

Sufistic Counseling in Robert Frager’s Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Human beings are creatures created by God and, therefore, are part of the universe. As created beings, humans are also entrusted by Allah with the responsibility of serving as khalifah (vicegerents) on earth and managing its affairs. This is stated by Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 30. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, humans are endowed by Allah with the heart (qalb), spirit (ruh), desires (nafs), passions (syahwat), and intellect (‘aql).[] As khalifah, humans are responsible for managing and prospering the earth by utilizing these God-given potentials. This study aims to analyze the concept of humans as khalifah from Imam Al-Ghazali’s perspective and its relevance to the development of morally upright individuals. The research employs a library research method with a descriptive-analytical approach through the examination of Imam Al-Ghazali’s works and relevant supporting literature. The findings indicate that human beings possess not only a physical dimension but also a spiritual dimension that must be developed in a balanced manner. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, the proportional utilization of the heart, spirit, desires, passions, and intellect forms the foundation for developing noble character and fulfilling the trust of vicegerency. Imbalances in managing these aspects may lead to behavioral deviations and destruction in human life. Therefore, a profound understanding of human nature, accompanied by continuous spiritual and intellectual development, is essential in cultivating individuals who are morally upright, responsible, and capable of carrying out their role as khalifah on earth in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Keywords: Heart, Self, Psychospirituality, Robert Frager

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INTRODUCTION

Sufism (Tasawuf) is one of the spiritual dimensions of Islam that focuses on drawing closer to Allah SWT through the purification of the soul (tazkiyat al-nafs), the control of worldly desires, and the cultivation of noble character. Sufism is not merely understood as a religious teaching centered on rituals but also as a path of personal development that emphasizes balance between the outward and inward dimensions of human existence. Over time, Sufism has often been regarded as a

means of attaining inner peace and wisdom amid the complexities of modern life.

According to Robert Frager, Sufism can be likened to a form of spiritual psychotherapy aimed at eliminating negative traits within individuals so that they may achieve deeper self-awareness and establish a closer relationship with God.[] Meanwhile, Hidayat explains that Sufism has several meanings, including its association with the Ahl al-Suffah during the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW, the conscious process of purifying the soul, and the effort to place oneself at the forefront of righteousness and worship.

In the context of psychology, Sufism is closely related to the human psyche. Sufi psychology emerges as an approach that integrates psychological and spiritual dimensions in understanding human behavior and personality development. Frager argues that Sufi psychology seeks to understand the true nature of the self through the cultivation of spiritual awareness and a relationship with the Creator.[] This approach has become increasingly relevant in the modern era, where psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, identity crises, and loss of meaning in life are becoming more prevalent.

Furthermore, Hadziq explains that, ontologically, Sufi psychology is not limited to spirituality alone but also encompasses physical and metaphysical dimensions, worldly and afterlife realities, and the influence of unseen elements acknowledged in Islamic teachings.[] Therefore, Sufi psychology offers a more comprehensive perspective on human psychological dynamics compared to modern psychology, which tends to focus primarily on empirical and material aspects.

On the other hand, literary works often serve as a medium for representing inner experiences, psychological conflicts, and

humanity's search for meaning in life. Through characters, plot development, and narrative structures, literature can become a relevant object of study when analyzed using the perspective of Sufi psychology. Such analysis enables researchers to understand how spiritual values, soul purification processes, and journeys toward self-awareness are represented in literary works.

Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between Sufism and psychology. Frager's research emphasizes that Sufi concepts are relevant to transpersonal psychology and mental health development. Other studies by Hadziq indicate that Sufi psychology provides an alternative approach to understanding psychological problems through the integration of spiritual and psychological dimensions.

In the field of literature, a number of studies have examined Sufistic elements in Indonesian literary works and Islamic literature. These studies generally focus on Sufi values, spiritual symbolism, or the religious journeys of characters in literary narratives. However, most of these studies emphasize normative aspects of Sufi teachings and have not extensively integrated Sufi psychological analysis into the examination of characters' psychological dynamics.

