is more pleasant to me than freeing slaves from two or more sons Ishmael.” (Ahmed b. Hanbal, 5, 255).
Relation between dhikr and elest

Man promised to Allah in Bezm-i elest. Dhikr is the remembrance of that promise in Bezm-i Elest. Because Allah by inviting people as a whole to remember, teaches them to know the essence of him: “Remind, because there is good in reminding for true believers” (Zariyah, 51/55). The message of this divine reminder is an invitation to remember the treaty of man. So the dhikr cultivates the man to take the condition before being "something", in other words, and make the man reach the "clear" self, before contaminated by the matter. Recalling the moment that the human is actually nothing, inviting to be "something" by eternally memorializing Allah (Ateş, 1966: 295; Kelâbâzî, 1992: 154). Because infinite possibilities are hidden in the human as the owner of an ego (Kılıç, 2000, 19). Strength and power and all the goodies are from Allah, with Allah. To use the opportunities of the essence of human with the purest sense good deeds will only be able to memorizing Allah, self-recognition and perfection for a man will only be possible by remembrance of Allah and establishing spiritual relationship with him

Dhikr - Idea Relationship, Dhikr in First Period Sufis

Some of the Sufis emphasised that the verse "Call in remembrance the benefits (ye have received) from Allah. that so ye may prosper "(A’râf, 7/69) includes both idea and dhikr. According to them, While contemplating the meaning of this verse, one would have fulfilled dhikr. The action to remember the favors of Allah, turns into the idea in the second stage. Although the idea is included to the circle of havf and reca, it gains strength with regard to qoality and it turns into mushahadeh (observation). (Mekârim;1995:20). Some Sufis, accept dhikr is superior to idea. Because, according to them, Allah can be characterized by dhikr, but not by idea (Kuseyri, 1990: 223). As it is understood that some Sufis, do not describe dhikr as only
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repeatation of certain words. Reaching to mushahade which is the qualified dhikr is the principal in dhikr. Therefore true dhikr is the dhikr during which one forgets other than Allah. So some sufis comment the verse "remember thy Lord when thou forgettest" (Kehf, 18/24), as "When you forget other than Allah you would have remember him". (Muhammed,1993:154). According to Kelâbâzî dhikr is the quality of the one who makes dhikr, it is not the quality of the one who has been remembered. Kelabazi who clearly articulates the necessity of remembrance of Allah, says that true dhikr is the dhikr during which one forgets everything other than Allah. Dhikr should move a person away from the masiva (anything other than Allah). Kelabazi divides the dhikr into two: chanting the name of Allah verbally and chanting the admiration of Allah with heart. He considers the dhikr of allah in the world as seeing Allah in eternity (ahirah). (Kelâbâzî, 1999, vr153). Kelabazi who describes ghaflah (heedlessness) as the sleep of heart, draws attention to ghaflah in three cases: heedlessness from dhikr of Allah; heedlessness between sunrise and morning salah; man's heedlessness from himself in religion. Ghaflah is a disease and deficiency (Kelâbâzî,1999, vr153). Kelabazi who considers the verbal dhikr is composed of the dhikr with heart, comments the dhikr of heart as seeing of Allah. Anybody whose heart doesn't reach to mushahadeh, even if makes verbal dhikr he is unwary. Making dhikr to Allah with peace of heart, mushahadeh and verbally is as if entangling in the Garden of Eden. The time between the sunrise and morning salah, is the time that the soul, body and eyes awake. Anybody who spends that time by sleeping has acted contrary to the natural balance. If one is asleep in the dawn, his day becomes inefficient. Ghaflah in the religion is to dive into the world and lust of the nafs (Kelâbâzî, 1999, vr152). Not to know religious obligations, being ignorant in the issues that to be made and abandoned, forgetting the known issues are ghaflah in the religion. *Kelabazi divides the*
dhikr into two: 1. negligence in world affairs 2. negligence in the affairs of ahirah (afterlife). The ghaflah in the world affairs is called "beleh" by Kelabazi and, he considers that not understanding from the world affairs is a characteristic of saints, siddiq and martyrs. Failing to fulfill the commanded things by means of diving into the world and carnal desires is a worse ghaflah than doing what is forbidden. Kelabazi calls forgetting Allah by being attracted to world as inauspiciousness. According to him this inauspiciousness is as a result of forgetting Allah. The truth of dhikr is dismissing ghaflah. When ghaflah disappeared, even if salik stills in silence, he will be in the mood of dhikr. (Kelâbâz, 1992; 154). In this regard Junayd al-Baghdadi (d.297 / 909) says: "ı remembered you. But it is not because of that I forget you even a minute. The easiest dhikr is the verbal one. However I remember you with my heart (Kelâbâzi,104).” The genuine dhikr is forgetting other than mezkûr during remembrance (Kelâbâzi of 154). In Qur'an: “When you forget, remember your Lord." (Al-Kahf, 24). Kelâbâzi about this verse says: "When you forget other than Allah, you would have mentioned him." (Kelâbâzi, 1992: 103)

Some of the first period sufis, considers the foundation dhikr as responding to Allah in the things to do. According to them, dhikr is done in two ways: First, glorifying Allah and reading the Qur'an and the second one is warming heart by remembering Allah's asmâ (names) and adjectives in appropriate circumstances. This will vary according to the position (maqam)of the one who make dhikr. So the dhikr of the master of tewekkul, muraqaba, mahabbah are done according to the position of them. (Serrâc,1996:223).

Junayd al-Baghdadi's sentence "who says Allah without mushahadeh is slanderer." Is being supported by kelabazi with the sententence : " if statement is not based on mushahadeh this is false testimony" (Kelâbâzi,103). Indeed mushahadeh is over
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dhikr. In this maqam even dhikr is an obstacle to see Allah. So dhikr is made until it reaches mushahadeh. One does not deal with the dhikr while living mushahadeh. Dhikr is done under veil (setr). The dhikr ends in case of discovery (keşf) and mushahadeh (Chittick, 2000: 138; Kelâbâzi, 103; Kuseyri, 453).

**Those who love Allah (c.c.) are those who remember him.**

People who love Allah in a real sense are those that remember him at all times. With the verse of "Bring your Lord to remembrance in a (very) soul, with humility, and remember without loudness in words, in the mornings and evenings" (A’raf, 7/205). Allah ordered to fulfill the dhikr sincerely. Remembering Allah unceasingly is a characteristic of a sincere Muslim. The worth of love is sacrifice for beloved. So the most wonderful time of dhikr is the dawn when everyone’s asleep. Love is the principal of dhikr. If the love is real, dhikr of Allah occurs in the heart of Mu’min (believer) (Göktaş & Tenik, 261). Dhikr is one of the most important prayer for ensuring contact with the creator. Therefore, love is the most important effect for self development. A self that is strengthened and matured with love is capable of dominate the world. (Kılıç, 2000: 20).

**Degree of dhikr**

Dhikr which is in the centre of sufi practice is an important psychological training or education application. Dhikr in the Sufi thought, is rather than repeating nouns and adjectives in the right moment or reminding them in a certain harmony, performing the commitment from the heart both verbally and actually. (Nicholson, 1989:45; Tenik,2002:97-116). For dhakir (the one who make dhikr) integration with the self is the goal. This integration will happen by removing the heart completely from all interest except Allah. So in the dhikr, one should fade away in
mentioned words or phrases. Dhikr is rated as five degrees: verbal dhikr dhikr-i cismî, thought dhikr-i nefsî, murâqabah dhikr-i qalbî, mushâhadeh dhikr-i rûhî ve muâyene dhikr-i sırrî (Tehanevi: 99). When the verbal dhikr overcomes, sıfat-ı zemîme that is made up of nafs-i emmareh, fades away in sıfat-ı hamîdeh. sıfat-ı hamîdeh refers to sharia.

There are different types of dhikr depending on the spiritual status of the disciple: There is the “dhikr al-lisani, dhikr al-qalbi, dhikr al-ruhi,”

“dhikr al-lisani,” which is performed by habit by the people who are not Sufi. This has no benefit to people, moreover it damages. dhikr al-qalbi,” which is performed on the purpose of prayer; is performed by saints namely "hawas (chosen ones) People with this remembrance, will gain Allah's approval. dhikr al-ruhi, is a remembrance that is done with all organs and limbs.this is a remembrance that is made with the conscious of ma'rifah and love. It is impossible to define the value of this dhikr next to God. Because, this continuous remembrance of Sufis is an action as necessary as to eat to live up because this is dhikr al-ruhi in which havvâsi’l-havâss (chosen of the chosen) spend every moment with Allah and remembering him. This kind of dhikr is embracing. In this dhikr, there is purifying the self everything other than Allah and remembering him. With this devotion, If the Sufi captures consciousness of dhikr, Allah protects him from all kinds of adversities. The purpose of the dhikr and even mystical life is to recover from dependence to the word. Sufis says that the important thing is to get rid of the word and to reach to a complete mushahadeh. Dhikr is evaluated in three stages. First dhikr with tangible assets, secondly with other assets, the third phase is dhikr with Allah (Tenik, 2012: 325-329).

Divine light that is originating from the heart, creates an association between body and soul. When the body provides
divine harmony, wakefulness of the body to Allah polishes the soul by means of heart. With the association of heart, body and soul, Light of Allah increases on salik. As there is no limit in the increase on the each spiritual status, there is no end no limit for this divine journey. This is overwhelming limitless enlightenment ocean. The inner worlds of sufis have been in trance in muraqabe. They see everything from Haqq. Thus they know ayne’l-yakin. The purpose is to remember Allah absolutely. This reminisce, whether the essence (zat) or the adjectives and names, they are equal. Namely dhikr has been referred in every case. So that, salik must isolate himself from all creatures and start dhikr. In the heart there must be provided a complete integration with Allah, get rid of to repeating the word, then Allah could be remembered as a whole and in the form of colorless.

If the heart is highlightened with light of dhikr, burns with the fire of dhikr, matures with dhikr, and is enlivened by dhikr; the whole organs of the body make dhikr of Allah as if the tree besides Moses, in the valley of Tur. (Kısas, 28/30). Nobody neither understands nor hears this situation except him. Even angels do not see and know this. This case is a love secret, proximity, integration and embrace between the one who makes dhikr (dhakir) and the one who is remembered by dhikr. The dhikr that is made until this stage is explained with the verse "remember Me" then it turns to "I will remember you" (Baqara, 2/152).

**Struggle in the inner world of human**

Human nature is based on a continuously ongoing struggle between the "self"(nafs) and "soul". the aim of the dhikr in this struggle is to separate the spiritual presence from the physical presence of the human and to make this spiritual presence go to Allah freely. The main purpose of tasawwuf and activities of tarikâq, is to protect the heart which is the representer of God,
from predominance of evil and the nasf. So to ensure the superiority of the soul that is at the disposal of Allah over the nasf. Because the nasf in tasawwuf is the sum of curtains in the ultimate union to Allah. The aim of suluq struggle of tasawwuf is to eliminate these curtains.

**Transcendency of the dhakir (he who remembers)**

In the dhikr the man who comes the upper limit drawn by Allah, comes to the level to master the forces of nature. Because he has transcended all the objects in nature and has made them into small particles in his own self. It is no more possible for the particles to dominate the divine atmosphere that immerse itself. Qushayri reports that story in his work *Al-Risalah*: “Hamid Esved says: I was in journey with Ibrahim Havvas. We came to a place where were many snakes. He put his pithcher and sat and I sat beside him. When it got dark and cold, the snakes came up. I shouted “O sheikh O sage”. he said to me: "make the dhikr of Allah" I made the dhikr of Allah and the snakes went. And then they appear again. I shouted again: “O sage”. And he said the same thing. This situaiton continued until morning. In the morning, Havas got up and walked and I folloed him. I saw that there were a big snake in the place where the sheikh were sleeping and I asked to him: what did you feel while this snake were beside you? He said: "Nothing, I haven't spent a good night like this for a long time.” (anything can harm to the dhakir who trust in Allah) (Uludağ,1999:304). Another report from Qushayri: “one of the Sufis is narrating: It was mentioned a dhakir who was making dhikr alone in the reeds. I visited that person. He was sitting. Suddenly a big lion blow him down and tore a piece of meat from him and with this both of us were about to faint. When we recover I asked him that what was this situation. He said: Allah has made that wild animal guard for me. When it saws languor in my dhikr and slack in my worship he bites me as you see. (warns me) (Uludağ,1999:305)."
these events seems to be extreme examples they are narrated by Qushayri in his Al-Risalah one of the most fundamental works of tasawwuf.

