The Sufi Path of Self-knowledge
Lecture One
Marifah
Allah says, “I was a hidden treasure, and I wished to be known, so I created a creation (mankind), then made Myself known to them, and they recognized Me.”

–Hadith Qudsi

“He who knows himself knows his Lord.”

–Sufi Proverb

On the authority of Abu Abbas Abdullah bin Abbas: “Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. Recognize and acknowledge Allah in times of ease and prosperity, and He will remember you in times of adversity.”

–Hadith Nawawi 19
Knowledge and comprehension are different. Knowledge is of the mind. Comprehension is of the heart.

–Samael Aun Weor, *Treatise of Revolutionary Psychology*

An hour of contemplation is better than a year of prayer.

–Prophet Muhammad, *Hadith*
Being and knowing must be balanced to establish a sudden blaze of comprehension within our psyche. When knowing is greater than being, it causes all kinds of intellectual confusion. If being is greater than knowing, it can produce cases as serious as that of a stupid saint.

—Samael Aun Weor, The Great Rebellion
The best act of worship is watchfulness of the moments. That is, that the servant not look beyond his limit, not contemplate anything other than his Lord, and not associate with anything other than his present moment.

Al-Wasiti in *Al-Risalah: Principles of Sufism* by Al-Qushayri
The key to success in worship lies in meditative reflection (fikrat)...whoever persists in such reflection in the heart will behold the invisible realm in the spirit.

Whoever contemplates God through keeping watch over the thoughts which pass through his heart will be exalted by God in all of his outward deeds.

–Dhū’l-Nūn Miṣrī in ‘Attār: Tadhkirat, 154-155
It is said, “Silence for the common people is with their tongues, silence for the gnostics is with their hearts, and silence for lovers is with restraining the stray thoughts that come to their innermost beings.”

*Al-Risalah: Principles of Sufism* by Al-Qushayri
[Al-Jurayri] said that whoever does not establish awe of duty and vigilance in his relationship to God will not arrive at disclosure of the unseen or contemplation (mushahadah) of the divine.

—Al-Risalah: Principles of Sufism by Al-Qushayri
The Four States of Consciousness

1. *Eikasia* εἰκασία: "imagination," εικόνων eikonon—"images"

2. *Pistis* Πίστις: "belief; faith" Πιστεύω Pisteuo—"to trust, to have confidence, faithfulness, to be reliable, to assure"

3. *Dianoia* διάνοια: "Imagination, thought, mind, perception," from diá, "thoroughly, from side-to-side," which intensifies noiéō, "to use the mind," noús, "mind"

4. *Nous* vouv: "mind, intellect, intelligence"
Wherever the delusion of your selfhood appears – there’s hell. Wherever “you” aren’t – that’s heaven.

–Abū Sa‘īd in Ibn Munawwar: Asrār at-tawhīd, ed. Shafī‘ī-Kadkanī, 299
In general, it is to the measure of one’s alienation from one’s own ego that one attains direct knowledge of one’s Lord... I heard Abu Ali al-Daqqaq say, “One of the tokens of the gnosis of God is the achievement of deep awe and reverence for God. If someone’s realization increases, his awe increases.” And I heard him say, “Gnosis requires stillness of heart, just as learning requires outward quiet. If someone’s gnosis increases, his tranquility increases.”

—Al-Qushayri, Al-Risalah: Principles of Sufism
When the seeker realizes the station of contemplation (mushāhida), which is witnessing God’s Essence comprehending and encompassing all phenomena – “Does not your Lord suffice, since He is witness over all things” (41:53) – he continually witnesses lights from the mundus invisibilis. From such a mystic’s perspective, this world and the hereafter are one and the same. This can only be realized by a vision that is all heart and spirit, not a view bound by mere mud and mire.

–Ibn Karbalā’ī, Rawdāt al-janān, II 164