Based on previous studies, there remains a research gap in the limited number of studies that comprehensively connect Sufi psychology with literary analysis. Most studies examine Sufism primarily as a spiritual doctrine, while psychological aspects related to self-awareness, ego control, soul purification, and the search for meaning in life have not been thoroughly explored. Therefore, research is needed that integrates the perspective of Sufi psychology in analyzing representations of spiritual and psychological experiences in literary works.

The novelty of this study lies in the use of Sufi psychology as the primary analytical framework for examining literary works. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on normative or symbolic aspects of Sufism, this research combines the dimensions of psychology and Islamic spirituality to understand personality development, self-awareness, and the inner transformation of literary characters. Consequently, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of literary studies and Islamic psychology while offering a new perspective on the relationship between literature, spirituality, and mental health.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research method, which does not rely on statistical procedures (Moleong, 2004). Qualitative research can also be understood as a scientific approach based on data obtained from natural settings. In its implementation, this study adopts a library research approach, a type of research that does not involve direct field intervention but instead limits its scope to data and literature related to the research topic (Zed, 2004).

The analytical technique used is comparative analysis. The results of the analysis are presented descriptively by comparing two or more viewpoints on specific aspects determined by the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Biography of Robert Frager

Robert Frager was born on June 20, 1940, in California into a Jewish family. He studied at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, from 1957 to 1961 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Psychology. He later earned a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Harvard University, where he studied from 1961 to 1967. Between 1963 and 1965, he was

a fellow at the East–West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. From 1967 to 1968, he served as a researcher at Keio University in Tokyo, Japan.

Frager studied transpersonal psychology and founded the first educational institution in the United States dedicated to this field. He also taught courses on spiritual psychology and “Islamic Wisdom” through the online programs of the University of Philosophical Research and the MA online program of the Holmes Institute Graduate School of Consciousness Studies.

Frager embraced Islam in 1981. He also became a Sufi teacher, or shaykh, in the Halveti-Jerrahi Order, where he was initiated by Muzaffer Ozak and given the name Sheikh Ragip al-Jerrahi. He led a dergah (Sufi community) in Redwood City.

In addition, Frager practiced the Japanese martial art Aikido. Holding the rank of 8th Dan in the International Aikido Federation, he was recognized as one of the highest-ranked non-Japanese Aikido practitioners in the world.

B. Robert Frager’s Thought

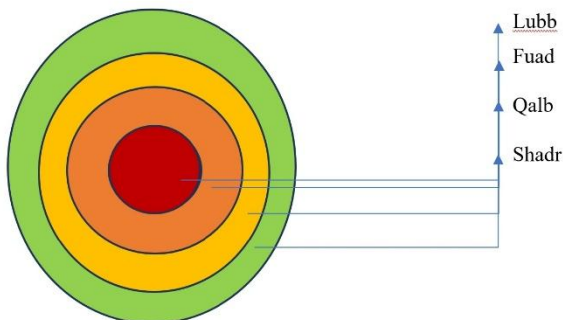
1. The Four Stations of the Heart

The heart determines the quality of a person's character and conduct. The Prophet Muhammad said, “Indeed, there is a piece of flesh in the body; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupted, the whole body is corrupted. Truly, it is the heart” (Al-Bukhari, 1400 H). Faith cannot remain steadfast without a healthy and virtuous heart. Moreover, a person’s wisdom and salvation depend upon the soundness and goodness of the heart. Robert Frager explains that, in the Sufi tradition, the heart is the center of human spiritual consciousness that transcends mere intellectual functions and serves as a means of directly knowing God.

In his discussion of the Four Stations of the Heart, presented in his well-known book

Heart, Self, & Soul: The Sufi Psychology of Growth, Balance, and Harmony, Frager draws heavily on the teachings of Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi. The Arabic terms for these four stations are shadr (the breast or chest), qalb (the heart), fu'ad (the deeper heart), and lubb (the innermost core of the heart). Frager's concept of the Four Stations of the Heart (shadr, qalb, fu'ad, and lubb) is significantly influenced by classical Sufi thinkers, particularly Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi, who elaborated on the hierarchy of human spiritual consciousness.

