



A Sufi Message

Mysticism in Everyday Life January 11, 2026

Inspired by the Teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan
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Anyone who has turned on the news this week knows that in the early morning on January 3rd the US carried out a military operation in Venezuela that resulted in a number of civilian casualties.

A few days later, on January 7, Renée Nicole Good, was fatally shot by a United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent in Minneapolis.

Every week when Joe and I attend Mass, we are asked to remember in our prayers people who have endured or died through acts of violence, and **their** families.

We are not here to pass judgement or debate the politics. We are to be here to pray together, and to offer our love and compassion for the benefit of all beings.

The great physicist, Albert Einstein said in the most beautiful and mystical manner this: *“A human being is part of a whole, called by us the “Universe,” a part limited in time and space. Experiencing oneself, one’s thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of our consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”*

There is a teaching in Sufism that goes like this, ‘look for the right in the wrong and the wrong in the right. and the evil of the good and the good of the evil.’ This is indeed a difficult task, but as one begins to work with this notion from within, one begins rise above polarities, and one’s view begins to become vast and spacious. Let’s take a breath together as if we are looking into a clear blue spacious infinite sky. In Zen Buddhism there is a slogan: *“Clear Mind, Don’t Know.”* The Third Patriarch of Zen teaches: *“The Great Way is not difficult if you do not distinctions. Only throw away likes and dislikes, and everything will be perfectly clear.”* ... ‘look for the right in the wrong and the wrong in the right. and the evil of the good and the good of the evil.’ When confusion arises, ‘clear mind, don’t know’; ‘throw away likes and dislikes, and everything will become perfectly clear’.

Perhaps I can illustrate this point for us. If you are plugged in various social media feeds it is likely that you are aware of the group of monks that left the Vipassana Center in Fort Worth, Texas on October 26, 2025 with an aim to arrive in Washington, D.C., in mid-February. The walk is intended to promote “awareness of peace, loving kindness, and compassion across America and the world.” This Peace Walk has not been without conflicts. For example, while addressing a group gathered in Georgia, one of the monks stands and begins to speak to the crowd. In the background there is a man’s voice speaking through an amplified megaphone reciting Christian slogans. The crowd begins to stir and respond, and then Aloka the Peace Dog who is walking with the monks, as if on cue, lets out a kind of moaning sound. The standing monk smiles and bends over to pet Aloka, from the crowd you can hear giggles and ah’s, and Aloka the Peace Dog helps break the tension. A mystic moment of synchronicity! The monk very naturally and calmly responds unaffected goes on to use what is happening in the moment and says, *“So... let us do the thing that we are supposed to do. Let nothing in this world disturb. Everything will be fine. We are not here to fight anybody. We are here to fight ourselves. The biggest enemy in this world is not the people outside. The biggest enemy in this world is our inner self— our mind, our thoughts. So let everybody say whatever they want to say. Because we have freedom. We only have to fight ourselves to purify our*

mind.” For me, this was beautiful example of mystic equipoise and deep mystic wisdom. – Look for the right in the wrong and the wrong in the right. The monk did just that in this situation by turning the crowd’s attention to look within at their own reactive response. “*We are here to fight ourselves. The biggest enemy in this world is not the people outside. The biggest enemy in this world is our inner self – our mind, our thoughts.*”

One of the greatest lessons I have learned regarding this was while I was living in India during a very tragic situation in upper Dharamsala. The incident took place at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, right next to the temple compounds and residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This is what happened, on February 5th, 1997, I was in New Delhi for a Sufi remembrance of the anniversary of the passing of Sufi Master, Hazrat Inayat Khan. It was evening and I was staying in the Tibetan Colony, Majnu-Ka-Tilla in Old Delhi. I had returned to my room, and around 8:30 in the evening there was a frantic knock at my door with several voices calling my name. I opened the door and there were a few monks who entered the room most distraught. I asked them what had happened, and grasping for their breath they informed me that they had just received word from Dharamsala that people had been killed at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics. Details at that time were sketchy, but we immediately bought tickets for the overnight bus to Dharamsala, packed our bags and waited at the bus stop so that could arrive in the morning in Dharamsala be with the community in prayer. When we arrived people greeted us and told us that His Holiness Dalai Lama would speak to the community at 9:00AM. The service began with usual prayers, and then the Dalai Lama spoke. This is what he said: When I learned of these assassinations, I became very angry. Dalai Lama told us of that there were three individuals who had been overcome and slain by knife. **NOTE:** Go to the recording here the remainder of the story conveyed how His Holiness the Dalai Lama shared his own grief, how He turned his mind to the dharma, and peacefully brought the community together.]

