

Murshid Samuel L. Lewis – Suras on Breath

1. It is the breath which controls all aspects of life from the seen to the unseen. When the breath is in the body, life is there and when the breath is not in the body life is not there.
2. Under ordinary circumstances all breath does not leave the human body with each exhalation. Some is retained in chemical combination with the blood and some air is dissolved in the blood fluid. Little as it may appear to be in quantity, it is sufficient to maintain life, but its chief function is to enable the muscle to operate in order that the lungs may inhale a fresh supply of air.
3. Breath should not be confused with air, although from a purely materialistic point of view it may seem so. One does not call magnetism a piece of iron although a magnet is usually composed of iron. Breath is energy rather than material, yet breath-energy or prana may be associated with oxygen even as magnetism is associated with iron or steel.
4. Breath may also be called the man and from one point of view this is so true. As individual being man is mind, as collective being man is Adam. It was in Adam's nostrils that God breathed the breath of life. It is breath which invigorates each and all men. It is mind which makes the man, it is breath or spirit which unites men, which forms Adam. This makes possible the Brotherhood of Man in the Holy Spirit or Divine Breath.
5. It is harmony between breath and breath which brings harmony between men. This comes most easily through music and dancing, through concentrating on a common subject, through personal agreement or through having the same or similar ideals. All these produce consonance of breath and harmony between personalities. Therefore all are employed by the Sufi schools in their spiritual instructions.
6. Degree of spiritual evolution can be measured by the Breath — its power, its sweetness, its rhythm and its tone. As spirit and breath may be considered one, so breath condition and grade of spiritual evolution may be treated as one.