The four stations of the heart are arranged like a set of concentric circles. The chest (sadr) forms the outermost circle, while the heart (qalb) and the deeper heart (fu'ad) occupy the two middle circles. The innermost heart (lubb) is located at the center, serving as the core of the entire structure.



Picture 1

Each station of the heart is associated with a different spiritual level, a different degree of knowledge and understanding, and a different level of the self (nafs) :

Chest (Shadr)	Heart (Qalnb)	The Depths of the Heart (Fuad)	The Deepest Part of One's Heart (Lubb)
The Light of Islam	The Light of Faith	Light of Gnosis	The Light of Tawhid
Muslim	Believe	Arif (a Gnostic)	A believer in Tawhid

Knowledge of correct actions	Inner wisdom	Inner vision	Divine disposition
The Nafs al-Ammarah is tyrannical and commands one toward evil.	The self-accusing soul filled with regret.	The Inspired Self	The tranquil soul

a) Chest (Shadr)

Shadr is understood as the outermost layer of the heart, directly connected to outward experiences and serving as the arena of struggle between divine impulses and the desires of the lower self (nafs).[] In Arabic, shadr refers to the “heart and intellect.” As a verb, it can mean to depart, to lead, and also to oppose or resist. Shadr is located between the physical heart and the lower part of the body and may be described as the outer aspect of the heart. It governs our interaction with the external world, and within it we struggle against the negative impulses of the lower self. Shadr is the primary battleground between positive and negative forces within us, where we are tested by our inclinations and negative desires.

What this means is that when positive forces are strong, the chest is filled with light and comes under the influence of the divine soul, which resides in the deepest recesses of the heart. However, when negative traits such as envy, desire, and pride enter the chest, or when the chest contracts due to sorrow, suffering, or tragedy and remains in that state for a long period of time, it becomes enveloped in darkness.

An important component of all our outward actions is the nafs (self/ego). Why? Because our capacity for action resides within the nafs. In other words, the heart feels, while the nafs acts. We can say that the outward practice of religion is the use of the nafs in accordance with the will of Allah. It is the

surrender of our individual will to the will of Allah, a dedication to serving the Divine, and a commitment to following the path that brings us closer to Allah.

Paradoxically, we must also use our personal will to do what is right. We need to exert ourselves in order to follow the path of truth found in every religion. In this sense, the nafs enters the chest in order to test us. To succeed, we must hold firmly to our religious and spiritual practices and continue to act with sincerity and love. Such actions weaken our negative tendencies; then the light of faith in the heart illuminates the chest and prevents the nafs from dominating it. Even so, we must continue striving against these negative traits.

The chest (shadr) is the core of human action. It is the place where our personality interacts with the spiritual realm. As human beings, we need our personality in order to act, yet we also require guidance and profound wisdom from the heart. Within the chest, we have the ability to transform our negative tendencies into positive ones.

b) Heart (Qalb)

The hadith describing the heart as the center of both goodness and evil within a person was narrated by Muhammad al-Bukhari in the Book of Faith (Kitab al-Iman) and serves as one of the primary foundations of Islamic spiritual psychology.[] From the perspective of Islamic psychology, the heart is not merely a physical organ; rather, it is the center of human moral, spiritual, and emotional perception.[] Abu Hamid al-Ghazali explained that the heart is the "king" of all the body's organs, while the organs act as executors of the heart's commands.

When we have purified our chest (shadr) and our heart (qalb) becomes open, we begin to understand the shallow outer surface of what lies hidden within. As mentioned earlier, actions that harm others or violate universal spiritual principles (such as honesty,

integrity, and compassion) tend to close and harden the heart. To become a dervish, one must possess a heart that is gentle, vulnerable, sensitive, and aware.

The Prophet Muhammad said, "Knowledge is of two kinds: knowledge of the tongue and knowledge of the heart—the latter being the most precious form of knowledge." In the West, greater emphasis has traditionally been placed on "knowledge of the tongue," or book learning, which represents one level of acquired intelligence. According to Robert Frager, this is one of the factors that limits traditional Western psychology, as it has not fully recognized the deeper knowledge of the heart and the wholeness of human intelligence.