Permanent dhikr: importance and effect

Sufis said that the important thing in dhikr is not the movement of the tongue, it is: the action of qalb (heart) with Allah. The tongue only ensures settlement of dhikr to the qalb by remembering Allah and also allows the qalb to join the dhikr. (el-Mekkî,248). When the dhikr dominate the heart, it illuminates all the senses with divine light. Then he deserves the praise of Allah " We removed thy veil, and sharp is thy sight this Day!" (Qaf, 50/24 Any person who is the recipient of such appraisal sets an example of the “perfect man”(qamil) which is desired by individuals and societies. The Qur’an explains the situation of those who forget Allah with the verse, “…woe to those whose hearts are hard against the remembrance of Allah…” (Zumar, 22.).

The respected dhikr is the one that remembering Allah permanently and apeak the fundamental of the dhikr is to move the heart with Allah. Allah also wants us to remember him permanently and sincerely: “Pray your lord by begging and hiddenly. Because he does not love those who exceed the limits ” (A’râf, 7/205). The tongue is only an announcer of the heart. It only ensures settlement of dhikr to the qalb by remembering Allah and also allows the qalb to join the dhikr. (el-Mekkî,248). Thus the Sûfis say that, dhikr is as important as water and bread for a sufi. Namely it is impossible for a sufi live without dhikr. On this, the Prophet (pbuh) says that “the state of the one who makes dhikr and the one who doesn't is like the state of the dead and alive.” (Buhârî, Daavât:66; Müslim, Mûsâfirîn:221). Just as the the body is not given the necessary food it becomes ill and at a later stages it dies, if spirit can not receive the food it
will get sick and die eventually. This is not death desired. This happens when the heart and soul sealed. But the desired one is to die in Allah before you die and then rise from dead in Allah with a new life. The body, heart and soul are the trust of Allah to us. Each one is obliged to do its part to ensure their healthy.

Sufis think that, there is not a more clear way in suluq than dhikr. Because according to them one can reach to Allah only by making dhikr. The Sufi must remember and keep in mind Allah at all times.

Dhikr is to tend towards and give oneself completely to Allah in order to communicate with him. On condition to lose himself in Allah dhikr is to intensify himself to divine will. Dhikr is the moment that saliq cuts all relationship with everythin except for Allah and drown in love. Allah appears in all beings in the eyes of saliq. As long as, salik realizes the divine manifestation and remembers the creator. The aim of the Dhikr is to gather the thought in one place to ensure the divine perception. When the dhikr is integrated with the thought and get out from mouth automatically, it means saliq have reached the highest stage of remembrance. This shows that the dilemma of body and soul have been overcome.

When qalb deviates from the divine destination, the only cure to rehabilitate it is the dhikr. The importance of this cure is implied in the verse in Quran “Remember your Lord by begging to and fearing from him, in the mornings and evenings, with a slow voice, and do not be among the ignorant” (A’raf, 7/205). Dhikr varnishes, polishes the heart and the heart glowing with the Light of Allah, and love grows to “absolute being”.

Sustainability of the dhikr is an important ritual for strengthening love between Allah and man. Allah’s door which is always open to man is the dhikr. The dhikr is a prayer and supplication and the tongue is a translator for this status. This
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kind of remembering protects one from sins and errors against Allah. This protection process is one of the most important duties of the Sufi. If Allah is remembered constantly, qalb goes into Allah's administration and is prevented falling into error. If man memorialised Allah in his every work, Allah helps for everything to him. It is said that: "every important work remains incomplete so long as it is started without basmala" [Beyheki] and "One starting work with basmala would be forgiven" [I. Rafii]. In other words Allah has promised that he make the works starting with his name better and fertile, and to forgive sins. Remembering his name is like a panacea.

Permanent dhikr has two stages: primary and final dhikr. The first one is the dhikr performed by the tongue. At this stage each prayer that fulfilled is a dhikr. Hence "...keep up prayer for My remembrance..." (Ta Ha, 14.) “It is no crime in you if ye seek of the bounty of your Lord (during pilgrimage).” Celebrate the praises of Allah during the Appointed Days.” (Baqara, 2/198-203) as it is seen every prayer is a dhikr.

Sufis, made effort to spend every moment of their life, by remembering Allah and the task of dhikr that was given to saliqs was evaluated in this context. The degree of maturity (kemalat) of the permanent dhikr is the this Sufi dhikr is the most advanced degree. For the dhikr there is no need specific days, principles and methods. Ay this stage dhikr is personal and can not be offered to the community. If Sufi remembers Allah constantly, qalb goes into Allah's administration and is prevented falling into error. So constantly remembering is helpful becazuse Allah says: "But remind; for reminding benefits the Believers.”(Zariyät, 51/55) A sincere Sufi remembers Allah at all times in order to purify his soul, to have his sins forgiven, to perish in the being of eternal God, and to go ecstatic with the virtues of divine love. Remembering Allah happens first by closely watching Him and His works. Witnessing Allah's works in an attentive and
continuous manner, that is to say observing his signs in the physical plane is called *muraqabah*. In doing muraqabah of small and big things, it is also dhikr to understand all aspects of the created, being alert and attentive as to their evidences, to take lessons and to think about and remember the Creator.

**Being only with Allah and the marifah**

Sufis want to remove "self" between Allah and themselves. They think that when the man dies he is separated from everything but Allah and The only thing that doesn't leave him is the dhikr. Dhikr is the recipe for salvation.

According to Sufis dhikr is the most important ritual that allows to occurs Ma'refah. The permanent dhikr leads to an increase of love and dependance to Allah. This dependance helps us to recognise Him and His. Sufis think that reminding Allah constantly leads us knowing Him.

Some Sufis consider dhikr is not only as reminding him with his names but also as every prayer for Allah, and everything done for Allah's sake. In Tasawwuf, verbal dhikr in fact inflames the love between the lover and the beloved. Through the formation of this love in the qalb, man regains eternal happiness. The qalb relaxing by memorilising the beloved understands that all deficiencies would be completed by the beloved. The man who understands the memorilising Him is the healing, will want to be more close to thaty healing doors and will remember him with desire.

**Relation of dhikr and tafaqqur**

Some sufis evaluate dhikr and tafaqqur together and they think that tafaqqur is a an upper state of dhikr. As Sufis also point out, the truth of dhikr is distant to letters and sounds; it is the affection in one’s essence of heart toward Haqq. Qur’an
invites one to tafaqqur as well as to dhikr. Qur’an defines dhikr and tafaqqur as an inseparable whole that is the most important virtue of a true believer. “Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand. Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire: Our Lord! surely whomsoever Thou makest enter the fire, him Thou hast indeed brought to disgrace, and there shall be no helpers for the unjust.” (Ali Imran, 190–192).

Referenced Qur’anic verses suggest that there is a very close relationship between dhikr and tafaqqur, and one could think that tafaqqur is a an upper state of dhikr. In support of this notion, the Prophet (pbuh) points out that one moment of tafaqqur equals sixty years spent in any other form of religious practice. (Dehlevi,tsII:591). According to Sufis tafaqqur which is a an upper state of dhikr is related with the creation and ability of one. The basic principle is that dhakir should think on the the word for dhikr. And many sufis say that this word is "tawhid" . this emphasises the point of integration of dhikr and tafaqqur. At this point, the degree of dhikr and tafaqqur for a dhakir is related both ability and knowledge of him.

Starting out from the verse, “Remembering is for sure the greatest deed of all.”(Ankabut, 45), Sufis hold dhikr to be more important than salaah and tafaqqur. Because this deed can be performed only by higher souls. On this, the Prophet (pbuh) says that “Best deed is dhikrullah (remembering Allah).”(Ibn Maja, Adab, 53) For a person to be able to perform dhikr, the heart-tongue balance must be fully in place. Being a form of invocation, dhikr happens when the tongue reveals the feelings that are held in the heart. Sufis take tongue to be the translator of
the heart. It is therefore that one cannot sincerely perform dhikr without harmony between the tongue and the heart. Sincere dhikr protects the individual from deviations and from making mistakes against Allah. This process of protection is among the most important tasks of the Sufi. The Sufi must remember and keep in mind Allah at all times. When He is remembered, the heart will be steered by Him and will be safe from slips. Making dhikr with qalb increases a person's closeness to God.

The thinking is made on Allah's names because the creatures are the manifestations of these names. The tafaqqur that Sufi makes on these names Will equip him with the necessary knowledge of the essence of Allah.

**The purifying feature of dhikr**

Dhikr is the cleaner of all the negative emotions (grudge, hate, gossip, jealousy) Because the existence of dhikr is the presence of Allah. A person that God judges, is not possible to be dominated by negative emotions God is beautiful, loves beauties. A man who is dominated by Allah would reflect the beauties and names of Allah.

**Contribution of dhikr for reaching Haqq**

The evergreen desire of the Sufis is to reach Allah. Longing to become one with Allah, Sufis want to reach Allah as soon as possible. Reaching happens as a product of love for Allah. The love for the Beloved increases even more as His name is recited. Every time the lover remembers the Beloved, his heartbeats will accelerate, he will get excited and start sweating. Remembering the beloved causes an increase in the for Him. If it is not for dhikr, love connection will not form between Allah and the subject. Thanks to love, thanks are given to Allah, helping the heart find lasting peace. This peace is explained by Qur’an as follows: “They alone are true believers whose hearts are deeply
moved when they hear Allah’s name and whose faith is strengthened when its laws are communicated to them.” (Anfal, 2). Dhikr eases the suluq and makes one familiar to Allah. Allah promises in this issue that: “I’m with my devotee’s conjecture. Whenever he remembers me I’m with him.” (Müslim, Zikir:2)

Man should interiorise the relationship between dhikr and tafaqqur in order to understand that he was created as a reflection of Allah; is a mikrokosm of the universe. Dhikr and tafaqqur are bridges between deeds and knowledge. If sufi wants to reach the happiness, he should turn away from everything but Allah and should live within “tafaqqur’l-lâzîm” (thinking that is necessary) and “dhikru’d-dâîm” (permanent dhikr) (Gazzâli, IV:394).

The formation of Ma'refah occurs exactly the realization tafaqqur. Love (muhabbah) and intimacy (uns) to Haqq occur with a permanent dhikr. Tafaqqur contains dhikr so it is extensive and superior to dhikr. (Gazzali, IV:394).

Starting out from the verse, “But keep in remembrance the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him whole-heartedly. (Muzammil/8) Sufi should remember his creator sincerely. But this dhikr should be constant and permanent. Allah also wants this kind of dhikr. By this dhikr sufi knows himself and Haqq truly. This knowing enlightens the life of him. Because allah has praised this prayer: "Recite what is sent of the Book by inspiration to thee, and establish regular prayer: for prayer restrains from shameful and evil deeds; and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. And Allah knows the (deeds) that ye do." (Anqabût, 29/45) Sufis underscore dhikr sensively because it has an important role in sayr al suluq.

Having a significant impact on the social formation of man, dhikr is a spiritual rebirth and the start of a brand new life. Because the first step in dhikr is to forget about the “self,” to
think only about the “Absolute Being” which treats all subjects equally, and to become a recipient of the manifestation of His attributes. As dhikr is continued, the disciple feels himself with Allah alone. This is a state whereby all human wrongdoing and sins are abandoned, and one’s entire senses are filled with divine love. The disciple reaches such a level that he no more has the feeling that all of his behaviors are being witnessed. Perishing in his own dhikr, he reaches such a state that he does not go back to the nafs (the limited, carnal self). This is the traditional passage from the lower self to the universal self. (Demirkol & Özdemir, 2000:85). With the manifestation of Allah, he gains an universal quality which goes beyond the social being. He is now a person of higher character who embraces all people with love and caring. With dhikr Sufi lives in an infinite time and eternal existence.

