



The Healing Order of Inayat Khan

My first memory of the Healing Order is a very personal one. The remembered event, of course not consciously associated with the Healing Order at that time, took place in 1926 in the mureed's house in Suresnes during the month of July. My mother and I had arrived from England the previous evening and as a result of the unaccustomed journey over a rough sea (long before the advent of stabilizers), strange food and overwhelming excitement and anticipation, my eleven year old stomach had rebelled strenuously. Into this world of extreme discomfort entered Kefayat Lloyd, a calm and beautiful presence which was already known to me as I had been taken several times to her home in Tregunter Road. I can still feel the touch of her firm hand on my heaving stomach and the easing and comfort as things returned to normal!

From 1930 onwards my parents' home was one of the London centres and weekly healing services were held, conducted by my Aunt Sabira Sturman, with occasional visits from Kefayat. The healing meetings were of course a regular part of the work of all the centres in England: in Brighton, Bath, Manchester, Leeds, Southampton, etc. Later my mother, Murshida Gulinar, as Shefayat lead the group in London and Alton. During this period the all too rare visits of the great healers, Murshid Ali Khan and Murshid Musharaff Khan, were healing in themselves. The records bear many names of conductors, leaders, Shefayats and Kefayats in many parts of the world, some of whom I have been privileged to know such as Hasina de Smeth, Rahman van Lohuizen, Shanti Jonker.

When Fazal Inayat-Khan became Inayat of the Healing Order he brought much thought and experience to the development of this essential work of the Message. It had become the custom to admit any mureed to the service, initiation in the Inner School being regarded as the equivalent to entry into the Healing Order in this respect. Murshid Fazal, knowing that his grandfather had intended the two Orders to be distinct, introduced a ritual of admission into the Healing Order for anyone with the commitment and openness to reflect the healing power, whether or not the person was a mureed. He encouraged members of the Healing Order to study some practical form of symptom alleviation such as massage, aromatherapy, breathing techniques, music therapy, etc and recognized the importance of the holistic approach to the harmony of body, mind and spirit. He strongly and sternly discouraged any discussion concerning the results of the 'healing service', maintaining the non-human transcendent aspect of this ritual. The ineffable quality of 'spiritual healing', the surrender to the All-sufficient Power, is of the essence.

In this spirit the services and meditations continue, and we pray that the Healing Order may more and more play its part in the longed-for health and well-being of humanity.

Sitara Brutnell
June 1994



Sitara Brutnell was the Murshida and leader of the Sufi Way from 1990 to 2004. Murshida Sitara Brutnell's parents were mureeds of Sufi Inayat Khan, founder of the International Sufi Movement; she was his life-long mureed, and she met him several times as a child. She studied music in London and became an accomplished pianist; she accompanied Murshid Ali Khan on the piano in recitals of Sufi songs. Initiated by Murshida Saintsbury-Green, she followed the Pirs of the Sufi Movement, until in the 1980s she moved from the Sufi Movement to the Sufi Way, a branch of the Sufi Order founded by Pir-o-Murshid Fazal Inayat-Khan who eventually appointed her Madar-ul-Maham of the Inner School. Following Murshid Fazal's passing in 1990, she became Pir of the Sufi Way. Murshida composed beautiful musical zikrs, and saw her work as "watering the roots" of Inayati Sufism. She was deeply beloved by the Sufi Way community, and also deeply appreciated by members of the Sufi Order and Sufi Movement for her initiative in the 1990s to bring members of these organisations informally together and over-come the estrangement that had prevailed between them for some years. The collaborative retreats she organized at Four Winds (the beautiful centre of the Sufi Way), and those organized in different venues by Julian Grindon-Welch of the Sufi Movement, and by Sarida Brown of the Sufi Order, brought us naturally into communion and harmony.