In this perspective, the brain is likened to a computer that can store data and reorganize information that has been accumulated, whereas creativity originates from the heart. Unfortunately, the creativity of the heart can sometimes be misused by the nafs (ego or lower self), as can be seen in many creative individuals who nevertheless remain arrogant, materialistic, and self-centered.

The heart is the essence of all human behavior and life. If a person's heart is good, then their behavior will also be good. However, if the heart is corrupted, it will negatively affect their actions and conduct. Therefore, diseases of the heart can distort the heart's perception, character, and will.[] As illustrated by al-Ghazali's analogy, the heart is like a king, while the limbs and bodily faculties are its soldiers. If the king is righteous, the affairs of the soldiers will also be righteous; conversely, if the king is corrupt, the soldiers will likewise be led astray.[] The heart is the standard by which the goodness of the body's actions is measured. It is like a leader that guides and governs the body.

Among the scholars who devoted significant attention to the study of reason ('aql) and the heart (qalb) was Abu Hamid

Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, commonly known as Al-Ghazali. According to Al-Ghazali's perspective, reason and the heart cannot be separated from one another, just as other essential elements such as the nafs (self or soul) and the ruh (spirit) are interconnected. Together, these elements constitute what Al-Ghazali refers to as the soul (nafs).

c) The Deeper Heart (Fu'ad)

The deeper heart (fu'ad) is the third layer of the heart, serving as the center of inner spiritual vision and the core of the light of ma'rifah (gnosis or spiritual knowledge of God).[] The relationship between the heart and the deeper heart is very close, and at times they are almost indistinguishable. The heart knows, while the deeper heart (the inner faculty) sees. Both complement one another, just as knowledge and sight complement each other. When knowledge and vision are united, what was previously unseen becomes visible, and our faith grows into certainty.

By analogy, those who possess knowledge without inner vision are like scholars who have studied a foreign country for many years but have never actually visited it. No matter how much they learn about that country, there will always be something missing from their understanding.

Likewise, vision without knowledge is not sufficient. It is like a traveler who visits a foreign country but knows nothing about its language, history, or customs. Such travelers may directly experience the country, yet they lack the knowledge necessary to understand or fully appreciate it. Only those who both know and personally experience something possess a complete and meaningful understanding of it.

In conclusion, the vision of the deeper heart is the true vision. "The heart did not deny what it saw." Likewise, true wisdom comes only from inner knowledge combined with inner vision.

d) The Deepest Core of the Heart (Lubb)

The deepest heart, or the innermost core of the heart, is unlimited in its scope and radiance. It is like a great axis that remains stable while everything else revolves around it. The Arabic term for this deepest level of the heart is "Lubb," which means "essence" or "inner understanding," and serves as the foundation of true religion. The light of the other levels of the heart is also derived from the light of Allah's unity and uniqueness that resides within the Lubb. The Lubb is the deepest essence of the heart, liberated from the domination of the ego, and becomes the locus of the perfect manifestation of tawhid (the oneness of Allah).[]

In the Sufi tradition, lubb is regarded as the center of wisdom and the highest level of spiritual consciousness, attainable only through a long process of self-purification.[] The innermost heart is nourished by the water of Allah's benevolence, and its roots are filled with the light of certainty. At this deepest level, the heart is cultivated and sustained directly by Allah, without any intermediary. Even the lower self (nafs), with its desires and heedlessness, cannot approach it.

As Allah the Exalted says:

"Allah grants wisdom to whom He wills, and whoever has been granted wisdom has certainly been given abundant good. Yet none will take heed except those endowed with understanding." (Qur'an, Al-Baqarah 2:269)

Likewise, those who have turned away from negative traits and have gained access to the innermost heart are granted inner understanding, as indicated in the Qur'an:

"He gives wisdom to whomsoever He wills; and whoever is given wisdom has indeed been granted abundant good. But none take heed except those of sound understanding." (Qur'an, Al-Baqarah 2:269)

The deepest truth can only be comprehended through the deepest heart. This inward understanding is often likened to

intelligence or reason. At this final and innermost level—the lubb, or the core of the heart—we enter an immeasurably vast realm. Lubb lies beyond the reach of words, theories, and discursive thought. At this stage, the saints and spiritual masters enter the world of poetry rather than prose.