The relationship between dhikr and fana thought

Allah, opens the door which is open to his prophets and saints, to the dhakirs. This dhikr is way to “fana” Sufis stressed that all creatures in the earth and heaven reaches Haqq by dhikr. Angels raises to “arsh-ı Rahmân” by dhikr. They try to express that when they cut the painter in everything other than Allah, they begin to see Allah in everything and everywhere.

Allah will both love the salik who remembers him and endears him to people. Because “Allah, surrounds the community who chants him, with angels, surrounds with mercy, peace will be upon them and allah will call this community with heavenly creatures. (Tirmizi, Duâ:7)

The relation of love and dhikr

If it is not for dhikr, love connection will not form between Allah and the subject. Thanks to love, thanks are given to Allah, helping the heart find lasting peace. This peace is explained by
Qur’an as follows: “They alone are true believers whose hearts are deeply moved when they hear Allah’s name and whose faith is strengthened when its laws are communicated to them,” (Anfal, 2). To the degree that man reach the truth of dhikr, abandones his ”self” he can integrate with Allah.(Qusheyri, 1999: 222) with this temper, peace of heart that Sufis want, continues uninterruptedly with dhikr. (Qusheyri, Letaif, I, 358). Because “Be awake, for hearts find satisfaction only through the remembrance of Allah.”(Ra’d, 28)

Dhikr, softens the heart like a potion that converts it an immortal ore. When dhikr that is a divine elixir diffuses to heart, converts it to a luminous ore.(Razi, ts: 20). Dhikr as a fire, burns the mãsivâ thoughts.

**Relationship between dhikr and place**

In tasawuf there are 3 worships which increase the love of Allah.These 3 important worships are tafaqqur, dhikr and ma’rifah. For Sufi, dhikr is a rituel that doesn’t bound to time and place. (Gürer, 1999:216-218; Yılmaz, 2005:382) Because the meaning of dhikr is, going beyond the time and being immortal with the Beloved. As the Prophet (phub) declared ‘I have got such a special time with Allah that in that time there can be neither an angel nor a prophet.’ (Acluni,173-174). A Sufi is always in this mood . Then only then, he coalesces into his Rabb with a giant love. His love is so powerful that he is overhelmed with this love. As Sufi knows that main dhikr is, forgetting the world and mention about Allah, and he knows that Allah protects him as he mentions him sincerely. For Sufis dhikr is timeless and placeless. For example Sheikh Ebu Hasan Shâzelî (d. 1258), wanted from his murids to make dhikr in mürîdlerinden in the marketplace, in ruins, the streets, abandoned spaces. They saw dhikr as a sign for themselves. While Islam does not impose any limitation of time or place for remembering Allah, the “official”
dhikr in orders must be done after certain preparations are in place (Gürer, 2000:338; Memiş, 2000:269-272). The sheikh decides which type of dhikr is appropriate for the spiritual station of the disciple (murid).

**The relation of dhikr with the other worships**

For Sufis dhikr is clearly superior to other worships. When salah and dhikr is compared, the importance of dhikr can be understood easily. Although salah is considered as the most honorable of worship, it isn’t suitable to pray in some special times. Because some cases banned in salah, is not prohibited during dhikr. Namely dhikr is as important as salah. For example while Allah wants the memorial of Himself from the people in the Qur'an He does not allege any space, any special preparation, time and condition. Allah commands people remember him in every place and time, with ablution or without ritual ablutions, lying, sitting or walking and constantly mention Him except in two cases. According to him, only the one who feel the horror of negligence can understand the importance and warmth of chanting. Dhikr is the only worship that hasn’t got any requirement.

**Relationship between dhikr and praise**

According to a narrative from Prophet (pbuh): “You'd be grateful to me when you remember Me (by dhikr), and If you have forgotten me, you would swore to me (have ingratitude)” (Teragib, III, 343). This hadith al kudsi declares that Allah had demanded that all people remember him, when he wasn’t remembered that would be ungratefulness. Based on this hadith that can be said that dhikr is a duty on every human, there will be a disruption of the bond with Allah if anybody who doesn’t make dhikr. Allahu Teala is such generous that he sees the remembrance as a praise. He says when he wasn’t remembered
that would be ungratefulness because he wants the man wish to be close to him. Allah created man because of love so He wanted from man to tent and love Him. So the love will be reciprocal. Surely Allah doesn’t need the love of man, but he wants this intimacy fort he man. Because anybody who loves Allah wants to be with Him, would surely reach Him one day. Once man finds him he would get rid of all the troubles.

Benefits of Dhikr

According to Dekkâk (d. 1014) the most valid and clear way for sulûq is the dhîkr because one can reach Allah only by dhîkr. For a Sûfî, dhîkr is a sign of his loyalty to Allah, salvation from evil, and a castle that protects from the evil desires. Allah commands to make limitless dhîkr by the verse: „you who believers! Remember Allah with much remembrance;” (Ahzab, 33/41) he wants to make us dhîkr day and night, in land and sea, in journey-in residence, inwealth-in poverty, in sickness in health, hidden-open and in every occasion. In short, when murid faces to difficulties in his journey, the only weapon that he shakes like a sword to eliminate the enemy is the dhîkr. Dhîkr is sometimes an iron sledgehammer that broke the petrified hearts like a salt-ice. And it sometimes is humbleness in the face of all beings because of the Creator. Dhîkr is brush for the hearts of Sufis.for a dhakîr Allah is the food of the heart. He has gained that food through dhîkr. Dhîkr is the food of the heart and at the same time it is the most important column on the path to God (Gurol, 1982:151; Kara, 1980:79). Dhîkr is discarding the disasters for them and eliminating the damn (Kuşeyrî, 1999: 221),and it is the garden of Eden in which dhakîr walks around by laughing, having fun.Dhîkr of Allah is the spiritual sword and is a shield to the trouble and tribulation.
Liberation from the lower self and the dhikr.

In Tasawwuf, seyr al suluq is an adventure for escaping from the lower self to the universal self. In this sense, fana and baka are the two concepts that are emphasised in tasawwuf. Fana is to get rid of the nafs; Baka is gaining the integrity and reaching universal self. If the lower self separated from Allah, it will be condemned to nothingness. Love is the most basic idea that tasawwuf emphasises. It is possible to find the ideas of "fana" and "baqa" in the stories of Leyla and Mecnun, Yusuf and Züleyha etc. These stories begin with physical love, but then they revert to an inner dimension and finally passed the physical presence and fall in love with essence (Kılıç, 2000: 17). Therefore love is an awareness; the acquisition of "self" consciousness.

In the self transformation of Sufi it is important that his organs are busy with Allah (İștan, 2013:185). Dhikr which is the process of self transformation, is coming into the truth of becoming the same with the real nature of man and coming to an end. In other words, dhikr calls the man to the cleanest, purest, most transparent moment and the moment that is the most close to Allah. With the help of dhikr which is in compliance with tafaqqur, man acquires a pure and unadulterated self as a gold. Then in the maqams of fana and baqa, he understands that since the beginning he has never been separated from Allah. Namely it may be said that dhikr makes man reach the purest state. As it is stated in the hadish al qudsi "I do not go into the sky and land, but I go into believer's qalb" man can reach to his heart and even to Allah by dhikr. Dhikr is as if diving to deep and searching for treasures like pearls hidden depths. Anybody who dives sincerely will not return empty-handed. Allahu Teala decrees in surah al baqara, verse of 156: "Who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return" everyone comes from Allah and will turn to Him. This turn will be in the heart by
dying before die or the soul’s leaving the bod. In any case, the dhikr makes the most beautiful way to return to Allah.

In the history of Tasawwuf, the main objective of every Sufi, is reunion with Allah. They always have wanted to be with God in every place and time. They want human ego to be taken from themselves and to be filled with Allah’s self. Yunus Emre’s sentence is one of the most terse statement expressing this statement “there is another One I have in me” (Gölpınarlı, 1964: 257). Like him many sufis have wanted the abolition of “I” between Allah and themselves.

They think that when the man dies he is seperated from everthing but Allah and The only thing that doesn’t leave him is the dhikr. Dhikr is the recipe for salvation. Sufis have tasted all delight and pleasure by dhikr.

Sufis put forward some principles to get rid of nafs and to know themselves. For instance, the first way for turning from nafs is to acquire all of the wisdom, second way is a true asceticism and a robust muraqabah; and the third one is tafaqqur. The one who makes tafaqqur eventually becomes an intelligent and inspiring scholar and in the heart of him there appears some of the things from unknown universe (Gazali, Risale tül-Leđünüyye, 36-37). Tafaqqur has been discussed in different ways in the West (Foucault, 1999: 70-71).

In Sufi terminology, dhikr is construed as "remembering, keeping in mind, and not forgetting Allah." Dhikr is an ascetic practice whereby Sufis and members of mystic orders, be it an individual or a group, recite certain words and phrases in given quantities at various places and according to a predefined set of rules and manners. In tasawwuf, dhikr in the true sense happens when the dhakir goes ecstatic, remembering only Allah, and forgetting everything else (Uludağ,1993:563). In dhikr, the intended target is to exert an effort for remembering what was
long forgotten, and for keeping it in mind and heart for good. The outcome is a maturing of the divine connection and experience experienced internally by the individual. If one is enriched internally through dhikr, he will remember the creator of the universe with everything in it.

Dhikr is participation of Allah voluntarily to the functioning of the realm which is the work of His love (Cebecioğlu, 2004:729; Göktas, 2013: 860; Uludağ, 2001:393). According to Kaşanî the real dhikr is not the one that remember Allah, but it is the one that Allah remember the man. (Kaşanî, 2004:250).

All beings in the universe make dhikr in his own language and situations. In the verse it is said that: “don't you that to Allah prostrate all things that are in the heavens and on earth,- the sun, the moon, the stars; the hills, the trees, the animals; and a great number among mankind?” (Hacc, 18). It is an expression of love and praise to Allah. The most worthy to be thanked and to be loved is Allah.

Dhikr is the most effective worship that has a positive effect on the human psychology (Tenik & Göktas, 2008: 219). As result of dhikr inspiration and enlightenment doors open. Mercy and compassion manifest. The light of truth, wisdom, inspire and new experiences then revealed. (Sayar, 2013:86). Sûfî now pasts the stage of the universal presence from the individual assets. He has exceeded his own "human self" and has integrated with the people with "Divine self".

Dhikr al "tawhid" that play the most virtuous role in the construction of "self", is likened to a scorpion that cleans the way from all the obstacles by Sufis. Pulling the captured breath upward under the belly, the sword of “La...” cuts the physical and psychological ties that have an influence on the heart. Pulled upward, the breath melts being against the heart. When saying “…ilaha...,” the breath on the right side transforms being into
nothingness against the heart. When saying “…illallah,” hitting the breath on the heart from right to left will affect the other body organs as well. When the physical universe disintegrates into nothingness, the heart becomes the recipient and the place of peace in proving the Truth.

The importance of tawhid is because it contains name of Allah (ismi zât). To mention tawhid, is like making a feast for lovers. When Hz. Ali asked a dhikr to Prophet (phub), he said that it is "Kalima al-Tawhid" many hadith books mentions the virtue of tawhid. the Kalima al-Tawhid is the most perfect of the dhikrs, and praise (since it is a means to increase the blessings of Allah) is the most perfect of the prayers. So many prophets’ dhikr and prays had been tawhid.

Although some of the Sufis emphasised the importance of dhikr they said that it was better to say the dhikr of "hu". Because “Hû” refers to “unicity” (Serrac,1996:438). According to them, all the assets available in the universe, says "hu".