Like the Dalai Lama when we bring tragedy into the light of our spiritual teachings, then the polarities which block the mind are cleared away. We can even ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?", "What would Buddha do?", "What would Dalai Lama do?", "What would Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta do?". You fill in the sentence with your ideal. 'What would (your spiritual ideal do)?'

Through our spiritual practices we experience mental purification that clears away impressions such as good and bad, wrong and right, gain and loss, pleasure and pain, in the light of the dharma – the light of these spiritual teachings lead us towards wisdom. My own teacher, Murshida Vera Corda, would say in difficult times, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going. You have to pull yourself up by your bootstraps and get going." The 'get going' is one's spiritual practice. And we might find it helpful to ask ourselves, 'What is God trying to teach me through this experience?'

The mystical soul is one that first strives to constantly seek after the wisdom and truth that has been revealed and illuminated by the great spiritual and religious traditions. For example, In the Sermon on the Plain in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 6, as part of Jesus' command to "love your enemies", Jesus goes on to say:

- 27 *But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.*
- 29 *To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either.*
- 30 *Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.*
- 31 *And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.*

For a mystic, through all of life's ups and downs, the appearance of separateness, wars, illness, you name it! – The mystical soul sees One Source working through all things and strives to let go of limited beliefs and concepts of duality in search of more depth of understanding.

Ibn 'Arabī, a 13th Century Sufi mystic scholar is known for being the first person to explicitly delineate the concept of unity of existence, meaning that all things in the universe are manifestations of a singular reality. Those that know me have heard my favorite quote of Ibn' Arabi which is: *“Seek to know that which transpires behind that which appears.”* Ibn' Arabi is encouraging us to go deeper, and to penetrate through the of the veil of illusion of appearances.

The Sufi Mystic Hazrat Inayat Khan expresses this idea in his teaching:

“All the tragedy of life, all the misery and disharmony, are caused by lack of understanding; and lack of understanding comes from the lack of looking deeply into life's phenomena. When one does not look at life from the point of view that one should, then one is disappointed because one cannot understand. [Life is a puzzle. Yet...] It is not for the outer world to help us to understand better, it is we ourselves who should help ourselves.” So many times in my own life I have grown the most by just sitting without judgement in the puzzlement, in the bewilderment, in the pain. Then there comes a moment where there is a shift and then new understanding arises. As the soul awakens from its slumber and becomes more open, more feeling, more alive, more alive. It is up to us to penetrate the veil of variety so that we can see God in all. In painful or confused moments in life, what would happen if we just stopped to asked: “Where's God in this? Not as an accusation that God has made a mistake or got it wrong, or is punishing us, but to find meaning. What is the Divine Impulse?

Before His passing the Buddha's last words to his disciples were, "Be a lamp unto yourself". The Buddha was encouraging his followers to find this light of inner wisdom through reliance on the teachings as their ultimate refuge that guides us towards this light.

In other words, each one of us **has the light of divine truth within our soul. It is our birthright as children of God. But we need to nurture it with the teachings of the great masters, thereby constantly polishing the lamp of our hearts to let the light of our soul shine.**

Breathe these last words of the Buddha silently into your heart, "Be a lamp unto yourself".

One last quote of the Sufi mystic Master, Hazrat Inayat Khan says, *"The mystic says the explanation of the whole of religion is the investigation of the self. The more one explores oneself, the more one will understand all religions in the fullest light, and all will become clear. Sufism is only a light thrown upon your own religion, like a light brought into a room containing all the things you want; the one thing needed was light."*

Remember our life is the greatest schoolhouse, arising circumstances are the best lessons because given to us as opportunities to fully awaken in life. This is 'mysticism in everyday life!'

Allow me to offer you my loving very best wishes for 2026. May you be blessed with and recognize your own mystical moments in everyday life! Celebrate these moments. Let these moments serve for further awaken the light of your soul, illuminating your life and the life of others.

As our musical meditation, I wish to offer a beautiful, mystical poem titled, A Tear and A Smile, by Khalil Gibran.

Kyle please play the video. Thank you. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rbx2nl-n7uE>
Fade out at 3:33.

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