2. Self-Transformation

Self-transformation occurs when a person is able to shift the dominant force governing oneself from the lower desires of the self (nafs) to higher spiritual levels. In sequence, the seven stages of the nafs are: the tyrannical self, the self-reproaching self, the inspired self, the tranquil self, the contented self, the self pleasing to God, and the purified self.

The Tyrannical Nafs (Nafs Ammārah)

According to Robert Frager, the tyrannical nafs can be defined as the commanding, dominating self, or the self that urges one toward evil. The term ammārah literally means “command” or “repeated habit.” This first stage is referred to as “the disturbing self,” as mentioned in Qur'an Surah Yusuf (12:53) (Frager, 2014). Frager explains that this nafs drives a person from the unconscious level, causing them to be unaware of the wrongdoing involved in their evil actions. The tyrannical nafs is extremely powerful, making it easy for individuals to fall under its influence without realizing it (Frager, 2013).

The Self-Reproaching Nafs (Nafs Lawwāmah)

Robert Frager's concept of the self-reproaching nafs is similar to nafs al-lawwāmah in al-Ghazali's framework. While under the control of the tyrannical nafs, individuals gradually become more aware of the egoic forces that continue to bind them. However, as the light of faith and inner understanding grows within, they begin to gain clarity and self-awareness. Their true nature rejects wrongdoing and quickly seeks God's

forgiveness whenever mistakes are made. Nevertheless, although one may understand the harmful effects of egotism, genuine transformation has not yet been achieved, since these negative tendencies can reappear in certain situations (Frager, 2013).

Frager compares this condition to that of addicts who recognize the destructive consequences of their addictions, whether to self-admiration (ujub), hypocrisy, religious rigidity, alcoholism, drugs, or worldly glamour (Frager, 2014). According to Utsman Najati, this awareness is characterized by feelings of guilt and self-reproach, as described in Qur'an Surah Al-Qiyāmah (75:1–2) (Najati, 2005). Inspired Nafs (Nafs Terilhami)

At this level of the nafs, the wise human heart begins to make room for personality and consciousness. This nafs provides individuals with the strength to overcome the power of the ego through wisdom, intuition, and inner guidance. Nevertheless, the ego remains active and is still capable of using a person's wisdom and intuition to promote self-aggrandizement (Frager, 2013). Individuals begin to experience profound joy in prayer, meditation, and other spiritual activities. They also begin to develop love and compassion for God and His creation. According to Frager, this stage marks the beginning of genuine Sufi practice. The essence of this nafs is wisdom, and its characteristics include generosity, contentment (qana'ah), trust in God (tawakal), and repentance (Frager, 2014). Peaceful Nafs (Nafs Tenteram)

According to Frager, citing Sheikh Safer, a person becomes safe from the major destruction caused by the negative ego upon reaching this stage (Frager, 2014). With this nafs, according to Sahl ibn Abdullah, individuals feel happiness and tranquility in relation to their Lord. Consequently, their spiritual condition becomes strong, and when their spirituality is strengthened, others

become happy with them and feel sympathy toward them (As-Sarraj, 2009). This is consistent with Qur'anic verses such as Al-Fajr 27–30, Ar-Ra'd 28, and Al-Baqarah 260. To attain this level, one of the essential foundations is the opening of the heart, as the light of the heart neutralizes the negative tendencies and delusions associated with the lower levels of the nafs. Inner training at this stage aims to minimize the sense of separation from God, and the various tendencies that have developed throughout the journey begin to reunite and integrate (Frager, 2014).