Some sufis advice least dhikr. For instance, a sufi should say salavat to prophet(phub)ten a day and saf istigfar a hundred a day.

Sûfîs think that, the most significant of dhikr is the one which is made under the supervision of murshid. However in order not to be hiden behind excuses, they say that dhikr can be made without a murshid. This shows that sufis are not insistent and bigoted about tariqah and murshid. The momentous thing is whether bounds to a mushid and tariqah, all living things that Allah created, make dhikr in their own language. It is an expression of love and praise to Allah. The most worthy to be thanked and to be loved is Allah.

Sûfîs indicate that the permission they gave about dhikr is not metaphoric, because they gave it with a divine mark. Dhikr is the essence and ore of life for a Sufi. So it is breathing. In this
process if dhikr of tawhid is also performed by the saliq, Allah would gace him a fayz. Now that heart, will be closed everythink other than Allah. Dhikr is thought to be an important way of knowing the true value of human in the sight of Allah. Because Allah is together with the one who remembers Him. This is an expression of that dhakir is making mushahadeh of Haqq.

The prophet (pbuh) emphasises that dhikr is , the largest of charity, the best of the deeds, the prayer that makes man the most charming servant of Allah, better than the best goods spentfor the sake of Allah (Mâce,Edeh:53; Tirmizi, Da’avât:6,). Glory of the dhikr is stated in verse: “and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt.”(Ankabût, 29/45). On this, the Prophet (pbuh) says that “the state of the one who makes dhikr and the one who doesn't is like the state of the dead and alive.” (Buhâri, Da’avât: 66)

For a saliq, the biggest shortcoming in the way of Sufism is not to show pacta sunt servanda (ahde vefa) and to leave the dhikr. The most prominent feature of the Sufi in love is the. If one doen't remember Allah , it is not possible to claim that man loves Allah. It is not possible for a man at the same time to taste dhikrullah (dhikr of Allah) and to engaged with the things other than Allah. Staying away from the dhikr causes the death of the heart for a Sufi. Qalb, is the source of life for the Sufi. If a man perefers the conversation with the unaware rich to the conversation with the dhakir poors, Allah would kill that man's heart (qalb).

By the dhikr, salik who escapes the monotonous reality of substance-soul relationship and individual self, experiences a unity with “absolute being” that completely surrounds himself. Sufi lives a social and psychological transformation at the end of stages of seyr al suluq. Dhakir eludes from old habits and behavior patterns and redounds a new practice to his life. The prancticing and ascetism in the dhikr circles make this new
application into a more systematic way. According to Tasawwuf, Allah, the guest in the heart palace of man, causes to emerge the divine aspect of man. Consequently the effect of dhikr is extremely important for reaching the “eternal self”. Dhikr will tell the man the reason for the departure from Allah and take to reach the pure-self in elest. Because Allah by inviting people to remember as a whole, teaches us to know the essence: “But remind; for reminding benefits the Believers. (Zăriyât, 51/55.) the message of divine reminder is an invitation to remember the the moment of treaty. Dhikr leads man before being "thing", namely tries him to reach the lucent self before he gets dirty. Dhikr reminds man that “he is nothing” invites him to be “something” by remembering Allah constantly. Nobody can find peace without remembering Him, and reciting His name. Dhikr cleans the heart from all worldly desires, polishing and filling it with love of Allah and it is the only protection against the attacks of the Satan. Allah put His dhikr into the heart of man who discard the persecution of self. That man who has the dhikr of Allah in his heart is satisfied. When lover melts away in his beloved, he really exist then. Thus he will exist in “the eternal self” by drinking the immortality water.
IMPORTANCE AND EFFECTS OF DHIKR IN SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL TERMS

In Sufi terminology, dhikr is construed as "remembering, keeping in mind, and not forgetting Allah." Dhikr is an ascetic practice whereby Sufis and members of mystic orders, be it an individual or a group, recite certain words and phrases in given quantities at various places and according to a predefined set of rules and manners. In tasawwuf, dhikr in the true sense happens when the dhakir goes ecstatic, remembering only Allah, and forgetting everything else. (Qushayri, 1940: 221-226; Ghazali, 1982: v.I, 390-402; Uludağ, 1993: 561-563) In dhikr, the intended target is to exert an effort for remembering what was long forgotten, and for keeping it in mind and heart for good. The outcome is a maturing of the divine connection and experience experienced internally by the individual. If one is enriched internally through dhikr, he will remember the creator of the universe with everything in it.

Although the term means 'remembering, reciting' in the Qur'an al-Karim, it is also employed in ways to mean salaah (Ankabut, 45/9), Qur'an (Hijr, 15/9), men of wisdom,( Nahl, 16/43; Anbiyya, 21/7) advice,( A'raf, 7/3; Isra, 17/41; Nahl, 16/43-44) and tafaqqur (reflection) (Baqara, 2/269; Ra’d, 13/19) sometimes. In the Qur'an al-Karim, the word dhikr is mentioned in two hundred and ninety-one places together with its derivatives. (Fuad, 1990: 271-275) Emphasized by the Qur’an al-Karim as well, dhikr is one of the crucial functions of the heart. Because it is dhikr that brings about the peacefulness of the heart (Fath, 4). Dhikr is used within the Qur’an al-Karim in the following meanings: Qur’an (Hijr, 9), salaah (Juma, 9; Ankabut, 45), people of the book (Anbiyya, 7), and remembering Allah. (Baqara, 152; Anbiyya, 20, Ahzab, 35, 41, 42). In addition, while
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dhikr bears such meanings as abstaining from evil, being just, not falling for the world, and always remembering Allah's orders (A'raf, 205; Kahf, 24; Munafiqun, 9; Nur, 37; Rad, 28; Ta Ha, 24), it is also used for religious practices like hajj (pilgrimage) and other similar practices (Baqara, 198-203).

The Qur’an says: “They remember Allah standing up, sitting down and lying on their side.” (Ali Imran, 3/191) Accordingly, one understands that dhikr is not restricted in terms of time and state. Another verse says: “Remember Me, so that I remember you,” (Baqara, 2/152) which points at the honor and pride that dhikr would bring.

On the importance of dhikr, the Prophet (pbuh) says: “The relation between the one who remembers Allah and the one who does not is like that between an alive person and a dead person.” (Bukhari, Daawat, 66) Another account is as follows: “How would you like if I told you that the most beneficial deed of all is to remember Allah.” (Tirmizi, Daawat, 6)

Bearing a broader meaning across the Qur’an, this word is attributed a different and outward meaning by the commentators then that attributed by mystics. Commentators usually construe relevant verses in a way to mean “remembering Allah, observing His orders in one’s acts,” and they do not perceive it as a recital of certain predefined words and phrases, either individually or in groups, in accordance with some normative rules. They hold dhikr equivalent to remembering Allah and all other religious deeds like praying, fasting and helping the poor. (Mawdudi, 1988: v.IV, 229) On top of that, it is also recognized as dhikr when one waives an opportunity to commit wrong deeds. According to commentators, happiness occurs when salaah is fulfilled in a genuine manner. When salaah is performed is a genuine way, one will be safe from all vice. (Yazir, 1997: v.VIII, 230) If one thinks that he is in the presence of Allah during salaah, he will realize his inner connection with salaah.
Otherwise, salaah is isolated from his soul, which is forgetfulness. Being the opposite of forgetfulness, if dhikr is incapable of eliminating forgetfulness, one has to assume that dhikr is not taking place properly. Denouncing those that perform the salaah in forgetfulness (Ma’un, 4-5), Allah praises those who do it in deep reverence (Mu’munun, 1-2). Having Allah in mind during salaah will affect the soul, bringing the performer of the salaah closer to good deeds, driving him away from evil. (Ateş, 1995: 1975)

According to commentary writers, another important point meant by dhikr is the Qur’an al-Karim itself. Hearts will find peace only in reciting and performing duties defined by the Qur’an al-Karim. Man can achieve psychological and physical happiness only by surrendering to the Qur’an al-Karim, which is the greatest remembrance of Allah. Remembering Allah means reciting His name in every moment, and surrendering to Him with the full understanding that one is under His control. (1988: v.V, 236)

Dhikr is one of the most fundamental requirements in tasawwuf, and a strongest principle on the path to Greatest Truth. (1940: 110) According to Sufis, the essence of dhikr, which is the opposite of forgetfulness, is to keep Mawla present in the heart at all times, and to avoid anything that may cause one to forget about Him. Sufis take the performing of farz (obligatory), wajib (essential) and sunnah (act of the Prophet) deeds as the greatest forms of remembering Allah, in which way they universalize the domain of dhikr by making it the common denominator of all religious deeds. Qushayri says the following about this: “One of the important characteristics of dhikr is that it is not restricted to a certain time. The subject is obliged to remember at all times. There is no time when dhikr is not performed as a farz or nafilah (voluntary). While salaah is the most honorable of all deeds, it is not allowed at certain times.
Yet, dhikr done in the heart can continue regardless of time or place.” (1940: 368) Therefore, dhikr is a broad concept which, according to one’s intention, can transform any physical or non-physical act into a religious deed.

According to Sufis, kalimat al-tawhid is the most virtuous of all dhikrs as it holds in itself the very essence of religion. There is no other means or way that is this effective for cleansing and taming the carnal self. This dhikr helps one strengthen his faith, enlighten his heart, and grow more mature; it helps achieve the attraction of Qayyumiyah al-Zatiyyah, and spiritual awareness and caution. Tawhid is a dhikr that renews the faith of believers. It is a ritual that eliminates all doubts and conflicts from the heart of the Sufi. Any person who performs the dhikr of tawhid in a sincere manner will achieve union with the Beloved without the need for an intercessor or a mediator. Any person that joins the circle of tawhid has made friends with Haqq. The dhikr of tawhid is the most effective among the self-control disciplines that the Sufi chooses in order to unite with the One.

The greatest of all names and recitals is the name Allah. All names and attributes are brought together in this name. Performing dhikr with this name helps one achieve the virtue of reciting Allah with His unlimited number of names and attributes. Those who recite the name Allah frequently will experience a state of extreme spiritual enthusiasm. Such state is balanced by a teacher who has perfected himself. In this sense, Ibrahim Hakki of Erzurum explains that, during dhikr, the dhakir dives deep into an ocean of ecstasy, where he sometimes cannot stand the full splendor of the dhikrullah, going into a state of lunacy. (Hakki, 1984: v.2, 691) Just like it is impossible to make good again a rotten egg, reversing such disturbance is impossible even for ordained saints. As one can understand, each dhikr affects the spiritual structure of an individual in a different way depending on its inherent quality. Out of these, the kalimat al-
tawhid has no adverse effects on the spiritual structure of man. Getting deeper in this dhikr, the structure of consciousness gets more peaceful, and one’s soul journeys toward perfection. But if those dhakirs who recite the name Allah, which is like a summary of all names, recite this name too much without being aware of his own spiritual capacity, he may experience some spiritual instability. This dictates that dhikr be within the limits of one’s individual capacity. Because any overload that is beyond one’s limits will, just like circuit breakers in a power circuit, trip the switches in one’s spiritual world, seriously disrupting the spiritual balance. At this very point, the perfected murshid (teacher) plays a crucial role in tasawwuf as he defines which disciple should engage in which dhikr and in what quantities according to the capacity and character of each. Keeping the disciple under check, he helps him maintain his inner balance with dhikr. In this context, Ali Ramitani draws an analogy between the murshid and a bird-keeper who knows how much seed each bird is to eat every day and feeds all birds accordingly. In the same way, the murshid must take into consideration the capacity of each disciple when he is training them. (Kashifi, 1292: 66) Another principle the Naqshbandi order uses for achieving a lasting state of remembrance is wuqaf al-adadi which is one of the main principled collectively called the usul al-ashura. It means observing the number.(1292: 25) At this point, Baha al-Din Naqshband points out the importance of observing numbers in dhikr by saying, “Observe the number in dhikr is for bringing unity to a fragmented inner world,” and “wuqaf al-adadi is the first station of secret wisdom.” (1292: 30-31)

Being at the heart of Sufi practices, dhikr is an important means for spiritual training. More than remembering or reciting Allah’s names and attributes in a certain harmonious way, dhikr is a verbal expression of a sort of devotion that has its roots in surrender of the heart. It is therefore that all Sufis have regarded dhikr as the keystone of applied religion. (Nicholson, 1989: 45)
Primary purpose of tasawwuf and all other mystical activities is ensuring victory over Satan of the soul that resides in human heart and represents Allah. That is to say, ensuring superiority of the soul over *nafs* (the carnal self), and achieving full control over the nafs which is identical to the worldly plane. This is because nafs is one of the principal themes in tasawwuf. The struggle of tasawwuf is a struggle for eliminating the nafs. Human nature is based on a constant battle between the “nafs” and the “soul.” The target that dhikr aims at in this battle is to distinguish between the physical and spiritual being of man, enabling free movement of this spiritual being toward Allah. Dhikr is to concentrate thought on one place in order to release the spiritual powers that will assist one make progress on the path. Dhikr is generally regarded from this perspective in tasawwuf.

Playing a dominant role in tasawwuf, dhikr, as pointed out earlier, is found in many places in the Qur’an. Qur’an al-Karim talks about the beneficence of dhikr for humans directly in over sixty verses, and indirectly in two hundred and fifty-six verses. (1990: 273-274) Emphasized this much by Qur’an, dhikr is an inner activity of man. With the verse, “And remember your Lord by your tongue (and within yourself), humbly and with fear without loudness in words in the mornings, and in the afternoons and be not of those who are neglectful.” (A’raf, 205), Allah orders that dhikr is performed in a sincere and humble manner. Remembering Allah at all times is a quality of sincere Muslims. Taking one step further in showing their sincerity, Sufis claimed that the heaven or hell is not the true objective for them. They care about neither getting closer to heaven, nor away from hell. They are just people who are madly in love with the idea of becoming one with Allah. (Emre, 1964, 257) And some Sufis desired heaven merely as a means for uniting with and seeing Allah. (Schimmel, 1953: 211)
Inner performance of dhikr depends on the condition of the heart. What is important in dhikr is not the action of the tongue, but that the heart moves with Allah. By just reciting Allah’s name, the tongue helps dhikr settle deep in the heart and the heart participates in the dhikr. (Maqqi, 1982: 248) When dhikr takes the heart under its control, it enlightens all feelings of one with heavenly light, who becomes the addressee of Allah following appraisal: “...now We have removed from you your veil, so your sight today is sharp.” (Qaf, 22). Any person who is the recipient of such appraisal sets an example of the “perfect man” which is desired by individuals and societies alike. Increase in the number of such people will create a livable society. Presence of people of such high character proves the significant impact dhikr has over human psychology. According to Sufis, failure to remember or fulfill dhikr will result in the death of the heart. Forgetting is one of the feeblenesses of limited man. This feebleness is manifested in remembering Allah, too. The Qur’an explains the situation of those who forget Allah with the verse, “...woe to those whose hearts are hard against the remembrance of Allah...” (Zumar, 22.). When the heart is deprived from dhikr, the soul is devoid of love. A heart that is far from Allah’s love will be friend the nafs. (Jawziyya, 1994: II, 331)

Such feebleness are seen at times among Sufi orders during practices of asceticism. Extremist behaviors of some disciples during dhikr sessions are not acceptable. Thus, remembering Allah has something to do with neither the way one dresses nor his posture. Remembering Him is about heart and intention. Holding certain postures above others, or cladding one’s self in certain ways is against the spirit of the Qur’an al-Karim. Dhikr should tread an internal path of destitution and secrecy. Vocalizing it, or crying out loud in frenzy is merely a result of forgetfulness. (1994: 118) Allah must be remembered in order to be safe from forgetfulness and petrifaction of the heart. Keeping Him in mind and heart at all times will ensure balance between
the soul and the body, keeping the soul in a constant state of aliveness and alertness. (1997: v.VII, 458) In saying, "Do not belong to the forgetful," the Qur’an al-Karim requires that Allah is never forgotten, and that the dhikr of the heart is unwavering.

Dhikr is a door between Allah and His subjects, which door is open at all times. It is a word from the subject to Allah which is uttered at the time, in the place and in the language of preference of the subject. Qur’an does not talk about a specific posture for dhikr. Like all Muslim religious practices, Qur’an liberates people in relation to dhikr, without forcing them to conform to strict formalities. “Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth.” (Ali Imran, 191) If one is still unable to enjoy dialogue with Allah, in spite of such tolerance in relation to the posture during dhikr, such person’s heart is for sure “closed to divine transmitters.” The practice of dhikr is an act of both the tongue and the heart which is regardless of time. (Qayyim, 1994: v.II, 332)

Once dhikr is integrated with thinking and becomes automatic without the need for any effort, the stage of higher dhikr is reached, which shows that the differentiation of thought and body is overcome. When the heart is rusted for not remembering Allah, and goes astray from the divine path, its only cure is dhikr. This important cure is underlined by Qur’an as follows: “Remember your Lord often, recite His name in the morning and in the evening.” (A’raf, 205) Dhikr polishes the heart, surrounds the heart shining with Allah’s light with love toward the “Absolute Being.” The disciple perishes against the unmatched beauty of the Beloved. Greatest desire of the lover is to reach that unprecedented beauty. All he wants is to be with Him, and live with Him. This state shows that the heart of the disciple is filled up to the brim with love. He surrounded by love on so many coasts that He becomes his ears, eyes, will and senses. Forgetting
everything other than Allah, persons who place nothing but Allah’s love in their hearts prevent both individual and social degradation.

Having a significant impact on the social formation of man, dhikr is a spiritual rebirth and the start of a brand new life. Because the first step in dhikr is to forget about the "self," to think only about the “Absolute Being” which treats all subjects equally, and to become a recipient of the manifestation of His attributes. As dhikr is continued, the disciple feels himself with Allah alone. This is a state whereby all human wrongdoing and sins are abandoned, and one’s entire senses are filled with divine love. The disciple reaches such a level that he no more has the feeling that all of his behaviors are being witnessed. Perishing in his own dhikr, he reaches such a state that he does not go back to the nafs (the limited, carnal self). This is the traditional passage from the lower self to the universal self. (Arasteh, 2000: 85) With the manifestation of Allah, he gains an universal quality which goes beyond the social being. He is now a person of higher character who embraces all people with love and caring.

Done everyday or at least one day every week, dhikr is a ritualistic activity that helps people socialize and get closer. This important activity has meanings that go beyond being a means for remembering Allah. With its unifying quality, it provides morale and motivation against degraded moral and human relations. According to some disciples, dhikr is the ability to withstand a decayed world. Dhikr is the most effective cure against the hardships and problems one encounters in the course of day-to-day life. And for some, it is the only effective way of treatment against modern-day problems like depression, deprivation of love, unhappiness, injustice and negativities experienced by most people, against disrupted human relationships, and all other social inconveniences. In the same time, dhikr stops one from spending his time on useless
activities, preventing him from wasting his energy. It gives the disciple a spirit of solidarity in both internal and external relations. Reciting person gets to know his being through the power of the recited words. With dhikr, the Sufi lives in an infinite time and an eternal being. Through dhikr, the dhakir is liberated from the mundane day-to-day reality of matter-spirit interactions, and from the individual self, engaging in an intimate relationship with the “Absolute Being” which transcends and entirely encloses his own being. Through dhikr, which is the sayr al-suluq station of the journey, and through other Sufi training methods, the individual undergoes a process of social and psychological change in the earlier stages. Abandoning his former habits and forms of behavior, the disciple engages in a new practice in his life. Exercises and practices that are performed in groups help one make new practices more systematic. According to Sufi thinking, residing in man’s heart, Allah causes one’s divine character to manifest. Hurting, offending and humiliating other people is the greatest crime one could commit against Allah. Being tender and merciful toward people is a result of an intelligence that is acquired through the heart. If the disciple feed his heart with the remembrance of Allah, loving and respecting humans is no different from loving and respecting Allah.

Starting out from the verse, “Remembering is for sure the greatest deed of all.”(Ankabut, 45), Sufis hold dhikr to be more important than salaah and tafaqur. Because this deed can be performed only by higher souls. On this, the Prophet (pbuh) says that “Best deed is dhikrullah (remembering Allah).” ( Ibn Maja, Adab, 53; Tirmizi, Daawat, 6) For a person to be able to perform dhikr, the heart-tongue balance must be fully in place. Being a form of invocation, dhikr happens when the tongue reveals the feelings that are held in the heart. Sufis take tongue to be the translator of the heart. (1994: v.II, 332) It is therefore that one cannot sincerely perform dhikr without harmony between the
tongue and the heart. Sincere dhikr protects the individual from deviations and from making mistakes against Allah. This process of protection is among the most important tasks of the Sufi. The Sufi must remember and keep in mind Allah at all times. When He is remembered, the heart will be steered by Him and will be safe from slips. It is therefore that a continuous benefit is to be found in reminding. Because Allah says, “Remind, because there is good in reminding for true believers” (Zariyah, 55).

The evergreen desire of the Sufis is to reach Allah. Longing to become one with Allah, Sufis want to reach Allah as soon as possible. Reaching happens as a product of love for Allah. The love for the Beloved increases even more as His name is recited. Every time the lover remembers the Beloved, his heartbeats will accelerate, he will get excited and start sweating. Remembering the beloved causes an increase in the for Him. If it is not for dhikr, love connection will not form between Allah and the subject. Thanks to love, thanks are given to Allah, helping the heart find lasting peace. This peace is explained by Qur’an as follows: “They alone are true believers whose hearts are deeply moved when they hear Allah’s name and whose faith is strengthened when its laws are communicated to them,” (Anfal, 2). On the Sufi path, truths are found only through love. If one wants to remember Allah in the true sense, he must fulfill his biddings, and constantly serve with Him in his mind. One can understand a person better only when his love for such person is deepened. (Khan and Fernandez, 1994: 31) Just like the lover needs to perish in the love of the beloved in order to reach her, the subject also needs to perish in Allah’s love for becoming one with Him. (1982: v.1, 428) Dhikr is to forget about everything other than the subject of dhikr. That means excluding from himself all physical universe which is not Allah. Dhikr is the first step on the path of love; because if one loves another, he always wants to spend time with and remember and recite the beloved. As a result of such remembrance, heart filled with love for Allah
will become the house of dhikr every moment, achieving true happiness. Allah explains the same as follows: “Be awake, for hearts find satisfaction only through the remembrance of Allah.” (Ra’d, 28)

A sincere Sufi remembers Allah at all times in order to cleanse his soul, to have his sins pardoned, to perish in the being of eternal God, and to go ecstatic with the virtues of divine love. Remembering Allah happens first by closely watching Him and His works. Witnessing Allah’s works in an attentive and continuous manner, that is to say observing his signs in the physical plane is called muraqabah. In doing muraqabah of small and big things, it is also dhikr to understand all aspects of the created, being alert and attentive as to their evidences, to take lessons and to think about and remember the Creator. In the history of tasawwuf, we find in the lives of many Sufis a great desire for becoming one with Allah. They wanted to be with Allah at all times and places. The last wish of Rabia, whose has name has come to be associated by Sufis with the love for Allah, was to be with Allah. (Smith, 1990: 110) Yunus asked that the limited being be taken away from him, and he be filled with Allah’s being. Similarly, many Sufis asked that the “being” between Allah and themselves be lifted. Sufis believe that man is alone but Allah when he dies and is placed in the grave, and that spouses, children, relatives or friends are not there in the grave, and that the only thing that does not leave one alone in the grave is dhikr. Dhikr is such a prescription for salvation that it gives man both worldly happiness and gives him his Beloved in the afterlife. He tasted all pleasures and joy through dhikr, reaching the long desired thanks to dhikr. On a day that everybody else has deserted him, he is with Allah, which is the one Person that all men want to be with on that day.