Contented Nafs (Nafs Ridha)

Upon entering the stage of the contented nafs, the human spirit becomes refined, allowing spiritual growth to deepen further. This condition is reflected in Qur'an Al-Fajr (89): 27–30. According to Frager, individuals at this level are not only satisfied with their destiny but also content with all the difficulties and trials bestowed upon them by God, because they realize that divine mercy and compassion continuously surround them. When a person's gratitude and love for God become immense, even bitterness is experienced as sweetness. This is a sign that one has reached the station of the contented nafs. Other characteristics of those who have entered this stage include miracles, freedom, sincerity, contemplation, and remembrance of God (such as solitude or meditation). Frager explains in his diagram that individuals become increasingly sensitive to various aspects of both the higher and lower unconscious. The center of the self, the "I," becomes deeper, and people consciously perceive what was previously hidden in the unconscious mind (Frager, 2014).

God-Pleased Nafs (Nafs Diridhai)

Robert Frager, quoting Ibn Arabi, describes this stage as an inner marriage between the nafs (self) and the ruh (spirit), symbolically representing the union of the

feminine (self) and masculine (spirit) dimensions within a person. This inner marriage gives birth to a "child" within the heart. The spirit inspires individuals to elevate themselves, and the heart follows its guidance. At this stage, people begin to realize that everything they do ultimately comes from God, meaning that they do not act independently. At this level, individuals attain genuine inner unity and become capable of seeing the world as a holistic entity. Frager illustrates that the nafs and the spirit have merged, eliminating any dichotomy or duality within the soul. When a person becomes whole, the divine unity of the world becomes evident. As Rumi expressed, the world appears as multiplicity, like a shattered mirror reflecting the same image in countless fragments. If the broken pieces are gathered and restored into a complete mirror, only a single image remains reflected (Frager, 2014).
Purified Nafs (Nafs Suci)

At the level of the purified nafs, individuals have completely transcended the self. No trace of egoism remains; if even a slight remnant of ego persists, one cannot attain this stage. What remains is only union with God, a state that some describe as ecstasy (James, 2004). Frager further characterizes this condition with the expression "die before death." Individuals who reach this stage exist in a state of constant prayer because they no longer possess personal will. It is as though they are continually guided into the presence of the All-Wise and All-Powerful God. The best course for them is complete surrender and devotion to God, for in such divine presence and wisdom there is no room for even the smallest degree of selfishness. In Frager's diagram, the "I" no longer exists; there is no clear boundary between the self and God. The self dissolves like salt poured into the sea. Only God remains. A Naqshbandi sheikh describes this stage as that of a traveler on the path of

truth, where a person becomes capable of fully transforming themselves (Frager, 2014).[]

3. Psychospiritual Therapy

Psycho refers to the self or the soul. Meanwhile, spiritual comes from the word spirit, which originates from the Latin noun spiritus, meaning “breath,” and the verb spirare, meaning “to breathe.” Based on its etymology, life is associated with breathing, and having breath means having spirit. Being spiritual means having a stronger connection to matters of the spirit or soul than to physical or material things. Spirituality is an essential part of a person's overall health and well-being.[] Psychospiritual relates to the connection between spirituality and the mind.

Another perspective suggests that the spiritual aspect involves two processes. The first is an upward process, which refers to the growth of an internal strength that transforms a person's relationship with God. The second is a downward process, characterized by improvements in an individual's physical reality as a result of internal transformation. Another implication of this change is the development of greater self-awareness, through which divine values within the individual are manifested externally through personal experiences and self-growth.

There is a distinction between spirituality and religiosity, particularly in terms of self-awareness and an individual's understanding of their origin, purpose, and destiny. Religion is regarded as the absolute truth of life that has a physical manifestation in the world. It consists of specific behavioral practices associated with beliefs that are expressed and upheld by particular institutions and followed by their members.

Religion has a confession of faith, a community, and a code of ethics. In other words, spirituality provides answers to who a person is and what their existence and consciousness mean, while religion provides

answers to what a person should do in terms of behavior and actions. A person may adhere to a particular religion while possessing a different spirituality. People may belong to the same religion, yet they do not necessarily share the same spiritual path or level of spirituality.