In brief, dhikr is the only sword the disciple can thrust at perils on his journey. (1940: 37) At times, dhikr is a
sledgehammer for crushing petrified hearts. Dhikr is a brush for polishing Sufi hearts. For the dhakir, Allah is food for the heart, which food comes through dhikr. Apart from being the food for hearts, dhikr is also the most important pillar on the path leading to Allah. (Schimmel, 1982: 151; Kubra, 1980:79) To them, dhikr is freedom from disasters, troubles, a garden of Eden in which they can stroll around with joy and laughter. To be brief, no one can find peace without remembering Him, and reciting His name. Dhikr cleans the heart from all worldly desires, polishing and filling it with love of Allah. It is the only protection against the attacks of the Satan.

While Islam does not impose any limitation of time or place for remembering Allah, the “official” dhikr in orders must be done after certain preparations are in place. (Memis, 2000: 269-272; Gurer, 2000:338; Konur, 2000: 160; Viedani, 1996: 39; Serin, 1994: 132; Yilmaz, 1980: 188-197) The sheikh decides which type of dhikr is appropriate for the spiritual station of the disciple. There are different types of dhikr depending on the spiritual status of the disciple: There is the “dhikr al-lisani,” which is performed by just the tongue without the participation of the heart; or there is the “dhikr al-qalbi,” which is performed in the heart; or there is the dhikr that is performed by both. In addition to these, there is the dhikr al-sirr, dhikr al-khafi, and dhikr al-akhfa. The last one being the most difficult of all, it can be duly performed only by those who are in advanced stages of the journey. (Hilmi Efendi, 1982: 139) The disciple is obliged to fulfill the dhikr within the rules set by his sheikh. He must make an effort to control and beautify his behaviors and morals. As a ritualistic activity, dhikr sessions both help “remember Allah,” and also have many unifying and socializing functions. These are environments where their members interact at individual and society level.
Categories of dhikr

Sufis have categorized dhikr in various ways. For example, at one place dhikr is discussed in three forms; the first one is dhikr performed by the tongue with a forgetful heart. This is called dhikr in numbers. This is regarded as the dhikr of the commoners. The second is dhikr performed with peace of heart, which is done for servitude. Being the dhikr of the chosen ones, the fruit of this dhikr is good deeds. The third is dhikr performed by all organs, which is the dhikr of the chosen of the chosen, the outcome of which is inexplicable. The true nature of this kind of dhikr, which belong to those subjects who are madly in love with Allah, can only be appreciated by the Haqq. Being the opposite of forgetfulness, if dhikr cannot eliminate forgetfulness, it means that dhikr is not properly performed. According to Him, love between God and the subject is mutual because He says, “…remember Me, I will remember you.” (Baqara, 152). Therefore the disciple must observe time in remembering Allah continuously. Remembering Allah means taking part in conversations about Him, which conversation is the most virtuous of all. All deeds are defined to remember Allah and only Allah, to keep him in mind, and to not be attracted to anything but Him. Because Allah says: “…keep up prayer for My remembrance…” (Ta Ha, 14.)

Tafaqqur (Reflection)

Tafaqqur is an advance state for the maturing of reflection. As Sufis also point out, the truth of dhikr is distant to letters and sounds; it is the affection in one’s essence of heart toward the One Truth (Haqq). Qur’an invites one to tafaqqur as well as to dhikr. Qur’an defines dhikr and tafaqqur as an inseparable whole that is the most important virtue of a true believer. “Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand.
Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire: Our Lord! surely whomsoever Thou makest enter the fire, him Thou hast indeed brought to disgrace, and there shall be no helpers for the unjust.” (Ali Imran, 190–192).

Referenced Qur’anic verses suggest that there is a very close relationship between dhikr and tafaqqur, and one could think that tafaqqur is an upper state of dhikr. In support of this notion, the Prophet (pbuh) points out that one moment of tafaqqur equals sixty years spent in any other form of religious practice. (Dahlawi, ts: II, 591)

The most important outcome of dhikr the purification of the heart from limited self identification of the ego, excessive desire and avarice, and to disappear in the Truth (Haqq). In this case, an important precondition of peaceful heart is dhikr. Peaceful heart means freedom of heart from ignorance and lowly morality. This means a surrendering of the heart to Allah, finding peace in facing away from attributing partners to Allah, and from lowly desires and worldly conversation. (Rhazi, 1990: v.XXIV, 130)

Qur’an saying that hearts can be satisfied only through the remembrance of Allah (Rad, 13/28) is a clear indicator that the heart can be saved and fed through dhikr, which suggests that diseases of the heart can be remedied only through dhikr. Because in mental diseases, the root cause of the disease is negligence of the fundamental needs of the soul. (Fromm, 1982: 19) In the same way, love, which is the most fundamental need of human beings finds its deserved place through dhikr. Because it creates a special connection between Allah and the subject, and the subject develops ability toward the blessing and granting of Allah. At the same time, dhikr Enlightens one on the inside and outside, while eliminating the mass and density of the physical
structure. But in order to achieve such outcome of dhikr, one needs to be able to protect the heart from assaults of memories and apprehension. It may not be possible to salvage one’s self from this situation in the beginning. Therefore until peace and spiritual integrity is ensured, the task of the disciple will be to do his best to keep memories and apprehensive feelings out of the heart, and to obtain the consciousness of benefaction.

While, during the process of dhikr, all sorts of memories, thoughts and apprehension will naturally haunt the disciple, dhikr will bear its fruits in time as a result of zeal and hard work. In this context, Ibn Ataullah mentions that dhikr consist of two shells and one nucleus. This could be explained as follows: the dhikr that the disciple engages in the beginning is a verbal form of dhikr (recitation). Even if the heart is not synchronized with this dhikr, it should at least approve of it so that the verbal dhikr can be sound. In time, the heart will grow harmonious to the verbal recitation, which completes the shell. And at the third stage, dhikr starts to spread from the heart to the organs. Virtually each organ starts remembering Allah in its own way. This completes the nucleus, which is the essence, and one will achieve a state of constant remembrance in time. (Eskandari, 1993: 9-10)

This suggests that, until one is fully matured through dhikr and becomes a man of caution, fana and baqa will follow one another, and there may be alternating states of jazba and sakr experienced along the way. But one can again be saved by dhikr from such transitional states as it is stated in Qur’an: “When you forget, remember your Lord.” (Kahf, 18/24) That is to say, even in the state of dhikr, one is invited to a target state whereby he achieves lasting dhikr of the soul and the heart in the true sense. Dhikr is a milestone in contacting the Creator. Because Allah will not grant the taste and joy of engaging in dhikr and its thought to those whom he does not favor, and to those to whom
he will not give his blessings. That is to say, if one loves Allah, a good indicator is that he keeps himself busy with dhikr. An indicator of Allah’s love for His subject is that the subject gets to spend time with Him. In the verse, “…remember me, and I will remember you…” one can understand how the subject remembers Haqq, but how does Haqq remember the subject? According to Sufis, when Haqq remembers His subject, he makes his remembering subject constantly ascend to the top of his station of dhikr, enabling him to continue with His dhikr, which greater than every thing else. And this is the greatest blessing. What is emphasized here that one, during his spiritual journey, gets to know his nafs depending on the unfolding created by dhikr, and becomes the recipient of his Lord’s contentment and intimate friendship by means of realizing himself, that is to say, discovering and realizing the potential he holds.

Dhikr has both worldly and heavenly aspects. From a worldly point of view, true dhikr occurs when one reflects with all organs, (Rushdi, 1967: 19-68) eliminates forgetfulness from his heart, and removes all but Allah from the domain of the heart. Heavenly aspect of dhikr is the blessing, honor and highness one is endowed in the afterlife, the nature of which is obscure to limited intellect like ours.

During the dhikr of the Sufis, exercises like holding, increasing the pace of or moving (vibrating) the breath function in a way that is similar to the halotropic breathing techniques employed in psychology. Such halotropic breathing exercise automatically resolve any troubling feelings and physical appearances that are rooted in the subconscious. (Grof, 2002: 269) It is observed that dhikr helps overcome certain phobias and consuming negative emotions, resulting in an increase in self-confidence and self-respect; observation also suggests that chronic infections (sinusitis, angina, bronchitis) are improved
and serious psychosomatic headaches like migraine are not experienced after the new on-charge of energy opens blood circulation in the body. (2002: 279) Every psycho-spiritual system that has studied the nature of man since the beginning of history has regarded breath as a vital bond connecting the body, mind and the heart. (2002: 256) In Sufi training of dhikr, manner and order of breathing is critical for activating both the physical and the subconscious structure.

Badr al-Din Kashmir of the Sufis (Kashmiri, 1376/1997: 157-158) (10th/16th century) lists a separate piece of intelligence for each stage of the practice of dhikr, which is done by holding one’s breath and hitting it against the qalb (heart). For instance, pulling the captured breath upward under the belly, the sword of “La...” cuts the physical and psychological ties that have an influence on the heart. Pulled upward, the breath melts being against the heart. When saying “…ilaha...,” the breath on the right side transforms being into nothingness against the heart. When saying “…illallah,” hitting the breath on the heart from right to left will affect the other body organs as well. When the physical universe disintegrates into nothingness, the heart becomes the recipient and the place of peace in proving the Truth. So one could say that this Sufi method is one that is valid for all people.

Through repetition of these dhikrs, the inner structure of man is settled. Because there is creative power in the vibration of a voice. For instance we call each other things like “sugar, honey, angel,” and these words create a positive impact on their addressees, and in this way, said person will start displaying that respective quality.(Fernandez, 1997: 33) Weakening words like “sneaky, evil, liar, difficult, bloody...” decrease our psychological energy every time we utter them, creating images in our mind that diminish enthusiasm. Strong words like “secret, love, respect, help...” strengthen our soul, and modify our
feelings. (Bozdag, 2000: 70) Through repeated dhikrs, we make references to our subconscious, rising from unawareness to higher planes of consciousness and awareness. (Dorst, 1997: 22) As the Upanishads say, in time “a person will turn into what he thinks.” We identify with the purpose of our thought, and now our thoughts are our own property, our own characteristic. (Tweedie, 1997: 103) In this way, dhikr serves as a key to enable us feel Allah internally, being painted in His colors. Through the positive energy of dhikr, the heart is conquered and the virus of conceit is killed. And it becomes possible to defeat the *nafs al-ammarah*, which is a soldier of the Satan.

On the other hand Stanislav Grof explains: “*a person whose existence is limited to the boring level of day-to-day consciousness, who has never accessed the transcendent and awe-inspiring experience of reality, will have a great deal of difficulty in conquering the deeply-penetrated fear of death, and find a deeper meaning in life. Under such circumstances, a major part of everyday behavior will be directed by the needs of the false ego, resulting in the meaningful aspects of life becoming reactive, and not authentic. It is therefore that we need to integrate political activities with certain systematic spiritual practices that offer experiential access to transcendent planes.*” (2002: 398)

In tasawwuf, such spiritual practices usually refer to dhikr in the general sense. Through dhikr, one grasps the meaning of life and the purpose of existence. Because dhikr helps us access the inner depths of our souls, which come from Allah, giving us an understanding of the backstage of existence. A person who has reached the true reality will gradually break free from false identities, and will, after a while, become authentic by realizing himself. In other words, he reverts to his original self. In this context, J. Paul Sartre says, as one of the fundamental principles of existentialism, that “a person is such as he makes himself.”
DHIKR/REMEMBRANCE IN SUFISM

(Sartre, 1980: 57) In this very sense, a Sufi uses dhikr to direct his being to Allah to be Allah-like, to educate himself with Allah’s moral values, to paint himself in His colors. Because he constantly bombards the sub-conscious with Allah through dhikr. To the extent of his sincerity, this practice of dhikr shape his inner contingencies in an Allah-like manner. Hadith al-Sharif says the following on this matter: “...We become his seeing eye and hearing ear...” (Tirmizi, Dawaat, 80)

In conclusion, dhikr is the most important elixir for the making of the Perfect Man. Taking root in man’s heart with dhikr, Allah’s love universalizes all acts and thoughts of man (by means of taking root in time). It causes a structuring toward awareness of servitude and perfection in one’s behaviors. In brief, dhikr shoulders a vital role in the making of the Perfect Man.

Solitude and dhikr

Sufis are people who enlighten themselves by turning into light the feeling that gives birth to “solitude,” which is nothing like the loneliness created and invented internally by others. As they live, they give meaning to life rather than oppose it. One could conclude that men catch the disease of “loneliness” only when they forget that “they are not alone,” or forget about the Rule of the Creator. This brings us back to the dhikr ritual of the Sufis, which means “remembering at all times in order not to forget.”

According to Western psychologists, people who live in solitude lead more organized lives, in terms of self-realization and communication, compared to the population of peers who live together. (Zimmer, 2005: 16)

Otherwise it is not a physical separation and seclusion from people. Here, the Sufi turns to dhikr and deep reflection for increasing intimacy with Allah with whom he is left alone,
abstracting his heart from people in order to enjoy the heart connection established with his Lord. (1982: 97) This inner separation will bring one happiness at both individual and society level. Turning his back to offending language and actions, he will stand, in his individual and social life, against all words and deeds that are to the detriment of people. Sufis emphasize the importance of uzlat from the continuance of deeds point of view. He believe that those who discontinue uzlat and get back with the people are doomed to a shameful end. (Isfahani, ts: v.II, 381) According to Mawlana, darkness of a water well is preferable to the darkness of a crowd. Because those who are stuck in the crowd cannot save themselves. (Mawlana, 1990: v.I, 1299)

During the period of *uzlat* (isolation) or *halwat* (seclusion) spent with dhikr, the heart of the Sufi will be filled with grace and refinement, because hearts of those who remember the Lord taste the divine light.

Some Sufis like Ataullah al-Eskanderi (d.1309) saw uzlat as a cure for the heart. They believe that there is no other act that is comparable to uzlat in enlightening the heart of the Sufi with love, tafaqqur and dhikr. It is only through uzlat that Sufis can dive deep into the world of tafaqqur, or reflection in order to find one’s own self, and to stay in solitude with and be inspired by God. (Eskanderi, 1309; Ataiyyah, 1868) Cut off from everything else, he stays out of sight in the company of Haqq, (E. Asım, 1304-1305: v.III, 805) in a state of exchange through dhikr and tafaqqur. Being alone with God, the subject cleanses his heart from all other things, after which he can focus on the ideation of Allah with a peaceful heart and mind. (Kubra, 1980: 76) Dhikr sessions are places of uzlat. Because the Sufi is with Him day and night. And the Sufi engages in uzlat because those sessions are promising of Haqq. The Sufi searches for solitude with his Lord amidst masses. In circles of Haqq, such solitude is not to be found. He is in constant search of a friend who can understand him and share his secret at all times.
Marifah (Gnosis)

The Sufi must acquire marifah (gnosis) through sincerity and consciousness of Allah, asceticism, nafs training and continuous dhikr in his deeds and practices. Another important means for acquiring marifah is to constantly keep Allah in mind, which is also possible through dhikr. Man will achieve marifah if he is able to suppress the animalistic feelings inside, that is to say, if he trains and keeps under check the primal feelings that he was created with. He sees dhikr and the ilm al-wuslah as two main cornerstones. He regards both as vital for the initiated/disciple, and expects that they do it constantly. There are three main points to help realize the contiguity of the Sufi, which cannot be discussed separately. These are the main principles in the maturing, suluq, and reaching Haqq of the Sufi, which are dhikr/tafaqqur, marifah and muhabbah, which concepts are severally connected to one another. Due to this philosophy, the Sufi has to keep Haqq in mind for the enlightenment of his inner world. The station of the Gnostic depends on this enlightenment, and not on becoming an expert of the Arabic language, or mastering other forms of wisdom. Because since the Gnostic stands closer to Haqq and away from the people, namely the nature, things of the physical world are not dear or interesting to his heart. The being, as it is related to anything other than Haqq, holds no value compared to Him. To the Sufi, dhikr means realizing the constant “moment” in order to access the secret of participating in the everlasting being, and to live with the creating power. (1940: 5) Because realizing the moment for the Creator in this sense, that is to say living “the moment” constantly is only possible through saving the self from being limited and veiled by the past and the future, which is done by remembering/reciting Allah at all times. The Sufi school of thought names this as “wakf,” in other words, fulfilling the rule of the current time, or experiencing “the moment” constantly by remembering the Creator at all times. In fact, the Sufi remembers
God in everything he sees on an “ayn al-yaqin” basis, living with Him at all times. When the Sufi hears the sound of animals, the crackling of trees, the splashing of waters, the chirping of birds, the blowing of the wind, or the sound of the thunder, he is reminded by all these of the singleness of the Creator, providing evidence for His unmatched beauty. (Isfahani, 1932: v.IX, 942)

Because dhikr is the most effective of all the paths that lead to Allah. (1940: 35) Any moment that goes by without remembering him is wasted. Dhikr is such a practice that it penetrates into the whole being of the Sufi. In this state, he remembers of nothing. Any person who remembers Allah will forget about others in that moment of remembering. Because to them, Haqq is worth everything. (Attar, 1985: 411) Through dhikr, the Sufi will be so intimate with Allah that he will even forget about his own dhikr. That is true dhikr. (Sarraj, 1380/1960: 220)

The opening of the third eye, and the acquisition of the knowledge of yaqin (certainty) is also through dhikr. Dhikr is neither something passive, nor a mere unaware repetition of Haqq’s name. According to him, dhikr is when the disciple remembers his creator with his whole being. Dhikr is also when the disciple orientates his entire self toward Allah for the purpose of communication, looses himself in Him, focusing all receivers on divine will and divine transmitters. Dhikr is the moment when the disciple experiences togetherness with Allah at a level of perfection, is not forgetful of Him, and is cut off from everything else. It is the moment when love, enlightenment and ecstasy reach the highest level, drowning the dhakir (he who remembers) in a sea of love. To the disciple, Haqq is not an insipid, dull or loveless divinity stuck between the beads of a rosary. He manifests in all beings in the eyes of a love-struck disciple. (1989: 83)
ESAD ERBILI AND DHIKR

Muhammed Esad Erbili was born in 1264 / 1847 in Erbil district of Mousul, and was the son of Sheikh Muhammed Said, who was the head of Khalidi lodge in Erbil. His grandfather is Sheikh Hidayetullah, who is a successor (khalifa) of Khalid al Baghdadi. He is said to be “Sayyid”, a grandson of Prophet, from both his father's and mother's ancestors. After his Sheikh Taha al Hariri passed away in Erbil, he started his guidance. Esad Efendi is a Sufi having permission from both Naqshi and Qadiri paths. Esad Efendi given an account of his initial training as follows: “I have received my initial education at the Sufi lodge and madrasa of my father, under the mastership of my special teacher Mehmet Efendi, and finally I have received my educational permission (ijaza) from Davud Efendi, who was one of the greatest masters of the time, in one thousand and eighty seven (1287 / 1870)” We understand from here that Esad Efendi completed his initial education in the Sufi lodge and madrasa, which was constructed by Mevlana Khalid Baghdadi in Erbil, where his father was a master in. After receiving special lectures from Davud Efendi, who is considered among the most reputed scholars of his time, he received permission from him when he was 23. He receives spiritual education from Taha al Hariri when he was 23. Sheikh Taha al Hariri assigns him to education worldly sciences to the new entrees of the path. This indicates that he was a qualified person who reached to a level of perfection in worldly sciences at that ibid. Esad Efendi explains why he did not enter to path of his father or grandfather, despite the fact that they were both Sufi masters as follows: “Since my spiritual journey in the Great Path of Naqshbandiya did not correspond to the teaching times of my father and grandfather, I have entered to the service of Taha al Hariri an-Naqshbandiya al-Khalidi, who was the qutb al-irshad of that time.” . After completing his spiritual education (sayr al suluk) in five years, upon the death of his sheikh, Taha al Hariri
in 1292/1875, he starts the mission of guidance (irshad) in line with the order he received from his sheikh. Esad Efendi, who received his scientific permission from Davud Efendi in 1287/1870, received his Naqshi permission from Taha al Hariri in 1294/1877. Following this, he received the Qadiri permission in 1303/1883 from Sayyid Abdulhamid Rifqani, his Qadiri sheikh in Baghdad.

Sheikh Esad Efendi makes his way to Hijaz in order to fulfill his duty of pilgrimibid in 1875, when he received permission after he completed his spiritual journey under the discipline of Taha al-Hariri, his Naqshi Sheikh. When he learnt that his sheikh passed away when he was in pilgrimibid, he comes back to Istanbul, locates there, and starts to give lectures to the son-in-law of Abdulhamid II, Dervis Pasazade. He lectures the Divan of Hafiz and Luccet al Asrar of Mawlana Jami in Fatih Mosque. However, the principle place of education of Esad Efendi is Kelami Dergah. Because many senior level administrators and scholars of that time have received spiritual guidance from him in this convent. Limitless number of people were raised in Kelami Dergah.

Esad Efendi is assigned to his homeland, Erbil, by Abdulhamid Khan in 1316 / 1900. Esad Efendi has continued his guidance activities during these 10 years when he loved in Erbil, and organized the Turks here about not favoring the British administration. Meanwhile he assigned his son, Muhammed Efendi, for establishing the Society of Turkish Lovers and for encouraging Turks to apply the United Nations. When the British forces occupied Mousul (1918) Muhammed Efendi was exiled to Basra by the British for his actions in favor of Turks. During this ten-year period when he stayed in Erbil, Esad Efendi engaged in actions against the missionary activities of the British.

After staying ten years in his homeland, Erbil, Esad Efendi returned back to Istanbul upon the invitation of his lovers in 1324
1908, when constitutional monarchy was promulgated, and restarts his tasks in the Kelami Dergah. Meanwhile, he makes conversations in the Cadirli chalet in Erenkoy. When the Sheikh position in Selimiye Dergah in Uskudar became vacant, Esad Efendi is assigned to this position. He assigns his son, Mehmed Ali Efendi, to the dergah to act on behalf of him. He also continues his guidance efforts as he visits the dergah from time to time.

Esad Efendi acts as the head of the assembly of Sheikhs, and leads the publishing of a journal named “Ceride-i Suфиýye” and an organization named “Cemiyyet-i Suфиýye”, and he is assigned as the Surre Emini by the Emperor, Sultan Reshad.

With the collapse of Ottoman Empire and emergence of the Republic of Turkey, as a result of closure of all Sufi lodges in 1925, Esad Efendi takes himself to retreat in his chalet in Erenkoy. Esad Efendi is taken to Menemen, together with his son Muhammed Ali Efendi, with the claim that they had relation with the Menemen event that happened on 23 December 1930, and they are taken to trial for a capital punishment. Whereas his son, Mehmed Efendi, is executed, the capital punishment ruled for Esad Efendi is converted into life imprisonment due to his elder ibid. Esad Efendi passed away in the night of 3-4 March 1931 when he was 84 while being treated for uremia disease in the military hospital in Menemen.

Esad Efendi has many works and writings about tasawwuf, tafseer, hadeeth and literature. His works are: Kenzü'l-İrфан, Mektûbât, Dîvan, Risâle-i Es’adiyye, Fâtiha-i Şerîfe Translation, Articles and a translation named Tevhid Risâlesi. (Göktaş, 2013)

Opinions of Esad Erbili About Dhikr

According to Es’ad Efendi dhikr is an instruction; Es’ad Efendi who claims that the Sufi Orders are one in terms of their
esence, emphasizes dhikr as the essence of this Muhammedan Sufi path (Erbili, 1341:12). This instruction was first ordered to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), and then to his followers. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) received this order by understanding its essence through the Gabriel, and then carried out the dhikr by tongue and heart. Following the path of the Prophet is only dependent on the dhikr performed by tongue and heart. For that reason, it is a well known reality that there is a clear need for such remembrances. Es’ad Erbili, who considers dhikr as a requirement of the human essence, and, as opposed to what is asserted by many, claims that the origin of the Sufi orders and the dhikr is the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and who thus ties this basis to the Quran, presents us the systemized form of the dhikr in his works. According to Es’ad Efendi, the only friend is His remembrance. Although the person might be away from Allah, he is with Allah with his heart and spirit.