Psychospirituality is also closely related to the human psyche. A healthy soul generally stems from noble character, whereas an unhealthy soul originates from reprehensible character traits. Noble character and virtuous deeds are the qualities exemplified by the prophets and the ash-shiddiqin (the truthful and righteous). In contrast, blameworthy character traits and actions are associated with Satan and distance individuals from Allah SWT. Therefore, the perfection of the soul's happiness can be attained through the spiritualization of Islam.[] This, of course, refers to psychospiritual therapy that is grounded in the teachings of Islam. Interestingly, one of the definitions of Islamic psychology is that it deals with the psychological and spiritual aspects of human beings. Among these aspects are al-rūḥ (the spirit), al-nafs (the self or soul), al-qalb (the heart), al-ḍamīr (the conscience), al-fu'ād (the inner heart), al-lubb (the intellect or innermost essence), and others.

The purpose of psychospiritual therapy is to address psychological problems by integrating psychological and spiritual approaches. Psychospiritual therapy is a form of psychotherapy or psychological counseling that recognizes and utilizes values, faith, and spirituality as resources for personal growth and positive change. When a person reaches the highest level of spiritual development, they experience a sense of freedom, peace, and tranquility in life. And the process of healing or therapy is usually connected to each individual's beliefs and faith traditions.

Among Sufis, or those who are beginning the path of Sufism, efforts are made

to attain clarity, purity, and sanctity of the heart through the stages of takhalliyah al-nafs (purification of the self from negative traits), taḥalliyah al-nafs (adornment of the self with virtuous qualities), and tajalliyah al-nafs (the manifestation of divine illumination within the self). In addition, there are various maqāmāt (spiritual stations) in the Sufi journey, including repentance (tawbah), asceticism (zuhd), patience (ṣabr), trust in God (tawakkul), contentment (riḍā), love (maḥabbah), fear of God (khawf), humility (tawāḍu'), piety (taqwā), sincerity (ikhlaṣ), gratitude (shukr), and spiritual knowledge or gnosis (ma'rifah).

Among the fundamental Sufi practices used in psychospiritual therapy to enhance spirituality are fasting, seclusion, proper etiquette and conduct (adab), remembrance of God (dhikr), and reflection on death.

CONCLUSION

Robert Frager is an American social psychologist who was responsible for establishing the first educational institution in the United States dedicated to transpersonal psychology. Frager is known for founding the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, now called Sofia University, in Palo Alto, California, where he currently serves as Director of the low-residency Master of Arts program in Spiritual Guidance and as a Professor of Psychology. Frager previously served as president of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology and has worked as a consultant, educator, and spiritual teacher within the Sufi tradition.

In discussing the four stations of the heart presented in his well-known book, *Heart, Self, & Soul: The Sufi Psychology of Growth, Balance, and Harmony*, Robert Frager was influenced by Hakim al-Tirmidhi. The Arabic terms for these four stations are shadr (the chest), qalb (the heart), fu'ād (the deeper

heart), and lubb (the innermost core of the heart). These four stations are arranged like a series of concentric circles. The chest (shadr) forms the outermost circle, while the heart (qalb) and the deeper heart (fu'ād) occupy the middle circles. The innermost heart (lubb) is located at the center, representing the deepest spiritual core.

Self-transformation occurs when a person is able to shift the dominant force governing the self from lower desires to higher spiritual states. In sequence, the seven levels of the nafs are the commanding or tyrannical self, the self-reproaching self, the inspired self, the tranquil self, the contented self, the self-pleasing to God, and the purified self.

The purpose of psychospiritual therapy is to address psychological problems by integrating psychological and spiritual approaches. Psychospiritual therapy is a form of psychotherapy or psychological counseling that acknowledges and utilizes values, faith, and spirituality as essential elements for personal change and growth. When an individual reaches a high level of spiritual development, they may experience a sense of freedom, inner peace, and harmony in life. The healing or therapeutic process is generally connected to the individual's own system of beliefs and spiritual convictions.

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