As regards the “hidden dhikr” (dhikr al khafi) and “openly dhikr” (dhikr al khafi) Es’ad Efendi says that the verse in Quran “Remember your Lord by begging to and fearing from him, in the mornings and evenings, with a slow voice, and do not be among the ignorant” (Araf, 7/205) implies the importance of the hidden dhikr. He also says that the following verse in quran reminds us of the openly dhikr: (Erbili, 1341:12). “Pray your lord by begging and hiddenly. Because he does not love those who exceed the limits ”(Araf, 7/55). According to him, this verse allows for the openly dhikr. (Erbili, 1341:23).

Es’ad Erbili considers dhikr as a necessity for the awakening of the ten “letaif”, for the enlightenment of the whole body with the norms of the Sharia, and for the healing of the body and the heart, through both hidden and openly dhikr, as it was put by the Prophetic saying: “The hidden of the dhikr is better, as the enough amount of livelihood is better”. He states that this is possible only through the adance and blessing of a Master who
DHIKR/REMEMBRANCE IN SUFISM

has submitted himself to Allah and who reached the level of annihilation (fana fi’llah). (Erbili, 1341:48).

According to Es’ad Efendi, the hidden dhikr is more valuable than the one that is performed openly. The openly dhikr is more influential on new starters.

Es’ad Efendi shows the evidence of the circle of “Khatm al Khajegan” through the 28th verse of the Surat al Kahf (Erbili, 1341:25). Es’ad Efendi also shows the order in the verse: “Oh those who believe! Remember Allah abundantly!” (Ahzab, 33/41) as being applicable in general to all men and women as in the case of prayers (salat), obligatory alms and fasting. Es’ad Efendi states that performing the dhikr in the mosque is valuable to the extent this does not disturb others. In relation to the participation of women in the dhikr, he says that the women are also under the obligation of dhikr as men are and they are allowed to participate in the dhikr gathering provided that their voice is not hear, same as they participate in the prayers with the group of men at a place specially allocated for them in a covered place. (Erbili, 1341:43).

As it is put by the Prophetic saying: “Remembrance of Allah is the healing of the hearts”, the spiritual ascension to reach the high levels of the paradise will not be accomplished unless the heart is healed. (Erbili, 1341: 116). Some of the diseases of the hearts are as follows: Jealousy, hypocrisy, arrogance. Es’ad Efendi considers dhikr as a polish of the heart. Es’ad Erbili explains the connection between dhikr and praising God as follows: “The first of praise is the one done for the benefit of the nation of Mohammad, which deserves mercy. The second should be the dhikr and thinking made with the ten spiritual powers. (Erbili, 1341: 156).

The purification of the self and cleaning of the heart are the two important targets of the dhikr at the beginning. Es’ad Erbili
takes the love as the basis in dhikr and in rabita and in many other issues. As a matter of fact, the dhikr of Allah arises at the heart of the believer when the love becomes real. This complies with the following verse of Quran: “There are men who could not be ignored of the remembrance of Allah, neither by trade nor any shopping” (Nur, 24/37) and thus the heart finds its peace and tranquility. According to Esad Efendi, what is instructed in the Prophetic saying“My eyes sleep, but my heart not” (Buhari, Teheccüd, 16) is that one should not be ignorant of the remembrance of Allah even for a moment. (Erbili: 46.)

According to Es’ad Efendi, the Kalima al-Tawhid (since it constitutes the basis for iman) is the most perfect of the dhikrs, and praise (since it is a means to increase the blessings of Allah) is the most perfect of the prayers.

Es’ad Efendi also shows the order in the verse: “Oh those who believe! Remember Allah abundantly!” (Ahzab, 33/41) as being applicable in general to all men and women as in the case of prayers (salat), obligatory alms and fasting. He states that this is expressly stated in the 35th verse of the Surat al-Ahzam which ends with “men and women who remember Allah abundantly” and thus that the men and women are both ordered to remember Allah. Es’ad Efendi shows the verse “Stay patient with those who beg him in the mornings and evenings asking for the assent of their Lord” (Kehf, 18/28) as an evidence of the circular performance of Khatm al-Khacegan. (Erbili, 1341: 12). And again according to Es’ad Efendi, the dhikr is more valuable than the jihad and non obligatory fasting.

Es’ad Efendi shows the verse: “Oh those who believe! Remember Allah abundantly” (Ahzâb 33/41) as an evidence for the “dhikr al Kull” which is known as a station in the Sufi path, implying the obligation to get connected with a Sufi master and to make “rabita” with him, which is questionable in quranic terms.
Relying on the verse which states: “Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting and sleeping on their sides” (Al-i Îmran, 3/191), he made explanations about whether the dhikr is to be performed standing or sitting. (Erbili, 1341: 71)

The ultimate result of dhikr is the “muraqaba” According to Es’ad Efendi, the “muraqaba al-maiyya” in the Sufi paths is not something that is different from the practices of the Prophet (PBUH)

Es’ad Efendi aims at creating the consciousness of dhikr in an individual. In order for the person to live every moment of his life in a meaningful manner, he needs to keep in memory the being to which he is affiliated. For that reason, according to him, dhikr is a requirement of the human nature. Dhikr is necessary for the satisfaction of the soul. For that reason, the personality that is desired is the one “which could not be distracted from the dhikr of Allah by anything”. Thus he is the human who has the highest capacity of sensitivity among the beings and he could thus maximize his capacity. The dhikr, which has been performed in Sufi paths in a systematic manner for the heart, the letaif and muraqaba, is a way of teaching for this.

Dhikr is not a form of asceticism that is restricted to Islam or tasawwuf only; it has an important place in other religions and faiths. Throughout the course of history, man felt the need to believe in a higher power. Believing is a natural need for humans. They tried to saturate this need by believing in God or another power. Be it heavenly or not, there is a power that people take as sacred, attach value to, and even die for. Many rituals and religious practices were done, and sacrifices made for such sacred powers. One cannot deny these forms of belief which are actually experienced, adopted by people, and have become institutionalized with their practices, moral values and belief systems. In heavenly religions, there are many approaches that take one to divine power, one of which is the mystical way.
Mysticism is the inner dimension of all religions, and it is a common characteristic in heavenly religions which share the same single source. For the whole course of human history, similar mystical schools existed in different time periods in different geographical regions. The extent of such similarity among religions is open to debate, of course. These commonalities that one finds in religions are not a shortcoming, but a richness for one another. Therefore one says that dhikr is a form of ascetic practice that is performed not only in Islamic tasawwuf, but also in many mystic schools of thought. It is a phenomenon that one finds in Indian mysticism, in the teaching of Hermes, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, in the Neo-Platonism, in Gnosticism, Christian mysticism, and in the Jewish Kabbala.
AFTERWORD

In Sufi understanding, remembrance/dhikr is the principle of living with divine spirit. Without this principle in place, man cannot remember the Creator in all aspects of life. Remembering means fulfilling His wish at every stage of life. Dhikr is to live with Allah pursuant to the divine will that is found at the depths of the soul, or in one’s natality. This is the truth of one’s return to his essence, and knowing oneself. If one illuminates the heart, which is the divine center in him, in accordance with Allah’s wish, and polishes it with the attraction of His love, then Allah’s light will illuminate every atom of his. An illuminated human being lives constantly with Allah, integrating with Him. All that it takes is to attain that treasure buried deep within. Once one lays his hands on that divine treasure, there is in every stage of that person’s life a being that is devoted to Allah in every atom.

The Dhakir (he who remembers) is exposed to a state of being where he constantly remembers Allah with the divine breath Allah bestowed on him eternally. Because remembering Allah is to exist with Him. Remembering Allah is to connect with the Creator with love and knowledge, and to lead a life with Him. Keeping Allah in mind, man ascends to Him. Not only he ascends to Allah, but also becomes a mirror for those who cannot be illuminated with Allah’s light, illuminating them with the light he reflects from Him.

Every step taken in forgetfulness of Allah brings about a liability. The Dhakir must remember Allah in his every deed, like He commands, so that there can grow between Allah and himself
a love and an attainment to His knowledge. Men who remember Allah attain such love that, just like Mawlana, they, as a result of this enthusiastic love, do things incomprehensible to ordinary people as divine love overflows from them. Likewise, it shows that all the pain suffered by prophet Job was turned into endurance and love. Remembering Allah at all times, they find peace with all-encompassing divine inspiration, their hearts and skins glowing with this light.

Like there is a way of polishing every different kind of surface, the way to polish the heart is to remember, that is, to bear in mind Allah at all times. In the process of man’s becoming and maturing, tasawwuf reaches down to his cells to weave them with Allah. This takes place only through the truth of dhikr. Because dhikr works the initiate’s being like the carder works the cotton, transforming him into a persona that is devoted to Allah. Dhikr turns one into a person who stands with Allah at all times. As Allah says: “Allah has sent down the best statement: a consistent Book wherein is reiteration. The skins shiver therefrom of those who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance of Allah.” (Zumar, 39/23).

Since knowledge attained by the Sufi by keeping Allah in his heart is the person, attributes and names of Allah, this kind of knowledge harbors no doubt. This knowledge produces a reality whereby Allah is known for certain, and life is lived with Him. Dhikr is to know Allah with full Lordship, to know the self to be a servant, and to know that Allah is the origin of every being, and that everything will eventually recourse to Him.

To remember Allah is to know Allah with His names and attributes; to be loyal to Allah in every deed; and to avoid all kinds of worldly morals and all disasters brought thereabout. Through dhikr, the initiate leaves aside all that makes one forget Allah, breaking free from his own self in a sea of eagerness and love. Remembrance is the most important method leading to
love, and love to knowledge. Marifah is the fruit of love, and love is the fruit of remembering Allah. The personality of the self-knowing Sufi emerges as result of remembrance, and by the union of divine love and divine knowledge. What helps the Sufi attain divine and cosmic secrets is the truths reflected in the light of the illuminated heart.

Keeping Allah in his mind and heart, one guzzles from the spring of Kafoor, which is the source of His beauty. This drink creates a sea of knowledge and wisdom in his heart. It takes him up to a level of pleasure and taste which is found in no worldly knowledge. By remembering Allah, the Sufi also remembers that the proof that takes him to Allah is Allah himself again. What dhikr reminds man is the consciousness to transform both worlds into a garden of roses. Genuine Sufi, who spends every moment with Allah, is a person who, by virtue of his creativity and craftsmanship, makes life easier for other members of the society.

Dhikr shows the path leading to a happy and peaceful state of being which is attained after cleaning the palace that is the heart from all but Allah, turning it into a sky for Him. Remembrance offers the prescription of happiness for living with Allah cleansing oneself from all that are created. This prescription offers a prototype portrait of “the Perfect Man” who is at the summit of psychological and sociological values. Dhikr is a manifestation of how men equipped with a Sufi state of being are curing the socio-psychological wounds of individuals and the society alike, offering new life to individual and collective peace by pointing at de facto solutions to the impasses and traumas of the individual and the society.

Remembrance/dhikr to learn first oneself through self-knowledge, then learn the rest of the creation, and finally to learn the truth of being one with the Creator. By teaching man how to return to the self, it shows that true knowledge is to discover the
“being.” In other words, it emphasizes that man’s greatest treasure is himself, and that one will attain greatest wealth if he discovers this treasure within. In conclusion, it is our hope that this humble work, which we have penned from a Sufi perspective, will provide guidance in remembering Allah, which is the true purpose thereof.
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